

EAST AYRSHIRE

**Health & Social Care**  
Partnership



# Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report



2022-2023

# Contents



<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Purpose and Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. East Ayrshire Profile</b>	<b>5</b>
East Ayrshire Profile	5
Age Profile	5
Life Expectancy	5
<b>4. Governance and Accountability</b>	<b>8</b>
Role of the Chief Social Work Officer	8
Delivery of Statutory Functions	8
Social Work Professional Governance	10
Organisational Governance	10
East Ayrshire Community Planning Board	11
East Ayrshire Council	11
Integration Joint Board	11
East Ayrshire HSCP Strategic Plan 2021-30	12
<b>5. Service Quality and Performance</b>	<b>13</b>
Performance in 2022/23	13
Service Experience	16
Overview of Children and Families Services in 2022-23	17
Overview of Adult Services in 2022-23	25
Overview of Justice Services in 2022-23	36
Challenges and Improvements	39
Risk Management	40
Complaints and Feedback	40
<b>6. Resources</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>7. Workforce</b>	<b>45</b>
Workforce Planning	45
Training, Learning and Development	47
<b>8. Looking Forward</b>	<b>51</b>

# 1. Introduction



It gives me great pleasure to present my fifth Annual Report as Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) for East Ayrshire, reflecting on the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The report provides an overview of social work and social care services and practice within the context of the delivery of statutory functions.

As ever, the report endeavours to do justice to the range of social work and social care practice across all service areas, highlighting areas of good practice, areas for development and areas of challenge. I had a real hope and desire to move on from focusing on the ravages of the pandemic in this year's report, however it is evident that the cost of the pandemic remains significant and impacts on daily life and living for those who live in East Ayrshire and for those who support them. Some children and young people have struggled

to retransition back to school or make the transition from nursery to primary and primary to secondary. The impact of mental health and wellbeing across the lifespan continues with increased demand and complexity being evident.

This past year has seen much activity around the development of a National Care Service, however with this activity much uncertainty remains particularly for those expected to deliver social work and social care services. The work has focused on examining the merits of children and families and justice social work services being within the scope of the NCS or indeed not and the outputs from this are anticipated in 2024.

As always, it is important to reflect on our remarkable, committed and caring workforce who continue to deliver excellent services and support people in East Ayrshire to live their best possible lives. This report is a testament to the work that they undertake on a daily basis in often difficult and challenging circumstances.

**Marion MacAulay**

*Chief Social Work Officer /*

*Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services*



## 2. Purpose and Background

This report is produced each year to fulfil the requirement to publish a local annual report in regards to the Chief Social Work Officer's role in professional leadership, governance, oversight of practice, values and standards as outlined in national guidance. The report also reflects on the specific areas of decision-making and practice where legislation confers functions directly on the [Chief Social Work Officer](#).

The report illustrates and celebrates the contribution of social work and social care in collaborating with partners to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our residents. A wide range of operational developments, activities delivered and examples of positive outcomes achieved by services within the reporting period, in addition to pertinent performance information, are included throughout the report to demonstrate the impact of such contributions in safeguarding and improving circumstances for people in East Ayrshire.

This report and the content within relates to the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The Chief Social Work Adviser (CSWA) to the Scottish Government provides guidance on the CSWO annual report composition every year to ensure consistency in reporting nationally. A new template has been provided for 2022-23.

The East Ayrshire Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2022-2023 observes the guidance outlined and is comprised of the following sections:

- Purpose and Background;
- East Ayrshire Profile;
- Governance and Accountability;
- Service Quality and Performance;
- Challenges and Improvements
- Resources;
- Workforce; and
- Looking Forward

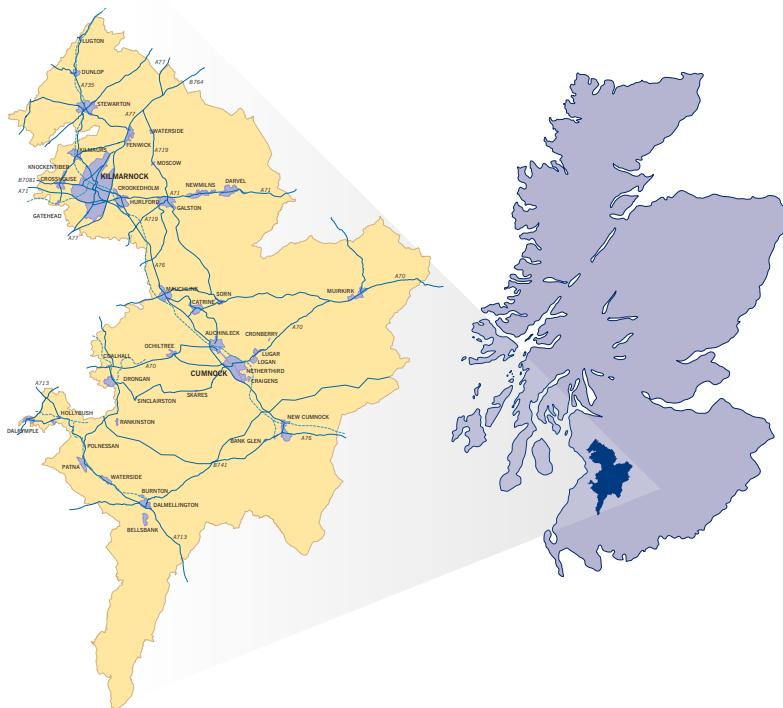
# 3. East Ayrshire Profile

A range of health and wellbeing, demographic and socio-economic information is presented in the infographics below to display characteristics of the East Ayrshire population and various circumstances within the authority.

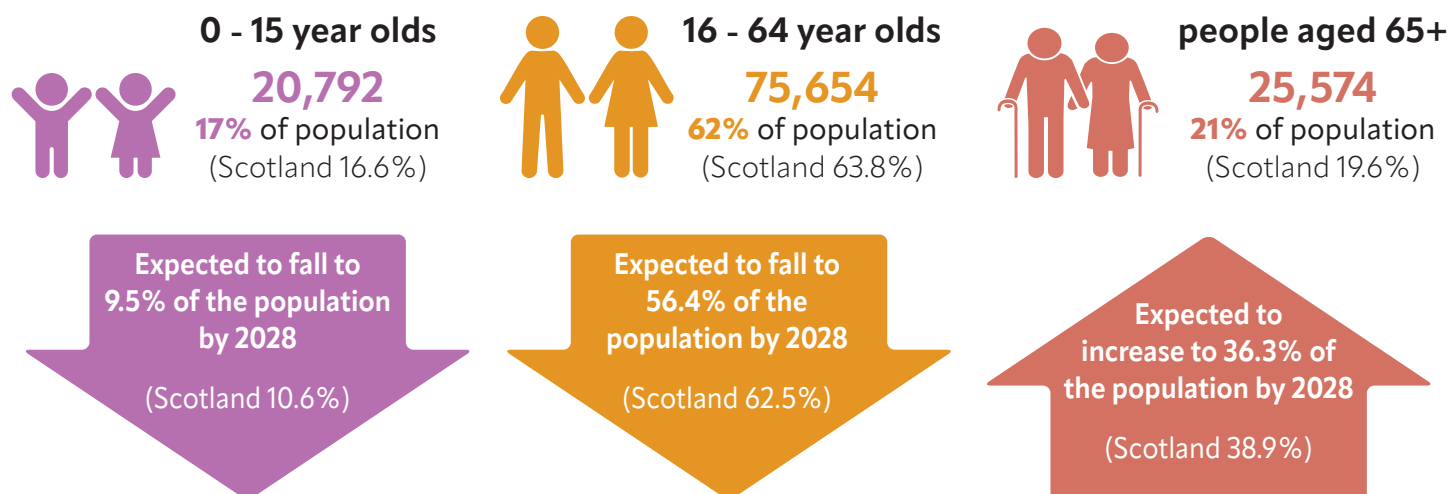
To view a more expansive range of statistical information relating to East Ayrshire, please see the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership's [Strategic Needs Assessment](#).

## East Ayrshire Profile

- Spans 490 square miles in South West Scotland
- Incorporates urban and rural communities
- Population 122,020 - 2.23% of Scotland's total population
- Population expected to fall by 1.8% by 2028



## Age Profile



## Life Expectancy



\*Information above provided by Public Health Scotland for the most recent time period available, 2021/22.

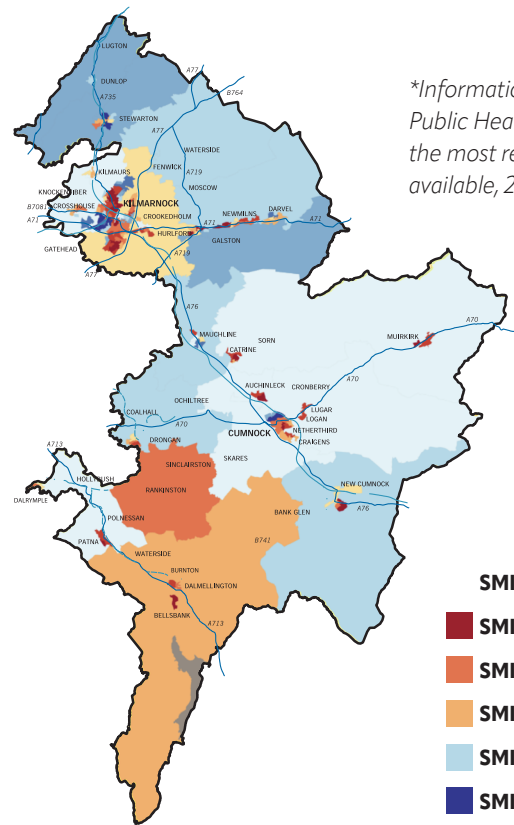
## Deprivation

**30.6% of the population of East Ayrshire live within the most deprived Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation Quintile (SIMD)**



The table below details the percentage of the population within East Ayrshire living in the 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) most deprived quintiles for each domain and the ranking of East Ayrshire amongst the 32 Scottish Local Authorities for each domain.

East Ayrshire	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Access	Crime	Housing	Overall
% of population	28.8%	32.5%	25.8%	28.2%	24.5%	22.7%	2.45%	31.3%
Rank	7	6	8	8	13	8	25	7

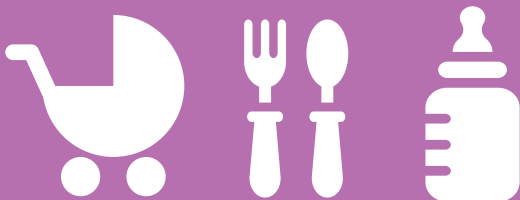


*\*Information provided by Public Health Scotland for the most recent time period available, 2020.*

### SIMD Quintile

- SMID 1 (Most deprived)
- SMID 2
- SMID 3
- SMID 4
- SMID 5 (Least deprived)

## Early Years



**19.1% of East Ayrshire babies are exclusively breastfed** (Scotland 31.9%) *ScotPHO, 2019/20-2021/22*

**19.2% of East Ayrshire children have at least one developmental concern at 27-30 months** (Scotland 14.6%) *ScotPHO, 2018/19-2020/21*

**63.9% of East Ayrshire children have a healthy weight in Primary 1** (Scotland 69.8%) *ScotPHO, 2021/22*

**71.1% of children within East Ayrshire have no obvious dental decay in Primary 1** (Scotland 75.2%) *ScotPHO, 2021/22*

## Long Term Health Conditions



**More than a quarter (26%) of the East Ayrshire population have at least one physical long term health condition** (Scotland 19%)

**The five most common long term conditions within East Ayrshire are asthma, arthritis, coronary heart disease, cancer and diabetes**

**Between 2022/23 and 2030/31 it is projected that the number of people within East Ayrshire living with dementia will have increased by 12.5% and the number of people with Parkinsons will have increased by 11.2%**



## Mental Health



**20.87% of East Ayrshire residents are prescribed medication for anxiety/depression/psycosis** (Scotland 19.29%) *ScotPHO, 2020/21*

**The rate of deaths by suicide is 18.3 per 100,000** (Scotland 14.13) *ScotPHO, 2017-2021*

**There were 15,366 unscheduled bed days per 100,000 for mental health in 2021/22** (Scotland 18,672) *Public Health Scotland 2021/22*

## Addiction



**The rate of alcohol related hospital admissions in East Ayrshire is 561.1 per 100,000** (Scotland 621.3) *Public Health Scotland, 2020/21*

**During 2021 there were 38 drug related deaths, a rate of 33.15 per 100,000** (Scotland 25.24) *ScotPHO, 2021*

**There were 129 incidents of domestic abuse recorded per 10,000** (Scotland 118.26) *ScotPHO, 2021/22*

**17.2% of mothers smoked during pregnancy** (Scotland 13.9%) *Public Health Scotland 2018/19-2020/21*

## Economic Status



**East Ayrshire has the 7th highest level of deprivation amongst Scottish Local Authorities** *Public Health Scotland, 2020*

**18.6% of East Ayrshire households are estimated to be workless** (Scotland 17.8%) *NOMIS, 2021*

**21% of children within East Ayrshire are living in low income families** (Scotland 17%) *EABN, 2019/20*

**In May 2021, 21% of all East Ayrshire households were on Universal Credit, almost 12,000 households** (Scotland 16%)

## Community



**53.2% of adults living in East Ayrshire rate their neighbourhood as a good place to live** (Scotland 59.1%) *ScotPHO, 2020*

**In 2021/22 the crime rate was 529 per 10,000 population** (Scotland 524) *Scottish Government, 2021/22*

**The rate of non-accidental fires in East Ayrshire is 518.8 per 100,000 population** (265) (Scotland 298.7) – *Scottish Government, 2021/22*

**In 2021/22 56.96 drug crimes were recorded per 10,000 population** (Scotland 50.59%) *ScotPHO, 2021/22*

## 4. Governance and Accountability

### Role of the Chief Social Work Officer

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Under Section 3 (1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 as amended, local authorities in Scotland are required to appoint a Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO). The CSWO role in East Ayrshire is performed by the Head of Children's Health, Care and Justice Services.

The primary role of the CSWO is to ensure professional oversight of local social work practice and service delivery. This includes professional governance, leadership and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services, whether provided directly by the local authority or purchased through third or independent sector organisations.

The Scottish Government issued revised national guidance in relation to the role and function of the CSWO (The Role of the Chief Social Work Officer: Principles, Requirements and Guidance pursuant to Section 5 (1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968) in July 2016, replacing the previous guidance issued in 2009.

The leadership role of the CSWO has developed a prominence over the last number of years. The CSWO role is complex and touches on all aspects of social work practice. The role has further developed in the scale and depth of involvement in certain areas of practice, not exclusively but most notably the support provided to our partner care homes, where individual human rights are core to all decision making.

The CSWO has had a key role in supporting and advocating for the workforce at both local and national level, with a particular focus on workforce wellbeing. The CSWO has a significant leadership role in setting out practice expectations in challenging circumstances. In doing so, this requires a delicate balance of ensuring public protection duties and responsibilities are fulfilled, whilst safeguarding the health and wellbeing of the workforce within an unprecedented and complex landscape in terms of guidance and restrictions. Successfully meeting the needs of our communities safely within this challenging context has been and will continue to be at the heart of all decision making.

Furthermore, a key duty throughout this period was and continues to be promoting the voice of social work and social care locally and nationally, particularly the ongoing work that is taking place around developing a national care service for Scotland.

### Delivery of Statutory Functions

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The CSWO holds specific responsibilities relating to statutory decision making and the provision of appropriate advice in the discharge of a local authority's statutory functions. This work is underpinned by the arrangements set out in the Social Work and Social Care Governance Framework, and through existing partnership arrangements, specifically regarding public protection.

The CSWO maintains oversight of practice standards relating to local services delivered by registered social workers, which includes public protection and / or the restriction of individual liberty. This function requires careful consideration of individual circumstances, with particular regard to a person's rights, identified risks, needs and capacity. Such judgements are often complex, and require taking full account of numerous potential issues, including risks to the wider community.



These legislative provisions include: the placement of children in secure accommodation, transfers of children subject to supervision requirements, adoption, fostering, community payback orders, statutory interventions linked to the Mental Health Officer role, adults with incapacity measures and the protection of children and adults at risk. Key legislation relevant to the CSWO's responsibilities include:



## Social Work Professional Governance

Social work services in East Ayrshire are commissioned by the Integration Joint Board (IJB) from East Ayrshire Council and are delivered through the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP). Our Partnership is responsible for a wider range of services than is required by legislation, with all social work and social care services delegated to the HSCP in East Ayrshire. The CSWO is accountable and reports to the Chief Executive of East Ayrshire Council (to the Director of Health and Social Care as Head of Service).

The Social Work and Social Care Governance Framework sets out arrangements which ensure and oversee the governance of the social work and social care profession and services operating within the East Ayrshire HSCP. The framework states that the CSWO:

- is a member of the Council's Executive Management Team, the Corporate Management Team and the East Ayrshire HSCP Senior Leadership Group;
- is a non-voting member of the Integration Joint Board;
- attends full Council and presents the annual CSWO Report to Council every year;
- reports to Council committees as required;
- is a member of the Chief Officers Group (Public Protection); and
- has access to elected members, the Chief Executive and Senior Officers as required.

The East Ayrshire Social Work and Social Care Leadership Forum has oversight of social work and social care professional practice matters in East Ayrshire. The work of the Forum supports the CSWO in delivering statutory functions and in fulfilling the professional leadership role. The CSWO is also a member of all protection committees and is chair of the East Ayrshire Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership and a member of the South West Scotland Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements Strategic Oversight Group (MAPPA SOG).

CSWOs also have an important role in promoting, influencing and assisting with matters relating to social work and social care practice at a national level. Some key areas of work being taken forward at a national level are developments around social work education and advanced practice pathways, implementation of the new Self-Directed Supports standards and extensive and active involvement in the consultation and engagement around the proposals to develop a National Care Service for Scotland.

## Organisational Governance

In East Ayrshire, the Social Work Service (and CSWO), operates in the context of the following governance structures:

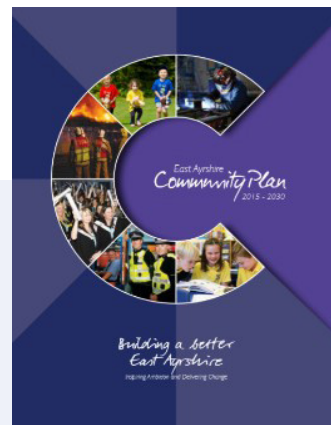


# East Ayrshire Community Planning Board

The East Ayrshire Community Planning Board is responsible for the development and oversight of the [East Ayrshire Community Plan \(2015-2030\)](#). This is the sovereign planning document for East Ayrshire and provides the overarching strategic policy framework for the delivery of services by all partners.

The Plan has a focus on tackling poverty and inequality and promoting recovery and renewal, and sets out how outcomes for people and service delivery in East Ayrshire will be improved in working towards achieving the following vision:

*“East Ayrshire is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people’s needs.”*



The Community Plan is underpinned by three thematic Delivery Plans: [Economy and Skills](#), [Safer Communities](#) and [Wellbeing](#). The Social Work Service and wider work of the HSCP continues to contribute significantly towards each of these Delivery Plans, with a particular focus on wellbeing.

## East Ayrshire Council

The Council recognises the East Ayrshire Community Plan (2015-2030) as the overarching strategic policy framework for delivering services in the authority.

East Ayrshire Council has experienced a number of challenges in recent years, including: rising demand for services, demographic shifts, policy / legislative changes and reduced revenue. East Ayrshire Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-27 was approved by Cabinet on 29 June 2022, and sets out how services will be delivered, with and for our communities, over the next five years. The Plan comprises of six key strategic themes:

- A fairer, kinder and connected East Ayrshire
- A vibrant and empowered East Ayrshire
- Property and estate rationalisation
- Workforce Planning
- A digitally connected East Ayrshire
- Income and commercialisation.

## Integration Joint Board

The Integration Joint Board (IJB) is responsible for the planning and operational oversight of Integrated Services; all social work services are located within the HSCP.

The IJB delegates responsibility to the following sub committees and groups as specified in the governance structures and terms of reference:

- Strategic Planning Group;
- Audit and Performance Committee (sub-group Strategic Commissioning Board);
- Health and Care Governance Group (sub-group Adverse Events Review Group);
- Partnership Forum (sub-group Health Safety and Wellbeing Group);
- Risk Management Committee; and
- Resilience and Civil Contingencies.

The CSWO is a member of all the groups highlighted above.

# East Ayrshire HSCP Strategic Plan 2021-30

The [East Ayrshire HSCP Strategic Plan 2021-30](#) sets out our local ambitions and shared priorities for health and social care between the 2021-24 period and towards 2030, in delivering the vision of:

*"Working together with all of our communities to improve and sustain wellbeing, care and promote equity"*

The core themes of the Strategic Plan 2021-30 are:

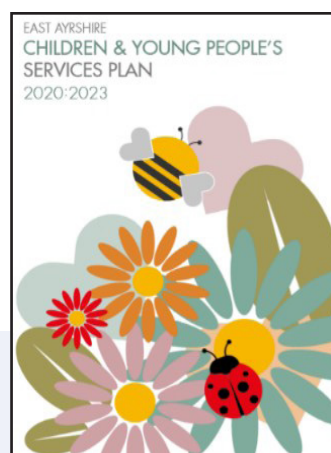
- Starting Well and Living Well
- Caring for East Ayrshire
- Safe and Protected
- People at the Heart of What We Do
- Caring for Our Workforce
- Digital Connections.

The annual review of the Strategic Plan 2021-30 concluded that the Plan remains effective, fit for purpose and that no replacement plan is required.

## East Ayrshire Children and Young People's Service Plan 2020-2023

The [East Ayrshire Children and Young People's Service Plan 2020-2023](#) sets out our long term aspirations and service plans for children and young people in East Ayrshire. The Plan celebrates our young people's achievements, talents, perspectives and contributions, alongside sharing examples of our partnership working successes and positive outcomes achieved for people. The new three year plan is in the process of being developed, although it is anticipated that some of the key themes such as child poverty, children's rights and voice, emotional and mental health remain relevant and important to our children and young people.

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



# 5. Service Quality and Performance

## Performance in 2022/23

A well-established framework is in place to monitor the performance and improvement progress of services delivered across the HSCP portfolio on an ongoing basis. This framework supports our operational development ambitions and ensures the provision of high quality services to meet needs and contribute towards positive outcomes for people in East Ayrshire.

A comprehensive suite of performance measures aligned to local and national strategic priorities, in addition to key service improvement actions identified, comprise core elements of this framework. This content is updated on a regular basis (monthly and quarterly) and is refreshed annually to ensure the information remains reflective of current circumstances. Much of this information is sourced directly from our local social work case record management system (Liquidlogic) and is thereafter collaboratively managed on our real-time performance reporting system (Pentana).

The statistics below reflect key aspects of social work service performance in East Ayrshire throughout the reporting period:



**During 2022/23 there were 153 child protection registrations,** 104% higher than 75 registered the previous year.  
*(Statutory Performance Indicator 39)*



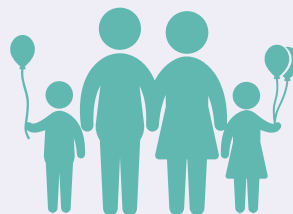
**8.5% of child protection registrations during 2022/23 were re-registrations within 12 months,** an increase of 1.8% from the previous year when 6.7% of child protection registrations were re-registrations.  
*(Statutory Performance Indicator 39)*



**130 reports were submitted to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration,** an increase of 23.8% from 105 during 2021/22.  
*(Statutory Performance Indicator 40)*



**45.4% of reports were submitted to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration by the due date,** a fall of 19.4% from 2021/22 when 64.8% of reports were submitted in time.  
*(Statutory Performance Indicator 40)*



**184 children were Looked After and Accommodated at 31 March 2023,** 17.9% higher than 156 on the same date in 2022.  
*(Statutory Performance Indicator 42)*



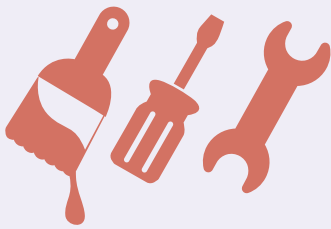
**53 Looked After and Accommodated children had 3 or more moves,** an increase of 3.9% from 51 in 2021/22. This represented 28.8% of Looked After Children, which is 3.9% lower than the 32.7% of children experiencing such disruption in 2021/22.  
*(Statutory Performance Indicator 42).*



**885 Social Work reports were submitted to the courts during the year,** an increase of 12.3% from 788 submitted during 2021/22. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 27)*



**98.3% of Social Work reports were submitted to the Courts by the due date during 2022/23.** This was 0.7% higher than for 2021/22 (97.6%), maintaining a consistently high level. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 27)*



**99% of the unpaid work requirement was completed on time during 2022/23,** up 2.4% from 96.6% the previous year. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 28)*



**96.2% of Community Payback Orders were successfully completed within the year,** 5.3% higher than the 90.9% successfully completed within the year during 2021/22. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 28)*



**Readmission to hospital within 28 days was 10.3%,** a decrease of 1.4% from 11.7% in 2021/22. *(Public Health Scotland)*



**Foster carer recruitment as at 31 March was 61,** down 3.2% from 63 as at 31 March 2022. *(Pentana Performance System)*



**9,943 bed days were lost as a result of delayed discharge during 2022/23,** a significant increase of 55.2% from 2021/22 when 6,408 bed days were lost. *(Public Health Scotland)*

*There were no hospital discharges over 2 weeks relating to Health and Social Care or family reasons during 2022/23. This remains unchanged from 2021/22 and represents a sustained excellent performance amidst considerable pressure.* *(Public Health Scotland)*



**61.8% of personal carers are qualified to Scottish Social Services Council standard,** up 1.9% from 59.9% during 2021/22. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 26)*





**97.4% of older people aged 65+ lived in housing rather than a care home or hospital setting during 2022/23**, very slightly lower (0.1%) than 97.5% recorded the previous year. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 25)*



**The unit cost of home care increased by 8.3% to £23.06 during 2022/23**, from £21.29 previously. An improved pay offer to staff was the main reason for the increase. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 6)*



**381.2 homecare hours per 1,000 population aged 65+ were used during 2022/23**, up 2.7% from 371.1 hours the previous year. *(Statutory Performance Indicator 23)*



**As at 31 March 2023, there were 1,331 Care at Home service users aged 65+**, very slightly lower than 1,357 from the same date the previous year. (1.9%) *(Social Work Case Record Management System)*



**640 care home residents aged 65+ at 31 March** is 3.2% higher than same date in 2022 when there were 620 residents. *(Social Work Case Record Management System)*

# Service Experience

[The Health and Care Experience Survey](#) has been run every two years since 2009, and asks about people's experiences of health and care services delivered in local areas. Results reflect various aspects of service delivery and highlights areas where we can improve, as well as the areas where people's needs are being met. In the 2021/22 survey there were 2,387 East Ayrshire responses, with a 25% response rate, a 2% decrease from 2019/20, and mixed results across the survey themes, detailed below. Overall, people using services in East Ayrshire responded less positively than in the previous survey carried out in 2020, however, results were more positive than the Scotland average in most areas.

## Care, Support and Help with Everyday Living

	East Ayrshire 2019/20	East Ayrshire 2021/22	Scotland 2021/22	
I was aware of the help, care and support options available to me	61%	55%	53%	
I had a say in how my help, care or support was provided	64%	57%	55%	
People took account of the things that mattered to me	72%	66%	62%	
I was treated with compassion and understanding	75%	70%	70%	
I felt safe	72%	67%	67%	
I was supported to live as independently as possible	70%	65%	65%	
My health, support and care services seemed to be well coordinated	65%	55%	54%	
The help, care or support improved or maintained my quality of life	69%	64%	62%	
Overall, how would you rate your help, care or support service?	66%	64%	62%	

## Caring Responsibilities

	East Ayrshire 2019/20	East Ayrshire 2021/22	Scotland 2021/22	
I have a good balance between caring and other things in my life	62%	60%	63%	
I have a say in the services provided for the person(s) I look after	45%	38%	39%	
Local services are well coordinated for the person(s) I look after	39%	28%	29%	
I felt supported to continue caring	36%	28%	29%	

We have continued to maintain a strong commitment to person-centred provision, best practice learning and ongoing progression in East Ayrshire over the last year despite continued significant system pressures and challenges. This commitment is reflected in our continual cycle of self-evaluation, reflective discussions and reviews, which continued to be implemented throughout 2022-23 across all social care settings to identify key areas for focus and improvement.

Many of the following examples in this section align with key themes identified in the Independent Care Review Reports (February 2020), particularly in regards to embedding the aspirations and values of 'The Promise' in our social work practice. Additionally, having reflected on the findings and recommendations from the Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland (February 2021), we passionately believe that our values and strategic approach to health and social care delivery in East Ayrshire demonstrate a strong local position in relation to numerous recommendations made, as evidenced in the following examples.

# Overview of Children and Families Services in 2022-23

## Fostering

The fostering service has continued to provide key functions throughout 2022-23 whilst also supporting wider social work functions during a period of significant system pressures. Whilst there have been challenges to overcome, there have also been signs of growth and development within the service.

Embedding 'The Promise' is a key priority for the service and throughout the reporting period they have worked closely with The Promise Implementation Lead to reflect on how the messages of 'The Promise' can be more deeply embedded in by the workforce. As a result of the commitment and passion of our foster carers who support the service to deliver the key foundations of 'The Promise', there are currently a number of brother and sister groups who have been able stay together. This remains an ongoing priority as we look towards 2023/24.



Recruitment and retention of foster carers remains a key priority locally and nationally. 2022 saw limited growth in recruitment, however, early 2023 has saw several fostering households undergo the 'Skills to Foster' training and have progressed to assessment to become foster carers. The annual Foster Carer's Recognition Event took place at the Park Hotel, Kilmarnock in September 2022. This was well attended, allowing carers and staff to reflect on the previous year, and hear about how we intend to 'keep the promise' in the year ahead. The Foster Carer Survey highlighted that the vast majority of our carers intended to continue fostering in 2023 and ongoing foster care review feedback frequently cites the support that the carers get from their supervising social workers as a key strength of the service.

## Kinship

The Kinship service has a particular focus around assessing kinship carers, supporting them and providing opportunities for carers to come together for social and training opportunities. Kinship carers deal with some of the most complex scenarios as they care for our children and young people who have experienced trauma and loss. Offering them support, guidance and training remains a key priority for the service.

Kinship Care week in March 2023 was marked by coffee mornings across the authority. The team were grateful to be joined by colleagues from the Financial Inclusion Team, East Ayrshire Advocacy Service, Barnardo's and other partners who came along to talk with carers about the services that are available to them.

By 31 March 2023, there were:	
25	young people benefiting from continuing care scenarios, ensuring that they have the foundation of their current setting and consistent loving relationships to step into adulthood.
71	Improving / maintaining quality of life
109	Co-ordination of support and care services

## Adoption

Nationally, adoption continues to be uncertain with the number of prospective adopters heavily outnumbering the number of children who have the potential to be placed for adoption, and locally there have been three children adopted during the reporting period.

The service has continued to take a holistic approach to supporting anyone who has been impacted by adoption. This ranges from the assessment of prospective adopters, to supporting birth mothers affected by adoption and helping adoptees with origins enquiries. These pieces of work are often emotive, but also hugely rewarding and we have recently been recognised for the innovative and compassionate practice that underpinned children being placed for adoption with carers in East Ayrshire.

### CASE STUDY



Through facilitation of a meeting between our adopters and a birth mother, our adopters were able to demonstrate their commitment to raising the children to know their life story, to have a knowledge of their birth mother and their birth family, and to ensure that she had all the reassurance that any mother would want of how her children were. Facilitation of this meeting was recognised by partner agencies and led to the children's birth mother attending the adoption hearing to express that she felt that the adoption order was in her children's best interests and express her own confidence in the adopters to meet her children's needs.



## Children's Houses

Our children's houses continue to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable children and young people. As we recover from the disruptions of the last few years much of the work focused on supporting our children and young people find normality again through school attendance and offering opportunities to achieve all that they can. Many young people from our houses are also benefitting from gaining apprenticeships within the council or finding further education courses suited to their skills and abilities, we are really proud of all of their progress.

'The Promise' puts an emphasis on how we look after and support the people who directly care for our children. All children's carers attended six day Social Pedagogy training in 2022-23 to support them with the skills and resilience to meet the needs of our young people. Additionally our staff survey highlighted that 100% of residential staff reported that their wellbeing was addressed within supervision with a significant proportion aware of and having benefitted from the additional wellbeing supports that are on offer to employees within the service. The values of our staff shone through in the residential survey and the top answer for what made their job most enjoyable in the last year was the relationships staff had with our young people. This demonstrates our commitment to 'The Promise' and the ask that we "find people who will be passionate and deeply care about the young people who we look after".

### CASE STUDY



We were especially pleased to see one of our young people head off to St Andrew's university in September to undertake a degree. Our residential colleagues were able to help him set-up his accommodation and have been heartened to hear about how he has been getting on when he has come back to visit. We continue to offer outreach support to all our young people who move on.



## Promise Participation and Engagement Team

Staff across social work services continue to work hard to ensure that we deliver on our commitment to #KeepThePromise. We have prioritised listening to our children and young people and have created opportunities for them to talk about the issues that are important to them.

The Promise Participation team established **'ArtClub?'** a co-curated group led by care-experienced young people with an interest in contemporary visual art and activism. The group enables young people from a range of care backgrounds to creatively engage with the issues and interests that affect them.

We are working with our care experienced young people to refresh 'Pizza and Coke', our Corporate Parenting Board, to ensure that young people can drive positive change by raising their questions directly with leaders and elected members. At a recent board meeting, a presentation from members of **'ArtClub?'** resulted in an increased offer of financial support to assist care leaves on low incomes through the cost of living crisis.

Our care-experienced community also had an opportunity to share their views through the Brightspots survey which we ran last year. Their feedback, combined with the findings of a detailed self-evaluation has enabled members of the Promise Oversight group to determine a number of key priorities within our Promise Implementation Plan. These include:

- Helping children in our care to build and maintain relationships with the people who matter to them
- Ensuring care experienced children and young people receive all they need to thrive at school and achieve their full potential
- Ensuring that children moving on from care receive the love and support they need to live independently
- Equipping the workforce to effectively identify and support people who experience trauma; and,
- Providing early and intensive help and support to families who need it.

Across the service, individual teams have also been taking time to consider what The Promise means for their particular areas of practice. Towards the end of 2022 staff from our children's houses and the Fostering, Adoption, Kinship Care and Supported Care services set aside two days to consider how they can better embed The Promise in their work. Many ideas were generated, but two key projects emerged. The first will look at how we can better hear from our children about their experiences of care using more varied and accessible methods to gather their views. The second will look at how we can move away from factual case recording towards keeping records that will help young people understand their whole life experience, both now and in the future.



### **ArtClub? Member:**

*"Sometimes I find it rather difficult to express myself through words, about how I feel in the real world. One way I get around this is by using a wide range of techniques in art to help express myself, mostly experimentally and random but unique to myself as they show who I am as an individual."*



## Family Support Team

The Family Support Team have continued to support families through providing a number of interventions in 2022-23. Seasonal activities have resumed and have taken place throughout the Easter, summer, October and winter holidays, enabling families to take part in a variety of activities such as arts and crafts, messy play, physical play and song/story time, and make those all-important memories together. Families are supported to attend by the team and the activities also serve as an opportunity for signposting to additional supports, such as food larders or other community events.

Weekend activities have taken place throughout the year, offering families positive, low cost, easily accessible community activities that focus on health and wellbeing, reducing social isolation and fostering positive attachments. The weekend activities build on the work and relationships nurtured with families who work alongside the team through group work activity, focussed work and family time.

Group work activity within the Family Support service has expanded throughout 2022, with a variety of groups being held across the authority that focus on bringing people together with shared aims; promoting positive social interactions; decreasing social isolation; upskilling parents, carers and young people; and, linking people to their local community. Groups that have ran throughout 2022-23 have included:

- **Conversation Café** – A weekly early morning get together for parents who may not be ready to attend parent and toddler groups. Focuses on parents with similar circumstances meeting to share strategies and offer peer support;
- **Parent Chat** – A 6 weekly parent's group offering help and advice with routine, boundaries, self-care and the importance of play;
- **Let's Get Organised** – Running in 6-8 week blocks, focuses on home conditions, improving day to day household management, improving hygiene in the home and building problem solving skills;
- **Dad's Group** – Aimed at dads and father figures, focusing on reducing social isolation, increasing knowledge and confidence in play, increasing knowledge of child development and dealing with challenging circumstances when parenting;
- **Boys Club** – Delivered April-July 2022, focusing on health and wellbeing activities for boys aged 10-15 years. Five young people attended regularly throughout the programme and took part in cooking, boxing and outdoor play opportunities in a safe, non-judgemental environment.





## Intensive Support

Over the last year the Intensive Support Team has continued to provide high quality support to our children, young people and families. The team continues to support a number of children and young people to remain in their communities, by offering a mix of tailored individual support, with group and activity opportunities for development and fun.

Two Social Workers were trained in Therapeutic Life Story Work (TLSW). This approach aims to not only help the young person understand their story, but also make sense and create meaning from their trauma, loss and experiences, as well as building resilience. TLSW provides increased opportunities for children and young people, and going forward the aim is for all staff to be trained in trauma informed approaches as well as working with play.

Group work and seasonal activities have continued to evolve, with an established calendar of group work now in place, offering opportunities for children and young people to express themselves through a range of activities from cooking to music. The Intensive Support team delivered a summer programme including gorge walking, cinema trips and gym passes for care experienced children and young people. By offering these activities, the team were able to divert a number of children and young people from being involved in negative behaviours and conflict with the law in their communities.

The team has continued to manage a number of challenges, including an increase in young people in conflict with the law and criminal exploitation of children and young people in their communities. To overcome some of these challenges they are working with Scottish Fire and Rescue to offer young people the opportunity to earn qualifications whilst becoming more informed about the fire service and participating in drills. This provides a range of learning, skills building and the opportunity to earn SQA, Saltire and John Muir Awards.

### **TLSW**

#### **Participant:**

*"What I like about it was that I know how to handle my feelings with breathing then letting it out."*



## Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

The UK national Government mandated Scotland to participate in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) to support unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). East Ayrshire has a maximum allocation of 23 children aged under 18 years. Due to the change in UK government approach, we required to quickly develop our approach to supporting children.

Currently, we are supporting nine UASC (under 18) across fostering, Children's Houses and independent tenancy support arrangements. We are also providing aftercare support to 11 young people over the age of 18. The young people that we support have come to East Ayrshire from a variety of countries including, Vietnam, Yemen, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt and Iran.

Our UASC team have provided and coordinated support and services to young people, linking them in with ESOL language classes, education, sports groups, health and care, cultural and religious connections, and community activities. We have also supported young people to manage their tenancies, daily living tasks and to access leisure activities in their local community.

## Outwith Authority Placements

The Outwith Placements Screening Group (OPSG) continues to meet monthly to consider recommendations from children's professions, lead professional Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, and Named Person Head/Depute Teachers for access to provision outwith East Ayrshire Council, using the expertise of these individuals to review requests and ensure all internal/local resources have been accessed. The OPSG reflects the commitment to the role of corporate parent, and continues to develop and respond to the changing, and sometimes challenging, needs of our children and young people who may require an external resource to meet their care and educational needs.

The pressure on financial resources in relation to outwith placements is evident as we move into 2023-24. This is due to increasing costs of residential placements; the reduced availability of foster carers and the resources required to support young people with complex needs; and, the increasing need and complexity of children and young people and the pressure this places on the services that support them.

## Child Protection

Throughout 2022-23 the Child Protection Committee has delivered Child Exploitation workshops and supported Child Protection Training as well as the Newly Qualified Social Workers Forum. The Committee has also supported the development of Whole Family Approach guidance and a refresh of practitioner's guidance to parents with problematic drug and alcohol use.

The Child Protection Committee has continued to support the joint work of the East, North and South Adult Protection Committees in developing a Pan-Ayrshire approach to implementing the revised National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021, as well as a Pan-Ayrshire set of Child Protection Procedures. As part of the process, the East Ayrshire Multi-Agency Implementation Group has carried out a range of self-evaluation activity to establish readiness and inform areas of work to be progressed.

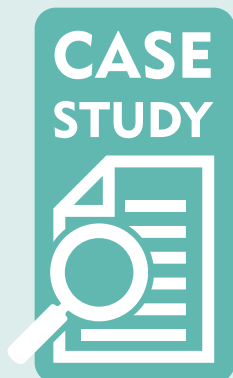
In September 2021, the Scottish Government published the National Guidance for Child Protection Committees Undertaking Learning Reviews, which replaces the National Guidance for Child Protection Committees Conducting a Significant Case Review (2015). Joint work between the three Ayrshire Child Protection Committees has been carried out during the reporting period to develop Pan-Ayrshire Learning Review Guidance, adapted from the national guidance. Work has now concluded to align the guidance to our Adult Protection Committees, leading to a single Pan-Ayrshire Guidance for Learning Reviews for all committees.

The Child Protection Committee has identified four priority areas for 2022-23:

- Continued implementation of Safe and Together;
- Child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation and trafficking;
- Robust self-evaluation and quality assurance; and
- Learning reviews.

## Self-Directed Support

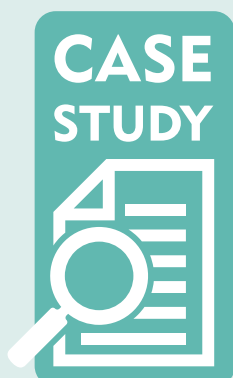
We continue to develop our approach to Self-Directed Supports in Children and Family Services. Currently, it is well embedded with our Children with Disabilities Services, and the last year has seen personal budgets allocated across Children and Family Localities to great effect.



Laurie is confident, gregarious, and outgoing, he has a strong love of football and has a season ticket to attend the Kilmarnock home games, which he does regularly. Laurie enjoyed attending school and also volunteers for a local hospital radio station. He plans to combine his love of football with his chosen career and wants to become a sports journalist, a career well suited to his confident, outgoing personality. Laurie was offered a place on a two-year course to study for a HND in Journalism, which could lead to a degree level in Sports Journalism at University, if he chooses.

Laurie has Cerebral Palsy and Autism and is a full time wheelchair user, he requires ongoing support to meet his everyday needs. Laurie decided he wants to live at home while he is studying at college, and is able to access a good level of ongoing support from his family as a result.

The Children & Disabilities' team and Adult Services worked with Laurie and his family to create his Self-Directed Support plan. Laurie's support plan provides access to a Personal Assistant to support him during non-teaching periods while he attends college. Laurie also uses some of his Self-Directed support budget to access ongoing fitness and physical strengthening to enable him to maintain independence and reduce aspects of his reliance on others, something that is very important to him.



Ellie is studious, and has worked very hard at school, she loves the sciences and is a straight 'A' student. Ellie would like her career to be in the field of molecular biology and has recently commenced studying for a degree at a university some distance away from her home. Ellie has Cerebral Palsy, which impacts her physical mobility and she uses crutches to get about. This limits what she is able to do as her hands are not free, making carrying anything such as a bag, opening doors, or preparing a meal very difficult. Ellie requires ongoing support to complete everyday tasks and to be able to access all the exciting life and career opportunities that she has open to her in the future.

The Children & Disabilities' team together with Adult Services worked together with Ellie and her family to create her support plan through Self-Directed Support. Ellie has been able to use her Self-Directed Support budget to commission a vital support service, ensuring that she is able to reside in her own accommodation while she attends university by supporting her with independent living tasks and allowing her to link into social activities. As a result, Ellie has been able to take up this opportunity that she has worked very hard for, and progress in her journey towards her career goal. Without the support plan, Ellie would not have been able to commence higher education or live independently.

Self-Directed Support has continued to be developed across the Partnership, with workforce development sessions taking place in March 2023. These two sessions, led by Matter of Focus, were aimed at social work and multi-disciplinary team to refresh and review SDS practice in order to build capacity within the organisation, with plans to further develop this in the upcoming year.



## Children's Services Wellbeing Model / HEART

The Children's Services Wellbeing Model is a transformational approach to improve how our children and families are supported in East Ayrshire. The vision is to ensure that children and families can access support at an early stage in their local community, in a way that challenges discrimination and stigma, with the model incorporating multi-disciplinary team working and the GIRFEC principles.

Considerable work has been undertaken to continue the development of this model in East Ayrshire. The model was given the name 'HEART' (Help Everyone At the Right Time), an idea suggested by a parent and chosen through a public vote. A range of local services (including: Education, Early Years, School Nursing, Health Visiting, CAMHS, Vibrant Communities, Social Work, Housing and Allied Health Professionals), have developed Community Teams, which formally started to come together on 4th April 2022. As HEART implementation progresses, it is anticipated that families and communities will experience the benefits in terms of early help and support.

*In March 2023 HEART was a Bronze Award Winner of the iESE Customer Focus Award.*

*This award recognises the organisation has delivered outstanding service to the people who use our services in our transformational approach to improve how children and families are supported in East Ayrshire. We have also demonstrated the link between excellent customer service and performance through working on a smaller scale, to root more services in the communities they serve and be more connected to partners in other services.*



The Public Sector Transformation Awards

## Third Sector Commissioning (Children and Families)

Our commissioned services are currently undergoing a full review to ensure they align with the changing needs of our communities, as well as the ambitions of The Promise, The Feeley Report, and EAHSCP Strategic Plan. Significant engagement and consultation has taken place with people who use our services, and they have been clear that they want accessible provisions at the right time and place.

There have been a number of developments emerging from this engagement to date. In particular, our parents and carers of children with disabilities and Additional Support Needs (ASN) have been fully involved in co-producing facilities which will benefit a significant number of families.

Parents also told us that the traditional short breaks model did not necessarily work for their families, and that they wanted an opportunity to enjoy a whole-family break together. We have supported a test of change of whole-family provision at the Tree Tops facility in the Dean Park. This will allow a number of families to enjoy a residential break together, fully supported by park rangers who will provide activities. The facilities on-site are fully compatible for children with disabilities, and includes a cinema for film nights. This resource should be launched later in 2023.

We also continue to commission Who Cares? Scotland to provide independent advocacy to care experienced children and young people in East Ayrshire.



# Overview of Adult Services in 2022-23

## Care Homes

Our partner care homes are a key element of the social care system, allowing people to live in a homely environment when they need support for personal and nursing care. Care homes have continued to be an area of unprecedented focus throughout 2022-23 and as part of oversight and support arrangements, the CSWO and HSCP have worked closely with the Independent Sector Lead to ensure that all available supports were offered inclusively and equitably to our partner care homes. This is a partnership approach we are proud of.

Our partner care homes have continued to receive a range of collaborative supports from East Ayrshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and partners during 2022-23.

Staff across our nineteen partner care homes continue to care for and support more than 650 residents, demonstrating outstanding commitment, compassion and resilience. We also recognise the continued flexibility and versatility of staff.

There have been continued challenges in recruitment for the sector, whilst auditing, reporting and general scrutiny have increased dramatically which has stretched existing resources further. Despite these challenges, our care home providers continue to grow and develop their staff by utilising the many resources made available by the Partnership.

## Mental Health Officer Service

The Mental Health Officer (MHO) Service continues to meet statutory demand and requirements in regards to the local authority's duties in respect of the Mental Health Act and Adults with Incapacity (AWI) legislation. The service has continued to experience significant challenges during 2022-23, with additional pressures relating to the back-log of AWI renewals, incoming new referrals, supporting decision-making processes and limited team capacity. In response, the MHO service is currently engaged in a rapid review of the current service that will help identify the future strategic direction and configuration of service that will ensure the safe delivery of statutory responsibilities in relation to mental health legislation and policy guidance, and to make recommendations on a sustainable model of service delivery.

East Ayrshire Council continues to support annual recruitment to the MHO Award to support the Retention and Recruitment Plan for the MHO service. Two candidates are currently nearing completion of the Post Graduate Certificate Mental Health Social Work Award, with qualification anticipated in July 2023 and a further two candidates will be supported to progress their applications in 2023/24.

Additionally, a qualified MHO has recently been appointed into the post of Practice Development Co-ordinator with a remit of supporting the mental health training agenda across the Social Work Workforce.



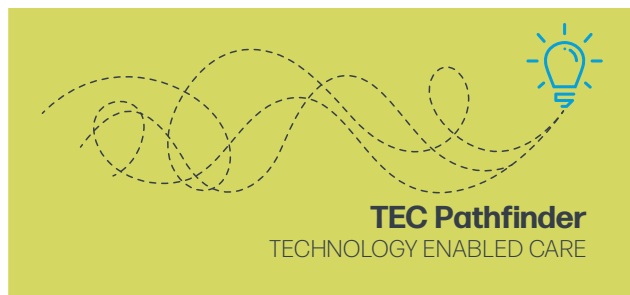
## Technology Enabled Care (TEC)

The Smart Supports Team have been part of the intensive induction process for all new Community Care Officers (CCOs), providing a 'show and tell' session to allow new workers to see different types of telecare equipment they may encounter in people's homes when delivering care, and recognise what role the equipment plays in supporting people to be independent. In 2022-23 there were 14 training sessions delivered to 96 new members of staff. This training will continue to be rolled out and expanded in the coming year to include bank staff as well.

The Smart Supports Peer Mentors have also continued to support colleagues in the Front Door service to consider TEC as part of someone's care plan for both early intervention and crisis management purposes. An annual development session will be offered to the Front Door service to provide a refresher on what is available and update on new TEC developments.

The TEC Pathfinder Programme continued throughout 2022-23 with the aim of transforming health and social care services for those with long term health conditions in the Irvine Valley. Adopting the Scottish Approach to Service Design the information gathered resulted in five solutions being identified to overcome challenges: Improving access to devices & wellbeing; having digital noticeboards in GP Surgeries; employing a dedicated Digital Health and Care Support Worker; having a 'TEC Backpack' available to demonstrate available technology in people's home, and; providing online multi-disciplinary group consultations to residents.

In February 2023 the Pathfinder team presented their solutions to the Irvine Valley community and partners, showcasing some of the digital solutions that had been trialled with service users and gathering feedback on the five options. The programme now moves into the implementation phase.



*In February 2023, East Ayrshire received the Bronze Digital Telecare Implementation Award in recognition of the progress made in our analogue to digital (A2D) transition project. The A2D team have worked hard over the past three years to transition the Community Alarm service and related TEC equipment, ensuring residents continue to maximise their independence and safety at home following the switchover.*



## Learning Disability Service

The Learning Disability service has continued to develop and grow throughout 2022-23 despite there being continued challenges in staffing and recruitment in addition to a trend of increasing referrals. Development days took place in August and October 2022 to support the development of the workforce.

The Empowerment Project was developed in 2022, aiming to **'empower people to make choices in relation to their lives; whilst promoting their own personal safety, happiness and healthy relationships'**, and was created in recognition of Adults with a Learning Disability in the local community, who may not have a safe place to talk about their lives, relationships, choices and other aspects of life that can be challenging.

The first women's peer group session was held on 1st March 2023, with plans to increase sessions and establish a men's group, as well as introducing a third mixed gender group, in the near future. The feedback from the women who attend the group has been extremely positive and they have clearly expressed that, not only do they enjoy attending the Empowerment Project, but that they truly believe it will be useful for them. The women who attend take an active role in identifying the discussion topics such as managing cold callers, gender, hate crimes, healthy relationships and mental health. The sessions are peer led, as opposed to facilitated, with no limits which strives to encourage participants to use the sessions as a safe space to ask questions, discuss their worries and increase their knowledge without fear. There have been some positive changes and evidence of personal safety and risk reduction following the initial sessions, with some women openly sharing how they have managed situations differently because of the Project discussions.

## Day Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities

There are three adult day service centres in East Ayrshire: Balmoral Road (Kilmarnock), Riverside (Cumnock) and the Sir Alexander Fleming Centre (Kilmarnock), which work with people to identify their personal interests and skills to provide person-centred support, activities and learning opportunities to meet their personal outcomes. All three day centres work collaboratively, regularly share information and support each other.

Restrictions remained in place for building based services throughout 2022 before easing in September. Staff recruitment has remained a challenge throughout last year following a decrease in staffing levels because of retirement and absence, successful recruitment is ongoing to resolve this. The teams are offered and have accessed wellbeing support from the Partnership Wellbeing Coordinator.

Throughout the pandemic individuals were offered alternative types of support whilst building based services were closed. Almost half of the Balmoral Road day service attendees chose to continue with alternative supports in the community. For some service users who have returned to building based services, the transition back to larger group settings has been difficult to adapt to. Our teams have continued to demonstrate their resilience and commitment to our service users and are supporting individuals through these changes, whilst organising and offering activities based on the needs and preferences of individuals and their families and carers.



### Parent:

*"My son is very happy at Balmoral centre, he gets stimulated and is well looked after by very kind and approachable staff."*

A range of activities were successfully delivered throughout the reporting period, including:

- Creation of a Pamper room for friends or individuals to relax and gather their thoughts;
- The Reflection Tree, painted by a local art student, where service users can write down thoughts or memories about someone special to them;
- Sir Alexander Fleming Centre opened their new kitchen to give individuals the opportunity to learn new life skills and explore healthy eating;
- Sensory activities, arts and crafts and physical activities resumed across the service;
- A range of outings took place, including shopping, lunches and bowling, and;
- Work experience and volunteering opportunities resumed.

### **Feedback on dance performance:**

*"It was amazing! You could see the joy on every one of the dancer's faces, as well as through their dance. The audience loved the performance, they were clapping and cheering throughout."*



## **Public Protection**

The Protection and Learning Team has continued to lead and support a wide range of essential social work, social care and multi-agency public protection priorities throughout the last year. Over 2022-23, the Protection and Learning Team has continued to support close integrated working across operation and strategic public protection work. The Protection and Learning Team has been central to the coordination and delivery of this work and it has been an excellent example of social work leadership supporting multi-agency protection practice.

The Protection and Learning Team led on an Ayrshire wide implementation of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). MARAC meetings support victims at risk of significant harm or death as a result of domestic abuse and as MARAC practice develops across Ayrshire there will be a focus on integrating the Safe and Together model. The East Ayrshire MARAC now takes place on a monthly basis and the Protection and Learning Team supports the multi-agency East Ayrshire Agency Representatives, including social work representatives from Children's, Justice and Adult services.





**1,200**  
referrals received

**400**  
prevented admissions

**500**  
early discharges

**Family member:**

*"We would not have managed this week without the support that was put in place by the ICT team – the referral was made Thursday late afternoon and at Friday lunchtime ICT staff were in my mum's house."*

**Family member:**

*"Thank you for the practical support and kindness you showed to both my mum and myself, it really is appreciated. You were always so friendly and helpful when we met and that meant a lot."*

## Supporting Independence

The Intermediate Care Team (ICT) continued to deliver vital care and support for older people to facilitate hospital discharge, reduce unnecessary hospital admission and promote independence at home through agreeing and working towards person-centred goals. The team received 1,200 referrals with approximately 400 unnecessary admissions to hospital prevented and over 500 early discharges supported for individuals. The team have also made significant contributions to Whole System Intervention events in acute hospitals in line with Discharge without Delay work, which has facilitated people returning home more quickly and influencing alternative pathways to allow people to return home directly rather than remaining in hospital or awaiting a rehabilitation bed.

The Community Alarm Emergency Response Team have continued to provide a 24 hour emergency care service for East Ayrshire residents in the event of a fall, unplanned care need and technical emergencies to maintain equipment. This service supports over 4000 people in East Ayrshire and frequently requires to work flexible to support the most vulnerable residents.

The Community Equipment and Adaptations Service has worked hard to overcome significant labour and material shortages experienced over the past few years and provide high quality responsive aids and adaptations. In April 2022, the Equipment store relocated to Balmoral Road, and has seen an increase of 30% in equipment referrals as Occupational Therapy waiting lists are being reduced. The number of requests for adaptations, e.g. ramps or wet floor showers, has increased by around 15% over the past year.

The Sensory Impairment Service has continued to work hard to provide equipment, rehabilitation and habitation support to service users with a hearing and/or visual impairment. Successful recruitment and additional resource into the service has seen a reduction in waiting lists. The service continues to work closely with partners in the third sector and the other Ayrshire authorities to deliver a person centred service.

The Social Care Review Team has worked tirelessly to complete over 700 person-centred reviews of residents in East Ayrshire with Care at Home Services as well as supporting numerous families and service users with the often difficult transition to long term care.



The Older People's Day Care Service welcomed service users back into day centres in 2022. While the outreach model was successful during the pandemic, the move back to day centres was appreciated due to increased social connectedness and relationships. Staff continue to go above and beyond to ensure service users have the best experience they can. A recent example of this was a Day Care Officer working on a sensory board and presenting it to service users with cognitive impairments to enjoy.

The Day Care staff regularly collect feedback from service users and carers, some recent feedback has been featured below:

**Service user:**

*"I feel the care here has helped me gain confidence and I'm more talkative. My family have noticed the difference too. I feel I have gained more friends and I feel I'm able to speak more."*

**Service user:**

*"It's making a big difference to me and to my wife. She mentioned my name for the first time today after being at the centre. She seems more alert. I'm very happy with everything as it's getting a bit more difficult at home."*

**Family member:** *"The Support Assistant has been my 'go to' and I know when they say they will sort something they will. It has been an extremely difficult time for our family and now having lost mum it's all about getting dad back up to some kind of normal and get him living again."*

The Home from Hospital Support Assistants have arranged care for over 1,500 people leaving hospital through restarting existing care packages or commencing new care and support packages. In order to achieve this they work flexibly to support people who are often in a time of great need. People and their loved ones have provided positive feedback.

**CASE STUDY**



Mrs A had been discharged home on Thursday and was struggling to mobilise when the carer from Home from Hospital attended on Thursday night. The Support Assistant completed a joint home visit on Friday morning, sourcing equipment to help Mrs A, including a hospital bed, to be delivered and set up that afternoon.





The Care at Home service supports over 1,800 people to live independently and safely in their own homes, often in extremely challenging situations.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Best Value Review of our Care at Home service continued throughout 2022 into 2023, with further improvements to systems, roles and responsibilities. New roles including Modern Apprentices have been created and recruited to, which will add capacity to the service and crucially provide development opportunities for people. In 2022-23 over 1,000,000 hours of care was provided in East Ayrshire, with over 85% of this being delivered by East Ayrshire's Care at Home service and the remainder by our three independent framework providers. Despite a challenging sector position where ability to recruit and retain sufficient staff remains a concern, staff have continued to provide high quality care to our most vulnerable residents with good humour and compassion.

## Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

Local authorities across Scotland have continued to see a high level of drug related deaths. The East Ayrshire the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) has expanded and increased opportunities for individuals to engage in treatment, support and recovery. The Recovery Hub, which is staffed by individuals in recovery, continues to go from strength to strength and has been recognised nationally as an excellent model of support. The Recovery Hub reaches across the whole of East Ayrshire, supported by a network of community based services and community outreach workers, all of whom have lived experience and are local to the area they are based.



This East Ayrshire Recovery community has grown significantly during 2022-2023 with over 800 members engaging via the Recovery Network Facebook group. The network offers opportunities for individuals to access a range of recovery activities across East Ayrshire from structured psychological interventions to leisure and recreation, exploring the opportunities that East Ayrshire is able to offer.

The expansion of locality community recovery and engagement opportunities has seen referrals to key treatment services increase by 14.7%. The ADP recognises however that some individuals are unable to engage in structured treatment and recovery support whilst living in their community which is why a robust process has been developed, with support from a social worker or MHO, to enable those most vulnerable to access out of area residential facilities.

Stigma around drug use and addiction has an impact on people seeking the support that they need to recover. Over the past year the ADP has taken positive steps to reduce stigma and have employed a dedicated Stigma Officer to engage with communities, focus on reducing stigma, and promote inclusion and engagement. The ADP also supported the organisation of a walk through Kilmarnock in August 2022 to remember all those who have died as a result of a drug related death and to highlight the impact that it has on survivors, with over 200 people attending the walk.



With the majority of drug related deaths involving opiate type drugs the ADP has further enhanced the roll out of the lifesaving drug Naloxone, training 30 members of staff within Health and Social care as first responders to drug overdoses.

Recognising that the involvement and engagement of those with lived experience of drug and alcohol use is central to delivering ADP activity they have now developed a lived experience panel that not only acts as a reference group but also as advisors in the ADP planning structures to ensure that member's voices are central to decision making.

## East Ayrshire Advocacy

The East Ayrshire Advocacy Service continued to advocate for the most vulnerable people in our communities to ensure that their voices were heard and their views were considered when decisions were being made about their lives. Representatives from the service have also participated in several of the Partnership's best value service reviews and continue to ensure that the views of people who rely on services are heard and considered when any changes to services are being considered.

Last year has seen referrals increasing significantly due to the current difficulties facing our communities such as cost of living increases and rise in fuel poverty. 1033 new referrals were received in 2022-23, compared to 895 in 2021-22, a 15% increase year-on-year, with a noticeable increase in people referred through Adults with Incapacity legislation (105 referrals) and Adult Support and Protection procedures (57 referrals).

The East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership provided additional funding which has allowed the service to recruit a new member of staff to further develop and improve the experience of people subject to Adult Support & Protection Legislation. Their role is to gather feedback from individuals, families and carers who have been involved in the process and report findings to the Adult Protection Improvement Sub-Group.



### CASE STUDY



Mr T was referred to East Ayrshire Advocacy by his mental health practitioner, he had recently lost his mum with whom he had lived, and due to his name not being on the tenancy agreement had been advised by the local authority that he may have to move out of the house. Advocacy worked alongside the local housing agency to ensure Mr T's name was added to the tenancy agreement, explaining how detrimental this would be for Mr T if he were to leave the house, and as a result he was able to remain at the property. The house also needed a variety of repairs, Advocacy assisted with calls to the local authority and these have now been carried out.

Mr T relies solely on benefits and was not able to pay for things beyond his basic needs, so when his oven broke this left him unable to prepare meals and maintain a healthy balanced diet, Advocacy applied for a community care grant for a new oven for Mr T. Advocacy was also able to support Mr T to switch bills for the property to his name and worked with Lemon Aid to pay off the outstanding debt that Mr T's mum had with their energy supplier and secure him £324 of credit to his energy account. All of the support from Advocacy and other agencies took the pressure off Mr T during a very difficult time and helped give him a better start to managing his property.

## Social Work Out of Hours Service

The Ayrshire Out of Hours Social Work (OOHSW) team continues to provide a 365 days per year cover, including evenings, weekends, and all public holidays to East, North and South Ayrshire. The team dealt with over 7,000 referrals during 2022-23, of these 2,300 being in respect of East Ayrshire residents. The OOHSW team have seen additional challenges over the last year due to the cost of living crisis where there have been higher demands for financial support for utilities and food from residents.

The team continue to review their processes and referral paperwork, working closely with our partners to ensure a streamlined referral process. This included merging three separate referral forms into one.

There continues to be an increase in digital resilience as staff are now able to have access to all three local authorities recording systems remotely. This offers flexible working and supports business continuity.

The team also continues to maintain strong and positive working relationships with colleagues in Police Scotland, health and education sectors, both locally and nationally.



## CASE STUDY



During the extreme cold spell in December 2022, there was significant demand for the Out of Hours service as a high volume of referrals were received due to individuals having burst pipes and their homes being flooded. A neighbour of an older gentleman contacted the team advising he lived alone and had no family to support him. He was not known to services, had lost all electrical power within his house and ceilings were down in some of his rooms. A home visit was carried out and it was quickly established he could not remain within the property. Due to the high volume of accommodation demands within East Ayrshire Housing department, the team was able to secure accommodation within a local hotel for this gentleman. He did not require any medical assistance but it was evident he was distressed after this incident. Staff supported him to pack some belongings and accompanied him to the accommodation, making a few visits over the course of the evening to check on him, this was followed up with a call the following morning. A referral was made to the day services to ensure he was able to access further support.

## East Ayrshire Violence Against Women Partnership

The CSWO in East Ayrshire has remained as Chair of the multi-agency Violence Against Women Partnership. Funding was secured in early 2022 through East Ayrshire Council for a full-time Violence Against Women Lead Officer, further enhancing the Protection & Learning Team. This represents a commitment to addressing gender based violence within East Ayrshire. The Violence Against Women Partnership supports all aspects of delivery of the EAVAWP Strategic Plan and there has been significant progress on actions & outcomes in 2022-23.

Throughout the reporting period there have been a range of developments and collaborative multi-agency work supported by the EAVAWP including:

- Implementing Trauma Informed Contact and Care (TICC) across all schools in Ayrshire to ensure children exposed to domestic abuse are provided a wide range of support in and out of school;
- Establishing Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) to improve the safety of victims of domestic abuse who are at risk of significant harm or death;
- Piloting the Equally Safe at School resource, entitled 'A whole school approach to preventing gender based violence' in St Joseph's and Kilmarnock Academies, establishing senior pupils trained as mentors to deliver the programme to their peers.

A highlight of EAVAWP's activities was the 16 Days of Action to Eradicate Gender Based Violence in November and December 2022. The annual Reclaim the Night March was held in December 2022, and a face to face multi-agency conference had over 120 practitioners in attendance. The theme of the conference was 'What next for violence against women & girls?' and featured a range of national and local inputs demonstrating successful work in relation to both prevention and support for victims of domestic abuse.



*"I was totally blown away by the wonderful ladies who spoke of their experiences with the Star project. Such amazing, strong women."*



## Tackling Poverty

Tackling poverty and inequality is one of the six priorities identified in the [East Ayrshire Council Strategic Plan 2022-2027](#) and outlines the commitment to work with communities and partners over the next five years to tackle the causes and effects of poverty and inequality, as well as understand the impact that recent years have had on communities and services. The [2020/21 East Ayrshire Local Child Poverty Action Report](#) outlines key activities undertaken locally to tackle child poverty in East Ayrshire. It sets out planned activity to meet challenging child poverty reduction targets. This work resonates with Human Rights and Social Justice, upon which social work practice is founded.

The Financial Inclusion Team (FIT), together with its partners, has continued to support East Ayrshire residents to maximise their benefit entitlement in what has been a challenging year for many due to the Cost of Living crisis. In 2022-23 the financial gains achieved for people in East Ayrshire totalled £4,981,700.68, an increase of over £1.5m on the previous reporting period, thus taking the cumulative total amount of financial gains since the establishment of the team in November 2013 to £40,151,325.68.

Over the past year, the EA Money team received a record 3,089 referrals and advice enquiries, an 18.7% increase from the previous year. The majority of these referrals are health related, people living with long-term illness or disability. 470 individuals and families have been supported by the Community team, achieving financial gains of £2,707,260, a 15% increase on the previous reporting period.

The In-Court Advice (ICA) team based at Kilmarnock Sherriff Court have reported a notable increase in the average level of rent arrears during 2022-23, working with service users with a combined arrears total of £268,354.04. ICA staff supported 108 new tenants, and achieved financial gains for clients totalling £81,944, however with the Scottish Government's moratorium on evictions due to end on 30th September 2023, the level of demand for this service is expected to further increase.

The Employability FIT have continued to support people from low income households, workless households and lone parents to overcome training and employment barriers, achieving £248,661.76 in financial gains during this reporting period. In addition, a partnership with East Ayrshire Citizens Advice Bureau saw the project fund three trainee Money Advisors posts.

The school-based pathfinder project has grown, with the Council agreeing to expand the project to all secondary schools in East Ayrshire for one year, serving the local primary school and early year centre communities as well. In this academic year the project has generated £121,011.77 for families with children. Additionally, the Early Years FIT project has supported families with children from pre-birth to pre-school by ensuring their income is fully maximised and has supported 260 families to date, achieving £479,113.19 of additional income.

The FIT also launched the Welfare Advice in Health Partnerships project in August 2022 with staff working within identified GP Practices, obtaining £215,527.62 of financial gains for 148 patients. The project will continue to be rolled out to a further five GP practices throughout 2023. The Macmillan Project also continues to receive a high number of referrals, generating financial gains of £1,048,232 for people living with cancer, representing an increase of 32.7% on last financial year.



## Unpaid Carers

East Ayrshire Carers Centre has continued to provide vital support to young and adult unpaid carers throughout 2022-23, offering individual and peer support; information and advice; advocacy; breaks away from caring; and, benefit maximisation.

In October 2022 a project to support unpaid carers during hospital discharge was restarted and two new Hospital Discharge Carer Link Workers were recruited to support the discharge process and identify unpaid carers. The Link Workers have been working closely with the Discharge without Delay teams within University Hospital Crosshouse and University Hospital Ayr and have helped ensure that carers are involved in the planned discharge of their loved ones, as well as identify what support they may require from statutory and voluntary services to ensure they are fully supported in their caring role.

## Adult Support and Protection (ASP)

The HSCP's Protection and Learning Team has been central to the coordination and delivery of numerous multi-agency protection work throughout the reporting period.

Improvement activity has been a key focus for the team in 2022-23:

- Single agency ASP audits were implemented in November 2022 to support improvements regarding quality assurance and oversight of practice, which has been met with a good response from Team Managers in both completion rates and standards of completed audits.
- A staff survey was conducted in October 2022 to identify specific areas of staff support and development and follow-up consultation sessions were held relating to the themes highlighted in the responses covering staff support, communication of developments, training and knowledge, and accessibility of guidance. Feedback is currently being used to develop future plans.
- New guidance was developed for NHS staff on attending ASP case conferences with the aim of improving attendance by health professionals to 80%. Following the introduction of the guidance attendance improved by 7.5%, with the current attendance rate now 70%. This will continued to be monitored and new approaches developed if necessary in the coming months to boost and sustain improvement.
- During the reporting period it recognised that we needed to improve the way we gathered the lived experiences of Adults at Risk of Harm in order to inform improvement activity. In partnership with East Ayrshire Advocacy, a post was developed to capture lived experience through accessible interviews, with the service launching in January 2023. Improvement activity will be identified for the 2023-24 period once a full year of data collection has taken place.



**ASP Referrals  
in 2022-23:**

**354**  
**Adult at Risk**  
**referrals,**  
*increase*  
*of 31%*

**2,733**  
**adult concern**  
**referrals,**  
*decrease*  
*of 9%*

*"We were told at every stage what would be happening;  
we were listened to and given good advice and support."*



# Overview of Justice Services in 2022-23

## Adult Justice Services

The prison-based Social Work team in HMP Kilmarnock have been involved in the roll out of the Throughcare Assessment for Release on Licence (TARL) report and guidance throughout the last year. TARL was developed in response to an identified need for an integrated approach to Social Work submissions from prison-based and community-based Social Work to the parole board for the people who are serving long-term sentences. The Social Work team in the prison have linked with community Social Workers from across Scotland to complete these unified assessments of risk and need, and where appropriate, consideration of risk of serious harm.

As courts continue to work through the backlog of cases that resulted from the pandemic, the community-based social work teams have seen a large increase in assessments and reports required for courts in this reporting period. The team continues to build trusting relationships with the people they support to ensure that basic needs are met, that they are supported to improve their life chances and work to reduce the risk of further offending.

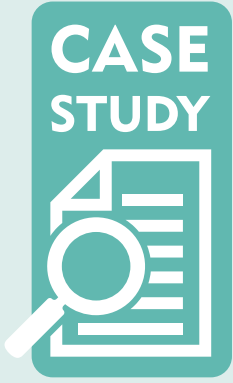
Unpaid Workers undertake key community projects identified for the community and achieve positive outcomes. They have been responsible for maintaining the baby remembrance area at Kilmarnock Cemetery, including painting fencing, edging pathways and weeding the area. They have also undertaken tasks in the larger cemetery area, taking back overgrown pathways and generally making the cemetery a more accessible and usable space for those who wish to pay their respects. This work was greatly appreciated by our colleagues in Bereavement Services as without the support of Unpaid Work teams, the work to improve the area would not have been achieved. Our service users undertaking Unpaid Work valued the work they were doing and looked forward to their shift each week as they saw the purpose and benefit of their efforts in improving this area. They also undertook the same support at Auchinleck Cemetery which drastically improved the look of the area.



### **Team Leader Bereavement Services/Business Support:**

*"The work they have carried out is amazing, what a difference they are making to the appearance of the cemetery. I can't thank you and all involved for making this happen!! Team work makes the dream work."*

In December 2022 the Unpaid Work teams worked in partnership with Crossroads Hub to learn how to forage for natural materials to make Christmas wreaths. Upon completion, the teams donated these to a beneficiary of Unpaid Work throughout the year, this included those who received the gardening service, the Scout Hall in Dalmellington, the Foodbank and The Richmond Fellowship Scotland. Unpaid Work service users were able to see the gratitude of those who received the wreaths and some used their wreaths to honour their own loved ones who had passed away. Carrying out this type of work allows the service users to think of others, the perspective of the victim and the impact on the community.



James had prior convictions all of a violent nature and was made subject to a Community Payback Order (CPO) for twelve months. He had a diagnosis of a rare, complex and lifelong condition, which impacted many aspects of his life and was formally assessed as lacking capacity. At the start of his Order, James's family were struggling with his behaviour and felt they could no longer have him at home due to his violence.

Lynda was allocated as James's Justice Social Worker and she worked with him for the full twelve months, building a good and trusting relationship, James was able to open up to Lynda and identify some of his triggers. Due to the complex nature of James's needs, structured sessions were adapted to incorporate his presenting needs and risks, but also to ensure that work was tailored to his level of understanding.

James was supported on a holistic basis to work on his anger management, self-regulatory skills, conflict resolution, problem solving, and consequential thinking. He was supported to practice mindfulness, and work on sleep strategies as a means of managing his mood and subsequent behaviours. James enjoyed the work and identified some of the things that he needed help with. Preparatory work was done to get him ready for challenges such as respite, which had been identified as a trigger point for him.

Lynda developed a good relationship with James's family, where they could talk about any concerns they had and identify areas they felt James would benefit from working on. As the order progressed James's family would feed back to Lynda that his behaviour within the family had changed a lot and they were no longer seeing angry outbursts. He began to spend more time with the family and appeared to be enjoying this. James became able to verbalise when he felt stressed or angry and was able to use the coping strategies he had learned. By the time the order ended, James was regularly attending respite, giving both him and his family a break from each other. At home relationships were greatly improved and James starting joining family activities such as baking with his mum.

Within Justice Services we use a person centred approach to support people, with James at the centre of all the work that was undertaken. This allowed James to build a strong and trusting working relationship with his worker, develop key life skills and improve his relationships with his family. James was able to complete his order successfully engaging with all appointments, and has not committed any further offences.

## MAPPA

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) is the framework which joins up the agencies who manage individuals who are subject to the notification requirements created by the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The fundamental purpose of MAPPA is public safety and the reduction of serious harm. The 2003 act places a statutory function on police, local authorities, and the Scottish Prison Service (the responsible authorities) to establish joint arrangements for assessing the risk from sex offenders including the effective sharing of information. Health Services are included in relation to Mentally Disordered Restricted Patients.

As a lead agency, East Ayrshire Social Work Justice Service is responsible for managing individuals while they are subject to statutory supervision. Once this ends the Police become the lead agency and together provide robust risk assessments and management plan to address the identified risks.

The 3 management levels in MAPPA are:

- **Level 1:** Routine Risk Management – mainly single agency;
- **Level 2:** Multi-Agency Risk Management;
- **Level 3:** Multi Agency Public Protection Panels (MAPPP).



Those managed under these arrangements may be in custody or community and the numbers of those subject to these arrangements are detailed below.

Number of MAPPA cases in East Ayrshire at 31 March 2023	
Level 1	208 (150 community, 84 prison)
Level 2	24 (5 community, 19 prison)
Level 3	1 (0 Community, 1 Prison)
Total	234

Justice social work services works with individuals to address their harmful behaviour to reduce the risk of future offending and through robust risk management plans along with partners enhance community safety.

There were a total of 54 MAPPA referrals received in 2022-23, of which three were not progressed and two were repeat referrals. Over the reporting period there were 221 Registered Sex Offender (RSO) notifications received, an average of 55 per quarter, of these, 62% were new cases to MAPPA.

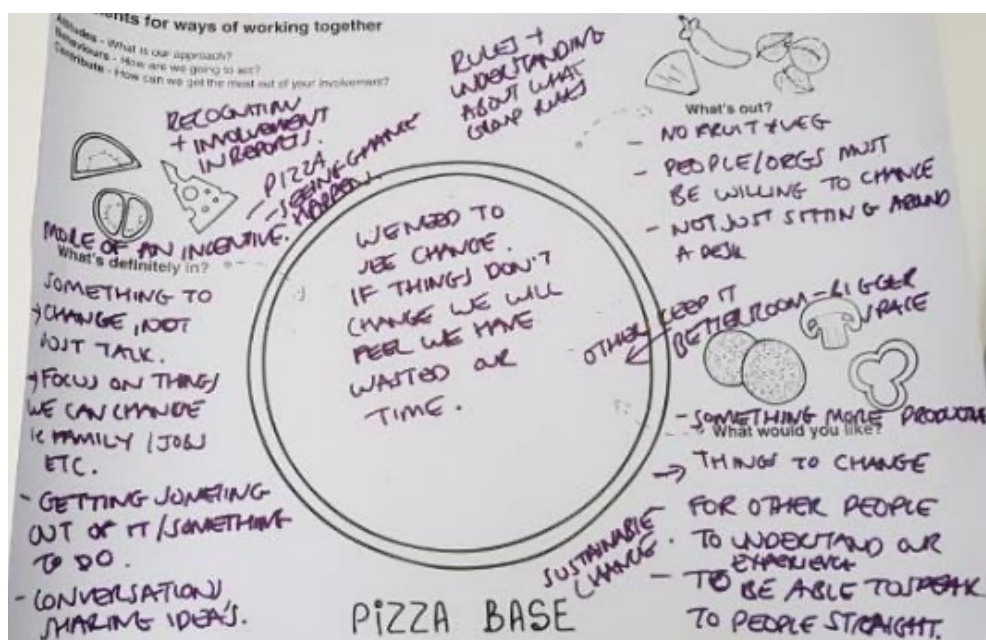
## Whole System Approach

The Whole System Approach aims to divert children and young people away from formal Court processes and adult justice systems; recognising that these systems do not meet the needs of our children and young people. The team work in partnership with the Police, Procurator Fiscal and local solicitors to provide additional information regarding children & young people to help with decision making and consideration of alternatives to prosecution. The Whole System Multi-agency team have worked to replicate the national agenda of promoting Children's Rights and ensure that children who are in conflict with the law are still treated as children.

The team have been working with partner agencies to address concerns reported by the public around our children and young people and have organised activities to help provide more opportunities for the children. There has been an increase in concerns around exploitation of children and we have been actively monitoring and trying to address these through linking with Intensive Support, Vibrant Communities, Police, Action for Children, Education and the local Fire Service.

Our Whole System Coordinators have worked to ensure that every child and young person under the age of 21 is offered support through Court. Over the last year they have supported 67 children and young people following their appearance at Court and provided post Court support. Some of these children and young people have been successfully diverted through remittal to the children hearing and the diversion from the prosecution process.

The voice of children and young people has also been a key area of focus for the Whole System Approach. Since June 2022, six young adults aged 18-25 have been supported to participate in a national study through the Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII), exploring young adults' experiences of the Justice system and co-designing more positive services in the local area. The group identified issues and stigmatisation in employment, making it difficult for them to gain experience and career opportunities. As a result, we have invited our partners within local community employment services to listen to the feedback and help create solutions to the issues raised. This group continues to meet facilitated by Whole System Coordinators.



Children in secure care and alternatives to secure care have also been supported through the Whole System Approach, developing guidance around this area and through providing continued advice and support to colleagues on supporting children and young people effectively.

Members of the team have been supported to attend and participate in several national forums. These include: Speech and Language; a Postgraduate Degree in Children & Young People in Conflict with the Law; and, Care and Risk Management (Train the Trainers). They have also undertaken risk assessment/interventions with children & young people including START-AV (Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability – Adolescent Version) and AIM3 (Assessment Intervention Moving On 3).

## Challenges and Improvements

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As many aspects of daily life have returned to normal, the impact of the pandemic on people prevails in our communities and workforce. At the heart of everything we do is the wellbeing of our residents and workforce and they are core to our recovery. Our programme of wellbeing support has continued throughout 2022-23 and we continue to support our communities to recover and tackle new challenges as a result of the increasing cost of living. From an operational perspective and across all service areas recruitment and retention has and continues to be a challenge and this highlights that the need for ongoing high quality staff wellbeing support remains high.

We have continued to experience pressure on our services as a result of budget pressures and ongoing recruitment challenges, however, staff at all levels have demonstrated strong resilience and commitment to maintaining a high standard of service delivery to support and safeguard people who use services. Several of our services focused on recruitment and maximising our support to communities throughout the last year and the publication of our Workforce Plan 2022-25, detailed fully in [Section 7](#), outlines the steps we are taking to 'Plan; Attract; Train; Employ and Nurture' our workforce.

In September 2022 we held a series of Multi-disciplinary Team development sessions with staff from across the Partnership to share learning, strengthen professional relationships and reflect on best practice. These sessions have supported the Partnership renew its focus on Multi-Disciplinary Team working. Other services and key areas, such as The Promise, have also delivered dedicated development sessions throughout the reporting period with the aim of improving understanding and knowledge, building skills and improving relationships.

One area of Multi-Disciplinary working that we have continued to develop over 2022-23 has been our HEART model in children's services. We now have established community teams who are working to ensure that children and families can access support at an early stage in their local community, in a way that challenges discrimination and stigma, and this will continue to be developed and implemented over the coming months.

Our performance has shown improvements in a number of areas over the reporting period, including a consistently high proportion of Social Work reports to Court by the due date, unpaid work requirements being successfully completed within timescales, and a reduction in the number of people readmitted to hospital within 28 days compared to 2021-22. We also recognise, however, that there are a number of improvement areas we need to focus on in 2023-24, such as increasing the number of report submissions to the Scottish Children's Reporter by the due date; supporting recovery to reduce drug use and drug deaths; and working on increasing the number of foster carers in East Ayrshire amongst others.

It is evident that whilst all services across the Partnership are facing similar challenges, they are committed to continuous improvement and supporting the development of our workforce and to supporting our communities in a holistic and person-centred way.

# Risk Management

Detailed service level risk registers are well established across the Partnership portfolio and represent a key component within our [Service Improvement Plans](#). The risk registers are managed on the Pentana Performance system and contain information relating to key areas of risk, including: detailed descriptions, risk matrix scores (likelihood and severity), risk status and mitigating actions.

The risks identified reflect strategic and service related issues, and are reviewed on a quarterly basis at management meetings. A process is in place for escalating risks that cannot be tolerated, treated or transferred through to service level registers, the partnership register and corporate risk registers. The service level and wider HSCP risk registers are regularly presented to the Risk Management Committee and the Audit and Performance Committee oversee an annual Partnership Assurance Report.



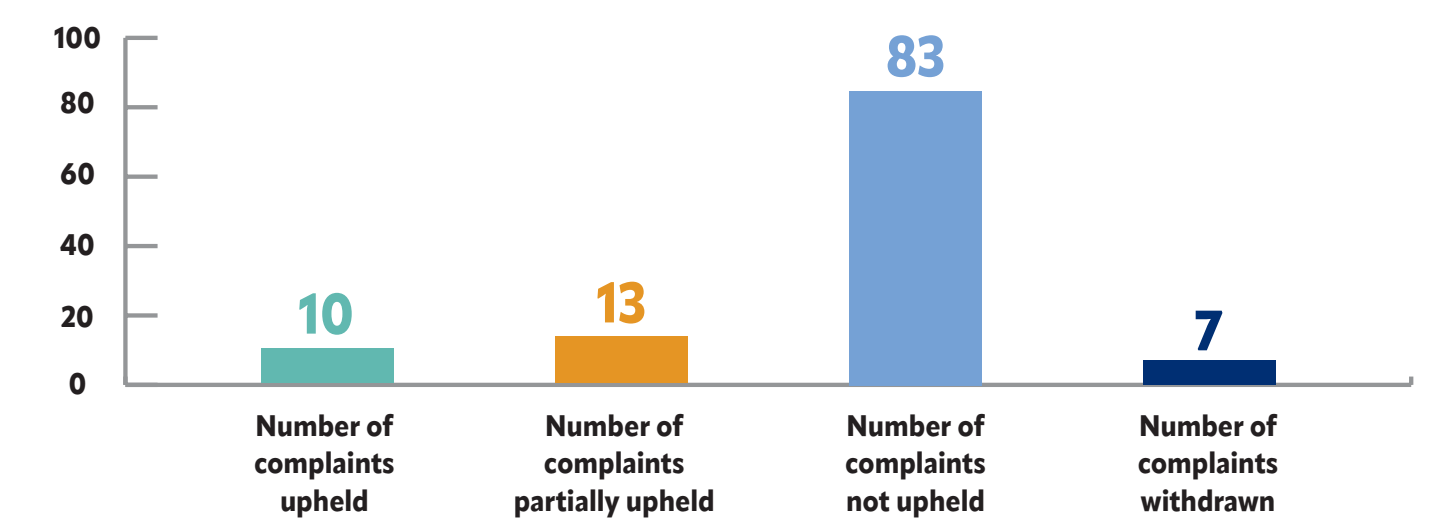
# Complaints and Feedback

Our Complaints Handling Procedure is based on the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman’s standard model. The table below displays complaints closed at each stage over the last five years.

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Stage 1	60	46.2%	63	48%	44	43.6%	57	52.3%	70	58.3%
Stage 2	67	51.5%	61	46%	54	53.5%	33	30.3%	38	31.7%
Escalated *	28	(21.5%)	3	2.3%	20	(19.8%)	14	12.8%	5	4.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>97.7%</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>93.9%</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>97.1%</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>95.4%</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>94.2%</b>
Open Complaints**	3	2.3%	8	6.1%	3	2.9%	5	4.6%	7	5.8%

\* These are complaints ‘escalated’ from Stage 1 before being resolved at Stage 2. They are a subset of all Stage 2 complaints. For the purposes of calculating totals, only discrete Stage 1 and Stage 2 figures are required. From 2021/22 onwards, escalated complaints are a separate category.

# Complaint Outcomes: 2022/23



As at 31 March 2023, 120 complaints were recorded: 7 complaints remained open, and 113 closed. Across all stages, 8.8% of complaints were upheld, 11.5% partially upheld, 73.5% not upheld and 6.2% were withdrawn.

We view complaints as a means of feedback and an opportunity for self-reflection as we investigate them, and they inform continuous improvement and learning.

2022-23 is the second year of complaints handling under the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) revised approach whereby social work and social care complaints are handled under the Local Authority Complaints Handling Procedure.

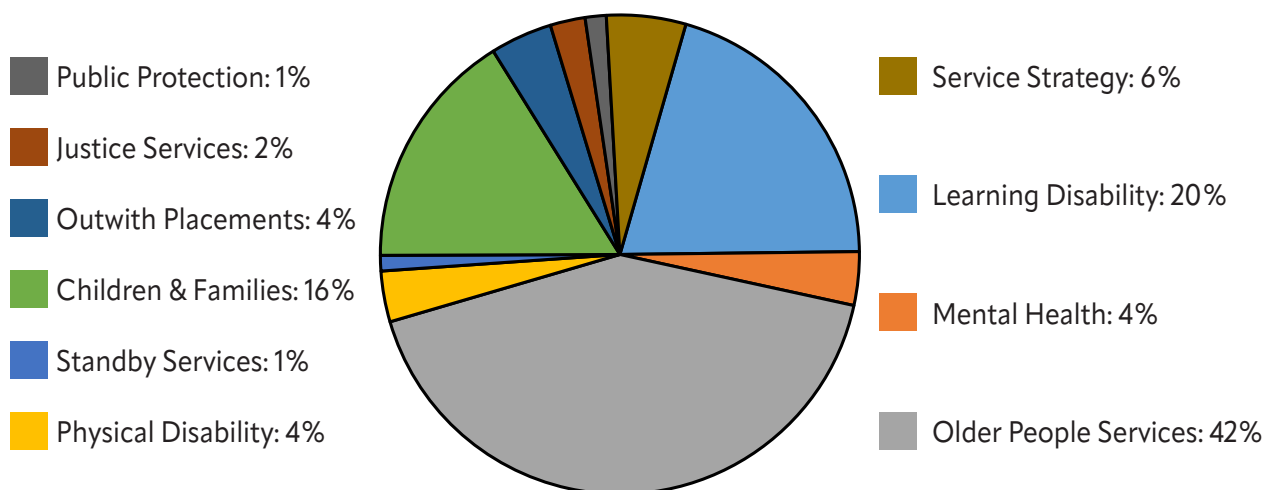
Complaints provide the Partnership the opportunity to reflect on good practices, and further build on them. Two aspects of handling complaints, in 2022-23, have provided opportunities for learning:

- **Timescales:** As anticipated, the number of complaints have increased in the last year. Complaints have been handled within the given timescales at each stage. Although this is positive, the average time to close a complaint indicates that some improvement around complaint management is required in this area, where complaints that should have been closed, have remained open.
- **Reviews:** There was a significant reduction in complaints escalated in 2022-23, from 15 in 2021-22 to 6 in this reporting period. Of those that that were reviewed, only one was upheld due to the complexity of the complaint. The SPSO also provided decisions on six escalated to them, with two complaints originating in the reporting period. None of these complaints progressed to formal review and the Partnership received positive feedback on the response it had provided and changes made.

## 6. Resources

The overall net social work budget within the Health and Social Care Partnership is £107,982 million. The gross spend (after income from NHS and service charges) is £132.535 million, which breaks down into the following services:

### Gross Budgeted Expenditure 2022/23



The table below highlights gross budgeted expenditure over the last three financial years:

Service Area	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Community Care	79.374	83.757	93.209
Children and Families	23.463	24.202	26.732
Justice	2.762	2.802	2.953
Public Protection	1.459	1.687	1.937
Service Strategy	6.114	6.357	7.704
<b>Totals</b>	<b>113.172</b>	<b>118.805</b>	<b>132.535</b>

The current and forthcoming period is anticipated to be an enormously challenging one due to the extent of real terms public sector budget reductions. This necessitates essential services to be secured with less money, while striving to maintaining service quality and coping with rising and diverse demands.

In order to achieve financial balance, whilst continuing to deliver on key outcomes and legislative requirements, the Social Work Service has achieved significant savings in excess of £30 million between 2010-11 and 2022-23. Approved savings achieved over the last five years by service area are displayed below:

Service Area	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Community Care	3.191	0.860	1.345	1.528	1.672
Children & Families	0.436	0.337	0.455	0.037	0.000
Justice	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Service Strategy	0.118	0.233	0.116	0.011	0.000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3.745</b>	<b>1.430</b>	<b>1.916</b>	<b>1.576</b>	<b>1.672</b>



In 2022-23, the Social Care Service was £1.898m under the approved annual budget. Going forward into 2023-24, the challenges remain consistent, particularly:

- Unpredictable pressures on Outwith Placements;
- Core service dependency on non-recurring budgets;
- Increasing demand that cannot be funded;
- Inflationary pressures;
- Required levels of cash releasing efficiency savings, and;
- Continuing impact of the pandemic.

The ongoing challenge for delivering Social Work services is evident across Scotland. In East Ayrshire, there has been sustained effort in maximising all opportunities to make savings which have minimal impact on frontline service delivery and staff. Our work is evidencing the potential for reducing demand pressures. Many of these approaches are dependent on the practice and approaches of partner agencies. Partnership approaches are essential in achieving the provision of quality services within the resources available.

It is clear that, in common with other organisations, Social Work services provided by the HSCP will not be the same as they were prior to the pandemic. This will impact on our workforce, the way we deliver services, and what and where services are delivered.

The CSWO has involvement in aspects of budget setting and financial decision-making related to the Social Work element of the Partnership's budget. The CSWO seeks to identify and advise on any budgetary issues affecting the operational delivery of statutory Social Work services and any challenges facing the profession, including the impact on statutory duties and the impact of financial decision making on the workforce. A total revenue budget of £108.040m was delegated to the East Ayrshire IJB for 2023-24, including £8.796m allocated from the Health Portfolio from 2016-17 onwards to ensure improved outcomes in social care and is allocated to IJBs from NHS Boards.

Integration Joint Board	£m	£m
2022/23 Approved budget allocation		100.037
Baseline adjustments		6.013
<b>2022/23 Revised budget</b>		106.050
Adjustments to Scottish Government funding		(0.125)
<b>2021/22 Revised base per Fin.Circ. 9/2021</b>		<b>105.925</b>
Additional Scottish Government funding (£95m):		
Adult Social Care Workers Living Wage base-line to £10.90 (£100m)	2.382	
Free Personal and Nursing Care uprating (£15m)	0.192	
Interim Care non-recurring (£20m)	(0.464)	
<b>Sub total: A</b>	<b>2.110</b>	
East Ayrshire Council funding:		
Public Protection Learning Reviews	0.005	
<b>Sub total: B</b>	<b>0.005</b>	
<b>Additional delegated resources: A + B</b>		<b>2.115</b>
<b>2022/23 Budget allocation - approved</b>		<b>108.040</b>

Work has been undertaken through the Budget Working Group to identify spending commitments against the £2.115m additional delegated resources for 2023-24. Commitments include "must do" commitments, which require to be funded, as well as a range of unavoidable national and local cost pressures.

After taking account of the various pressures, offset by additional funding, there are net identified pressures totalling £4.918m. These pressures will be offset by "flat cash" offsets (pressures to be absorbed within baseline funding allocations of £1.862m, as well as additional savings proposals totalling £3.056m).

A summary of commitments / pressures against the additional funding allocation is presented below.

	Council Commissioned Services (£m)
<b>Pressures:</b>	
Baseline pressures	2.308
Additional cost pressures	5.080
Third Sector grant funding	0.019
Cross Charging uplift (Resource Transfer / JP)	(0.374)
Total identified pressures (gross)	7.033
<b>Funding:</b>	
Scottish Government "pass through" funding	(2.110)
Partner funding contribution	(0.005)
Total funding	(2.115)
<b>Total identified pressures (net) (A)</b>	<b>4.918</b>
<b>Flat cash offsets:</b>	
Children's Health, Care and Justice	(0.789)
Community Health and Care – Locality	(1.026)
Community Health and Care – Wellbeing	(0.047)
<b>Total flat cash offsets (B)</b>	<b>(1.862)</b>
<b>Savings proposals:</b>	
Children's Health, Care and Justice	(0.465)
Community Health and Care – Locality	(1.241)
Community Health and Care – Wellbeing	(0.830)
Public Protection	(0.020)
Business Support	(0.050)
General cross cutting review	(0.050)
Transformational Change Programme	(0.400)
<b>Total savings proposals (C)</b>	<b>(3.056)</b>
<b>Balance (A+B+C)</b>	<b>0.000</b>

The £108.040m budget allocation increases to £110.127m when social care Integrated Care projects and delegated functions managed out with the HSCP are included.

	£m
<b>2023/24 Budget allocation</b>	<b>108.040</b>
Delegated functions:	
Equipment and adaptations (HRA)	1.285
Health Improvement (Vibrant Communities)	0.307
Social Work Transport (Facilities and Property Management)	0.495
<b>2023/24 Total budget allocation</b>	<b>110.127</b>

Further work will be required over the course of 2023/24 to establish and evaluate the impact and re-design services to mitigate pressures as part of transformation work already being taken forward through our Strategic Commissioning Board.

The Council savings proposals £3.056m include £0.400m related to cross-cutting reviews and service transformation, with multi-year savings aligned to investment cases and service re-design.

# 7. Workforce

## Workforce Planning

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The social work and social care workforce is our greatest asset and effective workforce planning is crucial in ensuring we have the right people in the right place with the right skills at the right time to deliver a high standard of health and social care services. The Partnership has a dedicated Workforce Planning Lead to oversee this process.

Workforce planning is directed towards supporting the delivery of the objectives of the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2021-30 and to meet the key challenges of recovery, growth and transformation identified in the National Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care in Scotland. As we continue to move towards growth and transformation we aim to increase staffing capacity, develop the skills of our workforce and provide enhanced opportunities for career entry and progression.

Some of the key workforce planning highlights from 2022-23 were:

- Publication of the Workforce Plan 2022-25;
- Establishment of the HSCP Workforce Planning Board;
- Introduction of the Social Work Trainee Scheme;
- Recruitment activities under the Care at Home Workforce Planning Group;
- Extended Graduate Internship and Modern Apprenticeship Schemes.

Key to the delivery of our objectives is our East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Workforce Plan 2022-25. The workforce plan aligns to the 5 Pillars of the workforce journey: Plan; Attract; Train; Employ and Nurture.

Key priorities of the workforce plan 2022-25 are:

- To ensure that workforce planning is evidence based, that we are investing in a talent pipeline to meet future needs;
- Our workforce are equipped with the knowledge and skills to deliver our services, and;
- We will grow our workforce and that we will be an inclusive, empowering and supportive employer.

The Health and Social Care Partnership Workforce Planning Board provides a forum for discussion, information, professional guidance and decision making on workforce planning across the Partnership. The Board will lead on ensuring progress is made towards delivering the Workforce Plan 2022-25, promoting creativity and innovation in shaping our workforce and ensuring workforce planning is robust, evidence based and linked to service and financial planning.

Significant investment has been made to improve career pathways in Social Work and we have developed and implemented our Social Work Trainee Programme. Six employees of the Partnership have so far received support and funding to undertake the Post Graduate Diploma Social Work at the Open University with funding for a further seven in place or the coming year, including the undergraduate route. Additional Social Work Practice Education (trainee support, coordination, placement opportunities and trained Practice Educators) support linked to the programme has been put in place.

Care at Home have an ongoing programme of recruitment events throughout the year. Community Care Officer workforce has increased by 27.8 WTE since May 2022. The multi-disciplinary workforce planning group is reviewing career pathways within community care to support access to roles and career progression within the service.

Work to improve employability and attract a younger workforce into the Health and Social Care Partnership has been progressed. 27 Modern Apprenticeships have been created in 2022-23 through East Ayrshire Council's Jobs and Training Fund with a further 13 proposed for 2023-24. Apprentices have been employed in Business Support, Finance, Wellbeing & Recovery and Locality Health and Care services. 11 Graduate Interns have been recruited on two year contracts to support project delivery across the Partnership.

## WTE by Employer as at January 2023

At January 2023 our workforce stood at 2235.4 WTE across 7 service delivery areas; Business Support, Children's Health Care and Justice Services, Directorate, IJB Finance, Locality Health & Care Services; Wellbeing & Recovery and Primary Care. Locality, Health Care and Justice is the largest service delivery area with 1252.0 WTE.

	EAC	NHS	Total
Business Support	94.3	21.6	116.0
Children's Health, Care and Justice Services	263.1	114.9	378.0
Directorate	4.0		4.0
IJB Finance	29.5		29.5
Locality Health and Care Services	600.8	651.2	1252.0
Wellbeing and Recovery	258.0		258.0
Primary and Urgent Care Services		197.9	197.9
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1249.7</b>	<b>985.6</b>	<b>2235.4</b>

The Partnership workforce increased by 188.3 WTE (9.2%) between January 2022 and January 2023 to 2235.4 WTE. Despite the increase in workforce size challenges remain around recruitment, absence and retention. Work is ongoing to ensure the partnership is an employer of choice with competitive terms and conditions, career progression opportunities and a strong emphasis on the wellbeing of the workforce.

Ongoing actions with workforce planning implications include:

- The Promise Oversight Group continues to work towards an implementation plan to deliver the outcomes of 'The Promise'. The Oversight Group is working to ensure that services fulfil their commitment to keep The Promise by 2030;
- The MHO Rapid Review Group was established in 2022 to review the delivery of Mental Health Officer services and identify the future strategic direction and model of service delivery. The Rapid Review Group are due to report their findings and recommendations in April 2023;
- The Multi-Disciplinary Teams Programme Board continues to develop proposals for enhanced multi-disciplinary working across East Ayrshire to ensure service users can access the right care at the earliest opportunity.

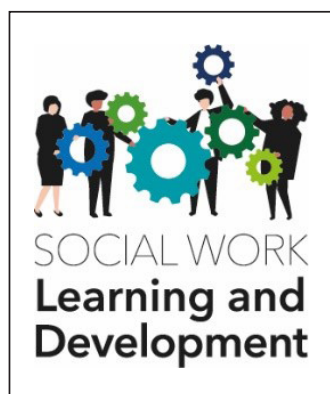
# Training, Learning and Development

## Organisational Development

East Ayrshire Council continues to provide Organisational Development (OD) support to Health and Social Care Partnership employees. A number of bespoke OD events were delivered to Social Work and wider teams throughout the reporting period, including four Investigations Training workshops, a programme of Care at Home Workshops and various Team Development Sessions. The OD service has supported the development and facilitation of a series of three Multi-Disciplinary Team Conversation events (seven sessions in total) across all localities, and they also provided the same support to the Local Conversation Events that took place across the localities in February 2022.

The workforce is supported to identify and access all relevant learning and development opportunities during supervision and within the Council's annual review and development process (FACE). All employees have access to a suite of development modules and leadership / management courses are available to new and aspiring managers. A number of health and social care specific e-learning resources have also been developed by OD to support employees' learning and development.

Working with service users and communities in an asset-based and person-centred way requires a cultural change. The Council's FACE Framework embeds the pertinent qualities and behaviours (Flexible, Approachable, Caring and Empowered), in the workforce and promotes a relational way of working, by empowering people and communities, which will help to reduce the need for services. This cultural change is further supported through Leadership Development programmes and Coaching programmes, which have been well attended by Partnership employees to date.



## Practice Learning

The Practice Learning team were instrumental in supporting the trainee social worker scheme and support the six employees who are currently in Year 1 of the scheme.

We continue to offer a robust first year in practice development programme for our Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW), with 13 NQSWs taking part during the reporting period. Each NQSW is provided with a Peer Mentor over their first year in practice, reduced caseloads

and a reflective supervision model designed to meet their needs as they develop their professional confidence and competence.

Another area of focus over the past year has been in supporting practitioner professional development in assessment, information gathering, analysis, decision-making and support planning. This development programme provides tools to be used in the workplace to support practitioners to integrate their learning into practice. Those who have attended commented positively on the benefit of practitioner discussions on the case/practice recording section.

**face**

**277**

**FACE**

**Experience completions**

**3,338**

**employee essentials training completions**

**1,023**

**management essentials training completions**

**NQSW**

**Feedback:**

*"I have been provided with an abundance of resources and insight into available support within the council to help me in my role."*



## Safe and Together

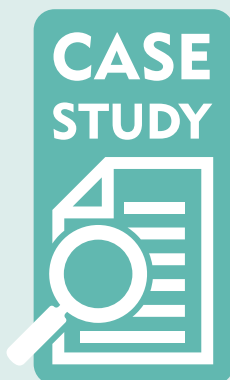
The Safe and Together Model Suite of Tools and Interventions is a perpetrator pattern-based, child-centred, survivor strengths approach to working with domestic violence.

We are now in the third year of the Safe and Together Implementation Plan and have continued to deliver training across the Partnership. In September 2022, a Safe and Together Lead Officer was appointed and they have overseen and targeted participants to ensure consistent training coverage across the Partnership and other areas. Training has now been expanded to other professional groups.

Various evaluation activities have taken place throughout the reporting period, including a multi-agency case file audit which will conclude mid-2023. The outcome of these evaluations and feedback from people with lived experience will be used to inform future practice and procedures.

A programme of practice learning has also been developed to create reflective team spaces to build practitioner confidence in applying the model and complement training. The programme has been designed to be flexible in order to meet the needs of teams and covers subjects such as:

- General Safe and Together and Domestic Abuse Basics
- Working with/assessing change in those who cause harm
- Disentangling women from abuse
- Domestic Abuse-informed assessment
- Understanding and responding to children's needs as co-victims/survivors.



Following the completion of the Safe and Together Core Training one of our Social Workers applied the principles of the model to a Court Report to assist the Sheriff's decision making in respect of a father's contact with his children. The worker used the model tools to explore the father's pattern of non-violent but coercively controlling behaviours, which demonstrated a persistent campaign to undermine and distress his children's mother - ultimately causing harm to his children. The worker detailed the control strategies and how these resulted in not just risks to the children but actual harm in terms of their attainment, health and access to services, in addition to causing them confusion, distress and disappointment. From there, the worker comprehensively outlined the efforts the children's mother made to counteract the impact of their father's actions on the children.

The behavioural patterns and harm experienced by the children were not overtly detectable prior to the model being applied to their situation. As a result of the worker's report, the Sheriff understood the complexity of the situation and a decision was made that the father should work with Social Work to develop insight into his actions and the children's needs, and make the necessary changes to his behaviour to allow contact to commence. The children's father declined to undertake this work.

Ultimately, the children felt better about their family situation given the stability that such a decision gave them, and the avenues that allowed their father's control of their mother had been shut down.

## Social Care Learning Hub

The Social Care Learning (SCL) Hub over the past year has developed an annual training programme to ensure that the social care workforce have access to a practice based learning and development journey that meets their needs. The Hub has achieved this through collaboration with operational services across Community Health and Care and Adult Services, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the Care Inspectorate. We now have an accessible training programme that covers all core and essential training for frontline social care staff, ranging from core induction training to specialist, role specific, training.

The Hub held successful Care at Home Engagement Sessions across 2022-23:

- 710 Community Care Officers attended to focus on sharing knowledge, skills and practice guidance;
- 800 places were provided for Community Care Officers and Coordinators to attend and take part in practice discussion cover the Partnership's Escalation Process – Caring for people at home who refuse or do not engage with supports; updates to the Safe Administration of Medication Guidance; recording and care diaries; and, an update on service changes to the new Home First service.

The Hub has continued to work with Ayrshire College and our Care at Home service to develop a new qualification and course programme. 12 students will have the opportunity to study with the college and be employed as a Community Care Officer. They will work half the week and studying at college the other half, which will provide a rounded experience as they work towards their SVQ qualification.

Over the last year the Hub commenced the first in-house cohort of SVQ 2 learners. This consists of 17 Community Care Officers from across Community Health and Care and Adult Services. There is also one Area Lead completing their SVQ 3 qualification. The Hub is currently designing a cohort to commence in April 2023 to support learners with conditions on their SSSC registration where their registration has expired or has been extended.

*In March 2023 the Social Care Learning Hub were Silver Award Winners of the iESE People, Value and Culture Award. This award captures the exceptional focus and effort of those that recognise and acknowledge the importance of their people to their overall success. By embedding values, culture and behaviours that empowers the delivery of the best possible services to their residents and service users.*



## Adult Support and Protection (ASP)

Over the last year, two new development posts have been created to support adult protection and mental health workforce development agendas. This has resulted in new programmes of development, one of which is focussed around Neglect (including self-neglect), recognising that neglect is the most prominent type of harm identified within the Care Inspectorate Triennial review of Initial Case Reviews (ICR) and Significant Case Reviews (SCR).

In order to establish local key themes and, to prioritise effective practitioner development, a 3-year analysis of ICR and SCR activity within East Ayrshire was carried out with a view to supporting the promotion of learning and improvements within adult protection practice. This analysis identified areas of good practice such as the relationships workers have with individuals are meaningful which impacts on a reduction of the risk of harm.

Looking forward to 2023-24, work is progressing in developing 'Adults with Incapacity: Conversation with Managers' and 'Adults with Incapacity for Practitioners' training courses and a refresh of 'Crossing the Acts' legislative based training is scheduled for Autumn. Chronology training will also be delivered throughout the next year, following feedback gathered from Single Agency Audits carried out by teams in 2022-23.

## Wellbeing in East Ayrshire

The '[Wellbeing in East Ayrshire](#)' webpage within the East Ayrshire Health and Social Care website, was originally created to provide an accessible resource for supporting our residents to look after their physical and mental health during the pandemic. The webpage continues to provide a range of useful materials, help and advice relating to various themes including: mental health and wellbeing, young people, parents and carers, physical and entertainment activities, financial assistance and contact information for numerous organisations which can provide additional support.

As previously highlighted, the commitment, resilience and flexibility of our workforce has been essential to the effective delivery of social work and social care services throughout 2022-23. The impact of the pandemic remains evident across the workforce as system pressures have continued throughout the past year, with recruitment and retention continuing to be a key focus for several areas across the Partnership. The [Workforce Plan 2022-25](#) focusses on how we will deliver the Recovery, Growth and Transformation of our workforce over the next three years, through caring for and supporting the wellbeing of our workforce, attracting new people to work with us, retaining experience in the workforce, and continuing to invest in learning and development.

A wide range of wellbeing support are available to employees of the Partnership, and our dedicated Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator has developed and delivered a range of supports including:

- 'Finding Inner Calm' Programme aimed at helping employees understand and manage anxiety and stress;
- Individualised 1-2-1 wellbeing sessions;
- Wellbeing Toolbox Talks for team meetings;
- Mindfulness Programmes;
- Two hour wellbeing sessions as part of Community Care Officer induction training;
- Supporting staff to undertake Mental Health first aid and suicide intervention courses;
- Wellbeing sessions for Foster Carers.

Employees also have access to the NHS Better Health Hub and wellbeing sessions available at Dumfries House, covering a range of holistic therapies and team building activities.

Recognising the impact of the cost of living crisis, the Financial Inclusion Team (FIT) provide support for financial wellbeing and are available to provide advice to any employee who has financial needs. FIT have developed a new Financial Wellbeing intranet page to bring together a range of financial supports, advice and tips.

Going forward into 2023-24, the Health and Wellbeing Coordinator will work to deliver bite sized holistic workshops for staff and work with the Organisational Development service to provide an ongoing support programme to all staff who have completed the Leadership programme.



**280**  
staff  
completed  
*Finding  
Inner Calm  
Programme*

**12**  
team sessions  
delivered

**157**  
1:1 wellbeing  
sessions  
delivered

*Finding Inner  
Calm attendee:*

*"I now have  
ideas to assist  
myself and team  
and promote  
empowerment  
for self-help."*

**wellbeing**  
in east ayrshire

## 8. Looking Forward

As I look forward, I also look back as some of the challenges that we have faced head on over the past year will continue. The World Health Organisation recently declared that the emergency phase of the pandemic was now over, however it is important to acknowledge that the impact the pandemic has had on society will remain with us for many years to come, for some it may be generational and life-long, and we know that the people supported by social work and social care have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. The ask of services is increasing in terms of demand and complexity and this is within the context of real terms cuts in budgets.

These challenges will be further compounded by a continuing cost of living crisis. In East Ayrshire we have high levels of child poverty and it will be challenging to reduce this. We have seen increasing numbers of children come into conflict with the law, more children being cared for away from their parents, increasing incidents of domestic violence, worsening levels of mental health and higher levels of deprivation. We also have an aging population who will require more support to live at home or in a homely setting.

Demand for all mental health services across the lifespan has increased, but particularly in relation to neurodiversity and ADHD. It is likely that these patterns of complexity and demand will continue to be evident over the course of the next year and beyond. In meeting these challenges head on we must support our workforce to be the best that it can be through ongoing recruitment, training and development, with a focus on wellbeing and retention of our skilled and talented workforce. We will also need to be innovative and creative in our service delivery and redesign in order to deliver the services required in a modern, flexible and agile way.

As noted in the report the financial climate continues to be challenging and there is no doubt that this will impact on service delivery should the pattern of previous years real term cuts continue.

As we move into 2023-24, there are a number of areas of development being taken forward across all social work and social care services:

- Our HEART model strives to support early intervention and prevention with the ultimate ambition that children, young people and their families will have less need for statutory and specialist services in the future. There will be a renewed focus on implementing this multi-disciplinary model in the coming year;
- We will likely see an increase in the number of asylum seeking children and young people in East Ayrshire. In order to ensure they are well supported we will work with key partners locally and nationally to provide excellent models of care and support;
- We will continue to develop our approach to supporting kinship and kinship carers, and we will place a focus on the recruitment of foster carers and adoptive carers for the children and young people who are no longer able to live with their parents or family;
- We will continue our programme of Best Value Service Reviews and conclude the reviews of our Intensive and Family support service, Mental Health Service, and Justice Social Work Services, implementing service redesign to ensure our services are fit for purpose and meet the support needs of those who are working with the services;
- The Promise remains a key area of work as such we will continue to support and work towards meeting the ambitions of the promise led through the work of the Promise team;
- We will implement the new national child protection guidance and the pan-Ayrshire procedures which will be completed later in 2023;



- We recognise the importance of TEC in a modern world and supporting our services to work differently and smarter. We will take the findings of TEC Pathfinder and move forward to the implementation phase;
- We will continue to work with our trusted and valued third sector to enhance the delivery of community based services across the lifespan;
- We know that East Ayrshire has intolerably high drug related death rates that require serious attention. The recovery community has developed and matured over the last year and we will continue to work and develop this in a way that allows us to support people in a different and more dignified way with the ultimate goal of reducing drug deaths and drug use;
- The voice of people using services is crucial to the effective design and delivery of services. We will seek to engage, listen and act on what people are telling us through a range of participation and engagement activities across all services;
- Domestic abuse rates in East Ayrshire are high. In challenging this we will review the impact of MARAC, and develop an ambitious new Violence Against Women plan;
- Poverty continues to be something faced in almost all our communities. We will continue to maximise income, challenge poverty and discrimination and the stigma associated with this by supporting people into education, training and employment;
- In order to meet the challenges faced we need to know our services well and understand where there are opportunities for development and doing things differently. We will review our arrangements to quality assurance (QA), self-evaluation and reflection and enhance our approach to QA across all service areas;
- As noted in the report, real terms reductions in resources have challenged service delivery as such we will manage our resources in a diligent manner that ensures best value for those who use services;
- Our workforce is our most valued and appreciated asset, we will continue to support their training, development and opportunities for career progression, listening to and implementing what works in supporting their wellbeing. Three wellbeing spaces for the workforce will be developed in the Johnnie Walker Bond, North West Area Centre and Rothesay House.



**Marion MacAulay**  
Chief Social Work Officer

August 2023

EAST AYRSHIRE

# Health & Social Care Partnership

