



Thriving Communities 2022/23

# THE STORY SO FAR







# INTRODUCTION

In June 2021 South Ayrshire Council established the new Thriving Communities service. The service brought together community-based services employability and skills, health and wellbeing, community safety, community learning and development, and community engagement.

In June 2022 Thriving Communities provided members with a report highlighting the progress and key success stories between 2021 – 2022.

The report below provides a further update for members highlighting how Thriving Communities continues to be a high performing, effective and efficient service that continues to evolve while supporting South Ayrshire Councils' new Strategic Plan.

Building on the progress made in year one, Thriving Communities have established four locality-based teams across South Ayrshire:

**Ayr North • Prestwick and Troon • Ayr South and Villages • Carrick**

Locality teams are made up of officers from across the service who work collaboratively with partners at a local level ensuring the needs of each of our unique communities are met.

Over the past year the service has been focusing on establishing these locality teams while supporting other services to move to a locality-based approach.

Thriving Communities are at the forefront of the Community Planning Partnerships (CPP) approach to locality working and are working closely with colleagues in HSCP and Education to develop new approaches to locality working.

Following approval of the new council plan, Thriving Communities developed a new Service Plan that was approved at Council in June 2023.

Thematic Team Plans have also been developed for Employability, Communities and Health and Wellbeing. These plans have helped shape Thriving Communities Locality Plans which set key priorities in each of our localities. These plans have helped ensure the work of Thriving Communities is aligned to SAC priorities and key themes across the CPP are embedded within the plans.

During 2022/23 Thriving Communities also took on the responsibility for Community Wealth Building (CWB) across South Ayrshire. Officers continue to work with colleagues in Procurement, Economic Development and other council service to embed CWB principles within our service and across the organisation.



# 2022/23 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

## EMPLOYABILITY

Thriving Communities are fully committed to improving training and employment opportunities for young people and adults. In line with the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind and UK Shared Prosperity Fund priorities we ensure there are real, meaningful, work experience and training opportunities for people across South Ayrshire to help them achieve their employment goals.

During 2022/23, through a wide range of employability programmes and initiatives **1,175 young people and adults** were supported.

## WORK OUT!

The [Work Out!](#) programme was established in 2009 and offers pupils in S4-S6 the opportunity to take their first steps into the world of work through a range of supported vocational work placements and accreditation.

- In 2022/23 **76 young people** completed the programme and progressed to a positive destination.
- To date over **1,000 pupils** have successfully graduated from the programme.

Over the past three years South Ayrshire has been in the **top three councils** across the country for the number of young people progressing to a positive destination on leaving school and programmes such as Work Out! contribute to that success.





## SCHOOL LEAVER DESTINATION REPORT (SLDR) / PARTICIPATION MEASURE

In partnership with Skills Development Scotland and Education, Thriving Communities play a significant role in ensuring young people reach a positive destination on leaving school.

In February the **SLDR** confirmed **98.6%** of our young people progressed to a positive destination on leaving school – our highest performance to date! (national average 95.7%). For care experienced young people **98.3%**, which equates to 59 out of 60 school leavers progressing to a positive destination, this is significantly higher than the national average of 86.5%.

In June 2023 the **SLDR Follow Up Report** was published confirming South Ayrshire were in the top 3 in the country at **96.9%** (national average 93.5%). The percentage of care experienced leavers in a sustained positive destination was **93.3%** which equates to 56 of the 60 school leavers in a positive destination, this is significantly higher than the national average of 79.2%.

**Participation Measure** reports provide an overview, at national and local level, of how many 16 to 19 year olds in Scotland are in learning, training or work. In May 2023 it was reported that **93.7%** of South Ayrshire young people aged 16-19 years were in a positive destination (national average 90.8%) and in August 2023 the report confirmed **96.6%** of young people were in a positive destination (national average 94.3%).



# MODERN APPRENTICES



We offer [Modern Apprenticeship](#), at a variety of SCQF levels, to young people aged 16 to 19 or up to the age of 29 if they are care experienced, a young carer and/or have an additional support need.

- During 22/23 we supported **157 Modern Apprentices** within **12 vocational areas** across the organisation.
- We are committed to providing opportunities for all and closing the equality gap by ring-fencing MA opportunities for **young people who are care experienced** or a young carer During 2022/23 **12.7%** of SAC's Modern Apprentices were care experienced (national average 2%)
- To **support young people with additional support needs** to access our modern apprenticeships we use a range of methods, including flexible, personalised, one-to-one support and pre-apprenticeship opportunities. **36.6%** of our apprentices identified as having an additional support need (national average being 13.3%)
- Since 2018 over **2,000 young people have started with South Ayrshire Council as a Modern Apprentice.**



## LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED PROGRAMME – [EVOLVE](#)

During 2022/23 Thriving Communities committed to creating **40 temporary, new and additional employment opportunities**. Due to the success of the programme and support from the Scottish Government **we were able to create an additional 9 positions**.

Employment opportunities were created in occupational sectors where there are skills shortage, existing labour demands or emerging sectors. **31 jobs** were created with South Ayrshire Council and **18** with the 3rd Sector.

## EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE (ERIS)

From April 2022 to March 2023, through No One Left Behind funding, Thriving Communities have helped **50 local businesses** recruit individuals through our Employer Recruitment Incentive.

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT / CHILD POVERTY

Thriving Communities provide support for families experiencing poverty within South Ayrshire. They receive tailored support to develop the skills to address their situation which includes developing money management skills, access to training and improving employment opportunities. Enhanced support is available to families living in South Ayrshire's most deprived areas. During April 2022 – March 2023 **the team provided support to 86 families across South Ayrshire**.

Free School Meals	Clothing Grants	Benefit Gain	Best Start Grant
£34,806	£9,129	£12,768	£3,420

## LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY PARTNERSHIP (LEP)

South Ayrshire's [LEP](#) is a well-established partnership with collective leadership and a shared commitment across partners to provide a more aligned approach to national and local employability support. The LEP lead the planning, decision-making and implementation of employability provision across South Ayrshire to ensure individual needs and labour market demands are met.



## COMMISSIONING

Through No One Left Behind the LEP **commissioned 5 training programmes**, including a Skills Academy with QTS and Sector Based Work Academies where there are labour market demands such as Hospitality and Care. **59 clients have been supported to access commissioned training, with a completion rate of 86%**







## COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community Safety remains a priority for Thriving Communities and our new model ensures local issues can be addressed by local officers, at a local level, with a range of skills and experience.

Thriving Communities continue to provide support to the CPP Community Safety Partnership SDP. Work includes; coordinating re-deployable CCTV, Violence Against Women Partnership, reducing violence, reducing accidents in our homes and on our roads, and creating safer, more attractive places through community engagement.



## COMMUNITY SAFETY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Youth disorder has fallen in 2022-23 by **14%** from the previous year.
- Delivered road safety input to **900** S5/6 pupils, Modern Apprentices and Ayrshire College pupils.
- Provided £10,000 funding to Police Scotland to support local campaigns such as Safe Ayr.
- Delivered targeted community safety inputs to individuals and groups at all secondary schools.
- Delivered environmental initiatives at Dalmilling, Braehead and Kincaidston Primary Schools.
- Worked alongside youth workers and Police Scotland to address youth disorder and anti-social behaviour during the school holidays in our communities.
- Continued to coordinate the re-deployable CCTV cameras across South Ayrshire this includes support for events such as The Pavillion and The International Ayr Show.
- Currently dealing with **16 areas** of complaint from members of the public ranging from graffiti, quad bikes, and antisocial behaviour by young people including fire raising, drinking and general nuisance.

Over the next year officers will be working partners to develop a new Community Safety Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027. This plan will set out the key priorities for the Community Safety Partnership.







## COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (CLD)

The mid-term Community Learning and Development Plan 2021-24 was approved at [CLD Plan Service and Partnership Performance Panel](#) in June 2023. The report sets out key highlights across the CLD partnership including key achievements of Thriving Communities.

## YOUTH WORK

Our Thriving Communities Youth Work team aim to empower and support young people to improve their life chances and opportunities so as they can plan for a better future. We believe that every young person should have the opportunity to realise their potential whatever their life circumstances. We work collectively to provide our young people with the skills, confidence and resilience required to achieve the very best they can. Our youth work takes place in a variety of settings including community centres, schools, youth cafés and street work.

- **2,122** young people engaged in CLD youth work provision in 2022/2023.
- **968** young people engaged in community-based youth provision
- **778** engaged in Holiday Programmes
- **376** engaged in school provision across the service

- **964** young people were within targeted groups, which is **45%** of young people engaged in CLD youth work provision either lived in SIMD decile 1-3, were a young carer, care experienced or a referred group.
- **89** programmes and **31,566** hours of learning
- **35** of the programmes were community-based youth work involving **15,182** hours of learning
- **22** holiday programmes across the authority engaging young people in **6,931** hours of learning
- A further **32** programmes were based in schools involving **9,453** hours of learning. On average, each individual young person was engaged in **15** hours of learning
- Adult and youth volunteers contributed to **969** hours of volunteering in youth work programmes in 2022-23.
- Young people gave **800** hours of volunteering commitment and adults 169 hours. Volunteering roles included organising youth club activities, community events and running youth groups.



## YOUTH WORK NETWORK

In August 2022, we set up our Youth Work Network with the intention of bringing local youth work organisations together. The network provides partners supporting youth work for young people aged 8-18 in South Ayrshire with an opportunity to engage with other practitioners, plan collaboratively, develop their skills, knowledge and practice and inform local and national youth work strategy.

The South Ayrshire Youth Work Network currently has **45** member organisations including South Ayrshire Council – Thriving Communities; Uniformed Youth Groups; Girvan Youth Trust; The Ark; VASA; Room 60; Champions Board; South Ayrshire Befrienders; South Ayrshire Young Carers Centre; LGBT Youth Scotland; The Gaiety and Voluntary Youth Work Groups.





## **In August 2022 Thriving Communities hosted the first ever youth work festival for young people 'Bounce Festival 22'.**

The main aim of the event was to provide local young people aged 10 to 16 with an opportunity to engage and enjoy a wide range of positive activities, including live music, entertainment, street food, health and wellbeing workshops and a Youth Voice consultation. Thriving Communities recognised that engagement levels of young people aged 10 to 14 were lower than expected in our Childcare Hubs when compared to that of young people aged 5 to 10. Anecdotal evidence suggested that older young people were reluctant to participate due to the large age gap and their differing needs hence why we created, developed and delivered #BounceFestival22!

Over **300** young people attended the event in Ayr and took part in the activities arranged by Thriving Communities officers. Young people from as far as Ballantrae to Dundonald attended the event with transport being provided by Thriving Communities.

The event is scheduled to take place again in August 2023.

## NATIONAL YOUTH WORK OUTCOMES

Through a Learning Conversation with their Key Worker, young people were asked to reflect on their involvement in youth work and what difference this had made. Learner Journey Forms were completed by 513 young people.

### Positive Relationships

Almost all young people (494), completing a learner journey form reported that their involvement in the CLD youth work had helped to build positive relationships.

### Safe and Welcome

Almost all young people (512), reported that they were able to participate safely and effectively in their group.

### Have a Say

Almost all young people (466), reported that they have had the opportunity to express their voice and demonstrate social commitment.

### New experiences

Almost all young people (467), said that they had the opportunity to broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking.

### Gained Skills/Knowledge

Most young people (429) reported that they had gained a new skill and/or knowledge.

### Better informed decisions

Most young people (440), completing a learner journey form reported that they were better informed to consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control.

### Positive future

Almost all young people (459), reported being confident, resilient and optimistic for the future.

## YOUTH WORK ACCREDITATION

**404** young people registered their participation in youth awards with **396** successfully achieving this, which is a completion rate of **98%**. The most popular youth awards were Hi5! Awards, Dynamic Youth Awards, Saltire Awards and John Muir Awards. Of the **89** youth projects delivered in 2022-23, accreditation was offered in **27** of these.



## DETACHED AND DIVERSIONARY YOUTH WORK

**Working closely with colleagues across Thriving Communities and Police Scotland, we have continued to develop our Detached Youth Work offer across South Ayrshire over the past 12-months.**

Our role is to deploy skilled Youth Workers to engage positively with young people in their local community to challenge their attitudes and actions in an attempt to alleviate antisocial behaviour and support critical discussion around alcohol consumption, personal safety, and drug use. Detached Youth Workers respond quickly to emerging themes by facilitating informal issue-based inputs on the street. It's also a great opportunity for us to build relationships with young people who aren't engaged in traditional youth work provision and support them to make informed choices.

We also devised an aspirational diversionary programme targeted at young people of secondary school age involved in anti-social behaviour and underage drinking on Friday evenings and during the weekend. The programme has a focus on off-site activities which offer young people new experiences and opportunities to participate in exciting activities, out-with our centre-based provision. Young people have been identified through targeted local youth club provision, street work and discussions with other key partners. This initiative complements our TAYP (Targeted Approach Young People) project which is usually facilitated during the school day.

- Youth disorder has fallen by **14%** in 2022/23 from the previous year
- We have delivered a total of **101** detached youth work sessions on Friday evenings (**21** during Summer 2023) in 2022/23.
- Areas targeted by youth workers are directly informed by local data and trends



# YOUTH VOICE

## Consultations

Young people had the opportunity to complete a range of consultations on issues that matter most.

The surveys were delivered in a range of methods such as online/paper through school drop in's and youth groups.

- A total of **10** consultations (surveys and focus groups) delivered with **922** young people sharing their views on issues that matter most.
- 2 of the surveys were fed nationally to shape GIRFEC and Scottish Government for the National Discussion with young people reporting what they expect from Education.
- Feedback from the surveys have created a better understanding of how to communicate and share information. Young people's views gathered were used to identify existing and emerging needs to set and review priorities and targets.



## Youth Voice Events

Events ranged from first young person's Ayr Pride, Bounce Youth Festival, Question Time with Elected Members and National Discussion.

- A total of **3** youth led youth events open to young people aged 12 to 25 years across South Ayrshire.
- A total of **485** young people participated in the planned events.
- There were various sessions set up to work with **35** young people to plan the various events.



# YOUTH VOICE

## Young Scot National Entitlement Card Progress

A total of **11,046** young people aged 5 to 22 years now have access to free bus transport, which is **57%** of the population. Those living in most disadvantaged communities and circumstances were supported to apply within a wide range of settings that met their needs.

From September 2022 to August 2023 a total of **112** in-person support sessions were offered, enabling around **3,000** families to have one-to-one support to apply for the NEC smart card.

A wide range of methods were put in place to support families and young people across South Ayrshire to complete NEC applications:

- Online via GOSS open for pupils in all Primary and Secondary Schools to complete
- **10** market stalls at community events
- **29** in person school support sessions
- **73** community library drop in sessions

## Say It Out Award

The SIOL Award supports schools in evaluating their own mental health and wellbeing approaches and developing plans to identify areas for improvement within the school community.

- **14** primary schools and **4** secondary schools registered with Say It Out Loud Award.
- **170** young people participating in the award and acting as School Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassador's
- **2** schools have achieved the 1st level
- **4** schools have achieved the 2nd level
- **3** schools have achieved the 3rd level



# SHOWCASING IMPACT



Braehead Primary Fun  
Friday's Alternative  
Curriculum Project



Summer Programme  
2022

**VIDEO  
COMING  
SOON**

Summer Programme  
2023



Bounce Youth Work  
Festival 2022

**VIDEO  
COMING  
SOON**

Bounce Youth Work  
Festival 2023



Iona Barrie, Youth Work  
Modern Apprentice



Maybole Youth  
Voice Group



Lochside Senior  
Youth Club



Fullerton Woods  
Allotment





## ADULT LITERACIES, ESOL AND MULTIPLY

In January 2023 a new Multiply team was established to meet the UKSPF Multiply objectives. Multiply is a specific funding stream to support adults over 19yrs to improve numeracy as part of the Levelling Up UK Government agenda.

To date 182 parents have requested numeracy support and links with Education have identified 32 classroom assistants looking to upskill. The new team is developing new programmes and interventions to support people who require support, this provision will continue until March 2025.

### Adult Literacies:

During 2022 the team have been involved in national initiatives, including writing the new Adult Learning Strategy with Scottish Government Adult learning strategy 2022 to 2027 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)) .

This has given South Ayrshire increased profile at policy discussion level and staff continue to play a strategic role in the future of the strategy with planning board representation.



## ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES - ESOL

Thriving Communities play an active role in the settlement of unaccompanied single children.

We are currently supporting 11 young people aged 16/17 years who are settling in South Ayrshire.

The learners include nationalists from countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan and Eritrea, most have had little or no education and are supported by our literacy officers.

Generic ESOL provision which takes place across all localities is available over 5 days and 3 evenings per week.

### CASE STUDY

South Ayrshire ESOL Chat Café is a successful project where local residents along with New Scots come together once a month to have coffee and a chat.

The café offers the possibility to volunteer as a server. This gives New Scots the opportunity to practice their newly acquired language skills in a working café. It also provides upskilling opportunities to all who wish to partake in some of the duties needed to run the café. A trained barista prepares a variety of drinks, and the volunteers use their speaking and writing skills to take orders. This is an effective way to meet people but also an opportunity to gain experience within a café environment.





## UKRAINIAN RESPONSE

Since April 2022, we have welcomed Ukrainian learners into the service, engaging with **213 residents** in South Ayrshire. The ESOL programme was delivered across South Ayrshire in various venues in Ayr, Girvan, Troon and Maybole. Our focus continues to be to respond to needs as they arise and provide quality and timely community-based adult literacies learning opportunities across South Ayrshire for all.

Our Ukrainian guests have benefited from the new Thriving Communities model and have had the opportunity to participate in a range of outdoor activities arranged by Thriving Communities and local partners. During the summer 2022 Ukrainian families took part in kite surfing, paddleboarding, and scaling a climbing wall in Troon.

During 2022 South Ayrshire became the first LA to work with WEA in creating and delivering the first Community Interpreting course in Scotland. This will start to develop opportunities for New Scots and Ukrainian guests to develop their language skills in a way that could lead to employment as well as providing a much-needed service to our communities that supports integration.

## FUNDING

Thriving Communities External Funding Officer supports local groups and organisations to build capacity by identifying and assisting with external funding streams. During 2022/23 relationship have been formed with key funders including NCCBC, Foundation Scotland and National Lottery.

The External Funding Officer has also supported each of the thematic teams across Thriving Communities. This includes; supporting local sports clubs, supporting the local economy and community empowerment.

Thriving Communities coordinated the distribution of LACER funding that supported communities and social enterprises.

- **£200,000 was distributed to support Social Enterprises**
- **£100,000 was distributed to empower community groups and organisations to support with the Cost of Living.**

In March 2023 **£112,991.62** was distributed to 9 community groups through the Coastal Communities Fund.

### Key strengths

- **33 dedicated funding reports developed**
- **£324k investment to communities (int)**
- **£1.6m of external funding**

Plans are being developed to distribute more funding to communities through the use of UKSPF, this will include participatory budgeting.

The funding alert that has been redesigned and published continues to receive positive feedback from groups, organisations and local communities. The role of the external funding officer has strengthened the relationship with VASA and the 3rd sector.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Placing community empowerment and engagement as a key priority has allowed Thriving Communities to provide dedicated support for community councils. 29 active Community Councils have been supported by a dedicated link officer from across the service.**

During the 2022/23, we facilitated three contested elections which resulted in 6,000 ballot papers being prepared. Thriving Communities also provided training for Community Councils, SAC Service Leads and Elected Members. We carried out surveys with Community Councillors and following this made changes to the Scheme for Establishment.

Officers continue to work alongside groups to take on assets in their local community through the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) process and provided ongoing support to ensure groups feel supported.

Thriving Communities also facilitated the Place Planning sessions that resulted in capital projects being awarded funding through the Capital Investment Programme. This includes projects such as; Stumpy Tower, The Pontoon and installation of community display boards.





# HEALTH AND WELLBEING



Thriving Communities are fully committed to improving health and wellbeing across South Ayrshire supporting communities to increase participation in sport, physical activity and outdoor learning to improve physical, social and emotional wellbeing, and to provide additional opportunities for those to become involved and remain involved in performance sport. We also create a variety of opportunities to volunteer, gain accreditation and develop skills for life.

## ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Our Active Schools programme provides more and higher quality opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity before school, during lunchtime and after school, and develops effective pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community.

During 2022-23 **5,664 young people** (nearly **80,000 participant sessions**) took part in our Active Schools programme including

- **1,888 young people with additional support needs**
- **267 from a BME background**
- **131 with care experience**
- **87 young carers.**

\*Participant sessions = number of visits to Active Schools sessions

## ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

Our Active Communities programme, incorporating our Inspire Disability sport programme, was launched in May 2021 to re-engage communities with sport and physical activity following COVID. COVID recovery funding allowed us to offer nearly **1,750 free sessions** across South Ayrshire communities during evenings and weekends to support our communities to improve their physical and mental wellbeing; this has continued as a subsidised low-cost community programme of activities for children, young people, adults and older adults.

Our free holiday programme over summer 2022 provided secondary school based multi-sport camps, village pop up sport sessions for those living in rural areas, transition sport camps to support young people moving from primary to secondary school, beach sport days and diversionary activity to discourage anti-social behaviour.

In 2022 we were successful in receiving **£410,722** investment from Sportscotland to expand our support to communities in Ayr South and Ayr North, and complement existing staffing in North/South Carrick, and Prestwick/Troon until March 2026. The focus of the funding is to support healthier communities, reduce inequalities and create a positive sport and physical activity culture across communities.





## WALKING FOR HEALTH

Following the recruitment of a Walking Development Officer in April 2023 the programme has focused on improving capacity, resilience and the profile of our Health walk programme. The current funding targets our older population, those with additional support needs, families living in areas of high deprivation, New Scot communities and individuals with experience of the criminal justice system.

- **15 weekly walks taking place across 7 localities from Troon to Ballantrae**
- **1447 people participating in the walking programme.**
- **33 Active volunteer Walk Leaders**
- **Walk Leader recognition event at Rozelle**
- **16 new Walk Leaders trained in 2022/23**

## CLOSING THE GAP

Equality, diversity and inclusion underpin the programmes we develop and deliver across South Ayrshire. In 2022 we were successful in receiving **£501,032** investment from sportscotland to employ and Active Schools Assistant per locality area to work in and support targeted communities. The focus of this investment is to increase positive engagement with young people living in identified areas with high levels of rural and social deprivation and identify and reduce the barriers to lifelong participation in sport and physical activity.







## COMMUNITY SPORTS HUBS

Our Community Sports Hub programme has established improved partnerships with local sports clubs and organisations to develop, diversify and encourage collaboration to improve the range of opportunities for all ages and abilities across South Ayrshire. Our Club Ready affiliation scheme supports sports club to improve and provides reassurance to schools and communities that they are safe, fun and a good place to participate in sport. Our new Changing Lives approach uses sport and physical activity to intentionally bring about positive changes for people, which delivers against the six Active Scotland outcomes as well as wider outcomes such as health, education, environment, and transport. We are committed to embedding a 'Changing Lives' approach within South Ayrshire's Scotland's sporting system.

- **45** Club Ready affiliated clubs
- Delivery of **2 Changing Lives workshops**
- **17** clubs receiving over **£30,000** of Changing Lives funding
- **5** clubs/partners receive annual SAC funding totalling **£32,000** via Service Level Agreements

This funding has supported South Ayrshire clubs to remove barriers to participation for identified groups within their communities whom they may not have connected with before. A few examples of some of the projects are:

## COACHING & VOLUNTEERING

Our Coaching and Volunteering programme delivers a range of opportunities to develop a diverse workforce about to support sport across South Ayrshire. COVID recovery funding allowed us to support sports clubs to return to delivery and develop their workforce to meet the needs of the club and local community.

- **18** coach education courses delivered
- **150+** coaches and volunteer participated
- **23** different local sports clubs represented

Our Developing Young Workforce programme provides a robust pathway of opportunities for young people from Primary 7 to S6, and students from Ayrshire College and UWS.

- **1017** P7 pupils completed the Junior Coaching Academy programme
- **85** S3-S6 pupils selected to be part of the Active Schools Leadership programme
- **787** qualifications achieved by Young Leaders
- Leadership Academy 2 day residential at Inverclyde National Sports Centre in October 2022
- **10** UWS students selected to complete a placement within the Active Schools programme
- **18** students from Ayrshire College and UWS engaged as volunteers within the Active Schools programme

December 2022 welcomed the return of our annual Sports Awards recognition evening at Troon Town Hall. The awards are a fantastic opportunity to recognise the commitment and invaluable contribution of coaches and volunteers across South Ayrshire, and to celebrate the successes of our talented athletes.





## COMPETITION

This year we returned to our full primary and secondary competition programme. Competitions and festivals were held across South Ayrshire for a range of sports, ages and abilities.

- **40** primary competitions
- **11** secondary competitions
- **2,079** different young people took part in at least one competitive opportunity
- **13** different sports available
- **10** local sports clubs supported the competition programme

COVID recovery funding has supported a number of facility developments locally to improve the sporting infrastructure within the North Ayr Craigie campus and allows us to attract national and international sporting events to South Ayrshire. We were invited to host the Olympic qualification women's beach volleyball Nations Cup at Kyle Academy Beach Volleyball Courts welcoming international athletes from Poland, Czech Republic and Belgium; and the GB trials for Beach Sprints at Ayr beach in partnership with Scottish Rowing.

## TALENTED ATHLETES

Our Talented Athlete programme was relaunched to support our elite athletes with the opportunity to access a range of support in their journey to excellence including:

- Funding to support attendance at regional/national training camps or competitions
- Free membership to their nearest South Ayrshire Council gym in partnership with SA Sport & Leisure
- Sport specific strength and conditioning programmes
- Access to a range of talented athlete workshops

In 2022 a total of **17 South Ayrshire athletes** received talented athlete support

- **6** Athletes supported through gym only membership
- **4** Athletes supported through grant only
- **7** Athletes supported through gym and grant
- **£2240** in grant payments were distributed

The additional training and grants were invaluable to the success of our athletes last year with 10 athletes competing for Scotland and Great Britain in a variety of sports including; basketball, handball, pétanque, gymnastics and swimming. Many of our athletes also reached the podium in a variety of sports.

## DOLPHIN HOUSE

Dolphin House is now open to schools and communities for **50 weeks per year, and 7 days a week** allowing us to provide a greater range of outdoor learning experiences to an increasingly diverse audience including schools groups, community groups, Young Carers, The Champions Board and care experienced young people and their families, Thriving Communities groups such as youth work and employability, those with additional support needs and older adults. The centre's programme has developed to offer a variety of quality outdoor education programmes and experiences including:

- 4-day residential programme supporting pupils to develop independence, team skills and communication
- 2-day adventurous activities residential focussing on experiential learning and exploring the great outdoors
- Outreach activities at various locations across Ayrshire bringing outdoor learning to communities
- Accreditation opportunities for school and community groups including encouraging respect and appreciation of the natural world through the John Muir Award
- Approved training centre for a range of National Governing Body awards including Mountain Training, Cycling Scotland and National Navigational Awards providing training courses for the outdoor workforce

During 2022/23 Dolphin House welcomed nearly **1500 young people, 36 different schools, including 4 additional support needs schools, and 41 different community groups**. Dolphin House has also been successful in achieving a two-year Adventurous Activities Licence (AALA) providing assurance that good safety management practice is being followed so that young people can have opportunities to experience exciting and stimulating activities outdoors while not being exposed to avoidable risks. The Adventurous Activities Licence commissioned by HSE, allows the team to deliver a range of safe, adventure activities including; caving, hillwalking, water sports, climbing and mountain biking. These activities foster a culture of 'challenge through choice' and introduce the concepts of exploration and collaborative learning.





## TALENTED ATHLETES

**Care Experienced Programme:** Funding was used during 2022 to support young people and their families who are care experienced to engage in outdoor learning activities at Dolphin House. Weekly visits took place throughout the summer holidays giving **18 families** the chance to take part in a residential experience and a further **15 young people** took part in day activities.

**Secondary COVID Recovery Programme:** Funding was secured to expand the current outdoor opportunities to ensure young people who had missed out on a residential experience, or who struggled to engage in learning following lockdown, were supported to engage in outdoor learning. Additional outdoor learning sessions were arranged in the community and at Dolphin House for all 8 secondary schools and three additional support needs schools/bases. Over **400 young people** took part in the 4-day programme during 2022/23 and evaluations demonstrated positive feedback from young people, parents, and staff.





## THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

In 2022/23 **526 young people** started the programme with **373 (83%) completing the award**, this is one of the highest completion rates in Scotland.

The Thriving Communities team created a new group in conjunction with the Virtual School team and have supported **8 care experienced young people** to complete their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award and start working towards their Silver Award.

This year we are really proud of the dedication and hard work of the **14 young people**, representing 6 different South Ayrshire secondary schools, who achieved their Gold Duke Of Edinburgh's Award and were invited to attend Holyrood Palace to celebrate their achievements.

**COVID Recovery – Expedition programme:** COVID recovery funding was secured to support young people within South Ayrshire secondary schools to overcome financial barriers to access the expedition part of the Duke Of Edinburgh's Award supporting them to complete the award during 2022/23. The funding provided **77 expedition places** as well as support within schools to complete the other sections of the award and expedition training.

## OUTREACH OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

A range of additional outreach venues and activities have been developed over the last year to support the demands on outdoor activities post-COVID and to increase the delivery capacity of the outdoor team. Risk assessments and operating procedures were developed and embedded across the team to utilise our natural environment to promote and support physical activity and outdoor learning within communities across South Ayrshire.



# SUMMARY



The new Thriving Communities service continues to have a positive impact on communities across South Ayrshire. As the service continues to evolve, new ways of working continue to be developed that will further enhance and increase opportunities for South Ayrshire Council and our communities.

Despite the economic challenges the service continues to demonstrate that it is a high performing service while also seeking new opportunities by maximising external funding.

The new service has also strengthened the relationship with partners including the 3rd sector and the Community Planning Partnership, and these partnerships with continue to grow through the new locality-based model.