



# CONNECTIONS Issue 26

August 2010



## ROARing Ahead With New Services



Reaching Older Adults in Renfrewshire (ROAR) are getting ready to launch a new website, newsletter and e-bulletin as part of their award-winning work on improving the quality of life for older people in the Renfrewshire area.

ROAR is aiming to use this communication network to make sure older people in the local area are kept up to date with important news items and are fully aware of what services and benefits are available to them.

Upcoming events, social activities, day trips etc will also be publicised, as well as any other items of relevance.

### What's Going On?

ROAR's Operations Manager Alison Greig said: "These developments will help us to communicate better with our

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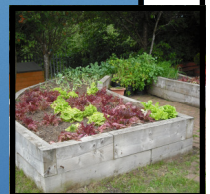


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# Services We Can Provide

<http://rcvs.synthasite.com>

- Funding advice, support and training
- Support setting up/ developing groups
- Developing a Constitution
- Training
- Voluntary sector representation, promotion and networking
- Growing your work
- Provision of newsletters and e-bulletins
- Equipment hire
- Payroll
- Print shop
- Promotional film making
- Connecting with local partners

0141 587 2487

[info@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:info@rcvsweb.co.uk)

This list is by no means exhaustive. It's our ethos to meet the needs of Renfrewshire's voluntary sector, so if there's other services you'd like to see us provide then get in touch. Even if we can't provide it, we will probably know someone who can.

Tuesday 16th May

## The Happening

This Autumn RCVS presents The Happening 2010 - a one day Social Enterprise Trade Fair which will provide the opportunity to buy and sell goods from Social Enterprises from all over the West of Scotland, network with other social entrepreneurs, attend workshops, visit local social enterprises and visit the cafe supplied by local social enterprises.

This fair is suitable for anyone interested in social enterprise, business and community life including those working in Third Sector organisations, local

## Dates For



## Your Diary

authorities, chambers of commerce, public sector agencies and the private sector.

A number of social enterprises drawn from across the West of Scotland will be exhibiting/trading goods.

Venue: Paisley Town Hall, Abbey Close, Paisley

Time: 9.30am - 4pm

Further Information: 0141 587 2487/  
[anne.keir@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:anne.keir@rcvsweb.co.uk)

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service users, partners and other stakeholders. We want to share information about what's going in Renfrewshire for older adults."

If you would like to be added to the ROAR mailing list please send an email request to Samantha Drysdale using the contact details listed below.

### Show Us What You Got

ROAR are also offering free advertising space on their website and publications.

They want to keep all advertisements relevant to older people and for them to be a means of publicising local groups and organisations who have something to offer older people or good news to share.

New services and ventures, recruitment and volunteering opportunities, events, giveaways

etc will all be keenly advertised by ROAR too.

If you or your group/ organisation would like to take advantage of this opportunity please send an email to ROAR. In your email please be sure to include the following details:

- Full name of your appointed contact
- Phone number
- Logo
- A short description of your group
- What you would like to advertise

### Share Your Views

They also have an online survey that you can use to share your views on ROAR's website and information services:

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/roarnewssurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/roarnewssurvey)



#### Further Information

**Samantha Drysdale**  
**0141 587 2487**  
[samantha.drysdale@rcvsw.co.uk](mailto:samantha.drysdale@rcvsw.co.uk)

# Renfrewshire Environmental Trust Update

## Linwood Community Garden

Renfrewshire Environmental Trust (RET) has seen a grant from the Local Area Committee providing plants for the Linwood community garden.

Through a programme of gardening activities coordinated by the BTCV Green Gym, volunteers have enhanced the environment of the area. They've cleared the site, introduced new top soil and composts and undertaken planting of new shrubs, herbs, vegetables and flowers.

## Johnstone Station in Bloom

The Flower Planters have been supported by RET as Johnstone Railway Station is deemed a local landmark of architectural significance and a public asset.

This project is one of several initiatives seeking to promote a better image of the town. Johnstone Community Council has involved volunteers in developing this project as they believe that the plants and flowers are enjoyed by the local

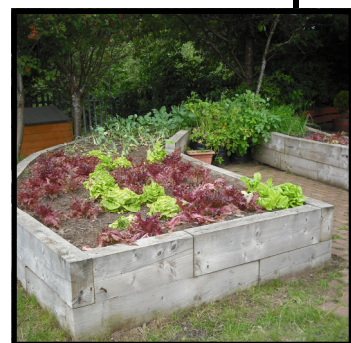
community. Volunteers gain a lot of satisfaction from their efforts, increasing their horticultural skills, and self-esteem by making a difference through practical activities in their local area.

## Our Blog

Sharing information and knowledge about environmental issues is made easier by contacting RET staff and volunteers. They've established a regularly updated blog and would like to hear from groups and individuals about their environmental concerns.

For details, please log on to:

<http://retpaisley.wordpress.com/>



#### Further Information

**0141 587 2487**  
[martha.wardrop@rcvsw.co.uk](mailto:martha.wardrop@rcvsw.co.uk)  
[www.retrust.org.uk](http://www.retrust.org.uk)

# RCVS Networks

**We recognise the importance of bringing together voluntary/community organisations with specific interests to provide a way in which we can share information to keep you best informed about local and national developments, consultations, funding news, events and training opportunities. As well as this, if we understand your needs, we can better represent the sector.**

We hold events during the year that are specific to a Network group or cut across all the Networks. Recent examples of such events are *Transforming and Empowering Renfrewshire*, *Connect with the Single Outcome Agreement* and *Funding for Sports Clubs*.

In November 2010 we are holding The Happening (see pg.2) which will give organisations from our Social Economy Network the opportunity to be involved in an exciting trade fair event.

We would like organisations to ensure they are linked in to our networks. Our networks are split into thematic groups to ensure we are providing information that is relevant to your line of work. We welcome new suggestions as to how we can better support your organisation.

Our current Networks are as follows:

## Social Economy Network

At the moment this mainly operates as a virtual e-network of local social enterprises and social entrepreneurs, set up for mutual support and inter-trading.

A website is currently being developed which will provide the most up to date information for Social Economy organisations. In the interim a yahoo email group provides a means of communicating with members.

This Autumn, in what we hope is the beginning of an annual tradition, we present *The Happening 2010*: a one day Social Enterprise Trade Fair which will provide the opportunity to buy and sell goods from Social Enterprises from all over the West of Scotland, network with other social entrepreneurs,

attend workshops, visit local social enterprises and visit the cafe supplied by local social enterprises.

If you would like to book a stall or attend this event please contact us.

Further event details can be found on page two.

## Voluntary Health, Social Care and Disability Network

This network aims to provide an opportunity for health and social care groups within Renfrewshire to gain and share information, and work in partnership more effectively and efficiently.

This network currently operates through a Facebook page which is regularly updated. Please visit our page and "Like" it to be part of this network! It can be found on Facebook by searching for: "RCVS health social care and disability network".

If you are unable to access social networking sites please let me know and we can arrange to email you with the information that has been posted to Facebook.

## Sports Network

The Renfrewshire Sports Network is an independent constituted group, with Renfrewshire Council funding, which brings together representatives from local Sports clubs in order to speak with a single voice on the strategic development of sport in Renfrewshire.

RCVS is currently supporting the development of this Network and are putting together a comprehensive database of all Sports Clubs in Renfrewshire.

The Networks objectives are to:

- provide a forum for clubs to promote ideas, to discuss and resolve problems
- to support and represent the views of all sports clubs on issues of concern
- to speak with a collective voice to the council,



# A Special Report by Our Network Development Officer Cheryl Thomas

- Renfrewshire Leisure, and to councillors
- to provide assistance with the development of coaches
- to provide assistance with competitions and events
- to provide a focus to draw together the sporting community
- to provide high quality advice, guidance and training on club funding
- to provide advice on club set up, administration and finance
- to act as a focus, to raise the profile and development of sport in Renfrewshire, with one eye on the Commonwealth Games

If you are part of a Sports Club in Renfrewshire contact us to make sure we have your most up to date contact details for the database. Please contact us to join this network.

## Future Developments

### Chairs Network

We understand that the Chair of a board often has a role greater than simply chairing meetings: managing staff, acting as a spokesperson, ensuring good governance, dealing with strategic plans, financial difficulties, conflict and so on. It is important that individuals taking on these roles feel well supported and informed.

We foresee a Chairs Network providing:

- A better understanding of the Sector
- A greater understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Briefing on key issues
- A group of contacts that can offer peer support
- The opportunity for sharing resources, expertise, knowledge
- A forum for consultation to ensure the voice of chairs is heard

We want to know if a network for Chairs of Voluntary organisations would be beneficial to you? We would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes to complete our online survey and share your views:

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/rcvschairsnetwork](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/rcvschairsnetwork)

### Cultural Network

This will be a network that aims to provide an opportunity for arts and cultural groups within Renfrewshire to gain and share information and work in partnership more effectively and efficiently.

If you are part of a cultural/arts group contact us to make sure we have your most up to date contact details. We are looking to start up this network in the near future and your input and support is required!

To join a Network/ get more information/ make a suggestion of what you would like to see developed please don't hesitate to contact me.



### Further Information

Cheryl Thomas  
0141 587 2487  
[cheryl.thomas@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:cheryl.thomas@rcvsweb.co.uk)

# Could Our Sector Be About To Save £1 Billion?

**CHARITIES could be on the brink of saving around £1bn a year, after Prime Minister David Cameron said he would look at funding charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises on the same basis as government.**

The Prime Minister made the announcement in parliament in response to a question on how to save charities from next year's increase in VAT. It has led to a call for an immediate VAT rebate to be introduced to put the third sector on the same footing as local authorities and other public bodies that are currently able to reclaim the VAT they spend.

Across the UK, charities pay £1bn in VAT every year, an amount that will rise by £150m when the tax goes up in January next year. In Scotland this translates to around £115m a year.

The extra cash would enable the voluntary sector to better support vulnerable people during the economically difficult times ahead, and is also necessary to create the Prime Minister's vision of a Big Society, said sector leaders.

Speaking during Prime Ministers question time, David Cameron said: "We will want to do everything we can to help what used to be called, rather condescendingly, the third sector but I believe is the first sector: the excellent

charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises that do so much for our country.

"One thing we should do is look at funding them on the same basis as the government funds itself. The government is always very generous with its own bureaucracy, and it needs to recognise that so often these first sector organisations have the right answers to the social problems in our country."

The chief executive of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), Martin Sime, urged the Prime Minister to take immediate action before the VAT increase in January next year.

"David Cameron's warm words on this issue are very welcome indeed," he said. "The third sector is currently battling against a tax injustice that undermines its ability to deliver effective public services.

"This week the Prime Minister also announced his plans for a Big Society and I would urge him to recognise that the government needs to learn to nurture and support rather than direct and control such initiatives.

"If the UK Government really wants to help charities and voluntary organisations do more then there are some pretty simple steps it can take, such as removing petty restrictions which prevent unemployed people

from volunteering, allowing charities to reclaim VAT on the things they buy, and by making Gift Aid easier to claim."

Stephen Bubb, chief executive of the Association of Chief Officers of Voluntary Organisations (ACEVO), writing in his blog this week, also called for the government to introduce a VAT rebate.

The Prime Minister's Big Society plans include encouraging groups to run post offices, libraries, transport services and shape housing projects.

He has announced a pilot project through which the government will fund and encourage the creation of community groups. However, fears have been raised that the government will be pushing community and voluntary groups to fill gaps in public services arising as a result of cuts.

SCVO has written to Scottish Secretary Michael Moore urging the government to act on VAT and Gift Aid.

*This article was originally published in SCVO's Third Force News (TFN). Reprinted with kind permission. For more information visit:*

[www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk)

## A 10 Point Plan to Kick-start the Big Society

Here are 10 things Government can do if they are serious about the Big Society:

1. Learn from the Danes and let charities claim back the VAT they pay. This would, at a stroke, make a huge difference to our capacity to do more and would level the public service playing field with business and government itself.
2. Make every public service contract "voluntary sector friendly". Eliminate unnecessary risk/reward approaches, value genuine social outcomes, make sure the scale and duration is appropriate and support users to contribute to the design, planning and delivery of services.
3. Stop issuing policy directions to lottery distributors. Agree on their broad missions and let them get on with the job of promoting and developing the work of voluntary organisations in the longer term.
4. Use endowment as a long-term tool to strengthen civil society. Create new community endowments around the renewable energy industry, the profits from the crown estate and air industry taxes.
5. Invest in the upscale and replication of what works. Do not tinker about with short term contracts but put voluntary sector

services on a par with the statutory sector. Only then can they capture the full value and potential of their work.

6. Cut out the bureaucracy which is slowing the sector down and costing millions. Gift Aid needs to be simplified, HMRC rules need overhauled, the new Incorporated vehicle for charities needs to be introduced and a whole host of other burdens should be eliminated.
7. Remove the petty restrictions that stop unemployed people from volunteering or taking on short-term work experience for fear of losing their benefits. Take the edge off rising unemployment by transforming it into a resource for communities.
8. Work through volunteer providers and existing grassroots initiatives to nurture community service for young people. Work with these groups to jointly design and co-produce programmes that inspire a new generation to commit time to helping others.
9. Bring the same principles of user involvement and co-production to international development. Persuade the Department for International Development to commit at least 25 per cent of its funds to be channelled through civil society organisations in the developing world and make clear that other funding will be contingent on countries working with and through civil society.
10. Above all, curb the instinct to direct and control. Voluntary endeavour always fails if it is the creature of government. Help nurture, promote and guard the independence of the third sector, however critical it may be.

# Staff Profile



## **Name and job title?**

I'm Samantha Drysdale - the ROAR Admin Support Worker Intern.

## **What are your duties and responsibilities?**

My main duties and responsibilities include answering calls and dealing with any enquiries, inputting referral information into the database, and general administrative duties. I also provide support where needed when setting up events, meetings etc. And have recently begun setting up the ROAR website, newsletter and e-bulletin.

## **What types of organisations do you usually work with?**

I work with a variety of organisations across Renfrewshire, including our providers, partners and various local clubs and organisations.

## **What are your favourite parts of the job?**

After being here nearly 5 months the things I enjoy most about my job are the challenges that I am presented with on a daily basis, my job is never boring and there is always something that needs to be done. I also enjoy the fact that I am part of a project that is helping to better the local

Renfrewshire community.

## **And your least favourite parts?**

The least enjoyable things about my job are, there is not enough hours in a day to get all that needs to be done finished, and also as we are working within the voluntary sector and reliant on funding for staffing it can be a very unpredictable and uncertain future for everyone involved.

## **What do you believe are the benefits of working in the voluntary sector?**

The benefits of working within the voluntary sector are being able to enjoy the feeling of being paid for using your skills to make a difference to a diverse number of people's lives and community support. Another aspect I feel is a benefit from the voluntary sector that you don't find in other areas I have worked is the openness with everyone from senior staff to junior staff within many different companies and organisations.

## **What big projects, events etc have you got coming up in the near future?**

As a project we have recently received funding from 4 of the 5 Local Area Committees (LAC's) to upgrade established clubs and set up completely new ones, which will include social activity as well as a healthy 2 course meal. So we are all very busy as it is a large juggling act finding out the needs of each area and getting everyone involved.

We also have our "More of The Same Won't Do" PSP Seminar coming up in September. On a personal level I have the launch of the new ROAR website newsletter and e-bulletin which I hope to get up and running before the end of August.

## **What's your background?**

I have worked now for approximately 5 years, starting

with some voluntary admin/it experience in Microcom, and then got my first "proper" job working as a sales advisor in New Look, Glasgow. I have also worked as a cleaner, a late maid and a sales assistant in Greggs. Between jobs

I have also been to college and completed an NQ in digital Design and HNC Interior Design. In 2009 I was told about future jobs fund and the opportunity to try something a bit different and update my skills. I applied for the position as ROAR Admin support worker and was taken on in late march 2010.

## **What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I am very creative so I enjoy making jewellery or cards and have recently developed a love of reading. I love to go camping, And I have just moved into my first home so when I'm not working most of my time is taken up with gardening and decorating.

## **Favourite bands?**

Most of the music I like is "before my time" but I love David Bowie, Queen, Paul Simon, and Meatloaf, amongst others like Billy Joel and some as far back as Elvis or Sam Cooke. I enjoy Mumford and Sons and The Script and absolutely love P!nk - she's my hero!

## **Favourite TV programmes?**

There are so many! I love Ugly Betty - amazingly written - and Skins. Love Family Guy, the Simpson and I'm addicted to the drama of Eastenders

## **Favourite films?**

Armageddon, My Girl, Grease. And of course Dirty Dancing!

## **If you could have one wish granted, what would it be?**

World Peace! No if I had one wish I would wish that there was less greed and suffering in this world.

# Mission Statement

“RCVS exists to give assistance to voluntary and community organisations seeking to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Renfrewshire.”



## Janis McDonald - Chief Executive

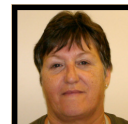
Janis has overall responsibility for the management of RCVS' human, financial and physical resources. She provides leadership, vision and the strategic development of our services.

[janis.mcdonald@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:janis.mcdonald@rcvsweb.co.uk)

## Sheila Connery - Corporate Services Manager

Sheila co-ordinates RCVS' corporate services work and is in charge of the corporate services team. She oversees human resources, health and safety, financial and other relevant areas.

[sheila.connery@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:sheila.connery@rcvsweb.co.uk)



## Anne Keir - Administrator

Anne provides secretarial support for all of RCVS' staff. She is also our health and safety officer, maintains HR paperwork and handles the induction of staff members.

[anne.keir@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:anne.keir@rcvsweb.co.uk)

## Alison Greig - ROAR Co-ordinator

Alison co-ordinates Reaching Older Adults in Renfrewshire (ROAR), a project that delivers a range of services for older people in Renfrewshire.

[alison.greig@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:alison.greig@rcvsweb.co.uk)



## Gordon Mclean—Information & Communications Officer

Gordon produces our newsletters, press releases, e-alerts and the weekly e-bulletin. He also oversees content management for our website and is in charge of our film production service.

[gordon.mclean@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:gordon.mclean@rcvsweb.co.uk)

## Help Us Help You

One of the ways we help the community and voluntary sector is by collecting data on the size and diversity of services we provide, individually and collectively, to demonstrate the contribution the sector makes to improving the quality of life for the people of Renfrewshire.

Thus it's important the information we hold is accurate. Please let us know about any changes to your organisation's details.

## Contact Us At:

**Airlink Business Centre  
24 Clark St  
Paisley  
PA3 1RB**

**Phone: 0141 587 2487  
Fax: 0141 889 3974**

**<http://rcvs.synthasite.com>**

## Do You Get the E-bulletin?

Our free e-bulletin is packed with information on what's on in Renfrewshire, issues affecting the voluntary sector, funding schemes and various other articles of interest.

If you would like to have it e-mailed to you each week, or if you have an article for inclusion, please contact Gordon McLean:

[gordon.mclean@rcvsweb.co.uk](mailto:gordon.mclean@rcvsweb.co.uk)



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The information we generally hold will relate only to contact details and the scope of services your organisation provides. In the unlikely event that any personal or sensitive information has been gathered (i.e. a contact number/address which is also a home number/address) this will be treated with the utmost discretion and will be stored within the guidelines of current Data Protection Legislation.