

VOLUNTARY ACTION ORKNEY

Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026

Supporting the Orkney Community to thrive



Chief Executive Introduction

Firstly, I would like to say a huge thank you to Voluntary Action Orkney Staff, Trustees, the Third Sector in Orkney and all those who I have met since being appointed as Chief Executive. You have all made me feel very welcome and I am excited to be leading such a wonderful organisation, albeit in challenging times.

This next 3 year Strategic Plan outlines the foundations already made to build on the compassion, commitment and determination the wider Third Sector here in Orkney has started.

Over the next three years we will bring together statutory bodies, third sector organisations and experts by experience to establish and support a collaborative approach to the delivery of identified actions to address poverty across Orkney. Our goal is to embed effective collaborative working in order to create preventative, joined-up pathway of support.

Morven Brooks
Chief Executive

Our Vision

Orkney has sustainable, resilient, inclusive communities with a thriving third sector at their heart.

Our Mission

Our mission is to give the Third Sector in Orkney a voice with trust, care and empathy. We will use what we hear to advocate for and enable change to improve our communities.

About Voluntary Action Orkney

Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) aims to improve the lives of people living on Orkney mainland and outer Isles. We do this by supporting and developing the Third Sector in Orkney, by listening to their needs and working collaboratively with them.

Our main activities involve furthering community participation through supporting and promoting the development and sustainability of local third sector activity, for example, volunteering, community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises.

We work in partnership with the local third sector, public sector and community planning partners and have a lead role in The Orkney Partnership and Integration Joint Board, amongst others to address poverty and inequalities and to create opportunities for everyone in Orkney.

VAO is also a third sector interface (TSI). TSIs provide a single point of access for support and advice for the third sector within local areas. There is a TSI in each local authority area in Scotland. One of the TSI's roles is to represent the third sector in community planning.

About Orkney's Third Sector

Orkney's Third Sector provides support to people in need. At least 840 Third Sector organisations / groups operate within Orkney, of which 328 are registered charities. They include non-governmental and non-profit-making organisations or associations, including charities, voluntary and community groups.

People working through voluntary organisations or groups provide highly valued services that range from social care and housing, to sport and leisure and much more, helping people to get their voices heard, and enabling people to enjoy life and live independently.

These various activities are central to the way our local communities work, and more so here in Orkney. Nevertheless, a mix of demographic changes – the population as a whole ageing, with many people experiencing a Cost-of-Living crisis, and the wider impacts of austerity require a re-focused approach by many third sector organisations to achieve their aims.

Our Values

Integrity and Honesty

We are fair, honest and responsible. We work to always achieve inclusion and equalities in all that we do.

Collaborative

We are committed to collaborative working in an ethical way. We nurture and develop our staff, volunteers, partners to achieve excellence in all we do.

Kindness and Respect

We treat people with kindness and respect, recognising everyone across our communities in Orkney.

Our Strategic Priorities 2023-2026

We have three Strategic Priorities for the period 2023 – 2026:

1. Poverty and Inequalities
2. Central Source of Knowledge
3. Voice
4. Capacity Building
5. Connect

Poverty and Inequalities

We will work constructively with Scottish Government, local partners and third sector in responding to poverty and inequalities.

How we will achieve this:

1. **Orkney Money Matters:** To develop and manage an Advice-and-cash-first referral pathway in place for those in financial need in Orkney (Orkney Money Matters Project)
2. **Partnership Action Plans:** To manage the co-ordination, monitoring and reporting of partnership action plans relating to child poverty, food dignity and fuel poverty.

Central Source of Knowledge

We will support and provide information and advice to the third sector across Orkney.

How we will achieve this:

1. **Local Third Sector Directory:** Develop and maintain a directory of local third sector services which is accessible to use and accurate.

Voice

We will ensure there is a strong third sector voice at strategic level within local planning structures in Orkney and represented nationally.

How we will achieve this:

1. **Third Sector Representation:** Ensure a strong local third sector voice and representation across Orkney.
2. **Third Sector Visibility:** Ensure local third sector services are valued by partners and their visibility increased.
3. **Third Sector Communications:** The sector values VAO's support in ensuring their views, concerns and insights are represented or reinforced within partnerships.

Capacity Building

We will develop the capacity of volunteering, community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises to achieve positive change across Orkney.

How we will achieve this:

1. **Volunteer Support:** Develop and support the capacity of Orkney's third sector to ensure flexibility in their service delivery and to ensure the most vulnerable in the community have been and are supported.
2. **Opportunities and Innovation:** Develop and maintain strong connections between communities, third sector and partners providing opportunities for innovation and enterprise.
3. **Isles Wellbeing Project:** Ensure improved access to services, increased wellbeing and community led service development amongst ferry-linked isles.
4. **Orkney Befriending:** To provide befriending support to young people, young adults, adults, and older members of our community.
5. **CONNECT Project:** To support Young people aged 16-19 who are school leavers, involved with the criminal justice system or have additional support needs to improve employability skills and prospects and improve soft skills.

Connect

We will provide leadership, vision and co-ordination to the local third sector to better respond to local priorities, including through partnership and collaboration.

How we will achieve this:

1. **Access to Resources:** Ensure Orkney has a strong and empowered third sector.
 2. **Local Impact:** Provide a leadership role to address current challenges around uncertainty of funding to sustain and develop the local third sector.
 3. **Partnership and Collaborative Working:** Ensure connections and relationships within and between sectors remain strong. These need to be developed further to ensure that our collective, local resources are utilised to meet the needs of Orkney's people, communities and economy.
 4. **Community Link Practitioners:** To establish, deliver and provide leadership and management of the Orkney Community Link Practitioner programme.
 5. **Tec Peer Mentor Service:** To establish and deliver a Tec Peer Mentor Service in collaboration with Orkney Health and care.
 6. **Isles Self-Management Group:** To create a virtual self-management group for residents of Orkney's non-linked isles living with long-term conditions.
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Thank You

We would like to thank our members for their continued support of Voluntary Action Orkney.

We also thank our funders:

- Scottish Government
- Orkney Islands Council
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Children in Need
- The Robertson Trust
- British Science
- Hugh Fraser Foundation
- The Stafford Trust
- NHS Orkney
- Health and Social Care Alliance
- Esme Fairburn
- The Tudor Trust
- Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership

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- Liam McArthur MSP
- Repsol Sinopec UK