



opportunities for learning

## Language and Culture Initiative

THERE'S nothing new to Uist about speaking more than one language. We've been doing it for generations, whether here at home or around the world wherever we have travelled. It's so natural we rarely stop to think about it. But maybe we should. In a rapidly "globalising" world in which people in general are much more mobile, we are all faced with new issues about how to get on with new neighbours or colleagues whose ways and manner of speech may be very different to our own. This can be a challenge if you've been brought up with one language only, as is the case for most of mainland Britain. Our

experience is different. Perhaps we've got something special here, an experience from which others might learn?

Cothrom has recently established a "Language and Culture" discussion and action group, which aims to try and safeguard our unique Gaelic heritage as a key part of the bilingual skills we tend to take for granted. In other words, we see Gaelic is an important part of our repertoire, but not our only "party piece".

Over the past few years Cothrom has been offering a range of classes for Gaelic learners and speakers, as well as

classes in English for speakers of other languages. For more information and a peek into some of the things these groups have been doing you can visit the Island Voices/Guthan nan Eilean website at: <http://guthan.wordpress.com>.

This project has been a partnership between Cothrom and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, with Am Pàipear also involved.

Going forward from here, we want to increase the opportunities for language activities in the community which will strengthen the inherent bilingual capacity we all share. For example, learners of English and Gaelic will shortly be

coming together for a social event in which everyone can get a taste of Latvian, Polish, and Russian food and music, as well as local Gaelic fare! And another idea is to start a lunchtime Italian class, run by someone who came to Uist to learn Gaelic.

And we also look forward to more community members, of whatever language background, sharing some of their stories, poems, or songs, whether in writing or recorded speech, through our local community newspaper, *Am Pàipear*!

We're sure that there are plenty of other people in the community with a special

language skill which they might care to share. If you like the sound of what this group is trying to do, and have some suggestions to make, please make yourself known to Barbara Macdonald at Cothrom.

Recent studies have shown that bilingualism, in addition to its intrinsic value, can have some unexpected beneficial side-effects, like delaying dementia for example. We all know that the place of English is secure both locally and around the world. Now let's think about what we can do to boost our other language – or languages. The more the merrier!

## Cothrom Og News

### Holiday Club

WE were delighted to have Cothrom Òg open again this year for children of parents attending International Woman's Day. The children had a great time and were busy with lots of activities throughout the day. They were each given a small book of pictures to show what they had been up to during their time with us.

We would remind parents that Cothrom Òg is able to care for children up to the age of 12 years old. This is a great service, especially with school holidays coming up, but prior booking is essential.

### Funding

WE were pleased to receive £500 of funding from SHARE for our Nursery garden.

The children have been busy weeding and tidying to get it ready for this year's crop of vegetables. The children decided what they would like planted and we are awaiting an order of herbs, spring onions, lettuce,

runner beans and potatoes. Later in the year we will plant sprouts, broccoli and cabbage.

We would like to say a huge thanks to SHARE for making this possible.

At the moment the children are beginning work on a Spring topic. They have been out and about picking daffodils which they have been using to do some still life drawing to put on display.

### Disco/Dance

ON Friday 4th March Cothrom Òg held a disco for under 12's and a Dance for over 18's in Balivanich Hall to raise funds for the Nursery. We had a very successful night and raised the fantastic sum of £876.75. We would like to thank all who attended on the night and give a special mention to those who assisted on the door and Iain MacDonald and Donald Graham for their help with organising the events.

## Staff changes

WE are happy to have Marion Mary O'Henley join the Cothrom Òg team.



Tiag MacInnes 'retired' as Financial Manager on Thursday 31st March after 13 years loyal service. We wish her all the best for the future.

Marion had been on work placement with the nursery through the Get Ready for Work programme, funded by Skills Development Scotland, since January. She will now start on a Modern Apprenticeship in Children's Care Learning and Development through her employment as a Trainee Nursery Assistant.



## Re-Store News

### Open Day at Re-Store

DESPITE the bad weather there was a good turn-out to the Re-Store Open Day held on Saturday 19th February. The showroom displayed a variety of furniture for sale, both modern and antique. Visitors were free to browse around the shop, view additional items stored in the container located nearby, or watch the staff and students busy at work in the workshop next door. Birdhouses made by the students from recycled wood were also available for sale. Delicious cupcakes, tea and coffee were served which helped to compensate for the wind and rain!

Plans for the proposed new

Recycling Centre to be built adjoining the Ormiclate Centre were on view and visitors were invited to complete a Community Questionnaire regarding the project. Suggestions for developments they would like to see in the new centre were gratefully received.

### New Textile Bank

DUE to demand an additional textile bank has been sited at Paible School. This will allow the schoolchildren to be involved firsthand in a recycling project. All clothing, towels, bedlinen, blankets, curtains, handbags, belts, hats and pairs of shoes, may be placed in the bank in waterproof bags.



## Contact Cothrom:

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