

STAFFING & DEVELOPMENT

STAFF UPDATE

It was with sad hearts when in June 2025 we said goodbye to our manager Stephen MacDougall. Stephen was an inspiration to all, his testimony, a life battered by alcoholism, shipwreck and near drowning but finally finding Peace when he surrendered his life to the Lord. Stephen had been with the project since 2015, moving up the ranks from relief to full-time Support Worker to Deputy Manager and finally to guiding the ship in 2023 when he became Project Manager. 'Cool hand Luke' has moved on to bless others with his calm assurance.

But in his place, we welcome a new manager, Carol Maclean and to Karen Grant who accepted the post of Deputy Manager. Karen has been with the project since 2021. Carol, who has been at the Project since 2020, and is now into her second year of Management Training.

And we are thankful to our two new relief workers, Annie MacPhail and Fiona MacDonald. Annie and Fiona bring professional and personal experience to the project.

NEWS FROM THE STUDIO

We've had a lot of fun! Here is what our clever lot have created....

On the recommendation of an ex-resident that we needed to do something with the top of our Christmas tree, two of our residents were prompted to make a Star and an Angel. These will be back on the tree next year!

Again, on the suggestion of a resident we have made keyrings including the date they entered the Project. A keepsake and a reminder of the journey that they are on in recovery. This will be something that we will be encouraging all future residents to do.

To allow us to sit the studio in its spot here at the project sadly we've had to cut down a couple of trees. None of this wood has gone to waste. The Sawmill in Stornoway kindly sliced up the branches and we have been busy decorating them with the aim of selling them for a future fundraiser. We have two apple trees, gifted by an ex-resident, ready to replace those trees we lost.

We are so grateful to have such a warm, cozy and inspiring place to be creative. Staff and residents alike are enjoying the benefits of this quiet reflective space. Staff wellbeing is important and having a space where you can go to be quiet and reflect, have lunch or to 'let go and play' is a blessing.

Our residents can at any point in the day go into the studio and work on a project or to simply sit and relax. But it was important that we give allocated time each week to be in the studio. Being able to come together as a group, make and have a laugh is so beneficial for building lost confidence and self-esteem.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.hebridesalphaproject.org

For all the latest information on Hebrides Alpha Project pay us a visit.

You can also like us on Facebook.



STEPHEN

THE YEARLY NEWSLETTER OF HEBRIDES ALPHA PROJECT



HEBRIDES ALPHA PROJECT

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

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The Lord is close to the broken hearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalm 34:18

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CAROL MACLEAN - MANAGER

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

Our Board of Directors; Mrs Lorraine Graham, Mrs Finella Morrison, Mrs Deborah Millar and Mr Alex MacDonald join residents and staff in expressing our thanks to all who have provided support to the Project in so many different ways in this last year. Every single act of kindness, support or prayer is appreciated and felt by all involved here and we would like to acknowledge that.

Thanks to our Outer Hebrides Alcohol and Drug Partnership who have continued to provide funding to keep our doors open and also work tirelessly to ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are heard by decision makers to affect positive and lasting change.

We would like to thank those who have contributed through one-off donations, regular monthly payments and the Gift Aid contributions. As funding streams become less accessible for the service we provide, we value every single penny that we are gifted and remember, thankfully, that it is the LORD that is in control! A huge thanks to all supporting churches who provide giving and prayer for which we are totally indebted.

We would like to share our appreciation with Road to Recovery/ WI Mental Health Team/ NHS Western Isles Board/ Substance Misuse/ CNES Alcohol & Drug Counsellors/ Housing Benefit/ Homeless/ Sports Centre/ Orbit Agency/ On Time Computer Services/ Crossreach/ The Shed/ AA/ UHI/ CIB Services/ HHP/ Penumbra/ Food Bank/ TIG/ BFRC/ Dept of Work and Pensions.

A special acknowledgement, gratitude and God's richest of blessings to Stephen MacDougall and his wife Maggie. Stephen left the Project in June 2026 to go to pastures new, yet both continue to support us in many ways. We truly are standing on the shoulders of giants.

For all the support we have received from individuals, services and friends, we are truly grateful.





LIFE AT THE PROJECT

Here at the Hebrides Alpha Project, we have an incredible opportunity to serve those with addictions and other issues in life. The people that come to us are often broken in many areas and not just simple addiction. As staff at the Project many of us have come from a background of brokenness and addiction ourselves, or close connection with it. It's amazing to see individuals both male and female coming into the Project and finding Christian love and support. Something they often have never experienced before.

As Christians we offer a God that can deliver from anything, a God that delivered us first of all. We offer hope to men and women who have no hope, who have exhausted themselves trying. God is real and God cares for the marginalised, the broken, the helpless, those whom everyone has given up on. Those who have given up on themselves.

Residents can stay up to a year at the Project and in that time, we have the opportunity to work in every area of life. Issues include debt, criminal justice, ADHD and other mental health, anger, abuse, are just some of the underlying problems that fuel drinking or drug problems.

The work of the Project from day to day includes morning devotion each day. We will look at the Bible and have a time of prayer together. One to One meetings with each resident up to three times a week. Discussing their needs and often studying Christian material in a secure environment. Recovery meetings twice a week which are more secular looking at depression or triggers or temptation to take substances or self-care and many other topics. Outside meetings include Road to Recovery where teaching or testimony is shared often by those who themselves have been addicted and have overcome. Church is attended on Sunday or alternatively AA.

We are conscious of the Lord at work and see development in the lives of those that we care for. One resident came in and in his own words blamed God for everything that was wrong in the world. By the end of his time at the Project, he had completely changed his mind. This was as a result of learning about God and his Word and seeing for himself the goodness of God in His Word. Many have come to the Project with their lives in complete chaos and their minds in complete chaos. Over time, dealing with one thing at a time, their chaos is gradually reduced and eventually life is normalised.

We are grateful to God above all and for the support we receive from the agencies and others that support those with addiction. There is a lot that can be done to help families and those struggling. If we can be of help to you then get in touch.

RECOVERY WALK - STIRLING 2025



Staff and residents at Hebrides Alpha Project had the wonderful opportunity of joining with The Shed and The Ark in attending the Scottish Recovery Consortium Recovery Walk Scotland in Stirling last September 2025.

Three groups, two minibuses and one purpose - to remember those we have lost to addiction and to celebrate the lives that are being lived in recovery. Over 3,500 people attended the day, and it was quite something to be walking with people we did not know but who we felt at one with.

Thanks to the Scottish Recovery Consortium for planning these annual walks, increasing hope and helping to reduce stigma and to Murdo Stal, who was our most wonderful driver and entertainer! Also, thanks to Outer Hebrides ADP, who partly funded our expenses for the trip.

POLY CRUB

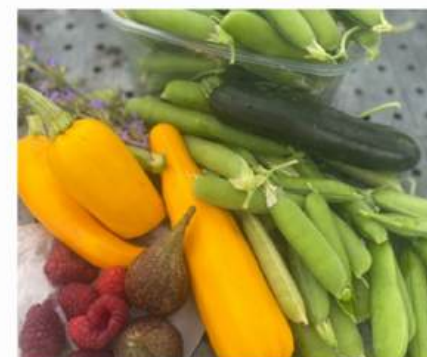
We are so grateful for our Poly club. It is looking very quiet now, but the soil is warming up nicely and we are preparing for this season of growth. The long growing season and the protection from the elements means plenty of opportunity to experiment with growing various seeds - giving them a headstart and fewer setbacks, although it does require a lot of attention to watering!

It is a restorative space which encourages growth and steady progress with its warmth and stillness. What is planted with care and nurtured with patience will bear fruit in time, another reason why it is favoured by residents and staff for one-to-one counselling sessions.

Last year was a great year for the berries, onions and carrots. The peas, herbs and the cut-and-come-again salad was popular. The fig tree has many buds, so we look forward to figs this year. Outdoors the rhubarb is getting stronger and producing more in its third year. The potatoes of choice were Rooster and Kerr's Pinks which yielded a healthy crop.

The sunflowers were enormous and such a joy, the dahlias bright and so beautiful were faithful again this year. The lupins however, are going to get a shift outdoors as they are going rogue inside. The planters have snowdrops, daffodils popping through and tulips which will make an appearance in due course.

Our resident requests for this year include garlic, peas, broccoli and chillies.



FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT

Grant funding was secured from TSI/Scottish Government

A sum of £1,752.00 has been awarded to Hebrides Alpha for training (£915.00) and residential unit items (£837.00) for which we are very grateful.

