



VOLUNTARY GROUPS - EAST SUTHERLAND



ISSUE 71



CHRISTMAS ISSUE



DECEMBER 2011

Voluntary Groups – East Sutherland 38th AGM



Picture Shows (L-R): Christine Ross, Chief Officer; Jonathan Brett Young, Chairman; Catherine Patterson, Guest Speaker; Liz Barron, Admin Officer.

The 38th VG-ES Annual General Meeting commenced with a warm welcome to all from the Chairman, Jonathan Brett Young.

This year saw a change of venue for the AGM which was held in Fountain Road Church Hall. Jonathan thanked the FRH committee for setting up the hall and making the microphone system available. He thanked Marie MacLeod and Eileen for the lovely buffet they had prepared for everyone after the AGM concluded.

He conducted the business of the AGM which saw the adoption of the annual report and financial statement of accounts, the setting of the subscription fee for next year and the election of directors. As usual, one third of the directors had to stand down at the AGM and being eligible, two stood and were re-elected, namely: Jonathan Brett Young and William Sutherland. The following were not required to stand down and remain as directors for a further year: William Faassen de Heer, Richard Gale, Charlotte Gibson, David Hannah, Deirdre MacKay, Colin Ritchie and Flower Thomson. Jonathan thanked the retiring directors, Sheila McKenzie who stood down in January and Ron Munro who retired on 25th November for their work on the VG-ES Board.

Once the business of the AGM concluded, Jonathan introduced the guest speaker Catherine Patterson, Development Officer, Caithness Voluntary Group and invited her to talk on her work. Catherine thanked the Board for inviting her to the AGM. She had worked for 7 years in the voluntary sector and is based in the Caithness Voluntary Group offices in Wick. Catherine is the Volunteer Development Officer. She explained that volunteers approach her by e-mail, phone or via the Job Centre. They do this for many reasons; to gain experience to help with employment, to fill up spare time and the feel good factor. Catherine appealed to voluntary organisations in Sutherland to

think about what roles they could offer a volunteer within their group. VG-ES has recently become part of V-Bay - a Government based national database which is proving to be a very useful tool. A volunteer will complete a form and the details are then logged onto the database. Volunteering opportunities in the area will also be logged in. The database will then “marry” up the volunteer with an appropriate placement. Catherine advised that they are looking into using Facebook to promote volunteering and she now has a volunteer to help her to do this.

Catherine spoke on her work with school pupils. She goes into schools and advises pupils on the Millennium Volunteer Awards (which will become the Saltire Awards next year). Pupils who do voluntary work can log the hours and work towards an award certificate. This helps with their future CV. She can also help with interview skills. This is open to people aged 16-25 years old.

Jonathan thanked Catherine for her interesting talk and invited fellow Director Richard Gale to present a small gift on behalf of VG-ES. Richard proposed a vote of thanks to Catherine for travelling down from Caithness to speak at the AGM. He spoke on the value of the volunteers that he has working alongside him at the East Sutherland Citizens Advice Bureau. He valued the work carried out by his volunteers and thought V-Bay would be an excellent tool.

Jonathan then asked Christine Ross, Chief Officer to give her report. He advised that Christine had taken up her new post in July. The Development Officer post is currently vacant and he thanked Christine for covering both posts at a very busy time.

Christine spoke on a year of significant changes for Voluntary Groups - East Sutherland:- becoming a Partner in the Highland Third Sector Partnership (HTSP) and the retiral of long standing Chief Officer, Ann Keatinge. Christine spoke on the Scottish Government’s requirement for a Third Sector Interface to be set up in each of the 32 local authority areas. It will be the single point of contact with the Scottish Government for the delivery of the following four functions:-

1. supporting and developing a strong third sector
2. volunteering development
3. social enterprise development
4. building the third sector relationship with community planning. *(continued on Page 2)*

***A Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year from all
at VG-ES***



*Please note our office will close on
Friday 23rd December at 12.30 p.m.
and re-open on
Monday 9th January 2011 at 9.00 a.m.*



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She advised that the journey in forming the Interfaces has proved to be more difficult in some areas and the Scottish Government funding is dependent on an Interface being formed. The Highland Interface is now an informal partnership which eventually went ahead with 9 partners. It was accepted by the Scottish Government in May 2011. The Scottish Government funding is channelled through the Interface and the first quarter grant was received at the end of May.

She thanked Ann for all the hard work and dedication she put into setting up and developing the Highland Interface with colleagues across Highland. The HTSP will support, promote, develop and represent the Third Sector. It is now a vital connection between the Community Planning Partnership and the Third Sector.

Christine then spoke on the EFQM Quality Standard. A condition of grant funding from the Scottish Government was for all Interfaces to work towards the Committed to Excellence award through European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). VG-ES were validated and received the award as Committed to Excellence in October.



Picture Shows (L-R): Richard Gale, Flower Thomson, Christine Ross, Jonathan Brett Young, and Liz Barron with the EFQM Certificate



Christine spoke on some statistics for VG-ES. The year had closed with 190 groups in membership and 8 individual members. There had been 3,365 visitors to the office and 201,388 black & colour copies produced. 25 Disclosures had been processed during the year. She carried out Independent Examinations on 17 sets of accounts for small charities with incomes of £100k or less.

Christine spoke on the forthcoming Training Needs Audit and urged everyone to help with this by completing the form when it is issued.

The Chairman thanked Christine for her report. He then gave his closing remarks, thanking all for attending. The raffle was drawn and the evening concluded with drinks and a finger buffet.

VG-ES ADVERTS BOX IN THE NORTHERN TIMES

The VG-ES adverts box is limited to **Two Fundraising adverts per week**. Please can we remind you that this box can only be used to advertise **fundraising** events. Adverts that do not meet the criteria will not be eligible.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS?

Is your organisation looking for volunteers? Are you thinking of developing a volunteering opportunity?

VG-ES is setting up a database of volunteering opportunities in East Sutherland which will feed into a larger national database called Vbay. You can register your volunteering opportunity with us and we will advertise the opportunity through our local Vbay site.

For further information and to register please contact Christine – christine@vges.org.uk or

☎ 01408 633001



The Search is on to find Scotland's Most Outstanding Social Service Projects!

- **Could your service be an SSSC Care Accolades winner?**
- **Do you want to showcase your outstanding project or service?**
- **You are making a difference and we want to hear from you.**

The SSSC's Care Accolades gives social service organisations in Scotland the chance to have national recognition for the hard work of staff, people who use services and the projects and partnerships involved.

In 2012, 10 SSSC Care Accolades will be awarded to organisations, teams and projects, giving you the chance to show your work in practice and share your ideas, success and innovation with other social service organisations in Scotland.

Categories for this year's awards:

1. *Investing In The Workforce, Developing Practice*
2. *Working Better, Working Together*
3. *Involving Our Local Communities*
4. *Children And Young People*
5. *Adults And Older People*
6. *Innovation And Redesign*
7. *Leadership*
8. *Personalisation*
9. *One To Watch*
10. *Chair's Award*



But you've got to enter to win so visit the SSC website: www.sssc.com/ca or telephone: 0845 60 30 891 to find out more. Closing date is 13th February 2012.



Act quickly – warm up your winter

Free Home Insulation - The Scottish Government's Universal Home Insulation Scheme is in your area

The Scheme run by The Highland Council with the help of the Energy Saving Scotland advice centre and Carillion Energy Services is for householders who live in **North, West and Central Sutherland**.

Householders are being urged to **act quickly** to take advantage of **free insulation** available under the Scottish Government's Universal Home Insulation Scheme (UHIS). The scheme aims to make your home warmer and help you save money on energy bills through the provision of free impartial advice and access to the Scottish Government's Energy Assistance Package.

To benefit from this free insulation offer, we are encouraging householders to **act quickly** and call the **Home Energy Scotland Hotline free on 0800 512 012**. The following postal areas will receive their mailings within the next week: Ardgay, Bettyhill, Bonar Bridge, Creich, Forsinard, Kinbrace, Spinningdale, Inveroykel, Lairg, Linside, Shinness

As the available funds for this offer are limited, applications will be allocated on a 'first come first served' basis.

For private households needing cavity wall and loft insulation, the scheme offers free surveys and installation by Carillion. Referrals can also be made to social landlords identifying potential insulation works in their properties.

"With the recent increases in energy bills and another winter ahead, it is more important than ever that people find out how they can insulate their home more effectively and reduce their heating costs." says Peter Rickard, Centre Manager of the local Energy Saving Scotland advice centre which is working on the campaign with The Highland Council.

"We are urging householders to act quickly and call the Home Energy Scotland Hotline on 0800 512 012 as soon as they receive their mailing to speak to one of our friendly advisors. The offer of free insulation means that every household in these areas can benefit from a warmer winter and lower energy costs."

The funding for the Universal Home Insulation Scheme lasts until the end of March 2012 so you need to **act quickly** to make sure you don't miss out. Call the Home Energy Scotland Hotline free on *0800 512 012 as soon as you receive your mailing to speak to an energy advisor.

* Calls from mobiles to 0300 456 2655 are charged at local rates

VG-ES Events Calendar

Do you want to know what's on; plan your events so that they don't clash with others? Help is here!!

We have developed an Events Calendar for our website – accessed from the VGES homepage. See our website at www.vges.org.uk Please let us have your event details as early as possible.

It could include meetings, training events etc. Please send all necessary information to Christine Ross. **N.B. the Events Calendar is not limited to fundraising events!**

We will include any fundraising events that you advertise in our Northern Times box too. Please send your details to contact@vges.org.uk or to Events Calendar, VGES, Alba, Main Street, Golspie, KW10 6TG

FREE TO GOOD HOME!



TYKES has a proper pool table that they need to pass on to another charity or voluntary group as it is taking up too much space in their activity room. If you can offer the table a home please contact TYKES as soon as possible on 01408 633017.

Homecoming
The Road to 2014

Scotland is planning another Year of Homecoming for 2014

VGES have commissioned Irene MacLeod of MacLeod Associates to provoke ideas from community groups that can be included into a programme of activities to be carried out in 2014.

This will identify any current plans and ascertain if there is scope to enhance these with a co-operative inter-community approach. A final report will include a proposed programme with the planning and implementation suggestions. This can also dovetail with a similar report for North & West Sutherland so that the whole county of Sutherland can gain maximum benefit from Homecoming 2014.

VGES wish to include groups and individuals in any sector from several different approaches, by looking at themes, interests and activities.

Irene is currently getting in touch with groups but if you would like to contact her please do so by:

e-mail: tubeg259@btinternet.com

or Tel: 01641 521219.

Or write to Irene MacLeod, Tubeg, Skerryay KW14 7TJ.

Highland Hospice OUTREACH SERVICE – DAY HOSPICE DORNOCH

Volunteer Drivers urgently required

Highland Hospice has been developing an exciting new project over the last few years. The Hospice team is keen to offer a Day Hospice service similar to the one currently being provided to patients within travelling distance of Inverness. This will enable patients and carer's living in remote and rural areas to benefit from Day Hospice and all it offers.

We are looking for volunteers drivers in the Dornoch area to provide patient transport to and from the venue at the Community Centre in Dornoch. Fuel costs will be reimbursed.

If you would like more information about volunteering with the Outreach Team please contact Carol Wilson (Outreach Team Secretary)

Tel: **01463 227910** or go to our web site

<http://www.highlandhospice.org/Care-Services/Outreach-Team/What-does-the-Outreach-Team-do>

If you are interested in applying to volunteer please contact or apply on-line

Maria Cuthbert on 1463 227902

Email: m.cuthbert@highlandhospice.org.uk

Ness House, 1 Bishops Road, Inverness, IV3 5SB SCO11227

Office Services for VG-ES Members

Advice and information on:-

- **Sources of Funding**
- **Grant-Aid**
- **Constitutions**
- **Charitable Status**
- **Training Courses**




Office Services at Reduced Rates for Members

Include:

- Use of our MEETING ROOM with OHP, SLIDE PROJECTOR, POWERPOINT PROJECTOR, LAPTOP COMPUTER & SCREEN, TV/VIDEO FACILITIES. To book the room or to borrow equipment, please phone Liz for details on ☎ 01408 633001.
- Use of our SMALL SOCIETIES LOTTERY LICENCE for 'printed ticket' raffles.
- STATIONERY FOR SALE at reduced rates: e.g. envelopes, copier paper and card (white and coloured), Plus an ordering service – stationery, sundries & office equipment.
- Use of PAPER SHREDDER – discreet disposal of unwanted documents.
- DIGITAL PHOTOCOPIER Copies in **Black & Colour** Improved quality reproduction, enlargement, reduction and overlay facilities. Double sided document feeder, and collating facility which sorts multi-page documents.
- TYPING and computer printing in a variety of styles plus graphics for posters, leaflets, letter heads, etc.
- RING-BINDING of booklets using either wire or plastic combs or slide binders.
- Use of FLIP CHART AND STAND.
- Use of FAX MACHINE – 05601 146813
- Loan of notice boards for temporary displays.
- Use of ADVERTISING space in the Northern Times for fund-raising activities and notify MFR Community Events.
- Funderfinder - Software for Grant Seekers, helps voluntary groups to identify which Charitable Trusts might fund their work - used in conjunction with the Directory of Grant Making Trusts on CD-ROM. Results can be e-mailed to you with funders' web links.
- A4 Colour Flat Bed Scanner. We can now scan documents into our computer of both text and graphics.
Laminator - We can laminate documents for you such as, posters, identity cards or important papers you wish to protect.
- Cold Laminator for photographs, banners and delicate originals.
- Digital Camera.

- Laptop, digital projector and screen for hire. Please contact VGES for details of terms and conditions for use.
- DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND – VG-ES is registered with the Central Body in Scotland (CRBS) to sign Disclosure applications for potential staff and volunteers who will be working with children or vulnerable adults.
- INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS for Receipts and Payments Accounts for organisations with charitable status. The charity must be a trust or unincorporated association established or registered in Scotland and meets the eligibility criteria. There will be a small fee for this service and an engagement contract to sign. For further information contact Christine at VG-ES.
- **Events Calendar** – advertise your forthcoming event on the VG-ES website www.vges.org.uk
E-Mail info to contact@vges.org.uk
- **E-bulletins.** Contact us if you would like to be added to our e-mail list for more news between our newsletters.

For further details phone us on 01408 633001 or call in at the VG-ES Office, Alba, Main Street, Golspie.



**VGES MEMBERSHIP
2012**

The annual membership fee for 2012 remains at £10 for groups and an invoice is enclosed for your organisation.

Membership is open to all Voluntary and Community Organisations who operate in the East Sutherland area.

Our group membership form which incorporates an annual survey is enclosed.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. It helps us to strive to deliver better services to you.

The next issue of this Newsletter will be
March 2012.

Please send information to be included by the end of February 2012 to:

VG-ES, Golspie, KW10 6TG.

Tel: 01408 633001 Fax: 05601 146813

Or email your information to: contact@vges.org.uk