

Grampian Opportunities

Finding the way forward

Activity Report

July 2006 – 30 June 2007

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.

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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

Grampian Employment Opportunities

Grampian Employment Opportunities is a company limited by guarantee (company number: SC208239) and is recognised as a charity by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (charity number: SC030396). The company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

History and background

- 19 June 2000: Grampian Employment Trust was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.
- 1 June 2000: Grampian Employment Trust was recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue (Registration was SC 030391)
- 2002: A special resolution adopted enabling the company to acquire the property and operations of Working Alternatives Limited (Opportunities Unlimited)
- 2003: A special resolution 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.
- 19 March 2003: The Company changed its name to Grampian Employment Opportunities but currently operates under the name Grampian Opportunities.
- 19 March 2003: The Company was recognised as charity. (Registration SC 030396)
- 1 November 2005: The Company accepted a transfer of engagements from North East Scotland Initiatives (NESI).

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

A board of directors of up to eight members who met as required administer the charity. The board has delegated the day to day operations to its Senior Development Worker.

The Directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purpose of charity law. The Directors during the year to 30 June 2007 are listed below:

Board membership

- Sandy Murray (chair)
- Alisdair Chisholm
- David Brown (resigned 05 June 2007)
- Martin Van der Lee
- Louise Cardno
- Jane Clarke
- Edwin Garland (appointed 28 July 2006)
- Alison Gallie (appointed 21 June 2007)

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
- Michael Wright, Support Assistant – (15 hours per week) from 31 January 2007

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)

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 ill health 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 (achievements and performance)

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 eight volunteer directors and during the year has worked with twenty six people recruited to the GO ICT volunteering project.

2a. GO Support to individuals

- Responding to demand Grampian Opportunities worked with Enterprise North East Trust and Job Centre Plus to support an introduction to self employment workshop held on 13 July 2006.

2b. GO support to Organisations

- Volunteers working with GO have supported a number of voluntary sector organisations. This has included Wood RecyclAbility, Fly Cup Catering, Help Light Up Inverurie, Inverurie & District Taxi for the Disabled, BITES (Buchan IT & E-learning Service), Computers and Integration, Inverurie Environmental Improvement Group
- Grampian Opportunities is supportive of the work of the Hillpark Community Flat committee. GO leases premises from Tenants First Housing Co-operative which are sub-let on an informal basis to Hillpark Community Group. The annual rental is currently paid by the Hillpark Community Group directly to Tenants First Housing Co-operative Ltd. The lease can be terminated by giving 28 days written notice.

GO staff and volunteers have supported individuals and organisations explore funding sources with a number of successful applications reported.

3. Developing an ICT Voluntary Sector Support Project

- Grampian Opportunities continues to work closely with Computers & Integration and BITES (Buchan IT E-learning Service). GO also links to a more recent development by Wood RecyclAbility where a volunteer is refurbishing computers to benefit the organisations and the people their service users.
- A range of guidance sheets and an ICT audit tool are available on Grampian Opportunities website. This work was developed and tested by volunteers.

4. Research Voluntary Sector employment practices

During the year Grampian Opportunities worked with a team of volunteers, self employed workers, and representatives from voluntary organisations to research good practice in the employment of disabled people within the voluntary sector. This work involved seven case studies, fifty telephone interviews and focus group meetings with the final work launched at a volunteer awards event on 1 June 2007. The summary report titled "Grampian delivers Opportunities" made a number of recommendations and GO plans to further explore peer support, mentoring and networking which were identified as having significant value.

5. Networking

Grampian Employment Network

- Grampian Opportunities worked with the Grampian Employment Network (GEN) members 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. The guide was launched at an event in Elgin on 15 March 2007. Local events were also held in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.
- A GO volunteer was supported to coordinate a programme of visits for GEN members. Volunteers were also involved in the visual report which accompanied this work.
- GO supported a volunteer to maintain the GEN website www.grampianemployment.net
- GO provides secretarial and administrative support to GEN. At their planning meeting and AGM on 26 June 2007, GO agreed to continue to support GEN and explore funding to develop the work of the network.

Aberdeenshire Social Enterprise Network

- Grampian Opportunities has worked closely with the Aberdeenshire Network of Social Enterprises. The main work during the year has been to support a property management study focusing on Inverurie and exploring the potential to set up an Inverurie Community Development Trust.
- On 14 June 2007 GO worked with network members to facilitate a lunchtime learning session on the subject of permitted work. Delivered by Job Centre Plus this event was attended by a member of staff from Careers Scotland, two GO volunteers, representatives from six local voluntary sector organisations.
- As Network activity involving events and e-mail communication updates is mainstreamed with the CVS network through local forums and e-newsletters, the gap area identified for further development is a peer support/ mentoring forum for the lead workers in voluntary sector organisations.

Grants and main sources of income (2006/2007)

- Voluntary Action Fund
- Scottish Community Action Research Fund
- Craigmyle Communities Ltd
- Lloyd TSB (organisational review June 2006/ consultant paid August 2006)
- A number of in kind donations have been received from local business and agencies (photocopies/ office seats & printer/ filing cabinet/ computers/ desk)

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.

One GO volunteer with the support of the Voluntary Action Fund and EQUAL support has worked with Computers and Integration to develop visual images from photographs taken in 1995 of street art in South Africa. Highlighting Human Rights this work will be displayed at an international art festival in July 2007; with plans to return the final version of the work to South Africa and share the material with the transitional Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

Bank details

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