

Grampian Opportunities

Finding the way forward

Activity Report

July 2005 – 30 June 2006

Job creation and assisting people into work is fundamental to the work of Grampian Opportunities which aims to support disabled people and people with mental health problems access the information and support services they need to access further education, volunteering opportunities and employment.

Grampian Opportunities will support individuals who have a personal goal that will further their employment prospects and groups or organisations that have both the idea and commitment to develop a project or enterprise which will promote employability or open up employment and volunteering opportunities.

Grampian Opportunities

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Grampian **Opportunities** is part of Grampian Employment Opportunities a company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland No 208239. Scottish charity number SC 030396
Registered office: 18 – 20 Queens Road Aberdeen, AB15 4ZT

History and background

Grampian Employment Trust was incorporated as a private limited company on 19 June 2000. A special resolution adopted in 2002 enabled the company to acquire the property and operations of Working Alternatives Limited (Opportunities Unlimited) and a special resolution in 2003 extended the beneficiary group from people with mental health problems to include people who are experiencing or who have experienced or who are disadvantaged by mental disorder or physical or sensory disability or who have experienced mental health problems. The company changed its name to Grampian Employment Opportunities on 19 March 2003 but currently operates under the name Grampian Opportunities: **Company number 208239**

The company is recognised by the Office of Scottish Charity Regulators.

Registration number SC 030391

Vision

Every adult in Grampian, regardless of age, gender, background, ethnicity, disability, personal or health history having the same opportunity as everyone else to find and retain meaningful employment.

Mission statement

Job creation and assisting people into work is fundamental to the work of Grampian Opportunities which aims to support disabled people and people with mental health problems access the information and support services they need to access further education, volunteering opportunities and employment.

Grampian Opportunities will support individuals who have a personal goal that will further their employment prospects and groups or organisations that have both the idea and commitment to develop a project or enterprise which will promote employability or open up employment and volunteering opportunities.

Area of operation

The organisation currently focuses activity in Aberdeenshire but can also operate in Aberdeen City and Moray.

Equality of Opportunity statement

Grampian Opportunities is committed to providing an environment of equality of opportunity and treatment in all areas of its work. There is also a commitment to reducing stigma and disadvantage experienced by disabled people and people with mental health problems.



Management structure

Board membership

- Sandy Murray (chair)
- Alisdair Chisholm
- David Brown
- Bill Good (resigned March 2006)
- Iain Thomson (resigned March 2006)
- Martin Van der Lee (December 2005)
- Louise Cardno (December 2005)
- Jean Clarke (December 2005)

Board members from North East Scotland Initiatives (NESI) were co-opted onto the Grampian Opportunities board at an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 14 December 2005 this has started the process for Grampian Opportunities taking over the work of NESI.

Staff

- Linda Singer, Development worker - (15 hours per week) from 1 December 2003
- Liz Robertson, Volunteer Coordinator - (25 hours per week) from 1 October 2005

Support to board members and staff

- Gary Walker (financial support through Tenants First Housing Co-operative)
- Margo Logan (Aberdeenshire Council advisor to Hillpark Community Flat)
- Maurice Parkin (Grampian Opportunities volunteer)

Volunteers

Opportunities exist to participate as committee members or be involved in short term working groups. Grampian Opportunities currently supports an ICT volunteers project funded through Volunteering Scotland to help people with disabilities and mental health problems take up volunteer opportunities using Information, Communication and Technology to support their activity.

Membership

GO membership is open to Individuals and organisations with an interest in promoting enterprise and employment opportunities for disabled people and people with mental health problems.



Current Activities

1. GO Volunteering Opportunities

- Grampian Opportunities aims to fully involve disabled people and people with mental health problems in the planning, managing and delivery of services. GO has six volunteer directors and works with nineteen people have been recruited to the GO ICT volunteering project.

2a. GO Support to individuals

- Responding to demand Grampian Opportunities has worked with Enterprise North East Trust and Job Centre Plus to support an introduction to self employment workshop for six people on 11 May 2006 with a second workshop planned for 13 July 2006.

2b. GO support to Organisations

- During 2005/ 2006 Grampian Opportunities was part of the steering group which saw BITES (Buchan IT E-learning Service) set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.
- Grampian Opportunities is supportive of the work of the Hillpark Community Flat committee.

3. Developing an ICT Voluntary Sector Support Project

- Grampian Opportunities has been working with Computers & Integration and BITES (Buchan IT E-learning Service) to explore funding options to support the development of an ICT support service for voluntary and community sector
- Grampian Opportunities has been working with Computers & Integration to deliver training on MS messenger to a number of individuals from voluntary sector organisations.

4. Research Voluntary Sector employment practices

- Grampian Opportunities is working with a team of volunteers, self employed workers, and representatives from voluntary organisations to coordinate the deliver of a research project which aims to:
 - Raise awareness of employability and employment opportunities for disabled people within the voluntary sector
 - Identify personal and workplace barriers to the employment of disabled people
 - Identify good practice examples of policies, processes and procedures.The work will involve five case studies and over fifty telephone interviews. Focus groups will be held, presentations will be made at an employment conference planned for August and following evaluation a final report will be produced and distributed.

5. Networking

Grampian Employment Network

- Grampian Opportunities provides secretarial and administrative support to the Grampian Employment Network (GEN).
- Grampian Opportunities worked with the GEN to secure funding through Awards for All to develop a leaflet and publish a directory of information on where people can get advice on moving into work or training, training for work, special projects for disabled people, and volunteering opportunities.
- Grampian Opportunities worked with the GEN to secure funding through Communities Scotland to support a programme of meetings and visits to raise awareness of social enterprises and support the development of a website www.grampianemployment.net. Work on the website is being supported by a GO volunteer. This project will also support meetings to consider how agencies can best work together to promote the employability and employment opportunities for disabled people.

Aberdeenshire Social Enterprise Network

- Grampian Opportunities works closely with the Aberdeenshire Network of Social Enterprises. Networking is seen as a focused method of developing and building a pool of contacts, an opportunity to bring people together, develop trust and communication to make the process of delivering services easier. The aim is to:
 - support the growth of the social economy, including improving cooperation across partners
 - facilitate local networking
 - strengthen the range of locally available support
 - unlock market opportunities for new and existing social economy organisations.

Grants and main sources of income (2005/2006)

- Voluntary Action Fund
- Scottish Community Action Research Fund
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Garioch Charity Shop
- Craigmyle Communities Ltd
- Lloyd TSB (organisational review)

EQUAL Funding

Grampian Opportunities has established links with Business Enterprise Scotland, lead body for the Enterprise Trusts in Scotland and through BES to the Equal programme and Theme C Development Partnership, Equal Enterprise Scotland. This provides Grampian Opportunities with funding support for research and for the promotion of enterprise, employment and self-employment.



Bank details

Grampian Employment Opportunities

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