

A Change for the Better

This edition of eVOLVe is looking at Change - life-changes through volunteering, the changing face of organisations, changing something old and broken into something useful and on pages 4 and 5 we're celebrating Volunteers' Week, Fife-style!



Peer Educator volunteers
with SmartLiving

SmartLiving is a project that brings together young people who have experienced homelessness. Peer Educator volunteers with SmartLiving pass on their experiences to other young people, explaining what led them to become homeless, the pleasures and pitfalls of living on their own and sustaining their tenancies. Some of the volunteers speak frankly about their experiences.

Stacey: "I was introduced by a friend to SmartLiving. I now have a flat and understand how to run a home. The young people we talk to are shocked

that we were homeless – it changes their opinion about homeless people." Lee: "I was living in hostels but getting kicked out. I was violent and drinking. Now I've cut down on the drink and have a scatter flat. I've settled down, have more confidence and I'm wiser to the world."

Vanessa: "I had a plan for life but it didn't turn out. I wanted to go to uni and be a nurse. Stacey got me interested in SmartLiving. It makes me feel happy, I belong somewhere. Now I definitely want to become a nurse." James: "Before I started SmartLiving I was always getting into trouble but now I have got my life back on track."

Colin: "I was violent and taking drink and drugs but now I have really changed. I was sleeping on the streets and in hostels but now I have a council home. I like telling bairns they can get help. It's a selfless thing to do and it makes me warm and cosy." Kirsty: "I joined SmartLiving in July. I am a recovering alcoholic. From day one I had passion, I believed in the project, believe me, I've had enough experience of homelessness. My confidence has increased ten-fold. After years, I have found who I am."

Working towards Change

Three Into One Does Go!



Volunteer Centre Fife has taken the decision to come together with two other well-established support agencies in Fife - VONEF (Voluntary Organisations North East Fife) and CVS Fife, together with the Social Enterprise Sector to create a brand new organisation. We believe these changes will enable us all to make better use of our resources and we are excited about the possibilities presented by the combination of our respective experience and expertise. Board representatives from each of these organisations sit on the Board of the new organisation and engagement with the wider Third Sector will be an important element for the new organisation as it develops.

Services to volunteers and volunteer-using organisations will continue to be provided from centres in the West, Central and North East areas of Fife and staff are currently working on a new name for the merged organisation. Although an 'aspirational' date of September 2011 has been suggested for the merger this has not been confirmed.

George Proudfoot, Chair of VC Fife said "The range and number of Third Sector organisations in Fife reflects a long tradition of community participation. We recognise the need to continue to provide high quality, accessible services throughout Fife. This is an exciting opportunity to build strength and increase effectiveness through engagement and collaboration. This interface will contribute towards the development of a Fife that is vibrant, dynamic and where all referrals have opportunities to develop their potential."

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme

The new PVG scheme, **which replaces the need for Disclosures in many instances**, came into effect on the **28th of February**. **This new scheme is a response to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007, and will likely affect you or your organisation if you currently use Disclosure checks.**

The new scheme is largely similar to the old system, but there are a few key differences to note. It removes the need for multiple disclosures and provides continuous updates regarding the eligibility of your employees/volunteers to work with children or vulnerable groups.

Perhaps the most important difference, however, is the criteria for eligibility. **If anybody in your organisation works directly with children or protected adults then they will probably need to become PVG scheme members.** This includes befriending, advice-giving and helping at lunch clubs or children's clubs. In addition to this, those with supervisory responsibilities for people in these roles, **including committee members**, also need to be PVG scheme members. This is known as 'regulated work'.

There are severe penalties for not meeting the requirements of the PVG Act, particularly if you give regulated work to an individual who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults. If you think that you or your organisation meets the criteria for regulated work, contact your local Volunteer Centre or visit our website to find out more.

Scouting for Boys (and Girls!)



Sue and Charlie outside St Margaret's Cathedral,

"I love getting up in the morning, having the first cup of coffee, looking at the sunrise or listening to the pitter patter of rain drops on the canvas!" A weekend with no technology is the key motivation for Cupar's Sue Jack, who recently received recognition for over 21 years of volunteering with the Scout Movement.

Sue became involved in the Scouts due to her good forward-planning – as a mother of 3 boys! She was keen to find activities which would involve her sons and the Scout Movement seemed ideal. She started out as a leader of the Beaver section which provides opportunities for 6-8 year olds to make friends and have fun. Over the years, there has been such demand from young people in the Cupar area, that now over 100 are on the waiting list and the Scout Hall is in use every night of the week!

Camping weekends are Sue's great love which she indulges whenever her other Scouting responsibilities allow. She loves letting her creativity to come to the fore as she plans a Harry Potter camping weekend in Balmullo with a group of lively Cubs! Says Sue "The Scout movement not only gives young people the chance to form friendships, but the leaders also benefit from involvement in a great range of activities with tremendous support and training. With so many young people on the waiting list we would love to have some new leaders".

Keeping It In The Family

Sue's youngest son, Charlie, has progressed through each section of the Scout movement culminating in the presentation of his Explorer belt last year. To achieve this, Charlie, along with two other Explorer Scouts, had to plan, organise and raise funds for a 15-day expedition to Switzerland, setting up a mini project based around the Kandersteg Scout Centre. The experience greatly enhanced his confidence, gave him a much wider outlook on the world and opened his eyes to skills he didn't realise he had. Charlie is already following in his Mum's footsteps and is now an assistant Cub leader.

Sue says "Over the last 20 years the badges and programme themes have changed with the introduction of badges for IT and martial arts, but the principles are still the same – to have fun and be prepared for what's to come."

Are you Volunteer-friendly?



The Volunteer Centre launched the 'Volunteer Friendly' award in Fife in February with several organisations signing up straight away: "It demonstrated to me once again just how dedicated the people working in the voluntary sector in Fife are and how much they care about the volunteer experience" – Tom Scott, Volunteer Centre Fife.

"Volunteer Friendly" is about recognising groups that are good at working with volunteers. Organisations working towards the award determine their own timescale and evidence under the guidance of trained Volunteer Centre staff, who are well-qualified to do so as we are going through accreditation ourselves!

To find out more or to start working towards this simple, user-friendly quality standard contact your local Volunteer Centre Fife office.

Volunteers' Week

European Year of Volunteering

European Fun for all the Family



Claire Baker MSP pictured with Ron Nugent, Stephen Adamson and Kate Lax of Volunteer Centre Fife, with some of the young people who came along on the day

As part of the celebrations for the European Year of Volunteering, Volunteer Centre Fife, supported by Adam Smith and Active Fife hosted a **Family Fun Day** in the college's Levenmouth Campus.

Around 75 people enjoyed activities including disco and belly-dancing, t-shirt design, digital art, jewellery-making and demonstrations of Spanish and Polish cookery.

The sessions were delivered by volunteers and Adam Smith College staff to highlight the value of the work going on in the local community, to celebrate Volunteers' Week, and to introduce new activities to local people.



Claire Baker MSP for Mid Scotland and Fife attended the Fun Day along with her young daughter. She had this to say about the event: "It was great to be involved in promoting the good work that volunteers do across Fife. The day really emphasised the importance of volunteering and I hope inspired a number of people to get involved in their communities. Volunteering makes a huge difference to local communities and there really is something for everyone to get involved in.....Volunteering can also provide opportunities to learn new skills and increase employability. It was great to see the Volunteer Centre working with Adam Smith College to highlight the benefits of volunteering."



Adam Smith's Mary Grant helps a budding cook

Volunteers' Week

European Year of Volunteering

Active Fife staff and volunteers were also on hand to pass on information about local sports groups, many of which are actively looking for volunteers to help out.



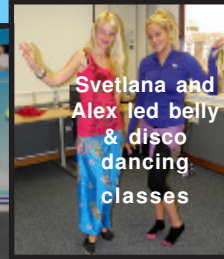
Sonia leads the Spanish cookery class



Fashion designer in the making?



Short tennis was a great hit!



Svetlana and Alex led belly & disco dancing classes



Having a 'Souper' Time!

"What a 'Souper' idea" said the posters to celebrate Volunteers' Week and, in keeping with the theme of "2011 European Year of Volunteering", Volunteer Centre Fife introduced a European Soup initiative across the Kingdom. Community cafes which joined in included the recently-opened Harbour Cafe in Tayport, Harbour Howff in St Monans, SAMH's Pantry in Dalgety Bay and Ladyhead in St Andrews where the favourites of the week were Minestrone and a German Frankfurter variety. Jane Crockett, manager of The Lighthouse in Cupar, said "It was fun to do and good for business!"



Cupar's Lighthouse volunteers and customers had very positive reactions to the new soups on offer



Spanish chorizo & bean soup was popular at the Harbour cafe, Tayport



Volunteer, John, taking on the soup challenge at SAMH's Pantry, Dalgety Bay

Boosting Fife's Red Squirrels



Photo by volunteer
Joe Dobson
of squirrels visiting
his garden

The red squirrel is endangered in the UK and vulnerable in Europe, primarily due to the introduction of the non-native American grey squirrel to the UK and northern Italy. However, the situation in Scotland is more positive with over 75% of the UK's red squirrels and some healthy populations here in Fife, protected by Fife Red Squirrel Group.

The Group was established in 2006 to address the need for a co-ordinated approach to red squirrel conservation in Fife. The first phase of the project centred around two site-based projects in Devilla and Ladybank Forests; the second started in April 2011 and will continue to be delivered by the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust. It spans three years and is now Fife-wide, with a focus on the key woodland sites for red squirrels listed in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

The main aim of the project is to maintain populations of red squirrels across their current range in Fife by carrying out a suite of conservation activities with the help of the local community. These include surveying and monitoring, habitat management, education and awareness, and grey control. This is a community-led project and they are always looking for individuals, landowners and groups to get on board. For more information contact Sophie Eastwood, Fife Red Squirrel Project Officer, on 07534 227163 or e-mail Sophie.Eastwood@fifecountryside.co.uk

Helping Fife's Young People



Emma Fedo

After volunteering while studying in Aberdeen, Emma Fedo has continued to give her time and skills after graduating in Sports & Exercise Science. First gaining valuable experience through Fife Active Schools and a local primary school, she went on to volunteer with the NHS in the **BEST** child weight management scheme (**B**e active **E**at well, **S**tay healthy **T**ogether in Fife), going into schools and delivering sessions on healthy eating and activity.

Through determination and the skills and experience acquired through her voluntary work Emma has recently gained paid employment as Community Walk Leader for North East Fife with the "Walk this Way" project. Sessions will be held during lunchtimes and after school with the aim of encouraging young people to start walking. Soon the project will be looking for volunteers to help with leading the walks.

Emma has nothing but praise for volunteering: "It gave me an opportunity to really experience and gain an understanding of what it's like in the workplace. I received training from Active Schools and BEST and I had the opportunity to develop my own skill set. I really enjoyed my work as a volunteer and it spurred me on to apply for a paid position. I am confident my volunteering experience gave me an advantage in applying for the post."

Rewarding Recycling

A New Lease of Life

Furniture Plus has joined forces with Adam Smith College, Kirkcaldy, to assist their HND Furniture students in their latest graded project. With a theme of 'connecting' and with an underlying message of 'upcycling', Furniture Plus were pleased to be able to allow students and lecturers access to pieces of furniture that were either damaged or had parts missing. Managing Director, Daniel Rous, said "Being able to give these items to the students to work on means there is less going to landfill – something Furniture Plus is making every effort to avoid. Also, in these times of funding difficulties, it is great for us as a self-funding charity project to assist Adam Smith College in this very practical way. It also fits with part of our mission statement which focuses on providing training and employability opportunities in order to reduce social exclusion."

The benefits of the excellent work being carried out by Furniture Plus can be clearly seen through the experience of Stephen Livingstone who came to the organisation from the Richmond Fellowship. Richmond support people with conditions like Stephen's - he has ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder) and Dispraxia. His support worker advised that his concentration levels were very poor and he could only manage very simple jobs and would become very agitated and excitable by lunchtime.



It soon became apparent that Stephen really enjoyed being with the project and he fitted in very well with the team who gave him lots of support and encouragement. Gradually, he was able to increase his hours until he managed a full day. When his placement from the Richmond Fellowship was completed he stayed with the project on a voluntary basis and continued to learn new skills. Two and a half years later Stephen is able to build beds, furniture and do most warehouse duties. Recently he has been involved in the latest project of furniture restoration. Gail Jackson of Furniture Plus said "This takes a huge amount of concentration and effort and he is producing some fantastic results. It gives us all great pleasure to watch Stephen develop; he really is a remarkable young man."

Bikeworks Volunteers Rewarded



From humble beginnings in a hut, Bikeworks is now located in a former factory within Whitehill Industrial Estate in Glenrothes and has become a focal point for all aspects of cycling in Fife.

The driving force and catalyst for this has been the passion, infinite knowledge and drive of Nan and George Shepherd who have been responsible in galvanising support from all sectors: Fife Council, businesses, Fife Constabulary, educational establishments, local Cycle Touring Club and numerous cycle-orientated individuals. Bikeworks' mission in practical terms is to recycle, refurbish and resell cycles; repair and maintain; train through cycle-specific and re-employment skills and cultivate cycle-related partnerships.

The amazing factor in all of this is that both Nan and George are dedicated volunteers and, by their actions, are shining examples of volunteering at its best.

Volunteer Centre Fife News

Thirteen - Not so unlucky for Mary!

'Retired but not retiring' was the wording on the cake at the Old Parish Centre, Cupar when Mary Ray retired from Volunteer Centre Fife recently and sums up someone who plans to continue to be very active in retirement.

The number thirteen for some may be regarded as unlucky but for Mary the opposite can be said. After thirteen years with Volunteer Centre Fife, Mary said "I have been so fortunate to have a job that was fun, interesting and challenging." Mary, who is herself a committed volunteer, has just retired as Training Coordinator. Always passionate about the Voluntary Sector in Fife, she said: "Despite the many pressures facing communities and voluntary groups at present, their key strengths lie in the fact that there are people in the community who not only want to make a difference but have the skills to help. The Volunteer Centre is pivotal in matching up these needs. Over the years I have seen how our service has responded to the demands of the local community and the training we provide has been tailored to meet those needs."

Look out for Mary volunteering in a community near you soon!



Mary Ray with Alison Chapman, Board members David Grisenthwaite and Laura McIntosh and Janet Brereton from Talking Tandems

A Date for Your Diary.....



Celebrating Fife's Voluntary Sector 2011

Wednesday 23 November, 7.00 - 9.30pm

Roths Halls, Glenrothes

More information will be posted on our website over the coming weeks.



VC Fife - Keeping You Informed

Volunteers' Managers Network meetings 2011: Scheduled for early September, late October and December. Details of precise dates, venues and themes will be advised in due course.

Support into volunteering: To find out about the **Give Something Back** project in Central and West Fife contact Jacquie Mellon on 01592 645540 gsbcentral@volunteeringfife.org or Biff McMahon on 01383 732136 gsb@volunteeringfife.org

MV Awards/16+ Learning Choices: Linda Turnbull, youth@volunteeringfife.org

For general enquiries: contact your local Volunteer Centre Fife office.

www.volunteeringfife.org

8 For information on every aspect of volunteering - advice about benefits, expenses, Disclosures/PVG, preparing to volunteer, links to other voluntary organisations and volunteering opportunities throughout Fife