



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

**SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITY
AND VOLUNTARY ACTION**



VICE CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD



MAGNUS FLAWS

This year has been very busy, with Voluntary Action Shetland (VAS) staff getting back to doing what they do best, helping others, especially after the Covid restrictions. This report shows that VAS and the direct delivery projects that they support, are once more open for business.

The Saltire Awards Scheme took place in June last year and it was a huge success, with 67 young people receiving their Saltire Awards.

Throughout the year we have been reading in the local press about young people with nothing to do and nowhere to go. Volunteering is something that VAS staff have been promoting within schools over the last 12 months to support young people to get involved in local groups, and it's wonderful to see that these Saltire award recipients have been able to volunteer and make a difference in our community.

Over the year the various areas of VAS have been presenting to the Board what their duties involve. The presentation that stuck out in my mind was from the staff of the Shetland Befriending Scheme. I was impressed with how the volunteers visited, supported in activities and helped people who were in need of some companionship, going out of their way to help, however they could.

Unfortunately three Directors have stood down this year and I would like to record the sterling work Mr W Henderson BEM, Mr A Miller and Mr W Shannon have contributed to the Board of Directors over many years. However we have also been fortunate to appoint two new Directors, Mrs B Wilcock and Mr L Tulloch to the Board.

We are still looking for new Directors to join the Board and I would hope that by reading this report and seeing the benefits to the community that VAS makes, you may volunteer to join us.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and funders for their work over the past year in making VAS the successful organisation that it is.

VAS BOARD DIRECTORS 2022/2023

MR MAGNUS FLAWS	VICE CHAIRPERSON
MRS OLIVE MACLEOD.....	FINANCIAL DIRECTOR
MRS MARILYN STEWART	DIRECTOR
MR ALLISON DUNCAN	DIRECTOR
MR STEVEN LAIDLAW	DIRECTOR
MR LINDSAY TULLOCH.....	DIRECTOR - APPOINTED OCT 2022
MRS BRENDA WILCOCK.....	DIRECTOR - APPOINTED NOV 2022
MR WILLIAM SHANNON.....	CHAIRPERSON - LEFT FEB 2023
MR ALEC MILLER.....	LEFT JUNE 2022
MR WILLIE HENDERSON	LEFT JUNE 2022

I WAS
IMPRESSED
WITH HOW THE
VOLUNTEERS
VISITED,
SUPPORTED
IN ACTIVITIES
AND HELPED
PEOPLE...

VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND



Voluntary Action Shetland (VAS) is Shetland's Third Sector Interface. VAS provides a single point of access for support and advice for the Third Sector within Shetland. There are 32 Third Sector Interfaces (TSI's) in Scotland with one situated in each local authority area in Scotland.

TSI's play an important role in the Third Sector landscape. They are a key point of intelligence about local third sector organisations and volunteering. They understand the local landscape and how it effects the third sector's ability to contribute to local outcomes and national strategies (such as health and social care, community empowerment). TSI's are well positioned to identify support needs for local community groups, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and around volunteering. TSI's can identify third sector issues and perspectives that can feed into both local and national policy.

The role and aim of Shetland's TSI is:

TO BE A CENTRAL SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

- About the Third Sector Locally.
- About Local and National Policy and how it might affect the Third Sector, communities and citizens.
- About how the Third Sector can contribute to those agendas.

TO BE THE VOICE

- Ensuring a strong Third Sector Voice at a Strategic Level within Local Planning Structures and Nationally.

TO BUILD CAPACITY

- Developing the capacity of volunteering, community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprise to achieve positive change.

TO CONNECT

- Providing Leadership, Vision and Co-ordination for the Local Third Sector to better respond to local priorities, including through partnership and collaboration

Community Engagement at the Country shows: Last year VAS staff attended all five local country shows. This gave staff the opportunity to engage with the community about their local needs and to increase staff knowledge of the community awareness of VAS and their available services. Everyone who completed a questionnaire was entered into a free prize draw for a chance to win VAS Giraffe! He is now wonderfully homed on the sunny isle of Yell!

Via the summer community show community questionnaire, based on 443 responses:



84%

of respondents had heard of
Voluntary Action Shetland

88%

respondents were aware of or
had used a service with VAS

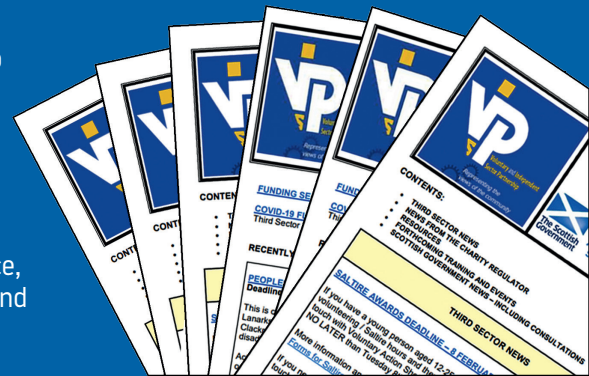
TO BE A CENTRAL SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

VAS regularly distributes the Voluntary and Independent Sector Partnership (VISP) newsletters within the voluntary sector to charities and community groups.

The **Funding Newsletter** provides up to date information on available funding streams.

The **General Newsletter** has relevant information on local news, sector developments and includes information on legislation changes, good practice, consultations and notification of events/resources for groups to utilise/attend to support effective running of their organisation/community group.

In a recent community annual survey based on 63 responses:



67%

agreed that as a result of receiving the regular VISP Funding and General newsletters, organisations and groups are better able to respond to local needs

77%

agreed that by receiving the regular VISP Funding and General newsletters they were more informed about relevant training/funding opportunities, legislation and policy.

95%

agreed that VAS is the key point of contact for information and knowledge about the Third Sector Locally

35 FUNDING NEWSLETTERS CIRCULATED

35 GENERAL NEWSLETTERS CIRCULATED

70 INFORMATION E-BULLETINS

231 PEOPLE REPRESENTING 197 ORGANISATIONS/ GROUPS RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTERS



VAS PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT SERVICE TO OUR VOLUNTARY GROUP. THEY HAVE GREAT KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IN SO MANY AREAS OF CHARITY WORK, I CAN GO TO THEM WITH A QUESTION KNOWING THEY'LL HAVE AN ANSWER! THEIR STAFF ARE POLITE, FRIENDLY AND ALWAYS WILLING TO HELP. THEIR ASSISTANCE WITH FUNDING APPLICATIONS HAS BEEN GREAT. THANKYOU VAS - YOU REALLY DO MAKE A BIG, POSITIVE DIFFERENCE

SERVICE USER FEEDBACK



TO BE THE VOICE

VAS engages in a number of National and Local Strategic Partnerships, forums and working groups to enable voluntary groups and organisations to have a voice and the opportunity to contribute.

Many of the Third Sector organisations alongside Voluntary Action Shetland contribute to the vast range of strategies and work plans including Community Learning and Development Plan 21-24, The Health and Social Care Strategic Commissioning Plan 22-25, the Shetland Children's Plan 21-24 and various projects including the Anchor/Early Action Project and Developing the Young Workforce.

**141 MEETINGS
ATTENDED AT 37
MULTI AGENCY
GROUPS**

**17
OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIRD
SECTOR'S CONTRIBUTION
ON LOCAL STRATEGIES,
LOCAL PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL
REPORTS AND SERVICE
DEVELOPMENT**

In a recent partner annual survey based on 19 responses:

100%
agreed that VAS was fulfilling the role to maintain an understanding of the Third Sector in order to represent at strategic level.

95%
agreed that VAS increased Commissioner's/Key influencers access to the range of third sector organisations that can contribute to local outcomes.

100%
agreed that VAS's role has enabled Third Sector Organisations to confidently, contribute to policy locally and nationally.

93%
agreed that VAS's role increased Commissioners/key influencers understanding of the role of the third sector in contributing to strategic delivery.

100%
agreed that VAS's role supported stronger existing partnerships and helped develop new strategic partnerships.

95%
agreed that VAS was fulfilling the role to be the lead organisation for engagement with the Third Sector.



VAS SHOWS STRONG LEADERSHIP IN BEING THE VOICE AND FACE OF THE THIRD SECTOR IN SHETLAND. STAFF ARE VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE AND SHOW COMMITMENT TO WIDER PARTNERS AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

PARTNER FEEDBACK

VAS PROVIDES VITAL KNOWLEDGEABLE SUPPORT TO THE WORK OF THE SHETLAND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE AND ITS SUBGROUPS. WITHOUT THAT SUPPORT AND EXPERTISE WE WOULD NOT ACHIEVE THE OUTCOMES OF ENSURING THAT ADULT AND CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING IS WIDELY KNOWN ABOUT AND TRAINING IS OFFERED. VAS ARE KEY PARTNERS

PARTNER FEEDBACK

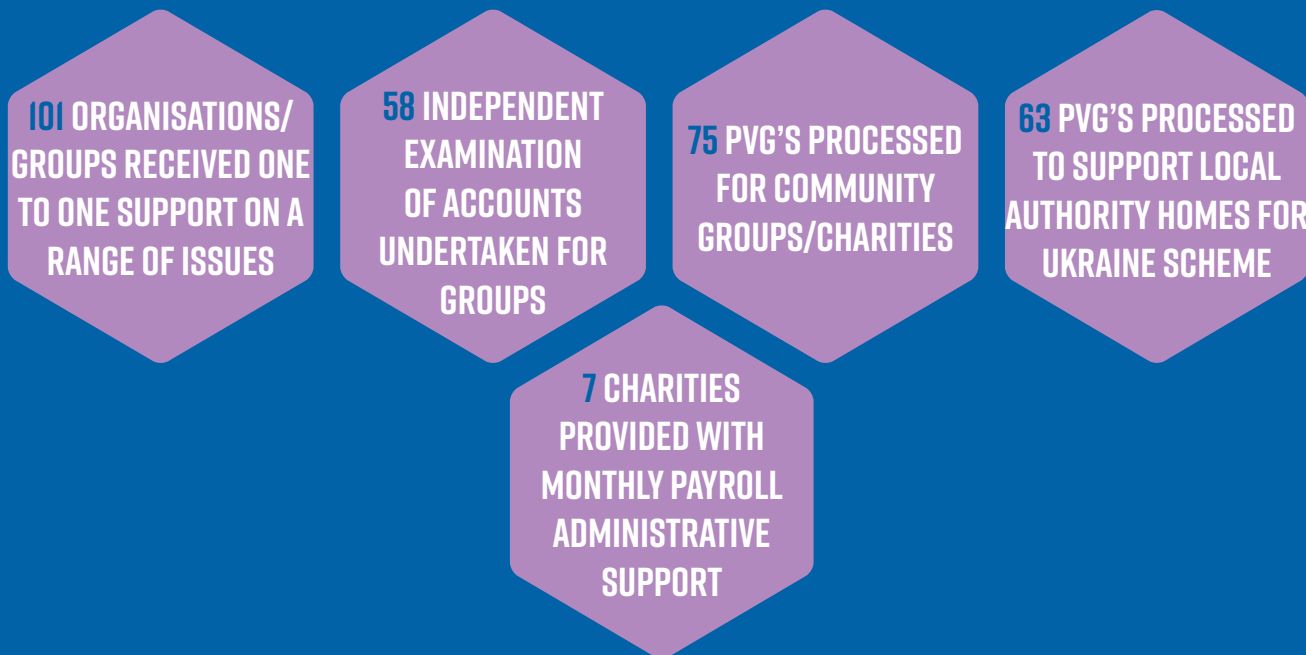


Details of the groups VAS/Third Sector are represented on can be found on the VAS Website:
www.voluntaryactionsketland.com

TO BUILD CAPACITY

Support

VAS's aim is to provide flexible and tailored support to third sector organisations and community groups to build the capacity of as many voluntary organisations in Shetland as possible by responding to queries and needs as they arise, and through targeted support and training. Providing the support enables local organisations to run well which supports them to respond and meet local needs/demands.



Some of the key issues staff supported groups on were:

- Identifying appropriate legal structures for third sector organisations and helping groups through the SCIO process and charity registration for both new and existing organisations; Dissolving organisations; Liaising with the charity regulator OSCR.
- Governance – Modernising constitutions and supporting charitable companies to change their Memorandum and Articles of Associations; Helping groups understand the roles and responsibilities of trustees/directors and recruiting committee members; Advice on establishing policies and procedures (including Equality & Diversity, Data Protection (GDPR), Volunteer Induction etc.); Supporting charities to comply with OSCR regulations (Meeting deadlines for Trustee Annual Reports and Annual Accounts)
- Queries around electricity costs and suppliers, funding, insurance, bank accounts, financial record keeping, fundraising, health & safety (fire alarms and risk assessment), licensing laws, gambling licenses, trading and VAT.



THIS IS OUR FIRST YEAR AS A SCIO AND THE ADVICE AND HELP THAT WE RECEIVED FROM VAS WHEN SETTING UP WAS EXTREMELY HELPFUL. I'M NOT SURE WHERE WE WOULD HAVE GONE FOR HELP IF VAS HAD NOT BEEN THERE
SERVICE USER FEEDBACK

WE ARE SLOWLY IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING OUR PUBLIC HALL A SCIO, AND HAVE FOUND VAS STAFF INVALUABLE WITH THEIR ADVICE AND HELP IN GETTING THIS OFF THE GROUND, ENCOURAGING US AND MOVING US STEP BY STEP TOWARDS BECOMING A SCIO ORGANISATION
SERVICE USER FEEDBACK



Training

Training VAS staff delivered to groups and organisations last year included:

- CYBER RESILIENCE TRAINING WORKSHOP
- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES TRAINING
- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES TRAINING FOR YOUTH COMMITTEES
- RISK ASSESSMENT TRAINING
- FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING



WE HAVE BENEFITED FROM TRAINING RECENTLY AND OUR STAFF MEMBER GOT A LOT OUT OF THE TRAINING AND NETWORKING AND PICKING UP ON OTHER OPPORTUNITIES. IT IS ABOUT CONTINUING TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH VAS AND ALL THE SUPPORT THEY OFFER. A MUCH NEEDED SERVICE FOR THE THIRD SECTOR, THANK YOU

SERVICE USER FEEDBACK



In a recent community annual survey based on 63 responses:



76%

rated the service they received from VAS as excellent



91%

of responders agreed that if VAS did not exist, this could negatively impact on their organisation or group



89%

agreed that when accessing support, VAS understood the organisation and its needs and adapted their support accordingly to fit with their requirements



84%

agreed that as a result of information/advice/support accessed from VAS, organisations/groups deliver improved services and is better managed/run by volunteers and/or staff



87%

agreed that as a result of using VAS services, organisations/groups felt confident in continuing to operate well in the community and potentially developing in the future to meet local need



31%

agreed that, as a result of VAS providing the opportunity to engage in a number of network opportunities, organisations/groups felt more connected with other organisations.



41%

agreed that as a result of VAS connecting with organisations/groups they felt better able to influence and contribute to Shetland Local and National Policy

Funding

Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Funding – Along with the other 31 TSI's throughout Scotland, VAS distributed a second year of the Scottish Government Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Funding to support community activity until March 2024. Shetland's allocation totalled £71,420.37. The intended outcome of the Fund is to develop a culture of Mental Wellbeing and Prevention within local communities and across Scotland with improved awareness of how we can all stay well and help ourselves and others.

18 COMMUNITY GROUPS/ORGANISATIONS RECEIVED FUNDING TO SUPPORT INITIATIVES

STV Childrens Appeal Funding – VAS received funding from STV Childrens Appeal to support families in need.

Vaila Fund – The Vaila fund was established in 2009 and is managed by VAS. The fund financially assists disadvantaged young people in Shetland to experience the joy of travel – young people visit exciting new places, and delight in learning about new cultures, history, food, traditions, and activities. The trips increase the confidence and independence of the young people as well as strengthening existing friendships and establishing new ones.

**60 VOUCHERS TOTALLING
£1,800 WAS PROVIDED FOR
CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR
FOR CHILDREN TO FAMILIES
AFFECTED BY THE COST OF
LIVING CRISIS**

**3 AWARDS GRANTED
TOTALLING £1,928
ENABLED LOCAL YOUNG
PEOPLE TO TRAVEL TO
THE MAINLAND**

Celebration of Key National Weeks



VOLUNTEERS' WEEK 2022



Volunteers Week 2022 - Volunteers' Week is a UK wide campaign that takes place every year in June. It's a time when volunteering involving organisations are encouraged to thank and celebrate their volunteers, past and present. The Volunteers' Week campaign started in 1984, which means this year marks the 38th year of formally saying 'Thank You' to volunteers. The week is also about raising awareness of the benefits of becoming a volunteer and the diverse volunteering roles that are available. As well as helping others, volunteering has been shown to have a positive impact on the lives of those who do volunteer in gaining new skills and boosting self-esteem.

VAS Volunteering staff celebrated Volunteers' Week by going out and about throughout Shetland to visit volunteer involving organisations. Volunteers' Week coincided with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations (which includes The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) – a tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022), and also the Month of Community. They brought along a tree supplied by COPE's Shetland Garden Co to each of the organisations they visited and a plaque to commemorate the tree planting which thanked all of their volunteers.

They visited:

- Nort Trow Gardin in North Roe
- Michaelswood in Aith
- Transition Turriefield in Sandness
- Bressay Development Ltd - Bressay Community Woodland at the Brough Loch
- The Community Development Company of Nesting (CDCN) – Nesting Scrapstore
- Food For The Way Garden – Lerwick



Trustees' Week 2022 - Trustees' Week occurred from 7th to 11th November 2022. It was a time for communities to come together to celebrate the achievements of nearly 1 million trustees across the UK. The theme for 2022 was making a difference in changing times. As the external environment continues to change, charities face new challenges. The positive impact people make, as a trustee is invaluable to a sector that is now as important as ever to benefit society. Trustees' Week offered the opportunity to say; *"Thank you for the time, commitment and effort volunteer trustees bring to your charities to help them thrive"*. VAS hosted a trustee session in November to offer the opportunity for local trustees to come together, discuss common issues and consider the development of a local trustee network.

Promoting Volunteering

The VAS Volunteering team have been busy actively engaging in the community, attending events and promoting volunteering opportunities. There are currently 77 registered active volunteering opportunities with 19 volunteers having been placed in the last 12 months. With more back to normal working patterns post covid-19, there has also been increased engagement within schools and linking in with partners to support individuals to volunteer in their own local communities. Last year there was the following:



In a recent volunteering annual survey based on 18 responses:

100%

responded that the service they received from VAS volunteering was good/very good

83%

responded easy/very easy in accessing VAS volunteering services

72%

of responders were volunteering at the moment

94%

felt more involved in their community by volunteering

87%

found at least one or more volunteering opportunity that suited them

67%

of responders said they would attend "Get Ready to Volunteer" training if this was provided



THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORKER AT VAS HAS BEEN GREAT TO SPEAK TO ABOUT THE SALTIRE AWARDS FOR MY SON
SERVICE USER FEEDBACK



Saltire Awards - On Monday, 6th June 2022, VAS were delighted to be able to present 67 young people with their Saltire Awards once more, in person at their annual Saltire Awards Ceremony.

The 2020 event had to be cancelled last minute, the 2021 event was held online and the 2022 had to be postponed from March to June due to uncertainties around the Omicron Covid variant. Needless to say the excitement of being back at Mareel in June was huge. The event – while on a much smaller scale than pre-2020 due to less volunteering activity during the pandemic – was well received, with many saying they loved the atmosphere of finally being together in a room again.

Despite the difficult circumstances of the past two years, these 67 young people received a total of 125 certificates between them recognising over 10,500 hours of volunteering they had collectively taken part in throughout the year with 25 different local groups, schools and organisations.

Our VAS Chair, Willie Shannon, recognized the volunteers' commitment during his opening speech: *'It is fantastic to see the first Saltire Awards event since 2019 and to celebrate young people being recognised for volunteering in the community. The efforts and achievements of the young volunteers has been a shining light as we come out of the pandemic and inspires all of us for the future.'*

Shetland MSP Beatrice Wishart presented certificates to the volunteers congratulating each of them for their fantastic efforts.

VAS would like to thank all the great organisations who continue to support their volunteers to receive Saltire Awards on a yearly basis. And a huge thank you to High Level hot Club who volunteered their time to provide excellent musical entertainment on the evening. The next Saltire Awards Ceremony is set to take place again on the 6th of June 2023.



Saltire Awardees with Beatrice Wishart MSP, Willie Shannon VAS Chairperson, Lavinia Schmidt VAS Youth Volunteer Development Worker and Lynn Tulloch Executive Officer for VAS.



VAS Volunteering Awards – VAS are delighted to announce that in the past year they have developed a new awards scheme called the VAS Volunteering Awards. The nomination-based awards aim to cover the age range of volunteers which are not eligible for a Saltire Award (which can

only be awarded to young people between 12 and 25yrs) to recognise all of the fantastic volunteering that goes on in Shetland. There will be a category for children 11yrs and under and a category for adults 26yrs and over. To raise awareness of the award, they held a competition to name each of these two categories. Individuals, community groups and primary schools all over Shetland were encouraged to contribute ideas for names. The winning names will be revealed in Volunteers' Week 2023 with a launch of the awards scheme to occur later in the year.



TO CONNECT

Third Sector Forum: This forum is an independent network of Third Sector Organisations within Shetland. The forum meets regularly and is facilitated by VAS. The forum is currently made up of **33 members** and provides a space to share information and good practice, identify needs and learn from one another. The network also provides an opportunity for statutory partners and key influencers to attend to share information and connect with Third Sector Organisations to support them to contribute to local policy and outcomes and to work together to support arising local needs.

**7 THIRD SECTOR
MEETINGS OCCURRED
WITH 6 STATUTORY
PARTNERS ENGAGING
WITH THE FORUM**

Shetland Community Facilities Network: This network was launched in March 2022, replacing the Shetland Halls Association. It is open to a much broader membership including heritage groups, museums, sports clubs etc. The Network aims to provide a regular platform for voluntary groups and organisations who manage a community facility to network, learn, collaborate and share information to improve the management of the facilities for the community. A total of **76 organisations** are currently supported through the network.



I VERY MUCH APPRECIATE THE COMMUNITY FACILITIES NETWORK AND VAS'S SUPPORT FOR IT. IT IS VERY INTERESTING TO HEAR ABOUT THE WORK OF OTHER GROUPS AND TO BE ABLE TO SHARE ISSUES AND SUCCESSES. KEEPING MEMBERS UP TO DATE WITH LEGISLATION ETC IS ALSO VERY HELPFUL. I'VE ALSO ENJOYED HEARING FROM SPEAKERS FROM OUT WITH SHETLAND - THE DAY TO DAY LIFE OF A FACILITY COMMITTEE MEMBER CAN FEEL A BIT OF A DRUDGE AND INSPIRATIONAL TALES LIFT THE SPIRITS! VAS'S PRACTICAL HELP AS WE RECOVER FROM COVID SHUTDOWNS HAS ALSO BEEN APPRECIATED

SERVICE USER FEEDBACK



Shetland Community Climate Action Network: VAS is working in partnership with the Shetland Islands Council (SIC) and the Highlands and Islands Climate Hub to launch a new Climate Action Network for Community Groups in Shetland. Meetings have progressed throughout the year and a Facebook page with resources is being developed by the SIC.



Climate Change Community Champions: VAS was successful in securing funding from the Shetland Community Led Local Development Fund to train **30 Third Sector representatives** from across Shetland in climate change solutions. The course delivered by the Scottish Royal Geographical Society plays a key role in supporting the Third Sector in Shetland to undertake climate change activities to address both adaptation and mitigation.

Shetland Trustee Network: An initial meeting took place in in November 2022 during Trustees Week, with 12 attendees representing 6 organisations. This network will be supported by VAS to develop to meet local needs.

Market House: VAS owns and manages Market House, Shetland's Third Sector Hub. It has been the office base for 12 Independent Charities not including VAS and their direct delivery projects. In addition to this, Market House have several rooms available for hire. Last year Market House had 2673 visitors and 2609 room bookings (534 external & 2075 resident)

Information on Market House, resident organisations and relevant costs for room bookings can be viewed at: www.voluntaryactionshetland.com



VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND PROJECTS

Voluntary Action Shetland has four projects that sit under their umbrella. Three projects provide direct delivery services to people in Shetland and the fourth is a literacy magazine, published three times a year.



SHETLAND BEFRIENDING SCHEME

The Shetland Befriending Scheme has had a very busy year supporting 35 face to face matches and one telephone match. Staff have delivered 18 group activities which have been offered to service users matched/not matched resulting in 39 service users having benefited from the activities. The scheme has had three successful recruitment campaigns resulting in 10 volunteers and 9 due to be trained.

The 16+ Service started a Tea & Cake session in September at Islesburgh firstly offering it on a monthly basis and then due to demand increasing to twice a month. This is continuing to be very successful and to date 87 people have attended the 9 sessions. At the end of March the 16+ development worker organised a bus trip and lunch at Frankies which was very well attended and enjoyed by all.

The project team are absolutely delighted that they have recently gained accreditation of the Quality in Befriending Award (QiB) across all three sections of the service!

Having the QiB marker (valid until July 2025) is invaluable as it ensures that the project is continuing to provide a quality service to those in the Shetland Community and it also helps to secure on-going funding for the scheme. They are so pleased!



Befriending staff team

Photo: Lavinia Schmidt



SHETLAND BEFRIENDING SCHEME HAS ACHIEVED QIB IN 2022, RECOGNISING THEIR EXCELLENT WORK WITHIN THE DIFFERENT SERVICES OF THE SCHEME. THEIR APPLICATION AND EVIDENCE EXCEEDS GOOD PRACTICE IN BEFRIENDING AND IS OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY. IT WAS GREAT LEARNING ABOUT ALL OUTCOMES ACHIEVED AND THE UNIQUE AND FLEXIBLE WAYS THE GROUP ACTIVITIES ARE USED TO PROVIDE RESPITE FOR CARERS AND SUPPORT FOR SIBLINGS. WELL DONE AND KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

ANGUS MACLEAN, QUALITY OFFICER BEFRIENDING NETWORKS

THE SHETLAND BEFRIENDING SCHEME IS A SERVICE WHICH, IN MY OPINION, IS A LIFE SAVER FOR THE USERS AND NEEDS TO BE CLASSIFIED AS FRONT LINE. IN MY CASE, MY PARENT LOOKS FORWARD TO THE VISITS/TIMES OUT/LUNCHES ETC AND JUST THE COMPANIONSHIP OF HIS BEFRIENDER. IT'S ALSO ABOUT THEM BRINGING IN "THE NEWS", ALSO KNOWN AS GOSSIP IN SHETLAND, WHICH IS PART OF THE STAPLE DIET IN THESE PARTS. GREAT SERVICE....GREAT JOB AND KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK. YOU'RE DOING WELL!!

REFERRAL AGENT



SHETLAND CARERS

Shetland Carers continue to support and empower unpaid carers in Shetland to manage their caring role and have a life alongside caring. They currently have 419 carers registered with the service as at 31st March 2023.

Carers Week – Activities provided during Carers Week in June 2022 included a private film screening at Mareel, a ‘Creative Day Out’ consisting of a photography workshop with May Graham, lunch at Bonhoga and a visit to the Kergord Hatchery bookshop and



finally an Afternoon Teas event at Islesburgh Community Centre with catering from Amy Henderson of Fyanna Bakery & Patisserie. The Young Carers group met up through the week, which included a visit to Aa Fired Up. The Parents Group had a Himalayan Sound Therapy session during Carers Week.

Carers Rights Day – In November 2022, Shetland Carers provided information and advice to carers online, relating to the theme of ‘Caring Costs!’ Further information was also provided through their quarterly newsletter.

Respite Scheme – Shetland Carers have continued to provide breaks to carers through the Respite Scheme. Respite (respite + hospitality) allows Shetland’s hospitality and leisure sector to donate short breaks which Shetland Carers pass onto local unpaid carers so that they may have an opportunity to recharge their batteries and take time for themselves. During the last 12 months, Shetland Carers awarded 51 Respite breaks to carers at an estimated cost to local businesses of £7615.



Amanda Brown of Shetland Carers presented Respite certificates to SeabirdsandSeals, Isles Reflexology and Glansin Glass in recognition of their support of local carers.

Photos: Shetland Carers staff

Short Break grants – Funding was received from Shetland Charitable Trust, and also from Scottish Government’s Short Breaks Funding, which is administered through Shared Care Scotland. During the last 12 months, Shetland Carers awarded 86 Short Break grants to carers, totalling £23,200.

Young Carers Action Day – In March 2023, Shetland Carers provided information and advice virtually to young carers. Shetland Arts gift vouchers were also sent out to all young carers and young adult carers who were registered with the service.



Photo: Shetland Carers Staff

Young Carers Service – Young Carers were supported through regular group sessions and individual support by Shetland Carers staff. The Young Carer’s Group also enjoyed an adventure week in July 2022, taking part in different activities throughout Shetland.

Groups – Shetland Carers groups have been able to meet face to face this year, without any restrictions. Sibling Group met 16 times throughout the year with many different activities. Family Day sessions were offered twice in the year and were very popular. Lego Group was able to restart and a total of 24 sessions were offered to young people. Friday Group met 14 times with some extra offered in the summer holidays. Parent Group met 4 times for a time out activity. All groups have been very popular and well received by all taking part.

Full details of Shetland Carers support can be found at www.shetlandcarers.org and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at **Shetland Carers**.



OPEN PROJECT

Peer Education - Since April, OPEN has delivered 85 awareness raising and harm minimisation workshops to 1,489 young people – across all high schools and junior high schools in Shetland. Following the workshop, participants' understanding and knowledge of the topics discussed increased on average by 71%.

Peer Mentoring - Da Café's popularity has provided an innovative approach to developing the Peer Mentoring Programme; as 10 young people have

trained to be volunteer youth work mentors from attending Da Café. There are currently 5 fully trained mentors and 3 mentees involved in the programme, and 4 young people have recently signed up for the 4-week peer mentoring training programme.

Da Café - Da Café has been a tremendous success this year, having been attended by 195 individuals – with up to 70 young people regularly attending each session. There have been 40 Thursday night sessions and an additional 17 sessions on Monday nights, with over 1,300 young folk attending. Da Café has also received enormous support from members of the community, who have donated more than £9,500 towards refreshments since 2020.

OPEN Board - OPEN are in the process establishing a Board of young people (aged 16-29); with the aim to become the first fully youth-led organisation in Shetland. OPEN's board members will have the power to make decisions on how OPEN operates and to lead the vision and direction of the project. To date, 9 young people have completed Board Management training, who went onto form the OPEN Interim Board in January 2023.

Peer Research Team - 8 young people met 6 times to design and develop the youth-led community action peer research project; exploring suitable spaces and opportunities for young people in the community. The peer researchers analysed the findings and presented it to the Education and Families Committee, Shetland Islands Council.

Volunteering - OPEN's volunteers have collectively achieved over 880 volunteering hours this year – an amazing achievement which is testament to the young folk's dedication and enthusiasm.



Photo: OPEN staff - Da Café attendees

NEW SHETLANDER

The New Shetlander is published three times a year (Voar, Simmer and Yule issues) by VAS and supported by a Voluntary Committee. The magazine is circulated widely with subscribers throughout the world. **1458 copies** were sold last year.

Contributions of prose and poetry with a Shetland interest are all considered for publication. New writers, young and old, are always welcome in the magazine.



EXTRACT OF ACCOUNTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT – YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
INCOME		
Charitable income - grants	1,165,740	798,798
Other income	222,892	204,060
	1,388,632	1,002,858
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities	1,078,773	991,897
Depreciation	92,743	91,591
	1,171,516	1,083,488
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) BEFORE TRANSFERS	217,116	(80,630)
Capital Reserves transfer (to cover depreciation)	95,161	91,591
Capital grant income (allocated to capital funds)	(192,140)	-
INCREASE IN INCOME FUNDS	120,137	10,961

BALANCE SHEET - 31 MARCH 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	650,983	736,258
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	200,510	6,684
Investments: fixed term deposits	185,761	185,316
Cash at bank and in hand	493,723	447,908
	879,994	639,908
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors falling due within one year	(59,405)	(119,930)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	820,589	519,978
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,471,572	1,256,236
PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES		
Pension liability	(3,131)	(4,911)
NET ASSETS	1,468,441	1,251,325
REPRESENTED BY:		
Restricted capital funds	833,237	736,258
Restricted income funds	486,330	404,548
Unrestricted income funds	148,874	110,519
TOTAL FUNDS	1,468,441	1,251,325

The figures contained within the income and expenditure account and the balance sheet shown above were extracted from the company's audited financial statements. These were approved by the board of directors.

A copy of the company's audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 can be obtained from our main office or by writing to the following address: Registrar of Companies, Companies House, 4th Floor, Edinburgh Quay 2, 139 Fountainbridge, Edinburgh EH3 9FF (quoting ref SC165677).

EXECUTIVE OFFICER – REFLECTIONS

This year has been incredibly busy as we moved into the “*new normal*” post Covid-19. Recovery has been paramount and it takes time to reset, and reflect on how the last three years have affected individuals and impacted on our communities. It has been pretty significant what we have all been through and our priorities last year have been about supporting people in moving forward and recovering well.

VAS staff have undertaken lots of engagement activity and face to face work over the last 12 months, getting out in the community, going into local schools, attending events, having good connections with others and promoting volunteering and VAS support services in order to help community groups and organisations to run well. Staff have also been able to deliver a range of training to community groups as well as providing practical support. The direct delivery projects have also been able to get back to supporting those within our community in a face to face capacity. You can read more about all the activity in this annual report.

VAS has continued to work collaboratively with partners; supporting partnership working and ensuring the Voluntary Sector has an opportunity to contribute to local and national planning. Last year VAS also distributed year two of the Community

Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund alongside our 31 Third Sector Interface colleagues. Its key outcome being to support community activity to develop a culture of mental wellbeing and prevention within local communities and across Scotland with improved awareness of how we can all stay well and help ourselves and others. I feel this is very much the “*spirit*” of all our partners as we work together effectively to ensure local people live well for as long as possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a HUGE thank you to my supportive board, my great staff team whom support me and Voluntary Action Shetland to: **Be the Central Source of Knowledge, Be the Voice, Build Capacity and Connect.** I also want to acknowledge all the charities, voluntary organisations and community groups for their dedication and hard work and all the volunteers who give their valuable time and energy to make things happen for others, Thank you! ♥



VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND

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A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE REGISTERED IN SCOTLAND NO. 165677. REGISTERED OFFICE MARKET HOUSE, 14 MARKET STREET, LERWICK, SHETLAND
COMPANY SECRETARY LYNN TULLOCH. RECOGNISED BY THE INLAND REVENUE AS A SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC017286.



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Quality Assurance & Good Practice



Funders

VOLUNTARY ACTION SHETLAND WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK THE FOLLOWING FUNDERS AND THOSE WHO HAVE DONATED TO CORE ACTIVITY AND THE PROJECTS. WITHOUT THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT, MUCH OF THE WORK UNDERTAKEN OVER THE LAST YEAR WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.



SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ACTION