



Economy and Skills Delivery Plan

Annual Update 2023/24



EAST AYRSHIRE COMMUNITY PLAN 2015-2030

ECONOMY AND SKILLS DELIVERY PLAN 2021-24: PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS UPDATE

The actions in this plan have been identified to support the delivery of our shared strategic priorities for 2021-2024

AYRSHIRE GROWTH DEAL and CARING FOR AYRSHIRE

Inclusive Growth ♦ Community Wealth Building ♦ Community Wellbeing
 Covid19 Recovery ♦ Renewal and Transformation ♦ Poverty and Inequality
 Children and Young People ♦ Sustainability and the Environment

| Action | Partnership Activity | Partners | Lead Partner Update |
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| ES1 Assist existing businesses to decarbonise and support the growth of high potential, sustainable and low carbon businesses. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Growth Workstream. Development of an Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire as a basis for identifying opportunities to support the transition to new, decarbonised energy systems. Work with Zero Waste Scotland to provide advice to businesses on district heating, waste heat recovery and industrial decarbonisation opportunities. | <p>EAC; SE; UWS; AC; businesses.</p> <p>EAC; SE; Business Gateway; ZWS; businesses.</p> | <p>Development of the Ayrshire Energy Masterplan is ongoing. A lead consultant is in place and is liaising closely with the three Ayrshire councils, with a draft completed. The final report is expected in mid-2024.</p> <p>Zero Waste Scotland offers support to local businesses to help develop a more circular economy by delivering tailored, one to one support to small and medium sized businesses in all sectors.</p> <p>The Council approved funding in August 2023 to support a second round of the Net Zero Accelerator pilot programme which will allow a further 20 businesses to participate. This follows the successful first round which was completed by 25 local businesses.</p> |

Case Study: Net Zero Accelerator Pilot

This 12 month programme is designed to help SMEs to get started on their Net Zero journey efficiently and cost effectively, as part of a group of like-minded businesses to share learning, progress and best practice.

Providing immediate access to CBN Expert Carbon Accountancy Software, together with expert advice to create carbon benchmarks and plans to remove carbon for businesses, organisations also receive an independent annual report compliant with the UK government’s Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR) policy.

The second cohort of participating East Ayrshire businesses graduated at a ceremony in 2024. Graduates included Emergency One, Kays Curling, Fortress Security, CurtainWise, ZE Global, Mossgiel Organic Farm, Craufurdland and SD Wind.

Each company has made a commitment to working together with the Net Zero Nation ecosystem to create clearly defined pathways to Net Zero.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Project. Establish a business support scheme with the assistance of CoRE to support local companies develop expertise in renewable and green energy technology | EAC; SE; Strathclyde University; AC; UWS, businesses. | <p>The Council continues to support businesses mitigate the climate emergency and reduce their running costs. Via the Business Energy Voucher Scheme, 17 businesses have been supported to complete audits, with 10 in progress. A further 12 businesses have been awarded Net Zero Business Grants. CWB Funding has been awarded to an additional 33 projects that have a green tech or green energy element.</p> <p>In light of funding pressures and external challenges, the aims and objectives for CoRE were revised in 2023. It is intended that CoRE will act as a catalyst to provide an employability pipeline to ensure there is a skilled workforce ready to support businesses delivering on renewable and green technology.</p> <p>Engagement with local businesses has highlighted a range of skills gaps to deliver the net zero transition. In response to this, a comprehensive skills gap analysis will be undertaken during June 2024. <u>Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy Project - CoRE - Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy Project - CoRE.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> |
| <p>ES2 Deliver new opportunities for apprenticeships across a range of emerging growth sectors, including 'green apprenticeships', which will help us to deliver on our net zero carbon aspirations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Jobs Fund. CPP needs to align itself to take full advantage of this to support recovery and renewal. • Ayrshire Growth Deal – all projects. Ayrshire College, EAC and private sector work together to identify green apprenticeship opportunities during both construction and delivery phases. | <p>SE; EAC AC; SDS; businesses.</p> <p>AC; EAC; businesses.</p> | <p>Delivery partners are fully aligned to the aims and objectives of the Green Jobs Fund, which is administered locally via SE. They continue to investigate ways to provide young people with the skills and experience for work in environmentally and socially sustainable jobs and sectors.</p> <p>The Ayrshire Economic Strategy Year One Delivery Plan, which was published in late 2023, undertook to carry out a mapping exercise covering skills shortages, labour market gaps and emerging opportunities in the green and digital economies. <u>Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy Delivery Plan - Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy Delivery Plan.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and training. Ensure that our skills and training packages are linked to emerging opportunities within the green economy, and that sustainability is embedded within course content. Ensure the development of skills from early years, through primary and secondary education, connect learners with the world of work and future career aspirations. | AC; EAC; SDS; universities; businesses. | <p>Via the Ayrshire Skills Group, partners come together bi-monthly to guide the skills agenda and identify emerging sectoral opportunities in our key sectors.</p> <p>The Regional Skills Investment Plan aims to maximise skills and training opportunities, including apprenticeships in areas where there are predicted skills shortages and future growth opportunities such as the transition to a net zero economy. Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan - Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The AGD Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund gained full business case approval in August 2023, and is now delivering funding to a range of skills initiatives across Ayrshire. It was formally launched in September 2023 - Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund - bridging the skill gap Ayrshire Growth Deal</p> <p>Summer 2023 saw Ayrshire College carpentry and joinery students take part in a number of community projects in Kilmarnock, including the creation of 'buddy benches' at Whatriggs Primary School, the construction of a shed at Park School which will be used to store equipment and carry out bike repairs and the build of a decking area to accommodate beehives in the community garden next to Kilmarnock Fire Station.</p> <p>Ayrshire College held an event in November 2023 to shine a light on the region's successful sustainability projects and the businesses who are driving progress towards Scotland's Net Zero goals. Attendees heard first-hand from leaders, experts, and enthusiasts in sustainability, and it is hoped that this sharing of best practice will ignite positive change in Ayrshire.</p> <p>The Wind Turbine Technician Course continues to provide a skills pipeline for the industry with apprentices and students leaving this full-time course with industry standard Global Wind Organisation approved qualifications.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The Council's Economic Development Service, along with local partners 9CCG and Emergency One, have developed an apprenticeship pilot project to fund and develop and an apprenticeships project which will support 20 new posts.</p> |
| <p>ES3 Deliver on Scotland's 2030 net zero carbon commitment by investing in the re-use of vacant and derelict land, forestry and woodland planting, peatland renewal, clean energy and transport, and digital technology.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all our public buildings are compliant with the new Climate Change (Scotland) Act's Net Zero Carbon Standards (date TBC). | <p>ALL</p> | <p>Retro-fitting of existing buildings is ongoing across the CPP, with the adoption of new building standards and where possible, a migration from natural gas heating to zero direct emission heating to mitigate the increased operational energy costs.</p> <p>A study has been undertaken to assess the appropriate levels of EnerPhit informed fabric intervention to allow decarbonisation of Council buildings. The results of this collaborative study, involving Edinburgh City, Perth & Kinross and Fife Councils, are now available and data is being shared to inform the Council's future strategy.</p> <p>In June 2023, the Council's Cabinet agreed to support the decarbonisation of community buildings using the Community Climate Change Fund, as part of a package of funding to incentivise local community groups to access the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme.</p> <p>Work is also ongoing to support the development of a network of regional community climate action hubs, which will help local community groups to develop plans, take up community funding opportunities and ensure a joined up approach at regional level.</p> <p>Drongan has been selected as the latest Scottish Climate Action Town, providing an opportunity to test a community led approach. Learning from this initiative will help inform our approach and work with other communities across East Ayrshire.</p> <p>The Council notified the Scottish Government that the preparation of an East Ayrshire-wide Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) would not be completed by the statutory deadline of December 2023. The first 6 stages of this process (including data analysis and evidence base) have been completed, leaving only the Strategy (stage 7) and Delivery Plan (stage 8) to be finalised.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place plans to replace all petrol and diesel vehicles from the public sector fleet by 2030. Develop the infrastructure for electric vehicle charging across EA. Ayrshire Growth Deal – Community Renewable Energy (CoRE) Project Testing and trialling of new technologies and use of low carbon technologies for powering and heating homes. | <p>ALL</p> <p>EAC/ARA</p> <p>EAC; AC; universities; community groups.</p> | <p>Ayrshire College is making good progress towards achieving sustainability goals. The College is focused on becoming a sector leader in carbon emissions reduction and is working with key stakeholders to build a sustainable network including Sustainable Scotland Network, Adaptation Scotland, Zero Waste Scotland, National Energy Research & Development Centre, as well as with each of the three Ayrshire local authorities and local stakeholders.</p> <p>The Ayrshire Road Alliance has transitioned from diesel to hydro treated vegetable oil (HVO) for almost all fleet vehicles. This has reduced carbon emissions by 98% compared to diesel.</p> <p>Looking ahead, partners are committed to reducing their transport emissions via a combination of measures including reduced mileage, alternative travel arrangements and choosing low carbon means of transport. For example, NHSAA introduced 100 additional EV fleet vehicles during 2023/24 and they are working to remove all petrol and diesel vehicles from their fleet by 2025.</p> <p>In response to recent increases in energy costs and the need to expand the charging network, the Council introduced tariffs and overstay charges for the use of public electric vehicle (EV) charging points in East Ayrshire from April 2024. There are currently 65 charging points in 36 locations across East Ayrshire and increased demand for these has resulted in high running costs to the Council. <u>Electric vehicle charging tariffs to be introduced in East Ayrshire from 1 April (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> <p>The CoRE project has been reviewed and refocussed with the aim of helping our communities deal with the cost of living and energy crises. There is a renewed emphasis on health and wellbeing, skills and training and the creation of sustainable jobs. The Project Team will undertake a redesign phase to ensure that the building is within budget and that it meets the needs of Council, community and project partners. <u>Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy Project - CoRE - Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy Project - CoRE.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing to 2040 - work towards achieving the vision of a well-functioning housing system, the provision of high quality, sustainable homes, sustainable communities and access to homes that meet people's needs by adopting a place-based approach. | EAC; ARA; HSCP; community groups. | <p>The ambitious plans detailed within Housing to 2040 place housing firmly at the centre of other national objectives such as tackling poverty and inequality, creating and supporting jobs, ensuring local authorities meet energy efficiency and fuel poverty targets, tackling the climate emergency and ensuring that people have connected, cohesive and vibrant communities in which to live. Housing to 2040 will drive forward innovation and change within all areas of housing in East Ayrshire and alongside a cohesive partnership approach, will inform all future strategic housing documents.</p> <p>The Council's first net zero assisted living housing model completed in November 2023 at Kilmarnock Road, now Wallace Court, Mauchline. The Council worked collaboratively with EAHSCP in the development of this project.</p> |
| <p>ES4 Form strategic relationships with SEPA, Scottish Government and other partners to fully examine the issue of flood risk and associated implications for our communities, including our town centres.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of flood risk management schemes in appropriate locations, based on results of flood study work. | EAC; ARA; SEPA; Scottish Water; Community councils | <p>As a result of changes to national policy introduced via NPF4, there are sites in East Ayrshire previously considered developable that will need to be re-evaluated. The new policy context means that SEPA are likely to object to any proposals for development in South Central Kilmarnock. Meetings have taken place between the Council, SEPA and ARA to consider what is possible in this area. Moving forward, engagement will take place with landowners in order that options for improving the appearance of sites can be explored and to consider the creation of a blue-green infrastructure plan.</p> <p>In January 2024, the Council agreed to update the Irvine Valley Flood Study to reflect the current funding situation and latest scientific information available, in order to maximise the likelihood of attracting future funding for a revised scheme.</p> <p>The Council Leader wrote to the First Minister in February 2024 to call for a summit with Scottish Ministers to discuss planning restrictions imposed by SEPA which would significantly impact upon developments in the area. <u>Councillors call on ministers to review flooding policy (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u> Officers have been working through Heads of Planning Scotland, with the Scottish Government and SEPA to consider the impacts of the NPF4 flooding policy and what can be done to address concerns.</p> |

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| <p>ES5 Invest in new, sustainable transport infrastructure that improves the transport network and accessibility, particularly in our rural communities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development of the Active Travel Strategy, ensuring alignment with the National Transport Strategy. | <p>ARA; EAC; SPT; EALT</p> | <p>In February 2024, the Council approved the creation of an Active Travel Forum to consider the proposed Active Travel Strategy, which remains in draft format. The Strategy aims to expand and promote active travel across the region over the next 5 years. The Active Travel Forum will propose recommendations for implementation which will inform a follow-up report (May 2024). Active Travel Forum - Active Travel Forum.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> |
| <p>Case Study: Active Travel, NHS Ayrshire & Arran</p> <p>NHSAA is supporting a shift to a healthier and more sustainable transport system where active travel and public transport are prioritised. In collaboration with the Active Travel Hubs, NHSAA developed a staff Active Travel booklet to promote active travel information via staff engagement sessions. A range of events have been promoted to engage staff such as Pedal for Scotland, Ayrshire Walking Festival, Cycle to Work Day and Scottish Workplace Journey Challenge.</p> <p>At University Hospital Crosshouse, a short film was developed which highlighted the facilities available to support staff who travel actively to and from work. NHSAA also works collaboratively with CPP partners such as ARA to improve access to Crosshouse via active travel routes.</p> <p>Discussions are taking place with YipWorld, a third sector organisation, to offer free bike and e-bike loans to staff.</p> | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayrshire Growth Deal – CoRE project & Ayrshire Engineering Park. Low carbon solutions for transport, including new cycle routes and paths. | <p>EAC; ARA; EALT; community groups.</p> | <p>The CoRE project was subject to review during 2023/24, noting the impact of cost pressures and other external challenges. A Full Business Case is being prepared for submission to both Governments in 2024/25 and this will provide more detail on proposed low carbon transport solutions.</p> <p>In relation to the Ayrshire Engineering Park, the Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor (AMIC) project is relocating to this site, which will be known as the Ayrshire Innovation Park (AIP). Outline Business Cases are being prepared for submission to both Governments in 2024. These will set out opportunities to provide further enhancements and encourage active travel linking up to a number of improved cycle routes currently planned by ARA.</p> <p>A planning application has been submitted for AIP and is under consideration.</p> <p>The Scottish Government published STPR2 in December 2022. This included all modes of travel including active travel and public</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). Ayrshire & Arran Regional Working Group established. Number of themes identified, including 'supporting smart and sustainable travel'. • Review of the transport infrastructure at the Bellfield Interchange to identify constraints and proposals to increase the capacity of the roundabout to enhance economic activity within Ayrshire. | <p>ARA; EAC; AGD; SPT</p> <p>EAC; ARA</p> | <p>transport. This work will develop transport project outputs at national, regional and local level. A delivery programme is yet to be published.</p> <p>The round 2 bid to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund in relation to the upgrade of the Bellfield Interchange was subsequently considered as part of the round 3 process in late 2023; however, this was once again unsuccessful. Whilst disappointing, the Council remains determined to press ahead with its proposals and is seeking urgent discussions with the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland in order to expedite a solution. <u>Levelling Up Fund Round 3 - Bellfield Interchange - Levelling Up Fund Round 3 - Bellfield Interchange.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> |
| <p>ES6 Enable local businesses to take advantage of public sector procurement opportunities, helping to increase their competitiveness nationally and internationally.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Project. Appointment of CWB Business Locality Officers to work closely with local businesses and assist them to bid for AGD and other public sector contracts and increase business opportunities within Ayrshire. • Support inclusive growth by harnessing CPP (anchor organisation) spending power in terms of buying from local or socially progressive businesses. | <p>EAC; SE; SDS; Fair Work Ayrshire; EACVO.</p> <p>ALL</p> | <p>By June 2023, 282 enterprises had been supported by the CWB programme in East Ayrshire. Figures published by the Council show that over £36.1m was spent with East Ayrshire suppliers in 2022/23, an increase of £3.6m on the previous year. The number of local suppliers also increased by 49 to 260.</p> <p>CPP partners have endorsed a commitment to support local businesses via supply chain contracts. Our collective activities will seek to prioritise and extend every opportunity to strengthen Net Zero, local value and the just transition. In doing so, partners are optimising collaborative opportunities which makes it easier for local and smaller businesses to bid for contracts.</p> <p>NHSAA CWB programme includes a progressive procurement pillar which aims to raise suppliers awareness of their sustainable procurement and community benefits processes; engage with local suppliers and increase local spend; make local suppliers aware of procurement opportunities; and maximise their understanding of the skills and capacity of the Ayrshire business base.</p> |

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| | <p>Exploration of collaborative and joint capital funding ventures across the CPP. One such opportunity has been identified through the forthcoming Doon Valley Community Campus development in Dalmellington, which will be taken forward collaboratively with a range of partners including EAC Education, NHSAA, Health and Social Care Partnership and East Ayrshire Leisure Trust.</p> | ALL | <p>From 1 April 2023, NHSAA introduced a Community Benefit requirement into tenders for goods & services over £50,000 and works over £1 million.</p> <p>Detailed design work is progressing and tender documents are being prepared for the Dalmellington development. The revised project programme is targeting commencement of construction works in Autumn 2024, with completion in Summer 2026.</p> <p>A further needs assessment is taking place, taking into account future roll projections and demographic information. As a result, the Council will review its options in order to reduce cost and seek further grant funding from the Scottish Government.</p> |
| <p>ES7 Provide a range of tailored support packages to nurture and develop the capacity of our businesses to grow.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a number of sector specific recovery groups (Food & Drink, Visitor Economy, Clean Growth, Digital, Aerospace, Business, Skills and CWB). Review of existing business support model in Ayrshire, to ensure that the same level of support is provided to businesses regardless of their location. <p>Ayrshire Growth Deal - Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor (AMIC). Establishment of a Centre of Excellence with on-site support and start-up units to support existing or new businesses adopt advanced manufacturing technology within the food and drink sector.</p> | <p>EAC; SE; AC; universities; VS; SDS.</p> <p>EAC; NAC; SAC; SE.</p> <p>EAC; SE; Strathclyde University; AC; SDS.</p> | <p>Sector-specific and growth groups, made up of a range of key stakeholders and industry representatives, are now well established in each sector, meeting regularly and making an important contribution to economic renewal via their delivery plans. The groups are making an important contribution to the new Regional Economic Strategy's priorities and in particular, 'Support for Enterprise', 'Fair Work' and 'Innovation'.</p> <p>The Ayrshire Economic Strategy's Year One Delivery Plan was published in November 2023. This document sets out a number of priorities under the 'Support for Enterprise' heading, including enhanced business support services. A mapping exercise is being carried out to determine existing activity and ensure a co-ordinated approach to RES delivery.</p> <p>In May 2023, Cabinet approved the co-location of the AMIC project at Moorfield, alongside the Ayrshire Engineering Park. The co-location of both AEP and AMIC on the same site brings significant benefits, particularly in relation to construction costs. A planning application has now been submitted. Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor Project - Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor Project.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The second annual Food and Drink Conference in Ayrshire took place at Ayrshire College in April 2023, providing local businesses</p> |

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| | | | with information on activities to support the development of the sector. |
| ES8 Attract more private sector investment into East Ayrshire, providing projects that generate jobs and wealth for our communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Regional Economic Strategy. Regional Economic Partnership will provide voice for Ayrshire to press the case for government intervention and investment, incentives and other assistance to complement the AGD. Ayrshire Growth Deal - Ayrshire Engineering Park (Moorfield Phase 3). Provision of high-quality industrial premises for engineering and manufacturing companies to assist the expansion of the existing engineering base and attract inward investment. | <p>EAC; NAC; SAC; AC; SE.</p> <p>EAC; NAC; SAC; AC; SE.</p> <p>EAC; SE.</p> | <p>The new Regional Economic Strategy was formally launched in June 2023, and the Delivery Plan was launched separately at Ayrshire Business Week in October 2023. Actions for year one are aligned to three of the Strategy's six themes (Support for Enterprise, Fair Work and Innovation). A mapping exercise across the themes aims to reduce the potential for duplication and ensure a co-ordinated approach to delivery.</p> <p>The delivery of a Regional Economic Strategy provides, for the first time a shared economic vision for Ayrshire. The strategic framework highlights enablers such as the CWB Commission, AGD and recovery/renewal activity. Moving forward, our shared ambitions will require innovative forms of joint working and governance.</p> <p>In May 2023, Cabinet approved the co-location of the AMIC project at Moorfield, alongside the Ayrshire Engineering Park. The co-location of both AEP and AMIC on the same site brings significant benefits, particularly in relation to construction costs. A planning application has now been submitted. Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor Project - Ayrshire Manufacturing Investment Corridor Project.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> |
| ES9 Provide specific innovation and entrepreneurial skills to support emerging growth sectors via skills partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Skills Investment Plan will be published in 2022, setting out the demand for skills and people in Ayrshire over the short and medium-term, and will highlight what skills priorities are needed to support economic development and the AGD projects. Ayrshire Growth Deal - HALO Kilmarnock. Enterprise and Innovation Hub scheduled to open in April 2021. This will establish an 'entrepreneurial ecosystem' to stimulate innovative business practices between new and established businesses and link with the existing Business and | <p>AC; SDS; UWS; RES Skills Group</p> <p>EAC; SE; AC; SDS; UWS.</p> | <p>The RSIP 2022-25 was approved by the Joint Economic Committee in June 2022. The Ayrshire Skills Group, a sub-committee of the AEJC, meets regularly to oversee the implementation of the Plan. Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan - Ayrshire Regional Skills Investment Plan.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The HALO #Rockme facility, in partnership with Barclays Eagle Labs, provides space for SME businesses to locate and grow their businesses built around a green economy. 120 desk spaces are made available on various packages to support businesses. Currently it houses 20 businesses and has created 72 jobs in the renewables, life sciences, financial services, construction and marketing sectors. Events held during the year included a Space</p> |

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| | <p>Employability Support provided by the Council to create the opportunity for an employability pipeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayrshire Growth Deal – Ayrshire Skills Fund (ASIF). £3.5 million has been allocated to establish a responsive skills fund to drive Inclusive Growth to support skills interventions and associated management costs. The fund will have core themes including digital skills; in-work progression; routes into Fair Work for excluded groups; skills support for inward investors; skills support for redundant workers; skills support aligned to AGD projects; responses to demand identified in Regional Skills Assessment and capacity building for innovation. | EAC; AC; SE; SDS | <p>and Trade Conference, including speakers from NASA and the US Consul.</p> <p>The Final Business Case for ASIF was approved in August 2023 and a sub-committee of the AEJC (the Ayrshire Skills Group) was established to oversee implementation. ASIF will provide a flexible and responsive skills fund for Ayrshire’s businesses and residents. It is aimed at helping employers grow and develop their employees and increase skills for Ayrshire residents, linking them to growth sectors and employment opportunities, with the objectives of reducing unemployment and increasing productivity.</p> <p>The first round of the Fund closed on 8 November 2023, with successful applicants notified by 24 November 2023. The second stage ran from 9 November 2023 – 26 January 2024. Further funding rounds will be available on a rolling programme.</p> |
| <p>ES10 Support social enterprises and the third sector to provide facilities and employment, and deliver inclusive growth.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and implement the Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building project. Key actions include the stimulation of social entrepreneurship, the development of social, family owned and employee-owned and co-operative enterprises and the promotion of opportunities for employee ownership. | EAC; SE; SDS; Fair Work Ayrshire; EACVO. | <p>The AGD CWB Review Report was published in October 2023. It highlighted a number of key achievements, including the provision of support to 22 entities to create or transition to employee ownership or co-operatives. Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Wealth Building Programme - Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Wealth Building Programme.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> |
| <p>Case Study: Utopia Computers</p> <p>Utopia Computers is a technology solutions company based in Kilmarnock which has been established for over 20 years. The company is very much rooted in the town, delivering repairs and technical support, often at reduced cost, to build a digitally inclusive company.</p> <p>Utopia epitomises the principles of CWB. They have fostered a sense of shared ownership among the team, providing shares to long-standing team members to ensure they benefit directly from the company’s success.</p> <p>This model has boosted team motivation and contributed to a more equitable distribution of wealth. This commitment to staff has resulted in a more skilled and resilient workforce which is better equipped to drive economic growth within its community.</p> | | | |
| <p>ES11 Work with employers to</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building project. £3 million has been | EAC; SE; SDS; Fair | <p>A mid-term review of the CWB Programme was carried out in 2023 and reported to the Ayrshire Economic Partnership Board in January</p> |

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| <p>ensure that opportunities created locally adhere to the principles of Fair Work, including payment of the Living Wage and high standards.</p> | <p>allocated to take forward specific work streams, of which Fair Work is an integral part. Dedicated Fair Work Ayrshire team currently being recruited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Wage accreditation. CPP commitment for their respective organisations to become Living Wage employers. | <p>Work Ayrshire; CVOEA.</p> <p>ALL</p> | <p>2024. Recognising the success of the project to date, the Board agreed to a one year extension to the programme beyond its original end date of March 2024. A mainstreaming approach will be considered post-March 2025 which will contribute towards achieving a wellbeing economy for Ayrshire.</p> <p>The Fair Work Ayrshire Team continues to engage with businesses across East Ayrshire, supporting Fair Work Action Plans, networking opportunities and providing financial assistance. In October 2023, the East Ayrshire Fair Work Jobs Fair took place, with 380 attendees.</p> <p>The CWB Fair Employment Workstream is made up of 3 sub-groups aligned to themes across fair employment: Recruitment, Apprenticeships and Volunteering led by representatives from NHS Ayrshire & Arran, Ayrshire College, and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire respectively. Collectively, they support the ambition to make Ayrshire the first Fair Work region in Scotland.</p> <p>NHSAA's CWB programme includes a Fair Work/Workforce pillar which aims to improve the prospects and wellbeing of local people by making NHSAA the best place to work by supporting, enabling, and empowering implementation of Fair Work practices through improved policy and practice enabling recruitment and retention of a workforce representative of the local population. mis22-088-cc-community-wealth-newsletter-april-2023.pdf (nhsscotland.net)</p> <p>NHSAA's employability workstream looks to create fair and meaningful employment within health and care services through support of NHS employment programmes, pre-application support and employment outreach work.</p> <p>69 companies and organisations across East Ayrshire are listed as accredited Living Wage employers on the Living Wage Scotland employer database. This is a considerable improvement on the 51 reported in last year's review. Employer Directory - Living Wage Scotland (scottishlivingwage.org)</p> |

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| <p>ES12 Invest in town centres to encourage the return of visitors, and reimagine our vacant shops and public buildings as housing, business or community space.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued promotion of the EA Virtual Mall and EA Gift Card sales. • Accelerate delivery of capital works and infrastructure projects to support growth in housing, business and activity within our town centres throughout the day and evening. | <p>EAC</p> <p>EAC; EALT; CVOEA; KBA; Ayrshire Chamber</p> | <p>The Council's Community Led Regeneration Team won the Visa Let's Celebrate Towns Award in 2023, in recognition of their successful partnership working to encourage the Shop Local message and support the business community through challenging times. An option for the £20,000 prize currently being explored is for the development of public art trails for Kilmarnock and Cumnock to attract more visitors to both towns.</p> <p>More innovative uses of the EA Gift Card have been introduced, including as an incentive for school children engaged in a recycling campaign ('Dinnae forget your caddy'). They are also being used to support asylum seekers (for example, being used to assist with school uniform costs).</p> <p>As an Anchor institution, NHSAA uses its financial power to increase local spend, investment and employment. Under the financial powers pillar of Community Wealth Building, it has been promoting the shop local campaign to NHS staff.</p> <p>A range of projects were being delivered in 2023/24 to support town centre regeneration, including Kilmarnock Bus Station (expected to conclude in mid-2024); car parks at Sturrock St (now complete) and at Centrestage (expected to conclude June 2024); construction of a new gable wall at Glaisnock St, Cumnock; tenders were received for the demolition of the Kilmarnock multi storey car park. <u>Building a Future East Ayrshire Capital Investment Programme Review Update - Building a Future East Ayrshire Capital Investment Programme Review Update.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> <p>In June 2023, the Council approved the latest round of place-based investment proposals, with 23 projects awarded £0.769m to support community-led regeneration across East Ayrshire, targeting investment towards new groups/projects and encouraging projects to leverage wider investment into communities. The initiative was over subscribed, reflecting the desire within communities to play an active role in shaping the future of localities. While disappointing for those groups who were unsuccessful, support will be provided to assist them with other avenues of funding.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The West of Scotland Climbing Centre (Above Adventure) which incorporates a bouldering hall and climbing walls within the former Grange Church in Kilmarnock, opened fully for business on 20 May 2023. The project benefited from £2.469m from RCGF, a substantial contribution to its overall approximate cost of £4.5m.</p> <p>Good progress has been made with the Kilmarnock Strategic Vision which includes plans to demolish the multi-storey car park and redevelop the site to create a civic space, EV charging points and cycling hub; stabilising of the building façade at 1 Strand St/12 Dunlop St to create an enclosed external business space; and proposals for the refurbishment of the Galleon Centre. The Kilmarnock Strategic Group, which has met 6 times, provides strategic oversight of these developments, recognising the need to manage interdependencies. Kilmarnock Strategic Vision Update - Kilmarnock Strategic Vision Update.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Kilmarnock town centre was given a further boost with the allocation of £20 million over 10 years from the UK Government's Long Term Plan for Towns. Funding will be used to invest in community-led regeneration and this will be managed by the new Kilmarnock Town Board. Investment will be aligned to three themes: high streets, heritage & regeneration, safety & security and transport & connectivity. Kilmarnock Town Board · East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The Designer Rooms announced the opening of their new superstore in Fowlds Street, Kilmarnock. The new 36,000 sq ft store, which opens in summer 2024 will be one of the largest independent furniture stores in Scotland, specialising in exclusively designed furniture, with a private car park hosting 80 spaces. As a local business, The Designer Rooms team are committed to CWB principles and are using local contractors.</p> |
| <p>ES13 As anchor organisations, design and build local economic</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners have signed up to the Ayrshire CWB Anchor Charter and are working towards achievement of the aims underpinning its 6 pillars. | <p>EAC; NHSAA; SE; Ayrshire</p> | <p>East Ayrshire Council, Scottish Enterprise, Ayrshire College and NHSAA are amongst the signatories to the Ayrshire CWB Anchor Charter. Each organisation is committed to the embedding of CWB principles and a Year 2 progress report, which provided evidence of</p> |

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| and community wealth building solutions in conjunction with local people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise the impact of combined partnership resources in support of CWB. Ayrshire Growth Deal: a regional community benefits tracker has been developed to monitor the delivery of community benefits and capture CWB pledges. | <p>Community Trust</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>AGD PMO, EAC</p> | <p>progress against each of the 6 pillars, was provided to the CWB Commission in early 2023. Community Wealth Building - Anchor Chartered Progress Report - Year Two - Community Wealth Building - Anchor Chartered Progress Report - Year Two.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>NHSAA launched its CWB Strategy in January 2024. The Strategy sets out how NHSAA will invest and spend locally where possible, create fair and meaningful employment, design and manage NHS buildings, land and assets to maximise community benefits and reduce the environmental impact of health services. NHS Ayrshire & Arran's Community Wealth Building strategy aims to improve local economic development - NHS Ayrshire & Arran (nhsaaa.net)</p> <p>The pledges set out in the CWB Anchor Charter are helping to focus and direct the activities of anchor organisations, particularly in relation to regional workstream activities across procurement, fair employment and land and assets. The monitoring process has also helped anchors to better understand each other, their strengths and challenges, and where added value via collaboration can take place.</p> <p>As the Scottish Government prepares for the launch of a CWB Bill, a joint response on behalf of the Ayrshire CWB Commission was submitted during the consultation phase in April 2023. Consultation on the Proposed Community Wealth Building Scotland Bill - Consultation on the Proposed Community Wealth Building Scotland Bill.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The updated Benefits Realisation Plan was approved by the Joint Committee in June 2023. 6 projects had entered the delivery phase, with benefits being realised. Projects in development are facing significant challenges with most needing to review their scope and deliverables. The introduction of the Community Benefits Tracker in the coming months will provide a useful tool to analyse changes.</p> |
| ES14 Work alongside our communities to deliver | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newmilns, Catrine & Ochiltree Placemaking Plans complete. NW Kilmarnock, Cumnock and Dalrymple | EAC; community groups. | The Auchinleck, Darvel & Priestland Place Plans were the latest in a programme of Place Plans that were rolled out in 2023/24 to support the East Ayrshire Local Development Plan. These were agreed by the Council's Cabinet on 19 April 2023. Place Plans for |

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| Placemaking and Local Place Plans which set out proposals for development of land and assets. | awaiting approval. 6 others in early development. | | <p><u>Auchinleck, Darvel and Priestland - Place Plans for Auchinleck, Darvel and Priestland.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> <p>The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 for the first time introduced new legal requirements around Local Place Plans (LPPs). Moving forward, there is now a legal requirement for planning authorities to invite communities to prepare LPPs. This invitation will be published in summer 2024.. The terminology used to describe placemaking maps and action programmes has changed to reflect the 2019 Act; they are now referred to collectively as 'Place Plans'.</p> |
| ES15 Strengthen community led regeneration through the development of community led action plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer communities the opportunity to create their first community led action plans to reflect local priorities and support other communities to develop second generation five year plans. | EAC; community groups. | <p>East Ayrshire Council continues to support local communities to develop action plans for their own areas. There have been 25 Community Action Plans facilitated by Vibrant Communities with an additional five partner plans that have been launched across East Ayrshire. The development of a Community Action Plan is entirely voluntary but Vibrant Communities has given a commitment to support any community who want to develop a plan. <u>Community Action Plans - East Ayrshire Council (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</u></p> |
| <p>Case Study: Gatehead Community Action Plan</p> <p>The Gatehead Community Action Plan was launched at a special event in March 2024. The Plan outlines the key priorities for the community between now and 2029, all of which were identified by members of the local community.</p> <p><i>'This launch marks a milestone for the community of Gatehead who have come together to create a joint vision and working plan on how they can improve their village for the better. I look forward to seeing the visions from the plan coming to life over the next five years'.</i></p> <p>Provost Jim Todd</p> | | | |
| ES16 Adapt the provision of employability services and provide re-training and upskilling opportunities for people whose work or learning has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the number of partnership groups and project boards established in East Ayrshire to support employability. | EAC; DWP; SDS; SE; AC | <p>Effective collaboration across the East Ayrshire Local Employability Partnership (LEP) is delivering employability provision which meets the needs of local people and communities. The introduction of the LEP's Trusted Partner Procurement Framework in November 2023 and the delivery of training programmes and sector skills activity through 27 national and local organisations offers unemployed people across East Ayrshire a range of provision which complements in-house employability services and is mainly targeted at those furthest from the labour market. This four year commissioning framework runs until 2027.</p> |

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| those most at risk of poverty. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support applications to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund, and ensure that Partnership resources are mobilised to take advantage of new investments in skills. Support the over-25s to take up a range of opportunities, including the National Transition Training Fund as an integral part of our economic recovery. | <p>ALL</p> <p>AC; SDS</p> | <p>A review of the Council's internal employability arrangements commenced in early 2024, noting that activity is currently managed or commissioned across a number of different service areas. The review, which is ongoing, will identify areas of duplication, synergy and potential for improvement.</p> <p>Levelling Up Fund Cultural Kilmarnock: design work is nearing completion and expected that works will commence in early 2025 with completion in late 2026/early 2027. LUF funding of £20m has been confirmed along with the Council's £5m contribution. The project continues to face challenging financial conditions due to market volatility and inflationary pressures.</p> <p>Shared Prosperity Fund SPF Year 2 funding was used in 2023/24 across the Council's projects, including funding for employment initiatives, skills development and business support. Highlights included the opening of the new employability hubs at Cumnock and Dalmellington, with a fourth and final hub opening in Galston in 2024/25. Via our Multiply programmes, 205 adults participated in maths courses and 29 people were assisted into employment. In year 3, SPF support will be used for the CWB Grant Fund and Place-Based Investment Programme.</p> <p>East Ayrshire Works, which is managed by the Council, provides a wide range of opportunities spanning the Employability Pipeline, all of which are designed to support people of all ages to progress to sustainable employment.</p> <p>A key focus of the East Ayrshire No-One Left Behind Delivery model in 2023/24 was on the long-term unemployed and economically inactive over-25s. Training providers worked with these client groups to prepare them effectively for the transition to employment.</p> |
| ES17 Reduce the incidence of ill health and fuel poverty as a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayrshire Growth Deal – Working for a Healthy Economy. £5 million investment in occupational health services with a specific emphasis on health related | NHSAA; DWP; EAC. | The Working for a Healthy Economy project continues to provide targeted interventions to help those struggling to maintain secure employment. Over 1,200 people have been supported across |

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| <p>constraint to an inclusive economy for individuals and businesses</p> | <p>barriers to labour market participation. Project will be delivered by NHS Salus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayrshire Growth Deal – CoRE. Reduce fuel poverty through implementation of CoRE demonstrator projects including advanced retrofit technologies. | <p>EAC; SE; Strathclyde University; AC.</p> | <p>Ayrshire to date, of whom 77 have returned to work. A range of events and promotional activities took place during 2023/24.</p> <p>The CoRE project has been reviewed and refocussed with the aim of helping our communities deal with the cost of living and energy crises. There is a renewed emphasis on health and wellbeing, skills and training and the creation of sustainable jobs. The Demonstrator Projects will remain key to the project, and a key focus of these will be on tackling fuel poverty. Scope for a community advice and support hub is being explored. Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy Project - CoRE - Ayrshire Growth Deal - Community Renewable Energy Project - CoRE.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> |
| <p>ES18 Tackle digital exclusion to promote equality, counter social isolation and unlock access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the impact of digital poverty and ensure there is a focus on digital access, literacy, numeracy and interpersonal skills via community-based learning for all age groups. | <p>EAC; AC; EALT; NHSAA; Third Sector.</p> | <p>Implementation of the Council’s Digital Strategy: Our Digital Journey to 2027 and Beyond continues. A key theme is ‘Digital Communities’, which sets out a digital inclusion approach to ensure everyone has the opportunity and capability to be digitally included. Council Strategic Framework 2022-2027 - Council Strategic Framework 2022-2027.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Using Scottish Attainment Challenge funding, the Council continues to work closely with a range of targeted families through its iLunch, Family Involvement Programme (FIP) and Parental Empowerment Programmes. The Financial Inclusion Team work with families to maximise potential benefits, whilst advice and guidance has been provided to support retraining or return to work opportunities. Participants’ needs are analysed and appropriate training courses and workshops are identified in areas such as safe food handling, parenting skills, CPR and supporting your child at home with learning. As a result of this intervention, a number of parental empowerment groups are now self-sustaining.</p> |

Case Study: Family Involvement Programme, Shortlees Primary School

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| <p>Shortlees PS, in conjunction with a range of community partners, set out to increase parental engagement with the school and improve home-school links. Its' Family Involvement Programme brought parents and carers together in the school to engage in an activity whilst their children were supported by Active Schools, Modern Apprentice and parent volunteers.</p> <p>Sessions included money management, oral health, British Sign Language, Parental Employability and emotional wellbeing. Once the hour was over, families came together to enjoy a hot meal and to take part in some family activities. The families also received additional food to take home each week.</p> <p>The programme has made a huge difference to the lives of many participants in terms of increased wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem and reduced levels of isolation. It has also been a gateway into other activities, with parents taking part in food hygiene training and other parenting programmes delivered by Barnardos.</p> | | | |
| | | | <p>The Council's Education Service has continued to focus on digital poverty and is providing IT equipment to pupils and families. Over 300 primary pupils have been involved in a P6/7 Chromebook 1:1 pilot and 100 secondary S1 pupils. Schools continue to offer Scottish Government funded devices to those pupils in our establishments who require access to a device at home.</p> <p>Across the South West Education Improvement Collaborative (SWEIC) – East, North & South Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway - secondary schools are working together to provide a virtual learning campus, providing a more equitable curriculum for senior pupils. The virtual campus, which is known as @South-West Connects, helps prepare our young people with key skills for learning, life and work and helps them to successfully enter university, college, or work with the confidence of having acquired the skills and attributes that each environment requires.</p> <p>William McIlvanney Campus staff were awarded 'Ambassador Status' by global education technology company, Promethean, in recognition of a commitment to embedding and disseminating digital best practice in education. As the first ambassador site in Scotland, this recognition sets the benchmark for educational standards through the effective use of technology.</p> <p>Provision of a range of supports to adults and parents, including family literacy and numeracy learning and parental engagement sessions via the Scottish Attainment Challenge during 2023/24. Via</p> |

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| | | | <p>the Shared Prosperity Fund's Money MOT programme, the Vibrant Communities Service works with young adults to provide sustainable approaches to numeracy skills, with the specific goal of improving sustained positive destinations in employment, education or training.</p> <p>Implementation of NHSAA's Digital and Data Strategy 2023 – 2025 continues. The Strategy focusses on a clear path towards delivery of a new digital ecosystem, with strong foundations to provide a platform approach and integrated services. This commitment to digital reform will be central to the successful delivery of the Caring for Ayrshire strategy for the benefit of our communities. https://www.nhsaaa.net/media/13317/2023-01-30-bm-p15-aa-digital-strategy.pdf</p> |
| <p>Case Study: Catrine Early Childhood Centre Catrine Early Childhood Centre was the first of its kind in Scotland to attain a Digital Schools Award. The school uses a number of innovative techniques, including QR codes around the building which children can scan using Chromebooks or iPads to learn more about subjects that interest them.</p> <p>The project is being led by the ECC's depute manager Alana Speirs, its STEM 'champion', Sherrie Devlin, and head teacher Judith Govans.</p> <p>Staff have talked about the importance of promoting STEM throughout the ECC, supporting staff to use new technologies and about the way the children have embraced technology, increasing confidence and independence.</p> <p>Thanks to their effort, Digital Schools Award Scotland will now be developing a framework specifically for Early Childhood Centres.</p> | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayrshire Growth Deal – Digital Infrastructure Project. Complete 4G coverage for rural Ayrshire. Overall aim – make Ayrshire a world-class digitally connected region. | EAC; SE; private sector. | <p>Proposals to rescope the Digital projects from the AGD Programme were approved by the AEJC in November 2023. They will be replaced by a new project, 'Building Digital Capital', details of which are expected to be finalised in mid-2024. This will set out details of the reallocation of the £14m budget and identification of the existing AGD sites that will contribute to the Building Digital Capital project across Ayrshire.</p> <p>The Ayrshire region was selected by the UK Government in November 2023 to receive £3.8 million from its 5G Innovation Regions Fund. This will be used to create a series of 'Regional Strategic Wireless Innovation Hubs', including one at the Ayrshire Innovation Park, Kilmarnock. The project will identify areas where technology can be used to address weaknesses and these will be</p> |

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| | | | used as case studies and demonstrators for others to follow. A new Business Advisor post, with a specialist remit for the Digital Economy, is being created to co-ordinate this activity. |
| ES19 Support all our businesses through recovery from Covid-19 and the UK's departure from the EU, and into a longer-term renewal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPP to develop links and work together with the Ayrshire-wide sector-specific recovery groups. • Assist in the co-ordination and integration of individual partners' Brexit preparedness plans and ensure integration as they continue to evolve. | <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> | <p>The sector-specific recovery groups continue to work with a wide range of partners in pursuit of their objectives. Each group has its own detailed action plan, and whilst these are tailored depending on the needs of the sector, common themes have emerged, including sustainability, economic growth and digitalisation. CPP partners are major employers within East Ayrshire, and have a crucial role to play in ensuring the success of the sector-specific activity.</p> <p>The Council received a 3 year allocation from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in 2022, a significant proportion of which has funded employability programmes that were previously funded by the EU via ERDF or ESF. This funding will terminate in March 2025 and the Council has entered discussions with the UK Government regarding future funding, which will be vital in supporting projects and staff contracts.</p> <p>The last 2 years has seen a shift from responding to Brexit to putting in place plans to mitigating against the wider cost of living crisis which is affecting all our communities and businesses. The Council undertook a survey in October 2023 in relation to cost of living challenges for businesses. 272 responses were received, predominantly from businesses in food & drink and hospitality. 50 businesses requested a follow-up, all of whom were provided with information on further supports available to them.</p> <p>Having supported communities through the cost of living crisis, the Council announced the closure of its Cost of Living campaign in 2024. It agreed to develop a local East Ayrshire Anti-Poverty and Inequalities Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders and partners, recognised the need for a longer-term, more joined up approach.</p> |
| ES20 Invest in hospitality and tourism as part of economic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of new Ayrshire-wide Tourism Strategic Group and Covid-19 Recovery Road Map. | VisitScotland; EAC; EALT; SAC; NAC; SE; Ayrshire | The new Ayrshire & Our Islands Visitor Economy Strategy was launched in March 2023. Ayrshire tourism forging ahead (east-ayrshire.gov.uk) . The strategy aims to deliver economic recovery with an emphasis on the natural environment to benefit visitors |

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| <p>recovery from Covid-19 and reposition East Ayrshire as a destination for responsible tourism in alignment with national and pan-Ayrshire tourism strategies.</p> | | <p>CofC; the Coig; Scottish Tourism Alliance.</p> | <p>wellbeing and aid social regeneration. Key to success is collaboration across local authority boundaries so residents, businesses and the whole region benefit from the visitor economy.</p> <p>The Council continued its media partnership with Newsquest's Best of Scotland and The Saturday Herald featuring East Ayrshire tourism businesses every month. The partnership includes promotion and inclusion across local news outlets and social media platforms with the production of videos and reels. Recent coverage has included The Covenanters, Robert Burns and Easter activities for families. For example, the Starry Night coverage in December 2023 had a reach of over 67,000 with over 35,000 engagements and 8,700 video plays.</p> <p>The UK Government's 5G Innovation Regions funding for Ayrshire includes an allocation for the Ayrshire tourism sector to support digital connectivity. Within East Ayrshire, funding will be used to enhance connectivity at Dean Castle Country Park, with other projects to follow where demand has been identified. A pan-Ayrshire working group has been established, the remit of which will be to consider 5G and advanced wireless technologies application at a range of venues and events across Ayrshire.</p> <p>East Ayrshire Cabinet confirmed support for the creation of a new Galloway National Park, as they agreed to reaffirm their backing for the Galloway National Park Association (GNPA) submission to the Scottish Government as it considers bids for the designation of new National Parks in Scotland. Following a series of public consultations, which started in 2022, the Scottish Government opened a nomination and appraisal process, which closes on Thursday 29 February 2024.</p> <p>The Council responded to the proposed Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill in August 2023, supporting the Bill which it believes would lead to a decentralisation of power to local authority level. If approved, additional income received would be reinvested into the local tourism and leisure sector. The Bill is at an early stage and would require</p> |

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| | | | councils to carry out consultation, with 2026 the earliest possible implementation date. |
| <p>ES21 Accelerate the transformation of key digital public services, recognising the transformation that has taken place as a result of Covid-19.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise learning and good practice from the pandemic to deepen collaboration and partnership working, and strengthen place and systems-based working across East Ayrshire. Invest in sustainable and resilient workforces through recovery, learning from Covid-19 to embed flexible working, promote wellbeing and develop new ways of working. | <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> | <p>CPP partners have recognised the impact that ongoing budgetary constraints continue to have on funding levels. In response to these challenges, partners continue to consider the levels of service that can affordably and sustainably be made while maintaining a balanced financial position.</p> <p>Economy & Skills Group members took part in a joint engagement event with the other Delivery Plan Groups in December 2023. This proved valuable in supporting collaboration and identifying opportunities for innovation.</p> <p>NHSAA opened a Staff Wellbeing Centre at University Hospital, Crosshouse, in 2023. One of three across the region, the Centre provides both clinical and non-clinical staff with a space to recuperate and relax away from clinical settings.</p> <p>Implementation of the Council's Workforce Strategy 2022-27 continues. Objectives include continued investment in developing young people and future skills; focussed work around equalities; fair and equal pay; a further review of People and Culture policies and employee benefits. Council Strategic Framework 2022-2027 - Council Strategic Framework 2022-2027.pdf (east-ayrshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>The Ayrshire Roads Alliance (ARA) introduced a new training programme for roadworkers which aims to address challenges including an ageing workforce and recruitment difficulties. Open to school leavers/employability pathways, seasonal workers and foundation apprentices upon leaving school, trainees would be required to sign up to the training programme and repay any training costs if they decide to leave within two years.</p> <p>ARA already supports foundation apprenticeships, modern apprenticeships, trainee and graduate programmes across the service and these further education opportunities are also open to roadworkers. There is also a seasonal employment initiative that was</p> |

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| <p>ES22 Support the Young Person's Guarantee by ensuring that every young person has access to a job, education, training or development programme.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a Young Person Guarantee Board in East Ayrshire. This Board will have responsibility for an immediate funding allocation and over the longer term is expected to develop its remit to take on a broader 'No One Left Behind' umbrella approach to all employability activity in East Ayrshire. | <p>EAC; AC; SDS; SE</p> | <p>developed in partnership with Greener Communities to provide continuous employment carrying out grass cutting, winter gritting and drainage works as well as the opportunity to obtain an HGV license.</p> <p>Separate grant funding for the Young Person's Guarantee ended in March 2023 and the programme has now been mainstreamed as part of the No-One Left Behind All-Age Employability approach.</p> <p>An innovative DYW project was launched at Stewarton Academy in September 2023. Bonnet Toun Bicycles (part of Stewarton Skills Academy) will teach young people about bike repairs and maintenance. This is one of four projects which make up the Skills Academy, along with Wee Roasters, Raise The Bar and Stewarton Construction. Learners will develop vocational, employability and life skills through structured projects.</p> <p>DYW also launched the Park School Skills Academy at the Grange Campus in April 2023. The three projects making up this Academy are Grand Park Café, the Cycle Shed and Shimmer and Shine.</p> <p>The Community Learning & Development Progress Visit Report, published by Education Scotland on 19 December 2023 identified SL33, the employability hub for young people in Kilmarnock, as making a significant contribution to supporting young people into positive destinations and specified as practice worth sharing more widely.</p> <p>Kilmarnock Academy became the first school in East Ayrshire to achieve the STEM Nation Award from Education Scotland. The award was developed by Education Scotland to celebrate, promote and build on effective practice in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Education. This work includes the delivery of science clubs during lunchtime and after-school including Lego club, CAD/CAM club, train club and maths problem solving club.</p> <p>The school has also worked closely with Ayrshire College and the Prince's Trust delivering vocational courses and has also worked with local businesses including Collins Aerospace and GSK to help prepare our young people for the world of work.</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of innovative new courses in growth areas including engineering, computing, digital, education and social care, which are linked to employers and developed with industry partners. | AC; EAC; SDS; universities. | <p>As part of the UK Government's 5G Innovation Region programme, £0.3m has been allocated across the region and work is being developed between University of the West of Scotland and Ayrshire College to deliver collaborative digital training programmes to support businesses with workforce upskilling across a range of sectors. Programmes will be developed for implementation during summer 2024. Additionally, Vodafone will be working within East Ayrshire Schools to increase the profile of the emerging projects being delivered through 5G digital applications in the workplace across a range of sectors.</p> <p>Ayrshire College continues to explore new and innovative courses linked to growth sectors. The Construction Technology & Trades curriculum continually revises and develops to ensure the curriculum meets identified skills needs. Course boards have been set up with employer representation to ensure that content is fit for purpose and gives students the best possible chance to enter the job market. This includes work experience opportunities.</p> <p>For promoting enterprise opportunities to students, Ayrshire College was named the Enterprise College of the Year at an awards ceremony in May 2023.</p> <p>The College entered into a partnership with Bridgend Motor Group, which provides students with the opportunity to join the company's academy programme and progress through a Modern Apprenticeship.</p> <p>Over 100 modern apprentices are studying at Ayrshire College's Aeronautical Engineering Training Centre. The College is developing its VR capability and aims to become a Part 147 Approved Training Organisation. A new space technology course will commence at Ayrshire College in September 2023.</p> |
| ES23 Expand provision of school, college and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Strategies. Enhanced focus on succession planning, including an increase in the numbers of apprenticeships. | ALL | <p>143 young people have been appointed to posts via the Council's Jobs and Training Fund (112 Modern Apprenticeships, 29 Graduate Interns and 2 Graduate Apprentices). A further 41 young people have been recruited by local businesses and 63 have joined the</p> |

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| <p>apprenticeship places to meet emerging demands in new and high-growth areas.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships. Embed Foundation Apprenticeships within the core senior phase curriculum offer in East Ayrshire Schools. Offer and ensure pathways to Modern Apprenticeships specifically highlighted as areas of significance for the Ayrshire region. Embed Graduate Apprenticeships within the core further and higher education curriculum offer from 2021/22. | <p>AC; SDS; EAC</p> | <p>Council's Modern Apprenticeship scheme via existing routes. Using Community Benefit funding provided by 9CCG and supported by the Council, 20 apprenticeships will be created in the renewables sector at local company Emergency One.</p> <p>Young people across our secondary schools have benefited from direct engagement with the Council's 'Future Skills' team raising awareness of employment pathways and the range of apprenticeship opportunities within East Ayrshire Council.</p> <p>There was a significant increase in the number of school pupils completing Ayrshire College's Foundation Apprenticeship in Engineering who were directly recruited into the aerospace industry. 43% of S5 pupils taking part in the two year course progressed into employment in 2021/22, compared to 25% in 2018/19. <u>Foundation Apprenticeship programme is proving to be the perfect platform for launching a career in aerospace (ayrshire.ac.uk).</u></p> <p>12 NHSAA modern apprentices successfully completed their Modern Apprenticeship in Dental Nursing in 2023/24. All are employed in dental practices across Ayrshire.</p> |

Case Study: Foundation Apprenticeships @ Loudoun Academy

Ayrshire College has a well-established partnership with Loudoun Academy, particularly in the areas of Hospitality and Food Technology. Over the past few years, a member of College staff has been working in the school for two days per week, working with senior pupils, developing their customer service, event management and barista skills. The pupils work towards a number of SQA units and use these qualifications to either obtain part-time work while they continue their general studies or further studies within the hospitality area.

Approximately 40 young people take part in the Barista/Milk Bar projects every year with almost all of the pupils achieving the vocational units at both level 4 and level 5 through very practical, hands-on learning, organising and delivering events across the school. As part of an Ayrshire-wide partnership bid to deliver Foundation Apprenticeships, led by the College, Loudoun Academy began the delivery of the Foundation Apprenticeship in Food & Drink Technologies (level 6) and has now expanded delivery to include the Foundation Apprenticeship in Hospitality (level 5). This is proving very popular within the school with the College lecturer working very closely with the HE department in the school and arranging visits to the College for the pupils.