

# slan



Scottish Local Authority News

March 2022

## **VAPING -A SURPRISING HEALTH BOOST.**

**CYBER RESILLIENCE FOR COUNCILS**

---

**A WORLD FIRST FOR FIFE**

---

**PLUS - OVER 40 PAGES OF NEWS**



AJG.com/uk | The Gallagher Way. Since 1927.

# Facing the future with confidence.

Gallagher is one of the leading providers of insurance and risk management services to the public sector.

Our specialist Cyber Risk Consultancy team will help you to identify the risks you face and design appropriate solutions specifically for your organisation. We help protect our clients so you can face the future with confidence.



Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

## CONNECT WITH US

For more information, please get in touch:

T: 0800 612 3641  
E: sales\_publicsector@ajg.com

Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: Spectrum Building, 7th Floor, 55 Blythswood Street, Glasgow, G2 7AT. Registered in Scotland. Company Number: SC108909. FPI73-2022 Exp. 02.02.2023.

© 2022 Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. | ARTUK-3403

# slan



Scottish Local Authority News

March 2022



FEATURES

## SPECIAL FEATURES THIS ISSUE

- P4 CYBER RESILIENCE - EXPLORING THE "GOLDEN FOUR" GATEWAYS**  
By Johnty Mongan, Head of Cyber Risk Management at Gallaghers.
- P6 VAPING - AN UNLIKELY HEALTH BOOST**  
Says Cancer Research UK
- P8 THE JOURNEY TO A GREENER FUTURE**  
With the help of Chris Carberry, Smart Solutions Director at Scottish Power
- P10 H100 FIFE - A WORLD FIRST FOR SCOTLAND**  
By Lorna Archer, H100 Fife Project Manager, SGN.



**HOUSING**  
P14



**EDUCATION**  
P24



**ENVIRONMENT**  
P28



**THE ARTS**  
P34



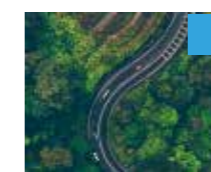
**TOURISM & LEISURE**  
P42



**COMMUNITIES**  
P47



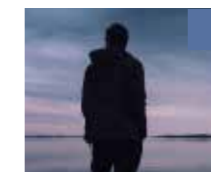
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
P50



**ROAD & TRANSPORT**  
P56



**HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE**  
P62



**TOP PEOPLE ON THE MOVE**  
P66

**PUBLISHED BY WEST ARGYLL TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS LTD**

**MANGAGING EDITOR**  
**DIRECTOR**  
**DESIGNER**

Robert M'Call  
Lynsey Moore  
Nicole Blair

**ADVERTISING SALES**

Allan McCarthy  
Libby Galbraith  
John Huss

The views contained within are not necessarily those of the publishers, nor of any of the contributors. No element of the content is to be founded upon or reproduced except with the express permission of the publishers. The title and the content in its entirety are the intellectual property of West Argyll Technical Publications Ltd., Registered office: 142 Cromwell Road, London SW7 4EF.

Scottish Local Authority News

# CYBER RESILIENCE – EXPLORING THE ‘GOLDEN FOUR’ GATEWAYS

**Johnty Mongan, Head of Cyber Risk Management at Gallagher considers the key cyber risk management areas to help protect Public Sector organisations.**



Cyber security is at the forefront of everyone minds, and with the nature of the ever changing cyber world it is imperative that all organisations keep on top of all potential vulnerabilities out there. Figures taken from the National Cyber Security Centre between September 2020 to August 2021 suggest that approximately 40% of cyberattacks were aimed at the Public Sector. Additionally, it's believed that Councils across the UK reported in 2020 more than 700 data breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

There are three key initiatives that could drive change and potentially reduce cyber-attacks. These include an assurance programme across Government addressing departmental vulnerabilities and appropriate measures, investment of £37.8 million in total into local authorities to address cybersecurity, and protecting key systems and services and measuring the cyber risk across supply chains of commercially implemented products within Government systems and instilling security as a key component of procurement exercise.

Historically the UK Government investment into cyber security has been at a lower level needed to bring local authority IT systems and services up to the 'national standard'. The initiatives set out have however brought to light that local authorities should be focussing more time, energy and money on their level of cyber security – learning from 'best in class' segments from the private sector such as financial, manufacturing and retail when it comes to digital services.

With modern networks now taking advantage of cloud computing and hybrid solutions, we are seeing the main routes of attack coming through four main gateways. We explore how the "golden four" gateways for attackers are exploited and how you can better protect

your organisation. This goes hand in hand with the increased digitisation of Public Services, encompassing for example technologies like Internet of Things (IoT) and Smart Cities, could be a future catalyst in the exponential increase of cyber attacks in Public Sector at a local and regional level – so it's now more important than ever to be aware of your organisations potential vulnerabilities.

### VPN (VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK)

Remote working is usually offered via VPN and RDP (Remote Desktop Protocol). The attackers are issuing IKEv1 session keys to decrypt connections. The technique involves reusing the key pair across different versions of IKE (Internet Key Exchange) which leads to a cross-protocol authentication bypass which allows the attacker to spoof the targeted IPsec endpoint to break the encryption mechanism.

Every hack starts with a scan which reveals access points (services, ports and technology) and scans reveal access areas. Medusa to "brute-force", brute-force provides an "in" which means the Hacker gets to decide what they want to do and the company is at the mercy of the attacker.



### Top five to help stay safe are:

1. Multi-Factor Authentication
2. IP Blacklisting
3. IPS/IDS
4. Penetration Testing
5. Vulnerability Scanning

### REMOTE DESKTOP

A remote code execution vulnerability exists in Windows Remote Desktop Gateway (RD Gateway) when an unauthenticated attacker connects to the target system using RDP and sends specially crafted requests.#

They scan the IP Range, the scan reveals access points (services, ports and technology), scans reveals the public gateway and any firewall restrictions, Hydra to "brute-force", brute-force provides an "in" usually at session level (user friendly), the Hacker gets to decide



what they want to do and the company is at the mercy of the attacker.

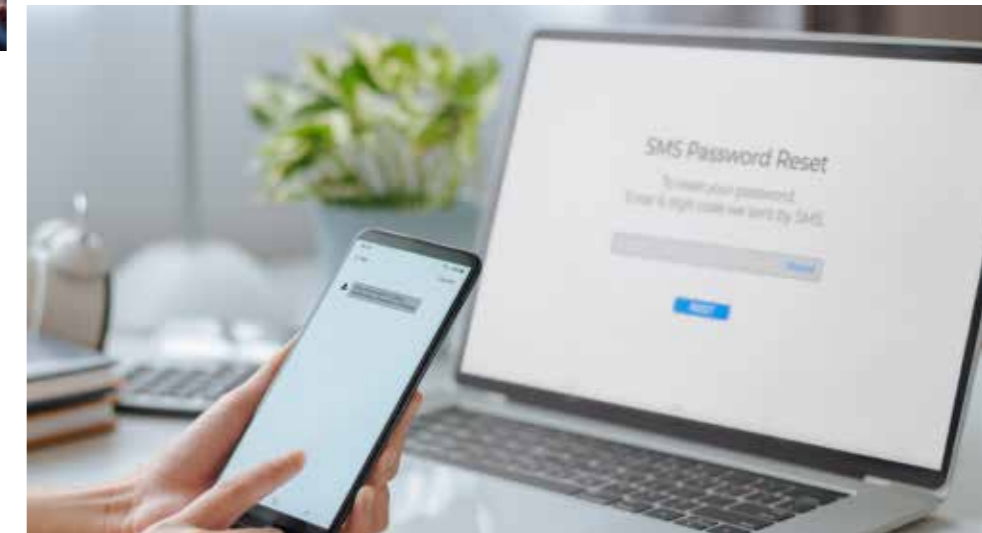
### Top five tips to help stay safe are:

1. Multi-Factor Authentication (less common on RDP)
2. IP Blacklisting (less common on RDP)
3. hIPS/IDS (less common on RDP)
4. Penetration Testing
5. Vulnerability Scanning

### OFFICE 365 / OWA (OUTLOOK WEB ACCESS)

With 258 million corporate users, the Microsoft Office 365 platform has become a target-rich environment for sophisticated phishing attacks. Office 365 presents a number of unique attack techniques for hackers looking to compromise accounts. Microsoft was in the top three brands being impersonated in phishing attacks in 2021 - thanks to Office 365.

They scan the domain name to find Mail. Address, the scan reveals company uses Outlook, dehashed (for credentials/breach lists), Enumerate users via (username spraying (metasploit), Password spraying (word list), Hacker gets to decide what they want to do, Crime, Privacy liability, Pivoting and the company is now at the mercy of the attacker.



### Top five tips to help stay safe are:

1. Multi-Factor Authentication
2. Complex Passwords
3. Auto Lockout
4. Penetration Testing
5. Cyber Security Awareness Training

### CLOUD APPLICATIONS

In the last decade, we have seen that companies experienced a cyber incident or a data breach due to a vulnerability or misconfiguration on their third parties, e.g., vendors, suppliers, partners, etc. Research reveals that the ratio of companies that experienced a data breach caused by a third party increased to 60%.

Websites can reveal cloud apps from testimonials and back links, Hacker phishes entire domain usually in password reset for cloud app, Credentials gained, user uses credentials for more than 1 app, user is significantly compromised, the Hacker gets to decide what they want to do and the company is at the mercy of the attacker.

### Top five tips to help stay safe are:

1. Multi-Factor Authentication
2. Complex Passwords / different passwords
3. Employee Training
4. Email Filtering
5. Phishing Simulations

Finally, please take care in these testing times and we hope that this document can support your business and your employees work remotely and securely during this period.

### CONNECT WITH US

For more information on our cyber risk management services, please get in touch.  
 T: 0800 612 3641  
 E. sales\_publicsector@ajg.com  
[www.ajg.com/uk](http://www.ajg.com/uk)

## VAPING - AN UNEXPECTED HEALTH BOOST



As illegal “disposable” vaping products are quite rightly being seized by local Trading Standards officers, Local Authorities around the country are feeling obliged to reassess their current stance on “vaping” in general. However, many experts believe that it would be a grievous mistake to “tar” perfectly legal smoking alternatives with the same brush as cowboys flaunting the law. Here, we try to put the health issues in perspective, with the help of Cancer Research UK

Research so far shows that e-cigarettes are far less harmful than smoking. This is because e-cigarettes don't contain cancer causing tobacco. They do contain nicotine, which is addictive, but isn't what causes the damage from smoking.

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or vapes) heat a liquid that has nicotine in. The liquid then becomes a vapour that people breathe in, as they would smoke from a tobacco cigarette. E-cigarettes give smokers the nicotine hit they need to help beat their cravings. But, the vapour doesn't contain the same dangerous cocktail of chemicals found in tobacco smoke.

Over recent years, e-cigarettes have become the most popular stop smoking tool in the United Kingdom.

The most effective way to stop smoking is still with the medication and support that is available from free local Stop Smoking Services. But for people who've tried to quit before, or don't want to use other aids, e-cigarettes could be another option. Most Stop Smoking Services will let you take an e-cigarette along to help with your

quit attempt.

Studies show that levels of key harmful chemicals are lower in people who switch from tobacco to e-cigarettes. There are still some questions about long-term safety, as e-cigarettes haven't been around that long. But the evidence is pointing towards them being far less harmful than tobacco.

In terms of safety, e-cigarettes are likely far closer to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). NRT has long been known as a much safer alternative to smoking.

**“A Safer Alternative”**  
says Cancer Research UK

The most important thing for your health is to stop using tobacco. For instance, no evidence has shown that e-cigarettes cause the disease known as popcorn lung.

The chemical thought to be responsible for this disease has been banned from use in e-liquids in Europe.



As, GP Owen Carter explains,

“E-cigarettes have become the most popular way to break the habit, and research so far shows that they're a far safer alternative to smoking. For smokers who've struggled to stop in the past, e-cigarettes are a worthwhile option to consider, especially when used alongside support from a Stop Smoking Service.”

Importantly, many people are also able to save hundreds of pounds a year after making the switch away from tobacco. As with most things, some people will spend more than others. But people generally find that vaping works out cheaper for them than smoking.

Recent headlines saying ‘vaping might cause cancer’ are wildly misleading.

In fact, the study that these stories are based upon, published in the journal PNAS, doesn't show this at all.

Researchers from New York University School of Medicine looked at how e-cigarette vapour affected the DNA of mice, and human cells in a dish.

They didn't look at how it affected people. And they didn't directly compare it to smoking.

The researchers focused on how components of e-cig vapour damage cells' DNA. And DNA damage increases the risk of cancer.

But they didn't look directly at whether e-cigs caused cancer, either in mice or in people.

They found that e-cig vapour raised levels of DNA damage in the lungs, bladders and hearts of mice.

They also found that the molecular machinery cells use to repair this DNA damage was less effective in the lungs of mice exposed to e-cig vapour.

Then they looked at how nicotine, the chemical that e-cigs vaporise, affects human lung and bladder cells grown in a lab dish. Nicotine is what makes cigarettes addictive, but isn't what causes the damage from smoking. Both e-cigarettes and conventional cigarettes contain nicotine, but e-cigs have much lower levels of the harmful components of tobacco smoke.

The researchers found that nicotine damages the DNA inside those lab-grown human lung and bladder cells. And they found that these cells were less able to repair this damage. These cells were then more susceptible to further genetic faults that could give them properties like those of cancer cells.

**The researchers described their results with an interesting line:**

“It is therefore possible that e-cigarette smoke may contribute to lung and bladder cancer, as well as heart disease, in humans.”

While this is technically possible, the study didn't look at humans, and so didn't show any effect on the health of humans.

Different e-cigs devices deliver different amounts of vapour, and people use them in different ways. So the levels of e-cig vapour and nicotine used in the study might not match the levels that people are exposed to through normal use.

And other research didn't show a link between nicotine products and cancer.

Finally and crucially, the study didn't compare vaping to tobacco smoke.

The evidence so far shows that e-cigarettes are far less harmful than smoking.

And for some people they're a helpful aide to stop smoking.

Up to two-thirds of long term smokers will die because of their addiction. E-cigarettes don't contain tobacco, which is the biggest cause of preventable death worldwide.

E-cigs are a relatively new technology and so we can't be certain about any long-term effects the devices might cause to health – they haven't been around long enough for this to be completely worked out. But compared to smoking, the evidence so far shows they are less harmful.

Studies like this are important for building up the evidence around vaping, and how e-cig vapour might damage cells in controlled conditions. It's a small piece in the puzzle and must be viewed alongside other studies. Large, long-term studies are also needed to definitively answer health questions, because those conclusions can't be made from lab-grown cells and mice alone.

The popularity of e-cigs continues to grow, but figures show that most people using these devices are now ex-smokers, and people mainly use them to quit smoking or cut down.

So conclusions around the health effects of vaping must be viewed alongside the damage that smoking has wreaked for decades. Only then can smokers make a call that could have a big impact on their health.

**“We support a balanced approach towards e-cigarettes, which maximises their potential to help people quit smoking, whilst minimising the risks of unintended consequences that could promote smoking.”**

- Cancer Research UK.

## THE JOURNEY TO A GREENER FUTURE

Scotland has already made great progress in our journey to decarbonisation. However in reality we're only just beginning. ScottishPower is leading the way in creating zero carbon solutions using the earth's renewable resources, to substitute petrol, diesel, gas and oil.

As the UK's only integrated energy company that produces 100% green electricity, we are proud to be at the forefront of the transition to a net zero economy. We're increasing our renewable generation capacity and investing heavily in modernising our networks to support the increased forecasted demand needed to electrify energy, heat and transport.

We are committed to working in partnership with businesses, local authorities, supply chain partners, policy makers and communities to realise our shared net zero ambitions. We have decades of experience in renewables, energy management and energy retail, and are well placed to support your decarbonisation journey. We have a dedicated Smart Solutions team with an unrivalled combination of technical excellence, local understanding, market knowledge and delivery to support your needs.

We also offer long-term energy investment in technologies to help organisations reach their net zero ambitions, taking a long-term energy services partnership approach. Working with you, we can support the development of the local economy and create employment opportunities.

**Chris Carberry, Smart Solutions Director at ScottishPower said**

"Scotland has ambitious climate change targets and we recognise that, for many, these targets can sometimes seem a bit daunting.

"In particular, we know the pressure local authorities are under to deliver against some of these targets and we want to work with you to help achieve your goals and to make a positive difference to the lives of your residents and businesses.

"Working together we can support you in reaching your goals and overcoming your challenges, developing bespoke solutions and a clear pathway on the road to net zero, putting your operations and communities that you serve at the heart of the process. Our team of experts have unrivalled experience across a range of energy solutions that will all play their part in delivering your low carbon journey."



### SMART SOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT A GREENER FUTURE

- **Net Zero & Energy Sustainability Master Planning** – working with you we can develop the most appropriate route to net zero taking account of your organisation's strategy and objectives, drawing upon our energy industry expertise across renewable generation, retail, network infrastructure and energy management, and taking a long term view to energy services, partnerships and investment.
- **Smart Mobility** – we can provide comprehensive solutions for domestic, business, public and fleet electric vehicle charging that includes supply, installation, operation, maintenance, and where appropriate, capital investment in charging infrastructure that can be supported with contracts for the supply of clean energy.
- **Smart Solar / Battery** – delivery of solar and battery storage solutions that can support you towards the use of locally generated renewable energy. Solutions can be delivered across the commercial and business sector coupled with smart controls that support improved efficiency to maximise the use of your own clean energy generation.
- **Smart Heat** – delivery of green heating solutions that include both ground source and air source heat pumps as well as district heating systems that harnesses the ambient temperature stored at ground level. Working with social landlords and local authorities we can also take a long-term view to investment in these assets as well as support ongoing operation and maintenance coupled with specific heat tariffs for end users.
- **Smart Services** – A range of in-home and business devices that support energy efficiency and energy use. Appliance, repair, and maintenance covers is also available



### GREEN HYDROGEN

ScottishPower is leading the way in Scotland with Green Hydrogen, a zero-carbon way of producing hydrogen to provide a fuel for high temperature industrial processes, heavy plant and fleet operations which cannot be decarbonised by electricity alone.

We are aiming to have 1,000MW of green hydrogen installed in the UK in the next decade providing a significant contribution towards Scotland's overall hydrogen ambition.

Partnering with other leaders in green hydrogen including BOC and ITM Power, ScottishPower can offer 'end-to-end' hydrogen solutions to fit a range of different needs.

### FLEXIBLE ENERGY CONTRACTS

We have a range of flexible contracts which will allow your organisation to plan ahead and to buy and sell energy at times that suit your needs. This means you can benefit from fluctuations in wholesale market prices and control costs to reflect your business strategy and performance.

We also offer a range of domestic energy tariffs which complement the new smart solutions technology being installed in homes.

### MEET THE TEAM

#### Euan Norris, Head of Smart Cities

Euan has over 25 years' experience working across the UK energy sector and his broad knowledge and expertise of the UK energy market enables him to deliver a range of technical, commercial and economic solutions to meet your individual requirements and help you and your communities achieve net zero carbon. Email: [euan.norris@scottishpower.com](mailto:euan.norris@scottishpower.com)

#### Andrew Mouat, Head of Smart Mobility

Andrew leads on delivery of our range of smart mobility solutions, including domestic and commercial electric vehicle chargers. Prior to joining ScottishPower, Andy led the Carbon Management Team at Glasgow City Council, giving him a unique insight into the challenges faced by public sector organisations at various stages of their decarbonisation journey, including the expectations of citizens and other key stakeholders. Email: [andrew.mouat@scottishpower.com](mailto:andrew.mouat@scottishpower.com)

#### Natasha Paine, Head of Smart Solutions Sales

Natasha has worked with ScottishPower for 18 years developing her career across a number of customer centric channels. Natasha has a track record of delivering growth across a range of domestic and commercial customer segments and is now responsible for the growth of our smart solutions product portfolio. Email: [Natasha.Paine@ScottishPower.com](mailto:Natasha.Paine@ScottishPower.com)

#### Mark Griffin, Head of Hydrogen Market Development

Mark leads our market development activities in hydrogen across the UK and Ireland, as part of a global Hydrogen Division within the Iberdrola Group. This focuses on the production and supply of green hydrogen to decarbonise transport, industry and heat. Email: [mgriffin@scottishpower.com](mailto:mgriffin@scottishpower.com)

#### Mark Murphy, Head of Government Obligations

Mark leads the Government Obligations team who are responsible for the delivery of our Energy Company Obligation and Warm Home Discount Obligation. The team has a wealth of experience in working with Government to help shape policy development and in executing our obligations. Email: [MarkES.Murphy@ScottishPower.com](mailto:MarkES.Murphy@ScottishPower.com)



### A CHOICE OF POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENTS

We have a range of renewable energy options that can help you achieve your decarbonisation targets. These include onshore wind and solar PV projects ranging from 10-120MW of installed capacity. Plus, long-term Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) allow you to fix your electricity costs and support investment into new-build projects.

### ENERGY COMPANY & WARM HOME DISCOUNT OBLIGATIONS

Our Government Obligations Team is responsible for the delivery of our Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Warm Home Discount Obligation. The team has a wealth of experience in working with Government to influence policy development and in executing our obligations.

Under the Industry Initiatives element of Warm Home Discount, ScottishPower also provides additional funding to third party organisations for projects that are designed to help assist vulnerable and low-income domestic customers with their energy bills or usage.



## H100 FIFE – A HYDROGEN WORLD-FIRST ON SCOTLAND'S EAST COAST



We can cut out more than a third of greenhouse gas emissions by using a greener gas to heat our homes. That's why at SGN we're preparing our network for green low carbon gasses by 2045, helping to deliver the UK's net zero target by 2050.

By Lorna Archer, H100 Fife Project Manager, SGN

We've carried out extensive research, both qualitative and quantitative, to gather insight into people's views on decarbonising heat. Our research shows they are supportive of the energy transition but are put off by perceived high upfront costs and instability. It's not surprising that in these uncertain times, people want a stable route to decarbonisation, and not a rushed change that comes at a premium.

Customers also highly value their gas connections. Being able to turn up their heating instantly as and when they need it, is hugely important and we can't underestimate the reliance and necessity of heating for those in vulnerable circumstances. They don't want to move to a system that doesn't give them control over when they can heat their home.

Changing the gas supplied through our network to a green gas like hydrogen, allows people to keep their gas connections, take a natural pragmatic step forward towards net zero and allows us to utilise the world class infrastructure which is under our feet and already reaching millions of people.

### HYDROGEN GAS

Hydrogen is a clean burning alternative to fossil fuels from which we can harness energy. It has a wide range of applications across key energy sectors, including heat, power and transport. Green hydrogen can be created using clean energy like wind power, meaning there are no harmful carbon emissions involved. For the UK, which is blessed with an abundance of renewable energy, this makes hydrogen the most effective, scalable way of providing heating while fighting climate change.

Hydrogen can also make the most of our existing natural gas infrastructure, making the transition to net zero faster and more affordable than other low-carbon solutions. In the UK, it has the potential to provide green energy to millions of homes and businesses, power our heavy industry and transport sectors, and create up to 100,000 skilled jobs.

With a series of hydrogen industry projects and demonstrations underway, the 2020s will be critical for providing policymakers with the evidence they need on costs, safety, technical viability and consumer acceptance to determine whether to

accelerate and roll out hydrogen in the next decade.

### H100 FIFE

One of those critical projects is a world-first taking place in Levenmouth on the east coast of Scotland. The town has a rich history in energy, once being home to one of Scotland's largest collieries and a major player in coal export. Decades later, we're retaining the energy heritage of this area, and developing the site for our H100 Fife project.

H100 Fife is part of the BEIS evidence base for hydrogen and will deliver a hydrogen neighbourhood for more than 270 customers in 2023. It aims to be the first 100% hydrogen-to-homes zero carbon network in the world, showcasing the UK's low carbon future. Next year in its first phase, H100 Fife will bring 100% green hydrogen gas to homes for the first time anywhere in the world.

We've deliberately chosen this sample size because it generates statistically representative learnings and outcomes. This offers a blueprint that can be replicated and scaled up towards a

system transformation where we aspire to replace the natural gas in the UK's gas network with hydrogen.

### PRODUCING GREEN HYDROGEN



We searched nationwide for the ideal location for H100 Fife. We chose Levenmouth because of its history as a community deeply rooted in energy but

also because of its characteristics which make it a prime location for a hydrogen demonstration. These include its access to offshore wind, an existing natural gas network and an energy park where we can produce the hydrogen we'll need.

A 7MW wind turbine, which is already up and running in the energy park, will supply

the renewable electricity we need for the project. There will also be a backup connection to the electricity grid.

The turbine will feed a 5MW alkaline electrolyser, purchased from Norwegian hydrogen experts Nel, which can deliver up to 2,093kg of green hydrogen per day.

It'll use a process called electrolysis to produce hydrogen by splitting water (H2O) into hydrogen and oxygen. Using electricity from a renewable source to do this, like the wind we're using from the turbine, results in zero carbon emissions. Hydrogen produced in this way is called green hydrogen.

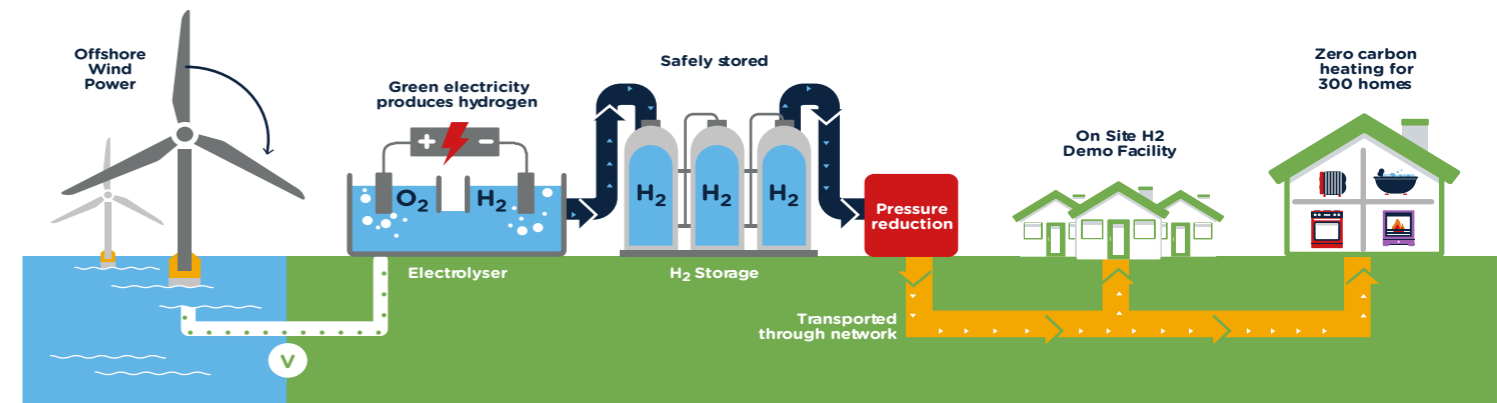
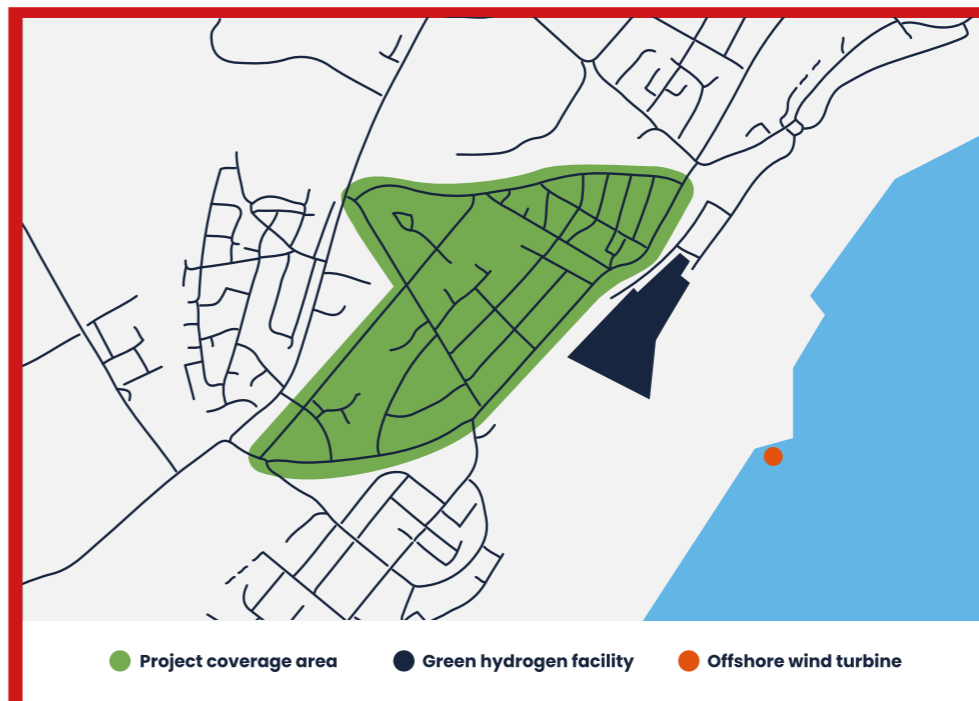


Diagram showing the end-to-end system being planned for the H100 Fife project – 100% green hydrogen, produced by electrolysis using green electricity from an offshore wind turbine, will be stored and transported to provide zero carbon heating for the project.

We'll safely store the hydrogen in six purpose-built tanks which can hold enough hydrogen gas to ensure supply won't be disrupted during even the coldest weather conditions.

We've been maintaining the gas network and providing the gas emergency service in Scotland for decades. So, safety is our number one priority and at the heart of everything we do.

Collectively across industry, we've already completed extensive research and experimental work to demonstrate hydrogen is as safe, or safer, than natural gas and is a viable replacement.



Up to 300 residents living inside this network area with an existing domestic gas supply can opt in to H100 Fife.

### RECRUITING PARTICIPANTS FOR OUR PROJECT

H100 Fife participants that want to get involved will be connected to our new hydrogen gas network in 2023, with the first phase of the project planned to run for four years. The hydrogen gas network will be built alongside our existing natural gas network, giving those in the catchment area the choice to opt in for a hydrogen supply or remain with their natural gas supply.

We'll replace their gas boiler, meter and any other gas appliances with brand new hydrogen alternatives for free. These work just the same as their natural gas equivalents, but don't emit any carbon.



Hydrogen boilers, like this one from manufacturer Worcester Bosch, can be fitted as direct replacements for conventional boilers.

**LOW DISRUPTION**

We want our H100 Fife participants to be able to see first-hand the minimum changes that will be made to their homes for the project. That's why we're working to create multiple opportunities to bring hydrogen in the home to life through interactive experiences, including a hydrogen demonstration facility planned for the energy park.

Importantly for participants, minimal change to the existing heating system inside homes is required. Hydrogen boilers also take up the same amount of space as traditional boilers and have been tested to the same high safety standards. This makes hydrogen gas the least disruptive option for decarbonising heating.

We're working closely with key local stakeholders to make sure the benefits of this project are delivered with the local Levenmouth community in mind. We'll also be holding events and demonstrations throughout 2022 and into 2023 to raise awareness of the project and the progress we're making.

**GATHERING INSIGHT**

H100 Fife will provide evidence to help inform future low-carbon policy decisions and a clear path towards net zero heating for Scotland and the UK. An important part of that evidence will be the feedback we'll get from our participants throughout the project.

So that the participants can concentrate on using their new hydrogen gas supplies and not have to worry about anything else, we'll maintain all the new hydrogen heating systems, including boilers, cookers, and other appliances for free. This will be for the entire four-year duration of the project.



We'll also ensure they won't pay any more or less for their hydrogen gas supply compared to their natural gas tariff and will be able to change their gas supplier, just as they can do now, at any time.

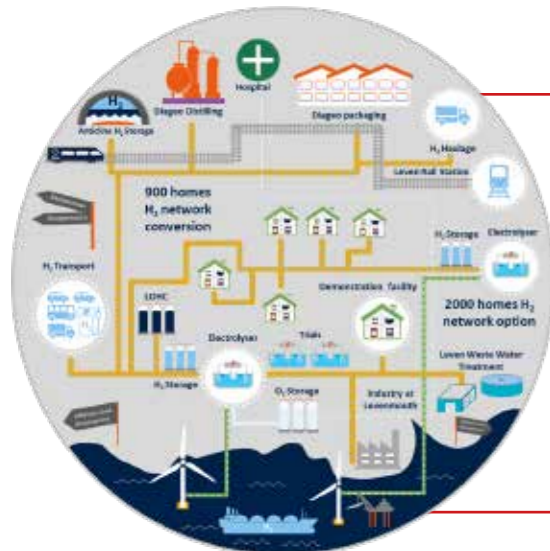
We'll always be on hand to ensure the participants of H100 Fife are supported throughout the project.

**EXPANDING H100 FIFE**

Part of the UK Government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution includes the commitment of rolling out a 'hydrogen village' by 2025. The village would have a statistically representative customer base of up to 2,000 properties which includes commercial properties.

We believe Levenmouth is the perfect place to scale up for the hydrogen village, so we've submitted a bid to expand H100 Fife from its initial phase. Our proposal benefits from the resources and know-how we're gaining from this hydrogen neighbourhood.

**We expect to know the outcome of our hydrogen village bid in Spring 2022.**



**IF YOU SMELL GAS, CALL THE NATIONAL GAS EMERGENCY SERVICE IMMEDIATELY ON 0800 111 999**

**nationalgrid**

**Inspiring and supporting.**

We are committed to working collaboratively with educators, employers and policy influencers to create a diverse engineering community in which women can flourish as engineers, applied scientists and technical leaders.



National Grid ©2018. Registered in England and Wales No. 4031152



RISK & SAFETY SOLUTIONS

**KEEPING PEOPLE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT SAFE.**



**INTERNATIONAL, INDEPENDENT, INNOVATIVE & EXPERT**

ARC is a global supplier of Risk, Safety Engineering and Management Consultancy Services to the Energy, Nuclear, Defence, and Transport sectors. Entirely employee-owned, ARC is an active participant with many professional bodies developing emerging best practice for hydrogen. This has covered: generation via both electrolysis and reformation; pressurisation; storage; dispensing for fuel; utilisation for energy storage, heating and systems transportation sectors.

**w: consultarc.com e: info@consultarc.com**



Cllr Angela Maclean and Margaret Paterson visit the new homes before tenants move in

## THREE NEW COUNCIL HOUSE DEVELOPMENTS IN FIFE APPROVED



### Councillors at the Community and Housing Services sub-committee welcomed and approved plans for three new council housing developments across Fife.

The three developments at New Flockhouse, Lochore, Fair Isle Road, Kirkcaldy and Belleoman Road, Dunfermline and will provide affordable homes for over 100 families.

**Convener of the Council's Community and Housing Services Committee Cllr Judy Hamilton said:**

"I am delighted to see three new council housing developments add to the tally of new council houses that have been built across Fife over the last three years. These latest developments are

part of a programme to build 3,500 new council housing across Fife by May 2022. I am immensely proud of what we have achieved so far and that the Council is investing over £300m in local communities.

"The new houses are highly energy efficient, meeting our design and sustainability standards making them very cost effective to run. The diverse housing mix meets the needs of local people by providing amenity bungalows and cottage flats, properties designed for wheelchairs and two, three and four bed houses.

Our tenants often experience huge improvements in their quality of life when they are able to live in a home that meets their individual needs. I am absolutely committed to creating as many different types of council houses as possible providing homes that are safe, warm and secure."

It is anticipated that work will begin on all three sites in Summer 2022. Completion of the Kirkcaldy development is expected to take 12 months while the development in Dunfermline should take about two years and the Lochore site may take between two and three years to complete.

Last year members of Fife Council's Policy and Coordination committee approved proposals in principle to bring forward a detailed programme to build more council houses between 2022 and 2024. Referred to as a Transitional Affordable Housing programme, the development and delivery of the additional houses will maintain the supply of affordable housing after the Phase 3 programme will end in May 2022.

## SIXTEEN NEW HOMES FOR MARYBURGH

The Highland Council has taken possession of sixteen new affordable homes for rent built on the site of the former Primary School in Maryburgh.

The development is the first to be built in the village in many years and has added much needed affordable, attractive, and energy-efficient properties to Maryburgh's housing stock.

All of the ground floor units have been built to meet varying needs, and five are fully wheelchair liveable. The remainder are homes for a range of families.

Funding for the project has come from The Highland Council and the Scottish Government.

The Council would like to thank CHAP Construction, KLMP, Helica and CDMM for their dedication to the development.

Local Councillors Margaret Paterson and Angela MacLean joined housing officers for a tour of the new homes before tenants start to move in.

**Councillor Paterson said:**

"These are fantastic new homes for tenants. They are very well planned, are on a high standard and as they are energy-efficient they will be economical to live in. Many people are going to be lucky to be getting a new home here because Maryburgh is a very friendly place to live and they will be made very welcome."

**Councillor MacLean added:**

"It's been a joy having a look round these houses in Maryburgh at the site at the old school. This is a new beginning for many people in the community. The standard of workmanship and facilities available in these properties is amazing. I would like to commend everyone involved in the project for all their hard work. I am sure all the tenants who will be moving in are excited to have the opportunity to make these excellent new properties their forever homes."

The Council is looking forward to welcoming tenants to their new homes over the coming weeks.

## HOUSING TEAM SHORTLISTED FOR NATIONAL AWARDS

Argyll and Bute Council's Housing Services team has had five nominations shortlisted in Shelter's 2022 Empty Homes Awards.

The annual awards celebrate the impactful and transformative work undertaken across Scotland to bring back many of the country's 43,000 long-term empty homes.

**Argyll and Bute has been shortlisted in the following categories:**

- Best Before and After (Ardbeg Road and Cullipool)
- Best Old Wreck (Cullipool and The Sheiling)
- Outstanding Team

**Leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Robin Currie, said:**

"Tackling empty homes is a priority for Argyll and Bute Council. We have to make the most effective use of the area's existing housing stock. Not only does this help us to address local housing demand, it also helps to regenerate and support sustainable communities.

"Our housing teams do an outstanding job bringing empty homes back into use across Argyll and Bute, so it's wonderful to see not just one, but five of their nominations being recognised and making it through to the final of these prestigious awards. I wish the team every luck."

Scottish Local Authority News





## £100M RENFREWSHIRE HOUSING TRANSFORMATION TAKES BIG STEP FORWARD

An ambitious £100m ten-year plan to transform the quality of council housing in eight areas throughout Renfrewshire has been given the green light to move to the next stage.

Councillors today agreed updated plans for the Housing Regeneration and Renewal Programme, revised after an in-depth consultation with the 1,500-plus affected residents last year.

The programme aims to create modern, high quality, energy-efficient and affordable council housing throughout Renfrewshire, while improving the wider neighbourhoods as places to live and contributing to the area's recovery from the pandemic.

It will see a mix of investment to improve existing buildings and the common areas around them, with potential demolition and new-build in some areas.

The eight areas covered by the first phase of the programme are: Auchentorlie Quadrant/Seedhill Road, Howard Street area, Waverley Road, Thrushcraigs area, Ferguslie/Broomlands area, Springbank Road area (all Paisley), Moorpark (Renfrew) and the Howwood Road area (Johnstone).

Last year council housing staff carried out an in-depth consultation with affected residents, tenants and owners over several months to capture their views on the initial plans, and that feedback has now been analysed and published.

Overall, 72% of tenants who responded broadly agreed with the plans. In four of the areas, the plans have now been changed in line with resident feedback. In the other four, the vast majority of residents confirmed they were happy for the original plans to be delivered.

Residents were also asked for their views on their neighbourhood as a place to live. That feedback will be used to help develop a neighbourhood plan for each area which will consider wider issues such as health and wellbeing, travel, outdoor areas, and access to services.

Members of the Communities, Housing and Planning board agreed to give officers authority to move forward with the programme when they met earlier today.



Convener of the board, Cllr Marie McGurk, said:

"These updated proposals set out a hugely ambitious, positive and forward-thinking vision for the future of council housing in Renfrewshire and we are delighted members have agreed to proceed with them.

"The work will transform the look and quality of council housing and the common areas around them, while making them more energy-efficient, reducing fuel bills for residents, and contributing to the area's wider climate-change targets.

"But what sets this programme apart is that it's about so much more than investing in bricks and mortar – it's about working with residents to consider all the factors that help make an area a great place to live, and work with them to create neighbourhoods they can be proud of.

"I want to thank every resident who took the time to respond to the consultation – nobody knows our neighbourhoods better than the people living in them, so your feedback was really important to us, and allowed us to reshape the plans in line with what you told us.

"I'd also like to recognise the staff from our housing team for their efforts to speak to as many people as possible during the

consultation, despite the restrictions placed on them by the pandemic.

"We will be back in touch with affected residents in the coming weeks to set out what the plans will mean for them, and will stay in close contact over the months and years ahead as the plans move forward."

The plans will see around 500 new social-rented homes being delivered across six of the eight areas. Council staff will now take forward the technical work required to assess each site for the delivery of newbuild housing.

The updated proposals for each area can now be viewed at [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/housing-regen-programme](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/housing-regen-programme) and council staff wrote to each resident last week to make them aware.

Staff will now write again to each resident or owner with more information on next steps and the likely timeline for work in their area.

That will include setting out the options and financial support available to private owners of properties in shared blocks earmarked for improvement or demolition.

Any council tenants in properties which are to be demolished will be offered suitable alternative housing in line with the council's allocation policy.

## DIGITAL HOUSING STRATEGY FOR GLASGOW PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

Work has finished in two phases in a development of new council flats which are part of an exciting programme building 2,000 new council houses across Aberdeen.

The development at Wellheads at Dyce is one of nine sites across the city where Aberdeen City Council is building new council houses – the only council in Scotland to be building new council houses on this scale and to the Gold Standard.

The Wellheads homes are designed to have a high level of energy efficiency throughout and low maintenance external amenity spaces as well as support more walking, cycling and wheeling through Active Travel. The site includes a playground, plenty of green outdoor space, and cycle storage. These homes are heated by Aberdeen Heat and Power combined heat and power plant which utilises waste heat from the production of electricity to heat the homes.

The 83 and 77 flats at Wellheads in Dyce are phases 2 and 3 in a mixture of 1 to 8 people flats houses for varying needs with 283 new properties at this site. Building work on phase 4 of the development – the last phase – is to start shortly.

The major project which is providing council homes across the city is one of several sites across Aberdeen which form part of the wider Aberdeen City Council Housing Programme aiming to address a long-term shortage of affordable social rented housing in the city.

Aberdeen City Council city growth and resources convener Councillor Ryan Houghton said:

"These new homes will not only be great places to live in but are designed to help meet the greatest demand for our properties including for families, single people, and housing for varying needs.

"The new council houses in the nine sites across the city will provide not only energy efficient buildings but they are also low maintenance and built to an extremely high quality.

"We are proud of the work we are undertaking building high quality homes of differing sizes suitable for a range of tenants in community settings around the city."

Aberdeen City Council Leader, Councillor Jenny Laing said: "It is fantastic to see people have moved into the second phase at Wellheads which forms part of our 2,000 new council house building programme in Aberdeen.

"We are very proud to be the only council in Scotland to be building new council homes on this scale and to the Gold Standard. I'm sure the latest residents in the Wellheads development will be pleased with the quality of their new homes and I hope they are settling in well and enjoying their new surroundings.

"This is the biggest council housing programme in Aberdeen for more than 50 years which is providing high quality homes

of differing sizes for a range of tenants in a variety of community settings around the city and I'm delighted to see residents moving into another one of the new developments."

The homes at Wellheads have Ogilvie Construction as main contractor and Faithful and Gould as project managers. Other sites currently being built include Auchmill, Craighill in Kincorth, the former Kincorth Academy site at Kincorth, two at Tillydrone, Summerhill, and Kaimhill.

The vision of the Aberdeen City Council's Housing Programme is to create sustainable integrated communities and places by delivering affordable homes designed for life which meet residents' current and changing needs, while supporting the wellbeing and resilience of tenants.

They will meet the most demand for council properties including flats for single people, flats for families, detached family homes, terraced houses, wheelchair-friendly properties, and a small number of amenity bungalows. They are being designed for exacting standards including housing for various needs, dementia friendly, low carbon, low maintenance, and to meet the Gold Standard.



## COUNCIL TO PURCHASE HOUSES FROM OWNERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITY

The Highland Council is piloting a new open market purchase scheme to buy directly from owners in a bid to bolster its housing stock to meet the need for additional affordable housing and provide new homes and futures for families, young and old in communities across the Highlands.

The Council is asking anyone considering selling a house to contact them and help make to make a difference to families who are in need of home.

Chair of the Council's Housing and Property Committee, Councillor Laurie Fraser, stressed that the purchases would be in addition to the Council's policy of building new affordable housing. He said:

"There is a continuing need for good quality affordable housing across Highland, especially for three, four and five-bed properties and we welcome the opportunity to meet some of this need through purchase of individual properties"

The Council will consider purchasing properties across Highland which meet certain criteria including condition and value.

The Council will provide a valuation for any property of interest and will not require a Home Report nor for the property to be advertised.



Anyone interested in finding out more can contact the Council by e-mailing [housing.development@highland.gov.uk](mailto:housing.development@highland.gov.uk) or to be demolished will be offered suitable alternative housing in line with the council's allocation policy.

## DIGITAL HOUSING STRATEGY FOR GLASGOW PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

Proposals for a ground-breaking 'net zero' housing development, as part of the £1.3bn Granton Waterfront regeneration project in north west Edinburgh, have been granted approval by city planners.

The Granton D1 project is the first Edinburgh Home Demonstrator (EHD) pilot which will see the construction of 75 net zero carbon homes and three retail units in Granton. The project is led by the City of Edinburgh Council with support from construction and academic partners and is part of the Council's ambitions to deliver 20,000 affordable homes by 2027

The project is being undertaken in partnership with CCG (Scotland) Ltd to test this new business model for building affordable, net zero homes. A large proportion of the construction will be carried out off site in a factory setting reducing the overall time it takes to build the homes. The homes will also include zero emissions heating. This will help to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and support the city's 2030 net zero target.

The pilot is also supported by a team from Napier University that will analyse the energy performance to validate and inform the net zero carbon strategy for

future EHD projects. The EHD project aims to deliver 1,000 affordable net zero carbon homes across the six council areas in the City Region Deal.

With an ambitious target to become a 'net zero' city by 2030, both of these developments, alongside the 444-home Western Villages development, will act as a blueprint for future sustainable development and help Scotland to transition towards a greener economy.

**Councillor Kate Campbell, Convener for the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee, said:**

Making homes more sustainable will help us to meet our net zero targets, but the most important thing is that our tenants will benefit. With the cost of living rising sharply, making the running costs of homes more affordable will help tenants on low incomes, preventing fuel poverty.

This pilot, and the learning we hope to take from it, is a really important step for us on our journey to making all of our housing stock more energy efficient, and better for tenants to live in.

We have incredibly ambitious plans which form the bedrock of our housing strategy over the next ten years. There is a critical need for more affordable homes in Edinburgh and we are responding to that through our commitment to deliver 20,000 social and affordable homes by 2027.

**Councillor Mandy Watt, Vice Convener for the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee, said:**

The Granton D1 development will provide affordable places to live for everyone with over 60% being for social rent. The development is part of the wider Granton Waterfront regeneration, which includes the creation of one of Europe's largest new coastal city parks. We hope to provide residents and visitors with the chance to reconnect with the city's waterfront and take advantage of the new leisure and outdoor experiences that will be on offer – altogether fostering an environment that will benefit everyone's health, community spirit and wellbeing.

**Councillor Neil Gardiner, Convener for the Planning Committee, said:**

This sustainable development is a great addition to our major regeneration of



Granton Waterfront to create a coastal town with lots of green and open space. It was good to see the committee unanimously backing the project which will provide the area with much needed affordable net zero homes as well retail units providing businesses opportunities and employment locally.

**Calum Murray, CCG (Scotland) Director and Edinburgh Climate Commissioner, said:**

The approval of Granton D1 is another important milestone for the City of Edinburgh Council and CCG. By working collaboratively alongside our partners, we are pioneering the delivery of affordable, net zero homes in Scotland and the Council is to be congratulated for taking these necessary first steps in delivery of our country's net zero carbon ambitions. CCG is delighted to be leading the design and build of Granton D1 where we will provide a cutting-edge demonstration in the use of fabric first design and

construction technology. We look forward to advancing works on-site in the very near future.

The approval made at the Development Management Sub-Committee on Wednesday 12 January and construction of Granton D1 is expected to begin in Spring 2022.

The Granton Waterfront regeneration project also includes the refurbishment of the Granton Station building and the Granton Gasholder restoration project, which is currently lighting up the skyline in a joint project with Edinburgh College. The wider proposals will bring over 3000 additional homes and create one of Europe's largest coastal city parks linking Granton Harbour to Cramond and Lauriston Castle, reconnecting the city with its waterfront and providing opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy spectacular views across the Forth while experiencing enhanced leisure and outdoor activities.



## EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY CONTINUES TO BRING HOMES BACK TO LIFE IN GLASGOW

Glasgow City Council's Empty Homes Strategy has brought back hundreds of empty homes back to use in the city over the past few years, helping to increase the housing supply.

Glasgow currently has 2659 homes listed as being empty for six months or more (the figure doesn't include second homes). Empty homes are not only a wasted resource that could be used to address local housing needs but can also become a blight on the community by becoming eyesores and attracting vandalism.

The economic advantage to bringing an empty home back to productive use is clear: it costs between £6,000 - £25,000 to renovate an empty property compared to an estimated cost of £120,000 to build a new home.

There are a number of reasons for homes becoming empty - mortgage default and repossessions; deceased or untraceable owners; property title issues; and properties which have fallen into a state of disrepair.

Since 2019, 607 homes have been brought back into productive use through council's Empty Homes Officers (EHO) working with owners, following the target of 200-250 homes per year. The council works alongside the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership, owners and other interested parties to achieve this.

Actions to bring back these homes into use falls under three broad categories: selling the property, renting or on occupation. Those who wish to report empty homes can do so by emailing [EmptyHomes@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:EmptyHomes@glasgow.gov.uk) or phoning 0141 287 0405 / 1373 / 7994 and this will allow the Empty Homes team to offer advice, guidance and support to enable owners to make an informed decision regarding their empty home.

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, local authorities can now use Council Tax records to identify vacant homes and bring them back into use, and a surcharge of up to 100% of Council Tax can be charged to owners of empty homes which are not being marketed for sale or rent. Glasgow is the only Scottish local authority which alerts home-owners prior to this application of the premium charge.

The Empty Homes Strategy aims to:

- Increase the availability of housing stock to meet demand, providing good-quality accommodation for those who need it;
- Offer home-owners information and advice to help bring properties back into use;
- Identify opportunities for suitable housing for particular groups, such as larger families, homeless people, and those with a variety of support needs;
- Tackle environmental and neighbourhood blight; and
- Safeguard the interest of tenement flat owners to facilitate common repairs work.

Where there are instances where an owner cannot be traced or refuses to engage with the EHO, the council will consider the use of compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers. CPO powers are considered when all other options have been exhausted, the use of CPO is to improve the condition of the housing stock and bring empty properties back into use working with registered social landlords to provide assistance through the acquisition strategy. Any homes that have compulsory purchased will be brought back into use for social rent.



Since 2019 committee authorisation has been sought to promote a total of 52 CPOs for properties across Glasgow, with a total of 37 CPOs now been progressed or confirmed. With the remaining 15 properties, 13 have been acquired by the respective housing associations on a voluntary basis and the remaining two properties have either been sold or occupied by family members, negating the need to proceed with the CPO.

The EHO also work closely with the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (SEHP), who have negotiated discounts for goods and services with a variety of companies for internal renovation works in empty properties. By contacting the EHO advice and guidance on this support can be discussed.

Another service the EHO offer is a matchmaker scheme, aiming to match empty property home-owners who are trying to sell or who are thinking about selling with people who want to buy an empty property. When the EHO identifies a 'match' between an empty home for sale and a buyer's requirements, the empty homeowner and the buyer will receive each other's details to follow-up and hopefully start negotiations.



**Councillor Kenny McLean, City Convener for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm at Glasgow City Council, said:**

"Our Empty Homes Strategy not only brings economic and environmental benefits to Glasgow, but also contributes to the regeneration of communities across the city. The officers in the Empty Homes team provide a range of services to homeowners and those looking to bring empty homes back into use in Glasgow."



**Bailie Christy Means, Vice-Convener of the Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm Committee, said:**

"I'm thrilled that Glasgow City Council has now recruited a third Empty Homes Officer since the budget was agreed last year. This will allow us to build on

the positive work that has been done in Glasgow to bring more empty homes back into productive use, to provide much-needed housing, to tackle poor property condition and to address the Climate Emergency. With demand for housing growing, rents increasing year on year, and housing waiting lists continuing to rise, it's imperative that we make the most of the homes that already exist. This will benefit our communities and, given the smaller carbon cost of refurbishing an existing home compared to building a new one, it will benefit the environment too."



## COUNCIL HOUSE UPGRADE PROJECT UNDERWAY



In addition to the new kitchens, 150 new windows and 90 new external doors will be installed, as well as 60 new bathrooms. 180 homes will have boilers and central heating systems upgraded to more energy efficient systems and 100 homes will have their water supply changed from storage tank to mains supply.

As part of the Council's commitment to improve the energy efficiency of tenants' homes, the roof and render programme also continues. The installation of insulated render, in place of normal render where possible, reduces heat loss and improves energy efficiency of the building.

This innovation is contributing to the Council's Get to Zero strategy where the goal is improve the energy efficiency of our homes as well as other tenures across East Renfrewshire.

**Housing and Maintenance Convener, Councillor Danny Devlin said:**



"I am delighted to see these improvements for our tenants get underway. It is really important for us to keep on making improvements on our council houses so that we provide safe, high quality and energy efficient homes for the people of East Renfrewshire. I look forward to seeing the programme continue and our tenants reap the benefits of the improvements."

**East Renfrewshire Council has begun works to upgrade and improve council houses across the area.**

New high quality kitchens will be installed in 200 homes between now and March next year as part of the Council's ambitious capital improvement programme, which highlights the local authority's pledge to continually improving its housing stock.

## WORK STARTS ON ANOTHER SITE FOR NEW GOLD STANDARD COUNCIL HOUSES

Work has started on another new council housing development – the fourth in three months – as part of Aberdeen City Council's flagship 2,000 new council houses building programme.

The development at Cloverhill in the community of Bridge of Don is one of nine sites across the city where Aberdeen City Council is building new council houses – the only council in Scotland to be building new council houses on this scale and to the Gold Standard.

Cloverhill will provide 536 homes which will be a mixture of flats, cottage flats, and two, three, and four bedroom houses. The design specification for Gold Standard requires energy efficient technologies that make homes greener and cheaper to run, enhanced space standards, and increased natural light.

Cloverhill is one of several sites across Aberdeen which form part of the wider Aberdeen City Council Housing Programme aiming to address a long-term shortage of affordable social rented housing in the city. Work at two sites in Kincorth and one in Tillydrone started in December.

**Aberdeen City Council Leader Councillor Jenny Laing said:**

"I'm delighted to see work start at the Cloverhill site as this development is an important part of our plan to build 2,000 new council homes in Aberdeen.

"Our council house-building programme is providing high quality homes of differing sizes suitable for a range of tenants in community settings around the city, and it is the biggest housing programme in Aberdeen for more than 50 years.

"Cloverhill is a significant development which will see 536 top class council homes added to the council's housing stock and I look forward to seeing the build programme progress in the coming months."

**Aberdeen City Council city growth and resources convener Councillor Ryan Houghton said:**

"It is fantastic that work has started at Cloverhill as these new homes will make a difference to the quality of life for our tenants.

"These new homes will not only be energy efficient but also low maintenance and



built to an extremely high quality in the industry-recognised Gold Standard."

"I'm sure the residents the Bridge of Don will enjoy watching the new homes being built and we look forward to when they are completed and tenants move in."

The vision of the Aberdeen City Council's Housing Programme is to create sustainable integrated communities and places by delivering affordable homes designed for life which meet residents' current and changing needs, while supporting the wellbeing and resilience of tenants.

They will meet the most demand for council properties including flats for single people, flats for families, terraced houses, wheelchair-friendly properties, and a small number of amenity bungalows. They are being designed for exacting standards including housing for various needs, dementia friendly, low carbon, low maintenance, and to meet the Gold Standard.

**Bancon is the main contractor at Cloverhill. Managing Director Allan Clow said:**

"We are proud to have been awarded such a major contract by Aberdeen City Council and look forward to supporting them with the delivery of their council housing programme."

**Property developer HBD has been appointed as development manager for Cloverhill. Matt Bellshaw, Director and Head of Region for Scotland at HBD, said:**

"We're proud to be working alongside Aberdeen City Council on the delivery of this development that will provide these much-needed homes in a sought-after area of Aberdeen. Cloverhill will help set a new benchmark for high-quality, energy efficient local authority housing.

"Close to areas of employment with easy access to public transport, Cloverhill will also feature usable open space, landscaping and parkland for the whole community to enjoy, fostering community spirit and promoting sustainability and well-being."

# 🏠 R.HOUSE

Contemporary Sustainable Homes. Made on Skye. Delivered throughout Scotland.



sales@ruralhouse.co.uk / 01478 612899

📷 @rhouseskye / www.ruralhouse.co.uk



## DUNFERMLINE LEARNING CAMPUS BREAKS GROUND

It was shovels at the ready at the site of the new Dunfermline Learning Campus today as the official "groundbreaking" ceremony took place.

Although enabling works on the site are already underway by BAM, the symbolic ceremony was a chance for those involved to welcome the work starting.

Council Leaders, Cllrs David Alexander and David Ross were joined by pupils, project contractors and council officers to mark the occasion.

**Commenting on the work so far Cllr David Alexander said:**

"I'm pleased to be here today, to see how work is progressing and to meet some of the young people who are going to benefit.

"We're a step closer to a new learning campus in Dunfermline and an asset the whole community can benefit from."

Cllr David Ross added: "Dunfermline Learning Campus will bring two high schools and Fife College together on one site.

"It's an exciting opportunity for the young people of Fife. A shared learning campus

opens many different routes for our young people by improving attainment, employability skills and positive destinations."

Fife Council is working in partnership with Fife College and The Scottish Government to create Dunfermline Learning Campus. The project is procured and managed for Fife Council by hub East Central Scotland.

**Cllr Craig Walker, Convener of Education & Children's Services Sub-Committee praised the partnership approach:**

"Through this strong partnership with the Scottish Government and Fife College we can bring a new learning approach to Fife that will benefit our young people now and for generations to come."

At the Dunfermline Learning Campus site we will bring together pupils, students and staff at St Columba's RC High School, Woodmill High School and Fife College in modern, fit for purpose and low carbon facilities. The schools will accommodate up to 2,700 students and are being designed to give flexibility in the delivery of the curriculum all whilst retaining the individual school identities

## GME ENROLEMENT COMMENCES ONLINE

Online enrolment for the next school session is now open and the Highland Council are inviting parents and carers to consider enrolling their child for Gaelic Medium education.

The Highland Council is committed to providing equal respect for English and Gaelic as both languages have an essential part to play in Highland life. The bilingual option is open to all primary 1 children living within a Gaelic Medium catchment area, even if they did not attend a Gaelic Medium Nursery.

**Gaelic Chair, Cllr Calum Munro said:**

"Languages are central to our cultural heritage and identity. The Council recognises the educational, artistic, cultural, social and economic importance of Gaelic; Gaelic Medium Education has been delivered in schools for over 35 years. Today, there are twenty Highland primary schools that provide Gaelic

Medium Education and this is essential to supporting our diverse and inclusive community. There are many benefits to bilingualism and I would encourage parents and carers to watch the very useful and informative video from the Council which will help to explain these benefits in an engaging and helpful way."

The video Fàs Foghlaim is available on the Council's YouTube channel.

Children who will be five years of age on or before 28 February 2023 will be eligible to enrol for Primary 1. Early Learning and Childcare online enrolment will open on Monday 14 February 2022.

**To enrol your child, for further information on completing the online form, the enrolment process, catchment areas, Gaelic Medium education, school transport and placing requests, please visit [www.highland.gov.uk/enrol](http://www.highland.gov.uk/enrol).**

Please do not visit the school or ELC setting during enrolment week.



## COUNCIL TO ACCEPT OFFERS FOR THE SALE OF TWO FORMER SCHOOL SITES



Offers for the sale of two former school sites are to be accepted after the move was agreed at committee stage.

Aberdeen City Council's city growth and resources committee approved the move to accept the recommended offers received after extensive marketing exercises for the sites of the former Braeside Nursery School and adjacent School Lodge as well as the site of the former Cordyce School.

The committee agreed to accept the recommended offer for the Braeside Site after the School was declared surplus on 25 November 2019, having been vacated during the summer of 2019. Demolition works started on site in February 2021 and were completed in June 2021 prior to the site being put on the market for sale.

This brownfield site is within a residential area and is zoned as an Opportunity Site (OP39), in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017, allocated for residential development. It is expected that any scheme for the site will respect the current dwellings for plot sizes, plot ratios, building form, heights, site arrangement, and orientation.

The former Cordyce School was declared surplus at the Education and Children's Services Committee on 25 January 2018. In the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan, part of the site has been allocated as OP14 and considered suitable for a number of uses including housing, a garden centre, and health and fitness village. Similarly, the committee agreed to accept the recommended offer for the site.

**Aberdeen City Council city growth and resources convener Councillor Ryan Houghton said:**

"The sale of these two former school sites will provide opportunity for redevelopment in these two communities and we welcome this next stage in the selling process."

The financial implications arising from the recommendations to approve the sale of both properties would be a capital receipt for the council's General Fund.

## NEW PARTNERSHIP TO BENEFIT CITY CHILDCARE

Clare Haughey MSP, Minister for Children and Young People recently visited the construction site of the Maybole Community Campus.

The Minister was given a tour of the South Ayrshire site as the £50 million learning campus starts to take shape.

Work is progressing well, with one of the two all-weather pitches already in place and steelwork appearing on the town's skyline.

When complete, the new campus will have capacity for 1,370 pupils, and a new Early Years Centre will operate on site for 52 weeks of the year.

The campus will also appeal to the wider community, with new outdoor sports facilities, changing pavilion and a new indoor swimming pool which will be available for public use.

**Clare Haughey, Minister for Children and Young People said:**

"We are continuing to work with Councils across the country to invest significant funding from the £2 billion Learning Estate Investment Programme to improve the condition of Scotland's learning estate.

"In South Ayrshire, the modern facilities planned as part of the new Maybole Community Campus will benefit not only children and young people, but also teaching and other school staff."

**Councillor William Grant, Children and Young People Portfolio Holder for South Ayrshire Council said:**

"It's great that work is progressing. This is our biggest ever investment in a community campus and when it's completed next year, local children from two to 18 years of age will benefit from the new state-of-the-art learning facility.

"These are exciting times for Maybole, with the community campus well underway, the new bypass just opened and plans for the regeneration of the town's high street being put in place."

**Michael Ross Chief Executive of hub South West Scotland, South Ayrshire Council's development partner, said:**

"This is our largest project for South Ayrshire Council to date, and I am sure it will provide first class educational and community facilities that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

"We are also very excited by the community and economic benefits that will be generated via this project, along with employment and apprenticeship opportunities that have been core to its development from the outset.



"As development partner we have successfully delivered over £122 million of projects for South Ayrshire Council and we work closely with the team to ensure our impressive collective track record is maintained.

"We now have over £600 million of education experience across south west Scotland and invest consistently with our Tier 1 contractors, design teams and supply chain in continuous improvements to achieve excellence in community education facilities in terms of value for money, quality and community outputs."

**Stuart Parker, Managing Director of Morgan Sindall Construction Scotland said:**

"We were very excited to welcome the Minister to the site to see our progress on what is an important project for Maybole and the young people who reside in the town.

"By working collaboratively with South Ayrshire Council and hub South West, we are continuing with our commitment to deliver exceptional educational facilities and improve prospects for pupils in Scotland. The campus has also provided a fantastic opportunity for our Tigers apprentices to gain valuable experience on a project which is local to them and will have a huge impact on their community. They should feel extremely proud of what they have achieved so far, and we look forward to continuing to strengthen our relationship with the training provider."

The new campus is being built on the existing Carrick Academy site and will incorporate Carrick Academy, St Cuthbert's Primary and Culzean Primary School and Early years Centre, formed from the amalgamation of Cairn Primary and Gardenrose Primary schools.

**The new campus is set to open in 2023.**



## GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION (GME) IN HIGHLAND



**Aberdeen City Council's Leader has welcomed a report published by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) following a visit to community learning and development (CLD) carried out back in November 2021.**

During the visit, HM Inspectors met with local authority officers, CLD partners, staff, volunteers, learners, and community representatives.

Inspectors found that CLD and their partners had responded quickly and effectively to support individuals and communities effected by Covid-19.

Digital devices and training on how to use them were provided to community groups and adult learners and that staff maintained communication with these groups through regular online meetings and conversations.

Hubs for vulnerable children were quickly set up and staffed by a range of CLD partners and benefits such as outdoor learning enabled adults and families to improve their physical and mental health.

HM Inspectors recognised that the council has been responding to challenges resulting from Covid-19, which has had a significant impact on the work of CLD partners.



**Aberdeen City Council leader Councillor Jenny Laing said:**

"We are delighted that HM Inspectors were so positive about the Community Learning and Development work we have been doing with partners during the pandemic.

"My sincere thanks goes to all staff, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that community demands have continued to be met despite the considerable challenges we have faced as a result of the Covid-19 situation."



## ANGUS SCHOOL CHILDREN TO HELP PLANT 420 TREES IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

Young people from Arbroath High School will help plant 420 trees in their school grounds after securing funding through the Woodland's Trust, Queen's Green Canopy initiative.

**Rachel Scott, Acting Deputy Head, Arbroath High School explains:**

"We were delighted when we found out we'd been chosen to buy trees for the school! We're really lucky as the school has a lot of space in the grounds with a large open grassed area. We wanted to bring trees and planting closer to the school buildings and particularly closer to our support for learning classrooms and learning spaces so applied for this funding to plant trees.

"Having these trees is also a great ongoing learning project with our youngest young people in S1 and S2 creating the woodland area and continuing to care for and monitor the trees in their six years at school, before they hand it on to future generations of Arbroath High School young people."



**Councillor Ron Sturrock, Convener of Children and Learning Committee said:**

"What a fantastic opportunity for our young children to learn about the importance of trees in the fight against climate change but to improve and enhance their school environment at the same time. Projects like this also help our schools engage with our young people, bringing the school community together after the impact of the COVID Pandemic."

The Queen's Green Canopy is a unique tree planting initiative to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, encouraging individuals and groups to play their part to enhance our environment by planting trees.

Species being planted include a native mix of Rowan, Hawthorn, Hazel, Silver Birch and Dogwood saplings.

## GOUROCK RECYCLING CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

A RECYCLING centre in Gourock will close presently and move to a temporary home to allow for a £150,000 revamp. The Kirn Drive facility will relocate to nearby Craigmuschat Quarry while work is carried out.

Inverclyde Council is investing around £155k to expand and upgrade the existing recycling centre.

The Kirn Drive site will be closed for around nine months while extensive work is carried out, including disconnection and re-connection of water and utilities supplies, demolition work, laying of foundations, fuel tank decontamination, fuel tank removal and ground filling, among other things.

During that time residents will still be able to use Craigmuschat Quarry to recycle materials that would normally be taken to Kirn Drive.

In the meantime, the Pottery Street civic

amenity site in Greenock is open as normal.



**Councillor Michael McCormick, Council's convener of environment and regeneration, said:**

"The upgrade and expansion to the Kirn Drive recycling centre will give the people of Gourock and surrounding areas improved facilities to continue to recycle a variety of materials.

"We've invested heavily in our environmental services facilities in recent years, including the £1 million transformation of the Pottery Street civic

amenity site in Greenock.

"I'm delighted that Kirn Drive recycling centre is now being upgraded and, along with Pottery Street, will support resident to recycle a variety of materials and liquids and maintain our proud recycling reputation."

Members of the environment and regeneration committee agreed to the Kirn Drive work at a meeting in August 2021.

For more information about recycling visit [www.inverclyde.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/recycling).

## COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ACTION PLAN TO TACKLE ASH TREE EPIDEMIC

**Councillors will consider an action plan designed to better understand, plan for and respond to the growing number of trees in the capital affected by the tree epidemic, Ash Dieback.**

If approved, the Council will undertake an exercise to assess the ash trees across the Council's estate and, if necessary, remove the diseased trees safely.

It is believed that Ash Dieback, a tree disease caused by a fungal pathogen, will kill around 80% of ash trees across the UK and the Council is proposing a proactive approach to take immediate action in the Capital.

In Edinburgh, Ash Dieback has the potential to infect tens of thousands of Ash trees growing on both private and City of Edinburgh Council maintained land.

Affected trees quickly become brittle and may drop branches or fall over, which increases the risk of injury, property damage and road traffic accidents.

By adopting this risk-based approach, the principal aim is to prevent trees from falling and causing damage or harm. A public information campaign will also be launched to advise residents about the plan and to provide advice to private owners of affected trees.

While the removal of trees is sadly unavoidable, it is the intention through the action plan to exceed the number of Ash tree losses as part of the Million Tree City planting programme.



**Culture and Communities Convener, Cllr Donald Wilson, said:**

Ash dieback is unfortunately a problem for councils and landowners throughout the UK and it's vital that we take action now to ensure trees are safe and to protect property and people. The action plan lays out an approach for the next five to 10 years.

Through this plan, we will spread the word to residents to make sure they have all the information they need if they own or maintain an Ash tree.

In 2019, we became the first local authority to sign the tree charter and in doing so we pledged to keep nurturing, planting, celebrating, cherishing and increasing Edinburgh's trees. Through this action plan we will make sure we're approaching this threat in the most proactive way and ensure we'll make sure Edinburgh is on the front foot in tackling this unfortunate situation.



**Culture Communities and Vice Convener Amy McNeese-Mechan, said:**

It is really important that we look after Edinburgh's wonderful tree legacy for future generations and so we must continue to take all necessary precautions when dealing with trees affected by ash dieback. We would also encourage private landowners who have trees on their properties to look for the signs and comply with current advice and regulations.

With this plan we hope to manage this process through a coordinated and programmed approach with a key element being the replanting of trees to offset anticipated losses. It is also positive to hear that new strains of disease-resistant trees are being developed and planned to make sure we don't have to repeat this process.

The Tree Council has provided guidance for homeowners and those with ash trees on their land.



## COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE PROJECTS BENEFIT FROM MORE THAN £2MILLION IN FUNDING FROM RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

New play areas, rediscovered nature reserves and inclusive community gardens have all been developed thanks to more than £2million in funding from Renfrewshire Council's Green Spaces, Parks and Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund.

Since it was launched in 2018, 66 projects have been supported with grant funding up to a maximum of £50,000 to improve and develop green spaces, parks, play areas and community facilities in their local area – with eight further projects being developed and expected to apply for the remaining funding.

Young people and families have benefitted from brand-new and redeveloped play parks created in their local areas with new equipment and resurfacing carried out to create welcoming, safe spaces for active play.

A brand-new interactive park in Bargarran has seen its equipment become the highest used in the UK since it opened in April 2021, Howwood Park now offers an outdoor gym, skate ramps, new goal posts, basket swings and picnic tables, and brand-new play equipment and maintenance work has allowed Glencoats Park to host silent discos, gala days and Halloween trails.

**Karen Campbell, Chair of Pals of the Privies, said:**

"We are so pleased with what we have all achieved in Glencoats Park and I'm so proud of the volunteers who regularly help to make the park look better and help with our events.

"It really feels like there is a really strong sense of community again here in Ferguslie.

"The funding really has made a difference and we couldn't have delivered what our community wanted without it. Thank you."

Numerous nature reserves have been

brought back to life with Jenny's Well in Paisley set to be free of Japanese Knotweed this year and replaced with native wildflowers, Newshot Island in Erskine has seen bird watchers flocking to return to the redeveloped viewing area, and Erskine Community Garden has been able to install a labyrinth, extend their sensory garden and now grow fresh fruit and vegetables all thanks to Council funding.

**Jim O'Neil, Erskine Community Council, said:**

"We can confirm that our vision for the Bird Watching area has been fully realised because of the donation received from the Green Spaces, Parks and Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund.

"Our regular users are delighted at the efforts made by the Council and the improvements made have resulted in a huge increase in usage of the area so on behalf of the Community Council, and the friends of Newshot Island, we offer our heartfelt thanks"

These projects are in addition to numerous others including community gardens, reclaiming woodland areas for the community and saving community facilities with structural upgrades, such as The Old Library in Kilbarchan.

Other projects expected to come forward soon include new play and fitness equipment in Thomas Shanks Park, a community social garden in Lochwinnoch and new football and gym facilities in Elderslie.

**Councillor Marie McGurk, Convener of Renfrewshire Council's Communities,**



**Housing and Planning Policy Board, said:**

"I'm incredibly proud of how beneficial this fund has been for our communities since we launched it back in 2018 and it's a real example of how we can make real change working with local people.

"The projects have been brought forward and driven by local groups and we've been privileged to support them with advice and funding to make their ideas into reality.

"Almost every community in Renfrewshire has seen a projected completed thanks to this fund and you can see the real difference it has made to our green spaces, parks, play areas and villages.

"I want to thank the staff involved in driving this fund forward, but also the people and groups who have led the projects and been such an inspiration for our local communities."

Applications to the fund for over £10,000 require additional funds to be in place from the community group which has led to more than £300,000 in external funding brought into Renfrewshire.

In addition to the creation of new projects, eight local community groups have completed, or are working towards, a community asset transfer thanks to grants received from this fund and the Council's Community Empowerment Fund.

No further applications are being now accepted for the fund with the entire £2.04million committed to existing or expected projects

For more information, visit [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/GreenSpacesFund](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/GreenSpacesFund).

## HUGE POTENTIAL FOR OFF-SHORE WIND FARM OFF ISLAY

Following Scottish Power Renewables being awarded the seabed rights to develop an off-shore windfarm off Islay, as part of Crown Estate Scotland's ScotWind Leasing, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Councillor Robin Currie said:

"This has the potential to bring significant benefits to Argyll and Bute, as well as more widely across Scotland.

It could increase by 200% the amount of clean energy we produce in Argyll and Bute, and make a major contribution to getting Scotland and Argyll and Bute to net zero.

It creates opportunities for a substantial number of temporary and

permanent jobs across Argyll and Bute, helping our economy recover and grow sustainably.

It also has the potential to position Argyll and Bute as a place where new industries such as data centres can access a ready supply of renewable energy. We look forward to working with Scottish Power Renewables as this project moves forward."

Potential suppliers can get involved through the Scottish Power website (MachairWind, Islay): [MachairWind - ScottishPower Renewables](http://MachairWind - ScottishPower Renewables)

The proposed 2GW off-shore wind farm proposal will be subject to achieving all the necessary permissions that will cover this.



## ECONOMY & INFRASTRUCTURE CHAIR WELCOMES ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW OFFSHORE WINDFARMS OFF HIGHLAND SHORES



The chair of Highland Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee has welcomed the announcement by Crown Estate Scotland of 25GW of new offshore wind developments, many of which earmarked off the coast of Highland.

Chair of Highland Council's Economy & Infrastructure Committee and Climate Change Working Group Chair, Cllr Trish Robertson, welcomed today's ScotWind offshore wind leasing round announcement, which **she said:** "signalled a huge step forward," in sustainable energy.

**Cllr Robertson also welcomed the economic opportunities for Highland, saying:**

"The opportunities presented by the

offshore industry will be a welcome boost as we continue on the road to recovery from the pandemic.

"In the Highlands we are very reliant on seasonal employment from tourism. To see a variety of new jobs can only help reverse depopulation and give our young people the choice of staying in the Highlands."

A Highlands and Islands Enterprise spokesperson commented that the "economic impact of the offshore wind industry in the Highlands and Islands could be similar to that of historic oil and gas developments."

The investment in offshore wind could lead to the creation of many new jobs as well as the world's first floating offshore

wind supply chain, manufacturing many of the components required for floating projects. The growth in this field could see the attraction of new, young talent to the Highlands and Islands.

Seventeen projects, with a combined potential generating capacity of 25GW, have been offered the rights to specific areas of the seabed for the development of offshore wind power - with developers giving commitments to invest in the Scottish supply chain, providing opportunities for high quality green jobs for decades to come.

The projects are expected to secure at least £1bn in supply chain investment for every 1GW of capacity proposed. They will also generate around £700 million in revenue for the Scottish Government and represent the world's first commercial scale opportunity for floating offshore wind.

As well as helping complete Scotland's own journey to net zero, creating thousands of jobs in the process, these offshore wind resources also have the potential to position Scotland as a major exporter of renewable energy, including green hydrogen.



## ANGUS TOPS THE RECYCLING LEAGUE TABLE

Angus Council has topped the recycling league table for 2020 by becoming the number one recycling local authority in Scotland, in figures released by SEPA.

Of the 52,166 tonnes of household waste generated in Angus, 30,226 tonnes were recycled, a massive 57.9%.

In addition to kerbside recycling, Angus Council accepts materials for recycling at seven recycling centres and 23 neighbourhood recycling points across Angus. The items collected via the household bulky uplift service are also separated for recycling as much as possible.

During 2020 the Council collected a massive 21,325 tonnes of recycling via kerbside collections of mixed recycling, food waste and garden waste. They also collected 8,901 tonnes of materials, such as cardboard, textiles and electrical items, for recycling at their recycling centres.

The recycling figures for 2020 follow on from Angus Council winning the Local Authority Success award at the 2020 National Recycling Awards for their redesign of recycling centres in Angus and the positive impact on recycling rates this has made.

There have been further initiatives delivered by Angus Council's waste team during 2021 to build upon the recycling success. In April 2021, council funding was given for the Special Waste Action Team,

a dedicated resource to tackle fly-tipping and littering and to manage the special bulky uplift service.

Earlier in the year, the Community Clean Up and Fly-tipping Prevention Fund was launched which funds community groups and individuals to help to clean up their area. So far 17 applications have been funded for items such as litter pickers, trail cameras and handi-carts.



**Convenor of Communities Councillor Mark Salmond said,**

"We are absolutely delighted that the hard work of our teams and our communities to ensure that recycling is a priority, has paid off.

"Throughout 2020 we managed to keep our kerbside recycling services running, despite the impact of COVID-19, and we were able to bring our recycling centres back online with a full range of recycling quickly after the lockdown period.

"I would thank our communities for being the best recyclers in Scotland. 2020 was a very challenging year for everyone due to the impact of COVID-19, however during this period the people of Angus continued to make the effort to separate their waste and make best use of our recycling services"

"We've also had a fantastic 2021 with a whole range of new initiatives being

funded to help in the war against waste.

"We will not however become complacent. We will continue to work with residents of Angus to ensure that the rate of waste recycled increases in line with government targets and our Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan."

**Vice Convenor of Communities Councillor Tommy Stewart said,**



"A massive thanks needs to go out to the residents of Angus who have helped us to become the top performing council for recycling in Scotland.

"However, one area we know we know we can do better is recycling of food waste. A third of what we collect in purple general waste bins is food. Food waste is collected from residents in villages and towns across Angus – if you need a caddy, you can order on the Angus Council website. Food waste is also accepted at recycling centres."

Full details on Angus recycling centres including opening times are available on the Council website, along with information on how to get the Right stuff in the Right bin and bin collection days.



## NEW APPROACH TO GREENSPACE MANAGEMENT IN THE CAPITAL LEADS TO BUTTERFLY HAVENS



Changes to the management of grassy areas in Edinburgh are helping butterflies cope with the impacts of climate change.

As the climate warms, more species are able to move north into new areas that were previously too cold for them, but they still need the right habitat to survive. For three species – the Small Skipper, Wall Brown and Speckled Wood butterflies – areas of long grass are just what they need. Caterpillars of all three species feed on these grasses, but they are easily wiped out if the grass is cut too often.

Initiatives from the City of Edinburgh Council and other partners in the Edinburgh Living Landscape programme, which is led by the Scottish Wildlife Trust, have helped these species move into the city, and have even given them a stepping stone into south Fife where all three are now being seen for the first time.

The Council has helped by naturalising 264 acres of amenity grassland, which only get cut at the end of summer, through Edinburgh Living Landscape's Nature in your Neighbourhood project and by sowing wildflower meadows. These are changes which boost populations of bees and other pollinators. With more insects around, animals like birds and bats will also benefit from the changes.

One of the most striking examples has been at Silverknowes Park on Muirhouse Parkway, which is now home to 14 different species of butterfly. This tiny park has been worked on by Council staff and volunteers from Butterfly Conservation through the Helping Hands for Butterflies Project for a few years now, and the list of species

there keeps growing. The most recent finds were of Small Skippers, a species that only arrived in Edinburgh four years ago. This species only lays its eggs on the flower stems of tall grasses, so the habitat at the park is perfect for them now.

Projects to create and maintain wildflower meadows throughout the city have helped encourage the spread of these butterflies. At the nearby National Museums Collections Centre in Granton, staff have brought about changes to the management of the site that have seen numbers of butterflies and moths increase dramatically in just two years. Further along the coast, work through the Edinburgh Shoreline project is helping to create yet more coastal grassland.

All of these projects work to create a series of stepping-stones that help butterflies and other insects move through our urban landscape and on into new areas in the countryside. This was demonstrated by the fact that the first sightings of the Small Skipper and Speckled Wood in south Fife were around North Queensferry, and Wall Brown butterflies have been seen near Dalgety Bay.

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to nature and connecting habitats is more important than ever to allow wildlife to respond to changing temperatures.

**The City of Edinburgh Council's Culture and Communities Convener Donald Wilson said:**

We're very proud of our parks and greenspaces and our Biodiversity Action

Plan is designed to help us enhance their quality and natural heritage. Under the strategy we've undertaken many projects to open up our environment to nature and provide a welcoming habitat for a wide variety of plants, birds and insects, including encouraging native wildlife to urban settings and allowing the public to reap the benefits and get involved.

It's a sign of success that these areas are now home to these new species of butterflies. These beautiful insects are not only an indicator of the health of our environment in the Capital, they are essential as pollinators and food for other species.

**Culture and Communities Vice Convener and Thriving Greenspaces Champion Amy McNeese-Mechan said:**

This is a fantastic new approach which ensures that these beautiful insects are at home in the Capital.

Working collaboratively with partners like Butterfly Conservation through the Helping Hands for Butterflies Project and community involvement are key components of our strategy. Together we will work to raise awareness of the rich biodiversity in Edinburgh, enable others to take positive action to protect and enhance our natural environment, and influence other plans, policies and strategies relating to Edinburgh's open spaces.

**Anthony McCluskey, Project Officer with Butterfly Conservation said:**

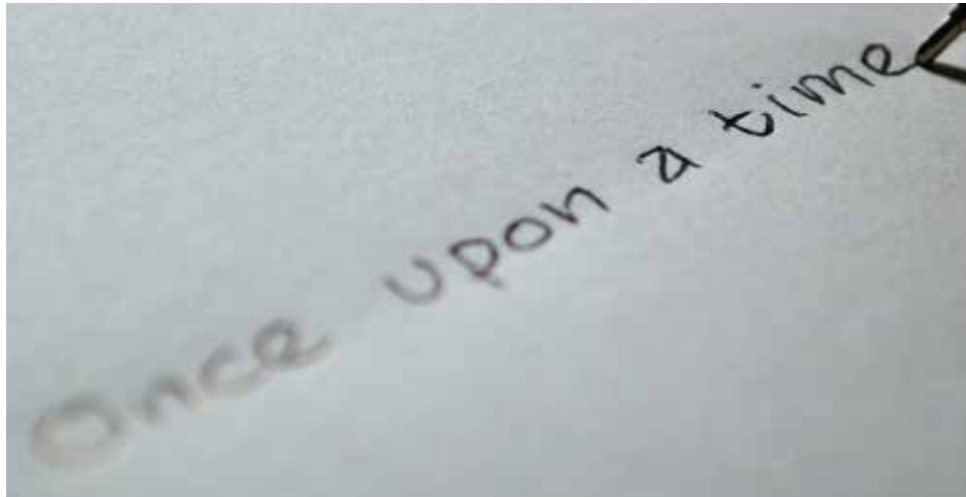
Some butterfly species move quickly in response to climate change, so the spread of so many new species in Scotland shows us how much change there has been already. Initiatives like this to provide more land for them to breed can help populations move through the landscape, helping to secure their long-term future.

**Dr Cathleen Thomas, Living Landscapes Programme Manager, Scottish Wildlife Trust said:**

It's really encouraging to see how quickly these butterflies have colonised the city thanks to the new habitat that Edinburgh Living Landscape partners have created.

This is a great example of how creating new green networks in Edinburgh can help tackle the climate and nature crisis by helping wildlife adapt to change.

## ONCE UPON A TIME IN SOUTH AYRSHIRE



Once Upon a Time in South Ayrshire celebrates Robert Burns and South Ayrshire's storytelling heritage in a year-long programme of events as part of Scotland's Year of Stories 2022.

South Ayrshire Council is delighted to launch this programme of events, exhibitions, and experiences with something for everyone to enjoy. Once Upon a Time in South Ayrshire launches in line with National Story Telling Week and will run until December 2022 with support from EventScotland.

January is the perfect month to start to tell South Ayrshire's tale, as Scotland remembers one of the greatest story tellers who has ever lived – Robert Burns.

Burns was born 25 January 1759, and many of South Ayrshire's myths and legends are reflected in his stories, but he also fought for social justice and encouraged people to help one another. It's these qualities that are celebrated through the Robert Burns Humanitarian Award (RBHA). Every January as part of the RBHA, we tell the stories of inspirational people who help others. This year, the globally respected award was won by Dr Digambar Narzary who is tackling human trafficking in north east India.

Next up in our tales of South Ayrshire will be the launch of a walking tour with a difference, running from 23 February until the end of the year. Shadows of the past...Ayr's Myths, Legends & History is a thought-provoking self-led tour which explores the story of Ayr, unearthing fascinating tales of heritage, the macabre and fun! Audiences will be encouraged to explore the landscapes and myths that inspired Robert Burns at iconic locations including Brig o' Doon and Alloway Auld Kirk.

Many more events across the year are still to be revealed, but Once Upon a Time in South Ayrshire will include campfire stories; character trails; family fun days; and festive delights. More announcements will follow soon.



**Councillor Chris Cullen, Economy and Culture Portfolio Holder for South Ayrshire Council said:**

"With our abundance of folklore and history, where better to kickstart Scotland's Year of Stories 2022, than the Birthplace of Scotland's Bard. Retelling our myths and legends is a great way to connect with our heritage, and hopefully this year there will be more opportunities to come together to celebrate the past, present, and future of South Ayrshire. Be sure to keep an eye out for more of the exciting events laid out in chapters of our storytelling book."

**Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland's Director of Events said:**



"We are delighted to be supporting Once Upon a Time in South Ayrshire as part of Scotland's Year of Stories 2022. From icons of literature to local tales, Scotland's Year of Stories encourages locals and visitors to experience a diversity of voices, take part in events and explore the places, people and cultures connected to all forms of our stories, past and present. Scotland is the perfect stage for events and Once Upon a Time in South Ayrshire's celebratory programme of events and activities will showcase the region's storytelling heritage."

**To find out what's happening and when visit:** <https://destinationsouthayrshire.co.uk/stories/>

## POPULAR LUNCHBREAK CONCERTS GO LIVE AGAIN AT CITY'S COWDRAY HALL

Aberdeen Art Gallery's Cowdray Hall will reverberate with the sounds of live music for the first time in two years with the return of the popular free Lunchbreak Concerts series.

The new programme will be launched in ambitious style as virtuoso local pianist Joseph Long continues his personal challenge to play all 18 of Mozart's piano sonatas. This is the fifth in the series and the first to be performed live. During the Covid-19 lockdowns audiences were able to enjoy a special pre-recorded performances by Joseph via the Art Gallery's Museum From Home web pages – these performances are still available to listen to at [www.aagm.co.uk](http://www.aagm.co.uk)

The enjoyment of art and music in one city centre location is made possible by the unique co-location of the Art Gallery and the Cowdray Hall. The Hall was gifted to the people of Aberdeen in 1926 by Lady Cowdray of Dunecht, to "encourage a taste for art and music in the city of Aberdeen." Today it remains true to its original purpose, with music events accentuated by the superb natural acoustic.

Lunchbreak Concerts have been an important aspect of the Art Gallery's public programme of activity for many years, offering an important platform for both established and emerging performers. The programme features professional and non-professional musicians, from Aberdeen and the North-East as well as further afield.

Following this week's launch with Joseph Long, the fortnightly programme features a wide range of musical genres, from classical to folk to jazz. On Thursday 3 March audiences will enjoy a performance by talented young musicians from the Aberdeen City Music School based at Dyce Academy. This specialist music school supports talented musicians from all over Scotland to continue their general education whilst receiving expert tuition and additional time for music study.

Aberdeen's UNESCO-recognised medieval town registers have inspired a very special performance on Thursday 31 March. Songs from Medieval Aberdeen is the result of collaboration between historian Dr Claire Hawes and musicians Davy Cattanach, Paddy Buchanan and Craig Spink, looking at how songwriters can use medieval material in their work. Supported by Creative Funding from Aberdeen City Council, the project resulted in the composition of original contemporary folk songs inspired by the 15th-century legal documents. They will be performed in the Cowdray Hall on guitar, bodhrán and percussion, with vocals in Scots.

**Councillor Marie Boulton, Aberdeen City Council's culture spokesperson, said,**

"The return of the Lunchbreak Concerts programme of live music at the Cowdray Hall is another welcome step towards 'normal service' for music fans and performers. Whilst it was great to be able to listen to pre-recorded performances during lockdowns via the Archives, Gallery & Museums website, nothing compares to gathering together to share the experience of listening to live music. We'll have appropriate measures in place to keep audiences, performers and staff safe. The numbers in the Cowdray Hall will be carefully managed, and we're asking audiences to test before visiting where possible and wear a mask at all times during the visit and performance. Tickets are free, but we do advise booking in advance."



## REAFFIRMING COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT 'DETERMINED AND INNOVATIVE' CITY CULTURE SECTOR

Edinburgh's culture sector will be supported by funding of around £4.7 million in the coming year if Councillors approve the cultural grants recommendations next week.

The Culture and Communities Committee will consider a report on Third Party Cultural Grants Funding 2022/2023 at their next meeting, including the proposal to include the Multi-cultural Festival to the city's current Strategic Partnership programme.

The report seeks approval for the continued Strategic Partnership, flexible and project funding recommendations for 2022/23. If approved, this will be the third year of Strategic Partnerships, originally agreed in 18 June 2019.

Given the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on planning, stability and programming, the report also seeks approval to extend the original duration of three years for Strategic Partnership funding for a further year. The extension would provide a degree of important continued funding stability for the existing programme Partners.

Next week's report recommends councillors also approve, in principle, the

commitment of revenue funding to the Multi-cultural Festival, establishing the event in the city's festivals calendar.



**Councillor Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener said:**

The city and events sector has responded to the ongoing pandemic with determination and innovation with hybrid models of delivery such as the creation of outdoor/online programmes. It was fantastic to see some of the buzz return to the city when possible in 2021 but recovery continues and through this funding we are reaffirming our commitment to supporting and sustaining the sector.

Our grants programme has always supported the city's year-round cultural offering and by approving the funding for 2022/23 we'll be playing our part in boosting the sector following such a hard time.

**Councillor Amy McNeese-Mechan, Culture and Communities Vice Convener said:**



I'm particularly excited by the proposal to add the Multi-cultural festival as a Strategic Partner. This would put the festival, originated by the Council, onto a more established and stable footing and enable fundraising opportunities and further artist and programme development. It would support the growth of longer-term benefits to the festival's diverse communities and audiences.

We know this continues to be a difficult time for so many in the culture sector and I'm very glad we'll be able to maintain our commitment through the £4m+ culture sector funding programme, subject to the report being agreed next week. The Council has a vital role to play in Edinburgh's festivals and events sector and this investment reflects our direct and continued strategic support for the sector, contributing to the retention of jobs, creative practices and development.

This strategy reflects our vital partnership role with stakeholders, Strategic Partners, communities and creative practitioners to achieve this.

## SCULPTURE WORK SET TO START

**WORK is set to get underway on a giant 33-foot sculpture in Port Glasgow.**

The huge 'Shipbuilder of Port Glasgow' stainless steel figures designed and built by famous artist John McKenna will be delivered to their new, permanent home in the town's Coronation Park, ahead of assembly beginning the next day, subject to weather conditions.

The foundations were laid late last year and are now ready to accommodate the pair of 14-tonne figures of shipyard workers hard at work in tribute to Port Glasgow and Inverclyde's rich shipbuilding history.

Assembly of the figures is expected to take around two weeks, subject to weather conditions, once they have been transferred from the artist's Ayrshire base where they were designed and built.

Work will follow to install lighting, signage

and improve surrounding footpaths.

During the assembly phase there will be parking restrictions in the area, including along the park's access road similar to the restrictions in place late last year to accommodate the laying of foundations.



**Councillor Michael McCormick, Inverclyde Council's convener of environment and regeneration, said:**

"I know there has been a lot said about this project but I'm really looking forward to seeing the figures coming home to Port Glasgow and for the assembly of what will be an iconic landmark for the town and the whole of Inverclyde.

"We're at last at the crucial final stage of this project and realising artist John McKenna's vision to honour our rich shipbuilding past and the hard-working

people who worked in our yards making Inverclyde and the River Clyde renowned the world over.

"We're actively promoting the area and encouraging people to visit Inverclyde and discover what it has to offer and I'm sure these sculptures will be Inverclyde's very own Kelpies attracting people from near and far."

The sculpture was chosen following a public vote and pays tribute to the illustrious shipbuilding past of Port Glasgow and Inverclyde and also serve as a modern-day tourist attraction.

For more information about what Inverclyde has to offer visit [discoverinverclyde.com](https://discoverinverclyde.com) and keep up to date with the progress of the Shipbuilders of Port Glasgow via Inverclyde Council's social media channels.

## LORD PROVOST HAILS HISTORIC MANUSCRIPT ACQUISITION FOR CITY ARCHIVES.

Lord Provost of Aberdeen Barney Crocket has welcomed the acquisition of an historic 17th century manuscript for the city's archives.

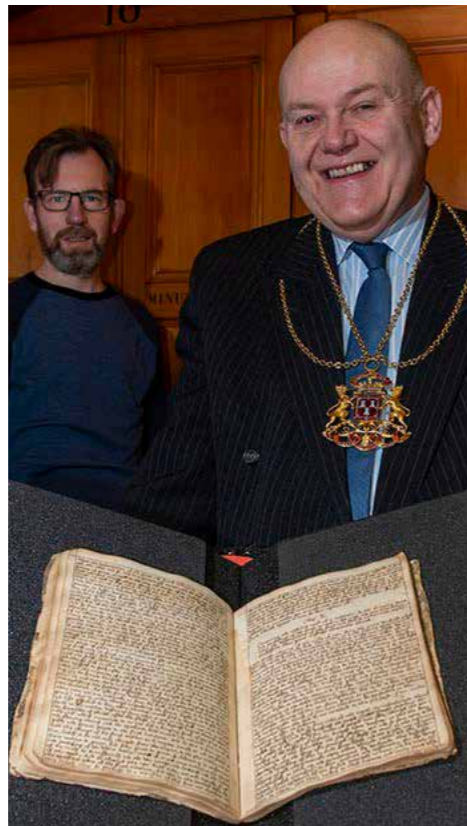
Aberdeen City Council's archivists have acquired the manuscript which relates to former politician and Provost of Aberdeen Alexander Jaffray written almost 350 years ago.

Jaffray, born in 1614 to a prominent Aberdeen family, was twice Provost of the city, firstly between 1649 and 1650 and again between 1651 and 1652 as well as representing the city in the Scottish Parliament between 1644 and 1650.

Lord Provost of Aberdeen, Councillor Barney Crockett said: "Aberdeen is steeped in history, and this is a fabulous addition to Aberdeen's UNESCO-recognised archive, the oldest and most complete collection of civic records in Scotland

"The manuscript is thought to have been transcribed in 1673 shortly after the death of Alexander Jaffray and it provides a fantastic insight into his faith following his conversion to Quakerism, at a time when being a Quaker inevitably meant persecution."

The volume was purchased for £15,000 and this was assisted by the National Fund for Acquisitions (NFA) and Friends of the National Libraries (FNL) who each contributed £5,000 with the remainder



coming from the Niven Bequest which was left to the Council's Archive several years ago.

**Hazel Williamson, National Fund for Acquisitions Manager, said:**

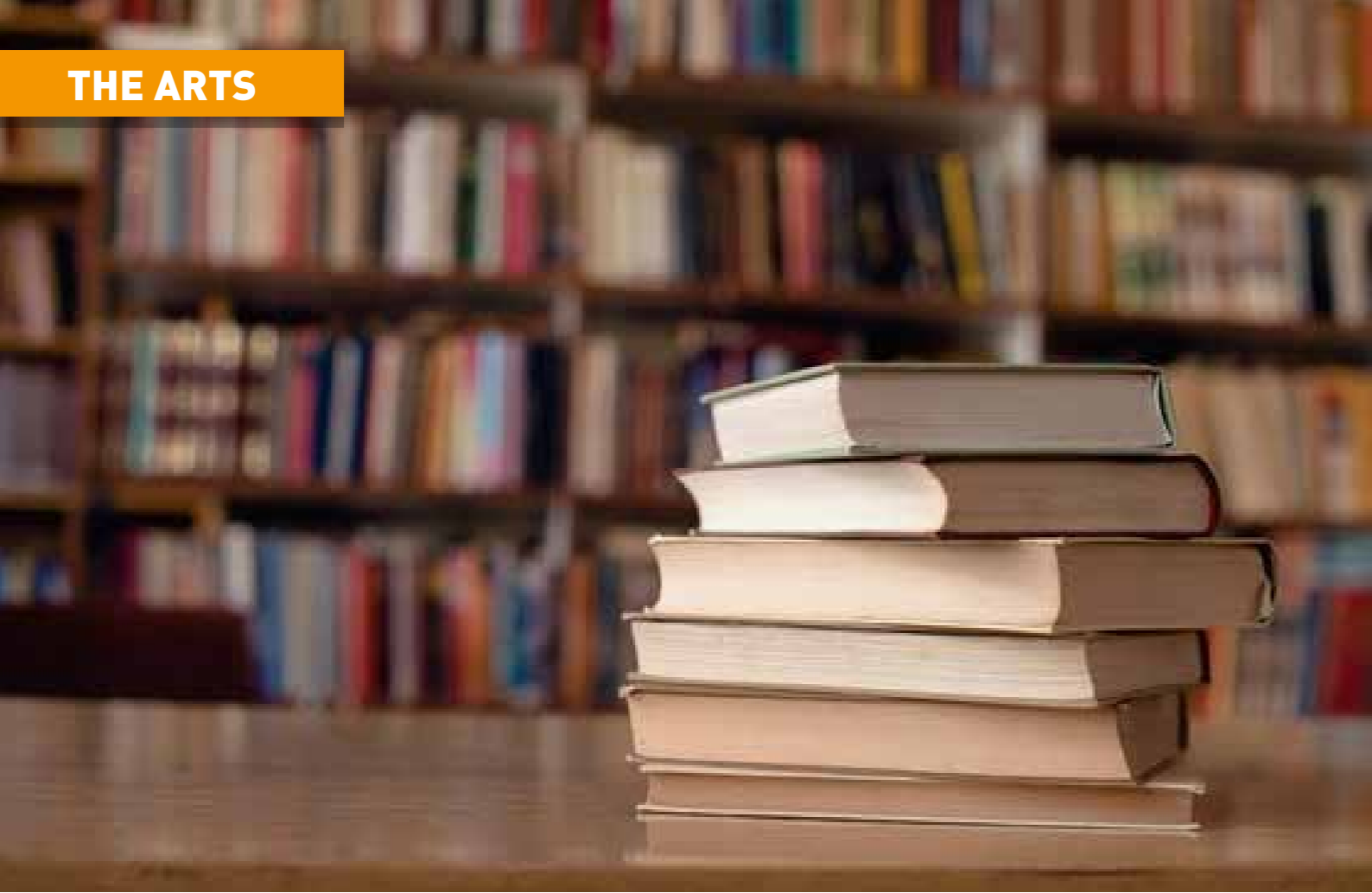
"We are delighted to support the purchase of this unique manuscript testament of Alexander Jaffray. The acquisition is particularly significant in the context of Jaffray's important role in the civic and religious life of Aberdeen at a time of political upheaval and religious persecution."

**Geordie Greig, Chairman of FNL, said:**

"We are delighted to have been able to support Aberdeen City Archives' acquisition of this rare and important manuscript that sheds light on religious belief in the 17th century."

**The Lord Provost added:**

"We are grateful for the support provided by the NFA and FNL in acquiring this important document for the city of Aberdeen."



## PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR THREE LIBRARIES TO REOPEN

Three popular Edinburgh libraries are set to be returned to their local communities ending their time as symptomatic testing centres.

Following a request from the UK Government in late 2020, Oxfgangs, Leith, Newington and Sighthill libraries have been used as testing centres under the Council's statutory duties to protect public health.

The buildings in Oxfgangs, Leith and Newington will be handed back gradually from 31 March. Significant work will be required to allow services to resume safely and securely but it's hoped the libraries can begin to reopen from the end of April.

Other testing centres in Council sites will remain for the time being including Sighthill Library, due to the close alternative of Wester Hailes Library.

Previously announced plans to temporarily relocate the Leith Library service to Fort Community Centre will continue, with a view to opening in the middle of March.

The temporary mobile vehicle library service for Oxfgangs will continue two days

a week at Oxfgangs Bank - every Monday evening from 5pm to 7.30pm and every Thursday from 10am to 4.30pm - until the library reopens fully.



**Councillor Donald Wilson, Culture and Communities Convener, said:**

"It's been a priority for us to have our libraries back up and running again as they are invaluable resources for local communities. There's so much more to libraries than just borrowing books - they are trusted and much-loved hub buildings which strengthen local communities and are essential for the wellbeing of our citizens. I'm delighted we now have a plan going forward to return them to their communities where they belong."

**Councillor Amy McNeese-Mechan, Culture and Communities Vice Convener, said:**

"No one should underestimate the value of these facilities to local communities, and the understandable demand that there has been to bring them back into use. We'll do everything we can to bring forward these timescales as far as possible. I really hope reopening these libraries will bring some relief to those who've missed them during the pandemic or are still struggling with its effects."



## ABERDEEN PLAYS HOST TO BRITISH LIBRARY NEWS EXHIBITION

Aberdeen City Library is playing host from today (Thursday 24 February) to a pop-up British Library exhibition about the role news plays in our society.

The iconic library is one of 30 venues across the UK featuring the British Library's Living Knowledge Network displays up until Saturday 20 August which are complemented by online and in-person displays of resources from Aberdeen City Libraries' own selection (visit <https://sway.office.com/RL2AAvr9hz8SttC3>).

Over the coming months, there will also be a programme of events and activities for people to attend and get involved with over the summer, including a look at how the Typhoid outbreak of 1964 was covered by the local news.



**Councillor Marie Boulton, Aberdeen City Council's Culture spokes woman, said**

"The landscape of modern journalism has changed so much over the last couple of decades, particularly in the ways people report, obtain and consume the news. With the proliferation of social media and 'fake news', now, more than ever, it is important to examine the role that news plays in our society and this exhibition is the perfect launch pad for those discussions".

Launching with a public event at Leeds Central Library on 24 February 2022, journalist and broadcaster Fatima Manji, artist and activist Rachel Horne, editor James Mitchinson and writer Roger Lytollis will celebrate regional news and its significance at the heart of communities. Breaking the News: The Launch Debate will be live streamed online and to public libraries across the UK.

Inspired by the British Library's upcoming Breaking the News exhibition (22 April - 21 August 2022), supported by Newsworks, the pop-up displays will explore what makes an event news, press freedom and issues of trust through a selection of news stories spanning 500 years of news production in Britain.



**Liz White, Head of Public Libraries and Community Engagement at the British Library, said:**

"We are thrilled to be collaborating with over 30 public libraries across the UK - from Aberdeen and Exeter to Bournemouth and Belfast - to kick-start a nationwide conversation about the role news plays in our society, ahead of Breaking the News opening in London this spring".

**Jo Allan, Newsworks CEO, said:**

"These localised exhibitions will celebrate 500 years of news by showcasing some of the most important local stories while examining the value of news, free speech and the ongoing importance of local journalism to their communities. This network of activity across local libraries is a brilliant initiative and will be a great way to lead into the launch of the British Library's Breaking the News exhibition in April, which we are delighted to be supporting".



The British Library is home to the UK's news collections with British and overseas newspapers dating back to the 1600s and growing collections of radio, television and web news. Each week the Library acquires more than 3,500 different news publications in print, digital and audio-visual formats.

## THREE NEW EXHIBITIONS FOCUS ON INSPIRATION, INCLUSION AND CREATIVITY



Six decades of artistic inspiration and a variety of stunning photos are being showcased as part of three new exhibitions.

- 'The Lillie at 60' marks 60 years of the Lillie Art Gallery in Milngavie, featuring artworks which were originally part of Robert Lillie's bequest in 1949, as well as selected works which have been added to the permanent collection since its opening in 1962. The exhibition is on at the Lillie until 28 April 2022.
- The 'Scottish Photographic Circle Exhibition' at the Auld Kirk Museum in Kirkintilloch features a range of amazing images from some of the country's finest amateur photographers. You can see the stunning prints until 18 February 2022.
- A Wider View' shines a light on the photo journalism and street photography of the renowned James Gilmour. He has featured a range of people over the years, particularly at their workplace. A collection of his evocative images will be on display at the Lillie Art Gallery until 24 February 2022.

The exhibitions - organised by East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture (EDLC) Trust - are free and no booking is required. For more information - including opening times - visit [www.edlc.co.uk/centres-venues](http://www.edlc.co.uk/centres-venues)

**Jim Neill, Chair of EDLC Trust, said,**

"It's wonderful to be able to offer people such a high quality cultural start to 2022, with three exhibitions - each offering their own delights and insights - showcasing a range of superb talents.

"I'm particularly pleased to welcome 'The Lillie at 60' - a celebration of six decades of the Lillie Art Gallery. It features landscapes, portraits and still life works in a variety of media - paying tribute to Robert Lillie's devotion to art and the gallery's continued dedication to developing a unique collection to be enjoyed by everyone who visits."



**'THE LILLIE AT 60'**  
Lillie Art Gallery, Station Road, Milngavie  
Until 28 April 2022

Celebrating 60 years of the Lillie Art Gallery, you can view a number of artworks which were part of Robert Lillie's bequest in 1949, as well as selected pieces added to the permanent collection since its opening in 1962.

You can also see works by Robert Lillie himself, his sister and Michael Bowley - architect of the Lillie.

In addition, artworks added over the last decade are on show. Pieces have been acquired for the permanent collection by purchase, gift, bequest and commission. The current collecting policy focuses on fine and applied art by talents who are Scottish by birth or residence.

'The Lillie at 60' will be accompanied by a virtual exhibition in March for Local History Month, telling some of the stories behind this collection.



**'SCOTTISH PHOTOGRAPHIC CIRCLE EXHIBITION'**  
Auld Kirk Museum, Cowgate, Kirkintilloch  
Until 18 February 2022

Since its inception in 1907, the aim of the Scottish Photographic Circle - a small group of dedicated photographers - has been to promote the art of contemporary and pictorial photography in Scotland.

The quality and diversity of subject matter in this year's exhibition suggests that the present membership is continuing to deliver on that aim. Traditional artistry and contemporary technology combine to display a wide range of amazing images from some of the country's finest amateur photographers.



**JAMES GILMOUR - 'A WIDER VIEW'**  
Lillie Art Gallery, Station Road, Milngavie  
Until 24 February 2022

James Gilmour's interest in photography began when he was working in a photo-engraving studio in the early 1970s. He enjoyed working in the studio, but became more interested in the photographic process - darkroom work in particular.

Shortly after starting work in the studio, his brother gave him a second-hand 35mm camera - kick-starting his career as a photographer.

The human aspect is the most important thing for him and, over the years, he has photographed a wide variety of people in the workplace.

His work has been published in Scottish Field, the Scotland on Sunday newspaper/magazine, The Scotsman, The Independent newspaper/magazine, The Guardian and the British Journal of Photography.

## LAUNCH OF FIFE TOURISM CONFERENCE – TURNING CHALLENGE INTO OPPORTUNITY

The spotlight will be on the visitor economy in Fife this March, with the return of the Fife Tourism Conference. With the theme 'Turning Challenge Into Opportunity', the conference is being held on Thursday 10th March at the Dean Park Hotel in Kirkcaldy. The day will focus on how the tourism industry can recover from the past 2 years which has had a devastating impact. Speakers will explore key areas such as digital innovation, accessibility, sustainability and attracting and retaining talent.

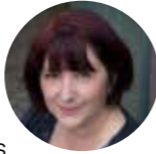
The keynote speaker will be Karen Darke MBE, a gold medal winning Paralympian cyclist and adventurer, who has recently received the Scottish Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture. She will explore ideas and tools of how an 'adventure mindset' can help us create surprising possibilities. There will also be a 'pecha kucha' style session, where local businesses can showcase recent developments and plans for the future.



"It has been an incredibly difficult time for tourism businesses," said **Moira Henderson, Chair of the Fife Tourism Partnership.**

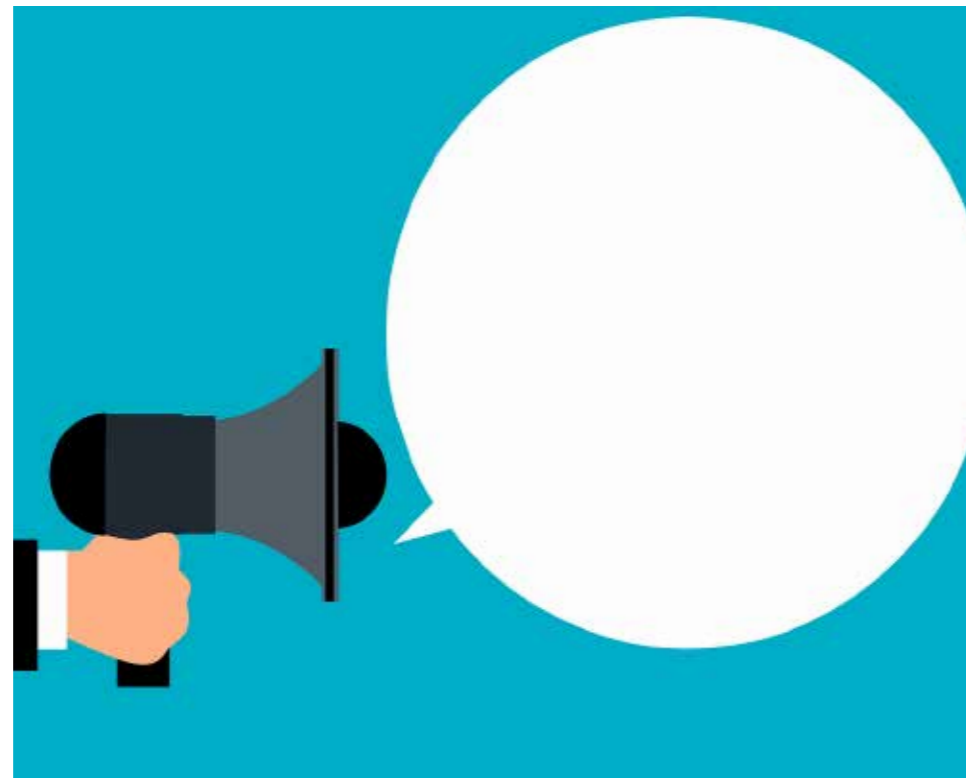
"The Fife Tourism Conference is an ideal way for businesses to re-engage with each other and develop ideas to move forward, recover and grow. We thought it was vital that this event was held 'in person' to allow conversation, networking, and collaborative ideas to take shape. We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone for an informative, useful and enjoyable day in Kirkcaldy."

**Hilary Roberts, Tourism Partnerships Manager for Fife Council added,**



"With speakers such as Marc Crothall, CEO of the Scottish Tourism Alliance, Craig Leitch from Greener Kirkcaldy and Joshua Ryan-Saha from Traveltech, the conference will help to get the Fife tourism sector back on track and look forward to the future. We are delighted to have the support of VisitScotland for this event, and look forward to Marina Di Duca, the VisitScotland Inclusive Tourism Manager joining us to give valuable tips on how to improve accessibility and how to best promote this."

For more information and to book your ticket visit the Fife Tourism Partnership website: [Fife Tourism Conference - Turning Challenge into Opportunity \(fifetourismpartnership.org\)](http://FifeTourismPartnership.org)



## NEW GYM SET FOR ARGRYFFE PARK IN HOUSTON THANKS TO RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL FUNDING

**Villagers in Houston will soon be able to get active outside as a new fully inclusive, interactive outdoor gym is added to Argyffe Park.**

The new gym equipment will cater for young and old, including people of all abilities, and users will even be able to connect to an app which will monitor performance and encourage continued use.

The project is being delivered after Houston Community Council were granted £35,000 following their application to Renfrewshire Council's Green Spaces, Parks and Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund.

Having already raised £7,000, this funding will allow a supplier to be appointed and work to start on the gym ahead of the summer months.

**Councillor Marie McGurk, Convener of Renfrewshire Council's Communities,**

**Housing and Planning Policy Board, said:**

"I'm delighted that we've been able to support yet another project that people have told us their community needs.

"This fund was created to deliver real change for local people and ensure that they could take forward ideas which they know will make a difference to where they live.

"More than £2million will be committed from the fund and it has seen projects completed across Renfrewshire and created lasting relationships between the Council and the community.

"I look forward to seeing the new gym in Argyffe Park when it's installed and I'm sure it will be a huge boost for parkgoers in Houston."

Since its inception in 2018, 66 projects have been completed in Renfrewshire in

almost every community, ranging from new play parks and community gardens to outdoor gyms and new nature trails.

The fund has encouraged the formation of new constituted community groups, created new play areas for young people and families, and made clear environmental improvements to local green spaces across Renfrewshire.

The fund is now fully subscribed so cannot accept new applications for funding.

**For more information, visit [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/GreenSpacesFund](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/GreenSpacesFund).**

## FACILITIES UPGRADE DUE FOR LOCHORE

A major investment in Fife's most popular free visitor attraction, Lochore Meadows Country Park, will see its popular play area get a much-needed upgrade.

Councillors at the Community and Housing Services sub-committee have agreed to invest £500,000 towards replacing the play area and creating a brand-new inclusive destination playpark.

Swings designed to be used by children with disabilities and a sensory tunnel will be amongst a range of new equipment coming to the park, carefully planned to let all children play together in one place. New fencing at key locations near the loch and through the wooded area, as well as CCTV, will help keep visitors safe and a new pathway will connect the play area to the visitor centre, giving easy access to the café and toilet facilities.

The project has drawn on the knowledge and skills of partners in the council, health and third sectors. Local communities shared their views on the proposed designs when they went on show in the visitor centre during the summer. Those from further afield were able to see them online.

Cllr Judy Hamilton, Community and Housing Services sub-committee convenor, said:

"Improved facilities for physical activity and sport are a key priority for the council and, as part of this ongoing commitment, a one-off investment of £750,000 from the 2017- 2027 Capital Plan for Improving Health through Leisure and Sport has

been allocated towards Lochore Meadows Country Park.

"The first phase is to use £500,000 from this funding for the play park experience whilst the balance of £250,000 will be reinvested in smaller capital projects.

"Lochore Meadows has been enjoyed by generations of Fifers and our commitment to improve the facilities there will ensure that it can continue to be enjoyed by generations to come"

Park manager Iain Laing said:

"Lochore Meadows will be a destination park, a place where families can spend the whole day without costing the earth, but with plenty to keep everyone occupied. It's one of the jewels in our crown and we want people to keep coming back. The new playpark will be something special, there won't be anything like it nearby.

"We've worked closely with the NHS and play park designers to carefully plan and develop a much-improved play area that's accessible and inclusive.

"Our play area has always been first class and the current facility has been enjoyed by hundreds of children every day for many years, but this amount of use takes a heavy toll on the equipment.

"The time has come to refresh the area for the benefit of the next generation of children with a greater emphasis on inclusive play allowing all children to play together as one."

A further £250,000 has been earmarked for infrastructure works which will support and complement existing facilities. The council's locality team along with stakeholders are considering different initiatives to improve the visitor experience in the park.

The total cost of the project could be in the region of £800,000. The council is working with partners to secure other funding and has a further a one-off investment of up to £200,000 from the council's tourism and community asset to fall back on.

The project is expected to go out to tender in November, with a contractor being appointed by the end of the year. Work should start in January 2022 and be completed by April, weather permitting.

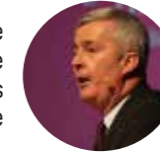
The investment comes as outdoor venues like Lochore Meadows have enjoyed increased footfall as Fifers enjoyed some fresh air and open space during the pandemic. Lochore Meadows saw visitor numbers reach 900,000 over the last year. The new play area will enhance the extensive facilities already on offer, which also include a new energy efficient visitor centre, built in 2017, with a cafe and toilet facilities, golf, mountain bike trails, water sports, woodland walks, a picnic and barbeque area and plenty of wildlife.

Over the summer, staycationers were welcomed to the park with motorhomes able to rent a pitch for an overnight stay as they toured through Fife.



## LEISURE LINK PARTNERSHIP EXTENDS TO SHETLAND

A partnership providing free use of leisure facilities across Scotland – including the Outer Hebrides – now includes access to multiple leisure facilities across the Shetland Islands.



**Director of Education, Skills and Children's Services, William MacDonald said:**

"I am very pleased to welcome Shetland Recreational Trust to the partnership.

"This collaboration gives leisure members and their families even greater flexibility to use their leisure cards at various sites right across Scotland, and all at no extra cost."

Head of Operations and Business Support at Shetland Recreational Trust Robert Geddes said: "We're delighted to be able to offer our MORE4life members the opportunity to keep active at leisure facilities across the country.

The Leisure Link Partnership allows CnES card holders to access gym, public swimming and fitness classes at leisure centres across Aberdeen, Argyll and Bute, the Borders, Highland, Moray and Orkney - all at no extra cost.

As of 17th January Shetland Recreational Trust has joined the partnership adding eight new sites that can be utilised.

They are: Unst Leisure Centre, Yell Leisure Centre, North Mainland Leisure, Whalsay Leisure Centre, South Mainland Pool, Scalloway Pool, West Mainland Leisure, and Clickimin Leisure Complex.

"This flexibility means that people working away from home or on holiday can use local facilities from participating areas as part of their existing home-based membership."

Those making use of the scheme are asked to check directly with the site they are planning on visiting and whether advanced booking is necessary.

The Comhairle's membership card, provides admission to 4 sports centres offering a wide range of health and fitness opportunities from swimming to squash courts, climbing walls, fitness suites and exercise classes across the Outer Hebrides.

For more information and to check out which facilities are included, visit [www.leisurelink.org](http://www.leisurelink.org)

## WORK STARTS ON £350K PLAY PARKS PROJECT

**WORK has started on the first of five new or replacement Inverclyde play parks as part of a £350,000 project.**

Contractors have started on site at Wellpark in Greenock where the smaller of the two play areas is being completely replaced.

Over the coming weeks and months there will also be new equipment installed at Craigend, also Greenock, Coronation Park in Port Glasgow, and King Street and Lunderston Bay, both in Gourrock.

Inverclyde Council is investing just over £355k in the five sites, including £200k alone on a major new play park at Lunderston Bay.



**Councillor Michael McCormick, convenor of environment and regeneration, said:**

"We have a proud track record of investing in play parks right across Inverclyde to ensure they are modern and inclusive for our children, young people and their families to enjoy and make the most of the great outdoors.

"The pandemic has made us all appreciate getting out and about and we want to encourage people to continue to explore what's on their doorstep and make the most of it.

"These new or replacement play parks will be welcome additions to the existing portfolio of wonderful outdoor facilities we have."

Work on upgrading the Wellpark play area, which includes new equipment and surface, is expected to take a fortnight and cost around £45,000.

There are currently 53 council-owned play areas across Inverclyde – an increase of eight over the last decade – and a further 16 facilities in housing estates that are not managed or maintained by the local authority.

Once the latest new or replacement facilities are completed there will be 32 inclusive play areas across the district compared with five in 2019.

Work will be carried out at the rest of the sites in phases over the coming weeks and months through until the summer, subject to weather and market conditions.



## GOUROCK GAMES BACK WITH A BANG

**GOUROCK Highland Games are making a triumphant return after a two-year absence and the event will be in safe hands with a Navy veteran and former police custody officer named as chieftain.**

Local man George McLeary will take over the reins of the first Gourock Games since 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic on Sunday 8 May 2022.

George, 66, is originally from Larkfield and worked for over 50 years in the shipyards, the Navy and the police.

He spent 34 years in the Greenock Royal Naval Reserves reaching the rank of Chief Petty Officer before retirement in 2012 and served as a custody officer in Greenock Police office for three decades until hanging up his keys in February last year.

But George is arguably best known for serving Inverclyde with distinction for the past 27 years leading the area's annual Remembrance Sunday commemorations as parade commander.

He will now add chieftain of the Gourock Highland Games – traditionally the first games of the season – to his long and impressive CV and takes the reins in what is the year of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The event will take place at Battery Park on Sunday 8 May 2022 from 12-6pm and it is free entry.

### George said:

"To be asked to be the chieftain of Gourock Highland Games is a great privilege and honour that has been bestowed on me. And what a year to be selected on Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

"I would like to say thank you to the people who made this possible and I'm looking forward to welcoming everyone there to enjoy a great day.

"To follow the chosen people and celebrities who have done this role before me is such a great honour and achievement and to complete another great chapter in my life and one that I will treasure forever."

George was welcomed as chieftain by Provost of Inverclyde, Martin Brennan, and pipers Ross Davidson, 17, and Tai Bao, 15, from nearby Clydevie Academy, which overlooks the park.



### Provost Martin Brennan said:

"I'm delighted that the Gourock Highland Games are back after enforced cancellations for the last two years. It also gives me great pleasure to announce George McLeary as our chieftain.

"I've known George for many years and he is well-known right across Inverclyde for a variety of reasons but none more so than his sterling service leading our annual Remembrance Sunday commemorations as parade commander for the last 27 years.

"With that experience and expertise, this year's Gourock Highland Games are in safe hands and I wish George all the very best come 8 May."

The Gourock Games are the first of the season and are organised in partnership with the Royal Scottish Highland Games Association (RSHGA).

### Ian Grieve, secretary of the RSHGA, said:

"The Royal Scottish Highland Games Association are hopeful that we might have a full season this year and are delighted that Gourock Highland Games will get the season off to a great start."

The Gourock Games will be followed this year by the British Pipe Band Championships a fortnight later on Sunday 22 May 2022.

Both are part of Inverclyde Council's flagship Meliora Festival which will also include the Inverclyde Warrior 5k obstacle course, also at Battery Park, on 11 June, a special Scotland v England girls' under-15s anniversary international football match at Ravenscraig Stadium on 15 May and a visual arts spectacular which is still to be announced.

### Provost Brennan said:

"We have an action-packed programme of events coming up this summer as part of

the Meliora Festival to help people reunite and enjoy first-class entertainment right on their doorstep after being stuck indoors for the best part of two years.

"It's also an opportunity to showcase Inverclyde as a great place to visit and encourage more people to discover what we have to offer.

"What better way to start the festivities than with the return of the Gourock Games which, combined the addition of the British Pipe Band Championships this year and the creation of a new schools' pipe band, demonstrates Inverclyde's commitment to pipe bands and Highland games."

As well as a distinguished career in the shipyards, Navy, police and serving Inverclyde on Remembrance Sunday, Gourock Games chieftain George was also involved in the local sea cadets and served on the management committee for 10 years, raised the Armed Forces Flag on behalf of the council on two occasions, was involved in the Greenock Blitz 75th anniversary commemorations, led the Battle of Arras centenary parade, and took charge of the French Military who attended in 2018 to commemorate 100 years since the guns fell silent in the First World War.

George has also served under five provosts of Inverclyde and has taken charge of parades in London, Glasgow and Paisley, as well as in Greenock and Gourock.

He is now retired and keeping active by cycling and walking.

### George said:

"I've done all right for a local boy from Larkfield."

**For more information about Gourock Highland Games and what Inverclyde has to offer, visit [discoverinverclyde.com](http://discoverinverclyde.com) and follow @GourockHGames on Twitter and @GourockHighlandGames on Facebook.**

## £120K INVERCLYDE EVENTS FUND OPEN



**GROUPS are being invited to bid for grants of up to £20,000 towards community events as part of the Inverclyde Meliora Festival 2022.**

Inverclyde Council has set aside £120k to be shared among the six locality areas as part of the Meliora celebrations.

It is part of the local authority's summer festival which kicks off in May with the Gourock Highland Games followed by the British Pipe Band Championships, Scotland v England girls' under-15s international football match, Inverclyde Warrior 5k obstacle course and a visual arts event which has still to be announced.

Local groups will also be able to bid for funding to put on their own community-based events.



**Councillor Jim Clocherty, convener of education and communities, said:**

"After long spells over the last two years of being stuck at home and dealing with restrictions, the Meliora Festival is an opportunity to reunite and reconnect while enjoying first-class entertainment right on our doorstep.

"We have some incredible headline events coming up during May and June but there's also an opportunity through this community fund for local communities to get involved and host their own celebrations and celebrate the community spirit that has been at the forefront of the response to the pandemic.

"Groups may wish to bid for funding to support and enhance existing events, launch a completely new one or seek funding for a Platinum Jubilee celebration. It is entirely up to those at the heart of our communities to decide and I look forward

to hearing about the events that will benefit from this funding."

Meliora means 'in the pursuit of betterment' and the festival itself is being funded by Inverclyde Council from a £350,000 events budget as part of the local authority's £4 million Covid-19 recovery plans.

The community fund is aimed at providing an opportunity for communities to socialise and reconnect with others during the summer through delivery of a range of activities.

Funding of up to £20k is available for groups in each of the six Inverclyde localities: Greenock East & Central; Greenock South & South West; Greenock West & Gourock; Port Glasgow; Kilmacolm & Quarrier's Village; and Inverkip & Wemyss Bay.

The fund is open to constituted groups and not-for-profit organisations only and the closing date for applications is 4 March 2022 at 4pm.

Two online meetings are scheduled for Wednesday 16 February 2022 at 11am and 6.30pm for interested parties to find out more and ask questions.

**Anyone wishing to attend should email [calum.mclellan@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:calum.mclellan@inverclyde.gov.uk) for more information.**

**For more information about the Meliora Community Fund and to apply, visit [www.inverclyde.gov.uk/melioracomunityfund](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/melioracomunityfund).**



## SCAPA FLOW WARTIME HISTORY TO BE REMEMBERED AS PLANS FOR A NEW HARBOURS STORAGE BUILDING PROGRESS

Plans for a purpose-built storage area for the Harbour Authority, incorporating a modern, up-to-date display and exhibition area for HMS Royal Oak and Scapa Flow and memorial garden moved a step forward recently.

Councillors at the OIC Harbour Authority Sub-committee gave the £500,000 proposal their support, recommending that a stage 2 capital project appraisal be submitted to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee at a future date.

Members heard that in developing the project, Marine Services worked alongside other Council services, the HMS Royal Oak Association and the Royal Navy, with very positive comments and reactions and it is intended that this collaborative approach be maintained as the project progresses.

**Jim Buck, Head of Marines Services and Transportation and Harbour Master, said:**

"The existing building which contains a storage area used by the Harbour Authority and a display for HMS Royal Oak is well over forty years old and has design features that cause problems with efficient roof drainage which in turn causes issues with the wooden structure. In effect the existing building is coming, fairly rapidly, to the end of its useful and economic life.

"The majority of the existing building is used by the Harbour Authority for the storage of essential equipment and items used by Counter Pollution and Marine Environmental staff. The remainder is a display area for HMS Royal Oak which we propose would be extended to include the history of Scapa Flow. The site is fully owned by the Council and is effectively split between the General Fund, held under Education, Leisure and Housing, and the Harbour Account. Subject to approval, it is proposed that the whole site, including the existing building, is transferred to the Harbour Account to allow this project to proceed.

"The building will be on the same site as the existing premises at Scapa and benefit from a newly laid out and landscaped memorial garden in order that certain areas can be used for benches and plaques, keeping an area towards Scapa beach where public events/services could be held."

Sub-committee, Vice-chairman Councillor Andrew Drever said: "This is an example of collaboration working at its best to ensure a project meets the expectations of all who are involved."

An application to Crown Estate Scotland under their Local Partnerships – Capital Investment Fund has been made for the full capital cost of this proposal. The



result of this initial application is due in March 2022. If the Crown Estate Scotland application is successful, there will be a revenue requirement to effectively pay back the amount over a fixed time period, to be determined in the next stage of Crown Estate Scotland funding application/system, but likely to be around ten years.

In providing a letter of support for the Crown Estate Scotland funding application, the Royal Navy have stated they would support an application for funding to the relevant benevolent funds for funding towards the display/exhibition area.



Scottish Local Authority News

## COMHAIRLE LEADER WELCOMES ESTABLISHMENT OF ISLAND FORUM

Comhairle Leader, Roddie Mackay, has written to Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove, welcoming the establishment of an Islands Forum to help level-up island communities. This follows Mr Gove's visit to the Western Isles last summer for discussion with the Comhairle Leader on connectivity and levelling up.

**In his letter, Mr Mackay states:**

"I write to warmly welcome the announcement that the UK Government is to establish an Islands Forum to help level-up island communities. This is a welcome initiative that I hope will allow island communities to closely collaborate with the UK Government and with islands across the United Kingdom to tackle challenges and deliver new investment opportunities.

"I hope that the Forum is action-orientated and focused on delivering new solutions and new investment for island communities. I appreciate that a policy development component would be useful, but the Forum should avoid becoming another "talking shop" and instead strive to deliver real benefits and real solutions for island communities.

"Comhairle nan Eilean Siar as the Local Authority responsible for an archipelago of islands with the largest island population base in the United Kingdom has much experience and knowledge of the very particular issues, challenges and opportunities that face island communities. I therefore believe that the Comhairle will have much to offer the new Forum and I look forward to participating in and making a positive contribution to the work of the Forum when it is established.

**Mr Mackay concluded:**

"The Comhairle would also be happy to host the inaugural meeting of the Forum if that was thought appropriate. I think Forum representatives would appreciate the opportunity to meet within an island context. My officials would be happy to work with the UK Government to facilitate a first-class initial Forum meeting."



Scottish Local Authority News

## COUNCIL TEAMS UP WITH CROWDFUNDER TO LAUNCH £150,000 BUSINESS FUND



Perth & Kinross Council has teamed up with Crowdfunder to launch the £150,000 Crowdfund Perth and Kinross Business Fund.

By matching up to £5,000 of crowd-sourced funding, this unique new project will support individuals, businesses and communities to establish and grow businesses, projects and services that make a real difference to the economy in the area.

To be eligible for the fund, applicants must run a crowdfunding campaign on the Crowdfunder platform and match certain criteria. Crowdfunding is where a large number of people support a business or endeavour by individually pledging small amounts of money, either as a donation or in return for a reward.



**Perth & Kinross Council leader Councillor Murray Lyle said:**

"Six out of 10 Scots are employed by small-to-medium sized enterprises so finding ways to support them is critical to our economic well-being.

"This scheme supports and rewards those businesses and communities that not only have great entrepreneurial ideas, but already have support from the public and investors through crowdfunding. This money can be used to help get a new business off the ground or help them develop. Raising money through Crowdfunder shows that your idea

matters to the community and if it meets our criteria then you could gain additional funding."

**Councillor Lyle added:**

"We also launched a Micro Enterprise Fund this year to support small businesses in Perth and Kinross and this new scheme will complement it. As a Council we are determined to do all we can to grow our economy and help firms recover from the coronavirus pandemic."

**Su Johnstone, Business Development Manager at Crowdfunder said:**



"We are delighted to partner with Perth and Kinross Council to support businesses in the area. Crowdfunder has already seen many dozens of small and medium sized businesses successfully crowdfund in Perth and Kinross.

"We very much look forward to working alongside the business support community to deliver more opportunities for successful, sustainable economic growth across the region."

**Business start-ups or existing SMEs who are looking to grow with the support of the crowd are encouraged to apply for funding to make their dreams a reality.**



## VICTORIAN MARKET ANNOUNCES LOCAL BUSINESS AS FIRST TENANT FOR THE NEW MARKET HALL DEVELOPMENT

Multi-award-winning Bad Girl Bakery Ltd, from Muir of Ord, can now be announced as the anchor tenant for the new Market Hall development at the Victorian Market in Inverness.

The quirky and innovative bakery owners say they are delighted to be part of such an exciting development in Inverness, particularly during the company's expansion.

**Jo Murray, Victorian Market Manager, said:**

"We have been in discussion with Douglas and Jeni of Bad Girl Bakery Ltd since the early conception of the Hall development and am delighted that they see the value and potential of this new food and drink destination.

"It is very encouraging that they are keen to expand and invest within Inverness city centre with their well-established and already popular business."

**Douglas Hardie of Bad Girl Bakery Ltd, said:**

"We are absolutely delighted to be the anchor tenants in the amazing new Victorian Market development as part of our expansion in 2022.

"It is a fantastic opportunity for us to be

part of this exciting development and bring our award-winning cakes, coffee, savoury bakes, breakfast, lunch, and dinner options to the City Centre."

He added: "We're also delighted to be joining the many high-quality food and drink providers in Inverness and look forward to working alongside our friends and colleagues in the Victorian Market and beyond.

"We feel this expansion into Inverness will be a great addition to the Bad Girl offering that includes the Cafe Bakery in Muir of Ord, our street food, the cake consultancy, classes and courses, and our recently published cookbook."

**Provost of Inverness, Cllr Helen Carmichael, said:**

"It is wonderful to see such a vibrant, local and ambitious business signing up to be one of the first to occupy a space within the newly refurbished and historic Victorian Market.

"The market's re-development will not only provide transformational benefits for retailers in Inverness city centre, but it will also provide another great reason for people to visit the Highland capital."

**Chair of the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group, Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie, said:**

"This is wonderful news for the Victorian Market development. I am absolutely delighted that a well-respected and talented local artisan business is taking up a prime spot within the new Market Hall development.

"The Victorian Market will have a positive ripple effect around the 'Old City', with other tourist attractions like Castle Project. This will encourage potential new business investment to Inverness."

**She added:**

"The New Year of 2022 is hopefully the start of a positive change with a new breath of life coming out of the uncertainty we have all been experiencing. As and when, residents and visitors will be keen to come along and experience all the businesses within the Victorian Market."

## DRAINAGE, ACCESS AND PAVEMENT RESURFACING PROJECTS PLANNED

A £1 million plan of action to improve drainage, access, paths and pavements across East Dunbartonshire has been unveiled.

Projects will take place in Bearsden, Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch, Lenzie, Milton of Campsie, Milngavie and Torrance.

It follows the Council's decision in November 2021 to allocate an additional £1 million in capital funding for drainage works, path improvements and pavement resurfacing.

You can view a full list of all 40 projects, including a new pedestrian crossing in Bishopbriggs, by visiting [www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/news/upgrade-projects](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/news/upgrade-projects)

**Councillor Andrew Polson, Joint Leader of the Council, said,**

"This is fantastic news for East Dunbartonshire. I'm delighted that we were able to allocate additional capital resources, which are going to be put to such excellent use - improving drainage, access and pavements across the area. Projects have also been identified for the

future. Work will continue to investigate how these can be funded and delivered."

**Councillor Vaughan Moody, Joint Leader of the Council, added,**

"Not only will this £1 million investment be good for access and helping people to keep active, it will also be beneficial for the environment - improving our resilience against severe weather events and climate change issues. Rest assured, we will continue in our efforts to secure support for future initiatives to improve East Dunbartonshire, as well as using our own resources"

The aim is for works to take place in 2022/23.



Projects are grouped within three categories - drainage, access and resurfacing:

- The drainage projects were identified following the major weather event in August 2021 when 65 locations were flooded. The sites selected were highlighted for direct intervention.
- Access projects were chosen via various sources that included the most recent active travel consultation and officers' knowledge of local issues.
- Pavement resurfacing locations were inspected and prioritised using the Council's Roads Inspection and Maintenance Policy to identify locations.

Already established core capital programmes will continue in parallel with the additional projects. There is a separate, ongoing core programme for road resurfacing.

## VIEWS INVITED ON POTENTIAL PLANS FOR NEW BUSINESS CENTRE IN BISHOPBRIGGS



People are being invited to help shape plans to boost business in Bishopbriggs.

Views are sought on a potential Business Incubation Centre in the town - part of the Council's £34.88 million City Deal Place and Growth Programme for the area.

The aim is to examine options to provide affordable, flexible space to help local businesses begin, bloom and flourish - creating and retaining employment within Bishopbriggs and East Dunbartonshire.

Consultation is taking place between 21 February and 13 March 2022 to help establish local demand - visit [www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/businesscentreviews](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/businesscentreviews)

If viable options can be established, the facility could potentially form part of the Bishopbriggs Town Centre Regeneration project element of the City Deal programme.

The UK and Scottish Governments are each providing £500 million in grant funding for the Glasgow City Region City Deal.

As part of the Bishopbriggs Town Centre Regeneration element, a Public Realm Plan consultation ran over the summer of 2021, with 750 people responding.

**Councillor Andrew Polson, Joint Leader of the Council, said,**

"It's important that we understand what is required to support start-up and small businesses in the town. Not only could an incubation centre help to create and support employment, it could also allow new products and services to be made available locally."

**Councillor Vaughan Moody, Joint Leader of the Council, added,**

"If you can spare 10 minutes, please visit the webpage - [www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/businesscentreviews](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/businesscentreviews) - and let us know what you think is needed. Good quality, tailored accommodation for entrepreneurs and fledgling enterprises is essential to boost our economy, provide opportunities, and to attract and retain talent."

You can sign up for City Deal news alerts via the webpage [www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/city-deal-keep-me-posted](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/city-deal-keep-me-posted)

The City Deal project - in conjunction with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport and Glasgow City Council - will see an integrated approach to improve infrastructure within East Dunbartonshire and the north of Glasgow, with three main elements:

- Bishopbriggs Town Centre Regeneration
- Delivery of Phase 5 of the Bishopbriggs Relief Road and a Masterplan for Westerhill
- Improvements to the A803 Route Corridor.

## SUCCESS OF HIGHLAND'S MODERN AND GRADUATE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME PRAISED

Members of The Highland Council's Corporate Resources Committee, which met recently, have commended the success of the Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship Programme, a scheme which has enabled several hundred individuals to undertake training and enhance their skills in a variety of roles and locations across the Highlands.

The apprenticeship programme has been in place since 2017 and is open to those aged between 16 – 67 years old. Since its launch, the programme has seen over 320 staff enrol with 119 of those having completed training to date.

The Council has facilitated a range of opportunities, both for new employees and existing staff, across a range of work areas and continues to grow the portfolio of apprenticeships which can be offered.

Apprenticeships are delivered in partnership with a broad range of training providers, both locally and across Scotland, utilising University, College and independent training provision for the Apprentices across all Highland Council services.

The Modern Apprenticeship Programme sees apprentices committing to between 2-4 years of learning and work experience within the organisation. On completion of

their qualification, they have several years of real time work experience, providing much needed life skills and a sound understanding of the working world in their chosen profession.

Work is currently underway in the development of further apprentice frameworks in order that the Council can provide opportunities to match workforce needs. On the Graduate side of the apprenticeship programme, for instance, six different frameworks are currently offered.

**Congratulating those involved, Chair of the Corporate Resources committee, Councillor Jimmy Gray, said:**

"My sincere thanks to those involved in the success and continuation of this key programme. Very well done to our apprentices and interns who have completed their training and are now prospering in their roles benefiting from the excellent support of their line managers who act as mentors to the staff.

**Councillor Gray continued:**

"As an organisation we are committed to supporting employment within Highland and are actively involved in creating pathways from Youth Trainee work placements to Modern and Graduate Apprenticeship opportunities for groups such as Care Experienced and underrepresented groups as well as those who have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This is a vital programme and plays a key role in contributing opportunities and growth for the Highland workforce and economy."

Highland Council apprenticeship opportunities are advertised throughout the year with apprenticeships starting from £9.78 per hour including a great benefits package. All of our apprentice posts are advertised on the [MyJobScotland website](https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk).



## BABYLON DEMOLITION BEGINS



**THE demolition of a derelict former Greenock nightclub has begun to pave the way for regeneration of the area.**

Contractors have started tearing down the old Babylon premises at the corner of Argyle Street and West Stewart Street on behalf of Inverclyde Council.

The local authority purchased the rundown property to allow for the redevelopment of the site, which is earmarked for housing, as part of the overall regeneration of Greenock town centre.

There is a temporary road restriction in force preventing vehicles from turning left from Argyle Street onto West Stewart Street, parking restrictions and limited pedestrian access in and around the site to facilitate the works.

**Councillor Michael McCormick, Inverclyde Council's convener of environment and regeneration, said:**

"It has taken a lot of hard work and effort to get to this stage and I'm pleased that demolition work is finally underway.

"The building really has been a blight on Greenock Town Centre for too long and now thanks to the council's intervention it is being demolished to pave the way for redevelopment of the site, which is part of our wider regeneration plans for the town centre.

"Naturally, there will be some disruption while this important work takes place so I'd like to thank people in advance for their patience and understanding during this time."

Contractors started on site on Monday (31 January 2022).

For service updates from Inverclyde Council, visit [www.inverclyde.gov.uk](https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk).

## GREATEST ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FILM & BROADCAST INDUSTRY IN GLASGOW RECORDED IN 2021

**Greatest economic impact of film & broadcast industry in Glasgow recorded in 2021**

2021 was a landmark year for Glasgow City Council's Glasgow Film Office (GFO) as their work helped to generate £42.4million for the city's economy over that period, a record figure for the city.

The one-stop shop approach of the GFO is recognised as being very attractive to film, broadcast and advertising productions as they consider locations.

Since its creation in 1997 with the aim of promoting Glasgow as a 'film-friendly' city, the GFO has attracted productions that have generated economic activity approaching £400million.

There were a number of notable productions shot in Glasgow in 2021, including The Flash, the fifth Indiana Jones film, Batgirl - the first major film production to be entirely based in the city - Tetris, Man & Witch, Annika, Shetland, Guilt 2, The Control Room and Screw, filmed in the Kelvin Hall and currently showing on Channel 4.

These productions join a long list of major films and broadcast series shot in Glasgow, including World War Z, Under the Skin, Outlaw King, The Wife, Hobbs & Shaw, Outlander, Succession, Still Game and Vigil.

The economic impact of the sector in 2021 does not include the figure being made by the ongoing production of Batgirl - this will be included in the 2022 total for the city.

The GFO - the council's film commission - acts as a 'one-stop shop' for productions of all sizes and budgets filming or wishing to film in Glasgow, coordinating meetings with appropriate agencies, location owners and other council departments, notably the Events and Filming team. This ensures that filming goes as smoothly as possible, delivering the greatest economic impact and minimising the impact on the daily life and operations of residents and businesses.

The GFO also markets Glasgow as an attractive filming location through supporting reces for production and location teams, meetings with key producers and decision makers, and working with Screen Scotland in the planning and execution of joint marketing

activities. A grant is also given to productions hiring local facilities and services suppliers, to help support and develop the sector in the city.

The GFO leads the Glasgow Film Partnership, a body with over 60 members, with the common goal of making filming on location in the city as simple as possible. Some of the members of this partnership include Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, Glasgow Science Centre, the University of Glasgow, Glasgow Airport, Network Rail and SPT.

The development of the Kelvin Hall Film & Studio Hub - to be completed in late summer - will further drive the development of the film and broadcast industry in Glasgow, becoming the Scottish hub for major TV broadcasters and production companies and helping to meet the growing demand for TV shows in the city and country, providing studio space and post-production services to companies including the BBC, ITV, STV, Sky, Channel 4 and Netflix. In addition, the Hub is expected to create and maintain new and existing local jobs in the industry and support the development of a skilled and diverse workforce.

**Councillor Ruairi Kelly, Chair of Glasgow City Council's Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm Committee, said:**

"The remarkable figures for the film and broadcast industry in Glasgow during 2021 signify a major step forward in the sector's activity in the city, and underline its economic importance. Glasgow Film Office have played a key role in this along with our Events and Filming team, and our 'one-stop shop' approach is proving a great draw for producers and location managers. The Kelvin Hall Film & Studio Hub was the missing link in our offering and the basing of the entire production of a major film in the city for the first time points to a successful and sustainable future for this sector in Glasgow. Now we need to work with partners to ensure that young people from Glasgow can study and work in the creative industries and forge successful careers right here in the city.



## NEW £770,000 FUNDING PUTS WHEELS IN MOTION ON ACTIVE TRAVEL



Communities across Argyll and Bute are set to benefit from a host of active travel projects following the announcement of new Scottish Government funding.

Argyll and Bute Council has received an award of £771,900 from the Places for Everyone programme to deliver ambitious regeneration projects through design stage to construction.

Places for Everyone is a Scottish Government funded infrastructure programme, administered by Sustrans, which aims to create safe, attractive, healthier places by increasing the number of trips made by walking, cycling and wheeling.

The projects will include major upgrades to walking, wheeling and cycling paths and improved links to town centres and communities.

### THEY INCLUDE:

**Rothesaiy** – Walking, wheeling and cycling improvements from the High Street to the towns Joint Campus and improved links to the local hospital, leisure centre and park.

**Lochgilphead** – New active travel routes will improve links from the towns school campus and Business Park, to Lochgilphead town centre.

**Islay** – A partnership project with Islay Community Access Group (ICAG) and local landowners will create a new, off-road walking, wheeling and cycling route connecting Bowmore and Bridgend.

**Jura** – working with the local community to support the Isle of Jura Community Action Plan by developing innovative, value-for-money interventions to make walking and cycling more accessible between Craighouse and the residential area at Corran Sands/ Knockrome.

**Dunoon to Hunters Quay** – Design of improved walking, wheeling and cycling link between Dunoon Town Centre and Hunters Quay Ferry Terminal.



**Councillor Robin Currie, Leader of Argyll and Bute Council said:**

"These projects are another significant step in the Council's ongoing drive to regenerate our communities, helping to make Argyll and Bute an attractive places to work, live and visit.

"We want to encourage active travel options which promote healthier living and give people a better range of transport choices, all of which contributes to our targets for a climate friendly Argyll and Bute.

"All the projects have been designed to meet the aspirations of communities. The feedback we have received from local groups in formulating our plans has been invaluable as we move to the construction stage."

**Infrastructure Coordinator for Sustrans Emily Gait added:**

"We're excited to be working with Argyll and Bute Council on this raft of new projects as well as the local communities that will benefit from them. Those living and working in these communities will soon be able to get involved in order to ensure the designs proposed work for them."

## COMHAIRLE UNITES TO PROTEST AT NO ISLAND APPOINTMENTS TO CALMAC BOARD

At its recent meeting Comhairle nan Eilean Siar unanimously supported a motion expressing disappointment at the lack of island based members appointed to the Calmac Board and supported a call for a review of the appointments process.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Donald Crichton, Loch a Tuath, and seconded by Cllr Finlay Stewart, Point, at last evening's meeting of the full Comhairle.

**The motion, unanimously agreed by Members, was as follows:**

"That the Comhairle expresses its disappointment that despite strong representations from the Comhairle, no islands-based candidates were appointed to the post of Chairman or as non-executive Directors to the Caledonian MacBrayne Board.

With the appointment of the new Transport Minister, the Comhairle further calls on the Minister to immediately review the appointments process so that in future there is more equitable representation across CalMac and CMAL Boards that reflects the experience and skills of the island communities they serve. This is with a view to providing local expertise and better informing the decision-making process for the delivery of ferry services to our communities."

**Speaking to the motion, Councillor Crichton said:**

"It is right that the Comhairle reiterate its disappointment that no island based appointments were made to the CalMac Board, despite strong representations for this to happen and assurances that the communities would be represented.

Instead we have a Chairman from Copenhagen who has been awarded for his failure as Chairman of CMAL and the debacle that is well documented about the procurement of our ferries. We need people appointed from our communities to all public sector boards with responsibilities for our islands that live and work in our communities and actually care for them. I hope this is a motion we can all unite behind."

It was agreed that the Convener of the Comhairle, Cllr Norman A Macdonald, would write to the new Transport Minister and the Commissioner for Public Appointments expressing the united view of the Comhairle.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG STARTS IN ADVANCE OF CROSS TAY LINK ROAD

Archaeology students from the University of the Highlands and Islands at Perth College will get the chance to uncover some Bronze Ages treasures in advance of work starting on the new Cross Tay Link Road.

Four archaeology sites with evidence dating back to the Bronze Age have been identified. Work on uncovering their secrets starts this month in partnership with site investigators GUARD Archaeology Ltd.

The dig is part of site preparation works in advance of the main construction work for the Cross Tay Link Road in Summer 2022.

The £118 million Cross Tay Link Road will create a new bridge over the River Tay just north of the Inveralmond Roundabout and a six kilometre stretch of new road linking the A9 and the A94 just north of Scone. The new road will significantly reduce traffic congestion and related pollution in Perth city centre.

**Councillor Murray Lyle, Leader of Perth & Kinross Council, said:**



"This is an exciting opportunity for students to work on a live project to advance and support their studies. As part of the Council's commitment to achieve social value from the spending power we have, the Cross Tay Link Road will deliver more than just a new road. These Perth College UHI students are an early example of the kinds of ways in which the people of Perth and Kinross can get involved in this project.

"Over the next few months we will also be announcing dates for meet the contractor events, which will give opportunities for local businesses within this major project."



**Dan Lee, Lifelong Learning and Outreach Archaeologist at UHI, said:**

"Hands-on field experience for students is such an important part of their training and this vocational opportunity could well enhance future employment possibilities."

**More information about the Cross Tay Link Road, which is due for completion in 2024, can be found at <https://perthtransportfutures.co.uk/>**

The Cross Tay Link Road forms Phase 2 of the Perth Transport Futures Project, which has already successfully delivered Phase 1, the A9/A85 junction improvement and link road to Bertha Park. This new phase will unlock key development land to the north of the city, as well as re-directing unnecessary traffic from the city centre reducing congestion and pollution.

BAM Nuttall was appointed by the Council in August 2021 as main contractor for the scheme. The main construction works will begin in summer 2022.

Meet the contractor events are being planned to give opportunities for local businesses within this major project. These are likely to take place in Spring 2022.

The archaeological works need to take place before construction can begin, taking place in localised areas along the proposed route of the link road between January and June 2022.

## COMHAIRLE RESPONDS TO CHFS DEBUNDLING SUGGESTION

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar have responded to the article that was published in The Herald over the weekend that suggested the de-bundling of Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services might be an option consulted on in the coming months. It is understood that this option will be included in the options published through the review Transport Scotland have commissioned from Ernst and Young on the governance and contracting arrangements that shape Government funded ferry services.

Where in the past, sections of our community have been extremely concerned at any suggestion to break up the Clyde and Hebrides network, it has been of equal concern in recent years that the views of island communities are not listened to by any of the central belt headquartered bodies which are responsible for our ferry service provision. This is evident in the decisions that have been taken to reduce capacity by limiting the use of the Mezzanine deck on MV Hebrides and the continued absence of any islanders on the Boards of Calmac or CMAL. With this in mind a healthy discussion on options for delivering a better ferry service to our islands and ensuring that island needs are placed front and centre with economic benefits maximised for islands would be a welcome step in the right direction.

While the case will be made for retention of the existing Clyde and Hebrides ferry service bundle with a proper consideration of the strengths and benefits that brings, this should not preclude other options being looked at and the merits of these being tested against the large single bundle.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has noted the recent announcement of a new contract on ferry services to the Lofoten islands in northern Norway. From October 2025 two new hydrogen fuelled ferries capable of carrying 120 cars and 599 passengers will join the existing two ferries (which are to be converted from LNG to bio-fuel) to operate the 100km open ocean crossing above the Arctic Circle. The annual cost for this to the Norwegian Public Roads Administration will be approximately £2.76M per annum. This cost includes all crewing costs and management functions.



With RET fares making it easy to calculate charges and distribute funds for individual bookings it should be perfectly feasible to maintain the Caledonian MacBrayne brand on the ferries that serve the Clyde and Hebrides and market the services through a single website. This can be specified by the contracting body whether there is a single bundle, 2 bundles or 3 bundles.

It is worth noting that a Western Isles ferry bundle would be larger than the current arrangements for the Northern Isles Ferry Services Contract which seems to work well for Orkney and Shetland. If a Western Isles bundle was tendered in the future this could specify similar ferries to those being developed in Norway with Hydrogen fuel supplied from renewable energy generated in the Western Isles. Six large ferries with 2 deployed to serve Stornoway and a dedicated ferry on the routes from Tarbert, Lochmaddy, Lochboisdale and Castlebay plus 2 smaller ferries to serve the Sound of Harris and Sound of Barra would represent a step change in connectivity for the Western Isles. Dedicated ferries would provide greater capacity and frequency in normal times and resilience will improve with the ability to cover any breakdown or dry dock maintenance within this network. This will be a step forward from current practice where cancelling the Lochboisdale service seems to be Calmac's go to position as soon as there is a need to cover a breakdown in operations in other areas or when Covid stretches manning on other vessels as we have seen in recent weeks. The operations and management of this bundle would be based within the Western Isles and there would be an increased focus on recruiting

crew locally. The Board of Directors could be made up of people who live and work in the Western Isles. This already happens for the board of Orkney Ferries which operates the internal ferries within Orkney and there is the same competence and experience present in the Western Isles to do the same.



Chair of Transportation, Cllr Uisdean Robertson said,

"The suggestion of de-bundling Calmac always creates uncertainty. In the past we have been urged to Keep Calmac and Carry On and people across the Western Isles have supported the single bundle. However, we must recognise that the way services have been delivered has been remote from our islands and often decisions are imposed on us against our will with damaging consequences on our people and businesses. One only needs to look at the removal of Mezzanine deck capacity on MV Hebrides this summer or the lack of resistance put up by our lifeline ferry service provider to the closure of Uig for 5 months and the casual way it is proposed to remove a service to Tarbert throughout this closure. Would this happen if services were managed and delivered from the Western Isles? I don't think it would. A consultation on a change in how ferry services are delivered allows a healthy debate and if this leads to more local accountability and service delivery that places island needs first that can only be a good conversation to have."



## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUTURE MAPPED OUT FOR GLASGOW

**Glasgow's new transport strategy has mapped a course to a city network that tackles poverty, supports economic success, creates thriving, liveable neighbourhoods and plays a central role in the fight against climate change.**

Following extensive consultation and preparation over the past year, a final policy framework for the Glasgow Transport Strategy has been set-out that covers over 100 policies that provide a comprehensive vision for how to get about Glasgow in future. But with vehicle emissions accounting for a third of the city's carbon output, changes to the transport system are regarded as a vital component in Glasgow's effort to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

To support the city's carbon reduction target, the new strategy sets out the ambition of reducing car vehicle kilometres travelled in Glasgow by at least 30% by 2030. The aim is to encourage travellers to opt for sustainable transport choices such as walking, wheeling or cycling or public transport wherever possible so there is less need to travel by car.

Support for the 30% target comes from initiatives such as council's Active Travel Strategy, which includes a proposal to build a city-wide network of segregated cycling infrastructure, and the Liveable Neighbourhoods initiative that will support more local access to essential services and enable shorter, local trips by walking, wheeling and cycling. Major projects such as the Clyde Metro, which recently received backing in the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review, and increased bus priority on our roads are also key components in the effort to provide a world-class public transport network that draws people from their personal vehicles.

With 27% of vehicle journeys in Glasgow 1kilometre or less, Councillor Anna Richardson, City Convener for Sustainability and Carbon Reduction,

believes there is significant potential for a widespread switch to sustainable transport.



Councillor Richardson said:

"A great many trips in vehicles across the city are short and could realistically be achieved by other means. Our task as a council is to ensure there are viable alternatives that support walking, wheeling or cycling or public transport to help reduce car use.

"Cars and other private vehicles will clearly continue to be part of Glasgow's transport future. But time and again people indicate they would cycle more if it felt safer to do so or the way that public spaces are designed can deter active travel in local communities. Initiatives such as our Active Travel Strategy and our Liveable Neighbourhoods programme are all about creating a better balance on how Glasgow's streets are used and encouraging people to leave the car behind wherever possible.

"Making in-roads on our car use is essential if we are to bring down the carbon emissions that drive climate change. But supporting sustainable transport choices also means we can make city streets safer and more attractive places to be, which in turns helps to improve quality of life for local residents.

"The new transport strategy fully recognises how important transport is to our daily lives and the overall success of the city. The far reaching policy objectives in the strategy create a vision of a healthy and thriving city but also a sustainable Glasgow that is prepared for the challenge of climate change."

According to Department of Transport estimates, 1.70 billion vehicle miles were travelled in the Glasgow city area in 2020. This represented a sharp drop in vehicle miles travelled due to the impact of the covid pandemic.

Prior to covid, figures for 2019 show a peak of almost 2.250 billion vehicle miles per annum following steady growth in figures over the early part of the 21st century. Around two-thirds of vehicle miles are travelled on trunk roads with a third over local roads.

The Scottish Government recently set a target of reducing car kilometres by 20% and other major cities such as London and Edinburgh have also similar ambitions. The recently published Route Map to achieve the 20% reduction nationally highlights the expectation that car use in rural and island communities will not necessarily reduce at the same rate as in towns and cities, and there is therefore the expectation that cities will contribute strongly to the national target.

Following discussion by councillors at the Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Policy Committee, the final policy framework of the Glasgow Transport Strategy has now been referred to the council's City Administration Committee for final approval.

Full Details of Glasgow Transport Strategy are available through this link:

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=103459>

## PLANS APPROVED FOR LEVEN BRIDGE AS COUNCIL SEES COST OF ALL PROJECTS RISE

Fife Council's Policy & Coordination Committee gave the go ahead for essential works on Leven Rail Bridge recently, as well as approving funding to cover extra costs in the Cupar care home replacement.

Council Co-leader, Cllr David Alexander said:



"Our capital plan originally included some £2.5m to upgrade the Bawbee Bridge, as it's known locally. That was based on much simpler work on the bridge before we knew there was going to be a rail link with live electrified lines and before we knew where the stations were going to be.

"Now it's a completely different project and, given the scale of the work, we're also building in costs to create a diversion to keep communities connected. So, though costs have risen, this is because of the positive and exciting development now happening in Levenmouth.

"We've been working with Transport Scotland and Network Rail since the rail link was announced, to make sure the works would be aligned. We've agreed that these expert partners will incorporate the bridge replacement into their programme, managing the construction work as part of the overall development. It will all run as one project and we're all determined to get these trains running on time!"

Co-leader, Cllr David Ross continued:

"I agree that it's vital that we go ahead with this work and this is the right solution. We want to reassure people about the additional funding for this work. To be clear, we will not be using any of the budget set aside for Levenmouth regeneration work. Nor do we intend to drop plans for other critical works around Fife.

"We have £10m allocated in the Capital Plan for bridge works, and we hold a capital contingencies budget, so we know we can cover the costs and we're approving these plans now to get the Leven bridge works moving. Given the critical timescales involved in the national project, it must be the priority.

"However, we're still committed to other

bridge replacements and improvements that had been planned, such as the Cowdenbeath railway bridge.

"We're actively looking for more national funding to help cover the costs in Leven so that we don't have to take the money from our capital budget. We're bidding for £6.35m through the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund and exploring funding opportunities from Sustrans.

"And, because capital costs are rising across the board due to supply chain issues and material costs, we already know that we've got to review the whole capital plan. This will give councillors an opportunity to prioritise all our planned work, not just the bridge works, and decide what's now affordable in the same timeframe."

Other notes from committee discussions about Leven Rail Bridge and capital projects:

- The Leven Rail Link and associated programmes will bring some £100m of investment to the Levenmouth area.
- Fife Council will now become an enterprise partner in the Scottish Government's Project 13 and the Leven Rail Bridge replacement works will be managed by Transport Scotland and as part of a Team Scotland Execution Plan (TSEP).
- Cupar care home was previously allocated a budget of £6.6m. Councillors agreed the additional £1.279m required to complete the project will be provided from the revenue balances set aside for costs and pressures stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- New housing costs linked to the Cupar care home are expected to be £0.9m more than originally anticipated. Funding solutions are being explored and the extra money will come from the Housing Revenue Account Capital budget if required – this is held separately from the rest of the council's budget and can only be used for housing purposes.
- With costs rising across all goods and services and financial risk rising in construction projects, the council's Capital Plan will be reviewed throughout 2022. This week the council also announced the playpark upgrade at Lochore Meadows will be delayed after tenders received from contractors were higher than expected – the project will be reviewed and put back out to tender.



## COMHAIRLE WELCOMES WILLINGNESS TO REVISIT THE CAPACITY RESTRICTION IMPOSED ON TARBERT AND LOCHMADDY FERRY SERVICES

Earlier this week questions were asked in the Scottish Parliament about the recent significant disruption in ferry services which have severely hampered the supply of goods to shops throughout the Western Isles.

In response to Rhoda Grant MSP raising the refusal by Transport Scotland to provide the funds to employ additional crew on MV Hebrides which Calmac insist is needed to allow the vessel to operate at its full capacity and contracted timetable Jenny Gilruth, Minister for Transport stated,



"I recognise some of the challenges that Ms Grant spoke to. However, I hope that she understands that my job as minister is also to listen to communities. I am very keen to visit our island communities to speak to them directly, and to ensure that some of the challenges that Ms Grant highlighted today are dealt with adequately. I give her an assurance that I will raise a number of the points that she made—particularly the latter points

on tonnage and staffing—with CalMac directly. I will also see what additional support we may be able to provide in Government."

From Summer 2022 Calmac have significantly reduced the number of sailings of MV Hebrides which offer the opportunity to book the full capacity of the ferry by removing those spaces accommodated on the hydraulic Mezzanine deck. This amounts to a reduction in capacity of 18 spaces on each affected sailing. To reinstate the full timetable and vessel capacity Calmac have calculated would require additional funding from Transport Scotland of £816,000.

Responding to the Minister's statement to Parliament Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Chair of Transportation said,



"I welcome the Minister's comments and hope these can give us some cause for optimism of a change in direction by Government in how they are handling

the reduction in capacity in lifeline ferry services to Harris and Uist. It is welcome that the Minister is listening to communities and so can I on behalf of our community appraise her of some hugely negative impacts current Calmac operational choices are causing. The cost of this loss of ferry capacity has been calculated to be at least £3Million to the economy of Harris alone. The wider economic impact on the Western Isles economy is likely to be £5Million when the loss of capacity to Uist is factored in too. Despite this huge cost to a fragile economy Government have so far refused to meet the cost of maintaining the service committed to in the Clyde and Hebrides ferry service contract. I sincerely hope that the Minister will recognise this economic harm and safeguard the people of the Western Isles from the damage her transport agency and ferry services contractor are causing."



## HERE FOR HATSTON – OIC INSTALLS DEFIBRILLATOR IN HEART OF KIRKWALL'S INDUSTRIAL AREA



A new defibrillator has been installed at Orkney Islands Council's Roads services depot in Hatston – and the team is keen the wider community knows it is there for anyone to use in an emergency.

The equipment was purchased by the Council and installed late last year.

**Roads and Environmental Services Manager, John Wrigley, said the defibrillator was suggested by staff:**

"There was just a sense that this was something that could one day make a real difference if one of our staff, or one of the many other workers and shoppers in Hatston, took ill with suspected cardiac arrest. It could be the difference between someone making it home to their families that night.

"Our staff are really pleased with how straightforward it is to use – it does not need to be used by a trained first aider.

"We'd just stress the most important thing in the case of a suspected cardiac arrest is to always call 999 and get the experts on their way – many defibrillators, including ours, will require you to put in a code to get it started, which the 999 call operator will give you.

"Once it is fired up, the unit will give you step-by-step voice commands throughout on what to do and when – and the 999 call

operator will be there to guide you too until the ambulance arrives.

"We are of course hoping it never has to be used – but it is here in case it's needed and we're keen as many people as possible know about it."

The defibrillator is mounted on the outside of the office at the Council's depot on Sparrowhawk Road Hatston, in a prominent spot facing the car park and Sparrowhawk Road and within a reflective casing.

It is registered on 'The Circuit' – the national defibrillator network run by the British Heart Foundation in partnership with the Resuscitation Council (UK) and the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives. In addition to it's also known to the Scottish Ambulance Service.

**Chair of the Council's Development and Infrastructure Committee, Councillor Graham Sinclair, welcomed the new addition to the depot:**

"So often our work is all about keeping vital services and networks going like roads and waste collections – it's heartwarming to see us joining this lifesaving network and contributing to the community."

## DRIVE TO MAKE DUNDEE A FAIRER PLACE TO CARE



Plans are underway to support all care providers used by the Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership to adopt fairer working principles.

The partnership recognises the vital role that the social care workers play in helping and supporting some of the city's most vulnerable citizens.

The Integration Joint Board (IJB) noted that the partnership will work with external care providers to create fairer working principles for care workers in the city.

A number of areas have been identified

that are considered good practice.

**Some of the principles include:**

- Care workers should receive the real living wage for the whole shift including travel and training.
- An enhanced rate should be paid for weekends, public holidays and antisocial hours.
- Travel as part of work should be funded by the employer.
- Staff should be provided with the equipment they need to undertake their role and should not incur any additional cost for this.

Going forward, the partnership will incorporate these good practice principles when appointing external care providers.

**Chair of the IJB, Councillor Ken Lynn said:**

"Making Dundee a fairer place to care is hugely important.

"As a partnership we have a duty to work with care providers in the city and to understand barriers and challenges they face so that we can find solutions collectively.

"By adopting fairer working conditions, this allows providers greater flexibility to provide additional support to people at times when they need it most.

"That is why it is great to see this piece of work brought forward."

## COUNCIL'S APPROVES REVISED MENTAL HEALTH PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES



**Focus groups, including front line staff and trade union representatives were able to provide essential feedback and outline outcome areas to focus on:**

1. A targeted programme of support and tools which is easily accessible by all staff;
2. A culture within which mental health and substance misuse issues are proactively supported and destigmatised;
3. Management training, support and development which empowers managers to support their teams confidently and appropriately;
4. Data reporting which allows the organisation to access and interrogate the data in order to target interventions proactively;
5. Reduce the total overall absences that are due to psychological reasons (these have slightly reduced 26.24% of total absences in 2020 to 24.89% in 2021).

Aberdeen City Council today (Monday 21 February) approved a new Mental Health Action Plan and the continuation of the innovative interventions the local authority is providing for staff.

The Council's Staff Governance Committee were updated on the positive impact that the programme of mental health wellbeing interventions, approved by the Council in January 2019, have had especially since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

A review of the mental health action plan was launched and took place during October to December 2021 to review the impact of the support already provided and identify, based on data and feedback, the most appropriate areas of focus for the year ahead.

Scottish Local Authority News



**Committee Convener, Councillor Yvonne Allan, said:**

"Since the inception of the original Mental Health Plan officers, in collaboration with trade union colleagues, have undertaken mitigating actions around staff mental health issues and these groups have been instrumental in helping deliver a range of support related to mental health and wellbeing, particularly during the pandemic.

"The review of our interventions is over the last 12 months informs our areas of focus for the year ahead and build upon the range of support mechanisms we already have in place a 365 days a year online and telephone counselling service, a Mental Health First Aid Network comprising trained staff volunteers, training in mental health awareness, mental health champions, access and signposting to external specialists as well as online blogs and videos.

"It is vital, as we progress to a post-pandemic world that we continue with our programme of interventions and ensure that these continue to be tailored to best meet the needs of our staff".

63



## LOCAL PROTECTION AGENCIES JOIN FORCES TO HELP THOSE AT RISK OF HARM OR ABUSE

All three Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee Chairs and Councils in partnership with NHS Ayrshire & Arran and Police Scotland, have joined together in a campaign to remind people that we all still need to be united in protecting people from harm or abuse.

With National Adult Support and Protection Day coming up on Sunday 20 February, we know that the longer term impact of the pandemic restrictions has meant that many vulnerable people have become increasingly lonely and isolated and may be less visible or have less contact with others.

This may mean they could be more at risk of being harmed by untrustworthy professionals, friends, family or strangers who may try to befriend and exploit them by taking advantage of them. This often happens through social media with the promise of romance or the promise of making money. As a friend, neighbour, family member, parent or professional we all have a responsibility to keep people safe from harm. This means we need everyone to remain vigilant and if you see someone who may not look safe or something you see doesn't look quite right, a wide range of protection services are available to check it out. Remember the person may not feel able or be able to do this for themselves.

The 'Seen Something, Say Something' campaign aims to raise awareness of the need to take a closer look at what you might see or hear. Is it a friend helping someone or a freeloader helping themselves? There are support services, including third sector, ready and able to help anyone who needs assistance with banking, shopping, house repairs or connecting with others to reduce loneliness and isolation. If someone doesn't feel safe at home, help is at hand.

If you are worried about yourself or someone else who is at risk of harm, you should call the police on 999 if it's an emergency, or otherwise call 101. For a health-related issue, call 111 or you can also speak to your local social work service about your concerns. Callers can remain anonymous if they wish, and help can still be provided. As well as these numbers, any children who are worried about harm or abuse can call Childline on 0800 1111.



**Professor Paul Martin, Chair of the South Ayrshire Adult and Child Protection Committees, said:**

"The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us all over the last two years, and now more than ever it is important for us to work together to ensure the safety of everyone in our community.

"Our teams are here for you, so please don't suffer in silence. Remember that not all abuse is physical, and if you're concerned about your wellbeing, get in touch with us. We all have a part to play so please be vigilant and do not assume that someone else has already reported an incident of harm or abuse; see something, say something."

**Professor Hazel Borland, Nurse Director said,**

"Our health and care staff have continued to provide support to individuals at risk of harm and abuse throughout the pandemic. We are committed to providing support to these individuals and recognise the importance of raising awareness of the wider options available.

"Your health and wellbeing is of the utmost importance and you should seek help from someone you can trust if you are concerned about yourself or someone else."

**Detective Chief Inspector Amanda McHarg of Ayrshire Division's Public Protection**

**Unit, said:**

"Police Scotland is fully committed to ensuring that every one of Scotland's citizens is looked after.

"Across Ayrshire we recognise that home hasn't necessarily been a safe place for all vulnerable people and, in fact, some may have been exposed to even greater risk of abuse, harm and neglect during the pandemic.

"Public protection is complex and policing on its own is not the solution. By working in partnership, taking a multi-agency approach, increasing public confidence and raising public awareness, we are better placed to identify threat, manage risk and prevent harm. It is absolutely crucial that our communities know that help is out there.

"Ayrshire Division is pleased to support this campaign, which sends out a very important message that a wide range of help and support services continue to be available to anyone dealing with harm or abuse.

"No-one should live in fear. It is not acceptable, not inevitable, and we believe that by working together we can make it stop. I urge you to seek support or advice if you are a victim, or if you are concerned about someone you know."

# Be the future of nursing



**Royal College of Nursing**  
2020 International Year of the Nurse and Midwife

## A career in nursing is a rewarding and vital role

**Nurses make up a large portion of the health care workforce and collectively they use their voice, skills and experience to make a positive impact to the profession.**

Training as a nurse gives you the skills and competencies to engage in care that ranges from complex decision making to meeting smaller care needs of patients. Nursing care helps save lives every day.

Being a nurse is a diverse job, with specialties including adult, children's, mental health or learning disability nursing. Plus opportunities to work in a variety of environments from hospitals, community settings, clinics and the military.

@theRCN @thercn  
 royalcollegeofnursing

The Royal College of Nursing supports over 435,000 nursing students, nurses and nursing support workers with benefits such as:

### Learning resources

24/7 access to Europe's largest nursing library and e-library, with a dedicated team of experts to help with your enquiries.

### Guidance and support

From networking events to online forums, we've got resources for you at every stage of your career.

### Careers advice

Developed in collaboration with Health Education England, we offer tailored information for nurses to plan their career paths.

### Placement support

The tools you need to help you get the best from your nursing placement.

Visit [rcn.org.uk/become-a-nurse](https://rcn.org.uk/become-a-nurse) to find out more about a career in nursing

## ACTIVE TRAVEL ENGAGEMENT OFFICER IN POST



The Highland Council is pleased to welcome Amy Taylor as their new Engagement Officer for active travel in Inverness. The role has been created to work with the public, businesses and Highland Council staff to ensure everyone can have their say and be informed about active travel plans for the Inverness city area.

The two year post is funded by Transport Scotland through Sustrans' Places for Everyone fund.

**Infrastructure Coordinator for Sustrans in the Highlands, Sjoerd Tel said:**

"This role will help deliver the commitment made by the Highland Council to ensure people are able to travel safely and sustainably via active travel. Sustrans look forward to working with Amy to advance opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling in Inverness."

Speaking about her new role, Amy said; "I am really looking forward to working at Highland Council, and to engaging with people to hear their views on active travel. It is something which is very important to me, and a great way of tackling climate change, having cleaner air, safer travel routes, and for boosting physical and mental health. It would be great if as many people as possible got involved in helping our communities to be the best

they can be."

Last year the Council ran a consultation to seek people's view on how easy they thought it was to walk, wheel and cycle in their area. Feedback will be used to help set up a framework for supporting people to make healthier, low carbon travel choices. For some, this will mean supporting a transition to low carbon car travel, whilst for others active travel and public transport will provide the best options.

**Welcoming Amy to her new role, Chair of the Council's Environment and Infrastructure Committee, Cllr Trish Robertson said:**

"The Highland Council is working to deliver a low carbon transport network to tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergency. Essentially this means making it easier, safer and more convenient for people to walk, wheel and cycle. To plan this effectively it is important that we understand what people think about moving around their area. Amy's role to engage with communities and businesses will be key to gathering information and feedback as we move forward, and I wish her all the very best."

## NEW DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES APPOINTED AT RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

**Alastair MacArthur has been appointed as the Director of Finance and Resources at Renfrewshire Council.**

The Council's former Head of Finance has been Acting Director since November 2021 and leads the Finance and Resources Department, which includes Finance and Business Services; People and Organisational Development; Legal and Democratic Services; Digital, Transformation and Customer Services; Property Services and Internal Audit.

Alastair, originally from the Isle of Lewis, joined Renfrewshire Council in 2007 as Senior Finance Manager and has been Head of Finance since 2015.

Prior to joining the Council, Alastair held a variety of finance roles in the NHS across Strathclyde, Lothian and the Highlands.

**Alan Russell, Chief Executive, said:**

"I am delighted that Alastair MacArthur has been appointed as the Council's new Director of Finance and Resources and will take up the post with immediate effect. Alastair has been with the Council for almost 15 years and brings a wealth of financial management experience to the post.

"Having spent the last seven years as Head of Finance, before taking up the position of Acting Director of Finance and Resources in November 2021, Alastair is perfectly placed to help us continue with our recovery and ambitious capital investment plans as we look to make Renfrewshire a better place to live, work and learn."

**Alastair MacArthur, Director of Finance and Resources, said:**

"I am really pleased to take up this role and continue to work with the great team across Finance and Resources. I look forward to working with the corporate management team to support delivery and achievement of the Council's ambitions as we recover and grow from the impact of the pandemic."



## NEW BIODIVERSITY CHAMPION JOINS HIGHLAND COUNCIL



Paul Kettrick has been appointed as Falkirk Council's Head of Invest Falkirk - a new post created to deliver major transformational projects central to the area's economic recovery.

With over 30 years of experience working in local government, Paul has a proven track record of managing corporate and commercial assets and delivering significant property projects.

Having started his career at Stirling Council, where he spent 16 years, the 50-year-old moved to West Lothian Council in 2006 to become an Economic Property Development Officer. He then worked his way up to become Property Services Manager.

In that role, he took on responsibility for the management, maintenance, compliance, and development of projects associated with the Council's operational and commercial property assets.

The role also gave him responsibility for the Property Capital Investment Programme and allowed him to prioritise spending on modernising services and improving asset performance. This helped turn West Lothian's portfolio into one of the best performing local authority estates in Scotland.

### CREDENTIALS

During his 15 years at West Lothian, Paul - who is originally from Stirling but now lives in Larbert - also helped the Council deliver several largescale projects, including:

- **Heartlands, Whitburn:** viewed as one of the biggest land remediation and regeneration projects in Europe, Paul led on the council's interests to deliver a new motorway junction, business park and associated infrastructure that unlocked capacity for 2,000 new homes, over 1.5 million square feet of commercial space, as well as retail and leisure facilities.
- **Civic Centre Headquarters, Livingston:** as well as developing partnership centres in Linlithgow, Armadale, East Calder, and Livingston North, he oversaw the management of the Council's Civic Centre, home to a range of public services including the Council, Police Scotland, NHS, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.
- **West Calder, High School:** a £32m project to deliver the award-winning school. He also led the property team to co-locate two new secondary schools, primary school, and community sports facilities in Winchburgh and, most recently, the £14.3m state-of-the-art Calderwood Primary School.

This work provides him with the experience and expertise needed to positively influence and drive forward major projects for Falkirk Council, including the HQ & Arts Centre, the Strategic Property Review, Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme, and Investment Zone and Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) projects.

Paul will join the new Place Services Directorate at Falkirk Council at the end of March.

### LOCAL ROOTS

Cllr Cecil Meiklejohn, Leader of Falkirk Council, said the interview panel had been "impressed" by Paul's experience of managing a large property portfolio and his overall performance history.

#### She said:

"Paul will be a great asset to the Council. His experience, knowledge, and passion for delivering change, that brings both economic and community benefit, will complement the vast expertise already held within the teams he will lead. By coming on board, he will help ensure Invest Falkirk becomes a real force for change."

For Paul, the role will allow him to build on his experience sustaining and improving performance and service delivery while also benefitting the area in which he has lived for the past three years.

#### He said:

"As a local resident, I am acutely aware of the challenges and the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. I look forward to working with colleagues who have already undertaken significant work to develop and drive forward projects worth up to £1billion. These projects will not only support economic recovery and encourage growth and investment but also help modernise the Council's property assets and support service delivery."

## LYNDSAY MCROBERTS APPOINTED AS NEW DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Highly experienced teacher and HMIE Associate Assessor appointed as new Director of Education at South Ayrshire

South Ayrshire Council has appointed Lyndsay McRoberts as their new Director of Education. The move follows the departure of Douglas Hutchison Director of People and Depute Chief Executive who left to become Glasgow City Council's Director of Education. Lyndsay will take up the education side of Douglas' role.

Lyndsay, who is currently head teacher at Duncanrig Secondary School in South Lanarkshire, will bring a wealth of experience to her new role. She is currently a non-executive board member of Education Scotland and an advisory council member of the Scottish Qualifications Authority. She is also an associate assessor for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education.

Lyndsay is more than familiar with South Ayrshire, having been head teacher at Kyle Academy, and she was also the Council's first ever executive head teacher, overseeing both Kyle and Ayr academies simultaneously.

Lyndsay, who will start her new role prior to the Easter break said:

"I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed to this role and very much looking forward to returning to South Ayrshire. There is a strong story of success across education in South Ayrshire and it is a privilege to be returning to work alongside education colleagues, young people, parents/carers and communities to build on this."

Councillor William Grant, Children and Young People Portfolio Holder for South Ayrshire Council said:

"I am delighted that Lyndsay is returning to South Ayrshire to take on the role of Director of Education. I consider her to be an inspirational leader with a proven track record in boosting attainment. She is well respected in South Ayrshire and I have no doubt she will hit the ground running."



Councillor Peter Henderson, Leader of South Ayrshire Council said:

"This is a welcome appointment. Lyndsay has so much experience at a national and local level and will be pivotal when it comes to giving children and young people the best start in life. We're already the best in Scotland when it comes to positive destinations for school leavers and Lyndsay is sure to help build on this success."



**SIGN UP FOR  
OUR LATEST  
NEWS AND UPDATES  
EMAILED FREE TO  
YOUR INBOX**

Subscribe at:  
<http://bit.ly/CI-subscribe>

# Do **you** use a care service?

The Care Inspectorate regulates and inspects care services. We publish inspection reports that tell you what we found. We can tell you more about your service and the kind of care you have a right to expect.

We investigate complaints about care. If a service isn't good enough, we can act to make sure it improves.

**Find out more about us and the care services you use.**

**Visit [careinspectorate.com](http://careinspectorate.com)**

**or call 0345 600 9527**

# Call for backup.



**Your time in the Forces never  
leaves you. Neither do we.**

**0131 550 1557**

Visit: [poppyscotland.org.uk](http://poppyscotland.org.uk)  
Email: [GetHelp@poppyscotland.org.uk](mailto:GetHelp@poppyscotland.org.uk)



# Time to take action. We're on it.

At ScottishPower, speeding up the journey to net zero is at the heart of everything we do. We're investing £10bn in the UK up to 2025 – £6 million every working day – doubling our renewable generation capacity and modernising our electricity network to support green transport and heating. Our plans include new solar, wind and battery infrastructure – ready for the increasing demand for green electricity and helping our customers to do their bit too.

Join us on a faster journey to a greener future.



SCOTTISHPOWER



PRINCIPAL PARTNER  
UN CLIMATE  
CHANGE  
CONFERENCE  
UK 2021

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY