



The Magazine of Grampian Opportunities

Grampian **Opportunities**
Finding the way forward



Issue twelve

Hello Everyone, hope you're all keeping well.

Since our last edition, there have been a number of interesting events, opportunities and projects for fellow volunteers to be involved in. With the ongoing Mentoring recruitment, Feel good days, Speak up speak out training event, Student Designer fair, Equally Enterprising workshops, and portfolio sessions. *GO* are also considering joining cyber space by creating a facebook page.



We have had to say farewell to our friends of the WRVS services, who have moved to 2 David's Lane, Inverurie. We wish them all success for the future and glad to hear they are settling in to their new office.

The newsletter team has grown with two new recruits, Gladys and James. You will notice that we have some new sections with the word search feature made by Gladys, and James's article on wellbeing. Welcome to our new volunteers, and thank you to those who have written and helped with this edition of *GO's* Newsletter.

Kind Regards
Edwina

WORDSEARCH

Find the following words connected with spring in our wordsearch grid. One word is not in the grid. Find the missing word.

DAFFODIL	TIME
CHOCOLATE	SPRING
EASTER	RISEN
CROCUS	HARE
MARCH	LAMB
BUNNY	CROSS
EGG	BUN

D	L	N	E	S	I	R	C	E	S
E	A	S	T	E	R	B	T	R	E
G	M	F	G	C	L	A	S	H	G
J	A	L	F	D	L	N	T	G	G
V	R	C	R	O	S	S	A	N	R
K	C	N	C	B	D	C	F	I	E
O	H	O	U	E	M	I	T	R	B
P	H	N	Y	K	H	G	L	P	M
C	R	H	A	R	E	M	R	S	A
P	S	U	C	O	R	C	O	Q	L

Grampian Opportunities has registered an interest in plans drawn up for a community training kitchen to be based in the Wyness Hall in Inverurie. The Health Improvement Group, who are leading the development, plan to form a Support Group to manage the facility. This group would meet three to four times a year. Volunteers are welcomed to get involved in the support group to help with the running of the service.

Learning to cook, healthy eating, taster sessions and the social opportunities the kitchen can offer fits with the activities and learning opportunities GO volunteers identified at our planning event. It is hoped to have the kitchen up and running by June. To find out more contact: Calvin Little, Public Health Coordinator on 01467 672729 or Jill Sowden jill.sowden@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Health and Care Framework Public Event

Two volunteers from GO attended the above consultation event in the Acorn Centre, Inverurie, on Wednesday 16th February 2011. Various speakers introduced the Health Care Framework Project and how local resources can be developed and improved. There then followed a general discussion regarding the use of Inverurie Hospital, its role within the community, the role of GPs and other community services. The meeting finished with a commitment to hold further meetings as the project progresses.

Short Breaks Research and "Inspiring Breaks"

A team of GO volunteers are currently looking at short breaks, supported by the Scottish Community Foundation and Aberdeenshire Council. This research fits with the "Inspiring Breaks" project being delivered by Shared Care Scotland who plan to host a workshop in Aberdeenshire on the 7 June 2011.

If you would like to be involved in GO's research project or be kept up to date on the Shared Care Scotland Workshops then please get in touch.

Contact: Bill or Denise on shortbreaks@grampianopportunities.org.uk

Changes to Taxi Card Scheme in Aberdeenshire

The taxicard scheme offers a reduced rate on taxi journeys for people who are unable to use buses. Previously a 50% discount was applied to all fares under £20, while a £10 saving was on offer for trips over £20. From Friday 01 April 2011, under the cost saving changes agreed by the Council, the 50% discount will only apply to fares up to £10, while a £5 saving will now be offered on charges over £10.

EQUALLY

ENTERPRISING

Strengthening organisations that focus on equalities

Business Planning for the future

A small team of staff and volunteers, including one of our Board have now completed three workshops with ODS consulting as part of our Business Planning process. Katy McMillan, Senior Consultant with ODS was our main contact and she took us on a journey that helped us look at our outcomes, the purpose of developing a business plan and what we needed to include and consider next steps for us as an organisation.

We have now been invited to send two members of our group to Glasgow in March so that representatives from the Scottish Government can hear about our experience and learn lessons from the whole programme.
Emma Rennie

Portfolio workshop



On Tuesday the 11th of January, GO held a portfolio workshop where we had invited speakers. Kay Diack explained that a portfolio is a folder that keeps a record of all your work and if you want you can get this assessed. Kay also described the different types of assessments available.

Another speaker was Edith MacDonald from the volunteer centre, Edith came to introduce herself and talk about what the centre has to offer volunteers. Edith can be contacted Monday - Thursday between 9am - 1pm on 01467 626060 www.vcaberdeenshire.org.uk

The final speaker was Tricia McLean, one of our New Explorations co-ordinators. Tricia gave a talk on what they could offer as a service to people who might need their support to help do a portfolio or with other issues that people may face.

Following on from this session, work is continuing on the use of Portfolio's to support volunteer's evidence their work. Grampian Opportunities is signing up to V Skills through Volunteer Development Scotland, and Pam Hunter of Aberdeenshire Council will be introducing volunteers to YODA (Youth Opportunity Database Aberdeenshire) at a training event on 19 March at Computers and Integration.

To find out more about any of these opportunities, contact 01467 629675



Grampian Opportunities Carbon Footprint

Travel - 44,372 Kg CO₂

Office Energy - 5,107 Kg CO₂

Paper - 500 Kg CO₂

Total = 49,979kgs CO₂ (5 tonnes)

(Equivalent to half of a Scottish person's 10 tonne CO₂ footprint)

On 25th January 2011 Grampian Opportunities was invited to a talk by Ann Davidson of REAP. The purpose of the talk was to discuss our current carbon footprint and to work out different ways of potentially reducing it in the workplace. Around about a dozen of us attended and were treated to a very informative session including some debate about the different ways that we can improve the current situation. We were given handouts to fill in regarding our own individual footprint, covering such things as travel and recycling. I personally found it a very interesting event and look forward to the implementation of some, if not all, of the recommendations.

The training session builds on work we started with Forward Scotland through the Sus-it Plus programme to look at our Sustainability. To reduce our travel footprint, we are exploring more effective use of ICT to support our work.

Allan Spence



Community Network Telephone Support

Two staff and two GO volunteers are currently being trained to support group conference calls.

Using technology to support our mentoring service was always recognised as part of our plans to provide an alternative and cost effective way to connect people. We were even more motivated to progress this work when several volunteers found themselves very isolated over the winter months due the snow and ice. The use of technology to support our mentoring activity is being led by Katrina Wilson one of our Mentoring Coordinators. Tel: 01467 629675 or Email: katrina@grampianopportunities.org.uk

Student Design Fair 2010

In early December a team from Grampian Opportunities accepted the invitation to attend the first Student Design fair organised by Alex Barton in Aberdeen. The event brought students together and challenged them to come up with new logos for local businesses and voluntary sector groups.

Alex, his team and the students brought great enthusiasm and energy to the event. We got far more out of the day than we could have hoped for. The students helped us revisit our values and consider what we do and who we want to reach with our marketing material. With us on the day was our mascot "turtle" that brought an element of fun to the final presentations. Look out for "turtle" as he carries on having fun with GO.

We would recommend this type of event to any organisation who gets the opportunity to attend. Further information www.student-designers.com

From the Student Design Fair, we are considering creating a Facebook page to promote our activities to a wider audience, especially young people, and give insight to what the organisation can offer.

Christmas Lunch in March!!!!!!



On the 3rd of March, GO volunteers and staff gathered at the Hopeville Social club in Inverurie to have a very belated Christmas dinner. The programme was planned by the New Explorations Mentoring Service, with a "speed dating" session to promote mentoring matches. Participants were encouraged to look at the skills they have or something they hope to achieve, and then use the four minute conversations to find someone who may already have the knowledge or experience to help.

This turned out to be a great success and a number of second dates now planned which may lead to longer term mentoring matches enabling GO volunteers to meet and support each other in reaching a personal goal. "It was great fun", said one of the volunteers "I met new people and found out more about those I already knew".

After the working session, we sat down for the lovely lunch, followed by presentations and discussions of big highlights where GO volunteers have

participated. This included feedback on the Scottish Mentoring Network AGM held at the end of last year.

HOW ART YOU?



The act of expressing oneself by using art materials is a recognised means for people with health problems as a tool for improving both mental and physical conditions.

The idea of making art has been around since cave dwellers painted images on their walls. Children are encouraged to draw at elementary stage to promote a feel good factor and a sense of making something unique. The **taking part** is more important than the results.

Making art can help as an outlet for frustration etc. when the body and mind stop functioning in the normal way. We are all creative in some way e.g. in the kitchen, decorating a room and dressing oneself. Art is available to everyone with emphasis on **taking part**, having fun and gaining enjoyment from the process. By doing something creative we take our minds out of the here and now and transport our selves into a place of healing.

The idea that art can be therapeutic and lead us to personal fulfilment and emotional improvement is an idea to be encouraged. To escape from the confines of every day illness is something that art can do. To promote personal wellbeing through making art has to be good for us all.

Please get in touch if you have a hobby or interest you would like to share with others. Tel 01467 629675

Feel Good Day Sunday 27th February

Lots of great music, singing and dancing was enjoyed by Grampian Opportunities' volunteers and guests at the Hopeville Social club. This was a "Feel Good Day" organised by Phyllis and Kirstie to thank volunteers and supporters.



An entertaining selection of music was performed by Alfie. A raffle was also drawn with many lucky winners. Thanks to local businesses and others who donated prizes. Money raised will be used to support future "Feel Good Days" Overall a great day was had by all!

Occupational Therapy Services in Aberdeenshire

As of Friday 4th March 2011, all requests for Aberdeenshire Council Occupational Therapy Services e.g. referrals, uplift requests, repair requests and general enquiries should be made to 0845 345 6791 between the hours of 8am and 6pm , Monday to Friday. Emergencies out with these hours contact 0845 8400070.

Volunteer! Make a difference MV award Recognising Achievements



At GO's March gathering, two volunteers and a member of staff were present with awards. Congratulations to Phyllis Gordon on achieving her Core Skills level 4 Award. Phyllis gathered evidence on the events she organised into a portfolio and was assessed in the workplace by Keith Anderson of WEA, who came to our celebrations to present Phyllis with her certificate.



Kirstie Watt was presented with her silver MV award, to recognise 100 hours of volunteering. This was handed over by Bill Davidson, a fellow volunteer, who praised Kirstie's contribution to GO.

Staff member Heather Morrell was awarded her certificate for attending all nine modules of "Vital Skills for befriending".

Congratulations to all three on achieving their well deserved awards.

UN Disability Convention event Monday 28 March, 10.30am - 4.30pm

The Acorn Centre in Inverurie is one of the venues where people can be part of Scotland's story under the UN disability convention. This one day event organised by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights aims to raise awareness of the UN Convention and provide an opportunity for disabled people in Scotland to tell their story.

Commission staff will facilitate the day and Web casting will be used to reach disabled people across Scotland. To find out more Phone: 0141 228 5914
Email: uncrpdscotland@equalityhumanrights.com

Huntly Area Cancer Information Support Service



I was delighted to be invited to attend the official opening of The Huntly Area Cancer Information and Support Centre at 11 Deveron Street, Huntly. Officially opened on Saturday, 19 February 2011 by Dr Gordon Carter, the Centre is run entirely by volunteers with the aim of providing information and support to help those touched by cancer.

For more information about the service or to find out about volunteering opportunities contact the centre Tel: 01466 799202
Email facilitator@huntlycancersupport.org.uk



Mentor and Mentee Recruitment

Mentoring is the support given by another person to help you to explore opportunities.

Do you want to explore Opportunities for change?

People need support networks. You may not use that phrase or even think of your family, friends and colleague in those terms but that is what they are. For those with disabilities and mental health issues the support network is even more important but often more difficult to establish.

With support much more can be achieved. New Explorations Mentoring Service assists Mentees to be ambitious, to see the opportunities for personal development and, for many, to achieve a job at the end of the journey. If you feel you could support someone or would benefit from being supported then contact: Tricia McLean or Katrina Wilson , Mentoring Coordinators
 New Explorations Mentoring Service, Grampian Opportunities
 Tel: 01467 629675 or Email: go.mentor@grampianopportunities.org.uk

Websites	
Grampian Opportunities	www.grampianopportunities.org.uk
ODS Consulting	www.odsconsulting.co.uk
Community Planning	www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk
WEA	www.wea.org.uk
REAP	www.reapscotland.org.uk
Student Designers	www.student-designers.com
Community Networks	www.community-network.org
Shared Care Scotland	www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk
Volunteer Centre Aberdeenshire	www.vcaberdeenshire.org.uk

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