



4th December 2009

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Last month's Charities Christmas Event turned out to be a success. Despite the inclement weather and the inevitable impact of the credit crunch on shoppers, it was well attended and business was brisk. Over 300 people came along and over £6000 was raised by the 34 charities taking part. The general feeling was that the event was well worthwhile, and that the move back to a Saturday had been beneficial.

Here are just some of the comments from the charities who took part:

*"Very good show for us
... made a lot of contacts"*

*"Nice, friendly crowd, and
well organised"*

*"Great event, shall attend
again in the future"*

▲ Some images from the Albert Halls event. Just about everyone seems to be smiling!

Comments and suggestions for the [website](http://www.cvs-stirling.org.uk) and e-Bulletin are welcome.
Emails to: lee.stevenson@cvs-stirling.org.uk or donald.saunders@cvs-stirling.org.uk
Deadline for contributions is the previous Monday. If you have any queries, please call 01786 469916 and ask for Lee or Donald.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Aberlour Christmas Concert

Albert Halls, Stirling

Sunday, 13th December, 5.30 pm

£7 (£5 concessions)

Aberlour announces its 13th annual Christmas Concert, and the start of the charity's celebrations to mark its 135th anniversary of helping Scotland's most vulnerable children. The concert is seen as a valuable way of raising much-needed funds at the same time as interacting with the community.

BBC Reporting Scotland presenter Catriona Shearer, one of Aberlour's 'ambassadors', will host the evening. The concert will star the Clackmannanshire and District Brass Band and the Alva Academy Choir, rock band and calypso band.

Tickets are available from the Albert Halls box office, tel. 01786 473544 (Open 9 am – 5 pm, Mon-Fri).

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TRAINING & RESOURCES

Building Sustainable Futures

Do you want to build a sustainable future for your organisation? **Pilotlight Scotland** may be able to help.

This is what they say about themselves:



Pilotlight brings together skilled professionals from the business community and harnesses their talents to create growth and sustainability in small to medium charities and social enterprises.

We offer a uniquely managed capacity-building process, exploring your vision and giving you the skills to make it happen...and it won't cost you a penny because we are funded by donations from our business partners.

"Even if someone offered me £80,000 I'd still go for my team of Pilotlighters"

- Chief Executive, The Yard
(Pilotlight partner charity)

Two years after working with Pilotlight, the charities and social enterprises we support

- increased the number of people reached by 57%
- increased turnover by 54% (6 times voluntary sector average), and
- improved services to individual and communities by 60%

To find out more, call the Project Management Team on 0131 243 2765 or visit

www.pilotlight.org.uk

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FUNDING & AWARDS

Funding for Fuel Poverty

As winter approaches, it is important that we ensure our members, clients and service users are aware of the help available to them in meeting fuel costs through the Scottish Government's **Energy Assistance Package**.



The package includes a range of measures to support those having difficulty in heating their homes, including:

- Tackling low incomes through benefit and tax credit checks
- Reducing high fuel costs through advice on social tariffs
- Improving the energy efficiency of the property through advice, insulation and heating measures.

Those most vulnerable to fuel poverty can get the most assistance, potentially including free insulation and central heating. These groups are:

- Families with a child under 5 or a disabled child under 16 living in an energy inefficient property and in receipt of income or disability-related benefits
- Those over 60 with no central heating
- Those 60-74 living in an energy inefficient property and in receipt of income or disability-related benefits, or
- Those over 75 living in an energy inefficient property

The Energy Assistance Package scheme is being managed for the Scottish Government by the Energy Saving Trust. It can be accessed at www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/Scotland-Welcome-page/At-Home/Energy-Assistance-Package

BIG Recession Response

BIG Scotland is making additional funding available to some current grantholders to help families cope, stabilise and recover from the effects of the recession.



To do this, they aim to work with grantholders in the following programmes: Life Transitions, Supporting 21st Century Life, Growing Community Assets, Primetime and Young People's Fund. The additional support will be for current projects that are not due to end until March 2010.

An extra £5million is available to grantholders, who can request **up to 20%** of the original amount of their grant.

The investment will target a number of areas including projects that provide:

- support for families with a newly unemployed member
- family mediation
- advice and counselling services that enable families to cope with changes in their circumstances and prevent further disruptive changes, including advice on income maximisation

- tenancy support projects, including those that might be developed to include access to financial inclusion and capability services
- support to families affected by alcohol or substance misuse
- practical assistance such as affordable or refurbished white goods, renovated furniture or affordable children's clothing
- parenting support, especially for vulnerable families or families with specific needs such as lone parents and carers

BIG wrote to all eligible grantholders on 23 October. Completed application forms must be in by 18th December, and decisions will be made by the end of March 2010.

To find out more about the recession response or ask for an application form, call 0870 240 2391 or email enquiries@scotlandbiglotteryfund.org.uk.

CSF Funding Stays with Rural Priorities - for now

Funding for **community services and facilities (CSF)** under the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) is to remain under the Rural Priorities option for the time being instead of transferring to LEADER.

The switch to LEADER had been announced in September, but it has now been decided that, in response to concerns expressed by stakeholders, a longer transitional period is required and that CSF funding applications will continue to be accepted and progressed by the Regional Proposal Assessment Committees (RPACS) under Rural Priorities. The announcement can be seen on the Scottish Government's website,

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/RuralPriorities/WhatsNew

Applicants should note that the November RPACs will consider CSF projects as usual. Projects containing CSF options which meet the appropriate January deadlines (see website) and information requirements can be assessed at the RPACs scheduled for March 2010, where the 90% grant rate announced by the Cabinet Secretary will apply.

Projects still in development should continue to follow Rural Priorities guidance and timescales, in consultation with Case Officers. Details on the arrangements for assessment beyond the March RPACs will be announced in due course.

The Government have said that work will continue on transferring CSF into LEADER and that further details on this process will be published on their SRDP website as they become available.

Elizabeth Finn Care

'getting help for you, a friend, or family member'



Elizabeth Finn Care gives money to help people who have less than £4,000 in savings and, lacking enough household income, manage a bare hand-to-mouth existence. By giving just that little bit more money beyond State Benefit provision, Elizabeth Finn Care enables people to:

- ✓ pay for the things they vitally need
- ✓ take charge of their lives once more, and
- ✓ plan for a future

The charity helps people whose former careers have been interrupted or ended through circumstances beyond their control such as physical or mental illness, redundancy, family breakdown, or those struggling on low income in retirement. In cases where people who apply have needs greater than Elizabeth Finn Care can meet, they will work together with other charities to do as much as they can to help..

For a downloadable copy of the eligibility guidelines, and an application form for support, please click on [Grants for People in Need](#). (This form is also available for downloading in Welsh, Chinese, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali.) If you have any questions, call 020 7396 6700 during office hours.

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GROUP NEWS

Friday Night Project



The Friday Night Project is a new group for young people (14+) living in the Balforn High School catchment area. It will be running from 7 – 9 pm on alternate Friday nights in Balforn and Killearn.

The first night was in Balforn, on 27th November - the next groups will be on

- * McLintock Hall, Balforn: 11th December
- * Killearn Village Hall: 4th December, 18th December
(Dates for 2010 are to be confirmed).

There is no set agenda - young people are encouraged to come and say what they want their group to be like, what they want to do, etc.

Activities could be anything from chill out, discussions, art, music, drama, sports, projects, training, etc.

Volunteers will soon be wanted to help run this group. There will be plenty of training opportunities and you will be helping the community to keep this group running.

If you'd like to volunteers, or would just like more information, then please call Sarah on 01786 432102 or email youthservices@stirling.gov.uk You can also text 'fri' to 07717 996884 to get more information (normal text rates apply).

SAAP and CVS Websites

Until now, Stirling Area Access Panel (SAAP) has had a dedicated webpage hoisted by the CVS Stirling website. But now SAAP's own website has gone live – check it out at www.stirlingaccess.org.uk

The CVS Stirling website now features a **Blog**, which you can access by clicking the button on the home page, www.cvs-stirling.org.uk Keep up with (and contribute to) news, views and gossip informally and day-by-day.

CVS and Partners at the Scottish Parliament

'Understanding and influencing Your Parliament' Conference

Saturday, 21st November



(l-r) Delegates John Clow, Terry Barlow and Robert Dick at the Scottish Parliament.

A very stimulating and interesting day was enjoyed by three delegates from **CVS Stirling, Stirling Area Access Panel** and **Council on Disability** who recently attended the above Conference.

Holyrood welcomed more than 100 attendees from all over Scotland representing voluntary and charity organisations so that they could engage with MSPs from all parties. Ten years on from the establishment of the modern Scottish Parliament, the Conference was aimed to help smaller, local groups campaign more effectively, and to increase the opportunities for small groups to have their voice heard at Holyrood.

Delegates heard first-hand from senior people and MSPs about the Parliament “*what it is and what it isn't*” and “*MSPs: who they are and what they do*”.

Our local MSP Bruce Crawford in his capacity of Minister of Parliamentary Business spoke about “The Scottish Government”, its openness and accessibility, and the weekly spectacle of First Minister's questions which take day-to-day issues on subjects like Health, Transport and Education.

Later, Susan Deacon gave a pragmatic account of “Experiences as a Parliament ‘*insider*’ and as an ‘*outsider*’”. Susan stressed that politicians are not ‘*all knowing*’ and that local insight and experiences are invaluable in providing accurate facts, support, and solutions to assist politicians to gain the necessary local knowledge in order that they can support constituents' issues in an environment where resources are limited and change of course, takes time!

The importance and effectiveness of using the formally recognised Public Petitions Process was ably demonstrated by Michelle Stewart who explained about campaigning successfully for better control of clostridium difficile at the Vale of Leven Hospital in Dunbartonshire.

A lively Q&A session with all the speakers from many of the participating groups closed the morning sessions.

The afternoon focused on “*How to Raise Your Issue*” this explained to smaller groups the process of Committees in the decision making of new legislation and the significance of Public Petitions which can be the initiator for significant social change in our society.

The operation of Cross Party Groups and Running a Campaign involved us hearing from media specialists, who outlined the importance of cascading information to the general public through radio and local newspapers.

The Parliamentary building is a fascinating place and is in itself well worth a visit, particularly to view the Main Debating Chamber.

Overall, the additional opportunity to network with other voluntary groups, MSPs and even observers from the Welsh Parliament, made the day one of the most interesting and informative experiences for the three delegates from CVS Stirling, SAAP and COD who were left with a clearer understanding of how Parliament works and how to work Parliament. We were pleased to have had the opportunity to participate in the day’s events on behalf of these organisations.



VOLUNTEERING & EMPLOYMENT

Third Sector Skills Partnership – Chairperson

The Third Sector Skills Partnership will be made up of these organisations:

- ACOSVO
- Alliance of Sector Skills Councils
- Learning Link Scotland
- SCVO
- Scottish Social Enterprise Academy
- Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition
- Volunteer Development Scotland

Applications are invited from individuals with wide ranging experience and knowledge of both the third sector and the skills sector in Scotland to be the independent Chairperson of the sector led Third Sector Skills Partnership.

The Chairperson will play a key role in leading and supporting the Third Sector Skills Partnership and in driving forward the implementation of the Third Sector Skills Framework in Scotland.

There is an opportunity to be involved in the Third Sector Skills Partnership from its formative stages, and on into the future, by supporting a crucial national agenda for the third sector, with contact with senior staff across the third and skills sectors and Scottish government. The position offers an excellent opportunity for a senior person to join us and chair a Partnership that

has the potential to make a real and visible impact on the Third Sector, furthering its positive contribution to society.

If you think you might be interested in applying, please get in touch with us here at CVS Stirling and we will forward full details of the duties and person specification, guidance notes and application form.

If you have any general queries regarding your application, please contact Laura Sexton, Scottish Government by email laura.sexton@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or by phone 0131 244 5461 or blackberry number 0779 925 2579.

The closing date for applications is 24th December.

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SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

State of Social Enterprise Survey 2009

Last week saw the publication of the first ever 'State of Social Enterprise' survey, the largest survey of its kind of social enterprises across the UK. Commissioned by SE Coalition (England), it was supported by the Scottish SE Coalition (SSEC).



Headline figures suggest the UK has 62,000 social enterprises, contributing £24billion to the economy. In spite of the economic downturn, 56% have increased their turnover during the last 12 months and are confident of future growth.

Here are some of the other findings:

➔ **Social enterprises are recession-busters**

Despite the recession, they are twice as confident about future growth as SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises), with 48% of social enterprises responding positively as opposed to just 24% of SMEs

➔ **Social enterprises are profitable**

Despite the economic downturn, two-thirds of social enterprises are making a profit, and a further 20% are breaking even.

➔ **Social enterprises vary widely in scale**

While some social enterprises are very large, with turnovers in excess of £100 million, the majority operate at small-business scales, with an average turnover of £2.1 million and a median turnover of £175,000.

➔ **Social enterprises are different from the voluntary sector**

The profile of social enterprise turnover is closer in size to that of the UK's small businesses, and comparatively larger than the voluntary/charity sector with which it is often confused

➔ **Social enterprises are home to many women entrepreneurs** (*entrepreneuses? – ed.*)

41.1% of all board members of social enterprises are women, compared to just 11.7% of board members in FTSE 100 companies and 4.9% in AIM-listed companies. Furthermore,

26% of social enterprises could be described as 'women-led' – almost twice as many compared to small businesses (14%).

→ **Social enterprise is a very diverse sector**

There are few business sectors that don't include social enterprises. However, within those sectors, many have a focus on developing human capital through employment and training.

These are only some of the thought-provoking conclusions in the report. See full document here www.socialenterprise.org.uk/data/files/stateofsocialenterprise2009.pdf

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OTHER NEWS

PVG Scheme Fees

On 10 November, the Scottish Government announced the fees for checks under the **Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme**. Information about the fees announcement, as well as the ongoing consultation and supporting documents are available online at www.scotland.gov.uk/pvglegislation (and click on the "Consultation 2009" menu item).

Protecting
Vulnerable Groups
Scheme

CHECK TO PROTECT

There are various ways to take part in the consultation: you can print off and complete the response form in each consultation document, or download and edit a Word version which you can return by post or email. There is also an on-line response form which you are encouraged to use where possible.

Citizens Advice Scotland kinship care service

Thousands of grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and family friends care for children in Scotland. These 'kinship carers' step in when children's parents are unable to manage, whether because of drug misuse, being sent to prison, becoming a parent at a very young age, poor physical or mental health, or a range of other reasons.



Kinship care is a non-legal term used to describe an arrangement where a child or young person lives with and is cared for by grandparents, aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers etc. Many kinship carers will not know what they are entitled to financially or where to find a variety of different types of support that they may have need of - this is where Citizens Advice Scotland can help.

In its *Getting it Right for Every Child* strategy, launched in December 2007, the Scottish Government recognised the need to acknowledge and support all kinship carers.

The Government also made a specific commitment to kinship carers of 'looked after' children. That commitment is to provide these carers with allowances and treat them on an equivalent basis to foster carers by 2010/11.

In addition to the advice and information services they already offer, Citizens Advice Bureaux across Scotland now provide an individually tailored advice service for all kinship carers. This approach is necessary because each case is different and any entitlements are affected by the

legal status of the arrangement. Advice for kinship carers is available from your local CAB office or by calling the advice line 0844 576 2955.

Public Transport Survey

Do you use public transport? Stirling Community Planning Partnership is investigating the transport needs of communities in the **rural southwest area of Stirling**. You can help to assess the kinds of transport service that our rural communities need by completing an electronic survey.

To access the survey click on www.bit.ly/swtransport. There is a special survey for young people: click on www.bit.ly/yprave

Alternatively, you can collect paper copies of the survey in Balfron Library and Balfron Local Office. For more information, contact Pam Campbell 01786 432320.

New VAT Rules Could Hit Charities

Charities working overseas are among those predicted to be hit by new European regulations. The rules, which will be introduced on 1st January 2010, mean charities will have to pay VAT in the country where a service originates.

The charity sector will face could face additional tax bills running to tens of millions of pounds, the **Charity Tax Group** has warned, as well as a heavy administrative burden. The increase in paperwork involved could even prove to be more expensive than the VAT itself.

John Hemming, vice-chair of the CTG, said, "Anyone who buys services abroad will be caught by this. Charities that hire overseas investment specialists or carry out a lot of work overseas will be the worst hit."

"It covers more organisations than you might think. Medical and care charities receive a lot of equipment from overseas. Anyone who receives a large donation from another country is likely to have to employ people in that country to handle it. You will have to employ people to manually check invoices for their country of origin and work out their VAT status," he said. "It's difficult to automate, and it's not an intuitive process."

Helen Donoghue, director of the Charity Tax Group, said: "We think this has slipped under the radar: many organisations haven't understood it."

Visit the Charity Tax Group website for a range of information and advice to charities on tax matters: www.ctrg.org.uk/home

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