

SPECIAL EDITION

# COMMUNITY PLANNING *bitesize*

South Ayrshire  
COMMUNITY  
PLANNING  
Partnership



October 26, 2012



## Councillor Bill McIntosh

Chair of the South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership

“This special edition of Bitesize gives you a brief update on the progress we have made as a Community Planning Partnership (CPP) in addressing identified challenges. Many of these are long-term challenges, relating to health, safety, the economy and our environment. I am pleased to say that the hard work and contributions from all our partners to our joint programmes of work are bringing about great improvements to the lives of people in South Ayrshire.

“Our targeted Community Planning Programme provides services to help those most in need in our society and we are delighted to be able to tell you how this is changing lives for the better.”

## Our overall performance

Our first CPP Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) identified 18 specific outcomes for South Ayrshire.

This year has seen a marked improvement in the number of indicators which have met or exceeded the targets we set. Of the 74 indicators where data is available, 53 of these have been given a green light and have met or even exceeded the target. This equates to an overall performance of 72% compared to 54% last year. We have eight indicators that have an amber light, down from 19 last year, which means they are within 5% of the target and the number of indicators given a red light has reduced from 14 to 12. While this shows significant improvement overall, we are aware of the continuing challenges.

We are on a journey to ensure the people of South Ayrshire have the best possible public services in place to improve their health, keep them safe, help them find employment, move towards a low carbon future and provide attractive environments. The development of our new 10 year Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement will ensure that we continue to focus on this journey, as a partnership, to do the best we can for the people of South Ayrshire. Our aim is to have a new Community Plan and SOA in place by April 2013.

## Our stories

Sometimes we get so caught up in service planning and outcomes and indicators that we can forget to tell the stories of what community planning is really about – helping people in South Ayrshire improve the quality of their lives. There are lots of inspiring stories, here are just a few. Names have been changed to protect identities.



# Getting a job transforms lives

634 people registered with our Access 2 Employment (A2E) service this year. 159 were given the training and support needed to find a new job and 295 children attend the childcare service which allows their parents to go to work or training.

Gillian is a single mum who had been out of work for some years so approached A2E for help with her CV. She was made aware of the other services provided such as childcare and courses and signed up for a Business Admin SVQ Level 2. She has now gained full time work as an office manager with a local media firm.

Gillian said: "I strongly feel that the service provided by A2E is first class as it covers all aspects of returning to work such as self-confidence, gaining a recognised qualification, relevant work experience and, in my case, full-time employment. With their help I have managed to achieve a better life for me and my two children."

John was unemployed and decided to seek help from A2E. He participated in the Employability Skills Course and later joined the Training for Work Social Care Course in December 2011. He then went on to a placement as a care assistant in a local care home where he gained 'hands on' experience. He has since been offered full-time employment where he did his placement and is now looking forward to studying for SVQ Level 2 in Social Care in the future.

# A fresh start in life

Our Skills Towards Employment Project (STEP) works with disadvantaged young people who have many barriers to contend with in their lives. This year 70 young people were helped into employment or further education and 76 moved into national training programmes or volunteering opportunities. Jennifer is one success story.

Jennifer could be angry and volatile, struggled to interact with her peer group and was very negative at times. After one-to-one sessions to build a relationship she started to engage well and, by taking part in activities such as drama and arts and crafts, she started to gain confidence and to communicate with others. Things started to change for Jennifer however as she was taken back into care.

Jennifer was allocated a flat at Quarriers where there was 24 hour support on hand. Working in partnership with other agencies, STEP discussed her options for the future and she said that she would like to go to college but felt she wasn't quite ready. Jennifer was taken on visits to the college to get her used to the environment and was advised what courses might suit her. She is now at college where she is thriving and engaging really well with her peer group.

Through the support Jennifer received from STEP, she has been able to achieve her goals, become confident enough to take up full-time education and to gain part-time employment.





## Families need help too

Stepping Stones for Families works with families and young people in the Girvan area, providing support, opportunities and a voice in tackling the effects of poverty and disadvantage in their lives. This year £1,291,992 extra income has been accessed for 792 individuals, and 35 families have benefitted from intensive family support services.

Brian was only eight years old when his mother died last year and she was the only person he would speak to. Stepping Stones created a life story for him by way of a bus map, because he loves buses, and a family tree was put together with photo albums and stories. He was very enthusiastic about this piece of work and it helped him to express some of his feelings and emotions regarding the loss of his mother. He now has a record of his life from birth to age nine capturing many happy memories. He visited his mum's grave with flowers and a note he had written for her and now has a better bond with his new carers and his communication has improved.

Cheryl was a single pregnant mum with a 12-year-old daughter who struggled with parenting issues, financial problems, drug abuse, additional support needs and health care issues. Help was given to ensure relevant benefits were being claimed and help given with budgeting. Support was also given for health appointments and daily home visits to monitor and support healthy eating, regular exercise, and to ensure appropriate care of the new born baby, ensuring liaison with health and social work services. There was a notable improvement in the health and wellbeing of the older child and Cheryl is now on a methadone programme and is a more confident, able and successful parent. The family situation is much more stable and regular engagement with this service vastly reduces the concerns of key agencies and mum proudly recognises her achievements so far.

## Liaison with service providers

Wallacetoun and Newton Regeneration Forum is an umbrella organisation which supports groups and individuals in the area. The Forum actively engages with other organisations to ensure that improvements are made in the area and services delivered.

In December 2011 the Forum was approached by a local resident, regarding storm damage to the roof of their flat, and asked if assistance could be given in organising repairs as the block is multi-tenured. The Council was contacted on behalf of the owners to negotiate a way forward for all concerned. A temporary repair was agreed between the parties to avoid more damage to the flats. It was agreed by everyone involved that the Forum office would hold monies, as they became available from various insurance companies, for the full repair works to the roof and administer payments to the contractor on behalf of the individual owners/landlords and the Council. The Forum had several meetings with the owners/landlords to discuss the progress of negotiations with their insurers and ensured that all payments had been made into the Forum bank account prior to instructing the contractor on finalisation of the works.



## Building self esteem

The Domain Youth Centre delivers community-based youth work adult learning and also works with young people in schools to help them develop new skills and build self-esteem and self-confidence.

Kenneth is in care and was not achieving his full potential at school so was referred to the Alpha Plus Outdoor Activities Group at the Domain Youth Centre. He had had problems making and retaining friendships with other young people and was often bullied. Through his positive experiences in this group, Kenneth felt confident to enrol on the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and he will be working in a team to undertake the expedition section – something he would not have felt confident enough to do seven months ago. Kenneth is also due to start an 'Involvement' training course as he would like to help in the running and programming of the Domain.



## Asking for help to knock down barriers

Care and Share works with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. An average of 50 people, many of whom have substance misuse issues, use the service every week, and many have been helped on their road to recovery. Ian is just one of these people.

Ian is in homeless accommodation and has alcohol issues. He had been attending Care and Share for a few weeks and was participating in outdoor activities when he expressed an interest in training and employment options. Ian was referred to STEP where an action plan was developed. He was referred to a literacy tutor, completed a STEP into SPORT course and is working towards a bronze Youth Achievement award. Ian attends football twice weekly and is involved in the Ayr United Get Active programme. All the skills and experience gained have encouraged Ian to apply to college and although he remains homeless at present, he is progressing well with a view to securing and maintaining his own tenancy in the future. Ian has also stated that his alcohol intake has reduced dramatically and he continues to be positive about the future.



## Maximising income

North Ayr Resource Centre (NARC) is an organisation providing an advice and information service to residents in South Ayrshire as well as delivering an outreach service in rural areas of Kyle and home visits to the elderly and disabled. Last year, the service helped people access a total of £1,361,687 in extra income.

Jane approached NARC when her youngest child was diagnosed with a disability and her Disability Living Allowance application had been refused. NARC appealed this decision and subsequently attended a hearing with her in Ayr. The tribunal ruled in Jane's favour and the child was awarded the middle rate care status entitling Jane to claim Carer's Allowance. This claim was backdated resulting in a lump sum payment of £6,347 and a weekly increase to her current benefit amount of £167.

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