



Local Outcomes Improvement Plan Annual Report 2022/23



Community Planning in
EAST AYRSHIRE

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Executive Summary

This annual performance report seeks to provide an overview of the wide range of work that has been taken forward by our community planning partnership over the last year. While we continue to address the renewal and recovery agenda identified in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are also increasingly looking ahead, building towards a fairer future wellbeing economy for East Ayrshire.

Central to this ambition is the realisation of our shared strategic priorities, Ayrshire Growth Deal and Caring for Ayrshire, which offer complementary visions for the future of partnership working in East Ayrshire and across the wider region.

Our reporting of the local work being undertaken in support of these high level longer term ambitions is framed around the priority areas identified in our 2021 Community Plan Review:

- **Recovery and Renewal**
- **Poverty & Inequality**
- **Inclusive Economic Growth**
- **Sustainability and the Environment**
- **Children and Young People**
- **Community Wellbeing**

Increasingly, we recognise and highlight in this report the cross cutting nature of this work, and the contribution that individual community planning partners make across each of these priority areas. In doing so, we also note the increased cumulative impact of joint partnership working, which outweighs anything that could be achieved by individual agencies or communities working alone.

At a strategic level, key milestones achieved over the last year include the approval of a new Ayrshire Economic Strategy and the related Regional Skills Investment Plan; and agreement of a Strategic Vision for Kilmaronock 2022-27. At a more practical level we are also pleased to highlight a new net zero housing model and the wider actions that are being taken by all partners as a direct response to climate change.

We celebrate the improved attainment and positive destinations achieved by our children and young people, in spite of the many obstacles that they have had to cope with over the last few years. And the achievements and contribution of our increasingly diverse and always resilient communities, who work side by side with statutory partners to drive forward our shared ambitions for East Ayrshire.

Of course there are also challenges – the cost of living crisis that has manifested in increased demand for partnership services and supports; the wider economic and geopolitical developments that have impacted on capital investment programmes and the funding available to us; and stubborn local issues like alcohol and drugs misuse that we are still working to address.

The development of a new Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2024-27, to be taken forward over the next year, will provide a formal opportunity to look again at our ambitions for the local area, the things that we need to focus on going forward, and the further work that needs to be done, particularly in relation to challenging inequalities.

This annual report and the related suite of annual reporting materials represents an important step on this journey, helping us to better understand where we are now, what is working well and what we still have to do – as we continue to work in partnership to plan and build for the future.

Introduction

During 2022/23 communities across East Ayrshire have continued to feel the after effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and have struggled with rising costs which have presented real and significant challenges to both individuals, households and businesses.

Community planning partners have also faced increasing demand for services, increasing associated costs and reducing resources, all set against the uncertain background of public sector reform.

This local context, taken together with ongoing wider developments relating to the war in Ukraine, the global economy and our changing climate, is one of continuing and perhaps unprecedented uncertainty.

However there are some things that do remain constant.

We have a strong ethos of partnership working and good, strong relationships across our CPP.

We have a committed partnership workforce that consistently goes above and beyond to deliver the best possible services in East Ayrshire.

We have strong and resilient communities, with their own ambitions, and the determination to achieve these.

Partnership working in uncertain times is increasingly becoming our business as usual.

This annual performance report seeks to demonstrate the strength of partnership working in East Ayrshire and how this is making a difference to people across our communities on a day to day basis. Importantly it will also highlight the investment that we are making for the longer term, the arrangements that we are putting in place for example to build our economy, develop the future workforce and protect our environment.

Central to this is the long term advancement of our shared strategic priorities, Ayrshire Growth Deal and Caring for Ayrshire, and our collective partnership vision of a wellbeing economy in East Ayrshire.

The report is presented under the priority areas of work agreed in the Community Plan Review 2021, and aims to showcase the range of work that partners are involved in - planning as one; working as one; achieving as one.



Our Work

Our overarching community planning vision is set out in East Ayrshire Community Plan 2015-30. To achieve this vision we work in three yearly planning cycles which allow us to respond to changing local needs and challenges, ensuring that we remain on course to achieve our longer term ambitions. The 2021 Community Plan review set our priority areas of work for the three year period 2021-24:



These locally identified priorities align well with the national agenda set out in the Scottish Government's [**Stronger More Resilient Scotland Programme for Government 2022/23**](#), which seeks to mitigate the impacts of the cost of living crisis and to build a better future through the continued national commitment to a fairer, greener wellbeing economy.

The performance measures that we will use to help measure the impact of our work at the end of the 2021-2024 reporting cycle are included at **Appendix 1** of this report, with interim updates provided where available reflecting the most up to date available data at the time of writing. These measures represent just some of the wide range of data that is used across our CPP on an ongoing basis, to inform and shape our work.



Our Strategic Priorities

AYRSHIRE GROWTH DEAL

'Ayrshire to be a vibrant, outward looking, confident region, attractive to investors and visitors, making a major contribution to Scotland's growth and local wellbeing, and leading the implementation of digital technologies and the next generation of manufacturing'

The Ayrshire Growth Deal Vision

- Scotland's first non-City Region Deal
- £251m investment over 10 years (2020-2030)
- Up to 7,000 jobs and £300m leveraged/private sector investment
- 19 projects (5 in delivery and 14 in development at September 2022)
- Community Wealth Building Programme (Officially launched)
- Working for a Healthy Economy (Officially launched)

Details of AGD progress over the last year can be found in the [Ayrshire Growth Deal Annual Report](#)



East Ayrshire Highlights in 2022/23

- [The HALO project](#) in Kilmarnock now has 20 new businesses based in the space, which have created 72 new jobs across a range of potential growth sectors, such as renewables, life sciences, financial services, construction and marketing.
- Planning permission has been secured for the [Community Renewable Energy project \(CoRE\)](#), an innovative renewables project in Cumnock which will build on the area's natural resources to provide a self-sustaining network of low cost energy from renewable sources, such as wind, solar, geo-thermal and hydro.
- Over 120 enterprises have been supported by the [Community Wealth Building Programme](#) in East Ayrshire. This people-centred economic approach strives to keep local money in the local economy, offering diverse support programmes for local businesses.

Community Wealth Building Case Study: Mossgiel Farm, Mauchline

Mossgiel Farm was awarded a place on East Ayrshire Council's fresh and organic food framework in 2021 to supply milk to all local schools. Mossgiel is an organic farm that aims to bring old-fashioned dairy products back to Scotland in a modern and environmentally friendly way.

Fairness is central to everything they do – from how farmers are paid, cattle are looked after, land is used and consumers are treated.

Mossgiel received financial support from the Ayrshire Growth Deal CWB programme to strengthen the business' sustainability credentials.

The CWB team also helped the farm to:

- Apply for the Scottish Enterprise Food & Drink production pilot programme;
- Benefit from wider business support services including procurement and marketing;
- Carry out feasibility studies to increase production capacity.



CARING FOR AYRSHIRE

'Care shall be delivered as close to home as possible, supported by a network of community services with safe, effective and timely access to high quality specialist services for those whose needs cannot be met in the community.' *Caring for Ayrshire Vision*



Highlights in 2022/23

- Re-launch of Caring for Ayrshire in 2022, post-pandemic
- Stakeholder engagement events, including an East Ayrshire Launch Event in November 2022 at Take a Bow, Kilmarnock
- CfA Professional Reference Group established

Caring for East Ayrshire is our local approach to delivering Caring for Ayrshire in East Ayrshire

Caring for East Ayrshire - Collaboration

Launched in 2022, the [HSCP Partnership Provider Statement](#) was created for organisations and groups which deliver (or would like to deliver) health and social care services in East Ayrshire.

It aims to guide effective collaborative working in the area and support delivery of our collaborative commissioning vision of: "Resilient communities, taking charge of their wellbeing, with an open flourishing, high quality and sustainable care community that has the right commissioning conversations".

Caring for East Ayrshire - Estate

Future proofing and providing an effective estate to support community wellbeing is central to Caring for Ayrshire and good progress is being made across East Ayrshire communities.

- Doon Valley Community Village: on track for completion and handover by June 2025
- Kilmarnock Town Centre Regeneration: ongoing scoping opportunities for new health and wellbeing facilities
- Cumnock Health and Wellbeing Centre: essential capital works undertaken
- Stewarton Medical Practice: scoping options being undertaken

Caring for East Ayrshire - Digital

Our commitment to digital reform will be central to the successful delivery of Caring for Ayrshire to the benefit of our communities. [NHS Ayrshire & Arran's Digital and Data Strategy 2023 – 2025](#), launched in January 2023, sets out a clear path towards delivery of a new digital ecosystem, with strong foundations to provide a platform approach and integrated services.

"Where people need support it should be the right support, from the right person, in the right place and at the right time".

Caring for East Ayrshire Digital Case Study: Irvine Valley Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Pathfinder

The TEC Pathfinder Programme continued throughout 2022-23 with the aim of transforming health and social care services for those with long term health conditions in the Irvine Valley.

Adopting the Scottish Approach to Service Design, five solutions are being developed to overcome the identified challenges:

- Improving access to devices and wellbeing;
- having digital noticeboards in GP Surgeries;
- employing a dedicated Digital Health and Care Support Worker;
- having a 'TEC Backpack' available to demonstrate available technology in people's home; and
- providing online multi-disciplinary group consultations to residents.

In February 2023 the Pathfinder team presented their solutions to the Irvine Valley community and partners, showcasing some of the digital solutions that had been trialled with service users and gathering feedback on the five options. The programme now moves into the implementation phase.

A WELLBEING ECONOMY FOR EAST AYRSHIRE: A Collective Approach to Delivering on Our Strategic Priorities

Over the last year local partners have increasingly sought to capitalise on the synergies between Ayrshire Growth Deal and Caring for Ayrshire, recognising that together these present a unique opportunity to build a wellbeing economy in East Ayrshire.

We know that this can only be achieved by all partners across our CPP working together:

- offering fair work and supporting local businesses to grow and do likewise;
- equipping our young people to meet the needs of the future economy (in terms of both employability skills and personal resilience);
- achieving our net zero ambitions together;
- working with our communities to provide a network of support, building individual and collective resilience; and, importantly
- maximising every individual contact with partner agencies to link people in to the full range of partnership services and opportunities.

Examples of this holistic approach can be found throughout this report, and more detail can also be found in our three thematic Delivery Plan Updates for 2022/23, Economy & Skills; Safer Communities; and Wellbeing.



Recovery and Renewal

Having recognised the challenges of the past few years, and also the opportunities that are emerging through Ayrshire Growth Deal and Caring for Ayrshire, we turn now to the work that we have been doing with our communities, to build on the resilience that emerged in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and look to the future.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

Kilmarnock – Strategic Vision 2022-27

Kilmarnock is the largest town in East Ayrshire, with a population of approximately 47,000. The new ['Kilmarnock – Strategic Vision 2022-27'](#) was approved by East Ayrshire Council in December 2022 and sets out ambitious plans to tackle a number of key sites in the town, including the demolition of the multi-storey car park and creation of a new civic space, EV charging points and cycling hub; and proposals for the refurbishment of the Galleon Centre.

The vision aims to build on recent developments in Kilmarnock, such as the newly created mural depicting Lady Ann Boyd, Countess of Kilmarnock; the improved links between the town centre and the Cultural Quarter via the newly revamped Academy Steps; and the award of £20m Levelling Up funding for the "Cultural Kilmarnock" project which will renovate and create new facilities at the Grand Hall and Palace Theatre and in the surrounding green spaces.

The progress being made in Kilmarnock through partnership working was recognised at the 2023 Visa Let's Celebrate Towns Awards, a nationwide showcase designed to celebrate the towns across the UK that have demonstrated an exceptional ability to create a supportive environment that helps businesses and communities to thrive.



Place Based Planning across East Ayrshire

Auchinleck, Darvel and Priestland Place Plans are the latest in a programme of [Place Plans](#) that are being rolled out to support the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan. Other plans being progressed with local communities include Northwest Kilmarnock, Dalmellington, Mauchline and Gatehead.

The Darvel and Priestland Plan includes “The Corner Project”, a new events space which will host live music performances, gatherings, café days, pop-up food stations and other community events. It will also accommodate cycle stands and a bike repair station, and act as a starting/finishing point for local routes around Darvel and the Irvine Valley.

Community-Led Regeneration

Since 2014 the Scottish Government and COSLA's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) has been supporting locally developed regeneration projects to tackle inequalities and deliver inclusive growth in deprived, disadvantaged and fragile remote communities across Scotland. In that time East Ayrshire has received nearly £11m from the fund, which has helped the Council carry out £21.5m worth of investment in projects in the area. These include:

- [Crossroads Community Hub](#)
- [Ingram Enterprise Hub Kilmarnock](#)
- [Ochiltree Community Hub](#)
- [Centrestage, Kilmarnock](#)
- [West of Scotland Climbing Centre, Kilmarnock \(Above Adventure\)](#)
- [Take A Bow, Kilmarnock](#)
- [New Cumnock Reuse Centre](#)

RCGF Case Study: Above Adventure

The West of Scotland Climbing Centre (Above Adventure), which incorporates a bouldering hall and climbing walls within the former Grange Church in Kilmarnock, opened fully for business in May 2023, having weathered the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Starting construction in January 2021, the project benefited from a £2.469m award from the RCGF – a substantial contribution to its overall estimated cost of £4.5m. With state of the art climbing facilities and a vision to provide climbing, training and employment opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and circumstances, this social enterprise is committed to creating a community of climbers who share a passion for the sport and the inclusivity it offers. It also brings back to life a beautiful historic building and will attract people from across Ayrshire and beyond into Kilmarnock town centre.



Capital Projects - Challenges

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the global economic situation have meant delays to construction programmes, and the costs of capital projects have escalated between application and implementation. Partners have needed, and will continue, to work innovatively to adapt their programmes, revising plans and costings to reflect the increased costs of materials, energy and related distribution issues, while remaining true to the transformational vision of the projects for local communities. This remains a challenge going forward.

Community Renewal Fund (CRF)

Four East Ayrshire projects were also successful in securing funding awards from the UK Government's £220 million [Community Renewal Fund](#). Sharing a total pot of nearly £1.3m were:

- Support to Engage (STEP) – Auchinleck Community Development Initiative
- Community Re-use Hub – New Cumnock Development Trust
- All in East Ayrshire – ENABLE-led Consortium
- Leisure at the Heart of Every Community – East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

CRF Case Study: All in East Ayrshire

'All in East Ayrshire' was an innovative, supported employment pilot project, delivered by an ENABLE Scotland led consortium of seven local delivery partners. With the benefit of £445,327 CRF funding, the project offered a comprehensive, personalised, end-to-end employment service for people who experience barriers to work. Its aim was to demonstrate innovation in sport and employment, outdoor pursuits, and sector work-based academies in key growth sectors, to support employment progressions for those furthest from the labour market.

The timing of the project presented some challenges, in part due to covid restrictions. This impacted on the 265 engagements that were achieved against a target of 340 (78%). However in terms of people progressing to employment, 92% of the target was achieved; and 89% of the target for people supported to gain a qualification.

An independent evaluation of the project identified a number of strengths including very positive feedback from participants and employers; an approach consistent with and advancing strategic priorities; new mechanisms to reach out to people most disengaged from the labour market; and a strong willingness amongst partners to work together.



Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting (PB) events were led by Health and Social Care Partnership colleagues across East Ayrshire's three localities in the summer 2022. Engagement with local residents, groups and volunteers helped to achieve:



89
funding applications
from local groups
and organisations



62
of these **applications**
progressing to
the voting events



5
voting events
held in Kilmarnock,
Dalmellington,
Cumnock,
Stewarton and
Darvel



Over 1,000
local residents
casting a total of
8,248 votes
at the events



32
groups
receiving a total of
£259,300
funding
to promote local
wellbeing

Community Empowerment

Community Action Plans form the basis of our locality planning approach, driven by our communities themselves and supported by colleagues in Vibrant Communities and across our wider partnership. 2022/23 saw:

- 29 Community Action Plans in place or being developed;
- 27 Active Community Councils – Over 300 individual community councillors active across East Ayrshire
- 7 Community Asset Transfers concluded in year and more than 60 Community Asset Transfers completed across East Ayrshire over the last decade.

The Council's Vibrant Communities Service was established in 2013 and has recently celebrated a decade of innovative working with communities across East Ayrshire. A summary of their achievements over this period was shared in a [report to the Council's Cabinet in June 2023](#).

From the Community Planning Partnership Board through our partnership structures, individual partner agencies and the work that is done every day in localities across East Ayrshire, the voice of local people drives our local priorities. Our CPP Board currently includes Community Council representatives from Darvel and Dronagan; and Community Action Plan representatives from New Cumnock and Muirkirk. The community voice on the Board is further strengthened by 5 Elected Members, including the Leader of Council as Chair.



Case Study: HSCP Locality Conversations

Three 'Local Conversation' events took place in February 2023. Delivered in each of our three localities: Kilmarnock; Cumnock; and Galston, these events offered partners an opportunity to provide an overview of how health and care services are currently delivered, and to highlight areas of success and key challenges faced by services, with a view to generating discussions about how we could address local issues collaboratively and to identify areas for future improvement.

All three events were very well attended by members of the public, Health and Social Care Partnership staff and partner organisations. A wide range of productive feedback was gathered from these events with various themes for local improvement identified, including service access; primary care service communication; grassroots education and awareness; recovery and addiction services; integration of information systems; and using people's experiences to shape future service delivery.

Community Power, Place & Partnership

Over the last year work has been taken forward to further strengthen our collaborative, place-based approach to the provision of services, working and planning with partners and harnessing community power.

Outline proposals for enhanced place partnership arrangements across East Ayrshire have been developed with community planning partners and during spring/summer 2023, Vibrant Communities colleagues are taking forward a comprehensive programme of engagement with local communities, stakeholders and residents, to ensure that the final proposals are co-produced, co-designed and co-led by the people who use our services.

Case Study: Africans in Ayrshire Community Engagement Event

In October 2022, a range of partners attended an event hosted by Police Scotland which brought together the local African/Caribbean Community. The event was the first of its kind in Ayrshire and allowed members of the community to come together and engage with emergency services and the local authority. It highlighted some of the issues that they face, including isolation, access to services and access to education and employment.

Since the event, an 'Africans in Ayrshire' group has been established to facilitate meaningful ongoing engagement, support community integration and ensure that the local African community is linked in to all available partnership services and supports.

Case Study: Drongan taking action on Climate Change

Architecture and Design Scotland is working with local communities to support place-based climate action in a network of small Scottish towns.

Drongan recently joined their list of **Climate Action Towns**, which uses a community-led approach to empower communities to come together and face the challenges of climate change; and develop opportunities to improve the environment, create sustainable jobs and build community resilience.



Poverty and Inequality



30.6% of EA population
live in most deprived SIMD



19.4% of
East Ayrshire households
claiming universal credit in
February 2023 (Scotland 14.7%)



Over the past year, EA Money team received a record **3,089 referrals** and advice enquiries, **18.7% increase** from the previous year.

We know that the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis have exacerbated pre-existing issues of poverty and inequality across all of our communities. Supports and interventions have evolved to meet the immediate need; while our strategic planning and economic development activity, set out elsewhere in this report, will help us to improve future outcomes for our communities.

Cost of Living

In September 2022, an extensive communications campaign was launched across East Ayrshire to help tackle the cost of living crisis. In October, the Council approved over **£3.125m investment** to progress a range of partnership initiatives to address the immediate challenges facing our communities.

In response to the cost of living crisis, partnership working between East Ayrshire Council and Leisure Trust, community groups, faith groups and the voluntary sector, resulted in over 60 community venues available across East Ayrshire offering 'warm spaces' where local people can get a heat, enjoy some refreshments, participate in social activities, access the internet and be connected to other supports such as food larders, money and energy advice and wellbeing support. A **digital map** was created, highlighting where these venues are located.

A year end update report on the impact of this work is available [here](#).

Financial Inclusion



£4.98 million financial gains
secured by the **Financial Inclusion Team and Partners** in 2022/23

The Council's Financial Inclusion Team (FIT), together with its partners, has continued to support local residents to maximise their benefit entitlement in what has been a challenging year for many. In 2022/23 the financial gains achieved for people in East Ayrshire totalled £4,981,701, an increase of over £1.5m on the previous reporting period, and taking the cumulative total amount of financial gains since the establishment of the team in November 2013 to £40,151,326.

Over the past year, the EA Money team alone received a record 3,089 referrals and advice enquiries, an 18.7% increase from the previous year. The majority of these referrals are health related, from people living with long-term illness or disability. 470 individuals and families have been supported by the Community team, achieving financial gains of £2,707,260, a 15% increase on the previous reporting period.

More information about the success of FIT pilot work in East Ayrshire Schools may be found in the Children and Young People section of this report (page 28).

Dignified Food Provision

- 1,200 East Ayrshire Residents are registered Community Larder Members
- 510 weekly visits to Community Larders

2022/23 has seen the continued expansion of the Dignified Food/Food Larder service, led by the Council's Facilities Management and Vibrant Communities Services and delivered in collaboration with partners, faith groups and third sector organisations. Finance has been secured from a range of sources including covid grants and cost of living funding, and Larder members are also signposted to additional supports by a network of community volunteers.

The community mobilisation seen during the Covid-19 pandemic continues, with all sections of our communities pulling together and supporting the most vulnerable.



Case Study: Ayrshire Muslim Education Centre, Kilmarnock

The Centre is open for prayers and provides support for the Islamic and wider community, including presentations, community events and health checks. The Centre also hosts Corner Cupboard, which provides food for those who need it, with collections available every Saturday from 10am to 12 noon. The Corner Cupboard also accepts donations for pets and ensures that these are passed on to individuals and families.

Case Study: Community Sports Hub BeAwesome Family Food Programme

This inaugural 6 week family food programme was a collaborative initiative between Ayrshire College and East Ayrshire Council's Active Schools team, supported by funding from the Kris Boyd Charity.

The free programme was hosted at Ayrshire College Kilmarnock Campus. Parents/carers received work experience, cooking sessions and information on cooking on a budget; older children took part in sporting activities; and the younger children took part in activities within the College Creche. Families were provided with the clothing to take part, snacks, cooking equipment and hampers, and also got to meet former Scotland Player, Kris Boyd and World Cup winner Rose Reilly.

The programme is part of Ayrshire College's award-winning Connecting Communities initiative, which offers health, fitness and sport opportunities to children and adults across Ayrshire

More information about dignified food provision through our schools and education establishments can be found in our [Local Child Poverty Action Report 2022/23](#).



Digital Inclusion

East Ayrshire Council's new [Digital Strategy, Our Digital Journey to 2027 and Beyond](#), was approved in October 2022. One of the key themes of the Strategy is 'Digital Communities', which sets out a digital inclusion approach.

- The East Ayrshire Digital Access Network (EADAN) was recognised nationally and awarded Silver Award at the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards in 2022 for its work in tackling digital exclusion, inequalities and isolation.
- Ayrshire College and schools across East Ayrshire have taken a number of steps to ensure that all students have access to a device and appropriate connectivity. More details of this work can be found in the [Economy and Skills 2022/23 Update Report](#).
- Openreach hit an ultrafast broadband landmark in Ayrshire in March 2023, with over 100,000 homes and businesses able to access its full fibre network. In Kilmarnock, over 25,000 properties (80% of the homes and businesses in the town) can now access full fibre, with one third signing up. This technology is up to 10 times faster than the average UK broadband connection and 5 times more reliable than the old copper-based network.

We know that more needs to be done to ensure that everyone across our communities is able to get online and access high quality digital services. Through the Ayrshire Growth Deal further work is underway, exploring options for the Digital Infrastructure Project.



Working in Partnership to Bridge the Digital Divide

- **EAHSCP Sensory Impairment Team** provided 19 iPads with Wi-Fi to service users with visual and hearing loss, providing training on how to operate the iPads with assistive software activated (normally a screen reader or magnification app for those with visual impairment)
- **EAHSCP Thinking Differently Team** working with Connecting Scotland provided 362 households, including care leavers and vulnerable families, with either Chromebooks or iPads and/or Wi-Fi units, with 24 months unlimited data to allow them to become digitally included - the 24 month data was further extended for another 12 months. Working with Input Community Works, they provided another 40 devices and/or Wi-Fi units to care experienced young people over 16 and in particular to a group of asylum seeking young people.
- **EA Carers Centre** issued 32 devices to young carers and supported them to get online.

In addition to place based service delivery, a number of outreach services have also been developed across our CPP to ensure inclusive access to partnership services.

Case Study – The Leisure Trust’s Digi Bus

The ‘Leisure at the Heart’ project, funded by the UK Community Renewal Fund, has allowed East Ayrshire Leisure Trust’s Digi Bus to continue to deliver digital activities right into the heart of our rural communities. Part of the Digital Communities project, the Digi Bus offers coding workshops and activities to young people, as well as providing a safe environment for them to work and study. This initiative contributes to the “No one left behind Scotland” project supported by SLIC and Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations to help people become digitally connected.

Improving Access for All

Wider community outreach activity undertaken by the Leisure Trust with CRF funding includes The Festival Bus, delivering cultural programmes, events and workshops celebrating local heritage, culture and greenspace; The **Branching Out Bus**, offering an SVQ3 qualification in rural skills designed and delivered in partnership with Ayrshire College and CAMHS to bring rural skills into green spaces and provide opportunities for young people with mental health and confidence issues; and The **Activity on the Go Bus**, developed in conjunction with East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership, taking a holistic approach to making positive lifestyle changes for people suffering from chronic disease and illness, for those who hadn’t previously been able to access this support.

East Ayrshire Leisure Trust has also developed new and free programmes aimed at children and families, including self-guided children’s trails throughout the museums and library spaces, games nights in some of the leisure centres and provision of digital engagement sessions. This has now become an integrated offer within venues with a new ‘I-Spy’ branded initiative within all cultural and library hubs. The Trust has also received a licence exemption from the Scottish Government to offer a free community cinema programme at Dean Castle Country Park, the Dick Institute, Stewarton Area Centre, Morton Hall and Cumnock Town Hall from Summer 2023.

East Ayrshire Advocacy - Ensuring that Everyone has a Voice

The East Ayrshire Advocacy Service has continued to advocate for the most vulnerable people in our communities to ensure that their voices were heard and their views are considered when decisions are being made about their lives and the services that they rely on.

Last year has seen referrals increasing significantly due to the current difficulties facing our communities and the related rise in fuel poverty. 873 new referrals were received, with a noticeable increase in those referred through Adults with Incapacity legislation (105 referrals) and Adult Support and Protection procedures (57 referrals).



Tackling Hate Crime

Police Scotland received a total of 104 reported hate crimes in East Ayrshire during 2022/23, compared with 136 in the same period the previous year. This is a welcome reduction, however work continues to raise awareness about the impact of hate crime and promote inclusion.

Campus Officers across East Ayrshire continue to deliver hate crime awareness inputs to young people highlighting the impact that hate language and incidents have on their victims, families and wider community. Partners also continue to be proactive on social media platforms, promoting campaigns utilising the #DontTolerateHate hashtag, encouraging victims to come forward to engage with Police and signposting to available supports.

Case Study: Empowering Communities in Ayrshire to End Hate Conference

In October 2022, the Ayrshire Equality Partnership organised a conference to support learning about hate crime through the lived experiences of its speakers and share the good practice to tackle hate crime and promote positive solutions.

Dave Scott, Campaign Director from Nil by Mouth hosted the conference with keynote addresses from Dr Christian Harrison, Reader in Leadership and Khadjia Mohammed, Senior Lecturer, both from the University of the West of Scotland. The conference also offered workshops for participants to choose from including the 'I Am Me' charity (Keep Safe initiative); Scottish Refugee Council; Police Scotland, Criminal Justice Authority and others.

Over 100 people attended the conference and were challenged to consider what they can do in their role and workplace to support partnership activity to tackle Hate Crime.

Tackling Violence Against Women

East Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership has continued to support a range of collaborative multi-agency work during 2022/23:

- Implementing Trauma Informed Contact and Care (TICC) across all schools to ensure children exposed to domestic abuse are provided a wide range of support in and out of school;
- Establishing Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) to improve the safety of victims of domestic abuse who are at risk of significant harm or death;
- Piloting the Equally Safe at School resource, entitled 'A whole school approach to preventing gender based violence' in St Joseph's and Kilmarnock Academies, establishing senior pupils trained as mentors to deliver the programme to their peers.

The annual 16 Days of Action to Eradicate Gender Based Violence took place in November/ December 2022, with the annual Reclaim the Night March and a multi-agency conference with over 120 practitioners in attendance. The theme of the conference was 'What next for violence against women & girls?' and featured a range of national and local inputs demonstrating successful work in relation to prevention and support for victims of domestic abuse.



Inclusive Economic Growth



£50m+
increase in total
turnover of businesses
supported



300+ jobs
created as a result of
support



131
BUSINESSES
SUPPORTED TO RECRUIT
MODERN APPRENTICES
and INTERNS



120+
BUSINESSES
accessing bespoke
business consultancy



500+
businesses accessing
grants worth
£700+k



320
new businesses
started

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

The new [Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy](#) was approved by the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee in February 2023. The Regional Strategy Working Group, which includes representatives from the three Ayrshire Councils and Scottish Enterprise, will now develop and put in place the appropriate governance and delivery arrangements to ensure the effective implementation of the Strategy, which seeks to:

- Deliver a wellbeing economy (addressing high incidences of deprivation and child poverty by connecting communities to opportunities, whilst achieving a just transition to net zero)
- Enhance economic activity and productivity (maximising the potential benefits of the Ayrshire Growth Deal Investment)
- Improve the physical infrastructure.

The final [Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan 2022-25](#) was approved by the Joint Economic Committee in June 2022. This Plan aims to create 'an agile, responsive skills system that supports an inclusive, sustainable and competitive regional economy, offer opportunities for everyone to thrive and progress, and enhance Ayrshire's attractiveness as a great place to invest, live and work'. The development of a strong local skills base will allow us to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the Ayrshire Growth Deal for the future local workforce.

Fair Work

The [AGD Fair Work Ayrshire Programme](#) commenced in April 2022. The Team has been engaging with businesses across East Ayrshire via a range of support mechanisms including Fair Work Action Plans, networking opportunities and financial assistance. Activity is aligned to the ACWBC Fair Employment Workstream Charter "Creating fair and meaningful employment opportunities by recruiting from priority groups, paying the living wage and building progression routes for workers."

- 51 companies and organisations across East Ayrshire are listed as accredited Living Wage employers on the Living Wage Scotland employer database.
- Ayrshire College, along with their estate partners, are Living Wage accredited. The College is a charter organisation with the Community Wealth Building Partnership, supporting and encouraging our partners to progress this as a key agenda.
- All NHS Ayrshire & Arran staff are paid above the living wage and NHSA&A is exploring ways to secure real Living Wage accreditation.
- East Ayrshire Council marked its third anniversary of being an accredited Living Wage employer in March 2023, meaning that all staff earn above the Living Wage (currently £10.90 in the UK).

The public sector is the principal employment sector in East Ayrshire and partners have led by example in their promotion of fair work.

Case Study: East Ayrshire Council Jobs and Training Fund

The Council has introduced a [Jobs and Training Fund](#) which is being used to provide a number of apprenticeships and other training roles across the Council and in local business sectors.

In the year since Cabinet approved the creation of the new fund, over 100 local young people have taken steps up the career ladder supported by this fund.

60 Modern Apprentices and 19 Graduate Interns have joined Council services through the Jobs & Training Fund, while 34 in either apprenticeship or intern roles have joined local businesses. During the first year of this programme a further 33 young people joined the Council's Modern Apprenticeship Scheme through existing routes.



Local Employability Partnership

Help for people and employers to find, train and support jobs in East Ayrshire is delivered via the [East Ayrshire Local Employability Partnership \(LEP\)](#). This is a partnership comprising representatives from employability agencies, Ayrshire College, NHS, the Chamber of Commerce, businesses, third sector and the local authority working together to deliver a comprehensive programme of recruitment, training and support to employers and employees alike.

The [No-One Left Behind Operating Plan \(2022 -27\)](#) provides a framework for these partners to work together to identify and commission employability training which addresses skills gaps and helps to ensure young people are equipped with the skills required to access opportunities through the Ayrshire Growth Deal.

No-One Left Behind East Ayrshire

551 participants were registered for No-One Left Behind, Parental Employability Support Fund, Young Person's Guarantee and Long Term Unemployed in 2022/23. This included 423 unemployed; 37 economically inactive; 73 employed; and 18 school pupils attending at SL33. The client group included significant numbers of individuals identified as having a condition affecting their emotional, physical and mental well-being; care experienced young people; and single parents.

Of the 423 participants who were initially unemployed, the following positive destinations were achieved

- 115 had progressed into employment;
- 63 had achieved an apprenticeship;
- 78 had progressed into further education; and
- 54 had moved into accredited training.

Of the 37 participants who had initially identified as economically inactive, 36 have now progressed into formal training programmes.

Any participant not progressing during the financial year continues to be supported through No-One Left Behind to progress during 2023/24.

East Ayrshire Works Employability Pipeline

The Employability Pipeline supported 237 unemployed and 96 employed clients in 2022/23 with a variety of in-house support measures including core skills, vocational training, work related activities, supported employment, self-employment support and job brokerage. 145 clients achieved accredited training to enhance their employability skills and 78 clients progressed to a positive destination. 80 clients within the service were linked with local employers through the Job Brokerage scheme with wage subsidy support provided for a period of 26 weeks.

Challenges

Notwithstanding the success demonstrated above, the deepening cost of living crisis, the termination of the EU funding and skills shortages have provided additional challenges for the Employability partnership over the past year. During 2022/23, while there was a successful delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee within No One Left Behind, funding arrangements for this programme changed. And this, coupled with the need to produce an investment plan for the Shared Prosperity Fund has meant that a full review of the Local Employability Partnership will now be undertaken, to ensure that we continue to respond effectively to the identified need.



Building the Workforce of the Future

The embedding of Local Labour Market Information in curricular planning across East Ayrshire secondary schools continues to be a priority. To enhance their understanding of the skills landscape and sectoral growth areas, Head Teachers attended a half-day Future Skills workshop at Ayrshire College in October 2022, followed by a second meeting for Depute Heads which looked to raise awareness of the importance of LMI and current and future skills gaps across school senior leadership teams. This is an essential part of our partnership work to build the workforce of the future and ensure that our children and young people are equipped with the skills they need.

Developing the Young Workforce: Skills Academies

During 2022/23 DYW Skills Academies have opened in several secondary schools across East Ayrshire, to help develop vocational, employability and life skills in the young people through structured projects, delivered within the curriculum and as part of the school timetable. The projects help prepare them for the world of work and are delivered by either college lecturers or appropriately qualified and accredited teachers, supported in a number of cases by external partners or individuals with knowledge, experience and qualifications in the particular field of activity

The Doon Skills Academy, Robert Burns Skills Academy and Park School Skills Academy at Grange Campus all launched during the reporting year and include a range of projects such as community cafes, health and beauty training projects, bike maintenance and repair skills training, horticultural skills projects and a child care initiative. The projects are funded by DYW and supported by Ayrshire College.

SL33

SL33 in Kilmarnock is now well established and offers school and post-school young people training and learning options to support them into positive destinations.

The success of SL33 has led to the provision of a partner hub in Cumnock, SL66, which is expected to open later in 2023, replicating the Kilmarnock model. The BTTC Centre in Dalmellington will be updated as a temporary employability hub until the Doon Valley Campus is completed and a further employability hub will be established following the conclusion of a review of service need.

Case Study: SL33

C was a non-attender at school. He was referred to SL33 in the hope that this would enable him to thrive and continue learning. C has anxiety and can struggle in group situations. He was unsure of his destination and choices after school. C struggled to speak to people he didn't know.

He now attends SL33 four days a week, is working towards a Skills for Customer Care qualification with Ayrshire College and joins group sessions delivered by SL33 staff focusing on employability skills. He also takes part in our wellbeing boxing sessions and Kilmarnock FC programme, and is working towards qualifications in Mental Health and Wellbeing, IT Skills and Customer Service.

Occasionally, he failed to attend but staff were able to help him get back on track. C has developed and grown as an individual. He can speak confidently and also take on a leadership role when needed. He welcomes new young people to SL33 and inspires them. C is now a confident individual who has a positive outlook on his future and a clearer insight into his career pathways as he prepares to leave school.

C says: "Attending SL33 has helped me with my confidence and applying myself in group work. I am working towards a customer service qualification on Mondays with a college lecturer, this will help me give good customer service when I get a job as a joiner."



Sustainability and the Environment

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

Ayrshire Growth Deal Clean Growth Workstream

Development of an Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire is being funded by the three Councils, University of West Scotland and Scottish Enterprise as a basis for identifying opportunities to support the transition to new decarbonised energy systems. Consultants were appointed in January 2023 and it is expected that the contract will be completed by the end of 2023, involving engagement with local communities, councillors, local businesses, anchor institutions, Scottish Gas Networks (SGN) and Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN).

Decarbonisation

Zero Waste Scotland offers support to local businesses to help develop a more circular economy by delivering tailored, one to one support to small and medium sized businesses in all sectors. A series of workshops have taken place in partnership with ZWS in 2022 and these were well received by participating businesses.

The Net Zero Nation Accelerator carbon reduction programme was launched in January 2023. 25 places were made available for local SMEs to work with this Net Zero Centre of Excellence, which will support them to be competitive and compliant in the new green economy. The total cost of this is £3,500 per placement and the Council is providing 50% of total costs with Scottish Enterprise funding the remaining 50%. To date the first and second cohort of businesses have launched – 16 businesses in total, with a further cohort planned to launch in August.

Energy Efficient Buildings

As well as supporting businesses and residents to reduce emissions and move towards Net Zero targets, East Ayrshire Council is taking significant steps to improve its own properties.

The biomass boiler at the new Barony Campus should reduce energy emissions by around 8% and the fabric first approach and adoption of net zero emissions heating in the Netherthird, Nether Robertland and Kilmaurs Early Childhood Centres are further reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

Case Study: Housing of the Future

A net zero housing model for East Ayrshire is being piloted at Bellevue Road/Warwickhill Road, Kilmarnock, to realise more energy efficient homes for tenants, support delivery of East Ayrshire Climate Change Strategy and respond to identified housing need.

The development was completed in April 2023 and provides 18 new Council homes across a mix of two, three and four bedroom properties and one wheelchair accessible home using the off-site manufacture process, working in partnership with CCG (Scotland) Ltd.

The development is constructed to a net zero carbon standard with enhanced fabric, photovoltaic roofing, triple glazed windows and the use of air source heat pumps. The delivery of the Council's new affordable housing is complemented by the provision of community benefits to respond to identified local Community Action Plan priorities in partnership with local communities, and in support of the strategic housing priorities identified in the current [Local Housing Strategy 2019-24](#)



Transport Emissions

Partners are making good progress towards the electrification of their vehicle fleets by 2030. NHS Ayrshire & Arran aim to transition to an all-electric fleet by December 2024 and has installed electric charging points for EVs that support delivery of healthcare services.

The Ayrshire Road Alliance, on behalf of East Ayrshire Council, has also taken huge strides towards achieving the goals of its Climate Change Strategy for Transport by changing from diesel to hydro treated vegetable oil (HVO) for almost all fleet vehicles.

The three Ayrshire Councils agreed plans in March 2023 to increase the number of EV charging points across the region. East Ayrshire currently has 62 publicly accessible charging points, and this will increase to 146.

Waste Disposal

Higher levels of household waste were generated during the pandemic and these trends have persisted as more people continue to work from home and as a consequence they are generating more waste in their home environment. Waste now accounts for a significant percentage of the Council's carbon footprint and until 2022 the Council disposed of all residual household and commercial waste in landfill.

The Council now has a new waste contract in place which diverts waste previously destined for landfill and uses it to generate much needed green energy. This will reduce the amount of landfill waste up to 30% in the first year. The Council plans to meet the Scottish Government's biodegradable waste ban by 2025 by diverting 100% of its residual waste from landfill, which will trigger a 48% reduction in the Council's overall emissions.

Case Study - New Cumnock Re-Use Hub

The New Cumnock Development Trust, with support from the UK Government's Community Regeneration Fund, has established a Re-Use Hub in the former New Cumnock Railway Station building. The project aims to increase economic and employability activity, raise awareness of carbon reduction and address the blight of empty town centre buildings.

As a viable social enterprise it develops and creates sustainable jobs and functions as a welcoming community space for people to come together, share and learn new skills. Building on the success of this initial project, the Trust has now secured Regeneration Capital Grant fund investment for phase 2, which will focus on developing the Trotters building to become the Re-use Hub's permanent home.

Flood Prevention

New Cumnock communities were subject to devastating flooding events in 2013 and 2015. In response to this ongoing challenge, local and national partners developed a new Flood Protection Scheme which has recently been completed.

The £8.97m flood protection works will protect residential and commercial properties near the Afton Water and the River Nith, and were unveiled in April 2023.

The extensive phase two of the project, which started in May 2021, involved a combination of engineering measures including 900m of earth embankments, 1200m of reinforced concrete walls and 600m of riverbank strengthening. The final scheme is one of only a handful in the whole country that is modelled on a one in two hundred year, plus climate change, flooding event.

Action on Bio-diversity

East Ayrshire's rich and diverse natural environment offers significant opportunities to mitigate the impact of climate change and offset carbon emissions. [East Ayrshire Woodlands](#) is an employability initiative supporting communities and landowners to expand and enhance the woodland habitat network in Ayrshire. The project aims to develop and deliver vocational training and employment opportunities to assist people pursue careers in forestry and countryside maintenance; Support landowners and communities to secure and expand the woodland habitat network in Ayrshire; Engage with and support local communities in the management of their environment; and Promote, develop and deliver health and wellbeing, and outdoor education activities within a woodland environment.

Case Study - Dunlop Wee Glen

The team from East Ayrshire Woodlands, which included trainees and modern apprentices, worked with the local community and the Council's Greener Communities Service to improve the Wee Glen, upgrading paths, steps, signage, the bridge and access points within the woodland; signage was revamped and two rustic benches also installed.

Two birch trees and two rowan trees were planted, to signify regrowth and renewal and support the biodiversity in the area. It is hoped that the changes will encourage local communities and visitors to stay within the pathed areas, allowing the plants to flourish, encouraging greater biodiversity and protecting the flora and fauna that already exists.



Case Study - Wee Forests in Kilmarnock and Cumnock

East Ayrshire Woodlands worked in partnership with East Ayrshire Leisure and the Council to develop Wee Forest sites at Kennedy Drive on the edge of Dean Castle Country Park, and next to the Lugar Water path on the Barony Campus.

Around 600 native trees were planted by "Wee Foresters" in an area the size of a tennis court in each town. Capable of attracting 500 animal and plant species within the first three years, the forests will be looked after by a volunteer Tree Keeper Team including children and young people from James Hamilton Primary, St Andrews Primary and Park School in Kilmarnock and The Robert Burns Academy in Cumnock, who will also use them for outdoor learning. Children from Cherrytrees Early Childhood Centre planted the first trees at the Barony Campus.



Clean Green Awards

Children and young people continue to drive forward the climate change agenda in East Ayrshire, and this was recognised in Clean Green East Ayrshire Awards 2023 which brought together pupils and teachers from 24 local schools.

The Awards are designed to encourage action across the themes of our climate change strategy: energy, transport, waste and natural environment. Schools can aim for Bronze, Silver and Gold accreditations in recognition of their journey towards net zero.

The 24 schools were able to point to a grand total of 670 individual actions they had taken to reduce or mitigate the impact of carbon emissions, which earned the schools different levels of accreditation and special recognition awards for their efforts.

Active Travel

The [Ayrshire Roads Alliance Active Travel Strategy](#), approved in June 2022, sets out plans and targets that aim to encourage active travel over the next 10 years and an Active Travel Hub has opened at Kilmarnock Railway Station. The Hub promotes and facilitates active travel for commuting and leisure purposes. Hub staff engage with local businesses to promote active travel at work and provide short term bike loans and personal travel planning.

Active Travel Case Study: Mission to the Moon!

19 primary schools across East Ayrshire helped to successfully launch a Clean Green, environmentally friendly rocket powered by S-Miles (school miles) to the Moon. Each Active Traveller crew earned S-Smiles by walking, cycling or scooting to school; parking and striding or walking the S-Miles circuit within their school.

Mission to the Moon encouraged everyone to get involved, regardless of ability or personal circumstances, parents, carers and siblings also joined in, earning bonus S-Miles by keeping active. At Mount Carmel, the Eco Committee decided the school would walk the 1,599 length of the Zambezi River and this helped our participating schools to complete the 313,028 mile journey to the Moon. Their efforts saved almost 7,000 gallons of fuel and prevented 70 tonnes of carbon from being released into the atmosphere. Collectively, our children climbed Mount Everest 7,322 times and ran almost 12,000 marathons. This behaviour change is not only good for the environment but also improves health and has educational benefits. Plans are in place to embed this innovative approach in our schools as we 'Journey to Jupiter' next year.



Children and Young People

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

Our Children and Young People's Plan provides a strategic framework for long term multi-agency collaborative working across priority areas: tackling poverty, respecting and promoting children and young people's rights, improving wellbeing, achieving and keeping safe.

This has been the final year of delivery against the [Children and Young Peoples Services Plan 2020-23](#), and extensive engagement has also been taking place, to coproduce the new plan for 2023-26 with our young people, to ensure that it effectively reflects their needs, concerns and aspirations.

Child Poverty remains a key priority area for our partnership with child poverty remaining stubbornly high, and during 2022/23 new arrangements have been developed to integrate local child poverty action planning and reporting more closely within the Children and Young People's Services Plan, although our holistic partnership approach to child poverty work will continue.

More information on the partnership work taken forward over the last year to tackle child poverty may be found in our [Child Poverty Action Report 2022/23](#).

Preparations are also being made for the forthcoming implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in terms of governance and reporting, although Children's rights are already strongly reflected in all of the partnership work that takes place in East Ayrshire. This is driven by the voices of the children and young people themselves. Our Children and Young People's Cabinet is particularly active in holding partners to account and working with us to shape strategic decision making in East Ayrshire, as are student representatives across our schools and colleges. Our care experienced young people also work closely with our Corporate Parenting Board, ensuring that young people can influence positive change by raising their concerns directly with leaders and elected members.

Partnership Working in Action

During 2022/23 we have continued to develop our [HEART](#) model of multi-disciplinary working in children's services. We now have established community teams who are working to ensure that children and families can access support at an early stage in their local community in a way that challenges discrimination and stigma, and this will continue to be developed and implemented over the coming months.

More information about this work over the last year can be found in the [Children and Young People's Services Plan Annual Report 2022/23](#).

The Promise

In delivering our commitment to #KeepThePromise, we have prioritised listening to our care experienced children and young people and have provided opportunities for them to talk about issues that are important to them. The Promise Participation team established a visual art group called 'ArtClub?' led by young people with an interest in contemporary visual art and activism. The group has enabled young people from a range of care backgrounds to creatively engage with issues that interest and affect them.



Whole System Approach

The Whole System Approach aims to divert children and young people away from formal Court processes and adult justice systems; recognising that these systems do not meet the needs of our children and young people. The Social Work team work in partnership with the Police, Procurator Fiscal and local solicitors to provide additional information regarding children and young people to help with decision making and consideration of alternatives to prosecution. This Whole System Multi-agency team have worked to replicate the national agenda of promoting Children's Rights and ensure that children who are in conflict with the law are still treated as children.

Whole System Coordinators have worked to ensure that every child and young person under the age of 21 is offered support through Court. Over the last year they have supported 67 children and young people following their appearance at Court and provided post Court support. Some of these children and young people have been successfully diverted through remittal to the children hearing and the diversion from the prosecution process.

Supporting our Children and Young People to Achieve



The [East Ayrshire Education Service Quality and Standards Report 2021/22](#), published in November 2022, showcased the success of partnership working in supporting our children and young people to thrive, in spite of the many challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Achievements included

- the highest ever leavers' positive destination percentage of young people leaving school moving into positive destinations
- recovery in attainment at all levels following the pandemic, with outstanding senior phase results on a local basis in August 2022.
- The closing of the attainment gap in all measures across 2021/22

Excellence in Literacy and Numeracy

The Scottish Attainment Challenge literacy team has provided professional learning and support for staff across East Ayrshire schools to engage with and embed the EA Literacy Programme which contains a structured progression across all stages; and the East Ayrshire numeracy strategy has a continued focus on developing the numeracy skills of all learners for life, learning and work and closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Our qualitative and quantitative data shows that we are making significant progress in this, as highlighted in an update report on [Secondary School Achievement](#) presented to Committee in June 2023. This latest benchmarking data shows attainment in literacy and numeracy at all SCQF levels in East Ayrshire being higher than the virtual comparator, the South West Regional Collaborative, and the national performance; and attainment in wider qualifications at all SCQF levels being above the virtual comparator performance.

Challenges

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) funding model has changed significantly over the last year, with designated SAC authorities being ceased across Scotland and all thirty two local authorities now being apportioned Strategic Equity Funding (SEF). The total sum available remained static and as a result East Ayrshire Council has entered a period of tapered reduction in funding across period 2022-2026. Each financial year sees a reduction for EAC of circa £635,000 as we move from £3.762m in 2021/22 to £1.21m in 2025/26.

Local plans are being adapted to ensure continued partnership working with establishments and communities to ensure that we continue to improve attainment and outcomes for our most deprived learners and close the poverty related attainment gap.

Safer Schools Scotland App

During 2022/23 the Safer Schools Scotland App, developed by iNEQE Safeguarding Group and funded by Zurich Municipal, has been introduced for parents and carers of children and young people attending all East Ayrshire establishments.

The app, which has been designed by safeguarding experts to educate, empower and protect school communities; provides news, a calendar for events, essential updates and information for parents and carers, but also contains vital safeguarding information. The online safety centre will ensure that parents and carers know how to safely support their child or young person's online activity including learning how to block, report and set safety and privacy settings on popular online platforms like Tik Tok and Snapchat. All establishments also get access to online safety shareables and resources through award-winning online Teach and Home Learning Hubs.



Financial Inclusion in Schools

In response to the ongoing challenges relating to child poverty, the Financial Inclusion Team's school-based pathfinder project has grown, with the Council agreeing to expand the project to all secondary schools in East Ayrshire for a year, serving the local primary school and early year centre communities as well. In this academic year the project has generated £121,012 for families with children. Additionally, the Early Years Financial Inclusion Team project has supported families with children from pre-birth to pre-school by ensuring their income is fully maximised, supporting 260 families to date and achieving £479,113.19 of additional income.

Multi-Agency response to Youth Anti-Social Behaviour in Kilmarnock

In late September 2022, following Stagecoach withdrawal of some local bus services, a multi-agency meeting was implemented to improve safety and tackle the issues experienced at Kilmarnock Bus Station. Partners from Police, EAC, Stagecoach, ARA, Vibrant Communities and Burns Mall swiftly implemented a range of measures including sustained deployment of police officers in a bespoke action plan, including specialists (e.g. Mounted Branch), implementation of security guards at the location, re-deployable CCTV cameras and appropriate use of fences to address concerns about safety about ongoing works at the location. Stagecoach re-instated services following the partnership approach and pro-active reporting continues to allow partners to tackle matters at an early stage.

Following media coverage of these events, the Children and Young People's Cabinet highlighted to partners their concerns about the negative stigma that was being attached to young people, and they are now working with partners including ARA, Stagecoach and Vibrant Communities to tackle this issue by promoting the many fantastic things that young people are doing in our communities; and highlighting the positive impacts and opportunities that free bus travel for young people brings.

Prevention and Early Intervention

The council's Vibrant Communities Service, in partnership with Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and NHS Ayrshire & Arran, has been working with Education Services colleagues to deliver youth roadshows to S1 pupils across East Ayrshire prior to the summer holidays. Workshops are being held in relation to anti-social behaviour, fire and water safety, peer pressure and stigma, alcohol and drugs awareness and safety in the community.

Water Safety Awareness

To ensure our children and young people understand the dangers of open water, the Council's Health and Safety section have joined forces with Scottish Fire and Rescue, RNLI, Police Scotland, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Loch Doon Rangers and the Forestry Commission to deliver an innovative water safety awareness course.

Local school children attending the training sessions learn about the hidden hazards within and around the water and how to correctly use the life-saving equipment strategically positioned around the loch. They receive essential lifesaving skills training including CPR awareness and defib training and are taught how to float in the water, should they find themselves in danger. They also learn invaluable information about cold-water shock, which is one of the main causes of drowning in Scotland.



Case Study: Danger Detectives

Almost 1200 Primary 6 pupils from across East Ayrshire became 'danger detectives' at a special learning event that focused on personal safety.

Over seven days, pupils took part in a range of fun, interactive workshops including community safety/ anti-social behaviour, home fire safety, road safety, water safety and countryside safety. The young people learned about the role of the emergency services, how to react to dangerous situations, and how to be aware of and protect vulnerable people in their communities.

The workshops gave all the agencies the opportunity to speak to the young people and highlight issues and dangers they might face on a daily basis. This multi-agency partnership initiative is led by the Play & Early Intervention team of Vibrant Communities, supported by Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue, Ayrshire Roads Alliance, EAC Trading Standards, Dean Castle Country Park Ranger Service and EAC Health & Safety.

Summer of Play

Vibrant Communities Play and Early Intervention team organised five Summer of Play events in summer 2022. Supported by the Home Link Team, over 400 children and young people and over 250 parents and carers took part in the events which offered fun activities including the mud kitchen, water slides, sports activities, nature crafts, sensory play, sand and water play and the ever popular obstacle course.

The events were supported by partners including the Young Carers Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue's Community Action team and pump engine; Active Schools and the Council's Speech and Language team. The council's Catering Service provided healthy packed lunches for all the summer programme events and attended at all five Summer of Play events running a free BBQ for our children and young people and their families.



Case study: Whole Family Break Provision at Dean Park

Consultation with families with children who have disabilities and additional support needs highlighted that families don't feel they benefit from a traditional respite arrangement and they would rather go as a family. The residential facilities at Dean Castle lend themselves to this new approach and external funding has been secured to purchase hoists, a hospital bed and sensory play equipment. Over 50 parents have signed up to take part and will be offered two nights each over summer 2023. The trips will be fully supported by the park rangers who will offer bushcraft and outdoor adventures for the families and there is also a cinema on site.



Community Wellbeing

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

Throughout this report we have highlighted the work being taken forward to deliver Caring for Ayrshire, which represents our overarching strategic ambition for the future delivery of health and social care services and our wider community wellbeing agenda.

We have also highlighted the significant work being taken forward under the AGD Community Wealth Building and Fair Work agendas, to deliver a wellbeing economy in East Ayrshire.

More information on the strategic work being taken forward in partnership with our communities to support community wellbeing can also be found in the [East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Annual Report 2022/23](#) and in the [Report of the Chief Social Worker 2022/23](#). Our Wellbeing Delivery Plan 2021-24 sets out the partnership actions that we have agreed to take forward to support community wellbeing across East Ayrshire. A [Wellbeing Delivery Plan Update 2022/23](#) has been produced to share progress in relation to these individual actions. Some highlights of this work are set out below.

Supporting People to live Independently at Home

This remains a key priority for our partnership and is at the heart of the Caring for Ayrshire philosophy.

- The **Community Alarm Emergency Response Team** continues to provide a 24 hour emergency care service for East Ayrshire residents in the event of a fall, unplanned care need and technical emergencies and currently supports over 4000 people in East Ayrshire
- The HSCP **Care at Home Service** supports over 1,800 people to live independently and safely in their own homes, often in extremely challenging situations.
- The **Intermediate Care Team (ICT)** continued to deliver vital care and support for older people to facilitate hospital discharge, reduce unnecessary hospital admission and promote independence at home through agreeing and working towards person-centred goals. The team received 1,200 referrals with approximately 400 unnecessary admissions to hospital prevented and over 500 early discharges supported for individuals.
- **Technology Enabled Care (TEC)** options are promoted to HSCP Community Care Staff by the Smart Supports Team. Smart Supports Peer Mentors support colleagues in the Front Door service to consider TEC as part of someone's care plan for both early intervention and crisis management purposes. An annual development session will be offered to the Front Door service to provide a refresher on what is available and update on new TEC developments.
- 1,095 **home safety visits** were carried out across East Ayrshire by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service officers over the last year, with 187 smoke detectors installed during these visits.



Case study: Quarry Knowe Assisted Living Development

2022/23 saw the opening of a new state of the art assisted living housing development at Quarry Knowe Court, Auchinleck. The development includes eight one-bedroom flats, a care provider's base and a private garden for residents.

The concept for the development was informed by collaborative working between the Council's Housing Service and East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership with the aim of enabling residents to live independently and safely in the local community, with support from health and social care services, in an environment that promotes social interaction.

The development was supported by £632,000 Scottish Government grant funding and built by the Council's strategic developer partner CCG (Scotland) Ltd for the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

EAC Community Defibrillator Initiative

East Ayrshire Council's life-saving community defibrillator initiative has been running since April 2021 and in that time 22 defibrillators and cabinets have been donated, free of charge, to community groups and clubs across East Ayrshire.

The aim of the project is to make East Ayrshire a defibrillator Council within the next five years, working with our communities to ensure that the equipment is installed in as many prominent locations as possible across the authority area. The initiative is delivered in partnership with the Council's contractors, who are donating the equipment as a way to 'give back' to communities, and Scottish Fire Rescue Service (SFRS), who deliver free CPR training to community groups or organisations who need it.

Sports clubs across East Ayrshire, including Annanhill Golf Club, New Cumnock, Ochiltree, Kay Park and Northwest Kilmarnock Bowling Clubs, Muirkirk and Glen Afton Football Clubs and the Bunker Gym are a few of the groups who have benefitted from this initiative to date.



Alcohol and Drugs

Tackling the misuse of alcohol and drugs remains a priority for our partnership, with data showing, for example, a significant increase in drug related deaths in the period 2015-2021.

Detection

Tackling drug supply and targeting those individuals and groups who are involved in the supply of controlled drugs continues to be a priority for Police Scotland officers across East Ayrshire. The dedicated Ayrshire Proactive Crime Team (PACT) continue to work closely with local policing and national resources in order to exploit all available tactics to disrupt those involved in serious crime and criminality and Police Intelligence departments, both local and national, are heavily invested in the support of this. More information on this proactive activity can be found in the [Police Scotland EA Performance Summary Report](#) which was presented to the East Ayrshire Fire and Rescue Committee in June 2023.

Treatment, Support and Recovery

The East Ayrshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) has expanded and increased opportunities for individuals to engage in treatment, support and recovery. The Recovery Hub, which is staffed by individuals in recovery, continues to go from strength to strength and has been recognised nationally as an excellent model of support. The Hub reaches across the whole of East Ayrshire, supported by a network of community based services and community outreach workers, all of whom have lived experience and are local to the area they are based.

This East Ayrshire Recovery community has grown significantly during 2022/23 with over 800 members engaging via the Recovery Network Facebook group. The network offers opportunities for individuals to access a range of recovery opportunities and activities, from structured psychological interventions to leisure and recreation, exploring all the opportunities that East Ayrshire is able to offer.

Harnessing Lived Experience

Recognising that the involvement and engagement of those with lived experience of drug and alcohol use is central to delivering ADP activity, our Alcohol and Drugs Partnership has now developed a lived experience panel that not only acts as a reference group but also as advisors in the ADP planning structures to ensure that member's voices are central to decision making.

Tackling Stigma

Stigma around drug use and addiction has an impact on people seeking the support that they need to recover. Over the past year the ADP has taken positive steps to reduce stigma and has employed a dedicated Stigma Officer to tackle this issue. The ADP also supported the organisation of a walk through Kilmarnock in August 2022 to remember all those who have died as a result of a drug related death and to highlight the impact that it has on survivors, with over 200 people attending the walk.

A number of community events have also been held to challenge negativity and misinformation around people with problematic substance use. The 'Let's CHAT about Stigma' roadshow visited Dalmellington, Auchinleck and Kilmarnock to spread hope and positivity around recovery services as part of Women's Recovery Month.

These family-orientated events, funded by the Council's Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and organised by Vibrant Communities, featured children's games, sports mentors offering boxing sessions and the youth work team providing activities for young people, as well as alternative therapies and health checks. Recovery services were also on hand to offer advice and support and to showcase the positive work that is going on across East Ayrshire.



Case Study: Housing First

East Ayrshire's Housing First programme continues to operate with the aim of providing a stable home with intensive wraparound support for homeless people with multiple and complex needs.

Of the 1,096 homeless presentations in 2022/23, 300 households stated that they required support with a mental health problem and 117 households cited a drug and/or alcohol dependency. 34% of applicants indicated that they had multiple support needs, demonstrating the continued need for this approach.

Single points of contact are established within Addiction and Mental Health Services and Children's Health, Care and Justice Services to target supports and ensure that Housing First Tenants are provided with prompt support. Housing First tenants are signposted through the Health and Homelessness Nurse and through the continuing open referral system for NHS Addiction Services to ensure the provision of health and wellbeing advice and an enhanced referral pathway for those with multiple/complex needs.

The programme achieved its quota of creating five furnished Housing First tenancies in 2022/23 as set out in the 5-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, and has maintained a 100% tenancy sustainment rate since launching in August 2021.

Suicide Prevention

There has been a notable rise in the number of probable suicide deaths in East Ayrshire in recent years, with the local 5-year aggregate having increased from 11.2 (2011-15) to 18.3 per 100,000 population (2017-2021). In response to this trend, a range of suicide prevention activity has been undertaken by partners during 2022/23.

The local suicide prevention strategy 'Here to Listen' has had a far reaching and positive impact on both our communities and workforce, with nearly 500 suicide first aiders trained to date. Bespoke suicide prevention counselling has been provided for those in crisis and our suicide first aiders have delivered 191 crisis interventions

As part of our awareness raising activity there has been continuous promotion of the [East Ayrshire Suicide Prevention Website](#) ; support for the national suicide prevention week in September 2022; and a pan-Ayrshire Suicide Prevention Development session held in December 2022.

Early intervention and prevention work takes place through the Wellbeing Champion Programme across schools; and the Suspected Suicide Review Group meets frequently to identify associated circumstances and gaps in service provision to inform future prevention work.

Public Protection

During 2022/23 the HSCP Protection and Learning Team has continued to lead and support close integrated working across operational and strategic public protection work. The Team led on an Ayrshire wide implementation of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

MARAC meetings support victims at risk of significant harm or death as a result of domestic abuse, and as MARAC practice develops across Ayrshire there will be a focus on integrating the Safe and Together model. The East Ayrshire MARAC now takes place on a monthly basis with multi-agency representation.

Child Protection

The Whole System Multi-Agency Team have been working with partner agencies to address concerns reported by the public around our children and young people and have organised activities to help provide more opportunities for the children. There has been an increase in concerns around exploitation of children and the team been actively monitoring and trying to address these through linking with Intensive Support, Vibrant Communities, Police, Action for Children, Education and the local Fire Service.



Police Scotland Community Wellbeing Unit (CWU)

Through collaborative work on engagement, prevention, intervention, rehabilitation and diversion, the CWU seeks to complement and improve services by creating pathways out of violence, crime and anti-social behaviour for affected community members whose lives and whose families/communities have been adversely impacted by offending behaviour. The CWU engage with repeat victims providing reassurance, guidance and support in an effort to remove them from the cycle which can increase vulnerability.

The Wellbeing Unit has engaged with 39 vulnerable community members in East Ayrshire who have accessed partnership support via the local Ayrshire Recovery Network and through joint visits carried out alongside NHS and Recovery Enterprise. Ongoing signposting, pre-intervention and wellbeing support is being delivered to divert these individuals towards healthier lifestyles.

CVO Open Doors Community Wellbeing Hub

The CVO's Open Doors Community Wellbeing Hub continued to operate in partnership with Police Scotland in the Kilmarnock town centre during 2022/23 to provide a safe place where people could access a wide range of activities and supports aimed at providing health and social benefits, improving life chances and signposting to opportunities within the community. Open Doors addresses various priorities identified by the community, while ensuring maximum use of existing local resources and accessibility through a person-centred and joined-up approach. The Open Doors team and volunteers have organised and facilitated several groups and services that have helped to tackle food insecurity, social isolation and lack of opportunities throughout the reporting period, with a key focus on children and families to help create lasting memories, a safe space and healthy meals.

SFRS Community Garden

Since its inaugural event in October 2022, Kilmarnock Community Fire Station has welcomed over 6000 members of the public to its community garden. Building on this success, three additional events have since taken place, with another event scheduled for the summer period. These inclusive fun events prioritise the provision of safety information and are designed to strengthen referral pathways between public sector organisations and local residents, improving community wellbeing.

Conclusion

This report is presented as part of a suite of annual reporting materials that are available on our [community planning website](#). It represents an overview of the partnership work being taken forward to deliver better outcomes for the people of East Ayrshire and to support local resilience in the face of ongoing challenges relating to Covid-19 recovery and the subsequent cost of living crisis. In the appendix to this report we present the available data updates on the high level performance indicators identified in our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021-24. There continue to be gaps in the published information available, in particular relating to the qualitative indicator information sourced through national survey work. Consideration is being given to local survey work which will potentially supplement any future national publications in this regard and will inform the analysis within next year's final report of the impact of our three year programme of work, 2021-24.

Our thanks go out to the communities of East Ayrshire who support, challenge and drive the work of our community planning partnership. We will continue to work with them to build community power and embed that locality based place making approach that is fundamental to our ongoing renewal and recovery work.



Appendix 1:

LOIP Data Table

Measures of outcome	East Ayrshire Baseline at 2022	East Ayrshire update at 2023	Scotland Baseline at 2022	Scotland update at 2023	Contextual Information
Life expectancy (years) • males • females (Public Health Scotland)	Males 75.2 (2018-20) Females 79.8 (2018-20)	Males 74.9 (2019-21) Females 79.3 (2019-21)	Males 76.8 (2018-20) Females 81.0 (2018-20)	Males 76.6 (2019-21) Females 80.8 (2019-21)	For more information around life expectancy, please refer to the HSCP's Annual Performance Report (link to be updated)
Unemployment rate (%) Population aged 16-65 NOMIS average from apr-mar (source changed from previous LOIP as data is no longer being published by DWP) Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)	16+ 6.0% (2021/22)	16+ 4.2% (2022/23)	16+ 4.5% (2021/22)	16+ 3.2% (2022/23)	The work of the Ayrshire Growth Deal has contributed to the positive move in unemployment rates. For more information refer to their Annual Report
% of children in living in relative poverty (before housing costs) (DWP – Stat-xplore)	Children 0-19 19.9% (2020/21)	Children 0-19 25.5% (2021/22)	Children 0-19 16% (2020/21)	Children 0-19 20.8 (2021/22)	For more information on this increase and the extensive work in place to combat the rise in children living in relative poverty, please refer to the Local Child Poverty Action Report (link to be updated)
Accidental dwelling fires Per 100,000 dwellings (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)	140.7 (2021-22)	148.3 (2022-23) *Provisional	156.7 (2021-22)	138.3 (2022-23) *Provisional	For more information on Accidental Dwelling Fires and the work of SFRS, please refer to the latest performance report

Appendix 1:

LOIP Data Table continued

Measures of outcome	East Ayrshire Baseline at 2022	East Ayrshire update at 2023	Scotland Baseline at 2022	Scotland update at 2023	Contextual Information
Reconvictions % of cohort reconvicted (Scottish Government, figures published)	All 31.4% (2018/19)	All 20.8% (2019/20)	All 28.3% (2018/19)	All 24.1% (2019/20)	"Substantial reductions in the number of proceedings in court were evidenced in the Criminal Proceedings in Scotland 2020-21 National Statistics bulletin, which are likely to have resulted in a substantial decrease in reconviction rates, owing to system related changes as opposed to changes in the underlying offending behaviour or effectiveness of any particular sentencing outcome or policy - https://www.gov.scot/collections/reconviction-rates-in-scotland/
Developmental Concerns at 4-5 year review % with a concern Public Health Scotland	15.9% (2020/21)	17.6% (2021/22)	12.8% (2020/21)	15.0% (2021/22)	For more information on support for Children and Young People, please see the latest report (link to be updated).
% of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible (Health and Care Experience Survey) No update until the 2023/24 survey	Agreed or strongly agreed 86.2% (2019/20)	Agreed or strongly agreed 76.1% (2021/22)	Agreed or strongly agreed 80.8% (2019/20)	Agreed or strongly agreed 78.8% (2021/22)	Preparation for the 23/24 Health and Care Experience Survey is now underway. Full results of the latest survey can be found here
Readmissions to hospital within 28 days Per 1,000 discharges (ISD Scotland)	Emergency 123 (2021)	Emergency 108 (2022)	Emergency 110 (2021)	Emergency 102 (2022)	For more information on hospital readmissions, please refer to the HSCP Annual Performance Report (link to be updated)

Appendix 1:

LOIP Data Table continued

Measures of outcome	East Ayrshire Baseline at 2022	East Ayrshire update at 2023	Scotland Baseline at 2022	Scotland update at 2023	Contextual Information
Premature mortality Deaths per 100,000 under 75 (ISD)- no update from 2022	Under 75 492 (2019)	Under 75 556 (2021)	Under 75 426 (2019)	Under 75 466 (2021)	For more information around life mortality rates, please refer to the HSCP's Annual Performance Report (link to be updated)
% of school leavers in positive follow-up destinations (Scottish Government)	93.4% (2020/21)	92.8% (2021/22)	93.2% (2020/21)	93.5% (2021/22)	The East Ayrshire Education Service Quality and Standards Report 2021/22 , published in November 2022, showcased the success of partnership working in supporting our children and young people to thrive, in spite of the many challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Please refer to this report for more details around this activity.
% of enrolled college students successfully achieving a recognised qualification FT PT Source: Scottish Funding Council- <i>(Provisional 2021/22 information provided by College)</i>	All students 66.2% 71.1% (2018/19)	All students 61.9% 76.4% (2021/22) *Provisional	All students 65.2% 79.7% (2018/19)	All students 66.0% 76.9% (2020-21)	For more information on Ayrshire College and to read about the Strategic Objectives & Measures of Success 2021-2024, please go here .
Tenancy Sustainment % of new tenancies sustained for more than one year (EAC)	86.4% (2021/22)	88.1% (2022/23)	91.14% (2021/22)	91.38% (2022/23) *SHN Provisional	For more information on tenancy sustainment and to read about the progress of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, please go here .
% of carers who say they feel supported in their role (Health and Care Experience Survey)	35.8% (2019/20)	27.6% (2021/22)	34.3% (2019/20)	29.7% (2021/22)	Preparation for the 23/23 Health and Care Experience Survey is now underway. Full results of the latest survey can be found here

The following Perception Based indicators are not reported for 2021/22 as updates have not been published. This is due to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on survey activity, however it is anticipated that updates for these indicators will be available again from 2022/23 onwards.

Measures of outcome	East Ayrshire Baseline at 2021
Sense of community belonging: % of adults who feel no real sense of belonging (Scottish Household Survey)	All adults 18% (2019)
Feeling safe in neighbourhood: % of adults who feel unsafe (Scottish Household Survey)	All adults 14% (2019)
Perceptions of local crime: % adults who think it's increased over the past two years (Scottish Crime & Justice Survey)	All 19.3% (2019)
Feeling safe at home: % of adults who feel unsafe (Scottish Household Survey)	All adults 2% (2019)
General health: % of adults who say their health is poor or very poor (Scottish Household Survey)	16-64 65+ 7.3% 16.4% (2019)
Mental wellbeing SWEMWB scores (Scottish Health Survey)	16+ 23.57 (2017)
Environmental sustainability: % of adults who say climate change is more of a problem for the future (Scottish Household Survey)	20% (2019)

