

2025-26

VAO

ANNUAL

REPORT



The Yard Plant Nursery



**Building a
more confident,
connected and
resilient third
sector for
Orkney**



Sanday Men's Shed



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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

This year work has again demonstrated the vital role of Orkney's voluntary and community sector in sustaining island life. Across our charities, voluntary organisations and community groups, volunteers and trustees provide practical support, local leadership and connection. Much of this work happens quietly, but its impact is deeply felt and greatly valued.



For Voluntary Action Orkney's (VAO) Board, 2025–26 has been a year of careful stewardship through organisational change. Directors have worked closely with the Chief Executive and staff team as VAO restructured, planned ahead and enhanced the arrangements needed to support our communities effectively.

During this period of transition, the Board has maintained a strong focus on governance, financial oversight and long-term sustainability, while also considering future Board development, succession planning and the skills needed to guide VAO with confidence.

I would like to thank the VAO staff team for their dedication, professionalism and resilience throughout the year. I am also grateful to my fellow Directors for the time, care and judgement they bring to their roles. Their collective contribution has helped steer VAO through an important period of development.

Above all, I want to recognise VAO's members, volunteers, partners and community organisations across Orkney. Your commitment strengthens our communities and helps ensure people access support when they need it most.

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to introduce this Annual Report and to acknowledge the progress made during a demanding and purposeful year.

Katherine McKerrell

Katherine McKerrell

Interim Chair
Voluntary Action Orkney

CEO INTRODUCTION

A Year of Change

This Annual Report covers a year of change, challenge and renewed focus for VAO and the wider third sector.

Across Orkney, organisations have dealt with rising costs, uncertain funding, increasing demand, new legislation and more complex community needs. Despite these pressures, they have continued to adapt and deliver the services, opportunities and support that local people rely on.

Within VAO, we have used this year to strengthen how we work. We reviewed our structure, clarified roles and developed new ways to connect with members and partners. The purpose has been practical: to make sure VAO can offer timely advice, trusted information, effective partnerships and a clear voice for Orkney's voluntary and community sector.

Over the year, our work has ranged from helping organisations understand legislative and governance changes to supporting volunteering, youth participation, membership development, communications and partnership activity. We have also created more opportunities for the sector to come together, share experience and influence local decision-making.

At the centre of all this work are people: trustees, volunteers, staff, young people, community groups, partners and members. Their knowledge, care and commitment are what give the sector its strength. VAO's role is to help that contribution be supported, recognised and sustained.

I am proud of how VAO staff, Directors, members and partners have worked through this period of transition. The year has tested capacity, but it has also sharpened our focus. As we look ahead, VAO will continue to support a confident, connected and resilient third sector for Orkney.

Morven Brooks

Morven Brooks

Chief Executive Officer
Voluntary Action Orkney



STRENGTHENING VAO FOR THE FUTURE

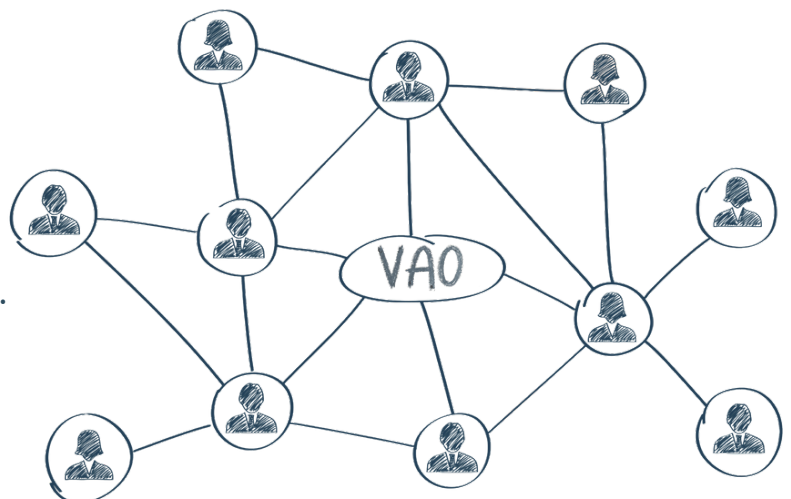
Building Resilience Through Change

- ✓ New organisational structure implemented across VAO
- ✓ New Strategic Plan and Operational Workplan approved
- ✓ Strengthened Board recruitment, succession planning and risk oversight arrangements
- 👥 153 member organisations, 9 individual members and a further 15 provisional members approved by the Board in March 2026



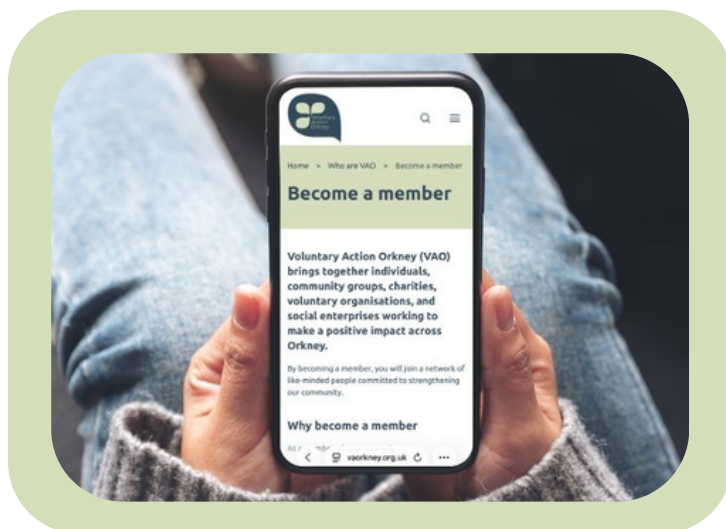
The year 2025–26 was a year of significant organisational change for Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO). As the voluntary and community sectors faced economic pressures and changing expectations, VAO strengthened its own foundations to ensure it could continue to provide effective leadership and support to communities across Orkney.

A major milestone this year was the implementation of a new organisational structure. Clearer roles and responsibilities and reinforced management arrangements improved the alignment between strategic priorities and operational delivery. The introduction of new and revised posts also increased organisational capacity in areas, including communications and partnerships, creating a stronger platform for future activity.



This year we also highlighted the importance of strong governance during periods of organisational change. Directors provided strategic leadership while supporting the organisation through transition and succession planning. Continued focus on risk management and organisational sustainability helped ensure that VAO is well positioned to respond to future opportunities and challenges.

Throughout the year, the organisation also began developing new approaches to understanding and engaging with its membership. Consultation and relationship-building activity have provided valuable insight into the changing needs of the sector and will help shape future services and support.



These developments represent an investment not only in VAO as an organisation, but in the communities and organisations it exists to support. By strengthening its own foundations, VAO is bolstering its capacity to build partnerships and respond effectively to the changing needs of Orkney's third sector.

While much of this work took place behind the scenes, its purpose was simple: to optimise VAO's ability to serve Orkney's voluntary and community sector.

“A stronger VAO means better support for our members, volunteers, partners and communities. The changes we have made this year have been about strengthening our foundations, improving how we work, and making sure we are better placed to respond to the needs of Orkney's third sector. Change is not always easy, but it has helped us build resilience, improve our focus and prepare for the future.”

Morven Brooks
Chief Executive Officer

SUPPORTING A SECTOR IN TRANSITION

This year, VAO provided direct support to 223 organisations and 64 individuals across Orkney, excluding volunteering enquiries and volunteer support activity. This support ranged from one-off guidance to more involved help with governance, constitutions, funding, policy development and legislative change.

223 Organisations supported



64 Individuals supported (non-volunteering)



The voluntary and community sector continues to operate in an increasingly complex environment. During 2025–26, organisations across Orkney faced new legislative requirements, evolving governance expectations, financial uncertainty and increasing demand for services. In response, VAO worked alongside organisations to help them understand their responsibilities, adapt to change and maintain effective governance

One of the most significant areas of change was the evolving legislative and regulatory environment. Changes to the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme, developments arising from the Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act and preparations for wider governance and reporting requirements created new responsibilities for many organisations. For smaller groups in particular, understanding what these changes meant in practice could be challenging.



VAO provided information, guidance, and individual support to help organisations understand their responsibilities and respond confidently. By translating complex legislative requirements into practical advice, organisations were better able to maintain compliance, develop governance arrangements and ultimately continue delivering services with confidence.

Case Study: Strengthening Governance for the Future



Supporting the Orkney Youth Café to refresh its governance

When the Orkney Youth Café approached VAO for support to update its constitution, the work quickly became about much more than rewriting a governing document. Through discussions with trustees, it became clear that the existing constitution no longer reflected how the organisation was operating. For example, trustees were increasingly attending meetings virtually, and quorum requirements made it difficult to conduct business effectively.

Working closely with the Board, VAO supported trustees to review their governance arrangements, draft a revised constitution and understand the reasons behind the proposed changes. Rather than simply producing a new document, the process encouraged discussion, built trustees' confidence and increased understanding of their legal responsibilities.

The revised constitution introduced greater flexibility by recognising virtual meetings and establishing governance arrangements that better reflected the organisation's day-to-day operation. VAO also guided trustees through the formal approval process, including preparing for an Extraordinary General Meeting and meeting the requirements of OSCR and Companies House.



As a result, the Orkney Youth Café now has governance arrangements that are more practical and better aligned with the way the organisation works today. Perhaps more importantly, trustees developed a stronger understanding of their responsibilities and greater certainty in leading the organisation into the future.



One area that generated significant interest was the implementation of changes to the PVG scheme. From 1 April 2025, PVG scheme membership became a legal requirement in Scotland for individuals carrying out regulated roles with children, protected adults, or both.

VAO provided direct support to groups and organisations, helping them consider their individual circumstances and identify the correct way forward. This included signposting and connecting organisations with Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Service for further guidance and support with PVG checks, and the Disclosure Scotland Online Result Service. This work reflects VAO's role as a trusted source of knowledge and practical support point for the sector, particularly where legislative changes affect local volunteer-involving organisations.

This year also saw the continuation of approaches that support longer-term sustainability. In 2025/26 the Scottish Government included the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund in their Fairer Funding Pilot. This allowed VAO to highlight the importance of moving beyond short-term project funding towards models that provide greater financial security. This allowed organisations to plan further ahead and focus on delivering impact rather than continually seeking resources.

Supporting Community Wellbeing

From a two year fund of £166,675, VAO awarded £140,430.33 during 2025-2026, supporting twelve, two-year projects and 7 one-year projects focussed on community mental health and wellbeing.

£140,430.33
Awarded



12 two-year projects
7 one-year projects



Alongside legislative change and rising costs, workforce pressures created additional challenges for many groups. Through community development support, including governance advice, funding guidance and capacity-building work, VAO helped organisations progress and plan for the future.

Overall, while each organisation's circumstances were different, common themes emerged: the need for stability and support in navigating a rapidly changing environment. The collective impact of the work that VAO does extends beyond individual organisations and contributes to a more resilient voluntary and community sector, capable of responding to the needs of communities across Orkney.

OPENING MORE PATHWAYS INTO PARTICIPATION



-  113 new volunteer enquiries
-  30 new volunteers registered
-  64 volunteer-involving organisations supported
-  4 supported volunteers matched with a mentor
-  105 young people volunteering including 30 new Saltire volunteers
-  76 Saltire Awards amounting to 3870 hours of volunteering were given out at the Orkney Youth Awards
-  24 Challenge Awards and 3 Summit Awards were also presented at the Orkney Youth Awards



Participation remains at the heart of strong and connected communities. Throughout 2025–26, VAO supported people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with volunteering.

There is a growing recognition of the personal, professional and social benefits that volunteering can offer and we saw encouraging growth in volunteering activity across Orkney.

More people came forward seeking opportunities to volunteer, with enquiries increasing significantly compared to previous years. The increase in participation locally follows the national trend with evidence demonstrating that volunteer participation is beginning to recover following the Covid-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis.

Many people engaging with volunteering were looking for opportunities that aligned with their interests and circumstances. Young adults aged between 16-34 were the largest group taking up volunteering opportunities. Those aged 35-59 were the second largest group and those aged 60 and over were the smallest. In response, VAO worked closely with individuals and organisations to create meaningful matches and support positive volunteering experiences. This included helping people explore career pathways, gain relevant work experience and improve their connections within the community.

“ Volunteering has helped to boost my CV as well as my sense of purpose and satisfaction - I feel very positive about helping the organisation and the people involved. Having the opportunity to build confidence in interacting with people through volunteering has been really beneficial for boosting my experience and helping with applying for jobs. ”

Alongside mainstream volunteering activity, significant progress was made in developing supported volunteering opportunities. Through building relationships with local organisations and community groups, and increasing our communities' awareness of the service we were able to identify a range of suitable volunteering opportunities for our supported volunteers.

Through the provision of referral pathways and mentor support, the service has created new routes into volunteering for individuals who may previously have found participation difficult or inaccessible.

Our local partnerships have been essential in developing inclusive placements and continuing to promote the value of supported volunteering across the local community.



Although many supported volunteer placements were still in their early stages by the end of the reporting year, initial feedback demonstrated the immediate difference that the right support can make.

“ Before I started, I was really quite nervous and anxious, but I’ve definitely been feeling happier since I started volunteering because it gives me a purpose to get up in the morning and to meet new folks.

I would say I feel more confident now and having my mentor with me has been great... and I can really connect and relate with him.

I enjoy the job satisfaction that I get from it and I’m learning things too – how to follow instructions and stay focused on what I’m doing right until I’ve finished the task.

It feels good to be putting something back into the community, and it’s opened my eyes to what is out there.”

Young People Participating and Leading

-  79 young people engaged through school drop-ins
-  248 young people participated in YPI across five schools
-  83 YPI finalists presented their ideas for local third sector organisations
-  12 young people participated in ROAR
-  6 young people participated in YLAG



Youth development initiatives also created practical opportunities for young people to participate in community decision-making and support local organisations. Over the past year, 248 young people took part in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative across five schools, with 83 finalists presenting on behalf of third sector organisations. Alongside this, 12 young people participated in ROAR, 6 in the Youth Local Action Group (YLAG), and 79 young people engaged through school drop-ins.



A particular focus this year was improving accessibility and inclusion. Changes to youth engagement activities enabled more young people to participate in ways that reflected their individual needs and circumstances. Expanded opportunities for involvement created stronger pathways into volunteering, leadership and civic participation, helping young people become active contributors to community life.

During the reporting year, youth development initiatives channelled £19,422 to third sector organisations in Orkney, including £12,000 through Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI), £4,870 through YLAG and £2,552 through ROAR. This demonstrates the practical contribution young people make to local organisations, while developing confidence, leadership and community decision-making skills. The impact of this work extends beyond the individuals directly involved. Volunteers strengthen organisations, support community services and contribute to social connection across Orkney. Young people who develop self-confidence and leadership skills today become the community leaders of the future.



Together, these developments demonstrate the value of creating accessible pathways into participation. By reducing barriers and supporting people to contribute in ways that work for them, VAO is helping to build stronger, more connected and more inclusive communities.

STRENGTHENING VOICE, RELATIONSHIPS AND INFLUENCE

Strong communities depend on strong relationships. Across the year, Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) reinforced the connections between organisations, communities, statutory partners and decision-makers, helping ensure that information, opportunities and ideas were shared more effectively across Orkney.

A significant organisational change was the creation of a dedicated Partnerships and Engagement Team, including increased communications capacity. This provided a stronger foundation for improving engagement with members and ensuring that the sector had access to timely information, opportunities and support.

Membership remains at the heart of VAO's role as Orkney's Third Sector Interface.

At year end, VAO had 153 member organisations and 9 individual members, with a further 15 provisional members approved by the Board in March 2026. This provided a strong foundation for continuing work to review and modernise VAO's membership offer, recognising that organisations have different needs depending on their size, stage of development and capacity.



Communications also underwent significant development. A redesigned website became the central hub for information, training, funding opportunities and volunteering, supported by the introduction of Mailchimp used to enhance newsletters and improve audience engagement. These changes have provided a more reliable, accessible and data-informed approach to communication, ensuring organisations and communities can find up-to-date information more easily.



the website attracted 4,118 users across 9,246 sessions



VAO content was displayed 133,700 times on Facebook



664 interactions were generated on Facebook



Improving accessibility was another important milestone. VAO introduced an Easy Read service, enabling organisations to present information in formats that are easier to understand for people with learning disabilities and others who benefit from accessible communication. Early commissions included Easy Read materials for Orkney Health and Care's Self-directed Support information, improving access to important services and leading to further commissioned work .



Beyond communications and membership development VAO continued to bring organisations together to address issues affecting communities. Through events, consultations and partnership activity, organisations were able to build relationships, exchange learning and contribute to discussions affecting communities across Orkney.

The Third Sector Working Group continued to evolve as a stronger mechanism for identifying shared priorities, gathering sector views and influencing strategic discussions.

This proved particularly valuable at a time of increasing pressure on organisations facing funding challenges, rising demand and complex reporting requirements. Through the group, organisations were able to raise common concerns and strengthen dialogue with statutory partners.

By creating opportunities for organisations to come together, share experiences and learn from one another, VAO has a more informed and confident voluntary and community sector.

As Orkney continues to navigate change, a strong sector voice, underpinned by trust and shared understanding, is essential for ensuring that communities continue to be heard and supported in local planning and decision-making.

Case Study: Bringing Partners Together to Prevent Homelessness



Preventing homelessness requires organisations to work together long before someone reaches crisis point.

VAO was commissioned by Orkney Housing Association to provide event planning, third sector engagement and communications support for The Big Ask – Acting to Prevent Homelessness in Orkney. Delivered in partnership with Orkney Housing

Association, Orkney Blide Trust and Women's Aid Orkney, the conference introduced Scotland's new 'Ask and Act' approach to homelessness prevention and brought together organisations from across the public and voluntary sectors to explore how earlier intervention can prevent homelessness.

More than 61 participants attended the event, hearing from national experts, people with lived experience and frontline practitioners. The conference increased awareness of the new homelessness prevention duties, enhanced understanding of early intervention and created opportunities for organisations to build relationships and develop a shared approach to supporting people before situations reach crisis point.

The event demonstrated VAO's role as a trusted connector, bringing together organisations with different expertise to learn and develop collaborative responses to complex community challenges.



“ I could not have done it without VAO engaging and connecting to the voluntary sector and the wider community across Orkney. The team were professional, responsive and committed to achieving the best outcomes. ”

Orkney Housing Association

SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH CHALLENGE AND CHANGE



Throughout Orkney, many people face challenges that cannot be addressed through a single service or simple solution. Poor mental wellbeing, isolation, caring responsibilities, disability, and limited access to support can combine to create significant barriers to participation and wellbeing.

Over the past year, VAO provided person-centred support through both the Community Link Practitioner service and the Connect project. While each service works with different groups of people, both share a common approach: building trusted relationships, understanding individual circumstances and helping people identify positive steps forward.

Community Link Practitioner Service

The Community Link Practitioner service provides vital support to people whose health and wellbeing are affected by social, emotional and practical challenges.

Working alongside GP practices, Community Link Practitioners support people experiencing issues such as loneliness, bereavement, financial difficulties, housing concerns, caring responsibilities and poor mental wellbeing. Often, these are challenges that cannot be addressed through clinical interventions alone.

The service provides people with time, space and support to identify what matters most to them and explore practical solutions. This may involve connecting people with community groups, specialist services, financial support, advocacy organisations or opportunities to build social connections.

A key strength of the service is its preventative approach. By supporting people before difficulties escalate, Community Link Practitioners help individuals access support earlier, improve their wellbeing and feel more able to manage challenging circumstances.

The service also plays an important role deepening collaboration between primary care and the voluntary and community sector. Through close partnership working with local organisations, individuals are able to access a broader range of support that reflects the wider factors affecting their health and wellbeing.

Feedback from service users, families and partner organisations continues to demonstrate the value of this approach. People have described feeling listened to, supported and less alone, while families have valued the reassurance of knowing that someone is helping their loved one navigate complex situations and access appropriate support.

Case Study: Rebuilding Independence



Helping one person reconnect with their community

When Magnus* moved from Kirkwall to live with his daughter due to declining health, he found the transition difficult. No longer able to drive, he became increasingly isolated, missing friends and the independence he had previously enjoyed. His daughter, while providing significant support alongside working full-time, was finding the caring role increasingly demanding.

Working alongside Magnus and his family, the Community Link Practitioner helped him access the practical support he was entitled to. This included successful applications for Attendance Allowance, a Blue Badge and Dial-a-Bus membership. Magnus' daughter was also supported to access Carer's Credits in recognition of the care she was providing.

These practical interventions had a significant impact. Magnus was once again able to travel independently into Kirkwall to meet friends, reducing his isolation and improving his confidence. His daughter gained additional support in her caring role, and together they found it easier to adapt to their new circumstances.

Magnus gained some independence and reduced his social isolation. His mood improved greatly and he settled well into living with his daughter.

“ The link worker role doesn't just care for that single person referred – it extends out to their friends, families and professionals too ”

Age Scotland Orkney

* The name has been changed to protect the client's privacy

Supporting Young People Through Connect

-  26 young people took part in the main Connect programme
-  4 young adults who had previously been part of Connect, returned for support when they needed it
-  3 young people moved into further education
-  2 young people secured full-time work
-  2 young people took on part-time work



This year, Connect supported young people facing increasingly complex challenges. Many of the young people engaging with the project were experiencing multiple barriers simultaneously, including poor mental health, autism, disability, social isolation, family pressures and difficulties engaging with education, training or employment.

Living in a rural and island community can create additional challenges for young people. Transport, distance and limited access to specialist services can make it harder to access support, build relationships and participate fully in community life.

In response, Connect provided flexible, relationship-based support tailored to the needs of each individual. Rather than expecting young people to fit within a predetermined programme, support was built around trust, safety and personal progression. For many participants, the most important first steps were developing confidence, building relationships and recognising their own strengths.

Volunteering played an important role within the project. Through opportunities such as intergenerational activities, community gardening and volunteering with local organisations, young people were able to contribute positively to their communities while developing communication skills and a sense of purpose.



Connect Gardening Group



Connect at Aalfiredup

Connect geology
beachcombing

The impact of this support can be seen in the progress made by many of the young people involved. During the year, participants moved into further education, entered employment and became more active within their communities. Others reduced feelings of isolation and built stronger social connections.

Alongside supporting individual young people, we marked an important stage in the future development of the project. Preparations began for Connect's transition from a VAO project to an independent charitable organisation. This transition reflects both the maturity of the project and a commitment to ensuring that support for young people can continue to develop and grow in response to local need.

Connect at
Soulisquoy Printmakers

Building Confidence and Connections

Although the Community Link Practitioner service and Connect project support different groups of people, both demonstrate the value of community-based, relationship-focused support. They have provided practical examples of how person-centred support can help people navigate challenges, realise their strengths and move forward with greater self-assurance.

Both services recognise that lasting change rarely happens overnight. Independence and wellbeing are often built through small steps, supported by trusted relationships over time.

By helping people overcome barriers, bolster social connections and access the support they need, these services contribute to healthier communities and improved wellbeing across Orkney.

FINANCIAL REVIEW



For the Year Ended 31 March 2026

Income and Expenditure

	2026	2025
Income		
Donations and legacies	£678,819	£620,455
Charitable activities	£106,045	£89,534
Other trading activities	£42,255	£40,370
Investments	£46,504	£66,938
Total Income	£873,623	£817,297
Expenditure		
Raising funds	£37,368	£40,118
Charitable activities	£974,901	£1,163,149
Other expenditure	£56	-
Total expenditure	£1,012,325	£1,203,267
Deficit for the year	(£138,702)	(£385,970)

Funds Held at 31 March 2026

	2026	2025
Restricted funds	£71,623	£138,126
Designated funds	£34,984	£44,296
General unrestricted funds	£151,953	£214,840
Total unrestricted funds	£186,937	£259,136
Total funds	£258,560	£397,262

These figures are extracted from VAO's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026

Financial Summary

During 2025–26, Voluntary Action Orkney received total income of £873,623, compared with £817,297 in the previous year.

Total expenditure was £1,012,325, compared with £1,203,267 in 2024–25. Expenditure therefore exceeded income by £138,702, compared with a deficit of £385,970 in the previous year.

At 31 March 2026, VAO held total funds of £258,560, compared with £397,262 at 31 March 2025. This included £71,623 of restricted funds and £186,937 of unrestricted funds.

Of the unrestricted funds, £34,984 had been designated by the Board for specific purposes, with £151,953 held as general unrestricted funds.

The Board continues to monitor VAO's financial position closely, including funding risks, future sustainability and the level of unrestricted reserves against the agreed reserves policy.

Our funders

- Children in Need
- Community Alcohol Partnerships CIC
- Crown Estate
- Liam MacArthur MSP
- Neo Next
- NHS Orkney
- Orkney Islands Council
- Robert Gordon University
- Scottish Government
- Social Investment Scotland
- The National Lottery
- The Robertson Trust
- The Wood Foundation



GOVERNANCE AND TRUSTEES



VAO is a company limited by guarantee (Company No. 143208) and a registered charity (Scottish Charity No. SCO10691), governed by a Board of Directors. The Board provides strategic leadership and oversight, helping to ensure that VAO is well managed, financially responsible and compliant with its legal and regulatory duties.

During 2025–26, good governance remained especially important as VAO moved through a period of organisational change. Directors supported the Chief Executive Officer and staff team through the implementation of the new organisational structure, while maintaining focus on risk, financial sustainability, succession planning and delivery of VAO’s strategic priorities.

The Board also continued to strengthen its own membership and oversight arrangements, ensuring that VAO has the skills, experience and scrutiny needed to support effective decision-making. This included welcoming new Directors during the year and recognising the contribution of those who stepped down.

Strong governance helps VAO operate with stability, transparency and accountability. It ensures that decisions are made in the best interests of the organisation, its members and Orkney’s wider third sector. As VAO continues to adapt, the Board remains committed to providing careful leadership and ensuring the organisation is well placed to respond to future challenges and opportunities.

VAO Board of Directors 2025-26

- Katherine McKerrell - Interim Chair (Appointed 16 June 2024)
- James Temple -Treasurer (Appointed 6 March 2023)
- Jan Swain – Director (Appointed 30 July 2018)
- Willie Neish – Director (Appointed 1 August 2023)
- Alison Sharkey – Director (Appointed 16 October 2023)
- Francesca Couperwhite – Director (Appointed 29 July 2024)
- Neil Kermode - Director (Appointed 5 January 2026)
- Hayley Green - Director (Appointed 20 April 2026)
- Sheila Garson – Director (Appointed 6 November 2025)
- Gerry O’Brien – (Resigned 16 September 2025)
- Janice Annal – (Resigned 14 August 2025)

VAO MEMBERS 2025-26



Groups and Organisations



Advocacy Orkney
 Age Scotland Orkney
 Amnesty International
 Birsay Heritage Trust
 Burray Community Association
 Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland
 CLAN Cancer Support
 Community Energy Scotland
 Cromarty Hall Trust
 Crossroads Orkney
 Cruse Scotland Bereavement
 Deerness Community Association
 Destination Orkney
 East Mainland Agricultural Society
 Eday Community Enterprises
 Eday Heritage Centre Association (SCIO)
 Eday Partnership
 Eday Renewable Energy Ltd
 Employability Orkney
 Firth Community Association
 1st Kirkwall Company Boys' Brigade SCIO
 Flotta Community Association
 Flotta Community Council
 Flotta Day Club
 Flotta Heritage Trust
 Friends of Happy Valley
 Friends of Sanday Kirk
 Friends of the Hoy Kirk
 Girlguiding Orkney
 Greener Orkney
 Grieveship Residents Association
 Haey Hope Club
 Hamnavoe Carers
 Harray and Sandwick Community Council
 Harray Community Association (SCIO)
 Holm Community Heritage at St Nicholas Kirk
 Home-Start Orkney
 Hope Cohousing Ltd
 Hoy Youth Hub
 Island of Hoy Development Trust
 John Rae Society
 Kirkwall East Church
 Kirkwall Squash and Racketball Club

Malawi Music Fund
 MS Society Orkney
 OIC Housing Services
 Orkney Archaeology Society
 Orkney Arts and Crafts
 Orkney Arts Society
 Orkney Athletic and Running Club SCIO
 Orkney Blide Trust
 Orkney Camerata
 Orkney Charitable Trust
 Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau
 Orkney Community Transport Organisation (OCTO)
 Orkney Creative Hub
 Orkney Dance and Fitness Ltd
 Orkney Disability Forum
 Orkney Drugs Dog
 Orkney Family History Society
 Orkney Field Club
 Orkney Folk Festival
 Orkney Foodbank
 Orkney Friends of Palestine
 Orkney Hearts Supporters Club
 Orkney Heart Support Group
 Orkney Heritage Society
 Orkney Historic Boat Society
 Orkney Housing Association Ltd
 Orkney Islands Sea Angling Association
 Orkney Japan Association
 Orkney Library and Archive
 Orkney Men's Shed
 Orkney Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre
 Orkney Music and Culture
 Orkney Natural History Society Museum Trust
 Orkney News Ltd
 Orkney Pilgrimage
 Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Service
 Orkney Renewable Energy Forum
 Orkney Riding for the Disabled
 Orkney Rowing Club
 Orkney Sailing Club
 Orkney Skate Trust
 Orkney Street Pastors
 Orkney Tourist Guides Association
 Orkney Traditional Music Project
 Orkney Trout Fishing Association
 Orkney U3A
 Orkney Vintage Club
 Orkney Wireless Museum

Orkney Yole Association
 Orkney Youth Café
 Orkney Zerowaste
 Papay Community Co-operative Ltd
 Papay Development Trust
 Peedie Kirk United Reformed Church
 Relationships Scotland Orkney
 Rendall Community Association
 Right There (Orkney)
 Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust
 Royal Voluntary Service
 RSPB Scotland
 Samaritans of Orkney
 Sanday Afternoon Club
 Sanday Community Council
 Sanday Community Craft Hub Ltd
 Sanday Development Trust
 Sandwich Community Association
 Scottish Autism
 Shapinsay Community Association
 Shapinsay Development Trust
 Shapinsay Heritage Arts and Crafts
 Shapinsay Lunch Club
 Shapinsay Renewables Ltd
 Skerries Toddler Group
 Somas Light
 Soullisquoy Printmakers Ltd
 South Ronaldsay Community Association
 South Ronaldsay Golf Club
 St Andrew's Community Association
 St John's Kirk - Walls Heritage
 St Magnus International Festival
 Stromness Community Council
 Stromness Community Garden Society
 Stromness Royal British Legion Pipe Band
 Stromness Shopping Week
 Stronsay Moncur Memorial Church
 Stronsay Renewable Energy Ltd
 Swandro-Orkney Coastal Archaeology Trust
 THAW Orkney
 The Craithub SCIO
 The Hoy Trust SCIO
 The Peedie Retreat
 The Pickaquoy Centre Trust
 The Pier Arts Centre
 Therapy Through Horses
 The Workshop Loft and Gallery
 The Yard Plant Nursery
 Victim Support Scotland
 Vital Talk Orkney Counselling Service
 Westray Community Association
 Westray Development Trust
 Westray Fairtrade Steering Group
 Westray Golf Club
 Westray Heritage Trust

Westray Parish Kirk
 Westray Sailing Club
 West Side Cinema
 Who Cares? Scotland
 Women's Aid Orkney
 Writing Orkney
 YM Empower

Individuals



Alistair Carmichael MP
 Ian Carse
 Francesca Jane Couperwhite
 Sheila Garson
 Elaine Grieve
 George Hannah
 Keith Johnson
 Alison Sharkey
 James Temple of Stowe (James Temple)

LOOKING AHEAD



Looking ahead, VAO will continue to build support for Orkney's third sector. The coming year will include further work to support organisations with legislative, funding, volunteering and governance-related developments, while also improving how VAO uses data and insight to understand sector needs.

A key priority will be to support groups and organisations with implementing the PVG legislative changes. Following local queries about regulated roles and PVG requirements, Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Service has been invited to attend an online meeting with Community Association members. This will provide an opportunity for groups to ask questions directly, improve their understanding of the requirements, and feel more confident in deciding which roles require PVG membership.

Youth and volunteer development will also remain a focus. VAO will continue exploring its role supporting Employer Supported Volunteering, alongside work to streamline volunteer matching processes. Plans are being developed for further Get Ready to Volunteer activity, including work with Kirkwall Grammar School and a future Open to All programme. Within youth development, the Youth Local Action Group has generated a number of ideas for next year, including the potential for a residential visit to Shetland, while further work is being considered around intergenerational activity in Stromness.

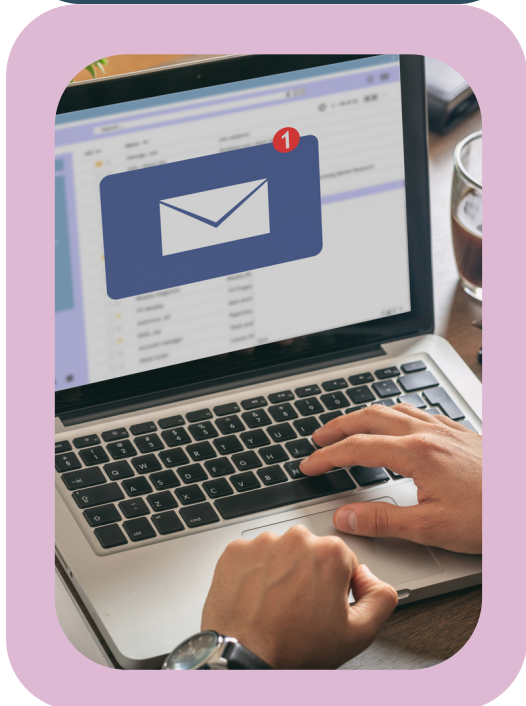
Community Development activity will continue to support wider sector resilience and connection. This includes progressing the Digital Inclusion Alliance project, working with Firstport to develop a learning exchange and partner awareness sessions. VAO will also be contributing third sector insight to the Heritage Places of Focus programme.

Membership development will be another important area of work. The membership survey provides a stronger evidence base for understanding members' needs, priorities and expectations, and will help inform future service development. Continued work to improve the Community Directory will also help VAO better understand the reach and representativeness of its membership and identify any gaps in engagement.

Communications reporting will be strengthened by tracking key website actions and linking communications activity more clearly to service development and sector support, for example. This will help VAO evidence its role as a Central Source of Knowledge and better understand how people use VAO information in practice.

Overall, the year ahead provides an opportunity to build on the changes made during 2025–26, embedding new ways of working while continuing to support a strong, connected and informed voluntary and community sector in Orkney.

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