

D&G HANDYVAN (SCIO) SECOND ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

It is the time of year once more when Annual Reports have to be prepared and reflection made of recent past events of D&G HandyVan (SCIO) and its business activities.

A long time ago, in fact 10 December 1948 when the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution 217A (III) "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", its 30 articles sought to define the fundamental rights of every person on the planet. Article 3 is very brief but drives home what the Assembly was trying to achieve, viz:

"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person."

Moving forward some sixty-five years, Dumfries & Galloway Council's fourth Single Outcome Agreement (2013-16) has a similar, though somewhat expanded vision which is relevant to the population of Dumfries & Galloway.

What you may ask have these statements got to do with D&G HandyVan (SCIO)? Any ageing population who hope to have good levels of health and well-being and to remain as independent and physically and economically active as they can residing in their own home for as long as possible, need external assistance to achieve that goal.

Central and Local Government desires to honour the above pledges cannot be met without the support of a vibrant Third Sector which has been adequately funded to meet the myriad of challenges as, and when, they occur. D&G HandyVan (SCIO) is one such Third Sector organisation which had its 10th anniversary in May 2014. It has expanded from an initial Annandale & Eskdale base to cover the whole of the Dumfries & Galloway region.

Last year I said we were busy making arrangements for D&G HandyVan (SCIO) to become a "stand alone" business. Legal and financial matters are now complete. The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) has also confirmed our name change to D&G HandyVan (SCIO). The year two targets set down in the Business Plan have also been achieved, viz:

- A third D&G HandyVan (SCIO) fitter commenced work in the west of the region in August 2014;
- Investors in People (IIP) accreditation was gained, at our first attempt, in December 2014.

The dissolution of Annandale & Eskdale Council for Voluntary Service was finally confirmed in January 2015. Funding bids were also successful to allow D&G HandyVan (SCIO) to expand gutter cleaning activities and recruit more volunteers.



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Ever optimistic that core funding from Dumfries & Galloway Council will continue at its present level, the Board agreed the office lease being extended for three more years, from 2014 to 2017. The workload of D&G HandyVan (SCIO) has been increasing year on year throughout the region with the number of referrals to the office now beginning to even out over the four areas of Dumfries & Galloway. This is a positive outcome but does put increasing pressure on the small number of volunteers who assist the three fitters. Volunteer procurement is an ongoing task but it is important that we secure quality personnel to maintain the excellent people representation D&G HandyVan (SCIO) currently has.

March 2015 saw the introduction of a Dumfries & Galloway Council document entitled, "Changing Dumfries & Galloway – a budget for the period 2015/16–2017/18. D&G HandyVan (SCIO) was mentioned as a probable provider of Dementia Friendly Design. The timescale is for three years initially, so we await further information for implementation in 2015/16.

To conclude, "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person", a noble target set down in 1948 certainly has no chance of reaching its achieved target without a vibrant Third Sector which is adequately funded to meet the challenge. Those who hold "the purse strings" must realise that funding on a three-year cycle is the minimum requirement for any organisation to be able to set out a well-structured Business Plan with clearly defined strategies to meet the needs of those people who are disadvantaged, for whatever reason, to have a satisfactory life style.

Don Hunter-Grant
Chair
September 2015