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General Enquiries/Training:

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01224 595505

InTrans:

Interpreting & translation services with special rates for the third sector.

in-trans@grec.co.uk
01224 576795

Casework:

Confidential advice, support and employability service.

casework@grec.co.uk
07857 180175

Counselling:

Confidential counselling for adults, children and young people.

mthomson@grec.co.uk

English Classes:

Free English language education up to four times per week.

language-cafe@grec.co.uk
01224 576797

AberdeenAIM:

Fighting illegal moneylending with support, advice and training to enhance financial wellbeing.

mmccall@grec.co.uk
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GREC Services

Welcome to the latest edition of the GREC Community Bulletin! As March is Women's History Month, for this month's Community Spotlight feature we caught up with Bertha Yakubu from the African Women's Group Scotland to learn about the history of the group.

This week is the first anniversary of the Scottish national lockdown, and last week marked a whole year since our office closed and the GREC team started working from home. What a year it's been! We would like to send a big thank you to all our staff, volunteers, clients, and supporters for all their hard work during this difficult time.

Although the GREC office is still closed, all staff continue to work remotely and can be contacted via the details opposite.

WEBSITE

FACEBOOK | TWITTER

COMMUNITIES



Our friends at **Four Pillars** are currently running a lottery draw to raise funds for their work. The winner will be chosen randomly at the end of March. Tickets cost £2 each, and the winner will receive £1000 cash.

Four Pillars will use the funds generated through this competition to support the local LGBT+ community with issues surrounding matters of mental, emotional, physical, and sexual health. [Click here](#) to find out more or enter the draw.

It was also announced this week that the Four Pillars Hub will be reopening from next month.. [Click here](#) for full details on the reopening of the Hub, or [click here](#) to visit the Four Pillars website and book your visit.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT: AFRICAN WOMEN'S GROUP SCOTLAND

In honour of Women's History Month, Bertha Yakubu from AWGS told us all about the history of the long-running group.

It's just like any migrant story: you come here and have your assumptions and your presumptions, but then things are not how you thought they would be. You begin to feel lonely. Then things start to happen- things happen to you while you're here, and things happen back at home- and there's just nowhere to talk about it, or meet people, so you are on your own.

My husband was studying in Dundee and when he finished he got a job there, so I came from Nigeria to join him. From there we came to Aberdeen. I was pregnant, about three months, and then my Mum died. I was so distressed. I just needed someone to help me, but there was nobody- I didn't know anybody, I didn't know who to call.

Then I started bleeding in the night. My husband had to stay with our little boy, so I was taken to the hospital alone. This isn't normal in Africa- when you are taken to the hospital someone will go with you. When I came out of the hospital, I thought "I have to find other women so we can be a support system for each other".

I literally walked down Union Street- there were much fewer Africans here then- and if I saw an African woman, I would stop and greet her. I'd ask her name, where she lived, and scribble down her details. When I got about 10 or 15 names, we called a meeting- and that's how the African Women's Group started.

When we met we just talked and laughed. The first meeting I think was at Powis Community Centre, and then we moved to GREC when it was on Belmont Street, then to the YWCA. That was in 1994. After a while we decided to register as a charity. We were the African Women's Support Group, then just African Women's Group, and finally African Women's Group Scotland. As we began to expand our reach, the name changed.

So that's how it all started. it was loneliness that drove us to start the group. Being alone can be tough. Nobody seems to understand your plight, and as a migrant you're not entitled to this, you're not entitled to that. Sometimes you just don't have anywhere to go.



The full interview with Bertha will be available on our website later this week. [Click here](#) to visit the AWGS website and find out how you can support their work.

EVENTS

#ConversationsForChange

Progress in Dialogue are marking Women's History Month with this month's Conversations for Change event **Womanhood Then and Now**.

The event will take place this **Tuesday, 23rd March** from 6.30pm on Zoom. [Click here](#) to find out more on Facebook, or [click here](#) to book your free ticket via Eventbrite.




Shelter Scotland are hosting an information session on social housing in Aberdeen this **Thursday, 25th March** from 6.30pm.

The session will be an opportunity to learn about the history of social housing in the city, as well as helping to shape it's future.

This event is part of Shelter Scotland's **Housing Rights Defenders** campaign, which is fighting for safe and warm homes to be a right, not a privilege, for everyone in Scotland.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the Housing Rights Defender campaign, or [click here](#) to book your free ticket for Thursday's event via Eventbrite.



Because everyone
in **Aberdeen**
has the right to a
safe home.

NHS GRAMPIAN EQUALITIES CONSULTATION

NHS Grampian recently published the consultation draft of their Equality Outcomes Report for 2021/25. [Click here](#) to view a PDF copy of the draft report.

NHS Grampian are seeking feedback from the public on this report, so GREC are hosting a short focus group this **Thursday, 25th March** at 5pm to discuss these Equality Outcomes and how they might be improved. [Click here](#) to book your free ticket to the focus group.

You can also [click here](#) to respond to the consultation by filling in a short feedback form. Alternately, feedback can be sent in any language or format to NHS Grampian's Equality & Diversity Manager Nigel Firth at nigel.firth@nhs.scot or **01224 552245**. The consultation period ends this **Friday 26th March**.

OPPORTUNITIES



Somebody Cares are currently recruiting someone with marketing, sales and management experience to join their team as Office Furniture Sales Lead. The deadline for applications is **Wednesday, 31st March**. [Click here](#) for more information.

Shelter are currently seeking applications for the role of Community Fundraising Area Manager for Scotland. The deadline for applications is **Sunday, 11th April**. [Click here](#) for more information or to apply.

Local arts organisation **Hysteria** is currently seeking volunteers to fill a number of roles on their newly-formed committee.

Applications are open to women, non-binary and otherwise gender marginalised people, and applications from members of underrepresented groups are encouraged. The deadline for applications is **Sunday, 4th April**.

[Click here](#) for more information about the volunteer roles available, or [click here](#) to access the application form.

We interviewed Hysteria for last month's Community Spotlight feature. [Click here](#) to read the interview on our website.



THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT

Last month the **Scottish Government** extended the deadline for the *Adapt and Thrive* stage of their **Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme**.

The new deadline for this round of applications is **Monday, 21st June**. [Click here](#) for more information or to apply.

The **Scottish Government** recently announced a new **Third Sector Growth Fund**. This fund will support small businesses within the third sector to grow and recover from the impacts of coronavirus. [Click here](#) to learn more. Full details, including how to apply to the fund, will be published later in spring.

The **Bank of Scotland Foundation** have recently launched their new **Invest Grants** programme. The theme of the programme for 2021 is *Addressing Financial Vulnerability*.

This programme will support charities in Scotland helping vulnerable people manage various financial issues.

The Invest Grant programme is open to applications from charities with an annual income of between £100,000 and £1million.

The deadline for applications is **Thursday, 1st April** at midday. [Click here](#) for full details about the programme or to make an application.

COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Scotland currently remains in lockdown.

- However, last week the First Minister announced a timeline for easing the lockdown restrictions.
- Stay at Home restrictions are due to be lifted on **Friday, 2nd April** and replaced with instructions to Stay Local.
- [Click here](#) to view a PDF of the full timeline of projected dates for easing restrictions.
- The First Minister is scheduled to make another announcement this afternoon, Tuesday 23rd March, exactly a year on from the original Scottish national lockdown.

COVID Spring Hardship Payment

The COVID Spring Hardship Payment is closing for applications soon. The deadline is this **Friday, 26th March**.

This scheme was announced last month by **The Scottish Government** and will provide one-off payments of £100 per eligible child. Families with children who would be entitled to free school meals due to reasons of low income are eligible for the grants.

[Click here](#) for full details, including eligibility requirements and a list of qualifying benefits, or to make an application via the **Aberdeen City Council** website.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

[Click here](#) for the latest coronavirus updates from the **Scottish Government**.

[Click here](#) for the latest coronavirus updates from **Aberdeen City Council**.

[Click here](#) for the latest coronavirus updates from **Aberdeenshire Council**.

[Click here](#) for the latest coronavirus updates from **Moray Council**.

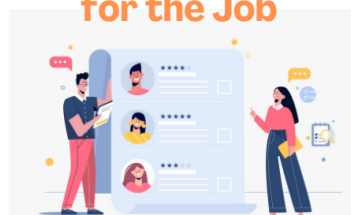
grec LANGUAGE & INTEGRATION TEAM

LANGUAGE WORKSHOPS

Language Works

Tue 23rd March 7:30pm

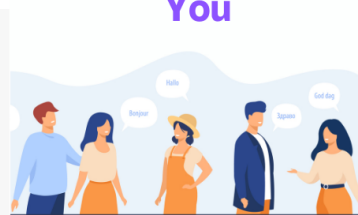
**The Right Person
for the Job**



Language Cafe

Thur 25th March 10:30am

**Getting to Know
You**



Email us at language-cafe@grec.co.uk to sign up

LEARN NEW SKILLS | HAVE FUN | PRACTICE ENGLISH grec.co.uk

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equality for all