



VOLUNTARY ACTION LOCHABER
BUIDHEANN SAOR-THOILEACH LOCHABAIR

Annual Report 2008/2009

HELPING COMMUNITIES TO HELP THEMSELVES



Funded by:



Thrive
&
Connect



Core CVS Staff

Left to right: Flora McKee, Manager; Jennifer Boulton Receptionist; Marion Smith, Community Development Worker; Fiona MacLean, Membership Officer; Deirdre Coull, Finance Officer.

Directors

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Chairperson..... | Thomas MacLennan (resigned 17/02/09) |
| Finance Director | Harry Whiteside (acting Chairperson) |
| Director..... | John Rosie |
| Director..... | Allan Lindsay |
| Director..... | Maureen Cameron |
| Director..... | Mervyn James (appointed 30/07/09) |
| Director | Nigel Bailey (appointed 30/07/09) |
| Advisor | Dot Ferguson |

Core Staff

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Manager | Flora McKee |
| Company Accountant | David Govan |
| Finance Officer..... | Deirdre Coull |
| CVS Development Officer | Marion Smith |
| Membership Officer | Fiona MacLean |
| Receptionist/Administrator | Jennifer Boulton |
| Centre Operative | Frances Logan |

Lifestyles Project

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Bryan Powell | LifeStyles Project Manager |
| Caroline MacPherson..... | LifeStyles Support Worker |
| Duncan Macleod | LifeStyles Support Worker |
| Christine Clephan | LifeStyles Support Worker |
| Fiona Gunn | LifeStyles Support Worker |

CJS ROB Project

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Liz McKenzie | CJS ROS Worker |
|--------------------|----------------|





At the helm

Chairs Report

Dear Members

Welcome to our 2008/2009 Annual Report. I am currently Acting Chair due to the resignation earlier in the year of Director Thomas McLennan. On behalf of the Board I would like to thank Thomas for the hard work he contributed to Voluntary Action Lochaber over the last couple of years.

At VAL, our core service is very busy and we are striving hard to gain a quality assurance mark (PQASSO) to ensure that we continue to deliver the best possible service for our members.

In the current economic climate I am pleased to report that we still have 100% occupancy at An Drochaid, which we are delighted with. Having this level of occupancy ensures An Drochaid is the thriving Voluntary Sector Hub we envisaged when the building was purchased.

Lifestyles Project has again had a very successful year, and the CJS Reduction in Offending Behaviour Project has completed its 2nd year of service.

We have continued to raise the profile of Voluntary Action Lochaber nationally by being engaged with the newly formed Voluntary Action Scotland and I am pleased to be Convener for VAS for the year 2009-2010.

On behalf of the Board I would like to thank our Managers Flora and Bryan and all our staff for their hard work and commitment to Voluntary Action Lochaber, without their dedication we would not have such a vibrant organisation. The Board would also like to thank Dot Ferguson for her continued support as our advisor.

To my fellow Directors I thank you for your support, hard work and dedication over the past year.

Harry Whiteside
Acting Chair





A Thriving Voluntary Sector

“Excellent support in all areas of grant application and they didn’t even make us have an appointment, Thank you all”

Lochaber Women’s Aid

Membership Services

- 144 registered members
- 467 enquiries for advice or guidance
- 62 member groups used our office services

Information and assistance is offered on all aspects of running a community group or social enterprise.

Financial Administration

- 5 member groups used our Book-keeping Services
- 34 groups had their Annual Accounts Verified.
- 13 organisations used our payroll and year end support

Training & Governance

- VAL provides a wide range of training opportunities.
- 3 Training Workshops
 - 8 Directors Roles & Responsibilities (Individual Board Training)
 - 4 Skills Analysis Workshops
 - 6 Groups assisted with application for Charitable Status
 - 14 Groups assisted with OSCR Annual Returns





Housing the Sector

“Since LCU has been at An Drochaid it has made us more accessible to our membership, as they can come into the office to discuss business, they are pointed in the right direction by the very friendly VAL staff on reception”

Jane MacLean Lochaber Credit Union

An Drochaid

An Drochaid is now well established as the ideal venue to host meetings and conferences for the Voluntary Sector. It is the ideal location for networking opportunities and information sharing, used regularly by the sector.

Office Rental

Throughout 2008/2009 An Drochaid continued at full rental capacity.

Tenants

- Lochaber Women's Aid
- HC Fostering & Adoption (left July 09)
- Action for Children
- Age Concern & Help the Aged in Scotland
- Lochaber Childcare & Family Resource Partnership (left June 09)
- Lochaber Environmental Group
- Lochaber Credit Union
- Volunteering Highland
- Lochaber Community Care Forum
Projects are:
 - Handy Person Scheme
 - Car Scheme
 - Volunteer Visiting Service
- Talk Lochaber
- Highland Vision Services (left May 09)
- SENSE Scotland (since June 09)
- Changeworks (since July 09)

Room Hire

200 Conference Room Hire

266 Meeting Room Hire





A Connected Voluntary Sector

Partnership Working

In the last year we have been involved in a wide range of partnership groups.

Local Partnerships

Lochaber Community Planning Partnership
Lochaber Drug & Alcohol Forum
Volunteer Managers Forum
Community Safety Action Team
Lochaber Outdoor Learning Partnership
Migrant Workers Forum
Lochaber Ward Fora

Regional Partnerships

Highland Third Sector Forum
Voluntary Action Highland
North Regional CVS Network Group

National Partnerships

Voluntary Action Scotland

Partnership Events

Dormant Bank Accounts Consultation - July 2008
Highland Compact & SOA Consultation - An Drochaid, January 2009
Enterprising Lochaber - The Nevis Centre, March 2009





Childs Play

"Excellent facility, great service"

Toy Library Service User

Lochaber Toy Library

VAL provides the administration service of the Toy Library which is open Monday-Friday, 10pm-1pm & 2pm-4pm, 50 weeks of the year.

Most of the membership categories have remained unchanged in the last year, with the exception of the individual category, where there has been a notable increase. We were extremely pleased with the response from the promotional events which have increased the awareness of the Toy Library within the Lochaber Community.

266 Members

- 200 Individual Members
- 33 Pre-school Groups
 - 7 Out of School Groups
 - 6 Youth Groups
- 20 Other





Opening Doors

"I would never have been where I am today without LifeStyles"

Lifestyles Service User

LifeStyles Housing Support Service

LifeStyles aim to meet the individual needs of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Lochaber. LifeStyles provide a good quality support to allow people to develop the skills and confidence to live independently as part of the local community. Two distinct services are delivered. People accommodated in temporary homeless accommodation are assisted to maintain this and then move onto a suitable alternative. Existing tenants who are at risk of losing their tenancy can access a service to address the issues they have with the aim of keeping their home.

In the course of the financial year 2008-2009 LifeStyles, supported a total of 82 people.

56% of clients were male

44% were female

48% aged 16 to 25 years old

85% of the referrals to the project came from the Highland Council Housing and Property Services.

54 clients stopped receiving a service in the period

33% of those completed a planned programme of support





Making Choices

CJS Reduction In Offending Behaviour Project

The project offers support and guidance to offenders who are at a low risk of re-offending. The service also provides a diversion from prosecution program if this is deemed suitable. The individual works through a structured program combined with personal support and encouragement to find ways to reduce their offending behaviour and to make a positive link to the community.

In the period the service has worked with:

- 10 clients were male
- 3 clients were female
- 2 clients were working on a Diversion from Prosecution program
- 11 clients have ceased with the service

27% of the clients successfully completed their support plan.

The following outcomes were achieved:

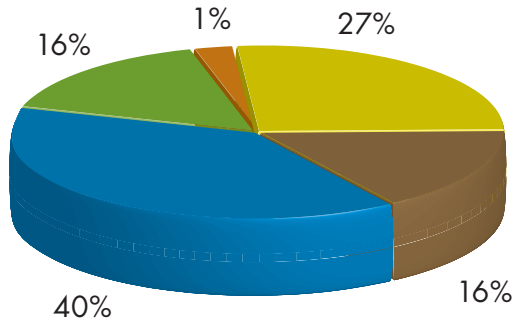
- 3 clients engaged with medical services
- 3 clients assessed specialist support for addictions
- 3 clients attended a local voluntary agency
- 1 client successfully completed a Diversion from Prosecution programme





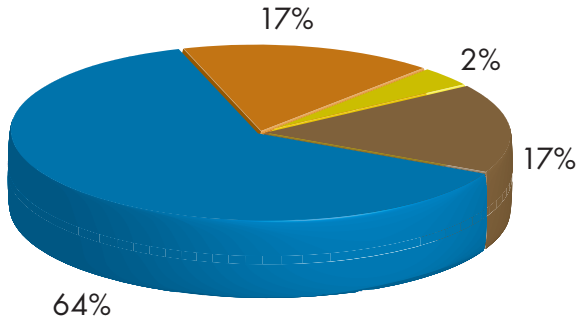
The Colour of Money

Income £374,560



- Generated Funds
- Restricted Grant
- Contracts
- Unrestricted Grant
- Bank Deposit Interest

Expenditure £315,646



- Support Costs
- Running Costs
- Other Expenditure
- Governance





On reflection

Managers Report

Dear Members

As we prepare this year's annual report it is hard to believe that yet another year has passed by, and what a busy year it has been.

We have all been bombarded over the last few months with woes of the credit crunch and the warnings of funding difficulties to expect in the future. This is not a new position for the Voluntary Sector and I think it is important to look back over the last year and to celebrate the successes.

The Voluntary sector within Lochaber is a vibrant one, this was clearly indicated in the mapping exercise carried out by VAL earlier this year.

196 voluntary and community groups were interviewed, 43% were out-with the immediate Fort William area. The exercise identified a wide range of services delivered through the sector, many of which were vital services for rural Lochaber.

Through adding the annual turnover of £2,590,000 to the economic value of volunteering, the total value of the sector can be derived at a staggering £4 million, of which 84% is re-invested locally.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Mapping Exercise and in particular to my own staff and our invaluable group of volunteers who made such a mammoth task possible.

Wishing you all a successful year ahead.

Flora McKee
Manager



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Voluntary Action Lochaber is a Charitable Company Ltd by Guarantee.

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