



**Welcome** to the spring edition of Bitesize, which focuses on our environment and the things we do to look after it.

## Earth Hour 2012

People across South Ayrshire helped protect the global environment on Saturday 31 March by participating in the world's largest single campaign for the planet, Earth Hour. By simply turning off lights for an hour at 8.30pm those who took part in Earth Hour showed their commitment to ensuring a better future for the planet.

South Ayrshire is a big supporter of Earth Hour and showed this by switching off the lights at 15 locations including St John's Tower, and local businesses and schools also participated. Thank you to everyone who signed up for Earth Hour. If you would like to find out more about this global initiative log on to [www.earthhour.wwf.org.uk](http://www.earthhour.wwf.org.uk).



## Climate change update

South Ayrshire Council has published its 2012 Climate Change Annual Report, which highlights a number of successes, from the setting up a network of green champions across the Council, to a variable street lighting trial at Holmston Road in Ayr, returning annual savings of £3,000.

Other highlights included a free home insulation scheme across South Ayrshire, award-winning cycling initiatives, a shared travel to work scheme for Council employees and the removal of 365 waste baskets, replaced by efficient recycling stations for Council employees.

Printgreen, a new network of shared printers has enabled printers in individual offices to be removed. The new printers are more energy efficient and have reduced the cost of printing.



# COUNCIL ELECTION 2012

## Are you registered to vote on Thursday 3 May 2012?

On Thursday 3 May 2012, you will have the chance to elect the people you want to serve you as your local Councillors for the next five years. To take part in the Council election you

need to be registered to vote. If you are not registered to vote, you will need to do so by Wednesday 18 April 2012. If you have moved house or changed any of your details such as name or citizenship, you will also need to re-register by this date. The easiest way to register is to visit the Electoral Registration Office website – all you have to do is print off a form, complete your details and return it.



## Energy Agency

South Ayrshire residents can now access free home energy checks and energy efficiency measures. Call free on 0800 512 012 to find out more or take part.

The scheme, which offers free cavity wall insulation, loft and top-up loft insulation, energy advice and access to the Scottish Government Energy Assistance package, has already seen the powerPerfactor Energy Award 2012 won by the Energy Agency. Thanks to the success of this project, lifetime savings of £3.6 million on fuel bills and carbon dioxide savings of 18,500 tonnes will be made across South Ayrshire.

## Blue bin service is changing

You can now put lots more additional waste items into your blue bin, including glass, batteries, pairs of shoes, pots and pans, clean plastic film and hard plastic items. For more information on waste and recycling log on to the waste and recycling section on the Council's website: [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/waste](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/waste). Recycling is so quick and easy to do there is no excuse not to.



## Electrifying news

This year, the Council's electronic sweeper will be able to use four new electric vehicle charging points which will be installed using grant funding from the Energy Saving Trust. The sweeper has been busy cleaning up Ayr town centre and saving the Council the equivalent of 30 litres of fuel a day – an estimated saving of £10,000 per year. As the price of electric vehicles falls, such purchases result in even bigger cost savings as well as significant reductions in carbon emissions. It is hoped that further funding will allow the transition to electric vehicles to continue, with national policy aiming for wholesale adoption of electric cars and vans by 2050.



## Dimming idea has a bright future

Barrhill Village, St Meddan's Street in Troon, Shawfarm Industrial Estate in Prestwick and Annbank Village are all set to benefit from variable street lighting.

This follows the very successful initial trial project to dim street lighting in the early hours of the morning at Holmston Road in Ayr. It delivered significant financial and carbon savings, lowered energy use and received positive comments from local residents. A total of 55 street lights in Holmston Road, Ayr, were converted to variable lighting units delivering an annual carbon dioxide saving of 19.42 tonnes and a cost saving of over £3,000 on the normal energy bill. Variable street lighting improvements to further urban traffic routes throughout South Ayrshire will also progress shortly, including Dundonald Main Street.



## ...News Bites...News Bites...

100,000 volunteers across Scotland joined the 2011 campaign to make Scotland cleaner and greener. Keep Scotland Beautiful is looking for even more volunteers to take part in the 2012 National Spring Clean between 1 April and 31 May. To register your event just click on **springclean** where you will find lots of useful information.

South Ayrshire has benefitted through funding opportunities from a new national policy to develop a green network across the central belt of Scotland which includes the whole of Ayrshire. South Ayrshire projects have so far accessed over £100,000. For more information log on to **centralscotlandgreennetwork**

Remember that the next deadline for applications to the Community Development Fund is Monday 30 April 2012. Remember that the next deadline for applications to the Community Development Fund is Monday 30 April 2012. For information on the fund and how to apply go to [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp/community-devfund.aspx](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp/community-devfund.aspx).

## Water Voles

An Ayrshire Rivers Trust two year project, run in partnership with South Ayrshire Council, to restore the water vole population in local burns is coming to an end. This has seen the captive breeding and release of this protected and vulnerable species into two South Ayrshire burns.

Over 200 water voles have been released and we will find out next year how successful this release has been.

This project is the first of its kind in a lowland setting in Scotland and the results of the trial will help to guide future strategies and projects aimed at rebuilding the water vole population in South Ayrshire.

To find out more log on to Ayrshire Rivers Trust. [www.ayrshireriverstrust.org](http://www.ayrshireriverstrust.org)



Picture courtesy of Ayrshire Rivers Trust

**COMMUNITY PLANNING**

Telephone : 01292 612134 [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp)

