

EAST AYRSHIRE

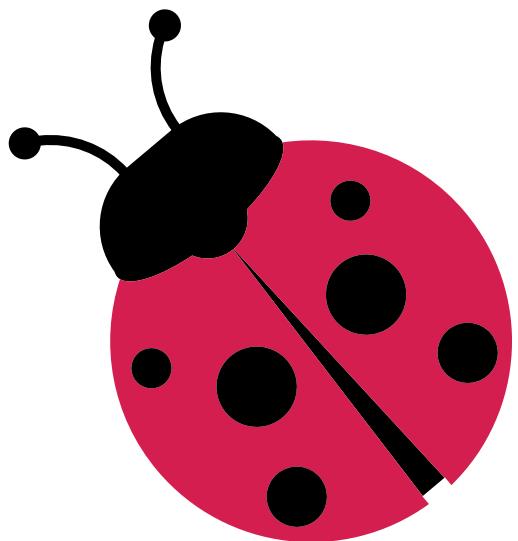
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES PLAN

2020:2023



FOR YOUNGER READERS

‘in East Ayrshire,
children and young
people grow up loved,
safe and respected so
that they realise their
full potential’



What is this plan about?

This plan will tell you all about the things that are happening in East Ayrshire to encourage children, young people and their families to develop and reach their full potential.

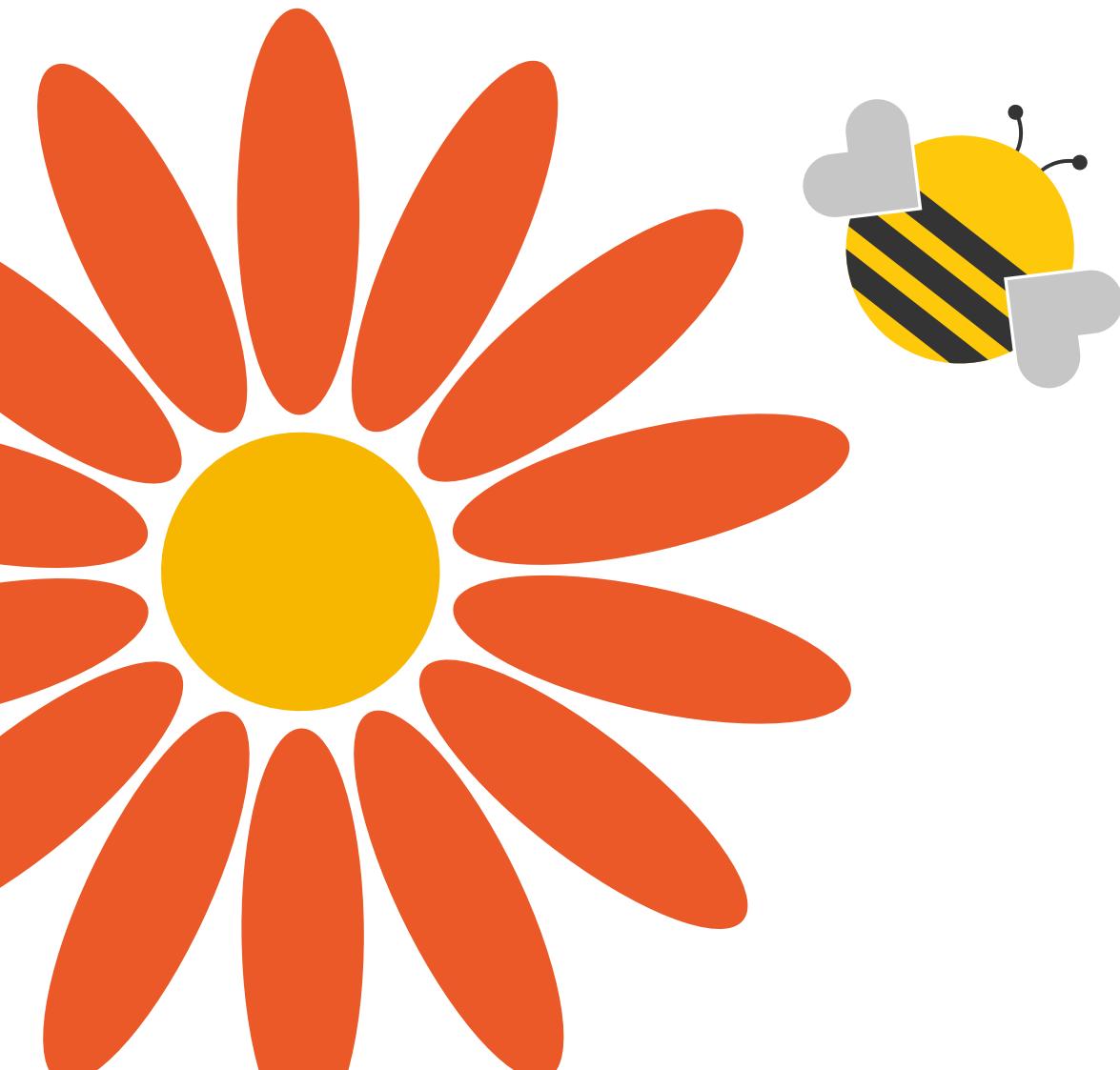
It is a promise that we (Community Planning Partners- like East Ayrshire Council, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Police Scotland, Ayrshire College and local communities) will focus on areas that will make the most important difference in the lives of children, young people and their families. We have identified these from the things our children, young people and families have told us matter most.

The Coronavirus pandemic has been a scary and confusing time for everyone but especially for our children and young people. We know all of your lives have been disrupted in some way and we are using this plan to promise that we will support all of you to succeed and live happy healthy lives.

We have a vision that says:

'in East Ayrshire, our young people grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential'

To make this happen we listened very carefully to our children, young people, families, carers and all the people whose job is to work with and help families, to find out how we can keep working together to make things better.



What Has Been Achieved Already?

We are so proud of our children, young people and families- you play a big part in East Ayrshire's success. By working together, we have already been able to achieve great things and we want to celebrate them:

- Babychat- these are groups that bring families with new babies together to chat about their babies and about what it's like to be parents.
- 19.4% babies are breastfed – up from 14.7% - this is good because we know breastfeeding is really good for baby and mum.
- Playday – every year Kay Park in Kilmarnock is transformed into a big playground and thousands of children, young people and their families from across East Ayrshire come to play and have fun. This helps families by giving them a chance to speak to people for advice and support with things they might be finding difficult
- 16.5% unemployment for 16-24 age group down from 23.2% - this means more young people are in work and succeeding.
- Danger Detectives – events where young people can learn how to keep themselves and others safe, how to respond to dangerous situations and the role of the emergency services. It is a good way to help young people be responsible citizens and effective contributors to their communities.
- 76.4% P1 children with a healthy weight – up from 73.1% - this is good because it means more children are living a healthy lifestyle and making healthy choices.
- Intergenerational activity – This brings together older people and younger people so that they can work together and learn from each other. This has really helped people to be more active and have good mental health.
- 16% increase in participation by children and young people in activity outside school – this means more children and young people are enjoying activities in their local area.
- 46, 200 free lunches provided – meaning children don't go hungry and have a healthy meal at lunchtime.
- Safer Schools - we know lots of children and young people are worried about bullying and being safe from harm online – this app allows us to encourage online safety and will teach children and young people how to keep themselves safe.
- 17.5% School exclusions per 1,000 pupils – down from 43.4- this is good because it means more children and young people are staying in school and having more opportunities to learn and grow.
- Buttons Mice – Children get to play and have fun with the mice and their stories and at the same time be encouraged to talk about the issues that they might be worried about.

Have a look at some of the photographs in this plan to find out more.



Celebrating Children and Young People



INTEGENERATIONAL ACTIVITY

Children and older people playing and keeping active together and learning from each other.



YOUNG CARERS STATEMENTS

Two local young carers enjoying the launch of East Ayrshire's Young Carers Statements, that will help to ensure their voices are heard.



ART & DESIGN TALENT 2020

The talent of young artists was showcased at the East Ayrshire Schools' Art and Design Exhibition in the Dick Institute Young People's Gallery, for the 21st year.



DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Over 600 young people started a Bronze, Silver or Gold Duke of Edinburgh programme in 2018/19 and almost 200 accolades awarded in November's awards ceremony.



SHANNON'S BOX

This box created by Shannon, a local young woman who grew up in care is given to children and young people to make entering care a little bit easier. It contains things to help young people capture memories, feel safe and secure and settle in their new home. It helps remind young people they are not alone and everything will be ok.

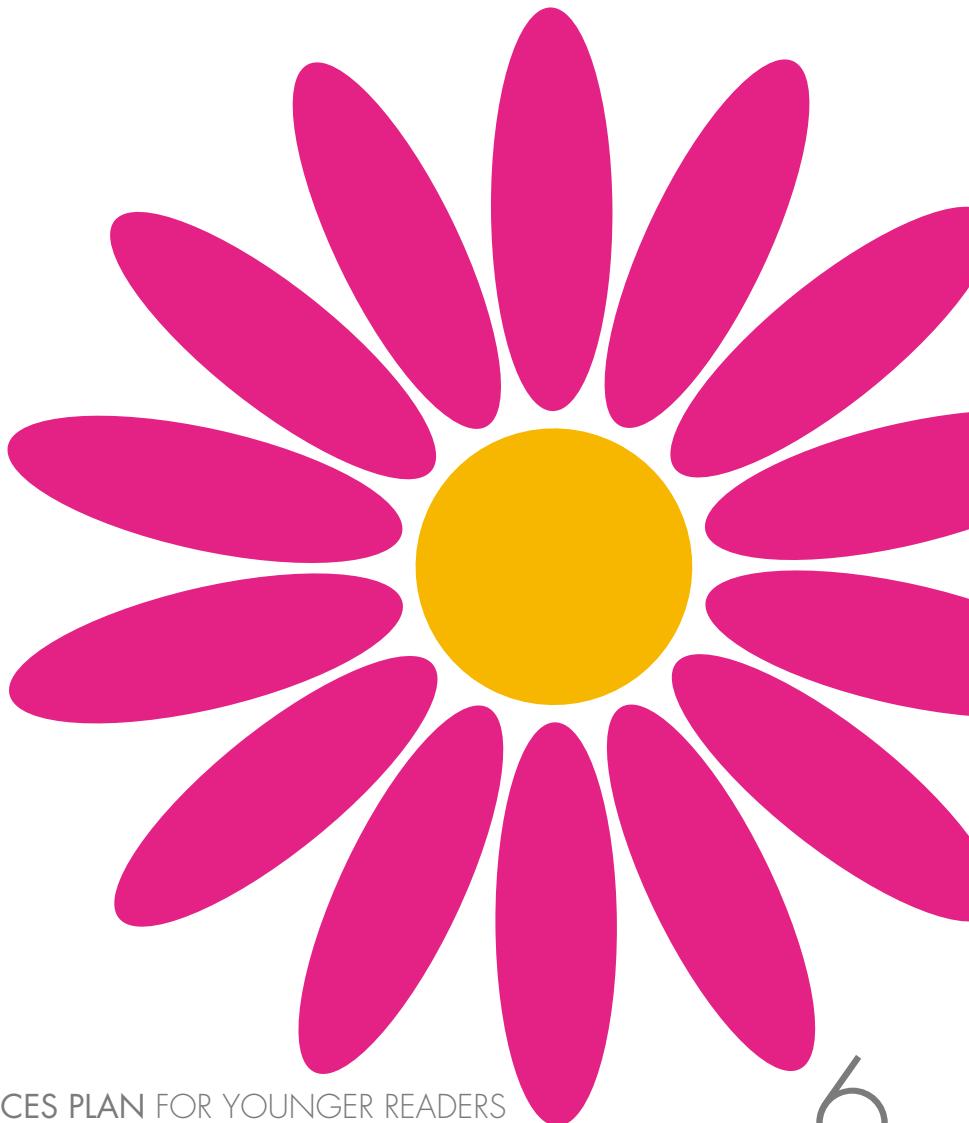
Some Things Need To Improve – What Are They?

Our plan is to build on all of the things we already do well. Our focus with children, young people and their families, especially those who need the most help, will be on these

Some of the areas that need our help the most include:

- Too many of our children and young people live in poverty and rely on food banks.
- More of the babies born in East Ayrshire could be breastfed – we know this is very good for mum and baby.
- We need to do more to help families as soon as we possibly can, when they need it, to make sure all children and young people can reach their potential.
- Care experienced children and young people are not doing as well in school as some of their peers.
- A large number of children and young people tell us bullying is a problem.
- Vulnerable children and young people are sometimes not involved enough in the decisions made about their lives.

In the next few pages, you can find out more about how we learned about these important things and what we will do about them. We want to make sure that everyone who works with children, young people and their families understand these challenges and are prepared to find new ways of doing things to make things better for families across East Ayrshire.



Coronavirus & Children and Young People

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has had a significant impact on children, young people and their families across Scotland since the first case was discovered in March 2020. Since then we worked hard to make sure that everyone who needs our help is able to receive it, especially those who are vulnerable and most in need.

We made the protection of children and young people a priority and changed the way that we work to make sure vulnerable children would still be protected. We created new ways to continue to provide support to those in need:

- Vulnerable children and young people and the children of key workers continued to have access to school whilst home-learning packs were provided for those staying at home;
- Over 500,000 meals have been prepared and more than 7,000 meals a day are being delivered to households in East Ayrshire;
- Children and young people who had to shield were supported with phone calls, befriending, food and medicine deliveries and a pack of activities including 'boredom busters';
- Over 640 children's activity packs were provided to children early on in lockdown – children particularly loved the rainbow colouring, paper plate face packs and make-your-own-cards.



We asked young people about Coronavirus and tell us what matters in their lives:

- 70% in East Ayrshire are unsure how to access financial support;
- 44% are unsure how to access mental health support;
- Everyone sticking to lockdown and restrictions would help combat the virus better;
- The drawback of an increasingly online world is that it could result in children and young people not wanting to go out and a reduction in real world social skills;
- Education should be consistent so that everyone gets the same opportunities;
- New opportunities need to be found for employment/training placements that have been lost because of the virus.

We will make sure these things are built in to services for children, young people and families as we recover from the pandemic.

PlayDay

Quadbike fun at PlayDay



How Was This Plan Made?

As we mentioned at the start, this is a plan for children, young people, families and caregivers in East Ayrshire and it is very important that their voice is heard. We had to find out what mattered most to them so that we could understand what is working well and what things need to improve.

We listened very carefully to a number of children, young people and their families from a wide range of backgrounds including those who are care experienced or who have additional support needs. They told us:

- Mental health is just as important as physical health and should be treated the same;
- Families, especially those with low incomes or where drugs or alcohol is a problem, should be supported and have access to help where they need it so they can take part in the things happening in their communities;
- Playing and spending time outside is an important part of growing up happy and healthy;
- When a conversation or decision is about a child or young person they must be included;
- Being safe online is just as important as being safe with their families and communities.

You can find out more about how this plan was made by reading [Making This Plan](#).

The message from our children and young people is clear, they live by a strong set of values and beliefs that we will strive to understand, encourage and promote. These include:

- Anti-bullying
- Good deeds and kindness
- Friendship
- Freedom to play
- Our voice matters



CONNECTING VOICES

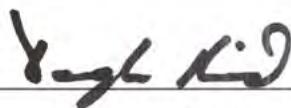


We are 'Connecting Voices' a participation group of care experienced young people who get together regularly to discuss barriers, share stories and attempt to make positive changes for care experienced young people in East Ayrshire.

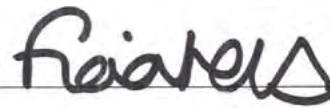
We see the East Ayrshire Promise as a list of promises made by our corporate parents to help young people reach their full potential when growing up in the care system. Connecting Voices have worked each week on a whole load of ideas to make care better. Like our corporate parents we would like to make it better for a young person entering care and when they leave care. We wanted to update the East Ayrshire promise because we felt it was old and needed updated as there are a few things we thought should be on it that aren't in it.

Our Corporate Parenting 'Ask' is therefore that our Corporate Parents will:

- Make sure we do our best to keep brothers and sisters together and when this is not possible make sure they have contact as often as possible.
- Involve children and young people in all decisions made about them.
- Listen to all young people's point of view even if we don't agree.
- Make sure young people get the help that they need with education.
- Take a chance by giving care experienced young people jobs but also understand that care experienced young people usually don't have mums and dads to help them get jobs.
- Promote young care leavers in the correct way by celebrating their achievements.
- Support young people and children to travel to see family and friends to help rebuild relationships.
- Commit to undertake training on our corporate parenting responsibilities and more communication between them.
- Help young people to fit into their communities by providing and supporting community activity programmes.
- Find creative ways i.e. social media for young people to keep in touch with their family, social worker & corporate parents.



Chair
Community Planning Partnership Board



Chair
Executive Officers' Group

East Ayrshire Promise

Community Planning Partners have promised to make it better for young people entering, growing up and leaving care.

What will we do?

Our children, young people, families and carers all have the potential to be vibrant and strong. We want to show them that we value them and want to encourage them to reach their full potential.

We will help families to:

- Stay strong when facing difficult challenges in life;
- Build strong, happy relationships with people around them;
- Live healthier, happier lives.

We will do this by:

- Being compassionate when working with children, young people and their families.
- Making sure the needs and wants of all children and young people are heard.
- Being positive role models for all.

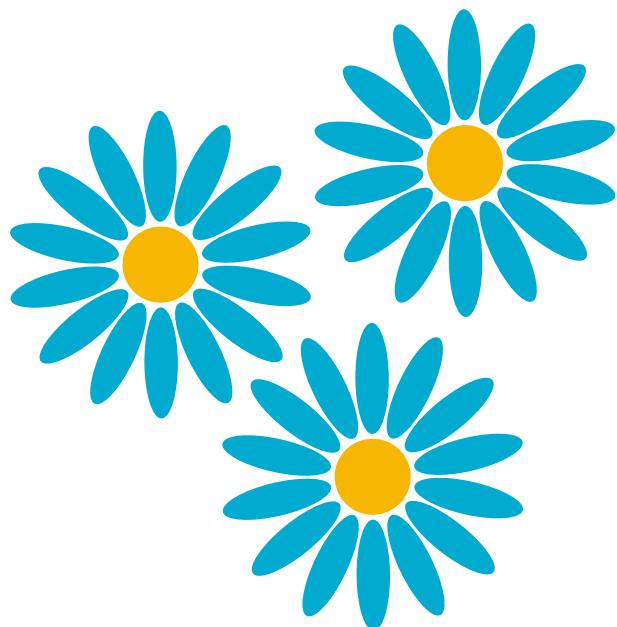
We have already made an East Ayrshire Promise to our young people who grow up in the care system- you can see a picture of it on the previous page.

On top of this, we will #KeepThePromise from the Scotland's Independent Care Review in all of our parenting responsibilities to make sure our most vulnerable children and young people feel loved and have the childhood they deserve. You can find out more about this in the pinky promise report [here](#).

We will support our children, young people and families to recover from the impact of Coronavirus. We will keep the good things that have changed in the way services work because of the pandemic and we will focus on positive relationships.

All of the work we do will focus on 5 key priorities –

- Tackling Poverty
- Respecting and Promoting Children and Young People's Rights
- Improving Wellbeing
- Achieving!
- Keeping Safe



Challenge poverty

Signing the pledge to end poverty

*On behalf of East Ayrshire Council and our
Planning Partnership, we commit to continuing
unstintingly work to end poverty and its impact on children
and young people.*

- too many people in East Ayrshire live in poverty
- poverty is not inevitable and can be ended
- poverty has no place in a Fairer, Kinder East Ayrshire

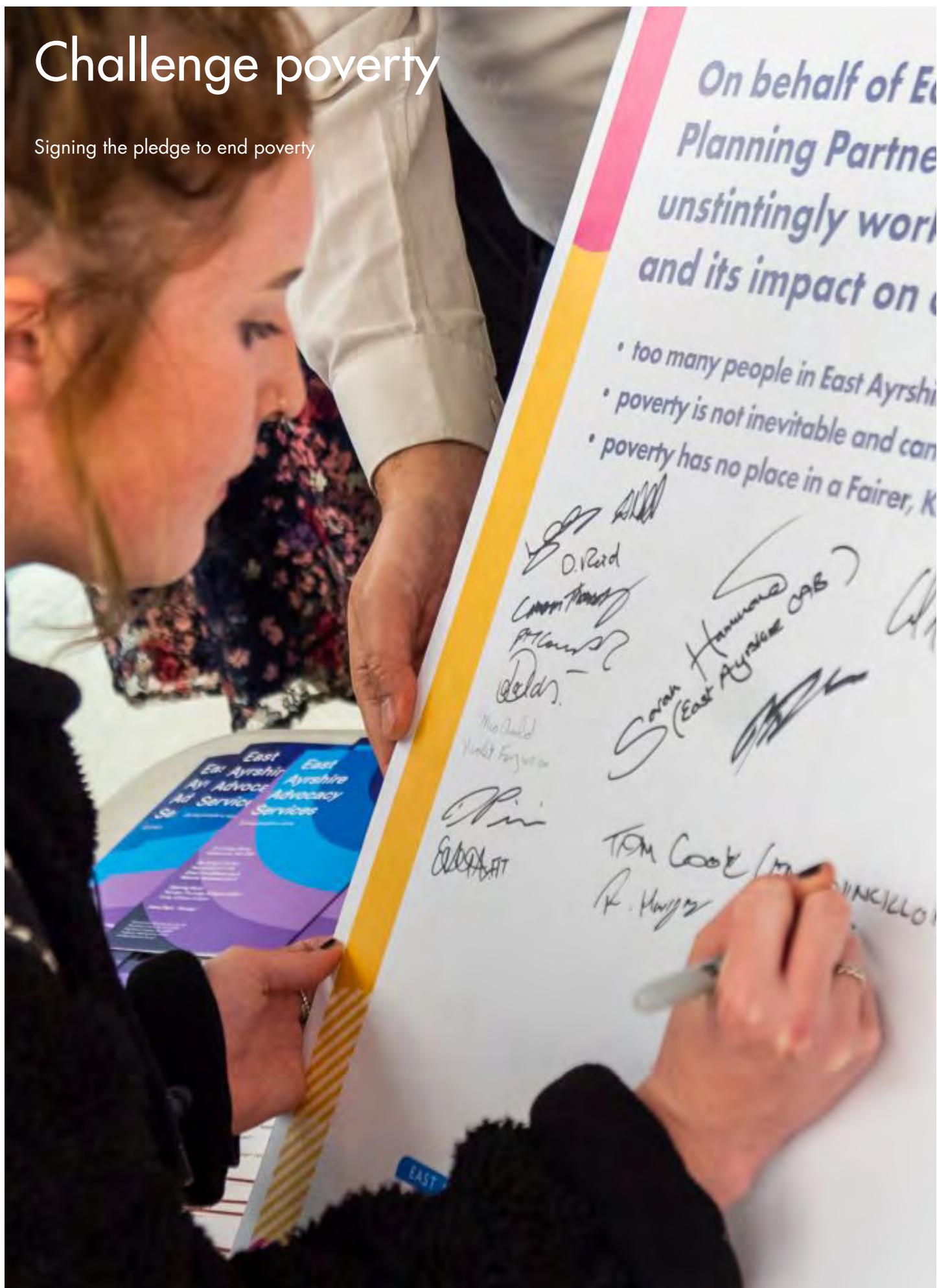
D. Reid
Community
Partnership
Depute
Leader

Michael
Vicki Ferguson

Chair
EDAPT

Sarah Hannan
(East Ayrshire CAB)

Tom Cook /
R. Haynes



Tackling Poverty

Too many children and young people live in poverty in East Ayrshire and we know this needs to change. Preventing, tackling and reversing the effects of child poverty will not be easy and might take a long time but this is something we are determined to make happen. We will take action in the following areas:

- Transport: we want to try to make transport more affordable to make it easier for people with low incomes to access employment and specialist support services.
- Employment: we will make sure people are treated equally and that we have fair working practices.
- Financial Inclusion: we will make sure that services can work with those in need, when they need it, to help tackle child poverty.
- Every day living costs: we will continue to roll out free P1-P3 meals, deliver good quality affordable housing for families and quickly rehouse those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- Communication: we will improve the way we share information and make sure our anti-poverty message is clear for all.
- Digital Poverty: we want to make sure all children and young people have access to opportunities to learn digital skills as well as literacy, numeracy and health and well-being.



Local Conversation

Children and young people taking part in conversations to design the future of local health and care services



Respecting and Promoting Children and Young People's Rights

We really want to make sure our children and young people are involved at every opportunity and to provide a platform for their voices to be heard. We want to make sure they can have their say on issues that are important to them and make sure they can contribute to making things better.

Children and young people should be the driving force behind our services and we will always look for new, better ways of working to make sure as many young people as possible have their say on the decisions that will impact on their lives.

To do this we will:

- Uphold, champion and defend the rights of children and young people in everything we do making sure we always implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Use GIRFEC and ensure children and young people are at the heart of plans and decisions about them.
- Make sure children and young people's voices are heard in discussions and decisions that affect them including redesigning our services and the future of our towns and communities.
- Listen to and include all children and young people.
- Empower children and young people to take control of actions and activities in their plans.
- Ensure the rights of young carers rights are respected by using young carers statements.

Summer Scheme

Boys enjoying softplay at Willowbank School Summer Scheme



Improving Wellbeing

Wellbeing is so important in ensuring that all our children and young people are able to reach their potential. Good wellbeing is about a lot of things- being safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included- and about having support to help make these things happen.

We want all children and young people in East Ayrshire to have a better quality of life and we know that having a safe place to live and good early life experiences help to make this happen. By working together with children, young people and their families we can provide support as soon as it is required and stop smaller problems from growing into bigger ones.

To do this we will:

- Continue to work with others using Getting It Right For Every Child, making sure children and young people are at the centre of everything we do.
- Support families to remain together, and where this isn't possible, we will work hard to keep siblings together or connected with each other when they are looked after away from home.
- Drive and grow services that focus on prevention, early intervention and wellbeing.
- Make sure children, young people and families are able to cope with change and have good mental and physical health.
- Ensure families are able to access local services when they need to do so.
- Make sure communities are more aware of neglect and ensure people know how to identify and report their concerns.





Talented Athletes

Talented young athletes, sports clubs and volunteers being celebrated at annual Awards evening.

Achieving!

We want every child and young person in East Ayrshire to reach their full potential. Children and young people will be supported to develop confidence, self-esteem and skills for home, education, their communities and the world of work because we know that achievement comes in many forms.

Every child and young person deserves to have control over their lives and be able to overcome challenges they face to achieve their ambitions. We want to work hard to reduce inequalities faced by some children, young people and their families, to do this we will:

- Work to make sure all children and young people, especially care experienced children and young people and those who are looked after at home, succeed in education and have positive outcomes.
- Create better life chances for our children in Early Years, especially those in our most deprived communities.
- Empower, engage and inform parents and carers in children and young people's learning.
- We will make the best use of available funding to improve wellbeing and education for all children and young people.
- Maximise children and young people's potential in the world of work, sports, the arts and as community leaders through learning.
- Ensure all vulnerable people secure a positive destination when leaving school and that they are supported into adulthood.



Youth Cabinet



Keeping Safe

All children and young people have the right to be protected from neglect, abuse and harm and to grow up in a safe environment. We want this to happen by working together to make sure families and communities can be responsible for their own safety.

We want to raise awareness of domestic abuse and provide support to anyone who may be affected, especially the children and young people who may be unsafe as a result. We will always aim to work with families and communities to ensure the appropriate services can provide support at the earliest opportunity.

We know that more and more children and young people are spending time online and this is a very big challenge for us to keep them safe from harm. We want to make sure children, young people and their families have positive, safe online experiences.

To achieve this we will:

- Work together to improve the safety of all children and young people
- Support children and young people to build respectful relationships with each other and tackle bullying whenever it takes place
- Promote safe and responsible online behaviour.
- Promote and implement early intervention, prevention and protection.
- Support children and young people to stay on a positive path as responsible citizens.



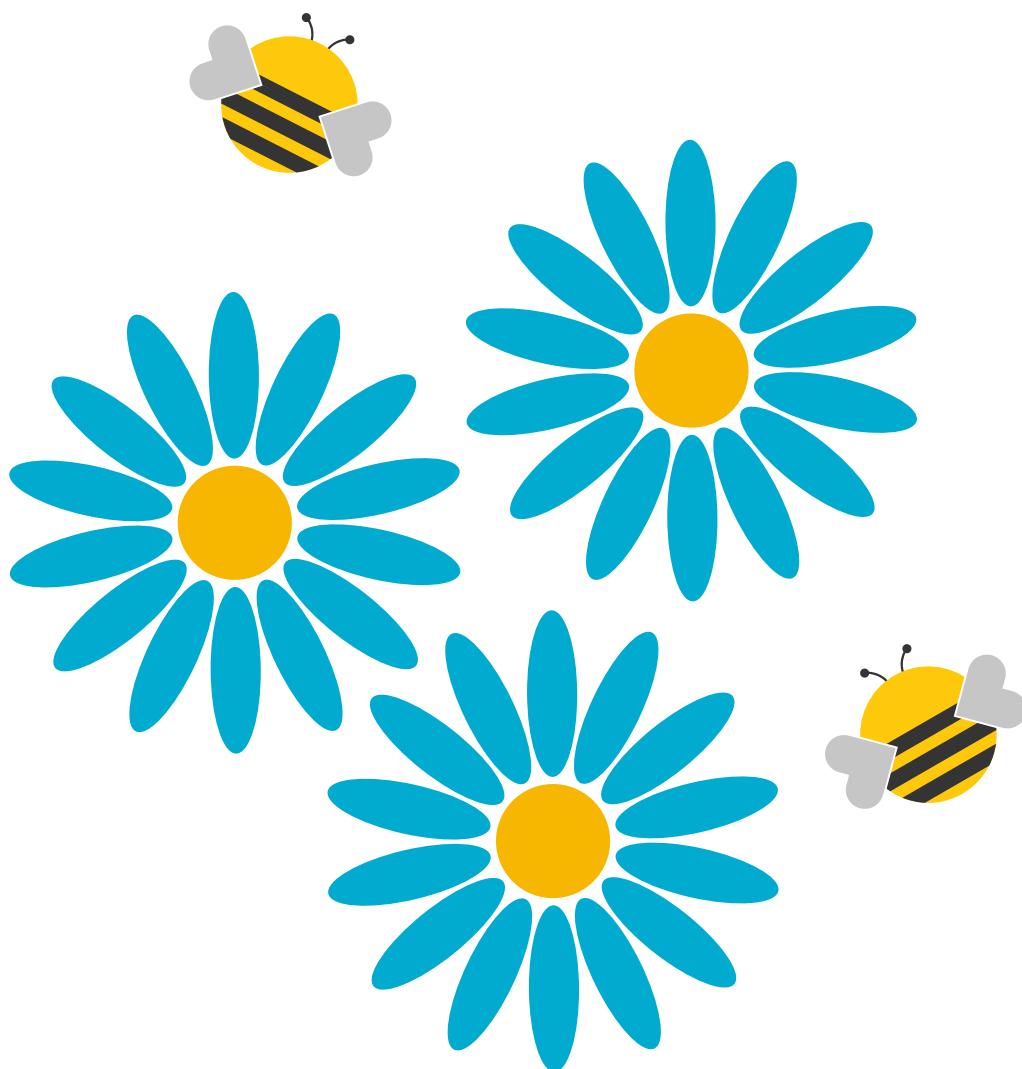
How Will We Know If We Make A Difference?

We have identified a number of performance indicators that will allow us to measure as time goes on how well we are doing and whether we are meeting our goals.

This will give us the opportunity to find out what is working and what might need to change as we go.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership ('CYPSP') are responsible for monitoring and reporting on our progress to the Community Planning Partnership ('CPP') and to the children & young people of East Ayrshire.

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





East Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrhachd Air an Ear