



CAITHNESS VOLUNTARY GROUP

NEWSLETTER May 2010



Welcome to the Caithness Voluntary Group Newsletter. This is our regular publication where we inform you about community activities, training events and funding opportunities for the voluntary sector in Caithness.

£49,000 community gardening boost

Residents in the Latheron, Lybster and Clyth Community Council area are celebrating the news of their award of almost £49,000 to help them develop an allotment site, install two polytunnels and deliver a programme of gardening training.

The award has been made by the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund to help reduce food miles through community gardening and so reduce their carbon footprint by up to 16 tonnes of carbon pollution per year.

The new allotment site at Seaview House, Lybster, will help develop the area's self-reliance for vegetables and fruit while saving on carbon pollution associated with the forced growing of crops and the subsequent transport to their final destinations. "We would like to thank the Climate Challenge Fund for supporting our community through the award of grant funding which will enable us to deliver a really great project," said Anne Sutherland, Latheron, Lybster and Clyth Community Development Company's community powerdown officer.

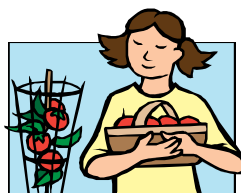
"The allotments and polytunnels will provide a community venture where home growing can be promoted and encouraged and where the complete beginner can learn from the training on offer and also from the more experienced gardeners who will have plots."

The allotments and polytunnels will provide a venue for others to visit and learn about home-growing their own vegetables and fruit and will also allow the more experienced members of the community to share their knowledge with those who are thinking about starting or have just started. The project allows for the part-time employment of a gardener who will deliver the training and be able to provide hands-on, practical demonstrations and class tuition in the basic principles involved in crop germination, growth and development. The polytunnels will be erected at Seaview House and will be used to sow and bring on seedlings as well as producing crops of vegetable and fruit. These can include those usually grown in warmer climates, where again the "food miles" journeys of those bought in the shops are high, resulting in large carbon footprints. The garden will be readily accessible to the less agile so that all members of the community can benefit from the knowledge and learning on offer.

The Lybster Allotments Association was set up in October 2009 to develop the project in partnership with LLCCDC, and enthusiastic members have already provided a lot of voluntary work in helping to develop the site. Each of the allotments will have a small shed and composting bin. There will also be a community shed where a number of sets of gardening tools and equipment will be available to allotment users for their communal use. Water butts will be attached to all the downpipes on Seaview House and will collect the rainwater for use on the allotments and in the polytunnels.

There are also plans to develop for a cooking project where the produce from the allotments and polytunnel will be used to demonstrate healthy cooking options. A "Food and Health" course has already been delivered by North Highland College at Seaview House.

A successful Home Energy Awareness Campaign was carried out last year where every household in Lybster village was given the opportunity to complete a home energy check form and receive feedback on how to reduce their energy consumption. The outcome of this campaign resulted in 45 households benefiting from insulation measures with a lifetime carbon saving of 1,510 tonnes. Following the success of this campaign, it is now being extended to cover the whole of south-east Caithness. Households should by now have received information about it and the opportunity to take part.



Countdown to digital switchover

The digital TV switchover will be happening in Caithness on 2nd and 16th June. On these two dates there will be advice points managed by Caithness Voluntary Group. On 2nd June you will be able to go along to John O'Groats Hall from 2-4pm, and on 2nd & 3rd June advice will be available at the CVG office in Telford House, Williamson Street, Wick, from 10am-4pm; also on 16th & 17th June at CVG from 11am-3pm and 6pm-7.30pm. At these venues there will be information on the switchover and how it will affect you and what you will need to do.

What you need to do will depend on what service you have now.

If you have:

- **Freeview, BT Vision or Top Up TV** – you will need to retune at both dates
- **Sky, Freesat or Virgin Media** – you do not need to do anything
- **Analogue TV** – you need to convert your TV to one of the above. You do not need to buy a new television.

Those aged 75 years and over, registered blind or partially sighted or claiming certain benefits are eligible for support from the switchover help scheme to convert one TV set to digital. Every eligible person will be offered practical help, including equipment, installation and aftercare, to convert one television in the run-up to the switchover. To find out how to retune go to back page.

Volunteering

If you are looking for a volunteering opportunity and have a few hours to spare, or are a local group seeking new volunteers, contact Volunteering Highland at Telford House, Williamson Street, Wick, and speak to Catherine Patterson, Development Officer; phone 01955 605470 or email caithness@volunteeringhighland.org

Training

BASIC FIRST AID

A FREE training course in Basic First Aid is being run in both Wick and Thurso on various dates over the next few months.

The full-day course covers blood loss, burns and scalds, fractures, strains and sprains. It is suitable for community groups, sporting clubs, youth organisations or any other groups in the voluntary sector that would benefit.

The course will be run in the Assembly Rooms, Wick, from 9am to 5pm on the following dates: Thursday, May 27th; Wednesday, June 23rd; Tuesday, August 17th; Thursday, September 23rd; Tuesday, October 5th; and Thursday, November 11th.

The course will also be provided at T3UK, Janetstown, Thurso, from 9am to 5pm on the following dates: Thursday, June 24th; Wednesday, September 22nd; Wednesday, October 6th; and Wednesday, November 10th.

To book a place or to find out more, contact Yvonne Hendry at CVG (01955 609960; Yvonne@cvg.org.uk).

WEA WOMEN@WORK PROJECT

WEA Women@Work is to hold a memory improvement workshop in Thurso with Kate Boyd of Mindpower Training Ltd.

Mindpower Training teaches the use of tools and techniques that help individuals and companies to work more effectively.

This session will provide tips on how to make better use of your memory and enhance concentration. It is suitable for anyone who would like to make better use of memory

It takes place on Friday, May 28th, from noon to 2pm, at the Pentland Hotel in Princes Street, Thurso.

The event itself is free and lunch will be available at a cost of £3. To book a place, contact WEA on 01463 710577 or email womenatwork-admin@weascotland.org.uk

ART WORKSHOPS

Free interactive art workshops with Lybster-based artist Lydia Popowich, on the theme of "Looking at Yourself", will be held at Caithness Horizons in Thurso in July.

They are taking place on Monday 12th, Thursday 15th and Friday 16th from 11am-3pm and include a free lunch. The workshops will use photography and mixed media. To book a place contact 01847896508, christinerussell@caithnesshorizons.co.uk

Participants will create their own artwork on themes suggested by an exhibition entitled "Disability Pursuits" which is being launched by Lydia at Caithness Horizons in June. All the resulting work will be displayed in Caithness Horizons at the end of the workshops. Lydia has 20 years' teaching experience and is a specialist adviser in arts and disability with the Scottish Arts Council. Find out more about her work at www.LyPopDesigns.co.uk

Funding

FUNDING is available to support events taking place from January 2011 onwards that showcase Scotland and help generate tourism. The National Events Programme from EventScotland is designed to support a new activity or to help events grow.

The closing dates are June 4th and October 1st. For more information, visit www.eventscotland.org or call 0131 472 2313.

Think Big

Think Big encourages young people aged 13 to 25 to tackle the issues that most affect them, their friends, their neighbours or their community. So if you are between these ages or know someone who is – if you want to make a change for the better – take a look at www.o2.co.uk/thinkbig

You can get funding and training and a whole load of support to get projects going. The application is easy. If your project is short-listed you will then get a call to have a chat, and you'll be told within six weeks of applying whether or not your application has been successful. If you have any questions, call on the free helpline on 0800 902 0250.

Lloyds TSB Foundation

Lloyds TSB Foundation will accept applications from grassroots charities that are clearly focused on improving the quality of life for people who are disadvantaged or at risk of becoming disadvantaged. Projects considered may be lack of youth provision; mental health/challenging behaviour; parenting skills; debt; disability; or poverty.

For a full range of criteria and guidelines go to www.itsbfoundationforscotland.org.uk or for advice contact 0131 444 4020.

Highland Council consultation

Highland Council is facing cutbacks in funding, and the squeeze on public-sector expenditure beginning in 2010/11 may last for 10 years. The council surveyed the public in 2009 and was told that people wanted more of a say in how the council spends its money. It is consulting widely until the end of June 2010 on budget-saving ideas. Views are being sought through a Citizens' Panel of 2,000 people. Members of community councils and groups can take part in the discussion forum on the Highland Council website at www.highland.gov.uk/budgetquestions

Latheron Art Show

There will be over 300 pieces of work on display at this year's Latheron Art Show, including paintings, sculpture and photography by professional and amateur local artists. A preview night is being held on Friday, May 28th, from 7pm-10pm, when there will be a £3 admission charge including a glass of wine and cheese. Admission is free on Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th from 11am-4pm; from Monday, May 31st to Wednesday, June 2nd from 2-4pm and 7pm-9pm; and finally on Thursday, June 3rd, 2pm-4pm.

PPP pampering evening

Pulteneytown People's Project is holding a fundraising pampering evening in the Ackergill Tower Tree House on Wednesday, May 26th. There will be two pampering sessions to choose from with therapists from Alternative Vitality. As well as Indian head massage and hand massage there will be mini-facials and nail file and polish. Tickets are on sale at £15 – this includes two sessions, a glass of wine, tea, coffee, juice and light snacks. To buy a ticket, contact Tracey at PPP on 01955 606950 or go to the PPP offices at 41 Murchison Street, Wick.

Action on Falls in Thurso

Local organisations and community representatives came together in Thurso last month in a working group looking at ways of tackling falls in their area. "Action on Falls in Thurso" was convened by the older people's charity Age Scotland which is working in partnership with NHS Highland to promote a better understanding of the main causes of falls and measures for their prevention. Awareness-raising is aimed at older people living independently in their own homes and promotes the strong message that many falls are preventable.

Local groups with members in their fifties and beyond are in an ideal position to make members aware of the causes of falls and of some of the measures they could be taking to lower risks. You can promote main messages around:

- Keeping physically active
- Maintaining health and managing medicines
- Carrying out a check on risks at home
- Being aware of the effects of alcohol
- Aiming for fit feet and footwear

You can play your part in preventing falls by, for example, giving people access to information leaflets, inviting relevant people along to talk to your group, putting an article in your newsletter or holding a falls awareness activity or event.

For older people and those with disabilities, free assistance in checking home safety is available from the Handyperson Caithness service (01847 892507) and there are free fire safety checks from Highlands and Islands Fire & Rescue Service Community Safety (08000 121312).

If your group is interested in taking action to prevent falls and you would like further information, contact Jo Cowan, Age Scotland, PO Box 7050, Fort William PH33 9AF, or email her on jo.cowan@agescotland.org.uk (or phone 07801 500422)

Leaflets and guides on safety and health issues are available from the Age UK Advice Information Line on 0800 169 6565 or via its website, www.ageuk.org.uk/information

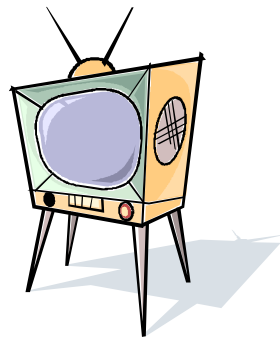
- **The Action on Falls in Thurso Group is planning a coffee morning and an afternoon tea dance on Thursday, June 24th, during National Falls Awareness Week. These relaxed and informal events in the Royal British Legion hall in Thurso are open to anyone over 50 in the Thurso area. Contact Jo (as above) if you can help publicise these events to your members.**

How to retune your TV

Retuning only takes a few minutes:

- Switch on your digital box or digital television
- Press 'menu' on remote control
- Select the 'set up' or 'installation' option
- Select the 'first time installation' option (sometimes called 'factory reset' or 'full retune' or 'default settings')
- Press 'OK' if your equipment asks if you want to delete all your channels. Don't worry this is normal.
- If you are prompted for a code, try 0000 or 1234
- Channels will be automatically installed. This may take a few minutes and your equipment may shut down and restart.
- After retuning, you may have to reset your favourites list. When you retune a digital TV recorder, you should reset future recordings.
- Remember to retune every piece of Freeview equipment you have.

These instructions are a guide only, as menu instructions will vary.



Anyone who would like to contribute information about their community group or events planned, or would like to find out more about anything in the newsletter, can contact 01955 609960, e-mail Yvonne@cvg.org.uk or pop in to the Caithness Voluntary Group office at Telford House, Williamson Street, Wick.

