Vital Talk Orkney Counselling Service

Scottish Charity No SC042360

Annual Report & Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2026

Trustees' Annual Report

For the Year Ended 31 March 2026

The trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements and the independent examiner's report for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Reference & Administration Information

Charity Name: Vital Talk Orkney Counselling Service

Charity No: SC042360

Address: The Life Centre, East Road, Kirkwall, KW15 1LX

Current Trustees:

Andy Fraser	Chair
Mark Kirkbride	Treasurer
Gill Fraser	Secretary
Margaret Rendall	
Lorna Scott	
Janet Burgon	
Caroline Christian	

Structure Governance & Management

Constitution

The Charity is an unincorporated Trust. It is governed by a Trust Deed which was adopted on 22 December 2010 and amended on the 24 March 2020. The Trust was granted charitable status by OSCR on 6 June 2011.

Appointment of Trustees

The management committee, which meets quarterly, are the charity's trustees. Membership of the management committee is open to anyone who has a live Christian faith, based on the belief and principles as stated in the Trust Statement of Faith. There must be a minimum of four and not more than nine elected trustees.

Management

The trustees are responsible for the strategic direction and governance of Vital Talk Orkney Counselling Service. There are currently four qualified counsellors, three are seeing clients and one manages the day-to-day running of the service. The manager also discusses progress and development at trustees' meetings. All have been volunteers, but from September 2026, those counselling can be paid £20 per session, while all others are volunteers.

The trustees are particularly aware of their responsibilities for Health & Safety, especially for the counsellors and ensure essential insurance cover is in place for counselling and ancillary activities. Vital Talk Orkney registered with Disclosure Scotland in September 2019 and now carries out PVG checks on all new volunteers. Training in safeguarding duties has and continues to be provided to trustees and counsellors.

Objectives & Activities

Charitable purposes
To promote the welfare and relieve those in need of emotional, psychological and/or spiritual support through the provision of a counselling and support service and to provide training, education and support for those involved in counselling and the caring professions.

Activities/Services
Our main service is counselling and in particular offering Christian counselling when requested.

Achievements & Performance

Vital Talk remains a well-established counselling service which is valued equally by clients and other local support services, and continues to attract referrals from the Christian community, NHS, support services and from people hearing good reports from previous clients.

For over a year now we have been able to offer on-line counselling by Counsellors living outside Orkney. This has benefit for those who wish to maintain a distance between themselves and their counsellor, as chance of meeting at the local supermarket, in the Town Centre or at events are reduced. This service also benefits people in the islands and out-lying parishes who can receive counselling at home. In addition, the online option enables access to counselling for those who are disabled or who find travelling a particular challenge.

There were 9 clients carried forward from the previous year, all being counselled, and no clients were on the waiting list, with 30 new referrals during the year. At the end of March, 6 clients were carried forward into April 2026 while 8 remained on the waiting list, which was closed in February due to lack of counsellors.

Financial Review

Our main source of funding is normally from donations from clients and supporters and through fundraising events. We are very grateful to Kirkwall Baptist Church for supporting us and continuing with a regular monthly donation. We received a grant of £3000 from Mind On, a local charity. Of late there have been no donations from clients receiving counselling, however, we had the opportunity to raise £2052 in a local charity shop The Blue Door. Our supporters, grants and donations enable us to continue to meet the high standards required, provide a professional service and support training of new counsellors.

Reserves Policy
The trustees' policy is to maintain reserves at around 6-9 months of normal running costs in order to meet counsellors' expenses and to cover any unexpected expenditure. The unrestricted reserves at the end of the year were almost £15,000 which represents more than 9 months of normal running costs.

Plans for Future Periods

The trustees will continue to develop the service from a Christian perspective to meet local needs. We have seen significant change in trustees for a range of personal reasons. We are delighted to now have a team with a mix of experiences and backgrounds to steer the Charity going forward.