

Grampian Opportunities

Finding the way forward

Activity Report

July 2007 – 30 June 2008

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

1 High Street

INVERURIE

AB51 3QA

Tel: 01467 629675

Email: info@grampianopportunities.org.uk

Web: www.grampianopportunities.org.uk



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

- 2000: Grampian Employment Trust was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee.
- 2002: Joined with Working Alternatives Limited (Opportunities Unlimited)
- 2003: The Company changed its name to Grampian Employment Opportunities and was recognised as charity.
- 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.

We recognised that not everyone is able or wants to be in paid employment but almost all want to “work” that is to be engaged in some kind of valued activity that uses their skills and facilitates social inclusion.

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 2008 are listed below:

Board membership

- Sandy Murray (chair)
- Alisdair Chisholm
- Martin Van der Lee
- Edwin Garland
- Alison Gallie
- Louise Cardno (resigned November 2007)
- Jane Clarke (resigned November 2007)

Staff

- Linda Singer, Development worker - from 1 December 2003
- Liz Robertson, Volunteer Coordinator - from 1 October 2005 until 31 December 2007
- Michael Wright, Support Assistant - from 31 January 2007
- Tricia Mclean, Acting volunteer coordinator from 26 September 2007 – 31 December 2007 then Mentoring coordinator from 1 January 2008

Support to board members and staff

- Gary Walker (financial support through Tenants First Housing Co-operative)

Volunteers

Opportunities exist within GO to participate as committee members, to be involved in short term working groups or become involved in our new GO Mentoring service.

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)

Achievements 2007/08:

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 five volunteer directors and has twenty four people registered as volunteers.
- Go held their first photography competition titled “The sprit of volunteering”, designed to capture photographic records of volunteering opportunities. This project was planned and delivered by volunteers with the support of staff. Over seventy entries were displayed at events in Inverurie (June 2008) and Inverbervie, with presentations of prizes in Ellon and Johnshaven.

2a. GO Support to individuals (including ICT support)

- The work of one GO volunteer was displayed at an international arts festival in Kirkcudbright in July 2007; the final version of the work highlighting Human Rights were presented to the original community artist, the South African High Commissioner and the curator of arts of Durban University
- GO supported eleven participants on a Peer Support and Mentoring Training Programme delivered by the Scottish Social Enterprise Academy, under their peer support and leadership programme, with the aim of developing skills to support the set up of a peer mentoring service within Grampian Opportunities

2b. GO support to Organisations (including ICT support)

- During the year, 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.

Grampian Opportunities staff and volunteers have supported individuals and organisations explore funding sources with a number of successful applications reported. In addition to this GO supports the work of Craigmyle Community Ltd and holds information about their grant scheme on our website

3. Developing an ICT Voluntary Sector Support Project

- During 2005 to December 2007, GO worked with thirty six members (people with disabilities or mental health problems) on a GO ICT volunteering project. During the two years of the project, ten individuals moved onto a level of paid work opportunity (from earnings disregard to full time mainstream employment); and 25 individuals were supported to volunteer outwith GO in 18 different organisations.

- During the year GO has passed on 15 computers directly for the use of disabled people who are involved in learning or volunteering. Three new printers and a small photocopier have also distributed to voluntary sector organisations and / or volunteers. A working link with Scottish Business in the Community contributes to this effort. 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.

4. Research

- The main research activity this year has been reviewing reports on mentoring schemes to inform the development of a mentoring service within GO. GO has attended national events on mentoring and visited New Futures, a mentoring service working across the Highlands.
- Further research has looked at “In-Control” and the developed of self-directed support across the country. GO has met with a member of “In Control Scotland” and attended an “In-Control” conference in Aberdeen

5. Networking

- **Grampian Employment Network** - GO continues to provide secretarial and administrative support to GEN (agreed at their AGM on 26 June 2007).
- **Aberdeenshire Social Enterprise Network** - Grampian Opportunities continues to link to the Network which operates at a reduced level following the end of the EQUAL programme.
- **Scottish Mentoring Network** – Grampian Opportunities attended national events and has registered as a member through the North Forum.
- **WEA** – Grampian Opportunities gave presentations to three group and hosted two visits. Following this a GO volunteer attended a WEA leaver’s event to present certificates.
- **Voluntary Sector Forum** – GO attends meetings of the Central Aberdeenshire Voluntary Sector Forum (coordinated by CVS Aberdeenshire)
- **Volunteer co-ordinators Forum** – GO links to the Aberdeen Forum and has attended a meeting to explore the development of an Aberdeenshire forum (GO is a member of Volunteer Development Scotland)
- **Common Purpose** – Grampian Opportunities, with Aberdeenshire Disability Action, participated in a Common Purpose challenge event. In addition to this GO coordinated a visit (February 2008) for members of the Common Purpose Programme to hear about the work of Go, Computers and Integration, and Inverurie Job Club (for people with learning disabilities).

Feedback:

“Being involved in the photography project has been about affirmation and valuing volunteers; the opportunity for team leadership and team working; confidence building; liaising with other organisations; working to deadlines and within a budget, finding creative low cost or no cost solutions – all positive experience towards employment opportunities. Newly identified strengths within the existing volunteer team at a personal and team level. The planning, implementation, and presentation stages were all positive and good cv stuff!”

GM volunteer (June 2008)

“Grampian Opportunities is the one place where I have been freely allowed to openly explore my options and life goals. I have found other things such as my Laptop and internet access thanks a grant from Craigmyle Community Limited. Grampian Opportunities is actively involved in supporting people to be the unique individual they are whilst allowing people to work collectively to develop the mentoring scheme. People involved with GO actively appreciate the organisation and everyone around us. The sustainability of GO is so important because it offer such a unique support to people.”
DC volunteer (June 2008)

“GO is a unique service that represents a mix of dedicated people who want to do things for themselves. It is a welcoming learning environment that offers choice and options for different people at different stages in their lives. There are structures in place and more are being developed as you begin to grow step by step. Resources are limited in terms of finance and (paid) staff time. Networks are strong and alive and kicking.”
FM (July 2008)

Grants and main sources of income (2007/08)

- Voluntary Action Fund – GO ICT Volunteering project (until December 2007)
- Voluntary Action Fund – Jubilee Fund to support photography competition
- On-Line Electronics Ltd (sponsorship of prize for photography competition)
- Craigmyle Communities Ltd
- Garioch Charity Shop
- Aberdeenshire Council (complemented bursaries arranged through Scottish Social Enterprise Academy to support learning)
- Community Planning
- Press & Journal Community Giving
- Inverurie Taxi for the Disabled (donation)
- The Big Lottery – Investing in Ideas
- A number of in kind donations have been received from local business and agencies (printer/ filing cabinet/ computers/ desk)
- EQUAL Funding - Grampian Opportunities maintained a working link 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. The final payment from the programme was passed to GO in June 2008.

Services and Use of facilities

- Use of facilities – Momentum Transitions until February 2008 and WRVS from March 2008

Bank details

Grampian Employment Opportunities

Clydesdale Bank plc

1 Queen's cross

ABERDEEN

AB15 4XU

Account number: 60268815

Sort code: 82 60 11

Employers and public liability Insurance: Policy number VC/ 134571

AON Limited
Capital House
1 Houndwell Place
Southampton
Hants
SO14 1HU