

NOVEMBER 2024

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

North Ayrshire Community Benefit News



Welcome to the autumn edition of the North Ayrshire Community Benefits Newsletter!

In this issue we're highlighting some fantastic work from a contractor who has worked with North Ayrshire Council on a range of projects over a number of years, and has continued to push the envelope for what community benefits can do in a local community. And now it's November, we're drawing your thoughts towards Christmas time through our Wish List round up.

If you can help any of the projects on the back page, get in touch with Karen on khayburn@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

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Community Benefits News and Thanks

Connect Modular have provided a range of community benefits over the last few months to both community groups and local schools. **The Three Towns Community Shed** took delivery of a range of good quality wood which will be used to upskill their members in their workshop space and build confidence on woodworking equipment. They also supported **Friends of Redburn's** Easter egg drive in the spring, donating a range of chocolate for the young people taking part in their activities. And creative pupils in the Garnock Valley got the chance to design a card to welcome residents in the new housing developments in Beith and Kilbirnie to their new homes, with the winners taking home an online gift card.



★ *Competition* ★

**DESIGN A
HAPPY NEW
HOME CARD**

**WIN
a £15
Amazon
Gift Card**

3 Winners will be selected.
(P1-P3, P4-5, P6-P7)

Winning Designs will be printed and issued to the new residents of Connect Modular's new Housing Developments in Beith & Kilbirnie.



Can you help Beith Trust?

Beith Trust are looking for a donation of 4m2 of slabs to help pave a small area between their main hall and container storage to help make their event management a lot easier!

The Trust has transformed the site of a former residential school and now hosts a range of events including weddings, craft shows and community shows, with all proceeds going back into employment and regeneration initiatives in the local area.

They're also on the lookout for some interior design advice and new windows for their Chapel, so please get in touch if you might have the in-house skills or know someone who could help!

A huge thank you to **Ameresco**, whose donation of £3,000 to the **North Ayrshire Fairer Food Network** this month enabled 15 community food larders the ability to offer their members a free week of shopping just in time for Challenge Poverty Week. To date, over 340 households have benefitted from this support, saving them over £1500 on their shopping. 7 more larders are about to roll out their free week of shopping, which will potentially double the number of households reached by the support from Ameresco.



Community Benefits News and Thanks

1st and 6th Ayrshire (Irvine) Scouts have asked us to pass along their thanks to staff from **Fortress Security Alarms Ltd** and **Clancy Consulting** who offered their time and expertise in response to a call for help in July. The Scout Hall has now had a range of electrical checks and a fire alarm review completed by Fortress; and a building survey worth £700 completed free of charge by Clancy, which enables the group to plan for the building's future.



Hayocks Parents and Toddlers Group are thrilled with their new games and toys kindly donated by **Bell Group**. It can be hard for small groups like this to access support, so thank you very much for your donation!



Ardrossan and Largs Sea Cadets are in the early stages of an ambitious refresh of their premises, and have also had some fantastic support through community benefits.

Lowmac kindly provided skip hire for the group to clear out old external storage cabins, and the team from **RJ McLeod** were also down at the site to help clear the ground and get it prepped for the next step in the work schedule. Thank you to both contractors for all your help.



In this month's back page, you'll see us call out for some help for Christmas events, but some of you got started in the summer!

Saltcoats Christmas Carnival are really appreciative of the donations they've had from **Landcare Solutions Ltd** and **SSUK**, which will enable them to provide children attending their Santa Grotto with a book each and cover their First Aid costs for the event.



Spotlight On: RJ McLeod



RJ McLeod are currently supporting the development of Ardrossan Campus, a new secondary school and community hub in the port town of Ardrossan. A Scottish business, they are champions for Community Wealth Building's principles of progressive procurement, fair work, and making locally-centred decisions; read on for some updates from their most recent work with us.

Fair Work

In a previous contract with the Council in Largs, RJ McLeod took on three joinery apprentices from North Ayrshire, and all three have transitioned to the Ardrossan site to continue their apprenticeships on the new contract. The security of their apprenticeships, and the business' investment in them as new members of staff has enabled them to gain new skills and experiences that would not have been possible if just perceived as 'tick box staff' taken on to fulfil a contractual requirement. Cameron, Marcus and Lee will continue to work on RJ McLeod's contracts to complete their apprenticeships, with future projects in East and South Ayrshire in the pipeline.



Marcus and Lee on site at Ardrossan

Community Support

Ardrossan Winton Rovers Youth Academy are a Community Interest Company who provide a range of volunteering, training and employment opportunities that aim to improve young lives through sport. RJ McLeod were approached by the organisation to see whether they could help them as part of their changing room redevelopment, and that initial conversation has turned into an incredible package of support to the project. Ardrossan Winton Rovers said: "Their generous work in kind has been vital to our project, especially as costs soared in the current economic climate and funding proved difficult to secure...Without their investment of materials and manpower, we would have struggled to complete the project. Their dedication, attention to detail, professionalism, and kindness have been instrumental in helping us achieve our goals. The successful completion of this project will benefit one of the poorest communities in Scotland and is a testament



The new changing facility being craned onto site

Spotlight On: RJ McLeod

to their hard work and commitment. Their willingness to assist us and continue to do so has been invaluable, and we will be forever grateful.” RJ McLeod have supported the academy with significant groundworks in preparation for a new changing facility to be installed. The installation itself was also coordinated by the business, arranging everything from road closures to the crane to hoist the new unit into place! There was a lot of hard work in preparation for the day of the changing unit arriving (and a long shift by everyone on the day), but the group now have a warm and fit for purpose space for young people to use. RJ McLeod would like to extend their thanks to 3B Cranes for their support with this project.

Local economic impact

RJ McLeod’s ongoing works at Ardrossan have required the import to site of over 350,000 tonnes of aggregate as part of the coastal protection and enabling works for the new community campus. Christina McKittrick, CSR Manager said: “Our team is super-proud to have sourced all of this stone locally from Beith and Troon – boosting the Ayrshire economy, supporting local jobs and minimising carbon emissions.”

School outreach and STEM engagement

In late spring, the site team for Ardrossan Campus were out in force visiting local primary schools. Winton, St Anthony’s, Caledonia, St Peter’s, Dykesmains and Mayfield Primaries each received a visit from the site to explain what RJs are doing in Ardrossan and why. They chatted about the many great jobs there are in civil engineering and different career pathways to them. The site team also explained how these works are benefiting the community and the environment too. Moving forwards, the business also plans to offer targeted support to older pupils at risk of disengaging in education to help open the door to potential careers in civil engineering and construction.

The team also partnered up with the Council’s STEM Coordinator for North Ayrshire’s Biodiversity and Sustainability Week in the October break, delivering a range of science, engineering, sustainability and environment activities at Eglinton Park, including building competitions and nature walks. This included a showcase of the work completed for the Council’s new sea wall at Largs, and information about the Enabling Works contract at Ardrossan Campus, with support from engineering consultants Fairhurst and the project designers from the Council.

Would you like to be featured in a future newsletter? Get in touch with us at communitybenefits@north-ayrshire.gov.uk



The Enabling Works team

Community Benefits Wish List: 'Tis (Nearly) The Season

Christmas events don't plan themselves, and it's becoming more expensive every year for groups to put on fantastic festive events for their local area. If you are looking to make an impact before the end of 2024, the options below are needed in November and December, and with a range of support from financial donations to volunteer time, we hope there is something to suit your approach to community benefits. We've had fantastic support for groups in the past from several businesses making smaller donations towards a larger target, and anything you can provide is really appreciated.

Please send any offers of help to: communitybenefits@north-ayrshire.gov.uk and we'll put you in touch from there.

- **Ardrossan Christmas Decorations Committee** are looking for donations towards the cost of hosting this year's Christmas lights event in November, which will include closing Glasgow Street to enable a parade, carols, stalls and entertainment, and gifts for children attending the event, with a total cost of £3,400.
- **Whitlees Community Centre** are hosting their annual Community Christmas Dinner in early December for anyone who would otherwise be alone at Christmas, and are looking any donations of food items or vouchers for local supermarkets to help us make this another great event.
- **Saltcoats Christmas Carnival** are on the lookout for financial donations towards the cost of selection boxes for their Grotto. Any support towards the estimated £2400 bill (that's 800 selection boxes!), or donations of boxes themselves, would be greatly appreciated.
- **Dalry Action Group** are creating a new sleigh for the town's Christmas celebration and are looking for donations of ply, screws, lights and other items to complete it.
- **Stevenston Christmas Lights Fund Committee** are looking for financial support to help make their event happen this year. Your sponsorship will help pay for the cost of road closures, insurance, hot food and stage hire for the town, which is estimated to be in the region of £2,400.
- **Kilbirnie and Glengarnock Community Association** host a community food larder, Cafe Solace and a wide range of community groups at their space in Kilbirnie. The building is in need of freshening up in time for the Christmas season, and they are looking for donations of equipment (paint, brushes, rollers, dust sheets) to help complete the task. If you have the skills to be able to help with external repairs to the building, they would be extra keen to chat to you!
- **Ardrossan Castle Heritage Society** are looking for volunteer litter pickers to help them tidy up the site in autumn as part of their ongoing maintenance of the space. They'd also like to improve the visitor experience with some new benches and view finding equipment.

