

# SOUTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL LIVE

*Merry Christmas*



ISSUE 15

*south*  
**AYRSHIRE**  
COUNCIL  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Deas



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# THE OUTSTANDING PEOPLE AWARDS

## Meet Our Outstanding Employees 2019

More than 5,000 people work for the Council, carrying out over 700 different roles. Through our annual Outstanding People Awards we recognise and celebrate employees and teams who really stand out.

This year's winners, although from very different service areas, all have one thing in common - the exceptional service they deliver to the people of South Ayrshire. On the night, we also managed to raise a fabulous £469.80 for Ayrshire Cancer Support.

You can find out more about our winners and what makes them special over the next few pages.

### South Ayrshire Supports Team

#### Outstanding Improvement and Innovation

South Ayrshire Supports brings together under one banner a range of initiatives that showcase South Ayrshire Council as an employer of choice with progressive employment policies. As part of this, South Ayrshire Council became the first employer in Europe to provide employees who experience domestic abuse with up to 10 days paid safe leave and the first employer in Scotland to provide employees who have premature babies with premature baby leave.





## Ayr North Exclusively Women's Group Outstanding Customer Focus

Ayr North Exclusively Women's Group was set up by Community Safety and Community Learning and Development as a local group for women in the Ayr North area which meets every week in Lochside Community Centre. The group gives the women a safe place to meet and helps to tackle social isolation and promote good health, well-being and positive relationships.



## Steven Qua Outstanding Trainee

Steven is a Grounds Maintenance Modern Apprentice at the Girvan Recycling Centre. Steven is committed to engaging in the programme and is enjoying his apprenticeship, gaining excellent feedback from his supervisors. Steven continues to work hard to complete his apprenticeship and achieve his qualification.





## Paul Dakers and Alan Ireland Outstanding Trainee

Paul and Alan go above and beyond their duties as Civic Amenity Attendants at Troon Recycling Centre, supervising trainees with a diverse range of needs in work experience placements and modern apprenticeships. Paul and Alan are role models of the South Ayrshire Way, encouraging and supporting trainees to achieve their best and reach their full potential.



## Culture Team Outstanding Team

The Culture Team have gone above and beyond their call of duty to support the new Grain Exchange on Ayr High Street. This has included delivering workshops and producing a 7 days a week programme. This would not have happened without the hard work, dedication and respectful, positive and supportive attitude of the Culture Team.





**Brian Robb**  
Outstanding Employee

Brian is a janitor based at Doonfoot Primary School. Brian is 100% committed to the parents, staff and especially the children. Brian goes above and beyond, volunteering to help vulnerable young people in the school. Brian epitomises the respectful, positive and supportive values and behaviours of the South Ayrshire Way.



**Organisational Development**

Chief Executive's Award

The Chief Executive's Award honours an individual or a team who is worthy of special recognition. This year's winners are the Organisational Development Team for their hard work to improve the culture and values within the organisation, develop new policies to support staff, introduce opportunities for volunteering, launching South Ayrshire Council Live and organising both the Community STAR Awards and The Outstanding People Awards. None of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the Organisational Development Team.





# Long Service Awards

The awards ceremony also recognised our employees who reached the landmark of 40 years' service!



The full list of our Long Service Award recipients can be found below:

- Anne Boyd
- Stephen Challis
- Rosanna Clancy
- Susan Connell
- Angela Doolan
- Philip Doolan
- Lorna Dunlop
- Linda Hannah
- Paul Harbison
- Jane McCarroll
- John McDonald
- Francis McMenemy
- Brian Milligan
- Barbara Morton
- Margaret Nelson
- Sandra Nimmo
- Lesley Pringle
- Heather Shedden
- Angela Swan
- Paul Thomson
- Mary Timpany









**NEW!**

## TRADING STANDARDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS

### 12 Top Tips for a happy and safe Christmas

To help you avoid those unpleasant surprises over the festive season, here are some top tips to ensure you have a very merry Christmas!

#### 1 Online Shopping

In most cases, online shopping gives you the right to cancel purchases and receive a full refund. You will usually have 14 days to cancel unless the goods have been made specifically for you. It is important to:

- Know where you are buying from;
- Know where the trader is based;
- Check that online retailers are safe by ensuring the padlock symbol is visible;
- Be wary of websites that ask for personal details and are not high street names.

#### 2 Faulty Goods

You have statutory rights if you purchase goods which are faulty or not fit for purpose. Try to keep receipts or email confirmations as these will help if things go wrong. Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, stores must offer a full refund if a faulty item is returned within 30 days.

#### 3 Unwanted Gifts

Your statutory rights do not apply if you simply change your mind. However, bear in mind many shops have their own returns policy or offer a gift receipt, particularly when it comes to Christmas gifts. Check out the store's returns policy before you buy and remember if bought online you have additional rights.

#### 4 Product Safety

Be safe this Christmas whether you are looking to buy Christmas lights, electrical goods or even an extra heater to keep you warm. Make sure that your purchases have a 'CE' mark, the manufacturer's identity or mark and ensure it has a 3 pin plug. More complex items should have warnings and instructions supplied. The same advice applies to all toys, regardless of size or price.



#### 5 Fake Goods

You may be tempted by a product for sale at a cheaper price. Watch out, as counterfeit goods are imitations, leaving people out of pocket and could cause serious harm. Fake electrical goods can cause fires and electrocution whilst cosmetics such as make-up may have higher lead levels. Counterfeit alcohol such as vodka may contain dangerous chemicals which can cause health problems such as blindness and fake tobacco often contains unknown chemicals and higher tar levels.

#### 6 Buying Goods on your Credit Card

Use a credit card for items costing over £100 as you get additional protection. Your credit card company will be liable if something goes wrong and the trader will not help.

#### 7 Don't Defrost your Turkey at Room Temperature

If your turkey is frozen, check the guidance on the packaging well in advance. This will ensure you allow enough time to fully defrost it in the fridge before cooking it. A typical turkey weighing 6-7kg could take as much as 4 days to fully defrost in the fridge.



## 8 Don't wash your Turkey

It's a common food safety misconception that you should wash raw poultry before cooking it. Instead of washing germs off of the bird, you inevitably splash them all over the kitchen. **Remember, it is heat that will destroy bacteria, not water.**

## 11 Dealing with Leftovers

If left at room temperature, bacteria will multiply. Make sure you cool any leftovers quickly and get them in the fridge within 2 hours. Never reheat your food more than once, making sure that it's piping hot when you do. Use your leftovers within 2 days, or freeze them and use them within 1 month.



## 9 Use a Thermometer

Use a thermometer probe or food thermometer to ensure that the turkey is cooked all the way through. The thickest part of the bird should reach at least 75°C for 30 seconds. If you don't have a thermometer:

- Make sure the turkey is piping hot;
- No pink meat is visible;
- The juices run clear from the thickest part of the bird.

## 10 Don't Ignore Vegetables

It's a myth that a little bit of dirt doesn't do you any harm. Soil can sometimes carry harmful bacteria and, although food producers have good systems in place to clean vegetables, the risk can never be entirely eliminated.

## 12 Don't forget the basics

Always wash your hands thoroughly (especially after touching raw meat), keep pets away and don't handle food if you're unwell. Clean and disinfect work surfaces, chopping boards, utensils and dishes after contact with raw meat or poultry. Do not use the same cloth as this will spread bacteria around.

**Remember:** If you have any shopping or food safety issues, contact 0300 123 0900 and ask for Trading Standards or Environmental Health.

Follow Trading Standards and Environmental Health on social media.





## SAY NO TO SKY LANTERNS

The release of helium balloons and sky lanterns has increased in recent years. Both pose hazards to wildlife and livestock and can cause injury and death. Chinese or Sky Lanterns consist of paper covered wire or bamboo frame and an open flame heat source, which lifts the lantern into the air where it can float for miles from the point of release. Once the flame is extinguished, the lantern falls back to earth. Don't be fooled into thinking that 'biodegradable' lanterns are safe either. Bamboo can take decades to degrade and there is still a fire risk.

Lanterns can also injure humans, damage buildings, woodland, agricultural land and result in callouts for the Fire and Rescue Services. Our Environmental Health team joined other local authorities and organisations, including the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS), in urging individuals and organisations to stop the release of these.

To help support this, we have prohibited all intentional helium balloon and Chinese/sky lantern releases on council owned land and property and at events endorsed or supported by the council, including those on non-council land.

### **Alternatives:**

If you are planning a fundraising event or celebration, why not explore some environmentally friendly alternatives at [www.mcsuk.org/dontletgo](http://www.mcsuk.org/dontletgo)

If you would like to find out more information on sky lanterns, please contact Trading Standards and Environmental Health on 0300 123 0900.







# LEARN 2 GYMNASTICS SUCCESS



Our Sport and Leisure team were delighted to welcome gymnasts, parents and carers from across our venues to compete at our first gymnastics Floor and Vault Gymnastics Competition.

We've introduced these popular competitions as part of our Learn 2 Gymnastics development programme and over 400 people came along to the event at the Citadel Leisure Centre in Ayr on 23rd November. The competitions are aimed at skills 2 classes and above, focusing on individual improvement and participation in a fun, friendly environment.

Medals were awarded for the top scores in each class and an overall trophy presented for the top floor scores from both skills 2 and 3 categories. Everyone received a certificate of attendance in recognition of their skills on the day.

Find out more about our Learn 2 Gymnastics programme [here](#).





# YOUTH FORUM CONFERENCE

The 11th annual South Ayrshire Youth Conference was held last month at Ayr Town Hall.

122 young people, aged 12-25 years, gathered together to share the results of the 2019 Say It Out LOUD survey. A massive 35% of young people aged 12-25, who live in South Ayrshire, took part in the mental health and wellbeing survey.

Young people attended workshops on the day to share their views and discuss the findings of the survey. There were information stalls from a range of organisations including Police Scotland, NHS and Home Energy Scotland. During lunch, there was even a tour of Ayr Town Hall, showing young people the cells!

Find out more about the South Ayrshire Youth Forum [here](#).



Your Young Scot Points Code:

**DFWITM**

To use your Young Scot Points, register at [www.young.scot/rewards](http://www.young.scot/rewards) using your Young Scot Card. If you don't have a card, or need a replacement please contact 01292 612788.



# Out and About with the Chief Executive



Welcome to my monthly column. Preparations are well underway for the UK Parliamentary General Election on Thursday 12th December. Employees across the council have been working together to ensure everything is in place so that the election runs smoothly. From opening and verifying postal votes, to setting up polling stations, staff are heavily involved in all aspects.

We recently returned to Ayr Town Hall to celebrate success across a range of services, and recognise employees who reached the landmark of 40 years' service at our annual Outstanding People Awards. More than 5,000 people work for South Ayrshire Council, in over 700 different roles and these awards are a fantastic opportunity to highlight the achievements of individuals and teams who really stand out.



I was delighted to attend The Ayrshire Hospice's annual 'Light Up a Life' concert at Troon Concert Hall. This year, there were some great performances from a range of acts including Marr College, The Salvation Army Band and Forehill Primary School.

I recently attended the South West Scotland Landlord Conference at Prestwick Academy last month. This was a great networking and training opportunity for us and our partners.

Ayr and District Blind Club recently held a Civic Reception in County Buildings to mark their 70th anniversary. Guests were treated to a fabulous afternoon tea. The group aims to prevent social isolation and enables visually impaired people to meet at weekly sessions.

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas across South Ayrshire with our towns and villages sparkling following the Christmas lights switch-ons. Our employees have, once again, given generously to our annual Giving Tree project, and at the time of writing our elves are busy making arrangements to get all the gifts distributed in time for the big day!

We're also having a Christmas Jumper, Hats or Socks Day on 16th December to raise funds for our charity partner, Ayrshire Cancer Support. If you'd like to find out how you can organise your own event visit: <https://www.ayrshirecs.org/christmas-jumper-day>.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a great festive season and a very happy New Year.

*Aileen Ussat*





# FOOD WITH FIONA



## Christmas Truffles

125g Margarine  
200g Evaporated Milk  
240g Coconut  
200g Oats  
200g Drinking Chocolate  
150g Granulated Sugar

1. Mix dry ingredients;
2. Melt margarine and add with evaporated milk;
3. Roll the mixture into balls;
4. Decorate as required;
5. The mixture can be rolled in coconut or dipped in melted chocolate;





## REGISTRATION COMES TOP IN SCOTLAND

For the second year running, our Registration Service has had the best accuracy figures in Scotland when it comes to recording births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships. Our 2018 accuracy figure of 99.67% beat the national average by almost 2%. All information is fed into the National Statistics Branch of the National Records of Scotland so it's vital that our record keeping is correct.

Each year, our registrars record thousands of events throughout South Ayrshire, playing a key role in some of the most important days of our lives.

If you'd like to find out more about the range of services offered by the Council's Registration Service, go to: [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/registrationandbereavement](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/registrationandbereavement)



## ANTON VISITS AYR

Love Island's Anton Danyluk paid a visit to Ayr Academy last month to discuss the relationship between exercise and mental health.

The Positive Wellbeing event, organised by our Active Schools team, saw Anton deliver a motivational speech followed by a bootcamp session. Anton highlighted that simple steps to improve physical activity could help to boost self-esteem and confidence.



## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

We love to celebrate and support our young in South Ayrshire, so we're delighted to bring you some of their positive stories. Read this month's profiles [here](#).











# WINTER WARMERS

Now that winter is officially here, we often want nothing more than to keep warm and add some brightness to the dark days. Once all the festivities have passed, do you find yourself facing unexpected energy bills? By adopting some simple energy savings behaviours, you can make a big difference to both your bank account and the planet.

## Some Like It Hot

Did you know that hot water accounts for up to 15% of a typical household's energy bill? Set your controls to give you enough hot water at the right temperature, when you want it. A minimum temperature of 60° is recommended.

## Wash at 30°

Setting your washing machine to wash at 30° rather than higher temperatures will use around 57% less electricity - saving £8 and 10kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

## Drop a Degree

Turning your central heating thermostat down by 1°C could save you £80 and 320kg of carbon dioxide every year (based on turning down a room thermostat from 22°C to 21°C in main living areas).

## Switch It Off

Even with energy efficient lightbulbs you can still save by switching off lights when not in use - saving up to £14 per year and 30kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Draw the Curtains

Drawing the curtains at dusk will help keep draughts out, keeping your home warmer for less.

## Avoid Standby

If every household in the UK turned off appliances when not in use, we could reduce energy bills by as much as £910million every year, saving enough CO<sub>2</sub> to fill Hampden Park over 710 times!

For more advice on how to save energy and money, and for information on grants and funding available to help make your home cosier, contact Home Energy Scotland free of charge. You can also visit [www.homeenergyscotland.org](http://www.homeenergyscotland.org)

**HOMEENERGYSCOTLAND.ORG**  
**0808 808 2282**  
**FUNDED BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT**







# MACMILLAN MOVE MORE SOUTH AYRSHIRE

If you are living with cancer in South Ayrshire, we work in conjunction with Macmillan and NHS Ayrshire & Arran, offering a free programme to help you to become and stay active. Here are some inspiring stories from some of our current participants.

## DAVID MCLAUGHLAN'S STORY

David was diagnosed with lung cancer in November 2018 and also lives with reactive arthritis, causing him a lot of pain, often making simple tasks such as walking to the bathroom take up to at least 20 minutes.

After initially hearing about the Macmillan Move More programme through his physiotherapist, David did some research into the benefits of physical activity for his conditions and realised that he had to change his sedentary lifestyle, and so decided to join up as soon as possible!

*“It does get you fitter. Classes are also social, you get to meet other people who are going through a similar situation.” - David McLaughlan*

Prior to attending, David had not had not been inside a gym for years, he now attends three classes a week - two Macmillan Move More and one Invigor8 falls prevention class. As a result, David feels he has gained physical and mental benefits from both classes and can now jog the length of the hall and do 20 continuous star jumps!

David continues to enjoy the classes and would highly recommend them to others.





## IRENE LAMONT'S STORY

After completing treatment for breast cancer, Irene's community link worker suggested she may benefit from the Move More programme.

After attending a circuit class in April, Irene decided she wanted to do more, and so a month later joined Gentle Movement as well.

Finding the combination of the two different classes very effective, Irene told us:

**"The classes are designed well for people with all physical conditions." - Irene Lamont**

Noticing improvements in her balance and strength, Irene is now able to go up and down stairs much faster and no longer needs to hold on to something for balance when bending down.

Irene has now decided to give back to the community by becoming a Volunteer Gentle Move More Instructor for the Move More programme. As a former attendee, Irene is in the best position to know how people attending the class for the first time may feel and is able to offer a listening ear, advice and encouragement.



## JOHN EYER'S STORY

In November 2018, John underwent surgery and radiotherapy for neck cancer, leaving him with a very limited range of movement in his left shoulder, as well as many other side effects.

After his surgery, a Macmillan nurse signposted John to a Move More circuit class, which he has now been attending for 6 months.

Before attending the class, John could not raise his arm above his waist height and now, as a result of his hard work and dedication alongside sensible progressions, he can now lift the affected arm above his shoulder height! This now means that everyday tasks we all take for granted such as reaching into cupboards, waving and closing curtains are now all possible again for John.

Prior to taking the class, John was excited, believing the classes were a great idea, and he was not disappointed! He strongly believes that his increased physical activity has helped his medical conditions and couldn't recommend the programme enough to others thinking about joining.



## HOW DO I BECOME INVOLVED IN MOVE MORE?

Take a look at our website to find out more about the classes we have on offer, or to book a pre-class assessment you can call our Health team on: 01292 612624 or email:

[macmillanmovemore@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:macmillanmovemore@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)



# HEALTH & WELLBEING TEAM NEWS

Welcome to our new Active Schools column. Each month the team will keep you up to date with the latest news and updates that are important to you.











## DANCING ON UP!

Our Active Schools team run a fantastic Dance Leader programme, where enthusiastic young people are trained to allow them to deliver dance schools across South Ayrshire.

This year, 26 new dance leaders completed the Level 5 Dance Leader Awards, and assisted in preparing schools for the South Ayrshire Dance Competition on Friday 15th November.

The competition which took place at Troon Concert Hall saw 29 fantastic schools take part. After 43 show-stopping performances, the judging panel, including staff from Infinity Allstars, Dansarena, North Ayrshire Dance and our very own Dance Leader Cerys McCrindle, decided on the winners from each category. Judging was particularly tough as all contestants worked hard and performed well.

The full list of winners can be found below:

### Infant Dance Category:

- 1st Place - Glenburn Primary School
- 2nd Place - Newton Primary School
- 3rd Place - Heathfield Primary School

### Upper Primary Dance Category:

- 1st Place - Doonfoot Primary School
- 2nd Place - Alloway Primary School
- 3rd Place - Heathfield Primary School

### Secondary Category:

- 1st Place - Queen Margarey Academy
- 2nd Place - Prestwick Academy
- 3rd Place - Belmont Academy

### Dance Leader Category:

- 1st Place - St Ninian's Primary School
- 2nd Place - Muirhead Primary School
- 3rd Place - Kingcase Primary School

Find out more about our Active Schools Dance Leader programme [here](#).



# OUR LOCAL HEROES

Our Active Schools team recently recognised a number of people who have had a huge impact on sport and physical activity across South Ayrshire.

These local heroes take on a variety of role in schools and communities to inspire people to become involved in sport and physical activity.

Every day in November the team celebrated the contribution of a different local hero or heroes, ranging from young leaders; school office staff; teachers; students; parents and local clubs.

This initiative allowed us to celebrate the fantastic support network we have in South Ayrshire, providing a huge range of activities within our schools and communities.

Find out how you can become involved [here](#).

## COMPETITIVE SCHOOLS SPORTSHALL ATHLETICS 2019

Each year, Competitive School Sport host a Sportshall Athletics Programme, which is rolled out across South Ayrshire. This year, 580 pupils from 29 schools participated in Cluster Heats. The winner from each heat was invited to compete in the South Ayrshire Final, which was held at the Citadel last month.

Forehill Primary School took the trophy after a great team performance. They will now proceed to represent South Ayrshire in the regional finals in Glasgow in early 2020!

All events were delivered by our network of Sports Leaders from local secondary schools. Senior pupils helped to prepare primary school children for the programme, offering extracurricular training sessions as well as taking a lead role on the day of the running of each event.





# South Ayrshire Active Schools

Impact of Active Schools during 2018-19

**10,624**  
**ACTIVITY SESSIONS**

**21%** MORE OPPORTUNITIES

for children and young people since 2017-18

**499**

**DIFFERENT PEOPLE DELIVERED SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES DELIVERING OVER**

**20,000** HRS

**OF ACTIVITY 88% OF WHOM ARE VOLUNTEERS**

**72** DIFFERENT LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS LINKING WITH SCHOOLS AND MAKING A **DIFFERENCE**

IN THEIR COMMUNITY

**50% OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE TAKING PART IN SCHOOL SPORT**

IN SOUTH AYRSHIRE **ARE GIRLS,** THAT'S 4% HIGHER THAN THE REST OF SCOTLAND

**7,579** DIFFERENT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
**THAT'S 54%** OF ALL CHILDREN IN SOUTH AYRSHIRE  
**5%** HIGHER THAN REST OF SCOTLAND











## MAKING A SPLASH!

**We are delighted to announce that we are the first local authority in Scotland to adopt the innovative children's swimming aid Turtle Pack into our Learn2Swim programme.**

The Turtle Pack swimming aid is made up of a neoprene vest and a set of three stacked foam shells that decrease in size. The shells can be removed as children grow more confident in the water.

This arms-free approach helps to teach children the correct swimming strokes, whilst the backpack-like setup ensures that they maintain the correct horizontal body position in the pool. The shells themselves are multi-functional and can be used as pool floats or toys; meaning that learning to swim with Turtle Pack is fun for swimmers of all ability levels.

Our Aquatics Development Officer, Katie Campbell said:

“Our Learn2Swim programme is really successful, with around 2,300 children taking part each week. We're always looking at ways to make the programme even better, so we started to trial the Turtle Packs. We found the packs are a fun way to promote the advantages of swimming to children; armbands and discs can be quite restrictive and the Turtle Packs allow much more freedom of movement so they are

really practical too. I hope our new Turtle Packs encourage even more children to take the plunge!”

More information on Learn2Swim can be found [here](#).













# GETTING YOU CONNECTED

South Ayrshire Council is now offering free public access WiFi services to help people get online and make it easier to access public services. The programme is aimed at providing free public access WiFi in key council buildings throughout the region. This is focused on areas where there is a high level of engagement with the public, including Customer Services Centres, Community Centres and Leisure Centres. Please see our Frequently Asked Questions below to find out more.

## When and where is it available?

The service is available at the following [locations](#). This will be updated as sites are rolled out via the programme and the service will be available during all periods when council buildings are open.

## Who is it for and how do I connect?

The service is for anyone with a WiFi enabled device in the coverage area of each building. To connect:

- Turn on WiFi on your device;
- Look for SouthAyrshireCouncil Free WiFi in your list of available networks;
- Accept the terms and conditions and start enjoying the service.



## What can I do with WiFi?

Visitors to public buildings can take advantage of the benefits of 'on-the-go' connectivity, including:

- Accessing online council services;
- Reading the latest news;
- Job searching;
- Accessing web based email.

## How fast is the service?

Speed will vary according to how far you are from a WiFi access point; what type of device you are using; how many people are using the service and the types of applications people are using. There is no restriction on how long you can connect to and access the public WiFi, however, it is configured for online activity that requires low amounts of bandwidth, therefore is not suitable for downloading/uploading large data files or video enabled content.

## How secure is the network?

Technologies are used to ensure the resilience of the network, however, as it is an unsecured network, users are strongly recommended to take care when transmitting confidential information, such as credit card details, when using the the free public WiFi. For further information about online security, see the Get Safe Online website.

Content filtering is also applied to the network which will block specific genres or types of internet traffic and the network is Internet Watch Foundation compliant.











