

Form B



TSI ANNUAL MONITORING RETURN
(To be submitted by 30 April 2015)

Form B

TSI Annual Monitoring Return

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Which interface area does your TSI operate in?

The Western Isles

Who is the principal contact for your TSI?

Name: Eoin Macneil

Organisation: Co-Cheangal Innse Gall

Position: Chair

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If different, who should we contact about the monitoring?

Name: Fiona Macleod

Organisation: Co-Cheangal Innse Gall

Position: 3rd Sector Liaison Officer (& Chief Officer)

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How many full time (30hrs or more) staff does your TSI employ?

6

How many part time (less than 30hrs) staff does your TSI employ?

12

How many volunteers (including board members) do you include in TSI activity?

26

Please provide a summary of the issues faced by your third sector locally. One page of space is provided for this, but your answer may be significantly shorter or longer depending on circumstances.

The effects upon service delivery of an aging demographic and a challenging socio-economic position (related to issues such as fuel poverty, etc) are inextricably linked to the geographic challenges of the Western Isles. This is felt in terms of both the Western Isles remote islands status and the overwhelmingly rural nature of its communities, all of which poses challenges in the delivery of services by the third sector.

The TSI has seen fewer community events in recent years, so reducing the number of volunteers recruited for such events. Funding remains one of the big issues not just in this Sector but in the public sector as a whole which can have a consequential impact on us. There is a continuing demand

for ongoing volunteer commitment, and because we have a fairly static and aging population in the islands, this is encouraging us to explore different ways to engage with both volunteers and organisations. We are also exploring, and finding, ways to be flexible about the delivery of volunteering services. Volunteering is already at around 55% of the population, so it is very much embedded in island life but the challenge is to increase or at least maintain this when our volunteering population is in itself an aging one.

We are encouraged by the fact that many volunteers and groups are skilling themselves up to ensure input into current and future developments arising from the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill. These include Community Empowerment and engagement in decision-making and 'Participatory Budgeting' initiatives which are an increasing part of the wider third sector agenda. The flow of information between Local Authority and other Agencies and the Community Planning Partnership is crucial. Some localities, such as those which are the furthest distance away from the seat of local government in Stornoway, have even more challenges in terms of service access. The challenge for community groups to look at delivering more services locally has never been stronger and it is a crucial agenda that some island communities are considering. The need to secure a variety of income is also crucial and social enterprise opportunities have to be explored and built upon.

Outcome 1A – More people have increased opportunity and enthusiasm to volunteer

- a) With regards to this outcome did your TSI have any particular successes, challenges or learning that you would like to share?

Family volunteering days were a novel and successful way to engage whole families in volunteer activity: a trial was carried out in the Uists and is now to be rolled out to other areas. We are also having particular success in using Face book for volunteer promotion and have had improved recruitment as a result.

In June we held Volunteer Awards Ceremonies, to recognise and reward volunteer effort. We awarded the first of our new awards 'Clisham Award' for outstanding service to volunteering to a lady of 90, who is still a regular volunteer! The VC Awards ceremony was recognised as positive and worthwhile by many organisations, volunteers and members of the public.

The Volunteer Award ceremony in Barra was attended by Cllr. Donald Manford and Angus Macneil MP. At the ceremony Donald Manford spoke about the importance of recognition for volunteers, and the importance of highlighting the important work being carried out all over the islands. Cllr. Manford later emailed saying "Thank you Karen, it was a pleasure. Your organisation and running of the event was a great success".

- b) How many volunteers answered **Question 1?**

54

- c) What percentage of volunteers rated your TSI as excellent or good?

91%

- d) How many volunteers answered **Question 2?**

36

e) What percentage of people who engaged with the TSI went on to active volunteering?

83%

f) Please provide a case study of the work you have done on this outcome.

“Murdo Smith came into the volunteer centre after a long break from volunteering, looking to get involved in something new again. Murdo wanted to boost his CV and after a brokerage session with Lewis Development Worker, selected Volunteering at Isles Fm Community Radio Station. Murdo began volunteering at Isles Fm one afternoon every week. Murdo helps out the reception and administration area during one of the live radio shows. This supports the radio presenter by taking calls and being able to meet and greet any visitors.

Murdo called in to inform the VC of how he is getting on: “I am really enjoying volunteering. The benefit I found from volunteering was that it was good work experience and beneficial before finding full time employment. There was the added satisfaction that you were helping people in the community. There is also a wide range of work you can choose from and times that is suitable for you.”

Outcome 1B: Volunteer involving organisations are better able to recruit, manage and retain volunteers

a) With regards to this outcome did your TSI have any particular successes, challenges or learning that you would like to share?

We have engaged with a wide range of organisations face to face and have been very proactive in exploring ways to support organisations. We are actively building stronger relationships with many. We ran 6 training courses which supported them in good practice and are working closely with some to achieve their local standards awards.

b) How many organisations answered **Question 3**?

56

c) What percentage of Volunteer Involving Organisations rated your TSI as excellent or good?

95%

d) How many organisations answered **Question 4**?

22

e) What percentage of VIOs felt better able to recruit, manage and retain volunteers as a result of using TSI services?

95%

f) How many organisations answered **Question 5**?

6

- g) What are the main reasons given for organisations not using the service?

Didn't need help/don't know

- h) Please provide a case study of the work you have done on this outcome.

"In March the North Harris Trust approached us to help find volunteers for their tree-planting scheme at Ardvourlie Community Woodland. Publicity on face book led to two families who are new to the area coming forward. Volunteers tackled the work with great enthusiasm and energy, and between them planted around 750 trees. One of the volunteers said '... we all left with a great sense of achievement and something being left for others in years to come! Hopefully our grandkids will come back and see our forest!!' Another said 'thank you – we really enjoyed the day.'

Matt Watts, the North Harris Trust Ranger who co-ordinated the event was delighted with the volunteers, saying 'The weather was perfect and it was a real pleasure working with everyone. On behalf of the North Harris Trust I'd like to say a huge thank you to the Volunteer Centre (C-CIG) and everyone who volunteered. It was great to see so many people working together to improve our environment.'

The children received Callanish and Saltire Challenge certificates for their efforts, as well as gaining an introduction to volunteering that will hopefully inspire them to continue offering to help others in the future.

Another comment that came back to us from an organisation we supported this year was: "The Lewis Carnival Committee is a charitable organisation who come together once a year to organise and run the carnival. It is an event set up by local people for local people. There is quite a lot of work involved in running such an event, so to have the help of the Volunteer Centre Western Isles (C-CIG) in recruiting additional volunteers was a huge weight off our mind. There simply wouldn't have been a carnival without the volunteers. We greatly appreciated all their efforts." Gemma Malcolm, Secretary, Lewis Carnival 2014."

Outcome 2 – Social enterprise develops and grows

- a) With regards to this outcome did your TSI have any particular successes, challenges or learning that you would like to share?

Our biggest successes this year involved creating links between the third and private sectors. One important third sector organisation has gone into partnership with private sector partners to provide business and marketing services with TSI support. We also continue to promote procurement opportunities but this continues to move slowly.

- b) How many organisations answered **Question 6**?

6 organisations

- c) What percentage of social enterprises / social entrepreneurs rated your TSI as excellent or good?

83%

d) How many organisations answered **Question 7?**

6

e) What percentage of organisations who engaged with the TSI felt more confident to develop their social enterprise as a result of using TSI services?

100%

f) How many organisations answered **Question 8?**

4

g) What are the main reasons given for organisations not using the service?

Didn't need help

h) Please provide a case study of the work you have done on this outcome.

“We were approached by board members of a social enterprise which owned and managed a quite large sports facility as they were having governance issues. We ascertained that, while they were acting within the law, there was dissatisfaction within the membership about the democratic structures within the organisation. It was an issue which affects many social enterprises; the legal position of boards within company law vs. the need for community control of the asset and the ability of the community to participate in the company's decision making. This was affecting the ability of the organisation to move forward; tensions within the board were such that no real progress on developing a business plan could be made. Over several months, a new board was elected which was much more representative of the membership and of the wider community. This was necessarily a painful process and the key TSI role was to provide mediation and guidance through the process.

We also worked closely with a local charity to establish a new trading arm. The organisation manages a community play park in the north of Lewis which is also a key environmental and tourist destination but has always been volunteer led and managed. The organisation wished to open a retail kiosk and several options for the development of this were considered. At present, the board are developing a subsidiary CIC with TSI support.”

Outcome 3 – Third sector organisations are well governed and managed and deliver quality outcomes

a) With regards to this outcome did your TSI have any particular successes, challenges or learning that you would like to share?

Through regular dialogue and contact with each organisation, it is clear that every group is at a different stage of organisation and learning. It is clear that they are all eager to gather information that will build their capacity for the future in the delivery of quality outcomes whilst ensuring that they are well governed.

b) How many organisations answered **Question 9?**

27

c) What percentage of organisations rated your TSI as excellent or good?

85%

d) How many organisations answered **Question 10**?

25

e) What percentage of organisations say their organisation is better governed and managed / delivers better services as a result of using TSI services?

90%

f) How many organisations answered **Question 11**?

15

What are the main reasons given for organisations not using the service?

Didn't need help

g) Please provide a case study of the work you have done on this outcome.

"We have been working with a small, local charity, 'The Leanne Fund' to support their development.

We have assisted them to create a full funding strategy for the organisation which will shape their development over the next 5 years. With our support they have created new job descriptions, a marketing strategy, fundraising strategy, an investing in ideas application, we have facilitated liaison with private sector partners. We have provided them with management committee training, assisted them to find new board members and supported them with their volunteer management and our local quality standards for volunteer involvement, The WAVE award.

Work has culminated in the production of a business plan which will encompass new work in the Grampian area. We introduced them to the TSI in Aberdeen to support this further. They are at stage 2 of a Big Lottery Fund application and have made several other sizable funding applications with our support.

"Thank you for giving us so much of your time to talk through our issues, it was so helpful 😊 I really feel like we are going in the right direction." Chrisetta Mitchell, Chair of The Leanne Fund."

Outcome 4 – Third sector organisations feel better connected and are able to influence and contribute to public policy

a) With regards to this outcome did your TSI have any particular successes, challenges or learning that you would like to share?

We have hosted 26 networking events/meetings this year around a variety of topics. These have proven popular in terms of networking and information sharing.

This includes 2 meetings of the new Western Isles wide Third Sector Strategic Forum (TSSF) in which interest has been good, but technology has been more problematic. The time and cost demands for

people from across the islands, meeting face to face is prohibitive. We have tried both video and telephone links to enable local meetings to join together for discussions, with varying levels of success.

Feedback from the majority of participants is that they prefer local meetings to a single Western Isles wide meeting. We are still to finalise an appropriate structure that will meet the needs of everyone and are aware this may need to be two tier with a much smaller, high level, strategic overview meeting that feeds to and from the local meetings.

It is intended to run the next Forum meeting in May as a series of “local meetings” and to include on the agenda a discussion on how the objectives of the Forum and the Networks can best be achieved, to ensure that every third sector organisation feels better connected and is able to influence and contribute to public policy.

We are proposing that the local network meetings will be convened monthly, or at least quarterly, and will offer third sector groups (and individuals as appropriate) the opportunity (in each Island/Rural location) to network and exchange information. A standing item for each meeting will include TSI Partners providing information on (a) the work of the TSI, (b) Community Planning news and (c) information on ‘national’ issues relevant to the third sector. Views will be sought on these key agendas that will then feed into the TSSF and the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership as appropriate.

The TSSF will focus on key strategic issues and is likely to involve a small number of organisations, meeting quarterly. Video links will be available to allow at least one representative from each local network to attend and provide feedback.

Over time, it is to be hoped that the TSSF will evolve and be recognised as a key strategic and representative component of the third sector in the Western Isles, which can be accessed by statutory and other partners.

b) How many organisations answered **Question 12?**

48

c) What percentage of organisations say that as a result in taking part in networks and forums or networking activity they feel more connected?

100%

d) How many organisations answered **Question 13?**

52

e) Please provide a summary or collation of the responses to this question

High = 13

Some = 24

Low = 10

None = 5

f) How many organisations answered **Question 14**?

37

g) What percentages of organisations say that the TSI helps them to engage in and influence public policy?

85%

h) How many public sector partners answered **Question 15**?

6

i) What percentage of partners say that the TSI brings knowledge of the third sector to partnerships?

100%

j) Please provide a case study of the work you have done on this outcome.

“The OHCPP is piloting a piece of engagement work with the community in Harris to look at how local organisations and Community Planning Partners could work better together to achieve improved local outcomes and we have been heavily involved in driving and supporting this piece of work.

A forum in Harris is now working on a 5 year strategic plan, looking at the whole picture for the area - including economic development, Health & Social Care, community transport, land, tourism, infrastructure etc.

This will be followed up with a community consultation process, allowing the wider members of the community to contribute/respond to the proposed priorities for the area. Once the plan is completed, there will be discussion with CPP partners about the delivery and resourcing of the Harris priorities. It is the aim of those involved that the plan will feed into the SOA.”

Outcome 5: The third sector interface is well governed, managed and effective

a) How many organisations answered **Question 16**?

41

b) What percentage of organisations say the TSI understands them and their needs?

86%

c) How many organisations answered **Question 17**?

41

d) What percentage of organisations say the TSI provides services and support that is suitable for their organisation?

93%

We recognise that many TSIs will have significantly more information they want to share. Please use the space below to include any additional information that you would like to. This may include other services you've provided, other learning and things you will do differently. As well as text this could include graphs, pictures, testimonials or other....

It has been a busy and successful year for the TSI; we run a variety of projects outside of our core TSI Services, all in response to community need. Here are few examples:

We manage and run a number of Social Enterprises and projects including 2 community newspapers, and a Thrift Shop which is staffed entirely by volunteers and stocked by donations received from the community and an environmental volunteering project.

The Thrift Shop provides a valuable service to the community, providing an opportunity for unwanted items to be reused and giving people on low incomes the opportunity to purchase good quality clothing and household items at affordable prices. Income generated is redistributed to the community through a trust fund. In 2014/2015 more than £7,500 was awarded supporting those in the community with disabilities to pay for adaptations to their homes and make essential household purchases, and helping the local pipe band to travel off island to compete in a prestigious piping competition.

The Western Isles Support for the Environment Volunteering Project (WISE) was founded in 2013 to provide environmental volunteering opportunities, encourage better use of our natural resources for physical activity. The project was conceived by the Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership, and managed by us. This year the WISE environmental project has been very successful and engaged 139 volunteers in environmental work on 29 different occasions. It is an example of what can happen when people come together to deliver mutual outcomes through the Community Planning process.

Other projects include, grass cutting services, community transport services, summer play schemes, Alzheimer's Café and Singing Group, Youth café, Harris in bloom project, Xmas display project, Direct Payment support, War Memorial, a community radio station, Work Programme, storage facilities, Befriending project, facilities management, MIDAS and ECDL training, learning centre, Siar FM, Siar Media and SiarTech a media and technology group and facilitated the introduction of a new Drugs & Alcohol Service for Uist and Barra having identified a clear need for this service.

We continue to experience pressures from reduced funding and sadly this year we were forced to take the decision to close the North Lewis Volunteer Centre office and combine the two part-time volunteering development worker posts for Stornoway and North Lewis into one full-time post based in the Stornoway office covering the whole of Lewis. Despite these pressures we are proud to continue to provide access to a range of services throughout the Western Isles, through telephone, internet and drop in at a total of 6 locations.