

# Thriving Communities Progress Report 2023 - 2024



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**THRIVING  
COMMUNITIES**

*south*  
**AYRSHIRE**  
COUNCIL  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Deas  
Making a Difference Every Day

Thriving Communities was established in June 2021 bringing together South Ayrshire Councils Community based services including Community Learning and Development, Employability, Community Safety and Health and Wellbeing.

Over the past three years progress has been made to improve outcomes across the service, most notably the School Leaver Destination stats placing South Ayrshire among the highest in Scotland.

Education Scotland carried out a Progress Visit of Community Learning and Development in South Ayrshire during October 2023, findings from this visit [Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report](#) highlighted strengths in the use of data to improve performance and outcomes. It was also recognised that there is a clear commitment and ambition across Thriving Communities to address inequality by supporting communities and individuals who are most disadvantaged.

The strength of the workforce was highlighted noting that staff and volunteers, across all levels, felt empowered to make decisions, an ambition that was set out when establishing the new Thriving Communities service.

The collaboration and the strength of the partnership with our external partners has been developed through the positive relationships formed over the past three years. Despite economic challenges facing the public sector Thriving Communities have worked alongside our partners to secure external funding that has allowed us to enhance our offer during 2023/24 and support young people, adults and our communities.

This report provides an overview of the successes and challenges during 2023/24 building on the previous 'Story So Far' progress reports [Year 2 Progress Report](#). This report provides some of the key priorities and achievements from across the service.



## Developing and shaping our localities

The Leadership Team within Thriving Communities have strived to establish locality-based teams across the service to help coordinate provision at a local level, avoid duplication, maximise resources and influence other services and stakeholders to reform and redesign their services to support collaboration. Placing Community Planning at the heart of our service delivery has allowed Officers at all levels to work closely with colleagues from HSCP and Third Sector organisations, including Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA).

Implementing locality-based teams across the service has created both internal and external challenges, particularly where remits have changed, or professional boundaries challenged. Locality working has strengthened partnership working and ensured a clearer focus on priorities using data and action planning, this has helped shape service delivery. The Team Leaders in the four localities are working closer with the HSCP Locality Managers and other services within SAC including Information and Advice Hub, Asset Management and Education Family First initiative.

Over the past twelve months there has also been a focus on protecting and enhancing our assets in our communities while also trying to secure external funding that can support communities to upgrade their facilities. This includes the introduction of the Community Empowerment Fund through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Although a greater focus has been placed on a place-based approach across the service, Thriving Communities continue to prioritise and focus on improving outcomes for priority groups including our Young Carers, Young People who are Care Experienced and families living in deprivation.



# Communities Team

## Community Learning and Development

Thriving Communities Community Learning & Development support is developed and actioned through priorities identified by the Community Learning & Development Partnership, and through actively engaging with communities to identify need.

### Community Learning and Development Partnership

The Community Learning & Development (CLD) Partnership is made up of representative from South Ayrshire Council, Police Scotland, South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership, NHS Ayrshire & Arran, Ayrshire College, Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA), Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The partnership is responsible for coordinating the delivery of CLD activity across South Ayrshire, in line with the priorities identified within the CLD Partnership Plan.

To achieve the priorities Thriving Communities deliver:-

- Youth Work
- Adult & Family Learning
- ESOL & Literacy Support
- Community Development

The new CLD Plan 2024-2027 will be published in September 2024 following on from consultation that took place during February 2024 – June 2024



# Youth Work

Our Thriving Communities 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 on the street through our detached youth work programme.

## Key Youth Work Data:

Number of young people engaged by youth work theme:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Holiday Programmes	422	778	298	158
Community-based Youth Work	1263	968	613	390
Work in schools	412	376	125	206
Total	2,097	2,122	1,036	754

Background information:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Care Experienced	59	58	61	14
Young Carers	29	13	49	7
SIMD 1-3	893	1,104	500	260
Referred Group	147	119	103	134
Out with Target Group	969	828	323	340
Total	2,097	2,122	1,036	755

Learner Hours by theme:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Holiday Programmes	3755	6,931	1,977	1,488
Community-based Youth Work	19,484	15,182	14,911	3,683
Work in schools	6,567	9,453	3,528	4,548
Total	29,806	31,566	20,416	9,719

Learning Outcomes:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Positive Relationships	388	494	362	106
Safe and Weclome	403	512	376	113
Have a Say	376	466	346	100
New Experiences	361	467	343	103
Skills and Knowledge	357	429	318	106
Better Informed Decisions	343	440	328	78
Positive Futures	358	459	358	107
Total Number Completed	404	513	378	113

Youth Work Accreditation:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Hi5! Award	88	184	18	9
Dynamic Youth Award	53	76	30	21
John Muir Award	29	17	27	15
Saltire Award	57	95	42	21
Youth Achievement	0	2	0	0
Duke of Edinburgh- Bronze	11	3	8	5
Duke of Edinburgh- Silver	0	6	0	0
Princess Trust Achieve L5	1	0	0	0
Princess Trust Achieve L4	1	3	0	0
Princess Trust Achieve L3	2	10	0	0
SQA Personal Development	0	0	12	6
Total Awards Completed	242	396	137	77

Thriving Communities – Locality Youth Voice Groups

Consultation through the ‘Have Your Say’ and ‘Social Media’ surveys, along with focus groups, has provided Community Planning partners with a better understanding of how young people want their voices heard and information shared.

Young people expressed a preference for local Youth Voice Groups to address issues specific to their communities. In response, Thriving Communities established groups in Ayr North, North Carrick, and Glendoune, with plans for Prestwick, Troon, and Ayr South.

These groups empower young people aged 11+ to influence their communities by contributing to projects like skate park development, youth activities, event planning, and youth centre refurbishment. For example, the North Carrick Youth Voice Group consulted over 300 young people on the design of Maybole’s skate park, directly shaping the final build.

Members have also contributed to other events including Bounce and Question Time.

[Maybole youth voice group | SAYWW.mp4 on Vimeo](#)



Youth Work

Over the past 3 years, Thriving Communities have delivered Holiday Programmes which were designed to support disadvantaged families and young people during the school holidays by providing healthy meals and enriching activities. All activities were free of charge, accessible and offered young people and families exciting new experiences which were rooted in opportunities for informal learning. People who engaged in programmes often tried and enjoyed new things they would not otherwise have taken part in, such as trips, STEM and drama. There were positive signs that our Holiday Programmes helped to improve socialisation and confidence, with most young people and their parents reporting they felt more confident because of participating in activities.

Youth Work Holiday Programme data:

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Holiday Programmes	422	778	298	158

Link to video:

[SAC summer evaluation on Vimeo](#)

## South Ayrshire Youth Awards 2024

The South Ayrshire Youth Awards, held on 17th April 2024, celebrated the achievements of our young people aged 11-25. Planned and delivered entirely by young people, 100 young people voted on the theme, categories, and entertainment. A group of 18 youth volunteers and locality members designed the nomination form, invites, and neon-themed decorations. The vibrant event, attended by 80 young people, featured peer-hosted awards recognising achievements in areas such as volunteering, mental health, community service, and arts.



The Overall Young Star Award was chosen by the audience with 189 votes cast.



## Youth Voice - Youth Council and Youth Strategy

Our Voice Group in partnership with young people, has actively worked to address barriers to Youth Voice participation. Insights from the 2022 'Have your Say' Survey and focus groups highlighted the need to review the priorities and improve opportunities for young people to influence services. Between 2023 and early 2024, consultation events and roadshows gathered further input from young people. This approach has ensured there was a variety of accessible settings to gather views of young people to help shape the new Youth Council and Youth Participation Strategy that will be published in 2024/25.

The newly established Youth Council is informed and developed together with 700 local young people, with young people having a say on the final representation members and of the election process. The election took place on 20th June with 53 young people standing. A total of 2558 local young people voted in the election voting for 28 Youth Council Members.

Through partnership and collaborative working this new approach will ensure the voices of young people influence service design across services.



## Youth Work in School - example - Breahead Fun Fridays

The Fun Friday's project was created in partnership with Braehead Primary School to address reduced attendance and engagement among Primary 7 pupils on Friday afternoons. CLD staff developed a 12-week programme aligning with the Curriculum for Excellence in Health and Wellbeing, offering workshops in outdoor learning, STEM, arts and crafts, and cooking. Held at Lochside Community Centre, the sessions encouraged community engagement and relationship-building.

The project increased attendance, with pupils eagerly anticipating the workshops. All 26 pupils earned the Youth Scotland Hi5 Award, learning new skills and strengthening relationships with peers and staff. Additionally, 10 participants joined local youth clubs due to the positive connections formed. The initiative successfully fostered engagement within the school and local community.

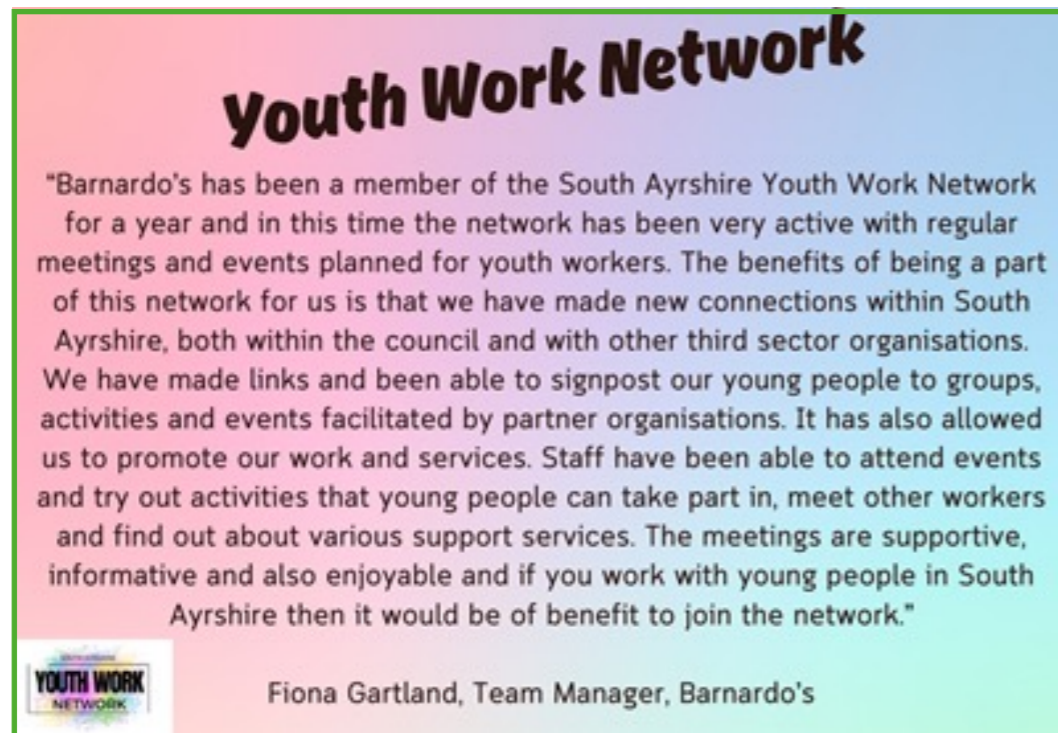
Please use the QR code to see out Fun Friday video!



## Youth Work Network

During 2023/24 we continued to work with our partners through the Youth Work Network to promote collaboration and align with local and national youth work strategies. It also helped us plan events, identify training needs, champion innovative practices, and share funding opportunities.

With 45 member organisations, including South Ayrshire Council, Girvan Youth Trust, LGBT Youth Scotland, and others, plans are underway to launch a Network Small Grants Programme to support its growth.



## Bounce Festival

In August 2023, Thriving Communities hosted its second youth work festival for young people in South Ayrshire, Bounce Festival 23.

The event aimed to provide local young people aged 10 to 16 with an opportunity to engage in and enjoy a wide range of positive activities, including live music, entertainment, street food, health and wellbeing workshops, and a Youth Voice consultation.

The idea for Bounce Festival stemmed from recognising lower engagement levels among young people aged 10 to 14.

Bounce Festival 23 once again attracted over 300 young people from across South Ayrshire, with attendees travelling from as far as Ballantrae to Dundonald. Thriving Communities provided transport and support to ensure the event was accessible to all.



## Detached Youth Work

Thriving Communities, in collaboration with Police Scotland, continues to deliver weekly Detached Youth Work across South Ayrshire. Skilled youth workers engage young people in their communities, addressing antisocial behaviour, alcohol, drugs, and personal safety through informal, issue-based discussions on the streets. This approach helps build relationships with young people not involved in traditional youth work and supports them in making informed choices.

Youth disorder has fallen by a third from 2020-21 to 2023-24.

## The Weekender - Diversionary Youth Work Programme

This programme targets secondary-age young people involved in antisocial behaviour and underage drinking on weekends. It offers off-site recreational activities to provide new experiences and alternatives to negative behaviour. Developed using local data, the programme supports social and emotional wellbeing while improving confidence and decision-making.

Key outcomes include:

- 265 learner hours of youth engagement.
- 20 young people from targeted groups participated.
- Positive feedback, with young people noting improved decision-making and reduced risky behaviour.

A partnership with Ayr Academy's Pupil Support Department identified vulnerable young people, enabling weekly connections with youth workers to encourage participation and build trust.

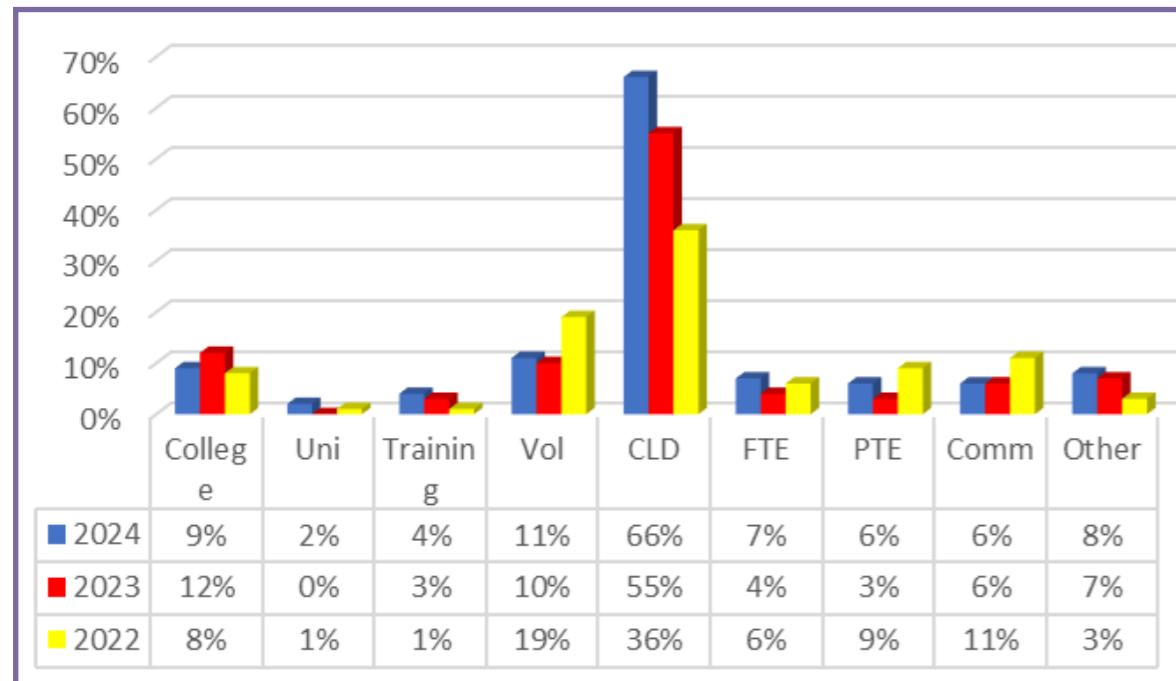
## Adult & Family Learning

Adult Learning happens in a variety of places, in a range of ways for any number of reasons. We continue to develop and deliver programmes that are relevant and accessible to our communities. We want all learning to be life long, life wide and learner centred. We aspire to establish adult learning as a route into community involvement and personal empowerment. CLD, will facilitate the development of digital skills that adult learners in the community may need, to access all opportunities to further learning, employability, or involvement in their community. We continue to cultivate digital confidence in parents, to ensure that each child thrives in their home, social and school environment. The Adult Literacies team have continued to deliver critical programmes to adults looking to improve their reading, writing, spelling, numeracy, and IT skills.

During 2023/24 Thriving Communities delivered a range of interventions to improve outcomes for adults and families, key achievements below: -

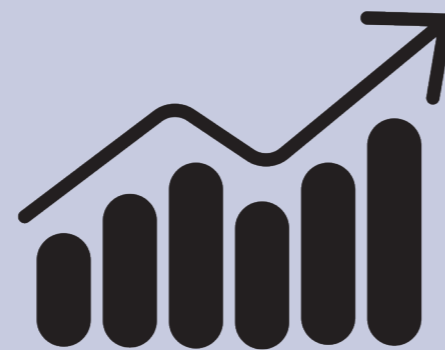
- Number of Programmes - 69
- Family Learning Programmes - 35
- Number of Learning Places - 998
- Hours of Learning – 21,071
- Number Completing – 90%
- Accreditation – 5%

## Progression Routes



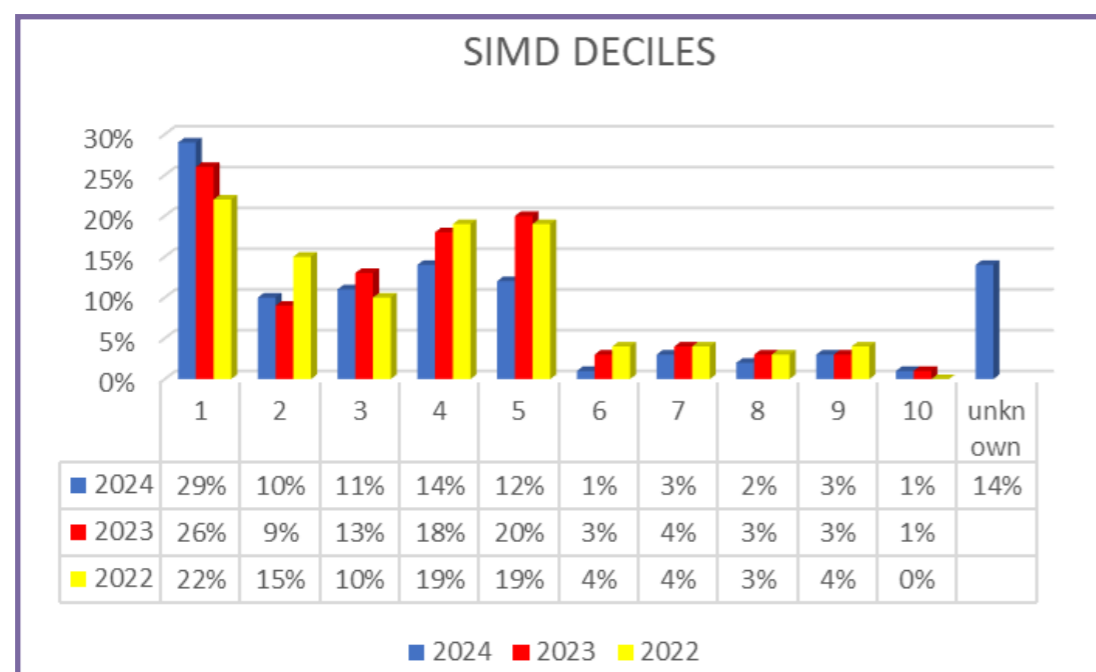
### Breakdown of learners age:-

- 16 – 24 years – 95
- 25 – 30 years – 89
- 31 – 40 years – 246
- 41 – 50 years – 117
- 51 – 60 years – 119
- 61 + years – 142
- Unknown – 190

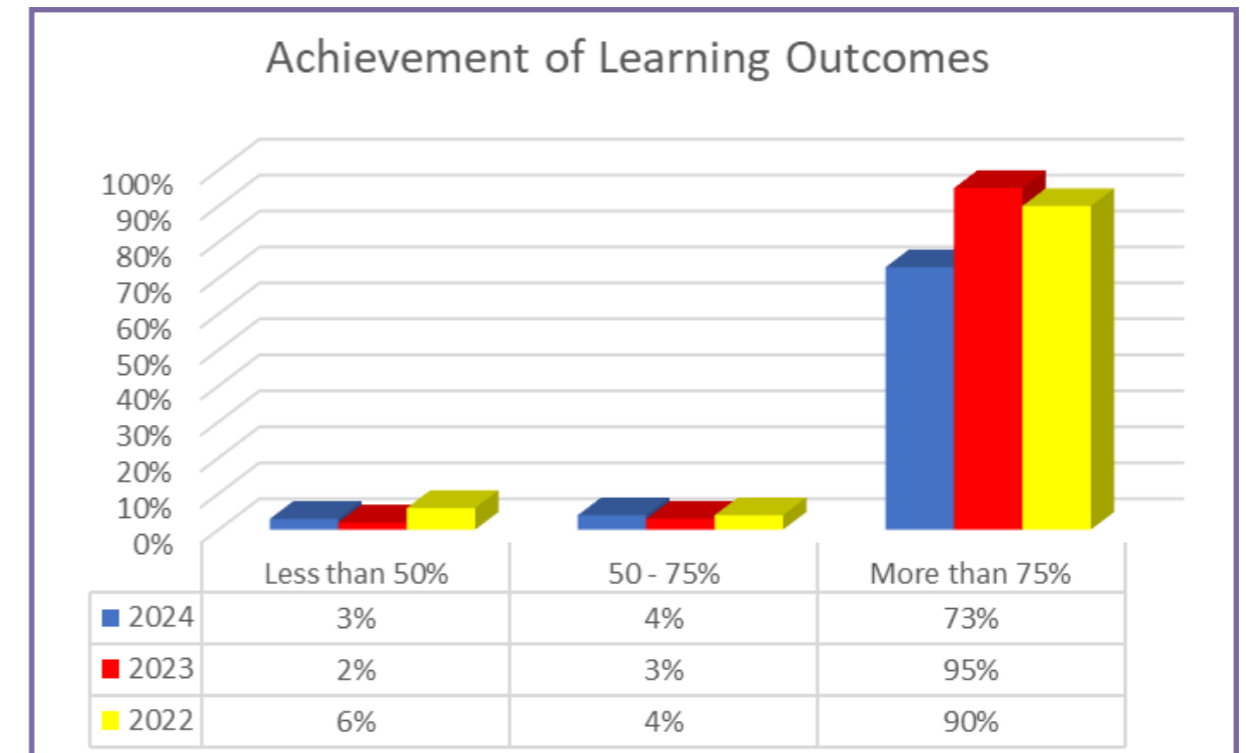


## SIMD Data

Between 2023 – 2024, 50% of learners resided in the Deciles 1 - 3 and 76% resided in Deciles 1 – 5. This demonstrates that learning programmes are targeted at the areas of greatest need.



## Achievement of Learning

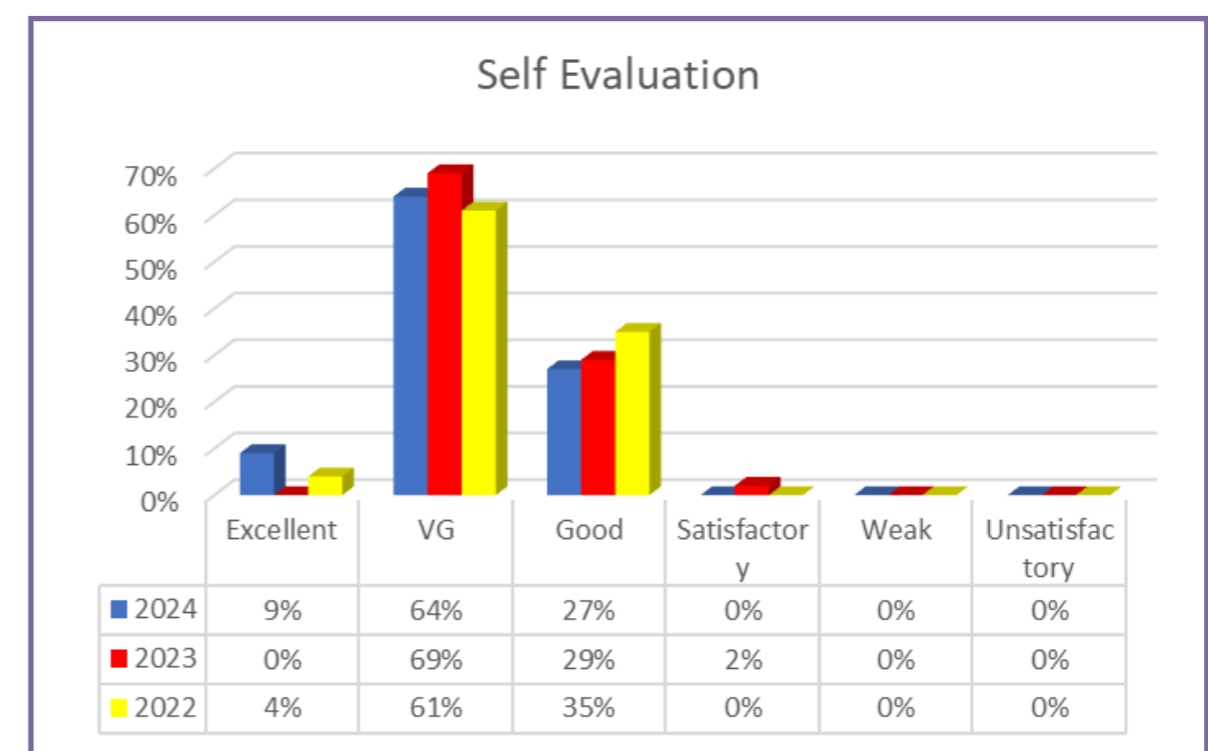


### Overall Learning Experience

Learners rated their overall learning experience highly 100% of all learners, rated their Learning Experience as Excellent, Very Good or Good.

### Self-Evaluation

Using Quality Indicator 5.1 (Delivering the learning offer with learners) from the How Good is our Learning and Development in our Community framework, key workers evaluated all work carried out in South Ayrshire as excellent, very good or good



Literacies

During 2023 /24 Thriving Communities supported 53 learners with tailored literacy support, including one-to-one tuition for those unable to attend groups. Each learner follows a bespoke programme addressing practical needs such as budgeting, reading letters, measuring, or reading for pleasure. Support has also been extended to sheltered housing units as part of South Ayrshire’s Ageing Well initiative.

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)

Thriving Communities have assisted 154 learners from 15 linguistic backgrounds, offering group and one-to-one sessions to build confidence, improve employability, and support community integration.

Key developments include:

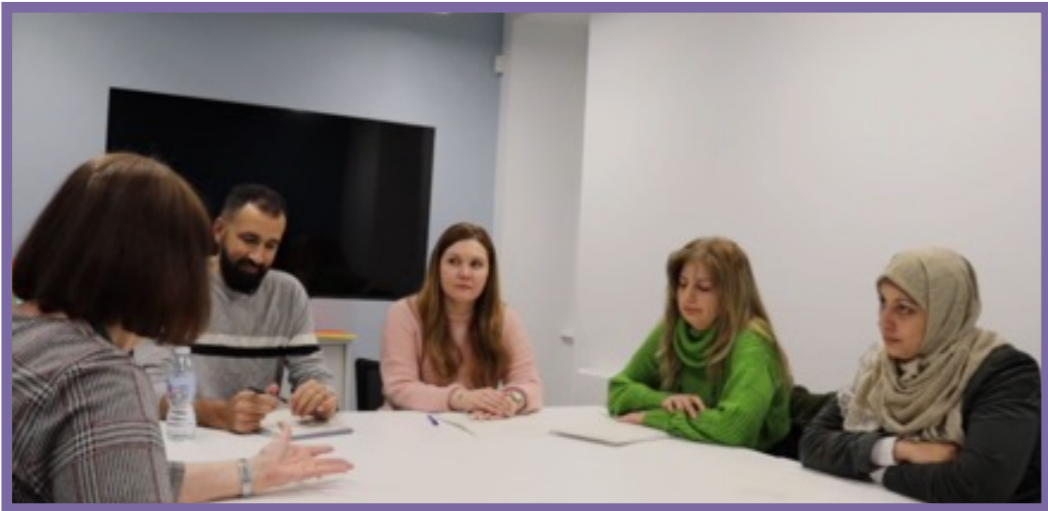
- **Ukrainian Cohort:** Support for IELTS and qualification equivalency to aid professional accreditation, delivered in collaboration with Skills Development Scotland.
- **Unaccompanied Children:** ESOL deliver weekly sessions focus on language development, socialisation, and integration for separated young people in mandatory education.
- **Community Interpreting Course:** South Ayrshire led Scotland’s first SCQF Level 5 Community Interpreting course, producing six interpreters to support settlement and integration services.

Multiply

Thriving Communities delivered the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply project in South Ayrshire, focusing on improving adult numeracy. £445,178 was allocated for 2023/24. The project aligns with local, regional, and national priorities and enhances existing adult learning efforts.

Multiply interventions helped individuals identify learning barriers and create action plans focused on numeracy, with some achieving formal qualifications.

During 2023-2024, 245 individuals were supported, with 14 internal projects and 8 third-sector projects funded, totalling £37,827.77 in community support.



North & South Carrick	
Summer Programme Girvan	£1274.82
Summer Programme Maybole	£1364
Summer Programme Villages	£2339
Maybole Cooking Groups 23/24	£2200
Maybole Plays (Multiply Lead)	£715.70
Culzean Primary Family Group	£3850
North & South Carrick - 3rd Sector	
Carrick Rugby RFC Statistical Analysis Group	£3559.20
Biosphere Bikes x Multiply Bike Building/ Maintenance Class	£4283.80
CRAG Arts: Allotment Project	£4190
Glendoune Parent Club	£4788.43
PC Passport	£765
Ayr	
ESOL Craigie Allotment (ESOL Lead)	£713.50
Lochside Cooking Group	£730.00
360 and Multiply Art Project	£500
Ayr North Women’s Group	£500
Ayr North Games Night	£767
Ayr - 3rd Sector	
Wallacetown Community Garden/Fire service Scotland Community Project	£2570
Troon & Prestwick	
Golf for Good (Multiply Lead)	£960
Troon Cooking Group	£300
PACT: Family Learning Together Sessions	£557.32
Troon & Prestwick - 3rd Sector	
Symington Bridge Club	£900

Volunteering

Thriving Communities delivered 12 bespoke training sessions for Literacies and ESOL volunteers and currently have over 70 active volunteers.

Please click on the links below to see our videos on Adult Family & Learning support:-

Belleisle Fun Day Activity	Family Learning
	



Community Development

Community Development is a pivotal function of CLD and a key priority for Thriving Communities as we aim to help build capacity in our communities. We have continued to see progress on how we support community engagement and development across South Ayrshire.

Thriving Communities have been supporting Communities to develop Community led action plans. During 2023 / 2024 we:

- Developed surveys based on ‘How Good is Our Place’ for the communities with questions adapted to the village/town.
- Supported Community Councils and other local groups to develop community-led action plans with a list of priorities and aspirations for their communities.
- Developed surveys for children in P4, P5, P6, P7 to include the younger voice in looking at ways to improve place and community.
- Supported community groups to forward their action plans to council officers and teams for project development.
- Engaged with local primary and secondary schools for the promotion and administration of village and/or town consultations.

Community Councils

We have continued to support our local Community Councils to flourish. We currently have 23 active Community Councils being supported by Thriving Communities Officers. The Community engagement team who are the main resource supporting Community Councils have delivered a range of supports including:

- Carrying out a contested election in 2 areas. This included issuing 13,000 ballot papers and overseeing the counting process
- Delivered Link officer training, facilitated for TC staff
- Delivered training for new and existing Community Councillors – 6 sessions, afternoon and evening in Troon, Ayr and Girvan as well as upskills Community Council office bearers from various community councils to support independent panels processes for complaint panels.
- Processed all Admin Grants/Accounts
- Finalised dissolved Community Councils who never established after the elections
- Worked with Community Councils to ensure they had an updated Constitution
- Consultation with 2 Community Council areas regarding a change to boundaries
- Consultation with Community Councils’ regarding amendments to the Scheme for Establishment
- Supported all Community Councils with a Link Officer
- Support a by-election January – March 2024.



## External Funding Support

Our External funding officer has provided advice and information to a vast range of community groups and organisations over the past year in respect of identifying funding opportunities, both externally and internally. A total of seventy dedicated funding reports have been prepared and provided to groups. As well as the reports a bi-weekly funding alert is produced and sent to groups throughout the authority. Twenty-three of these have been produced since June 2023.

Additional support has been provided to groups to make funding applications who require it, along with information and advice sessions on hints and tips on how to make strong application to funders.

“ Navigating through potential funding sources can be very challenging and time consuming for community volunteers. Thriving Communities has been and continues to be extremely helpful to us as we try to identify sources of funding. As a result of Thriving Communities guidance and advice we have submitted a number of successful grant funding applications.”

Andy McAlpine  
Volunteer Fundraiser, Ballantrae

As part of our commitment to providing support and assistance to community and voluntary groups, charities, and social enterprises in search of external funding opportunities, we operate a free to use resource called South Ayrshire 4 Funding

<https://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/southayrshire?bcr=MTIzNA>

It provides a cohesive approach to external funding and enables groups and organisations to identify the best range of funders for their particular projects and initiatives. Over the past year there have been 1312 searches made. Currently there are 301 registered users (groups) using the site.

As well as providing the above support and assistance to community groups, we are committed to supporting our communities through the investment of funds. A range of funding opportunities have been developed and distributed since June 2023, some of these include:

## Financial Inclusion Fund

The Thriving Communities Service is committed to developing and supporting Financial Inclusion Projects that aim to help reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for our communities. The Financial Inclusion Fund was developed to tackle the above and groups were invited to make applications to this fund. The following groups were successful with their applications.

**Ayr United Football  
academy**

**Awarded: 2500**

**Kincaidston  
Community Centre**

**Awarded: 1850**

**Harbour Ayrshire**

**Awarded: 2500**

**Glendoune Community  
Association**

**Awarded: 2000**

**Stepping Stones for  
Families**

**Awarded: 4950**

**Vics in the  
Community**

**Awarded: 4900**

**SeAscape**

**Awarded: 4950**

Coastal Communities Fund

South Ayrshire’s Coastal Community Fund has been established to invest funds from the region’s allocation of net revenue from Scottish Crown Estate marine assets. Groups are invited to apply who can demonstrate that their projects will provide tangible benefits to the economy and/or safety, health and wellbeing of coastal communities.

The following groups were successful for the 2023-24 allocation.

Name of group	Amount Awarded
Whiteleys Retreat	£18910
ACE	£3000
Alloway tunnel project	£5270
Ballantrae Community Council	£18810.5
Girvan Youth Football Club	£10,000
Vics in the Community	£20810.5
Carrick Rugby Club	£6336
Ayrshire Coastal Path	£4280
Harbour Ayrshire	£12167
Friends of Broadway Prestwick	£17748

South Ayrshire Charitable Trust

The South Ayrshire Charitable Trust was set up to assist and improve the lives of South Ayrshire residents who are in need because of poverty, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. The available funding is split geographically. Groups and individuals from the Ayr locality were invited to make applications to the fund and the following groups were successful:

Name of group	Amount Awarded
Ayr Sea Cadets	£1000
Kincaidston Action Group	£1000
Lochside Neighbourhood Group	£500
North Ayr Exclusively Womens Group	£800
South Ayrshire Autistic Society	£1000
Unique Groups - Friends Together	£966
Young Carers HSCP	£1000

The Ayrshire Rural and Islands (ARIA)

Thriving Communities manages the ARIA fund across Ayrshire. The (ARIA) Fund is the successor to Ayrshire LEADER, an EU fund which supported rural development. ARIA similarly supports rural development, also using the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) model. It is governed by a decision-making body called the Local Action Group (LAG) made up of Ayrshire community members. ARIA/peer funds are now derived from the Scottish Government (SG), and South Ayrshire Council (SAC) is the ‘Accountable Body’ for ARIA: it provides the administration and payment system and has oversight of the programme. More information can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/ariafund](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/ariafund). ARIA covers rural and islands Ayrshire as defined in its [eligible area map](#).

During 2023/24 Allocations:

SG Allocation			£753,168.23
Revenue		Main/CIA Funds	£360,500.00
		CAM Fund	£37,648.80
		Video Project/Fund	£31,178.40
		CLT Project	£29,500.00
		Total	£458,827.20
Capital			£150,000.00
Total Funding Allocated			£608,827.20
Remainder - Admin/Animation			£144,341.03



Projects funded located in South Ayrshire:

Project	Applicant	Sector
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	Adventure Centre of Education	Thrid Sector
Ballantrae Community Development/Action Plan	Ballantrae Planning Group/ Trust	Third Sector
Stage 4 - Victory Park Sports Pavilion	Girvan Youth Football Club	Third Sector
Alisa Craig Pop-up	Go Girvan	Third Sector
Community Garden Upgardes	Girvan Community Garden	Third Sector
Business Developed Officer Continued Employed	Carrick Rugby Football Club	Third Sector
Staffing and Materials	Crag Community Arts	Third Sector
Little Peru Elevate	Little Peru LTD	Business
Gaiety on (Rural) Tour*	Ayr Gaiety Partnership*	Third Sector
FoDC Visitor Centre Improvements & Expansion Plan	Friends of Dundonald Castle SCIO	Third Sector
Kirkmichael Community Shop & Cafe	Kirkmichael Village Renaissance (KVR)	Third Sector
Robert the Bruce 750 - CIA	North Carrick Community Benefits Company (NCCBC)	Third Sector
Rural Networking	SASEN - South Ayrshire Social Enterprise Network	Third Sector
Straiton Stores Service Development	Straiton Village Co-operative	Business

\*14 projects total, Ayr Gaiety Partnership counted in Pan-Ayrshire in LA breakdown table as covered pan-Ayrshire.

South Ayrshire Council had the most projects funded during 2023/24 across Ayrshire

Funding Extravaganza

A funding extravaganza was developed in partnership with Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) to take place in Ayr Town Hall in October 2023. This consisted of significant national funders being invited to South Ayrshire to take part in presentations to our community groups and then participate in a Q&A session.

Presenting on the day were The National Lottery Community Fund, The Corra Foundation and Foundation Scotland.

As well as the Presentations we developed workshops that our community representatives could take part in, these included:-

- Funding Ready
- Application Form Hints and tips
- Fundraising
- Community Benefits
- Evaluation Ready

Over 100 community representatives registered for the event and the feedback from the evaluations was very positive.



## Locality based Funding surgeries

A strong working relationship has been developed with the National Lottery Community Fund for Scotland. After joint planning sessions with VASA it was decided to host a number of localised funding surgeries so that community groups would have an opportunity to speak to a National Lottery funding officer face to face. Groups each had a 30 minute slot to discuss their funding requirements. In total five funding surgeries have been held and 45 groups having managed to speak directly with the National Lottery to discuss their funding bids.

In July the National Lottery announced their awards for groups to South Ayrshire, This totalled £401,040 of funding being invested within South Ayrshire communities.

“Funding surgeries enable The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) to provide face to face support and advice about our funding programmes to potential applicants, and an opportunity to receive honest feedback about proposed projects. As South Ayrshire’s dedicated Funding Officer for TNLCF, it was a pleasure to meet local groups face to face at a series of five recent funding surgeries in the area. The surgeries were organised and facilitated by our key local stakeholders, Milissa McCulloch of Thriving Communities and Angela McWhinnie of VASA. They were also present at each surgery, giving attendees the opportunity to access their specialised support in addition to receiving customised TNLCF funding advice. This model worked very well, evidencing strong partnership working locally. I look forward to delivering similar sessions in partnership with Thriving Communities and VASA in the near future to discuss TNLCF’s new portfolio of funding programmes, scheduled to open in November 2024”

Lauren Farquharson – Funding Officer - The National Lottery



## Community Empowerment Fund Officer

We created an External Funding Officer position to support the final 2 years (2023/24 and 2024/25) of UKSPF. This post aims to support and lead community empowerment initiatives that help build capacity across our communities. This includes the Participatory Budget and Community Empowerment Fund.

## Participatory Budgeting

£90,000 was allocated from UKSPF (Year 2 - 2023/24) with £15,000 going to each of the six HSCP South Ayrshire localities. Due to when funding was allocated, the Girvan and South Carrick locality was the only locality that hosted a PB (Participatory Budgeting) event during 2023/24. The event was held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 at the Carrick Opportunities Building in Girvan and organised by the South Carrick Locality Partnership members.



17 local groups, who had bid for funding up to the value of £3000, attended the event to speak with the public about the project they were hoping to deliver through this funding.

Groups in attendance all have a great reputation within the community and deliver excellent services and support throughout South Carrick.

The public were encouraged to speak to all groups in attendance and rate them between 1-5, their scores determined who was successful in receiving funding. The event was a great success with over 200 people attending to vote.

Groups successful in receiving funding:

Group	Funding Recevied
Biosphere Bikes Community Hub and Shop	£3000
Carrick Resilience Team	£3000
Carrick Rugby Football Club	£2600
Crossroads	£1000
Girvan and District Attractions	£3000
Girvan Christmas Street Party	£3000
Girvan Community Garden	£2800
Girvan Community Sports Hub	£3000
Girvan Youth Football Club	£3000
Harbour Ayrshire	£517
Stepping Stones for Families	£3000
Stumpy Corner Steering Group	£3000

Officers from HSCP and Thriving Communities are supporting the Locality Partnership Members to host PB Events during 2024/2025 through UKSPF.



Community Empowerment Fund

£108,000 was allocated to create a ‘Community Empowerment Fund’ during 23/24. There were 2 funding options:

- Small Grant up to £5,000: To assist with any barriers to sustaining community groups and for development of smaller projects.
- Large Grant up to £15,000: For groups who are taking ownership of land or assets. - -To support groups going through CAT or who have successfully achieved this, as well as supporting groups who are taking on the lease of an asset.  
- To support groups to achieve the priorities identified within their Place Plans or Community Action Plans

Once applications were submitted a Panel was established of members from Community Planning and Corporate Planning, Community Wealth Building, Asset Management, Thriving Communities and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA). Applications were scored in line with the undernoted priorities and against the qualifying criteria:

- Project suitability and need
- Link to eligibility criteria
- Applicants’ ability to deliver the project/timescales
- Costs – value for money/future sustainability
- Governance

29 groups applied for funding, 17 groups were successful and received funds ranging from £900 to £15,000.

The successful groups were:

- ACE, Alloway Railway Tunnel, Annbank Community Association, Ayr Sea Cadets
- Barr SCIO, Biosphere Bikes
- Carrick Burns Club, Carrick Rugby
- Dailly Community Development Trust
- Girvan & District Attractions, Girvan Community Garden, Girvan Youth Football Club, Go Girvan
- Kirkmichael Village Renaissance
- Pinwherry & Pinmore CDT
- Troon Scouts and Troon Water Sports Centre.

Community Development - Example – Glendoune

Glendoune Community Highlights (2023-2024)

The Glendoune Community Association, with 16 members, has contributed 1,428 volunteer hours and secured £58,420 in external funding, which is vital for support.

Key activities include:

- Summer Fayre & Parent Engagement: Thriving Communities supported parent councils to drive social change and attended school events to encourage volunteer involvement.
- Youth Voice: Focus on P7 transition, offering new graduates the chance to join the Youth Voice team, aiming for 5 new volunteers in August 2024.
- School Events & Parent Engagement: Attending school events helps engage hard-to-reach families and promotes volunteering opportunities.
- Collaboration with Girvan Town Team: Monthly updates and partnerships with other community groups prevent duplication and enhance event delivery.
- Volunteering Growth: The Girvan Community Sport Hub staff now play a key role in supporting Thriving Communities’ youth groups.
- ADP Partnership: Addressing rising drug and alcohol abuse through collaboration with the ADP team to offer community support discreetly.

Volunteer numbers have grown significantly, and community engagement has been a major success. Volunteers have directly contributed to community events, strengthening Glendoune’s capacity.

Community Quotes:

“This has helped me so much for Christmas. I have a very happy wee girl here.”

“This gas coupon allowed me to do something else with my daughter.”

“I can’t believe how much the Glendoune Community Association has done for our residents this year.”

Community Safety

Thriving Communities support and lead the The Community Safety, Strategic Delivery Partnership (SDP) within the Community Planning Partnership. The CSP is made up of representation from South Ayrshire Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Coastguard, NHS Ayrshire & Arran, South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership, Community Justice Ayrshire and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA). The partnerships strategic vision is that people in South Ayrshire live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. The partnership aims to do this by working together with local communities and agencies, developing strategic problem solving as an overall approach.

Thriving Communities Officers support the work CSP and the four Joint Action Groups (JAGs);

JAG	REMIT
Reducing Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reducing the number of violent incidents in Ayr and Prestwick town centres on Saturday nights and during large events.</li><li>• Ensuring the safety of all staff and patrons in Ayr and Prestwick town centres on Saturday nights and during large events.</li><li>• Reducing the number of emergency service call outs to Ayr and Prestwick town centres on Saturday nights and during large events</li></ul>
Safer Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working in partnership to ensure a co-ordinated approach and response to Anti-Social Behaviour issues in communities.</li><li>• Increasing positive community and school engagement to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour, Environmental and Community Safety issues (including secondary fires); working with partners to deliver LOIP priorities.</li></ul>
Violence Against Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raising awareness of Violence Against Woomen, it’s impact on society and support available for those affected by Violence Against Women.</li></ul>
Home, Road and Water Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working in partnership to ensure a co-ordinated approach and response to reduce the number of serious accidents at home, on our roads, and in our water; working with partners to deliver LOIP priorities.</li></ul>

## October 2023 - March 2024

The Reducing Violence Joint Action Group (RVJAG) coordinate a range of initiatives with the aim of making Ayr and Prestwick town centres safer and more attractive places to visit, during the night at weekends. Partners include Police Scotland, Beatbox Leisure Ltd (Taxi marshals), South Carrick First Responders (mobile first aid), and Ayr and Prestwick Street Pastors (patron well-being and assistance).

The time period covered in this report is 1 October 2023 – 31 March 2024. Annual statistics could not be collated for the period 1st April 2023 – 30th September 2023 due a change in service provider.

Partners collate a range of information and data on a weekly and monthly basis to demonstrate the work carried out in the Ayr and Prestwick town centres as part of the night-time economy. This information and data is collated centrally and used to evaluate the ongoing work.

## POLICE SCOTLAND

Police Scotland patrol Ayr town centre and Prestwick town centre during night-time economy.

Statistics were provided for both these areas for the time period 1st October – 31st March. Please note that the figures are based on police beat and will cover a larger area than just the Arthur Street/High Street area of Ayr; and Main Street area of Prestwick.

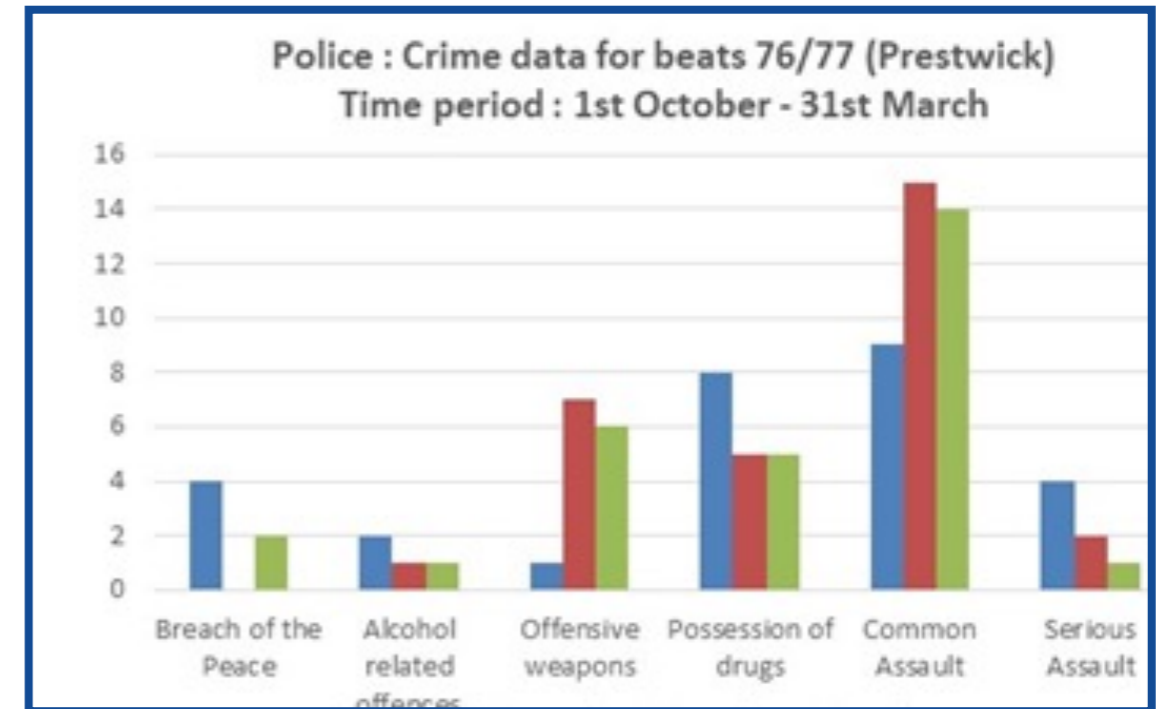
Stats include serious assaults, common assaults, possession of an offensive weapon, possession of drugs, alcohol related offences, and breach of the peace.

### Ayr Town Centre

- All Crimes of Violence for the stated time period have fallen by 50% over the year.
- Assaults and weapons offences both increased in 2022/23 but have since fallen.
- Breach of the peace has increased in last year.

### Prestwick

- All Crimes of Violence for the stated time period have fallen by a third over the last year.
- Assaults and weapons offences both increased in 2022/23 but have since fallen 2023/24.
- Breach of the peace has increased in last year.



### Please note

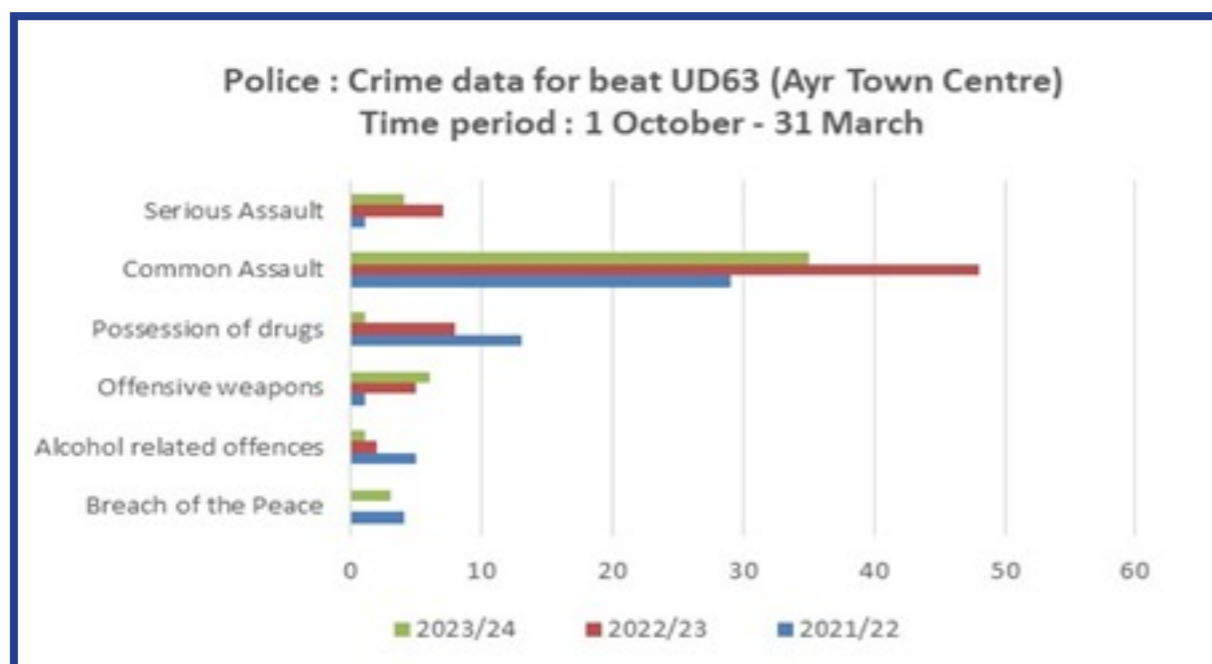
All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information.

All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as at June 2024.

## TAXI MARSHALS

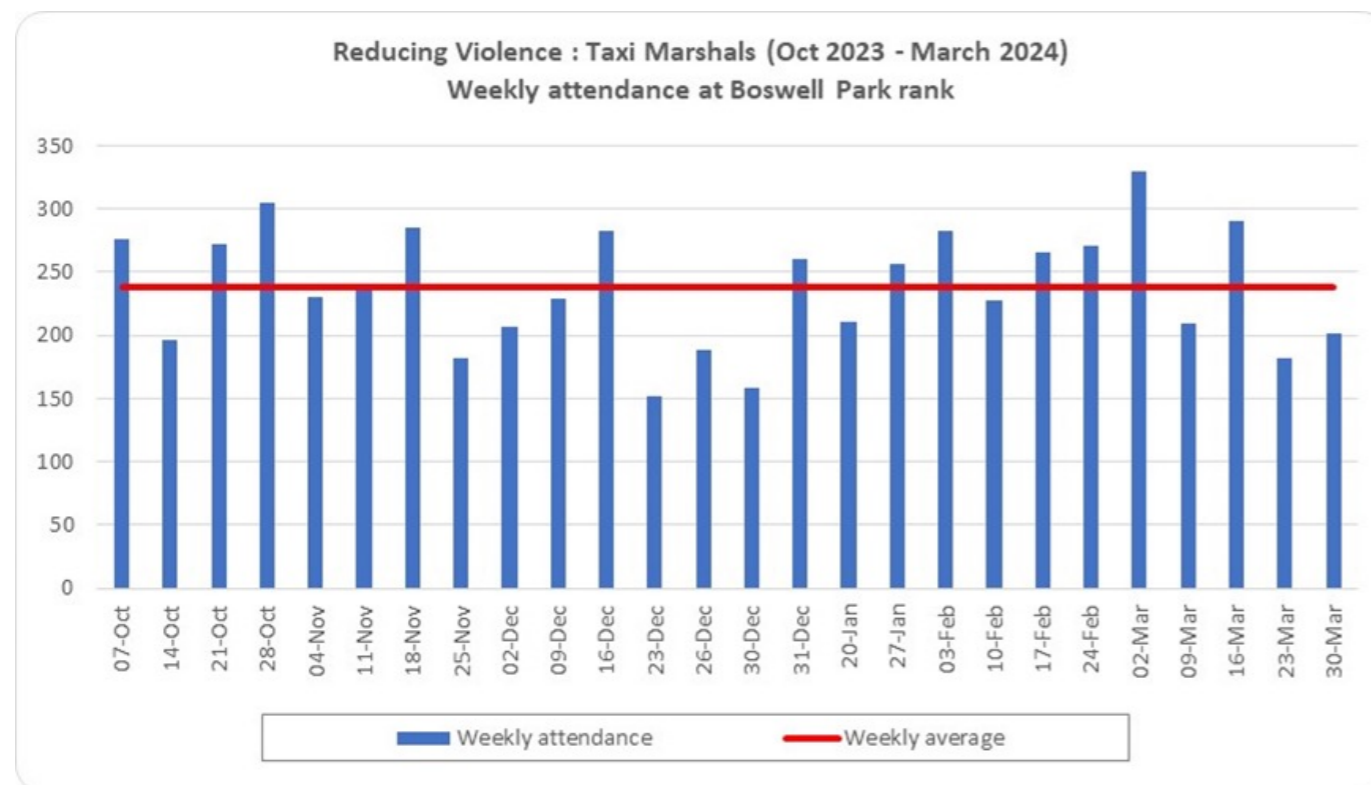
The taxi marshalling service is commissioned by Thriving Communities and supplied by Beatbox Leisure Ltd and operates on a Saturday night/Sunday morning from 23.30hrs – 0330hrs at the Boswell Park taxi rank in Ayr town centre.

They also provide additional hours during annual events which take place in South Ayrshire including Ayr Races and the Xmas festive period.



## Summary of weekly reports

- Between 1 October 2023 and 31 March 2024 the taxi marshals were out 26 times at the Boswell Park taxi rank. Most of these nights occurred on a Saturday with the exception of Boxing Day which fell on a Tuesday night. There were two weeks where there were no marshals after New Year.
- There is an average of 240 people using the Boswell Park taxi rank on a weekly basis over the 6 month period.
- Taxi availability was excellent during this time period.
- Incidents of note included an assault on two taxi marshals in November 2023 with a quick response from the Police resulting with the arrest of a male ; a few fights within the rank were stopped before they escalated and busy weekends were noted for some events including St Patricks Day and the Xmas Festive period.
- Other information noted included a little litter noted each week with request for a public bin outside the Central Park licensed establishment ; good communication with the South Ayrshire Council CCTV operators and good Police presence. A new "road restriction" sign has also been requested due to weather damage.



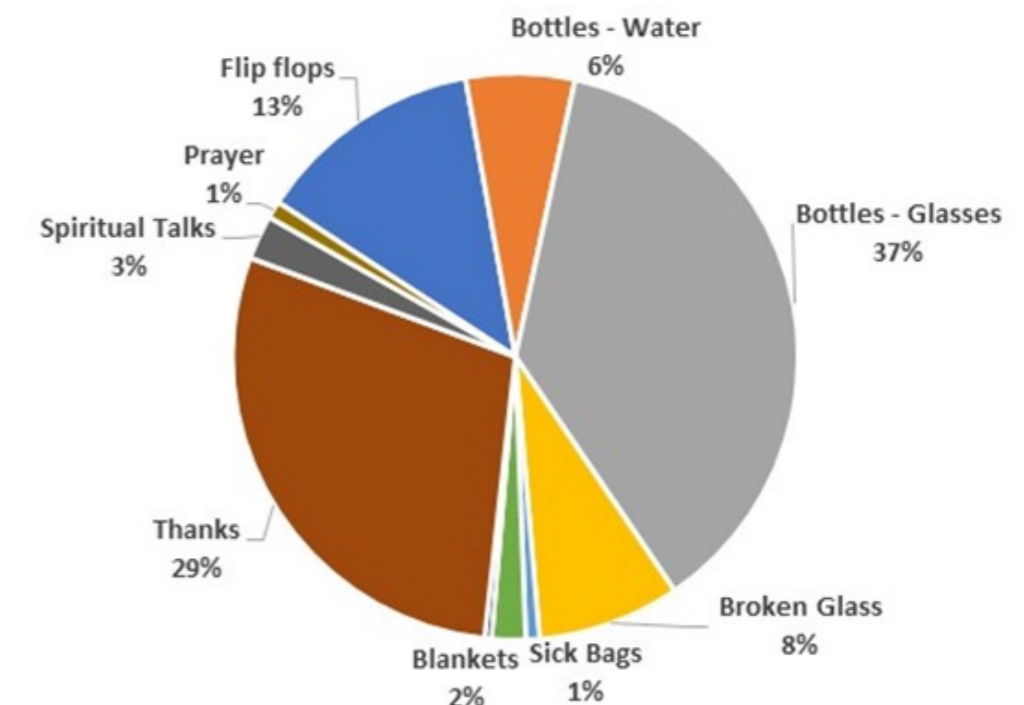
## AYR AND PRESTWICK STREET PASTORS

The Street Pastors attend both the Ayr and Prestwick town centres providing a welcome presence and patron reassurance in both areas. They also distribute a range of well-being items to patrons of the night-time economy.

### Summary of weekly reports

- They patrol an average of 3-4 hours every Saturday night/Sunday morning in groups of three.
- They have been out 23 times over this time period – with January 2024 being the only month with no patrols.
- They have removed broken bottles/glass numerous times and given out a range of items including flip flops, water and blankets.
- December 2023 was the busiest month for items distributed.
- They receive thanks on a weekly basis from all of the people they assist including persons who are vulnerable, inebriated, or have been assaulted.
- They have requested assistance 9 times for people in need. This included the Carrick First Responders (mobile first aid) for a shoulder injury; Police for an assault and CCTV for a vulnerable male.
- They have provided care for 12 vulnerable people.
- There have been a couple of occasions where their intervention has prevented an escalation of incidents and saved police from attending.
- The removal of broken bottles and glass also benefits the South Ayrshire Council Waste Management service.
- Other information provided in their reports includes; communication working well with radios and CCTV operators ; no contact required with Fire service ; large groups noted outside a couple of licensed premises but no issues or concerns and no naloxone or "spikeys" issued.

It is not possible to carry out a Cost Benefit analysis on the Street Pastors service but their input and involvement is invaluable to the group and brings benefits to all partners involved in the initiative.



CARRICK FIRST RESPONDERS (mobile first aid)

The Carrick First Responders (CFR) have been members of the group since October 2023. They patrol both the Ayr and Prestwick night-time economy zone areas.

Summary of patrol reports

- Between Oct 23 – March 24 the CFRs have been on patrol 10 times.
- They have attended to 12 casualties during this time with 7 requests to attend an incident from other partners and 5 self generated referrals.
- Breakdown of incidents includes 8 from Ayr and 4 from Prestwick.
- The highest percentage of casualties were females (58%).
- An ambulance was required on 4 separate occasions and the CFRs recommended further treatment to 8 casualties.
- Injuries varied from a bump on the head; chest pains; a nose bleed; cuts; a panic attack; a twisted ankle; a dislocated shoulder; feeling faint/sick and a spinal/neck injury.

Carrick First Responders - Cost Benefit		
Time Period: 1 October 2023 - 31 March 2024 (Saturday night only)		
No. of people treated by Carrick First Responders and sent home / returned to event		8
<u>SCSN Preventative Spend : Table 1 - Basic NHS Costs</u>		
Ambulance call out	365	
A&E attendance	146	
Sub-total	511	
Savings in relation to number of people treated by First Responders - no ambulance or A&E attendance	4088.00	
Cost of First Responder service to SafeAyr (Oct 23 - March 24)	1000.00	
OVERALL SAVINGS TO NHS		£3,088.00
<b>Police time (Estimate)</b>		
<i>On average 2 officers would attend A&amp;E with a victim - would be expected to be there between 3-4 hours</i>		
<i>Cost per hour - £30</i>		
<i>Cost of police personnel</i>		
<i>2 officers @ £30 per hour for 3 hours</i>	180	
<i>No. of incidents</i>	8	
		1440
OVERALL SAVINGS (INCLUDING POLICE TIME)		£4,528.00

Please Note

The above cost benefit analysis is a snapshot of savings made to emergency services and only includes basic costs in relation to ambulance call-outs; A&E attendance ; and estimated police time.

The costs are based on Community Safety costings provided by Scottish Community Safety Network.

Safer Communities Joint Action Group

Youth Disorder (1 July – 30 June)

- Youth disorder has fallen by a third from 2020-21 to 2023-24.
- Ayr South has seen the biggest fall in complaints.

Locality	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Ayr North	375	408	295	290
Ayr South	510	258	256	224
Girvan-Maybole-Carrick	206	177	189	131
Prestwick-Troon	716	495	446	400
Ayr Town Centre/Ayr Shore	170	173	327	342
South Ayrshire Total	1977	1511	1513	1387

Please note

All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information.

All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as at June 2024.

GOSS ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR COMPLAINTS (youths / environmental issues) (July-June 2024)

There has been a 15% reduction in antisocial behaviour complaints made to Community Safety.

- In 2023/24 - the majority of complaints in Ayr North are in relation to quad bike nuisance
- In 2023/24 - the majority of complaints in Ayr South are in relation to youth disorder in Alloway (The Loaning).

Locality	2022-23	2023-24
Ayr North	96	52
Ayr South	35	54
Girvan-Maybole-Carrick	6	6
Prestwick-Troon	15	14
Ayr Town Centre/Ayr Shore	4	7
South Ayrshire Total	156	133

Thriving Communities worked alongside colleagues in Police Scotland to address anti-social behaviour and youth disorder reports in Dundonald. Officers attended Dundonald Community Council and responded to concerns from the community. Youth Workers along with a visible Police Scotland presence was deployed to engage with young people.

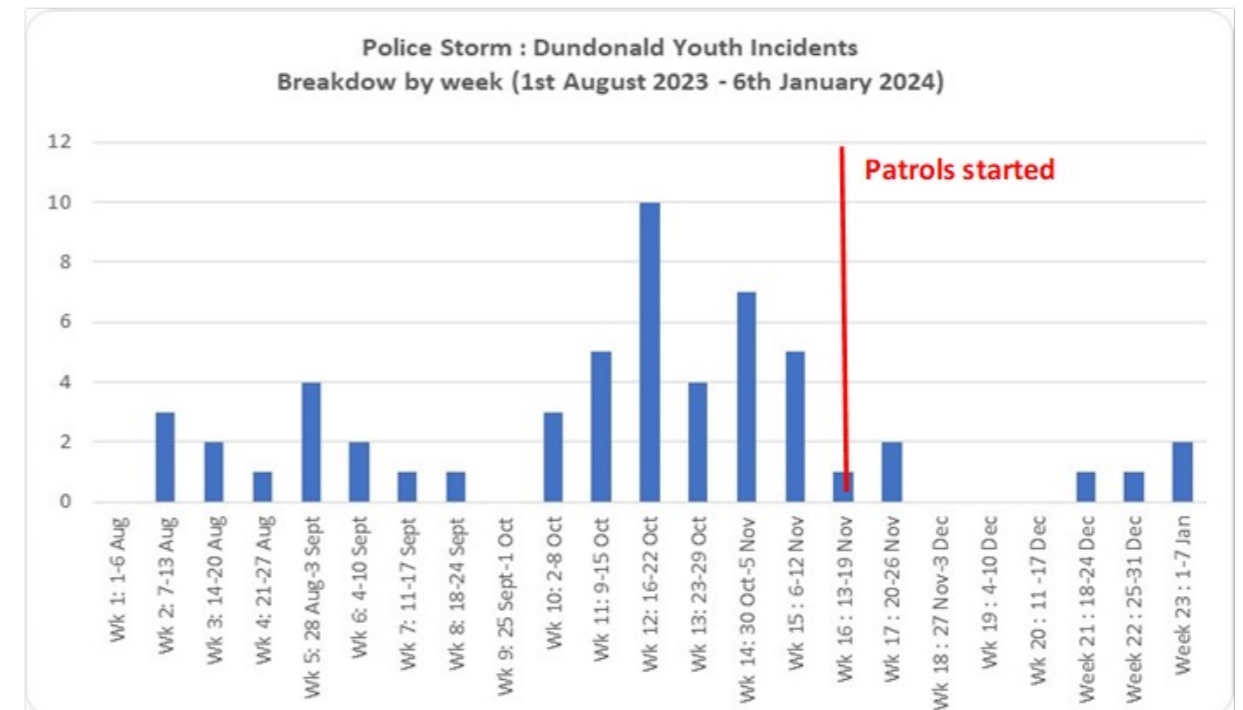
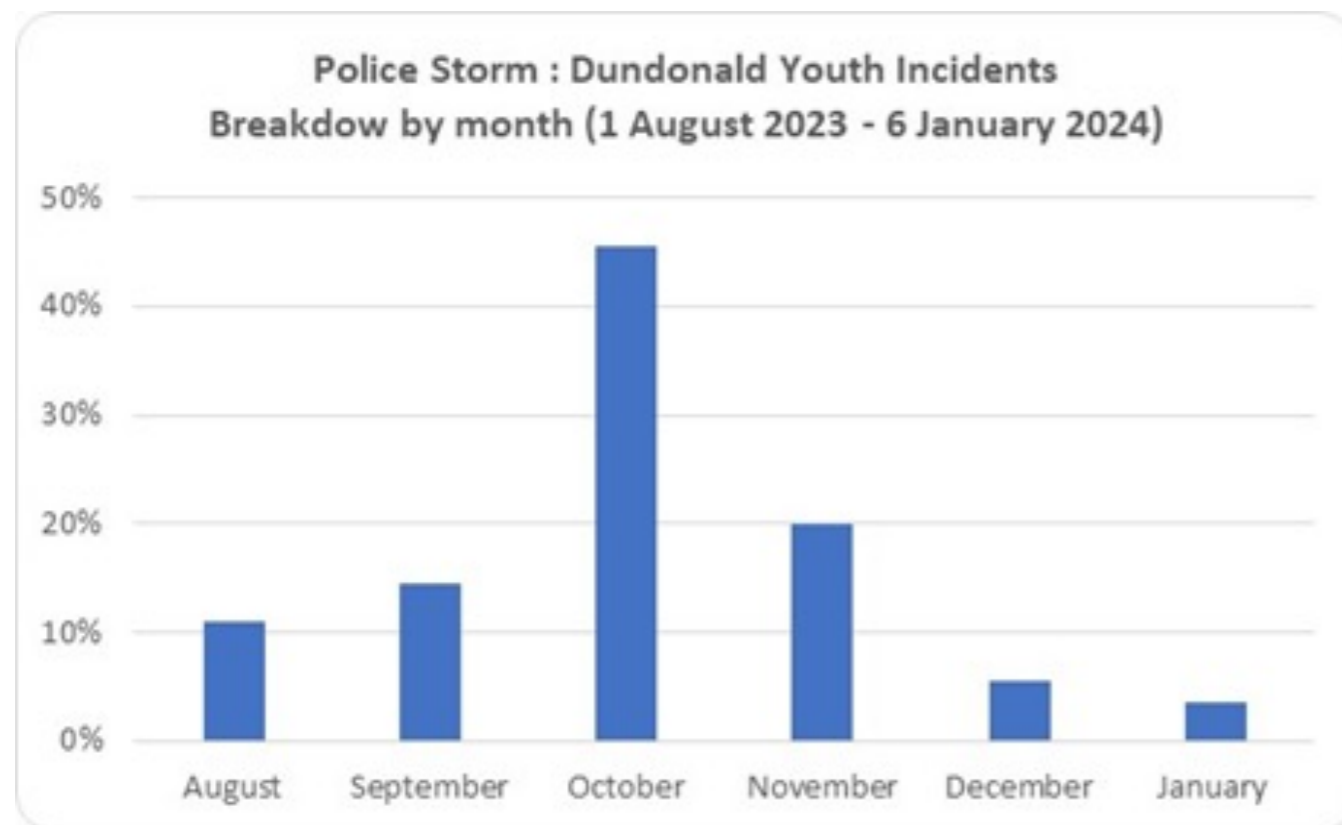


## Dundonald: Youth related incidents reported to police

**Time period: 1st August 2023 – 6th January 2024**

### Summary

- There was an increase in youth related incidents reported in the village of Dundonald during October 2023.
- Additional patrols were arranged with Thriving Communities staff starting on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- Seven patrols took place on Thursday, Friday and Saturdays nights between 17<sup>th</sup> Nov and 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023 ; times of patrols were 6pm – 9pm.
- Incidents have fallen by 44% in November and December when compared to the month of October.
- Since 13<sup>th</sup> November there has been a significant reduction in the number of youth incidents reported on a weekly basis.
- In 2024 there has only been 2 incidents reported in the area – one in relation to graffiti in Fullarton Avenue and the other involving a large group gathering in Drybridge Road with a laser pen (Sat 6 Jan at 2130hrs)



## Violence Against Woman Joint Action Group

Violence Against Women Joint Action Group - 16 Days of Action (2023/2024)

Thriving Communities officers coordinate and support South Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership (VAWP). VAWP is dedicated to addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality through high-quality services for women and children. The 16 Days of Action campaign, running annually from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) to December 10 (International Human Rights Day), aims to tackle violence against women and engage local activism.

Key Events in South Ayrshire for 2023/2024:

- Campaign Launch with White Ribbon trophy
- Women's Safety Networking Event at All Warriors Gym
- Community Planning Equalities Webinar to promote the joint action group
- 'Reclaim the Night' Walk in Ayr town centre (over 250 attendees)
- Women's Aid Info Sessions in all secondary schools
- Pan-Ayrshire Initiatives:
- Pan-Ayrshire Sexual Exploitation Conference to raise awareness and share best practices
- Inside Outside Exhibition at Kilwinning Fire Station, amplifying the voices of women in the sex industry
- 'HYSTAYRIA' Presentations on the witch trials of Ayr, educating communities about historical violence against women

## White Ribbon Trophy Tournament:

All South Ayrshire secondary schools participated, with awareness sessions on violence against women, male behaviours, consent, and being a positive bystander.



## Women's Safety Networking Event:

Held at All Warriors Gym, it included dance workouts, lunch, and discussions with NHS Mental Health, South Ayrshire Women's Aid, and Victim Support.



## Pan-Ayrshire Conference:

Focused on commercial sexual exploitation, aimed at expanding knowledge, sharing best practices, and supporting women affected.

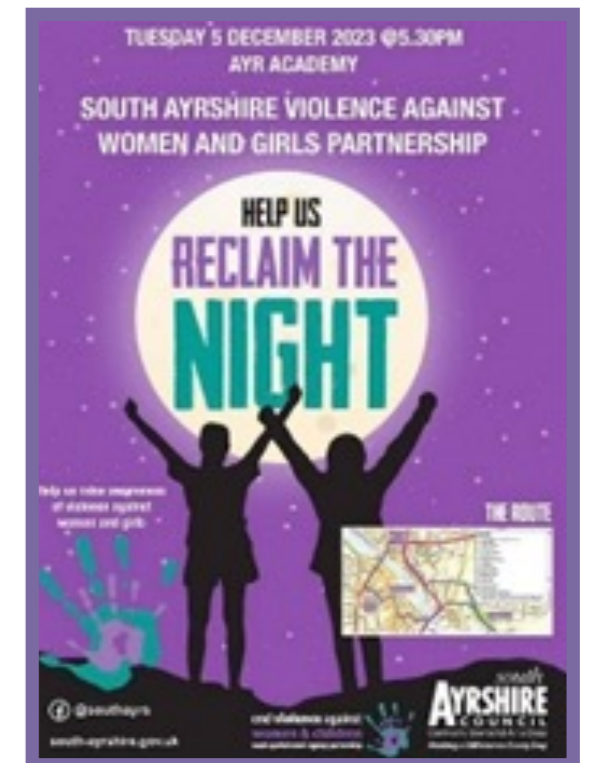


## HYSTAYRIA:

A film about the historical witch trials of Ayr was shown across Ayrshire, accompanied by Q&A sessions to spark discussion about violence against women.

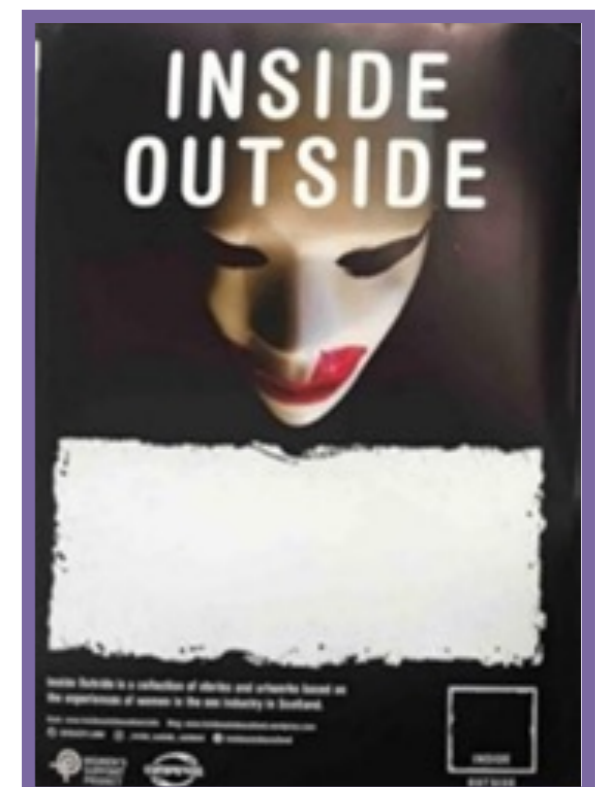
## Inside Outside Exhibition:

Showcased voices of women involved in the sex industry, often overlooked by mainstream media.



## Reclaim the Night Walk:

The walk raised awareness of violence towards women, with over 250 participants providing positive feedback, highlighting empowerment and safety.



Home Road and Water Safety Joint Action Group

S1 COMMUNITY SAFETY EVENTS

South Ayrshire Thriving Communities Community Safety Team carried out a series of safety events aimed at S1 pupils. Partners involved included Police Scotland (traffic); Scottish Fire and Rescue; RNLI; British Transport Police; Community Safety and Environmental Health. Sessions covered topics such as Fire Safety, Road Safety, Water Safety, Safe Travel, Smoking and Vaping safety, and Safe Relationships.

Partners feedback

All partners who completed the evaluation said they would like to see this event as an annual occurrence. They all thought the arrangements and facilities at schools were good as well as the timings of the presentations.

Everyone said the sessions were effective in getting the messages across to the pupils. Most of the partners said the communication prior to the events was good.

School feedback

Feedback from school included communication prior to the event was good, and that the timings and rate of input was suitable. They thought the messages targeted the correct age group and said pupils were enthusiastic about all the inputs.

Pupil feedback

- An overall evaluation of all inputs took place with Prestwick Academy.
  - A total of 147 pupils completed an evaluation form.
  - The highest percentage of pupils strongly agreed or agreed with the statements for each input
  - The most popular input was Fire Safety followed by Smoking/Vaping and Online/Health Relationships.
  - Comments included
1. **Road Safety** – brilliant; the session was informative; I liked the VRs
  2. **Travel Safety** – I learned a lot; good information
  3. **Smoking/Vaping** – I enjoyed learning about this; good to realise the dangers; educational
  4. **ASB/Online Safety** – Gives me a better view on this; good information to keep you safe

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Road Safety	39%	54%	5%	1%	1%
Fire Safety	58%	39%	2%	0%	0%
Water Safety	41%	45%	11%	2%	1%
Rail Safety	48%	43%	8%	1%	0%
Safe Travel	37%	52%	10%	1%	0%
Smoking and Vaping	57%	39%	3%	0%	0%
Online Safety/Healthy Relationships	49%	45%	5%	1%	0%

ROAD SAFETY: YOUNG DRIVERS EVENT

The Joint Action group conducted young driver awareness sessions for S5 and S6 pupils at secondary schools throughout South Ayrshire Aug-Sept 2023. Initial feedback from the first couple of sessions is summarised below.

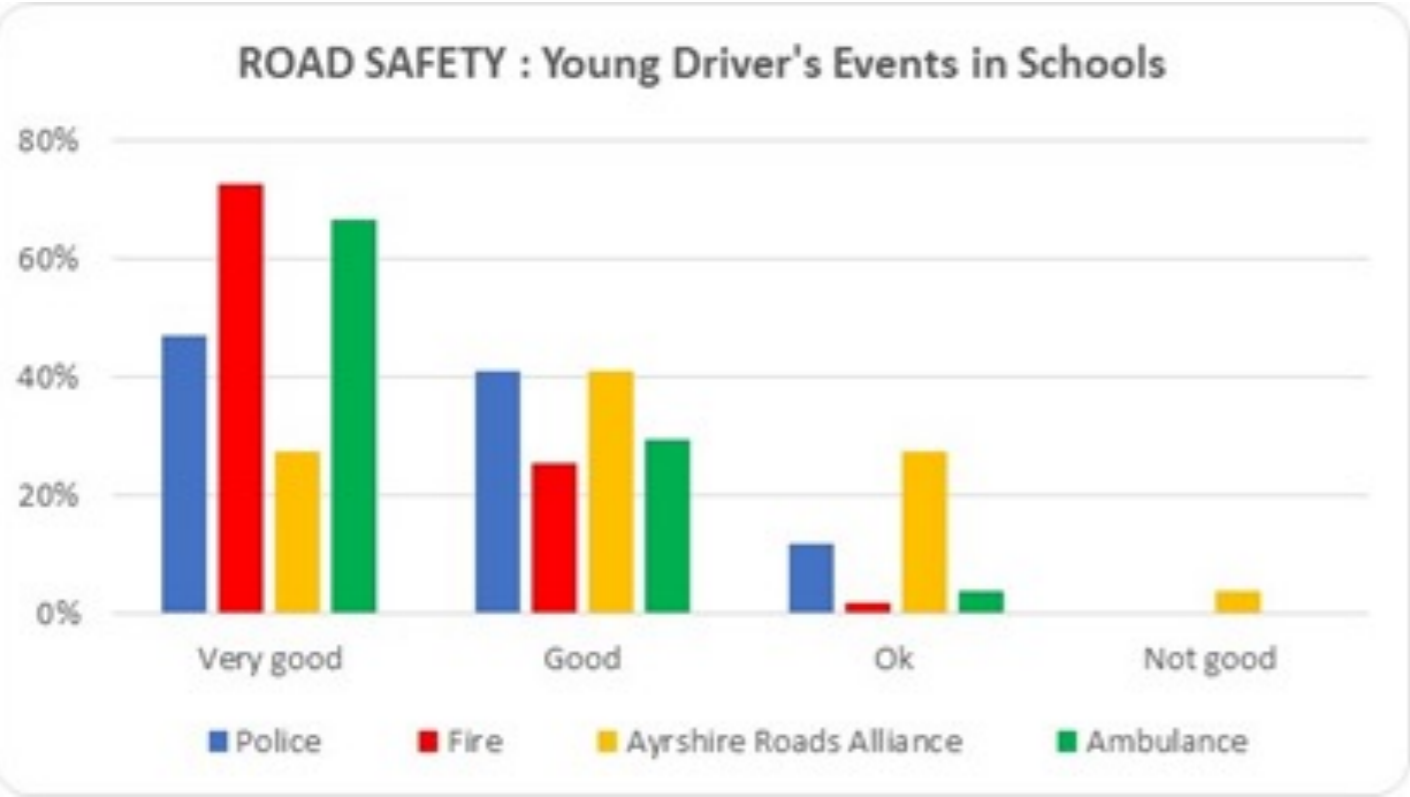
Summary

- A total of 51 responses were collated.
- 1 in 2 pupils said they would like to learn to drive but had not applied for their provisional licence yet
- 1 in 3 pupils had already received their provisional licence and were taking or hoping to take driving lessons.
- Only a small percentage (4%) actually held a full driving licence.

Inputs were provided by the following partners - Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Ayrshire Roads Alliance and Scottish Ambulance Service. Pupils were asked to rate each of the inputs and provide some comments.

Scottish Fire and Rescue and Scottish Ambulance Service had the highest percentage of very good rating.

Inputs	Very Good	Good	Ok	Not Good
Police	47%	41%	12%	0%
Fire	73%	25%	2%	0%
Ayrshire Roads Alliance	27%	41%	27%	4%
Ambulance	67%	29%	4%	0%



An overall rating of the session was also gathered with over 90% rating it as very good/ good. Comments included very informative and helpful; useful and eye opening; engaging; made me think; and it provided me with info I didn't have before and changed my perspective on safety and driving.

**Targeted Approach to Young People (TAYP)**

The TAYP programme, delivered by Thriving Communities, aims to engage young people who are involved in or at risk of antisocial behaviour, crime, or disengagement from school. This activity-based initiative builds confidence, self-esteem, and teamwork through outdoor challenges while providing ongoing support to help participants access further youth work, education, or employment opportunities.

Key topics addressed include antisocial behaviour, substance misuse, mental health, knife crime, and domestic violence. These discussions are supported by partners such as Community Learning and Development, NHS, Police Scotland, Women's Aid, and Recovery Ayr.

In 2023, the TAYP Xtra programme, developed in partnership with Kyle Academy and supported by South Ayrshire Alcohol & Drugs Partnership funding, provided targeted intervention for four young people referred by the school. By focusing on tailored engagement and support, the programme continues to help these young people work towards positive destinations, with their progress extending into its third year.

This collaboration with Kyle Academy highlights the programme's ability to adapt and meet the specific needs of young people, ensuring they are supported in achieving long-term, positive outcomes.



# Funding to Police Scotland

## Summer Action Plan for Youth Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour (1/7/2024 - 16/8/2024)

An action plan was implemented to address youth disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB) during the summer. Police data from the 2023 school holiday identified local hotspots, which were regularly patrolled.

Before the summer break, Campus Police Officers and Thriving Community Officers delivered safety sessions on topics like water safety, travel safety, vaping, substance misuse, ASB, and personal safety.

Police, Thriving Communities Community Safety, and CLD Youth Workers worked together to reduce ASB and engage with youths. Regular meetings between the Police and Thriving Communities facilitated information sharing.

Additional patrols were funded by the SAC Community Safety Partnership, providing 168 hours of extra patrols on Friday and Saturday nights. The results included:

- 26 stop searches (5 positive)
- 15 offences identified (road traffic, street drinking, drug misuse)
- Large quantity of alcohol seized
- Youth engagement in all areas
- Hotspots were patrolled, and details of youths involved in ASB were shared with Thriving Communities, leading to the issuance of 9 parent alert letters.

### ***Please note***

***This is not published information from Police Scotland.***

***This is data collated by South Ayrshire Council Information Analyst and is based on information from live databases, so it may be subject to change.***

### **AREAS OF CONCERN 2023**

- Over the last couple of months (March-April) there has been 312 youth related incidents reported to the police.
- Prestwick remains the area where most incidents are reported and accounts for a quarter of all incidents reported during this period.
- Girvan, Troon and Ayr shore also had a high number of calls.
- 1 in 2 incidents took place on a Friday or Saturday
- 1 in 3 incidents were reported between 1900-2100hrs
- studies / Stats

## FRIDAY NIGHT FITBA

Girvan Football Club (GFC) approached Thriving Communities to address littering and vandalism at their football park. In autumn 2021, a partnership was formed with GFC, the Campus Police Officer, and Thriving Communities, leading to the creation of Friday Night Fitba.

The initiative ran on Friday nights, from 7 to 9 pm, when antisocial behaviour was most prevalent, at Hamilton Park in Girvan. Thriving Communities provided a coach, youth worker, and project lead. The programme ran successfully from October to March, with an average attendance of 25 per night.

The project included serving hot drinks and biscuits in a portacabin for young people at the football grounds. Additional partners such as the Community Sports Hub and Girvan Youth Trust joined in.

The initiative resulted in a 22% drop in youth-related antisocial behaviour in Girvan since its start in 2021. It also led to follow-up activities, including a Summer Cup football tournament, which became part of the town's Civic Week celebrations.

In March 2024, the initiative was nominated for a National Youth Work Award and reached the finals. It won the award for "Inclusion and Prevention" in June 2024, celebrating with the coaches, many of whom are young people, at the Hilton in Glasgow.

## Employability

**South Ayrshire's Local Employability Partnership (LEP)** is a well-established partnership and has clear links to local strategic plans, including Community Learning and Development plan and South Ayrshire's Volunteering Strategy 2021.

The LEP is made up of representative from South Ayrshire Council, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Ayrshire College, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce & Developing Scotland's Young Workforce (DYW), NHS and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA), as the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector interface

The LEP are fully committed to improving volunteering, training and employment opportunities for young people and adults and lead the planning, decision-making and implementation of volunteering and employability provision across South Ayrshire to ensure individual needs and labour market demands are met.

The LEP ensures local data informs decisions and reflects service delivery priorities to make best use of resources that maximises value for participants whilst contributing to local and national policy ambitions.

In line with the Scottish Government's No One Left Behind and UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund priorities the LEP ensure there are real, meaningful, work experience and training opportunities available.

Thriving Communities and LEP Partners develop and deliver a range of and employability programmes that help residents of South Ayrshire gain skills, confidence and access to support to help them achieve their employment goals, relevant to the local labour market.

We recognise the benefits of volunteering in a participants' learning and employability journey and utilise the knowledge, expertise and reach of the third sector, via VASA, in the design and delivery of services.

A wide range of programmes are offered that are tailored to meet the needs of individuals with enhanced support provided for care experienced young people and young carers, those who require specialised supported employment, parents from priority family groups and ex-offenders.

Our focus is on the impact service delivery has on participants with emphasis on progression through the employability pipeline. There are robust monitoring and tracking systems in place allowing the LEP to report on the outcomes of all participants.



## Main Objectives:

To reduce levels of child poverty by supporting parents from the priority family groups to increase their income from employment;

To reduce inequality in the labour market by supporting those further from the labour market to increase their income from employment.

Ensuring employability support is embedded within a wider range of services that wrap-around the individual, including building relationships with various stakeholders and partnerships locally

Employability support is embedded within a wider range of services that wrap-around the individual; developing place based, integrated offers of support for participants- especially parents, in line with Best Start, Bright Future ambitions.

Build relationships with various stakeholders and partnerships locally, including Child Poverty Leads

## School Leaver Destination Report (SLDR)

Thriving Communities and Education, in partnership with Skills Development Scotland are committed to ensuring young people, on leaving school, progress to a positive destination. Over the past three years South Ayrshire have been in the top four councils across the country.

**98.1%** 2022/23 (Published Feb 24) surpassing national average 95.9%

**97.3%** (Follow Up Report Published 18 June 2024) national average 92.8%

**98.6%** 2021/22 (Published Feb 23) surpassing national average 95.7%

**96.9%** (Follow Up Report Published August 23) national average 93.5%

**98.3%** 2020/21 (Published Feb 22) surpassing national average 95.5%

**97.6%** (Follow Up Report Published June 2022) national average 93.2%



## Participation Measure

Reports on the number of 16 – 19year olds participating in education, training or employment. Since 2022 Thriving Communities have had a real focus on ensuring young people aged 16-19years are supported into further education, training or employment and the work of the team since 2022 is reflect in the undernoted data:

- Published data (August 23) notes South Ayrshire's rate of 96.6% surpassing the national average of 94.3%
- Published data (August 22) notes South Ayrshire's rate of 93.7% surpassing the national average of 92.4%
- Published data (August 21) notes South Ayrshire's rate of 91.8% which was just below the national average of 92.2%

Tailored Jobs

During 23/24 Thriving Communities have created **6 tailored, part-time jobs**. These jobs were specifically created for people with additional support needs who are ready to progress into the world of work. Thriving Communities work with colleagues across the council to create job opportunities specifically designed to suit each individual person's circumstances. The jobs are designed around the skills, interests, and capabilities of the person, and supported throughout by a dedicated Thriving Communities Officer.

Evolve Programme

The Evolve Programme offers parents 6months paid employment within the local authority or with 3rd sector organisations, giving them the experience of fair and flexible employment and enhancing the prospects of permanent employment to suit their individual needs around parental responsibilities. During 23/24 16 parents have taken part in the Evolve Programme.



Employer Recruitment Incentive (ERIs)

During 23/24 Thriving Communities have supported 20 local businesses to take on an individual through a permanent contract of employment.

Employer Recruitment Incentives play an important role in not only supporting local businesses but supporting individuals to gain sustainable employment.

Modern Apprentices

South Ayrshire Council offer Modern Apprentices to young people aged 16 to 19, or upto 29yrs for people who are care experienced/young carer and/or have an additional support.

Whilst completing their apprenticeship the MA works towards the relevant work-based qualification. Modern Apprenticeships are available at a variety of levels, all mapped to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

From 2021 Thriving Communities have supported 187 MAs in a range of occupational areas including the recruitment of our first Adult Craft Trade Apprenticeships within Property Maintenance.



Reporting Year	Care Experienced	National Average	Disability	National Average
2020-21	12.5%	1.7%	33.3%	13%
2021-22	12.7%	2%	33.6%	13.3%
2022-23	5.5%	2.1%	33.3%	15.3%
2023-24	6.0%	2.3%	49.0%	17.0%

Stats show Thriving Communities have well surpassed the national average over the last 4years

Charlie White – Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) Award Winner and Outstanding Trainee Award Winner at TOPA

[AMD-TOPA-CharlieWhite-002.mp4](#)

After an outstanding apprenticeship, he was successful in securing full time employment with the Council as an Electrician in August 2023.

APSE hold annual Award Ceremonies for Outstanding Contribution to Public Service Excellence. In October 2023, Charlie won **UK APSE Apprentice of the Year** and in February 2024 won **Scottish APSE Apprentice of the Year**.

In support of Charlie’s application to the APSE awards, references were submitted:

“ Charlie has been a credit to himself and to South Ayrshire Council throughout his apprenticeship and has represented the organisation at various times during his time here. The way Charlie has conducted himself since beginning with the Council should be the template that all future apprentices work to, and I am pleased to say that Charlie will be beginning a career with us as a full time Electrician when his currently contract ends in the coming weeks ”

“ Charlie has set the mould for our future apprentices both at College and on site. He is an extremely quick learner and his progress has been outstanding. Not only does he complete his work quickly and to a high standard but his communication within the team is also impressive. If any apprentice deserves to be recognised it is Charlie, he is a credit to himself and I am delighted that he has been nominated for this award ”

Charlie’s TOPA Video

## Health and Wellbeing

### Outdoor Learning

2023-24 has been an extremely busy year at Dolphin House providing our schools and communities with high quality opportunities to learn, explore and develop a wide range of skills and qualities whilst making memories which last a lifetime.

South Ayrshire Council values the impact of outdoor learning through it's continued commitment to our residential centre Dolphin House and popular accreditation initiatives such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and John Muir Award, as well as investment in enhancing infrastructure including the Access Steps development on the River Ayr creating accessible opportunities for water-based activities for years to come.

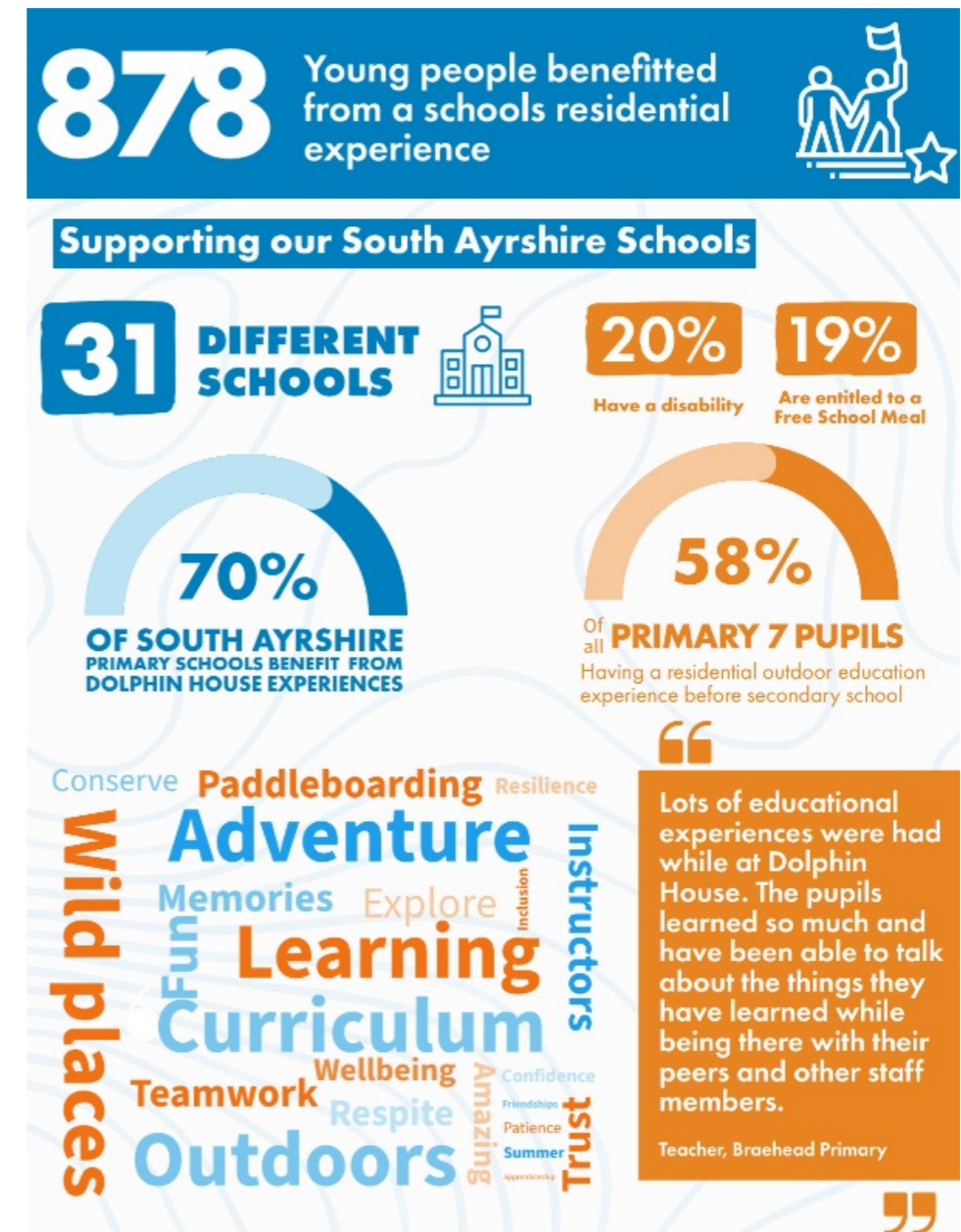
We strive to ensure outdoor learning experiences are available locally to all, increasing our provision to allow more people to experience the benefits of the outdoors through learning, having fun and exploring our beautiful area.

This year in particular has been extremely exciting for the team, with long term plans coming to fruition with support to increase staffing, allowing our services to be offered to a wider audience and substantial improvements made to accommodation at Dolphin House in addition to the exciting development of the Outdoor Classroom which

will transform outdoor learning for visitors.



## Schools and Education



The John Muir Award is used at Dolphin House to encourage and foster an awareness and responsibility of the natural environment through visiting and learning about wild places. Each visiting school achieve their award by taking part in a wide range of educational activities to explore the stunning Ayrshire coastline on foot, boat, and bike. The programme introduces the concept of learning for sustainability, educates about biodiversity in a variety of environments, allows pupils to visit and learn the history of exciting, new places and encourages young people to share their experiences when they return home. Each programme is tailored and planned to help young people develop learning outcomes in line with the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence.

During 23/24 606 young people achieved the John Muir Award from 25 different schools.



## A Centre for All

**Adapted activities**

**Accessible to everyone**

**Empowering young people**

This year the centre has been privileged to welcome all South Ayrshire's Additional Support Needs schools and units to take part in quality outdoor experiences. The programme included new, exciting opportunities for the pupils which they have never experienced before, which allowed positive connections to nature and the outdoors, teaching skills for life. The activities programme was fun and engaging, empowering the young people to develop independence, work together on team challenges and learn about the history of the local area. The impact of such visits is long lasting and profound, with young people having special memories and experiences from school which can help shape and guide their future.

"We cannot thank you enough for the unique and wonderful experiences you provide at Dolphin House, you all make an amazing team, and it was easy to see how well you all work together to make this experience one that we will never forget." Teacher, Southcraig School

Braehead Primary visit Dolphin House each year for an action-packed week of outdoor learning. The Dolphin House team have worked closely with the head teacher at the school to ensure all pupils are supported to attend the visit. Due to socio-economic challenges facing families, financial support is provided from the school in addition to a reduction in price for pupils in receipt of a free school meal.

Dolphin House instructors have worked closely with the class teacher and head teacher to gain an understanding of the diverse needs of every visiting pupil, designing a programme which best meets these needs and providing additional support and assistance where required.

The team have continued to provide opportunities for young people who are care-experienced or young carers to access outdoor activities and experiences.

Care experienced young people and young carers have been regular visitors to Dolphin House over the past year, taking part in exciting and stimulating activities in a safe, inclusive environment. To support young people the team have provided a safe space for participants to express themselves and talk about their experiences. Visits allowed family members and siblings the chance to come to a unique outdoor environment away from home where they can have quality time together. Each visit focussed on having fun as well as learning new skills working with staff who are empathetic, encouraging and non-judgemental. Throughout the year positive relationships have been built between the team and participants allowing them to feel comfortable, increasing motivation towards activities and improving physical and mental wellbeing.

“

The activities picked for each group was worked around each group we brought, this was fantastic and suited us. Overall, it was an amazing support, being able to provide us such great experiences we were able to offer the young people who might have not been able to have if not for Dolphin House. Also offering us the buses helped support the young people who could not have gone otherwise.

Taylor, Group Leader, The Champions Board

”



## The Duke Of Edinburgh's Award

2023-24 has been an outstanding year for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) in South Ayrshire. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is the largest youth achievement award in the UK and is open to 14-24 year olds at three progressive levels; Bronze, Silver and Gold. Each level contains four sections challenging young people to learn new skills, stay active, give something back to their community and work together to complete an exciting expedition. At the Gold level there is an additional residential section where young people have the chance to stay at Dolphin House for a week long residential programme.

**Expedition:** Young people plan, train for, and complete an unaccompanied, self-reliant expedition supported by the South Ayrshire team. To complete the section, training, a practice expedition, a qualifying expedition (the one that is assessed) and a final presentation to share their story are all included. Every expedition challenges young people to work together to progress on their journey exploring some amazing wild places, whether it be the remote hills of the Galloway Forest Park, the picturesque Isle of Arran and the historic Cowal Way, learning skills for life and making memories along the way.

**Volunteering:** For the first time the team have offered an exciting training, mentoring and volunteering programme focussed on building capacity to deliver the DofE expedition section across South Ayrshire. The team have made increasing DofE Leaders a priority for this year and have offered a range of fantastic training opportunities including National Governing Body approved awards, bespoke outdoor first aid training and minibuss driving training. The support has resulted in new leaders with confidence and skills to take on organising and supervising their own expeditions whilst creating more opportunities for young people to take part in the award at all three levels.

### The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in numbers 2023-2024



**486**  
Young People have started an award

**282**  
Awards have been achieved



**58%**  
Completion rate across all schools and centres

**Higher than the national average**

**Girvan Academy – A Model for Success:** Girvan Academy have developed an impressive model for delivery of DofE within a school setting which is robust, sustainable and person focussed. Over the past 12 months the team have supported 7 members of school staff to access training and development opportunities to increase capacity within the school. Each of the school staff volunteer their time to provide support to young people to work towards an award at all three levels including advice and assistance to access sectional activities, which can be challenging in rural areas, expedition supervision, and assessing and creating a new DofE group for young people with additional support needs which is individually tailored to their needs and abilities. Girvan Academy have shown outstanding commitment to DofE and enhanced the profile of the award within the school and local community, especially through the volunteering section.

**52**  
Awards achieved

**7**  
New leaders

**5**  
Gold Awards

**50%** Of young people progress to the next award level

“

**Completing training courses has allowed more pupils to take part in Duke Of Edinburgh Awards, outdoor learning and other outdoor activities by expanding the knowledge and skills of staff to work with pupils in remote environments**

Teacher, Girvan Academy

”

## Supporting Communities

Summer Holiday Programme: Throughout the school summer holidays Dolphin House has welcomed a diverse range of groups to the centre, as well as taking outdoor learning to our communities and delivering activities closer to young people at venues including paddling on the River Ayr and River Doon. Over holiday periods outdoor learning provides young people opportunities to try and experience something new, pushes them out of their comfort zones and has the potential to engage those who may be involved in anti-social behaviour.

This summer groups have been involved from Dundonald to Barrhill including Thriving Communities Youth Provision, Community Safety, Third Sector Youth Organisations, local Sports Clubs and Organisations who support young people with additional support needs.

“Our Youths had an excellent time at Dolphin House and we would highly recommend all services to make use of the wonderful space. The staff are the difference on the day and really are what makes the experience.” Group Leader, Thriving Communities



Versus Arthritis: Versus Arthritis visited for two residential experiences over the summer holidays with participants from across Ayrshire. The visits involved young people with arthritis visiting accompanied by family members to provide support in addition to group leaders. Collaboratively a programme was developed between the lead instructor and group leaders to meet the needs of participants with shorter sessions, regular rest breaks and additional support provided to ensure the programme was a manageable level for all.

Each of the participants was supported to access experiences they would otherwise not have including many trying paddlesports for the first time, taking a leap of faith whilst abseiling and exploring the dark dives of the historic caves. All of this was possible due to the positive relationships built between participants, family members, group leaders and the Dolphin House team based on flexibility, trust and adaptability.



## Workforce Development

Inspiring young people to develop skills, confidence and leadership in an outdoor environment.

### Case Study: Charlie's story

Charlie started at Dolphin House on the South Ayrshire Council Modern Apprenticeship Programme having previously taken part in Project Search, a Girvan Youth Trust and Ayrshire College employability initiative. Having previously been unemployed after prematurely leaving formal education, Charlie's journey has been remarkable, inspiring and life changing. Starting his Modern Apprenticeship in Active Leisure, Learning and Wellbeing: Operational Services Charlie was shy, apprehensive and extremely quiet due to a range of challenges he has faced throughout his life.

After settling in, supported by the team at Dolphin House and Thriving Communities Employability Officers, Charlie began to thrive in the unique outdoor environment around Dolphin House. He quickly became a popular member of the team, building his confidence, resilience and interpersonal skills as well as obtaining a range of nationally recognised qualifications and awards. He has also received glowing testimonials from participants and group leaders. Charlie continued to advance with his confidence and responsibility growing week-by-week

whilst receiving support from colleagues to begin to lead his own activities and groups including his favourite activity; archery.

Charlie's development has been outstanding and a testament to his own motivation and commitment, as well as the bespoke support and opportunities provided by Thriving Communities. To date Charlie has achieved; SVQ Level 2 in Active Leisure, Learning and Wellbeing: Operational Services, Archery GB Instructor Award, PathsforAll Walk Leader, Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Cycling Scotland's Cycle Ride Leader, and Bike Maintenance Level 1.

We are delighted to share that Charlie will be continuing with the team, having been successful for a Tailored Job as an Outdoor Activities Assistant. Over the next 23 months Charlie will be given the opportunity to continue his career development working with a range of visiting groups, and working towards further outdoor qualifications in Mountain Biking, Hill Walking and Paddlesports. Charlie's ambition is to utilise the 23-month Tailored Job opportunity to further prepare himself for a career working in the outdoors.

“Completing my apprenticeship has helped me gain confidence by leading groups and improving my leadership and communication skills. I have been helped throughout by the instructors who give me tasks and feedback to support my development.”

Charlie, Modern Apprentice.

## Building Connections

A priority for 2023/24 was to support local groups and organisations to access affordable outdoor education opportunities. Dolphin House significantly increased the range of visiting groups thanks to a new operational model, increased local outreach venues and improved facilities at Dolphin House. This has provided increased access for local people including families having the chance to visit time and time again.



“

One of our young people had the best time, we have been working with him for 18 weeks and I have never seen him smile as much as he did when walking through the gorge.

Scottish Sport Futures

”

## Females in the Outdoors

Trefoil Guild

21 DOLPHIN HOUSE - ANNUAL REVIEW DOLPHIN HOUSE - ANNUAL REVIEW 22

Dolphin House is committed to ensuring opportunities are offered to all stages of the life course to encourage everyone to experience healthy, active lives. During June 2024 Dolphin House welcomed a group of members from the Trefoil Guild for a action packed weekend of adventure and learning fully immersed in the outdoors. The members worked closely with the lead instructor to plan an engaging tailor-made programme which pushed them out of their comfort zones and provided unique opportunities to continue to challenge themselves later in life.

Throughout the weekend each of the Trefoil members showcased impressive teamwork, willingness to try new things and overcame fear through a range of exciting activities including exploring the historic caves below Culzean Castle and paddling a scenic section of the River Ayr. The weekend was not just impactful for the participants but an inspiring and meaningful experience for the team at Dolphin House, gaining a clear understanding of the impact they have on communities first hand. Dolphin House continues to showcase the opportunity and support for all ages to take part in activities which remove barriers, challenges stereotypes and enhances mental, and physical, health and wellbeing.

“

The activity was nonstop, ranging from shell collecting, tree identification, caving, rock pooling, orienteering, and pond dipping. The instructor had designed an incredible time where we learned, laughed and had the best time together!

Patrice, Group Leader, The Trefoil Guild

”



This year we have welcomed a range of local uniformed services to Dolphin House for both residential visits and day activities over weekends and holiday periods. Supporting groups such as Guides and Brownies provide the chance for girls and young women to access the outdoors.

Female-only trips give girls a space they can fully participate and lead outdoor activities without fear of judgement or feeling overshadowed. This setting allows them to push personal boundaries, gain independence, and experience outdoor challenges on their own terms.

Activities like preparing for water sports or climbing can feel vulnerable. A female-only group creates a safe, supportive space where girls can feel comfortable and focus on the experience, without added worries about appearance or judgement. These trips foster connections among girls, promote teamwork and camaraderie in a supportive, empowering space. These friendships and shared experiences can encourage girls to pursue activities in future, knowing they have a network that understands and supports them.

“

**Our goal was to provide an affordable adventurous day out for girls from Carrick District, and to make use of local facilities. The girls had a blast doing both the orienteering and the water sports and we were blessed with beautiful weather too.**

Sharon, Group Leader

”

## Sport and Physical Activity

**sportscotland**  
the national agency for sport

2023-24 has been a great year for sport and physical activity in South Ayrshire with lots of children, young people, adults and families taking part in our school, community and competitive sport programmes.

### Participate



### Active Schools Programme

Our Active Schools Programme provides FREE sport and physical activity sessions to all schools across South Ayrshire, encouraging more young people to be active. These sessions are open to all pupils & take place before school, during lunchtime and afterschool.

**5,149**   
Sessions delivered

**2125**  
pupils attending  
our sessions have  
additional  
support  
needs 

**29**   
different activities

**246**   
pupils participating  
come from an ethnic  
minority background

**954**   
pupils taking part live  
in an SIMD 1&2 area

**5893**   
pupils participating  
in our Active Schools  
Programme



### Curricular Delivery – Family First

Thanks to sportscotland funding, our Active Schools Assistants have been working across South Ayrshire to provide communities with more opportunities to participate in sport & physical activity in their area.

One of their main focuses has been to support the new Family First forums. The Family First model allows the needs of South Ayrshire's children to be met through a joined-up, collaborative approach to children's services. The Assistants work with schools and other partners to support some of our most vulnerable young people and their families to access sport during the school day, within our Active Communities sessions or support them to attend local sports club s in their community.



## In the net... case-study

### Using football to engage pupils in literacy

The pupils were showing little to no engagement in literacy and reading tasks and were below target for reading ages and attainment in literacy. Weekly quiet reading sessions took place supported by Aiden, their Active Schools Coordinator, working 1-1 with each pupil. This was followed by 30 mins of football activity outside linking the reading to the values displayed by professional football players such as teamwork and communication.

This linked with other initiatives throughout the week with the schools "Reading in The Net" programme, where pupils complete literacy activities relating to the books they are reading with their Active Schools Coordinator.

Pupils were assessed the using the Accelerated Reader STAR assessment. All four pupils who part of the programmes saw an improvement in their reading age within the 4 months of the programme, with one pupil increasing their reading age by nearly four years!

At the start of the programme the pupils said that they didn't enjoy reading however all pupils have now said that they enjoy reading.

“

#### SCHOOL TEACHER

The boys are motivated by being part of this group, helping them to build a positive relationship with reading ”



#### ACTIVE SCHOOLS COORDINATOR

“ The project has been a real success. It has been great to see the boys so engaged with their reading and to hear of some of impact the sessions are having with reading scores and literacy engagement has been amazing! ”

## Young Carers in South Ayrshire



south ayrshire  
health & social care  
partnership

Supporting Young Carers: We continue to provide bespoke opportunities to support Young Carers across South Ayrshire. Working alongside the South Ayrshire Young Carers Centre we provided swimming lessons for young carers who attend schools within the Carrick cluster. We recognised that Young Carers were unable to attend swimming lessons, or access the pool, outwith the school day due to their caring responsibilities. Thanks to funding from the Health & Social Care Partnership, sessions during the school day were delivered by Sport& Leisure Swimming teachers at the new Maybole Leisure Club.



“

We are delighted to be partnering with Health & Wellbeing (Thriving Communities) and our commissioned carers service, Unity, to offer swimming lessons to all young carers who live in the Maybole and North Carrick area. This is a great opportunity for young carers to build relationships with others who are in the same, or similar, situation to them, offering informal peer support.

Clare Flanagan Young Carers Strategy Lead Officer ”

“

#### FEEDBACK FROM YOUNG CARERS

I LIKE SWIMMING IN A SMALLER GROUP  
THE SWIMMING TEACHER LET ME SWIM  
NEAR THE EDGE AS I WAS NERVOUS  
I HAD NEVER BEEN SWIMMING BEFORE ”

“

THIS IS FUN THAT IT  
IS JUST US ”

“ MY SISTER AND I GET TO  
DO THINGS BUT NOT ALL  
YOUNG CARERS DO ”



## Young Carers Week

In June, our team celebrated Young Carers Week to raise awareness of caring and of the challenges that Young Carers face when accessing sport and physical activity opportunities. Young Carers can find access to sport outwith school hours a challenge due to their caring responsibilities and so our team provided sessions during the day including rowing, assault courses & nature walks.

# ActiveCommunities

Active Communities is an accessible programme of sport and physical activity delivered throughout the year across South Ayrshire. The programme offers a wide range of options for young people and adults, with sessions in the evenings, weekends and over the school holidays.

Active Communities bridges the gap between school-based sport and club sport, whilst offering a valuable opportunity for young people to build friendships, confidence, and skills across a range of activities.

With the addition of adult and family sessions, we deliver opportunities for anyone across our community to enjoy the benefits of physical activity and sport.

Through the support of sportscotland and other sponsors, we are able to keep the cost of sessions very low - and in many cases, free of charge.

We link in with a range of local services to promote opportunities and remove barriers for individuals and families who need assistance.

Our partnerships have further enabled us to broaden the range activities available through Active Communities - including green health activity; such as cycling, walking, beach sport and paddlesports.



A feature of the programme is Inspire Sport – specific activity supporting those living with a disability (of all ages) to play sport and stay active in their communities.



## Compete

Our school competitions and festivals provide young people with the opportunity to take part in both fun and competitive events across the school year. Our team provides events across a variety of different sports such as Athletics, Volleyball, Tennis & Football. Some of these events are also an opportunity for schools to qualify for regional and national events. National Governing Bodies and Local Clubs support the Competitive Sport Programme through supporting on the day and by providing the pre-event Coach Education to Ayrshire College, UWS students and volunteers.

### Competition stats for 23-24

15 PRIMARY COMPETITIONS

14 SECONDARY COMPETITIONS

21 CLUSTER COMPETITIONS

2137 PUPILS COMPETED

### National Handball Competition

Returning to the Citadel for the first time since 2020 was the Primary South Ayrshire Handball Regional Qualifier. 126 P5-7 pupils from 7 South Ayrshire schools attended the event which was supported by Ayrshire College, Troon Handball & Scottish Handball.

#### Winners

Boys – Heathfield | Girls – Grammar

Both winners, finalists and 2 wildcard schools progressed to represent South

Ayrshire at the National Competition at Ravenscraig Sports Facility:

Coylton | Annbank | Heathfield | Troon | Grammar

Boys from Marr College S1-6 represented South Ayrshire at the secondary national event.

Working closely with the Handball Development Officer we have been able to re-establish

Handball in schools and communities across South Ayrshire. This has enhanced our offer and

created a sustainable pathway allowing schools the opportunity to compete at regional and national competitions.



# Holiday Programmes

Our holiday programmes provide an excellent opportunity for young people to stay active and remain in touch with friends when schools out.

As well as our ever-popular primary sports camps,

our programme also includes a range of activities designed to a wide range of participants –

including free community pop ups, cycling, watersports, walking, ASN sessions and beach days.



**2,079** HOLIDAY SESSIONS DELIVERED

**774** YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDED  
(465 MALE / 309 FEMALE)

**31** YOUNG CARERS TOOK PART

**243** PEOPLE TAKING PART HAD AN  
ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEED

**12** PARTICIPANTS WERE CARE  
EXPERIENCED



“ Lucy absolutely loved the multi sports camps. The staff were amazing and helpful. Such a great idea for the holidays ”



“ Our son absolutely loved both the Auchencruive and Fullerton woods cycle adventures. Thank you so much to all the staff for providing such a fun and exciting opportunity for the kids. ”

“ Absolutely amazing opportunities not just for the kids that attend but for also the young people that help out - long may it continue, such a valuable resource. ”



“ My child had a great time and came home telling me lots about the different sports he got to try out. He was especially excited about basketball as it's something he's never really tried before. ”



# Developing People

The team deliver a range of opportunities for coaching and volunteering to develop a network of people to support the delivery of sport and physical activity across South Ayrshire. From our Developing Young Workforce programme to supporting community sports clubs grow their volunteer network.

## People



Supporting children, young people and adults to develop their skills and qualifications to support the delivery of sport and physical activity in South Ayrshire.

### DYW stats

**721**   
Young Leaders took part in our Leadership pathway

**835**   
qualifications were completed by our young leaders

**16**   
young leaders have care experience

### Distinct Deliverers Stats

**337**   
different coaches & volunteers delivered Active Schools sessions this year

**117**   
teachers and other school staff delivered breakfast, lunch & afterschool clubs over the last school year.

**26**   
students delivered afterschool programmes across South Ayrshire

## Coach Education



After a successful Coach Education Calendar throughout 22/23. We have again worked with our National Governing Body partners from March 23 to March 24 to offer a variety of generic and sports-specific courses that Club Coaches, HWB Sports Coaches and Volunteers could access. Having this opportunity allowed candidates to be develop and be supported to deliver our sport and physical activity programmes and support their local sports clubs.

This year we were able to add a fantastic selection of new workshops which were delivered by our partners from the University of the West of Scotland.

Psychology in Sport	Safeguarding - Child Wellbeing
Rugby Essentials	SAMH Mental Health Awareness
Scottish FA 1.2 Childrens Coaching Certificate	Walk Leader Training
Bikeability Instructor Training	Inclusive Practice
Sports Specific First Aid	Cycle Rider Leader Training
Fundamentals of Handball - Stage 1	Females in Coaching
Positive Coaching Scotland	

The Coach Education Calendar provided learning opportunities for

**70** Club Coaches, HWB SportsCoaches & Volunteers.

### Club Ready affiliated clubs

benefited from free access to this programme. These coaches attended multiple courses/workshops throughout the year as they looked to develop themselves and share the knowledge gained back at their local clubs.

19

Our annual Sport Awards are an opportunity to highlight and recognise both junior and senior sporting achievements and the invaluable voluntary contribution from parents, pupils, coaches, athletes and officials in schools and communities across South Ayrshire.

# Case Study

## DYW PATHWAY



Carys has been part of our Active Schools leadership programme for the last 3 years as a dance leader.

Carys decided to become a dance leader as she had a passion for dance and wanted to provide young people with more opportunities to have fun taking part in dance.



### CARYS

Meeting new people and going to primary schools to make sure children enjoyed after schools clubs and made use of their free time, watch children become more confident in their skills and become passionate and creative.



### CARYS MUM

I was keen for Carys to undertake the Leadership Academy to challenge herself in regards to meeting new people, improving her communication and organisational skills and self confidence.

Carys was very nervous initially on mixing with and meeting new people but now looks forward to meeting up with and working with students from other schools and age groups.

Carys takes the responsibility of being a dance leader seriously and has a sense of pride when she see the children develop their confidence and dance skills whilst having fun. She has grown hugely in confidence emotionally and physically. She has developed the ability to be assertive and provide guidance and direction to younger children which will help her immensely in her choice of career.



# AGEING WELL Case Study



## VOLUNTEERING WITH CYCLING WITHOUT AGE SCOTLAND

Towards the end of 2023, we launched Cycling Without Age in Ayr, which aims to alleviate social isolation by taking people with limited mobility out into their community on specially designed tricycles. The success of the project is dependent on the support of adult volunteers who collect residents from neighboring care homes and pilot the bicycles on various routes.

There are 17 adult volunteers who have undergone training to qualify as "pilots". Volunteers are assigned to one

or two care homes, to allow them to build a rapport with residents and staff. By undertaking accredited training, volunteers are supported by the national agency and can support any branch of the project across Scotland.



We love taking people out on bike rides. Having a relative in a care home has made us aware that much of their day is spent indoors. We wanted to be part of a project which got people out more often where they could enjoy the scenery and all of the things we love about cycling.

Tracy, volunteer pilot



# PROGRESS...



Our Sport & Physical Activity team supports people in South Ayrshire to progress to community and club sport, as well as helping to support talented athletes to participate in competitive opportunities.

## Talented Athlete

The South Ayrshire Talented Athlete programme strives to support our National and International athletes on their journey to the top of their sport. The Sport and Physical Activity Team in partnership with South Ayrshire Sport and Leisure offer our athletes a free gym and swim membership with a strength and conditioning programme to complement their own training. Athletes can also access a grant payment of up to £200 which supports National or International events or training.



2023/24

39

athletes supported  
in South Ayrshire

24

athletes under  
18 years of age

15

athletes over  
18 years of age

**£4795.60**  
of funding awarded to support athletes



Athletes compete for  
different clubs

19

athletes supported  
with gym and swim  
memberships

31

## Club Ready



## DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

South Ayrshire Club Ready is an accreditation award scheme designed to recognise and support the work of clubs and sporting organisations in South Ayrshire. The scheme helps clubs to improve and is a clear indication that the club is safe, fun and a good place to participate in sport.

The programme has evolved over the last year to allow sporting organisations, and businesses who operate for financial profit, to affiliate. This ensures that the organisation / business is safe and a good place for young people and adults to participate in sport.



The benefits of joining the Club Ready Affiliation scheme include: -

## FREE COACH EDUCATION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

PROFILING THROUGH  
ACTIVE SCHOOLS  
SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

ACCESS TO DELIVER ACTIVITIES  
WITHIN SOUTH AYRSHIRE SCHOOLS

INVITES TO EVENTS  
AND SOUTH AYRSHIRE  
COMPETITIONS

MEMBERSHIP OF THE  
SOUTH AYRSHIRE  
COMMUNITY SPORT  
HUB NETWORK

CLUB SUPPORT  
AND DEVELOPMENT

A total of

52

clubs and sporting  
organisations  
affiliated over the  
2023/24 period.

# CHANGING LIVES THROUGH SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



**Evidence shows that being active brings about positive changes beyond participation in sport and can impact positively on the health and wellbeing of individuals, on their skills and learning, and on communities, ensuring a more inclusive and healthier nation.**

Sporting and non-sporting organisations can proactively use sport & physical activity as an intentional tool to achieve both increased participation and wider social outcomes.

In 2023/24 the Health and Wellbeing team worked with clubs and sporting organisations in South Ayrshire, through the Club Ready affiliation scheme, to offer opportunities to our communities to participate in sport. These opportunities would focus on those who face barriers to participation.

Club Ready members were invited to attend a Changing Lives Through Sport workshop delivered by our Changing Lives Champion.

The workshop focused on the key themes of changing lives:-

- Sport for Inclusion
- Sport for Health and Wellbeing
- Sport for Communities
- Sport for Skills

On completion of the workshop clubs could apply for a grant of up to £2000 to support with a project that meets one or more of these key themes. 7 clubs were awarded funding from attending the Changing Lives through Sport workshops. A total of £12,499.56 has been awarded to the 7 clubs to deliver a variety of projects in South Ayrshire.

Clubs who received funding:

**SOUTH AYRSHIRE SWIM TEAM** **AYRSHIRE TIGERS**  
**SOUTH AYRSHIRE TABLE TENNIS CLUB** **WHITLETTS VICTORIA FC**  
**CARRICK RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB** **KYLE KAYAK CLUB**  
**PRESTWICK BOWLING CLUB**

## Carrick Rugby Club Friday night Diversionary Rugby Project (Changing Lives)



Receiving funding from the Health and Wellbeing Team through the Changing Lives Through Sport and Physical Activity fund supported Carrick Rugby Football Club to deliver Friday night diversionary Rugby at Maybole Community Campus. This project aims to divert young people from North and South Carrick communities from anti-social behaviour and creates a pathway into the club.

The sessions run from 6pm to 8pm every Friday night with the club offering free transport from South Carrick and surrounding villages making it accessible to everyone.

The sessions are delivered by the clubs' development officer, club volunteers and are supported by the Thriving Communities Health and Wellbeing Team and Girvan Community Sport Hub. This partnership working has helped the project grow from strength to strength over the last year.

The club have also recently started their Ruck and Roast project aimed at socially isolated adults within the community, inviting them into the club for some food, tea or coffee and just a chat. This project is supported by the Thriving Communities Health and Wellbeing Team and Community Learning and Development Team.

The Friday night Diversionary project has over 60 young people attending each week from Maybole, Girvan and surrounding villages, and the Ruck and Roast project has 10 adults attending each week.

**Carrick Rugby Development Officer:**  
**Both projects have had a massive success within the area and we couldn't do it without the funding we have received. This funding allows us to offer free transport which is integral to the success of the programme**

**Safeguarding and Funding Officer:**  
**Being able to offer this programme for free has been key to the success. It has helped massively to grow our girls section of the club as there is a pathway from the Friday nights into the club**



## Case Study

### TABLE TENNIS



#### HIGHLIGHTS

50

adults, families & young people attending each week

Youngest participant 3 years old

1

participant progressing to a Table Tennis Regional Qualifying Competition

Oldest participant 91 years old

Over the past year, North Ayr Community Sports Hub (NACSH), Thriving Communities Health and Wellbeing Team, Table Tennis Scotland and South Ayrshire Table Tennis Club worked in partnership to deliver weekly Table Tennis sessions. After consulting with the local community at the NACSH Open Day in 2023, it was clear there was a demand for fun sport and physical opportunities for families and adults.

The sessions ran every Wednesday 4-6pm at Ayr Academy and were open to all ages and all abilities. The relaxed "drop in" format made it accessible for all as people could come for part of the session or stay for the full duration.

Having the session open to all ages created a community with older adults interacting, supporting and playing against the young people.



“

Relaxed atmosphere and coaches very helpful and encouraging.

Very accessible plus plenty access to tables, also time to practice.”

## Walking for Health



Our continued collaboration with Paths for All and the Health & Social Care Partnership has supported the further development of our Walking for Health project. These accessible walks are free to attend, with most scheduled on a weekly basis – offering a valuable social opportunity to participants. Our engagement with Community Link Workers, members of the Health & Social Care Partnership, colleagues in Education and services across South Ayrshire has identified a range of opportunities to develop the project and support a number of community groups to establish their own walks.

With around 120 participants each week, the profile of Walking for Health has grown and further investment has been secured to continue to develop the project. Earlier this year, SportScotland and Paths for All invited our team to present to the Community Sports Hub network on the success of the South Ayrshire Health Walk programme.

Across all of our walks,

20% of participants live in an SIMD 1-3 area



Almost 80% of participants are aged

45+



More than half aged

65+



Near 75% of participants are female.



# Cycling



Through the support of SportScotland, Cycling Scotland and a number of other partners, we have been able to deliver a programme of cycling over the course of the last year. This has included cycling in various forms – from early years balance bike classes, mountain biking skills and adventure rides.

Cycling and walking activities continue to be a key feature of our Active Communities and Holiday programmes. Around 500 adults, young people and children have engaged with some aspect of our cycling programme in the last year – between regular sessions, holiday activities and events.

Linking in with Girvan-based community enterprise Biosphere Bikes, we have been able to introduce all-abilities cycling into our Inspire programme. Adult social rides have also grown in popularity, supported by partnerships with both Ayr United Academy and the South Ayrshire Ukrainian Community Group.

Our work with both the Community Gift Exchange and Cycling Scotland has helped to improve access to bicycles within communities and households who would benefit most.

Referrals for a bicycle (helmet and lock) can be made by school staff or any family support practitioner. To date, more than 120 bicycles have been re-homed through the project. 24 bicycles have gone to Young Carers and 7 Care Experienced young people. 94 of the referrals made cited 'support for cycling to school and around their community' as principal benefits of having access to a bicycle.



“

Thank you for the bike ride today. One day I will make it to the top of the hill on the bike without stopping, I'm determined!!

Olena, Ukrainian Community Group.”



## On Yer Bike, Girvan



**In May, we partnered with Cycling Scotland and Girvan-based Biosphere Bikes to deliver a two-day community cycling event – On Yer Bike Girvan!**

With Pedal for Scotland and Participatory Budget investment, a full weekend programme of cycling, alongside a range of green health activities – including climbing, beach craft and archery. There were 249 hires of bicycles and other pedal-powered vehicles offered free of charge over the course of the event.

We provided additional activities and Cycle Ride Leaders and to support those less comfortable with cycling, or less familiar with local cycling routes. There was a presence from the Ayrshire Link team, who were raising awareness of efforts to develop new routes in the area.

The tourism team from Go Girvan and colleagues for the UNESCO Biosphere also supported the event, along with the RNLI who gave advice on water safety.



# Case Study

## AYR NORTH SOCIAL CYCLING GROUP

Consultation with local partners identified an ambition to promote

cycling around the Ayr North Community. Further collaboration with

the Community Planning team for Wallacetown and Ayr United

Academy led to setting some key targets - improved cycle parking facilities and bicycle security, improved access to bikes and regular cycling activity for local residents.

Led by the Sport Activation Manager for Ayr North, working alongside colleagues across Thriving Communities, investment was secured via Ayrshire Roads Alliance for a new cycle shelter and maintenance station at Somerset Park, alongside a storage unit for bicycles.

This laid the way for a summer programme of led rides for local residents, some of whom do not own or have access to a bicycle, are now meeting for weekly social rides around the town. Through the support of SportScotland, activities and access to bicycles is made free to participants – with Ayr United Academy providing the post-ride tea & coffee at their Community Hub.

Our ambition is to grow this further, following in the footsteps of the Ayr Strollers walking group – which has grown significantly in recent years. To allow for this, our priority would be building capacity through training ride leaders, allowing us to take more rides and larger groups out into the community on bicycles.

“

I've not been on a bike in about 9 years. I'm glad I came out on the ride today. I've really enjoyed it and looking forward to the next time

Matt

”



### South Ayrshire Communities Day

The final highlight during 2023/24 was the Communities Fun day that was organised by Housing and Thriving Communities. The day took place on Saturday 11th May 2024 with over 3,500 attendees enjoying the first Communities Fun Day since 2019.

Attendees enjoyed all the free activities on offer including some new attractions such as Canoeing, Sport Taster sessions, Inflatable Zone and the highly rated Zip Line.

The information and advice stalls were bustling with attendees able to chat with a range of Council services, partner organisations and charities.

The vehicle display was the largest Communities Fun Day Vehicle Display to date with a vast array of different vehicles including a 1980's Western Bus, 1940's Military Vehicles, Vintage Trucks, Vintage & Modern Cars, Motorbikes and a Council Gritter.

Feedback from attendees was extremely positive with the new venue of Ayr Academy/Riverside Sports Arena being highly rated along with all the tickets, activities, attractions, information & advice stalls, parking and shuttle bus service being completely free.

This was the first time Thriving Communities were involved in the event and are delighted to be working alongside colleagues in Housing to plan the next event planned for 2025.

### Year 3 - Conclusion

It has been another action-packed year for Thriving Communities as the service continues to evolve, develop new ways of working and focus on outcomes and data. The progress of the service was validated by Education Scotland as part of their progress visit. It is clear from feedback from communities and inspectors that Thriving Communities are improving the reputation of The Council with the new approach.

There is clear evidence that Thriving Communities are empowering communities, improving outcomes, maximising external funding opportunities and strengthening partnerships with external partners.

The leadership team within Thriving Communities acknowledge the economic challenges facing not only our communities but also the organisation and how we deliver our services. The staff have created a good foundation to continuously improve the service and consider new ways of working.

The service will carry out a service review in 2025/26 as agreed at Cabinet in November 2023, where we will engage with staff and other services to assist this review and consider how we can further enhance the service.

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