



Annual Report
& Financial Report
2018/19



Wrigley and The Reel Life
Foundation

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During 2018/19

1. Why Wrigley and the Reel Life Foundation was set up:

Wrigley and the Reel Life Foundation (Reel Life) was established as a charity to promote and support the distinctive musical traditions of Orkney, Scotland.

Orkney comprises an archipelago of 70 islands situated off the north coast of Scotland. Of the 70 islands, 20 are inhabited. The islands of Orkney and Shetland belonged to Norway until 1470 when they were given to Scotland as security for a dowry which was never paid, so they share much of their culture and traditions with Scandinavia rather than Scotland, even having different laws than the rest of Scotland to this day. This gives Orcadian music a very distinct “dialect”, phrasing and style.

It is essential that this unique style of playing music is not lost. Even within Orkney, the separate islands and Parishes have their own variations on traditional music and folklore and these differences need to be preserved and celebrated.

Currently the traditional culture is fragile, to a lesser extent older and younger people still do enjoy mixing for storytelling and music sessions, but these informal gatherings and ceilidhs are far more unusual now-a-days. In other parts of the country these traditions have been totally lost, as younger people see them as irrelevant and the close community network has been lost. Not only does this threaten the continuation of the unique traditions of Orkney but it also reduces the interaction between the older and younger generations and increases isolation and loneliness.

Two of the founders of the Reel Life foundation, along with many Orcadian musicians, have and still are performing traditional music both locally, nationally and internationally but recognise that the traditions are at risk of becoming less strong and can now be described as fragile. The purpose of the Reel Life foundation is to build on the existing traditions and to leave a lasting legacy for the people of Orkney to enjoy and celebrate for generations to come.

Our aim is to work with the people of all the Islands and across the Parishes to conserve local music traditions, songs and folklore and to support future generations to continue these traditions. To do this the foundation will arrange workshops, small group activities, concerts and festivals and will send musicians, tutors and storytellers both within mainland Orkney and to the Isles. As well as sending tutors to the Isles, video-conferencing communications such as Skype will be used and developed to connect with those living in more geographically isolated areas, those living in other parts of the world and who cannot therefore easily access classes, tutorials and sessions which regularly take place in the centres of population within Orkney.

Traditional songs, tunes and stories, especially from older members of the community, along with new pieces written in the traditional style will be recorded and archived for reference in the future.

2. Who the Reel Life Foundation helps:

The people of Orkney are the target group that Reel Life is aiming to help.

The purpose of the Reel Life foundation is to build on the existing traditions and to leave a lasting legacy for the people of Orkney to enjoy and celebrate for generations to come.

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Traditional songs, tunes and stories, especially from older members of the community, along with new pieces written in the traditional style will be recorded and archived for reference in the future.

In summary the Reel Life charity supports our passion, creativity and commitment to the unique and distinctive music traditions of Orkney so that our culture and heritage thrives and connects to all age groups (including visitors). We strive to reach out to hear-to-reach parts of the community, to act inclusively and to positively impact on community well-being.

3. What has been done:

The charity was registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, OSCR (No. SCO48216) 15/03/2018, the Trustees were appointed, a Constitution written and adopted and the various policies and procedures were developed. An email address, website and Facebook page were set up, a logo was designed.

Trustees are: Hazel Wrigley (Chair), Jennifer Wrigley (Treasurer), Pam Woodcock (Fundraising), Bruce Mainland (Data protection), Barbara Graham (Secretary).

An information evening with a bring and share supper was hosted at The Reel to let local people know about the plans for the charity, to gather ideas from folk and to recruit volunteers, this has formed the basis for operating the charity.

Fundraising activities have been conducted to permit progressing to the achievements noted below, including the establishment of regular tutor-led Slow Sessions and the founding of a Musical Instrument Bank.

The Trustees of the Reel Life Foundation receiving the Calor Rural Fund award.



Bring and share supper at the launch evening, Kirkwall, 12/03/2018



A successful bid was made to the Orkney Islands Council Culture and Heritage Fund for £1050, this allowed the establishment of regular tutor-led Slow Sessions (19 x 1 hour) starting in April 2018 and the production and printing of 25 music/tune books to be made available at these sessions. The funding covered the cost of room hire, tutor payment and provision of music books.

Another successful bid was from the Calor Rural Fund of £5000, this allowed the establishment of a musical instrument bank to provide a range of instruments to individuals free of charge.

A concert was held in Kirkwall on 15th February 2019 to provide a platform for local musicians old and young, individually and in groups, to play in public. The income from sponsorship, ticket sales, raffle and sale of ice cream was £1480

Further funding of £2000 from the Orkney Islands Council Culture and Heritage fund for 2019/20 has been successfully applied for to continue to provide the Slow Sessions in a pattern of 12 x 2 hour and 14 x 1 hour once a fortnight for the next 12 months from April 2019.

A range of smaller individual donations and income from raffles and a charity concert are itemised in the attached financial report.

4. What has been achieved:

4.1 Slow Sessions

Wrigley and The Reel Life Foundation (RLF) and its tutors recognised an unmet need for musicians of all ages to be able to develop the ability to play in a group in a setting that felt “safe” with other musicians with a wide variety of different instruments, learning to play some local Orcadian and traditional tunes that are commonly played in local sessions around the county.

A music notation book has been produced specifically to help people play these tunes and is available at every session.

The speed that proficient musicians at pub/formal sessions play tunes may be daunting to less able musicians, so to be able to learn to play the tunes slowly and repeatedly, allowing them to build up their confidence and repertoire is essential if they are ever going to be able to join in.

In this way people who do not read music notation can also participate and it builds and develops aural skills, which is also very important. Nurturing people in these early stages is vital in order to build both competence and confidence.

The goal is to enable the musicians to play tunes by memory, but it takes time, practice, repetition and self-confidence to get to that stage.

Having an experienced tutor to lead the group and assist in teaching the timings, interpretation and nuances of the musical phrasing is essential.

Financial barriers can also be a major constraint for people, musical tuition is expensive and may be out of reach for people on a limited income and is a luxury not an essential when considering their priorities.

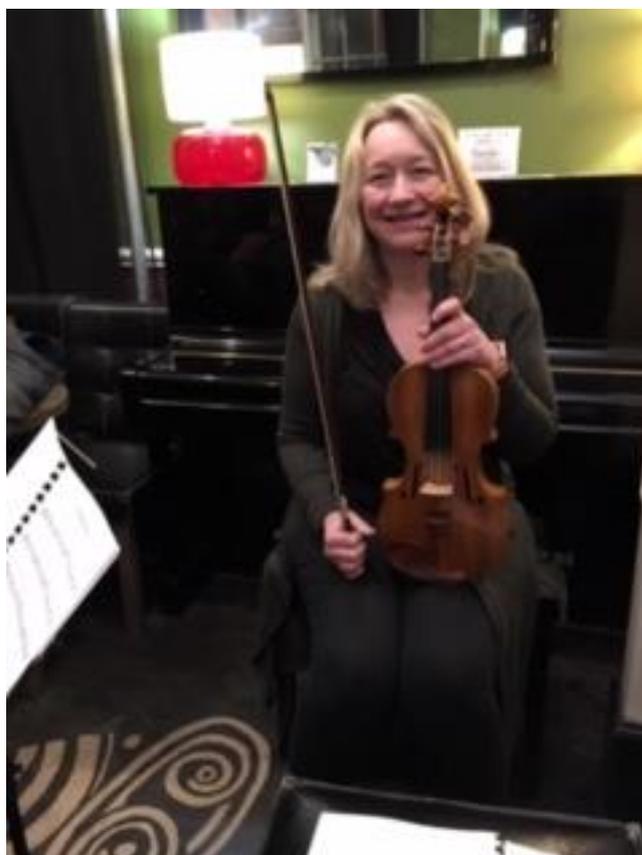
The social and mental well-being that music can provide is well documented and evidence based, minimising social isolation, encouraging friendships, facilitating age integration and providing an environment of mutual respect is important, ensuring that people who may have some mobility problems have easy access and parking to these sessions is also a consideration.

These sessions have been well supported the numbers attending have far exceeded our original estimates, we expected an average of 10 people per session, in reality our numbers have never been under 15, and as many as 33, on average the numbers are 20.

We regularly attract visitors to join the sessions, either using their own instruments or borrowing one from our Musical Instrument Bank, feedback from them is extremely positive.

The age range is diverse from as young as 7 through to late 70's, there is a good gender mix. The group are friendly, open and welcoming.

One of the tutors leading a Slow Session



Slow session musicians (left) and a young harpist with the tutor (right)



The range of instruments played at these sessions is wide, violin, piano, harp, accordion, melodeon, harmonica, cello, Bodhran, guitar, mandolin, whistle, flute and recorder.



Using the music books at the Slow Session



Tutor leading Slow Session



4.2 Instrument Bank

Set up as a unique facility to provide a range of good quality well maintained musical instruments to anyone wishing to borrow them on a short term basis free of charge.

Instruments have been donated and purchased, one of the volunteers agreed to administer the operational aspects of the process, registering and recording each instrument, giving each instrument a unique barcode and interacting with users of the facility. To date there are over 70 instruments in the Instrument Bank



Visitor borrowing a fiddle from the instrument bank and enjoying participating in a session.

Instruments have been loaned to people living locally, visiting the county and to residents of the more distant isles such as Papa Westray.

INSTRUMENT BANK SUMMARY as at 30.3.19

INSTRUMENT	Qty	LOANED
Accordion	5	
Banjo	2	2
Bohran	1	
Cello	1	1
Clarinet	2	
Fiddle	15	8
Viola	1	1
Flute	2	
Guitar	15	2
Keyboard	8	1
Mandolin	3	
Melodica	3	2
Recorder	8	
Ukulele	6	
Whistle	2	1
Total	74	18
<i>Additional</i>		
Guitar amp	1	
Fiddle case	1	

4.3 Fundraising Concert

A fundraising concert showcasing the musical abilities of the users of The Reel Life Foundation and promoting the Instrument Bank and the general work of the charity was held in King Street Halls, February 2019.

A flyer describing the work of the Reel Life Foundation was developed to distribute at this event and at future events, also a banner was printed for use at the fundraising concert and at future events.

The concert was designed to provide a platform for local musicians old and young, individually and in groups, to play in public. The income from sponsorship, ticket sales, raffle and sale of ice cream was £1480.

The Reel Fiddlers performing at the Fundraising Concert





The Reel Life Foundation

www.reellifoundation.com

Who we are

We are a local charity founded in 2018 to support and promote the distinctive musical traditions of Orkney.

What we do

Our aim is to work with the people of all the Islands and across the Parishes to conserve local music traditions, songs and folklore and to support future generations to continue these traditions. Our purpose is to build on existing musical traditions and to leave a lasting legacy for the people of Orkney to enjoy and celebrate for generations to come. The RLF supports our passion, creativity and commitment to the unique and distinctive musical traditions of Orkney so that our culture and heritage thrives and connects to all age groups. We strive to reach both local and hard-to-reach parts of the community, to act inclusively, to positively impact on community well-being and to develop a lasting legacy for future generations. We are specifically focussing on positively impacting on mental health and reaching out to both younger and older age groups and those who are geographically isolated.

How we do it

We arrange workshops, slow sessions, small group activities, concerts and festivals and will send musicians, tutors, instruments and storytellers both within mainland Orkney and to the Isles.

We have established an instrument bank to lend instruments to anyone wishing to 'have a go'.

Traditional songs, tunes and stories, especially from older members of the community, along with new pieces written in the traditional style will be recorded and archived for reference in the future.

Get involved

Volunteer to help us deliver our aims, attend our events, make a donation. Further information is on our website.

Website: www.reellifoundation.com **Email:** reellifoundation@gmail.com

Banner at Fundraising Concert



5. What impact has the Reel Life Foundation had:

Impact has been measured by letters and messages of support for the slow sessions:

Letters of Support 2018/19

From: AG Email

Date: 5 February 2019 at 09:41:57 GMT

To: reellifoundation@gmail.com

Subject: Slow sessions

I have been enjoying the slow sessions since they began .I am an adult learner of fiddle and this mixed instrument session builds up my confidence so hopefully I can join another session within Orkney. The slow session offer a mixture of learning new tunes, meeting new folk with a similar interest in a relatively fun but structured way. We have on occasions had different tutors each with a great approach.

AG

From: BC Many thanks for the sessions, it is great to be able to learn tunes at a pace all can join in. I find that in other sessions there are too many new tunes which are played too fast and no one can remember what they are called, so it is hard to practice in between sessions. i really hope you can continue to provide this much needed service.

Slow session feedback

Feedback on the Slow Session from me is that it's been a very positive experience to play at a reasonable pace and with the excellent leadership of the tutors. Having the music book is great and playing with a wide range of instruments and players of all ages is very rewarding. I have never been able to join a session before and this has really been a life-long ambition now realised.

My only criticism would be the state of the music stands, many of which keep falling over or collapsing; we need new ones please!

From BG

Date: 22 January 2019 at 11:59:48 GMT

To: reellifoundation@gmail.com

Subject: Slow Sessions

The Slow Sessions at the Reel has been a great success in my opinion. It has attracted a lot of players each time. Many folk have never played in a group and this has inspired them to join in and gain confidence. Very enjoyable indeed.

A brilliant idea and long may it continue. From DH

ENQUIRY Slow session - I'm emailing in support of continuing the Slow Sessions at the Reel. I've only joined recently - I'm a later starter guitarist - but am really enjoying playing along with other instruments, my first experience of this. I can't read music, but am picking up (with some help) how the music works.

From GN

I just wanted to express my thanks and appreciation for your work in helping to kick-start the fortnightly Slow Session at the Reel. I have thoroughly enjoyed leading the sessions and have noticed an immense impact on everyone who came along. It has been amazing to witness such progress in playing with confidence, quite a wide repertoire - not only each individual's technique but the ease with which people can play together. There was certainly a feeling of nervousness in the first few sessions and that seems to have totally disappeared.

It has not only addressed all we set out to do but has also attracted younger players such as P - a beginner harper who is now able to follow and play along with the bass lines. This Slow Session has instilled such a confidence and ease in people and it is wonderful to see how open everyone is to trying new and sometimes tricky repertoire because they feel happy in the pace, using notation and the camaraderie they have now in place.

It's become a lovely social event and I get people in the street checking with me when the next one is happening!

Getting players to feel more confident in sharing music in a public is so very inspiring to me as a tutor; slow sessions are crucial to helping beginner and intermediate players feel they could be part of a session or public performance and therefore their own progress becomes so much happier and faster. This session also stabilises their sense of rhythm and pace; often people can only practice alone and in private so many struggle to have a sense of stable rhythm and feel they aren't good enough to play with others. The Slow Session addresses all of these issues perfectly.

From my travels, I know that such sessions do not happen elsewhere in the UK and many would like them to - Orkney could start a new trend!

It has been a joy to be involved and I do hope these continue; I know that some participants now feel that they are now open to joining other sessions in their locality in Orkney. Without the Slow Sessions and the chance to gently build up their confidence, they may never have dared to try sessions further afield.

Many thanks and warmest wishes

Karen Tweed (Tutor)

www.karentweed.com

Why I like the slow sessions

I really like going to the slow sessions. They are absolutely fantastic because it's a session where anybody who can play an instrument can join in, and all the other musical meetings and sessions at the reel are too hard for anyone but adults who really know their stuff to attend. Now, I love playing the fiddle but some of those other sessions play at lightning speed and that's really unhelpful when you're still learning. But at the slow sessions they take really fast tunes and slow them down so that you can actually see how they're made up and you can properly play them.

I started the slow sessions in the summer last year, and back then I was thinking about giving up on the fiddle and that it was too much work. But when I started at the slow sessions I absolutely loved it, and I soon got private lessons at the reel, because I was enjoying playing again. There is nowhere else that you can play tricky tunes easily with other people of a great range of ages and a great range of instruments. The feeling of being able to play at session properly without having to play something extremely difficult at the speed of sound is really encouraging for any young or learning musicians.

By GH, age eleven

I have really enjoyed the Slow Sessions and I found it very helpful to be able to play along with others instead of just practising alone at home. It has given me the confidence to play at some other music sessions in from which I get a great deal of pleasure. I now play in local sessions 2 or 3 times each week and would not have been able to do this without the confidence building that the slow sessions gave me. Regards DW

Anonymous comments:

I started the slow session in the summer last year and back then I considered giving up on the fiddle and that it was too much work, but when I started at the sessions I absolutely loved it.....

“Attending something like this means the world to me.”

“Being a single parent has knocked my self-confidence greatly, the sessions are giving me back some of this confidence.”

“Being an OAP have found being able to join a group and play with other people. It has given me the confidence to pick up the violin again.”

“As an older person who has only recently started playing an instrument It has given me the confidence to join in a couple of sessions, something I did not dare do until I started coming to these sessions.”

“I have made several friends since coming and have started to meet with them and play a few tunes.”

“it is great being able to learn tunes at a pace all can join in. I find in other sessions there are too many tunes which are played too fast and people do not know the names of tunes so you can't go off and learn them.”

“It has been a very positive experience to play at a reasonable pace and with the excellent leadership of the tutors.”

“I have never been able to join in a session beforehand this has really been a lifelong ambition now realised.”

“Many folk have never played in a group and this has inspired them to join in and gain confidence.”

“I found it very helpful to be able to play along with others instead of just practising alone at home. It has given me the confidence to play at some other music sessions from which I get a great deal of pleasure.”

Feedback on the instrument bank has been predominantly verbal, as well as some emails of support, all of which has been extremely positive.

Email feedback included:

"Thank you I have really enjoyed playing the fiddle and appreciate the loan of this one very much."

"...many thanks for helping Papay get fiddling!" (Papay is Papa Westray).

Verbal feedback included:

"Such a great idea and, a super service!"

"Been very helpful"

"I've enjoyed playing the instrument and will continue"

"My 2 daughters practiced for 3 months on loan fiddles and now, I will buy 2 fiddles for them. Thank you very much".

6. Plans for the year ahead 2019/20

Plans for the coming year include efforts to promote the use of the Instrument bank by various means, including a presence at the annual County Show in August 2019 and promotion via BBC Radio Orkney. We also plan to promote the Instrument Bank to those attending the Orkney Tradfest in October 2019, with a strong presence at the 'Come and Try' session that invites people of all ages to simply try any instrument, with the support of tutors.

Expansion of the existing Slow Sessions to hold them for the initial one hour periods and then to continue for a second hour at a faster pace as participants grow in confidence. Further funding of £2000 from the Orkney Islands Council Culture and Heritage fund for 2019/20 has been successfully applied for to continue to provide the Slow Sessions in a pattern of 12 x 2 hour and 14 x 1 hour once a fortnight for the next 12 months from April 2019. Launch a revised version of the tune book with extensive revisions and inclusion of guitar tabs and a CD with all tunes on it; books to be available for Slow Sessions free of charge and for purchase to those wishing to own one.

We plan to explore purchasing a full sized cello and a lever harp for the instrument bank in response to numerous enquiries regarding these instruments.

We aim to take workshops and instrument bank instruments to the remote isles and have started communicating with the first 2 islands in relation to this, with the plan to try to roll out the model further, once operational.

7. Financial Report (unaudited)

The sources of income have been grants, fundraising activities (in particular the Fundraising Concert in February) and donations. The main sources of expenditure have been on musical instruments to establish the Instrument Bank, the services of a professional musician to run the 'Slow Sessions' and the production of a book of music notation to accompany these sessions. These items of expenditure have been fully covered by grants from the Calor Rural Community Fund (for the instruments) and Orkney Islands Council (for both the book and the musician). Creation and maintenance of the dedicated website, production of advertising materials and purchase of special identity labels for the instruments account for most of the remaining expenditure.

Details of the assets held – the instruments – are shown as part of the notes to the accounts. As that shows, less than a third of the instruments now in the bank have been bought, the remainder donated by the generous Orkney public. The grant has now been used up and future acquisitions will need a different source of funding. The various instruments require maintenance. This is currently done voluntarily, the only costs being parts (strings, rosin, etc) which are easily covered by money from fundraising activities. However, it may be necessary at some point to have instruments professionally maintained/repared and some thought should be given as to how this might be funded.

The Foundation is in a healthy financial position at the end of the year. Any new initiatives of any size will require new reliable sources of funds. The sources of income other than grants have been raffles, donations and one concert which are not robust enough to sustain any long-term project.

No reserves are held by the Foundation. No previous year figures are shown as this is the first financial year of operation.

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Year ended 31/03/2019
Receipts			
Donations	700	-	700
Grants	-	6,000	6,000
Fundraising	3,048	-	3,048
Total receipts	3,748	6,000	9,748
Payments			
Fundraising costs	199	-	199
Set up expenses	405	-	405
Payments relating directly to charitable activities	553	1,070	1,623
Sub total	1,157	1,070	2,227
Payments relating to assets			
Purchases of fixed assets	-	4,860	4,860
Sub total	-	4,860	4,860
Total Payments	1,157	5,930	7,087

Net receipts (payments)	2,591	70	2,661
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,591	70	2,661

Statement of Balances - As at 31 March 2019

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2019
Opening cash at bank and in hand	0	0	0
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	2,591	70	2,661
Closing cash at bank and in hand	2,591	70	2,661

Other assets - unrestricted fund

Instruments (estimated)		3,960	3,960
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Liabilities (unrestricted fund)

None	-	-	
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Trustee remuneration – none

Trustee expenses – none

Notes

Assets – Instrument Bank summary

Instrument	Quantity	Loaned	Purchased
Accordion	5		1
Banjo	2	2	1
Bodhran	1		
Cello	1	1	1
Clarinet	2		1
Fiddle	15	8	1
Viola	1	1	1
Flute	2		
Guitar	15	2	3
Keyboard	8	1	5
Mandolin	3		2
Melodica	3	2	3
Recorder	8		
Ukulele	6		5
Whistle	2	1	
Total	74	18	23

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