

## **Right Approach Campaign: July - December 2016**

### **SCVO**

21 March 2017

### **Introduction**

In 2016 the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) produced the Right Approach campaign to promote and encourage human rights-based approaches in the Scottish third sector. Following on from SCVO's interim report produced in June 2016, this document sets out the developing context of the campaign for the second half of the year. This includes external human rights developments, alongside an overview of the place of human rights within the third sector, details of the campaign's content, followed by an evaluation and appendix of feedback on the campaign from SCVO members.

### **Human rights under threat in the UK**

SCVO began preparing the Right Approach campaign in January 2016 at a time of great threat to human rights in the UK. The very foundations in the UK were being questioned severely by proposals for a British Bill of Rights to replace the 1998 Human Rights Act, accompanied by calls to leave the European Court on Human Rights. This was against a backdrop of increasingly hostile media coverage towards human rights. SCVO realised the dangers and decided a positive human rights campaign was necessary to energise the Scottish third sector to stand up for hard-won rights and freedoms.

As the year progressed, the situation threatened to deteriorate even more for human rights protection in the UK with the European Union (EU) Referendum result of June 2016. The vote to leave the Union means, in theory, UK legislation which guarantees EU law on

human rights can be repealed and throws open the question of adherence to both the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice.

If enacted, these measures would have significant and wide-ranging implications for individuals, communities, public services, charities, social movements and campaigning. This stands in contrast to the Scottish Government, which has continued to support human rights explicitly, including in its latest Programme for Government. Human rights language is often used by Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) from a range of political parties, and a human rights-based approach (HRBA) has framed many issues, including the integration of health and social care.

## **Human rights and the third sector in Scotland**

SCVO has long promoted human rights and played a role in the development of the [Scottish National Action Plan on Human Rights](#). Throughout this period, there has been a strong appreciation of the importance of human rights within the third sector in Scotland. Many SCVO members, for example, regard the 1998 Human Rights Act as an important milestone, and a platform from which to argue for greater incorporation of international human rights legislation.

This, however, has not translated into universal application of human rights-based approaches and the sector can be divided up into three broad categories:

1. organisations actively involved in championing human rights and HRBA
2. organisations aware of the importance of human rights, but not following HRBA
3. organisations unaware, or not appreciative, of the importance of HRBA.

SCVO, therefore, identified the need for a campaign to promote the human rights work of organisations in the first category, and, in doing so, encourage those in positions two and three to follow a human rights-based approach to their work.

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## Taking the Right Approach

In the first half of 2016, SCVO convened a core group of members to ensure the campaign was peer-led from the outset. Engagement prior to the campaign had identified clear support amongst Scottish charities and voluntary organisations for a sector-led human rights campaign and 15 key organisations agreed to join the group.

Just after its interim report was published, SCVO held a roundtable discussion in Inverness to discuss human rights based approaches. A range of local organisations attended and identified key challenges to their work including ensuring the right to shape self-directed support and realising the right to food in a dignified manner. Despite the financial challenges, organisations present discussed innovative solutions to these problems, including sharing resources across organisations.

In the run-up to the launch date, SCVO sourced material from the sector to learn more about how human rights-based approaches was shaping its work. This in turn helped mould SCVO's understanding of human rights and has given a deeper human rights focus to its interpretation of policy. This has included framing SCVO's response to the Social Security Consultation, stressing the human right to social security, alongside the need for a human rights-based culture across the new agency's staff team. Human Rights now stretches across SCVO policy responses, including ongoing social care discussions and the launch of the children in care review.

## Campaign content

The core group decided to start with a two week intensive splash period, followed by a slow-burning campaign. Originally designed to include case-studies, the campaign was redesigned to include podcasts. Although case-studies can provide an in-depth presentation and analysis of an issue, podcasts are a more accessible format in which to communicate.

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On August 29, SCVO launched the Right Approach campaign with two SCVO [blogs](#), alongside a [podcast](#) featuring Naomi McAuliffe, Scotland Director at [Amnesty International](#) discussing her take on human rights in Scotland and the UK. The rest of that week and the next featured a further nine blogs, four podcasts and a video, addressing a range of integral human rights issues, including:

- promoting gender equality
- integrating health and social care
- tackling mental health stigma
- combatting food insecurity
- ensuring children have a voice in decision making
- tackling poverty through involving people with direct experience
- empowering individuals with dementia

After this, the campaign progressed to include blogs on specific issues which arose during the campaign, such as on the [Children in Care Review](#), the [Scottish Labour Market Strategy](#), the [Open Government Partnership](#), and [Universal Children's Day](#). There was also a [podcast](#) with Voluntary Arts Scotland looking at the potential impact of Brexit on the arts and cultural diversity.

The campaign also featured [an exclusive blog](#) from Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equality. Her remit is of paramount importance to the sector and her ringing endorsement of human rights was welcome.

All the campaign material is stored on a landing page on the [SCVO website](#). The page also features a jargon-free description of the campaign, and a link to further useful resources. This includes [Good HQ](#), which encourages users to share stories about their human rights experiences with a particular charity or voluntary organisation.

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## Content design

A challenge we faced was overcoming the perceptions of the term 'human rights' being either too abstract and/or too politically loaded. We therefore used colourful graphics and straight-forward messaging to attract attention and explain the campaign. We used photographs of blog writers in social media posts in order to personalise the content and to generate greater shared ownership, with an embedded link to a blog or podcast. In order to communicate a simple and engaging message, we posted a quote from the blog writer next to their photograph.

This is an example of a social media post:



## Engagement with politicians

As the campaign developed we sought to engage politicians in order to raise awareness of the campaign and the vital work of the sector in protecting human rights. We contacted all elected Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and created [a motion](#) which has so far been signed by 25 MSPs, representing the Scottish National Party, Scottish Labour, the

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Scottish Greens and the Liberal Democrats. We also held a parliamentary drop-in session in which 14 MSPs, from three of the five parties, indicated their support for the campaign.

Further to this, SCVO contacted all the Scottish Members of Parliament (MP) in the House of Commons and held a drop-in session for MPs. 24 MPs came along, including representatives from the SNP, Scottish Labour and one independent, to show their support for the campaign. An Early Day [Motion](#) before the House of Commons has currently been signed by 25 MPs.

In addition, when open the Gathering 2017 conference in February, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon highlighted the success of the Right Approach campaign. [Her speech](#) identified two key crucial messages from the campaign around citizen participation in decision making and holding government to account. Praise of the campaign was part of a wider point on the increasing role the third sector is set to play in the development of human rights

## **Social media engagement**

Campaign content was widely shared across Twitter. The most widely shared [blog](#) described how human rights based approaches are helping people with dementia and their carers to help shape policy and practice. The blog, written by Owen Miller from Alzheimer Scotland, received 17 retweets, 19 likes and made 5,985 impressions.

Over September, when the campaign was at its most active, there were 92 tweets related to the campaign, with 250 mentions and 152k impressions. Of the accounts which engaged with the campaign, the largest, '*Human Rights Grow*', had over 100,000 followers.

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Campaign [podcasts](#) have so far received over 250 listens, with one on Health and Social Care receiving the most plays at 64. This is an encouraging number of plays, though the statistics do not show who listened to the content, nor if they acted on the back of it.

## **Campaign evaluation**

The success of the campaign can be attributed to a range of factors, in particular being low-cost, engaging and collaborative. The use of colourful and straightforward messaging ensured high and sustained engagement, and the campaign's format enabled links to a wide variety and depth of content. In addition, the approach enabled a collective campaign with members feeling part of it. There is now a substantial bank of materials which can be used at a later date for our members.

As momentum built for the campaign, meaningful engagement with politicians at both Holyrood and Westminster was achieved. Support from four different political parties reinforces the justification for the campaign.

A campaign of this size and nature, of course, is limited in what it can achieve. Analysis of the data only gives so much of an insight and cannot determine each individual who looked at the content and, on the back of that, what they did to further human rights-based approaches. In addition, the limits of social media are well documented, not least in terms of the 'echo-chamber' effect.

## **Campaign legacy**

The Right Approach campaign resonated strongly with many of SCVO's members and showed a clear need for strong leadership regarding human rights. In turn, the campaign's development has shaped the policy responses of SCVO, giving human rights concerns greater prominence than was previously the case. Championing human rights will continue

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to be an integral feature of SCVO's work, not least as it joins the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

The OGP is designed to promote citizen participation, greater transparency and accountability, fight corruption and strengthen governance. Central to this is the promotion of human rights. In addition, human rights has also become a central plank of SCVOs analysis of the ongoing Brexit negotiations.

## Appendix I: Activities July to December 2016

Activity	Month
Held roundtable with grassroots organisations in Inverness to discuss social security and human rights (appendix)	Jun-16
SCVO supported the launch of <a href="#">Shared ambition on the future of social care support in Scotland</a> report calling for a human rights based approach	Jul-16
Held roundtable with networks and Scottish Government to discuss Social Security Consultation being launched	Jul-16
Human Rights Core Group meeting	Aug-16
Scottish Campaign on Welfare Reform (SCOWR) held roundtable on social security consultation	Aug-16
Campaign material sourced: blogs received, podcasts recorded and edited	Aug-16
#RightApproach Campaign launched	Aug-16
Discussed human rights and the campaign with the Policy Officer's Network	Sep-16
Discussed human rights campaign with Electoral Reform Society	Sep-16
Met Human Rights Consortium to discuss campaign and future proposals	Sep-16
Hosted Social Security Consultation with SCVO members	Sep-16
Held drop-in at Scottish Parliament to discuss campaign with MSPs	Oct-16

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Met Scottish Government to discuss the importance of human rights underpinning the proposed social security legislation.	Oct-16
Raised human rights campaign with the Scottish Volunteer Forum	Oct-16
Social Security consultation response submitted, framed around human rights	Oct-16
Scottish Government Children in Care strategy launched, SCVO blog on human rights implications	Oct-16
Attended Scottish Government's Universal Periodic Review event	Oct-16
Attended SHRC meeting reviewing the Scottish National Action Plan on Human Rights.	Oct-16
Attended European Economic & Social Committee consultation on Social Pillar of Rights	Nov-16
SCVO 'Healing Divided Societies' workshop at Open Government annual summit, Paris.	Dec-16
Attended Scottish Human Rights Commission Parliamentary Reception	Dec-16
#RightApproach Campaign closed	Dec-16
Presentation to Human Rights Consortium Conference <i>Speaking Up for Human Rights</i> , Edinburgh	Dec-16

## Appendix II: Feedback

Participating organisations were asked to provide a short comment on their impressions of the campaign. Three are listed below to give a flavour:

*"ALLIANCE involvement in the Right Approach campaign was helpful on a number of fronts – enabling us to articulate our role in promoting the adoption of human rights based approaches in health and social care, highlighting some of the key elements of the work so far (including the Declaration Festival), whilst also promoting the work of the ALLIANCE across the sector more widely.*

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*It was also good to do something a bit more creative (the podcast specifically) which allowed for different types of audiences and easy sharing across our own networks.”*

**Andrew Strong, Assistant Director Policy and Communications, Health and Social Care Alliance**

*“We were happy to be involved in the Right Approach campaign and help others appreciate the barriers deaf people face and how these barriers adversely affect their ability to KNOW and enjoy their rights. Inclusive communication and human rights are everyone’s business: let’s make Scotland and Inclusive Communication Nation”! From our perspective there is still considerable work to be done and we call on all our third sector colleagues to get the “Right Message” – Reasonable Rights and Fairer Action for all. Let’s all own them now.”* **Janis McDonald, Scottish Council on Deafness**

*“The campaign was a great opportunity for Alzheimer Scotland, as we’ve been working for years on what a human rights based approach looks like in practice for people with dementia. Our policy officer’s blog for the campaign gained tremendous traction in dementia circles too – a concerted effort to articulate human rights in practice is obviously needed.*

*I hope the campaign is now able to feed into the SHRC/SNAP work and show that there is both an appetite for taking that out into practice, and a need to make that more visible, so that in wherever in either health and social care, or elsewhere in the voluntary sector people work, we are aware of what a rights based approach can do for that work, and of the day to day actions that we already take to support, uphold and promote human rights.”*

**Amy Dalrymple, Head of Policy, Alzheimer Scotland**

## **Appendix III: Contributors**

A special thanks to the following organisations for their guidance and materials for the campaign:

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- Alzheimer Scotland
- Amnesty International
- Church of Scotland
- Engender
- Health and Social Care Alliance
- Humanist Society Scotland
- Inclusion Scotland
- Nourish Scotland
- Poverty Alliance
- Poverty Truth Commission
- Scottish Association for Mental Health
- Scottish Community Development
- Scottish Council on Deafness
- Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees
- Scottish Human Rights Commission
- Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
- Scottish Refugee Council
- Scottish Youth Parliament
- See Me Scotland
- Voluntary Arts Scotland
- Who Cares? Scotland

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## About us

The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is the national body representing the third sector. There are over 45,000 voluntary organisations in Scotland involving around 138,000 paid staff and approximately 1.3 million volunteers. The sector manages an income of £4.9 billion.

SCVO works in partnership with the third sector in Scotland to advance our shared values and interests. We have over 1,600 members who range from individuals and grassroots groups, to Scotland-wide organisations and intermediary bodies.

As the only inclusive representative umbrella organisation for the sector SCVO:

- has the largest Scotland-wide membership from the sector – our 1,600 members include charities, community groups, social enterprises and voluntary organisations of all shapes and sizes

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- our governance and membership structures are democratic and accountable - with an elected board and policy committee from the sector, we are managed by the sector, for the sector
- brings together organisations and networks connecting across the whole of Scotland
- SCVO works to support people to take voluntary action to help themselves and others, and to bring about social change.

Further details about SCVO can be found at [www.scvo.org.uk](http://www.scvo.org.uk).

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