



**ANGUS**  
COMMUNITY  
PLANNING  
PARTNERSHIP

# Annual Performance Report

## 2023-2024



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**Hayley Mearns**

Chief Executive Officer, Voluntary Action Angus,  
Chair of The Angus Community Planning Partnership

**Welcome to the second annual performance report of the Angus Community Plan 2022-2030. This report provides an overview of the wide range of work that has been delivered by our community planning partnership over the last year, covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.**

The Angus Community Plan 2022-2030 is the result of a collaborative effort by community planning partners and reflects the priorities identified by local communities. It replaces the previous Angus Community Plan 2017-2030 and is built around three core priorities:

- **Caring for our Economy:** Focused on supporting economic growth and resilience.
- **Caring for our People:** Aimed at improving health, well-being, and quality of life.
- **Caring for our Place:** Committed to preserving and enhancing the natural and built environment.

The new plan comes at a challenging time, with communities facing the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing living costs, and greater demands on services due to public sector reform and reduced resources. Despite these challenges, the Partnership remains committed to its vision of making Angus a great place to live, work, and visit.

The 2023-2024 Performance Report reflects the progress made in this period, highlighting achievements in partnership working and the benefits this collaboration brings to communities. The report also acknowledges areas requiring improvement and outlines the need for faster progress and better alignment of resources to address key priority issues.

This year's performance report also includes:

- The Our Bright Futures Action Plan - Report on Progress 2023-24.
- The Community Learning & Development Plan, marking progress toward a unified approach for the region.

The Partnership is determined to build on these efforts, making more substantial strides in the coming year to meet its targets.

*"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."* — Helen Keller

This quote serves as a reminder of the strength and potential in collaborative efforts, as the Partnership continues to work together to build a brighter future for all in Angus.



## Our Partnership

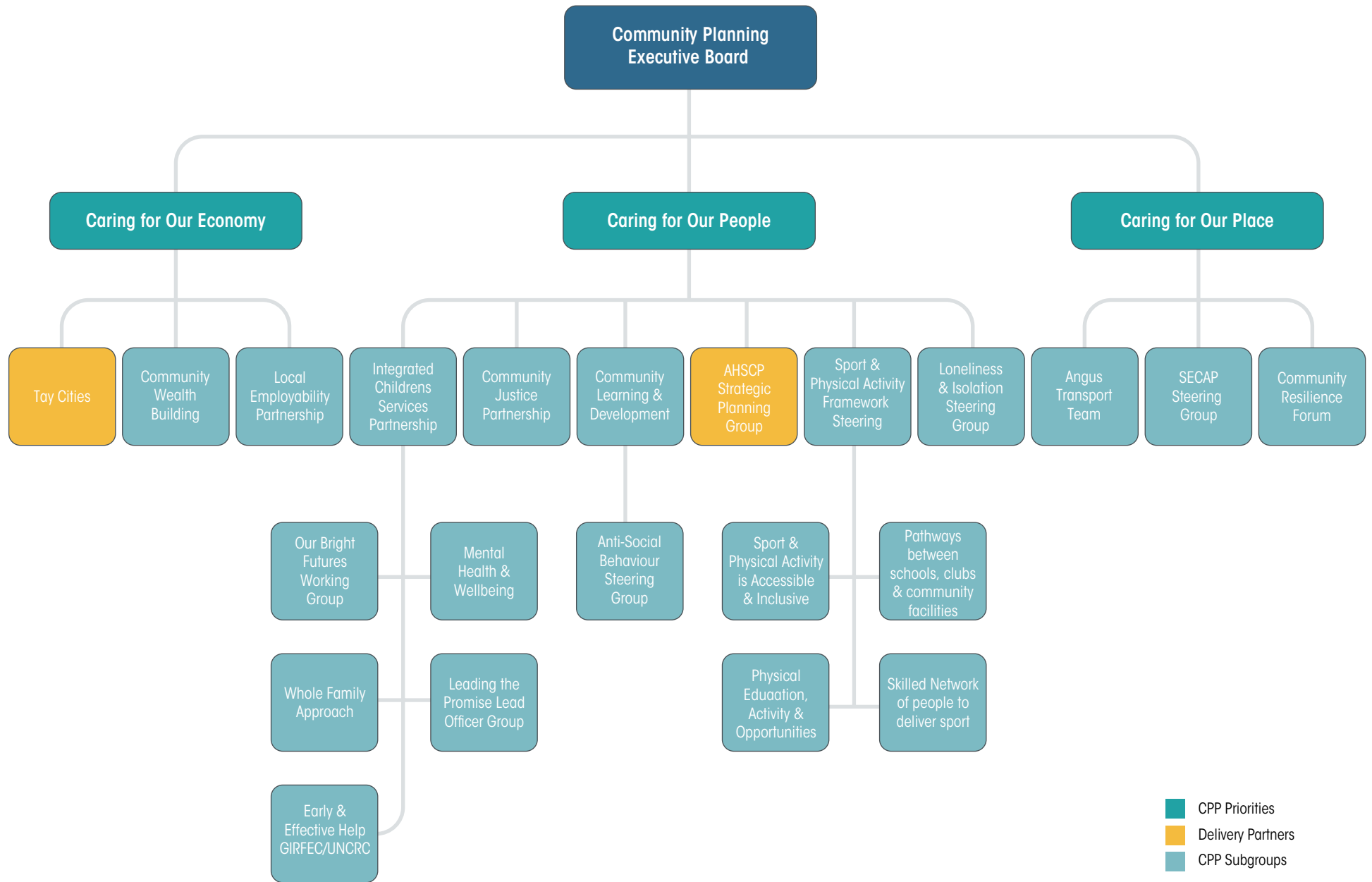
Community planning is about partners working collectively with our communities to maximise the impact of our shared partnership resources to improve outcomes for our local communities. A review of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) structure was undertaken to ensure the partnership model is fit for this purpose. The Angus Community Planning Executive Board oversees the delivery groups for each priority to ensure outcomes are achieved and to work in partnership to alleviate any challenges. The structure is shown on the next page of this report.

The first two years of the eight-year Community Plan has shown a strong and cooperative effort to create positive, lasting development in Angus. Thanks to the teamwork of our partners, key priorities have been identified and successfully achieved, with ongoing work continuing to make progress through strong partnerships that follow our plan for the future.

The plan highlighted the importance of inclusivity, collaboration, and community involvement. By working together, we have ensured that the diverse needs and goals of our community are being met. This shared responsibility has helped build a strong, vibrant community that is ready to face future challenges and opportunities.

Support to the board and delivery groups will continue to ensure continuous development. Using data from the Angus Strategic Needs Assessments, we will make informed decisions to help the Community Planning Partnership focus on the community's most important needs. This will lead to more focused actions, better use of resources, and stronger results, improving the overall wellbeing and growth of the Angus community.

The work of the Angus Community Planning Partnership is underpinned by several legislative and strategic requirements. A full list of these can be found in the [Community Plan 2022-2030](#).



## Caring for Our People

The partnership priorities for Caring for our People are delivered through the delivery subgroups. These include:

- Integrated Childrens Services
- Angus Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Planning Group
- Community Learning & Development
- Sport and Physical Activity Framework
- Community Justice Partnership

Performance measures to demonstrate impact against our priorities were reviewed and updated during the review of the 2022-2030 Plan.

Measure	Baseline 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target Year 3	Target Year 5	Target Year 8
% of children living in poverty	20.6%	24.2%	24.9%	Available June 2025	19%	17%	15%
No. of children living in poverty	4,600	5,067	5,147	Available June 2025	3,770	3,690	3,600
Children with a healthy weight at Primary 1 age group living in SIMD 1	67.2% Baseline used is pre- pandemic 2018/19	59.2%	70.6%	Available Dec 24	Increase	Increase	Increase
Children with a Healthy Weight at Primary 1 age group living in SIMD 2	72.5%	66.5%	75%	Available Dec 24	Increase	Increase	Increase
Inequality in risk of obesity between children in least v's most deprived areas, at Primary 1 age group	6% v 16.4% (+10.4%) Baseline used is pre- pandemic 2018/19	2.5% v 27% (+24.5%)	2.5% v 15.3% (+12.5%)	Available Dec 24	Reduce	Reduce	Reduce

Measure	Baseline 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target Year 3	Target Year 5	Target Year 8
Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels for Literacy and Numeracy (P1/4/7)	Literacy 72.2%  Numeracy 78.4%	Literacy 75.0%  Numeracy 82.0%	Literacy 76.2%  Numeracy 81.6%	Literacy 78.1%  Numeracy 82.9%	Targets set and reviewed on an annual basis and can be found in <a href="#">Angus Education Plan</a>		
Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more passes at SCQF Level 5	89.4%	86.6%	86.1%	Available Feb 25			
Proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more passes at SCQF Level 6	67.7%	58.9%	60.1%	Available Feb 25			
Proportion of 16-19 year olds participating in education, employment or training	92.4%	93.2%	91.4%	91.9%			
No. of adults and young people engaged in Community Learning & Development (CLD) activity	NA	3,639	2,858	3,301	Increase	Increase	Increase
No. of individuals (children and adults) engaged in family learning	NA	NA	1,595	5,795	Increase	Increase	Increase
% of people able to look after their own health	93%	Not recorded	92.4%	91.1%	95%	97%	98%
Rate of deaths under 75 (per 100,000)	370.5	418.6	390.2	Not published	390	370	350



The number of children in Angus living in poverty increased by 80, from 5,067 in 2021/22 to 5,147 in 2022/23. The increase in Angus reflects a national pattern of persistent levels of child poverty. The continuing impact of the cost-of-living crisis is recognised nationally as one reason for slow progress towards the achievement of these targets.

Primary 1 BMI data is reported on an annual basis in mid-December and is publicly available via this [Public Health Scotland Dashboard](#).

Data for 23/24 shows an increase of 31% (1,053 adults and young people) engaging in community learning and development activities from 2,248 in 2022/23 to 3,301. A significant increase is shown for the number of individuals engaging in family learning due to the number of partners now reporting through CLD activity from 1,595 in 2022/23 to 5,795 in 2023/24. This represents a 363% increase. Further measures are included in the Community Learning & Development Outcome report in Appendix 3.

The number of people able to look after their own health has decreased slightly from 92.4% in 22/23 to 91.1% in 23/24. Data for 21/22 was not recorded due to the pandemic.

The following section of the report highlights work undertaken by each delivery subgroup over the reporting period.

## Angus Integrated Childrens Services Partnership (AICSP)

The priorities and actions outlined in the [Tayside Plan for Infants, Children, Young People and Families 2023-2026 Plan](#) complement activities at a local level through the Angus Integrated Childrens Services Partnership.

Angus Integrated Childrens Services Partnership work is delivered across five workstreams:

- Our Bright Futures
- Whole Family Wellbeing
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Early and Effective Help - Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Leading the Promise Lead Officer Group.

Our Bright Futures report can be found at appendix 2.

## Whole Family Wellbeing Approach

Building on and extending the current approach to pre-birth support (PRAM), we aim to establish Help at Right Time (HART) to bring key agencies together to match families to services. Voluntary Action Angus/3rd Sector Interface and 3rd Sector agencies are leading on this work. £10,000 from the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund has been invested in commissioning an external consultant to support this work.

This service is now called "Connect Point" which provides easier access to services across Angus using both a digital tool and person -to- person contact. A digital App called "Community Connector" was launched in March 2024 which provides a directory of services across Angus.

Development sessions were held with the multi-agency group directly involved with the upscale of the Glen Clova Project, focussed on adopting a gender specific, trauma responsive and relationship-based approach to service design. This is based on good practice material, and plans are being developed for multi-agency training and practice development events.

One of the success factors of this work has been the strategic “buy-in” from senior leaders and key stakeholders. This is evident from the well-attended Whole Family Wellbeing Fund (WFWF) events to date along with the multi-agency input in the WFWF programme itself.

The main challenges to progress this have mainly related to collaborative working in the 3rd sector, and a delay with procurement and commissioning support. This has been resolved with the recruitment of additional staff time.

With reference to Activity 1, there has been a lot of collaboration and multi-agency events that have focussed on the design and planning aspect of the programme. There has been a lot of discussion and “thinking time” regarding how best to take forward the “hub” model. Initial projected costings were too high, and parts of the delivery model, required a closer look in terms of aligning with existing preventative support services. Therefore, further work is required to bring this in line with other improvement plans, service delivery, and budget constraints.

## **Early and Effective Help - Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**

### **Development of a new GIRFEC e-learning module**

Following the publication of the national refresh of GIRFEC guidance on 30 September 2022, the Angus GIRFEC group has developed a new e-learning module which is available on Always Learning and TURAS. The module has been developed in alignment with GIRFEC training developed by NHS. Completion of the e-learning module was a pre-requisite to attending multi-agency GIRFEC training delivered in Angus. Most of the participants rated the module as useful in preparing for the multiagency training sessions.

### **Delivery of GIRFEC multi-agency training**

In June 2023, a multi-agency training pilot was delivered to professionals in the Named Person role in the Brechin/Montrose and Arbroath localities. It was attended by 43 participants, the majority of whom were from Education and Lifelong Learning, but also with representation from Children’s Social Work, Health, and Private and Voluntary Early Years settings.

This informed further GIRFEC training sessions in 2024 on the Continuum of Need, and role of the Named Person and Lead Professional. These were attended by 73 participants across agencies. Due to increased demand, two additional dates have been arranged in September 2024.

Our career long professional learning development mirrors plans currently in place across local authorities in Scotland and is being developed in collaboration with other local authorities in Tayside.

### **Refreshed Child's Plan Guidance**

Following positive feedback from participants during the multiagency training sessions, refreshed Child's Plan Guidance has been issued to all ELL staff and can be accessed on the #AngusDigiLearn website alongside all relevant GIRFEC resources and tools.

### **Leading the Promise Lead Officer Group**

As part of the expansion of advocacy services, an additional £60,000 annual investment in advocacy for children, young people and families has allowed us to work in partnership with Angus Independent Advocacy (AIA) to provide Family Advocacy as well as recruiting an additional young person advocate for children.

We have also continued to commission individual advocacy and group advocacy from Who Cares? Scotland.

Engagement opportunities for young people to influence change and be involved in decision making has been supported by two care experienced Participation Assistant posts, renamed as Promise Ambassadors, and hosted by Who Cares? Scotland. They have supported young people in our residential houses to participate in new staff recruitment for residential carers and have delivered training and awareness sessions to social work and education staff as well as being involved in the development of an Angus Promise video to support raising awareness across the wider workforce.

In partnership with young people, the Promise Team and Promise Ambassadors we have established a very successful children's group, 'The Hangout' for care experienced children aged 5 and above. Since it opened in 2022, numbers of attendees have grown with 36 children registered and between 18 and 25 regularly attending monthly sessions.

Over the last two years, the secure base parenting model has been promoted, supporting carers and workers to better understand children's needs and feel supported to meet them.

During Oct-Dec 2023, 13 children had intensive input, 22 had regular contact and the advocates-maintained contact with 22 young people sustaining relationships. The areas children requested advocacy support with were wide ranging and included family time, current placement and future planning, mental health support, education issues, and transitions. Over the last year we have seen younger children from 12 months old being supported through non-instructed advocacy.

The number of young people accessing continuing care placements has continued to fluctuate. In the first year 2018-19, eleven young people remained in continuing care placement increasing to nineteen young people in 2020-21, the take up decreased to seventeen young people in 2021-22 by March 2023 twelve young people exercised their eligibility for Continuing Care. In March 2024, a total of eleven young people were in continuing care placements 6 young people were in continuing care placements with their foster carers with a further 3 young people remaining in our children's homes and 2 in external placements. We continue to encourage young people to 'stay put' where they decide this is the right choice for them.

### **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

A subgroup of Angus Council's Corporate Equalities group has met regularly since the end of April 2023 to discuss implications of the implementation of UNCRC council wide. The following areas have been considered.

We have consulted with children and young people in Angus regarding the development of a local complaints system that is easily accessible. This work is being taken forward by the UNCRC subgroup which includes members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs). Guidance on the complaints process will be available to ensure it is accessible to children and young people.

Having the Children's Rights Assessments built into the Equality Impact Assessment digital process was a positive development. External training on assessments, including children's rights, for Elected Members and Officers was held on 25 January 2024. 42 members of staff attended also, including many of the Equality Impact Assessment Champions.

The Improvement Service attended a meeting of the UNCRC subgroup on 22 January 2024 to support with the national self-assessment template to determine council-wide readiness for UNCRC assessment. The assessment involves undertaking a staff survey which has been shared with CLT with a view to being promoted with all staff.

It was agreed that whilst a lot is already done in schools with children, young people and parents, we need more awareness raising of children's rights with Council staff and the general public through our communication/publicity channels and linking to other relevant information. Examples of this have included Human Rights Day on 10 December 2023; Scottish Government animation in the staff newsletter, You Matter and on the SharePoint site.

Input at a future Leadership briefing session will also help to raise awareness with managers and highlight the benefits of involving young people in service developments.

Finally, it is hoped that a part-time Youth Participation Worker may be able to support some of the engagement work in relation to UNCRC this session. Future collaboration with Dundee University is also being explored.

### **Rights Respecting Schools**

In May 2022, the Scottish Government awarded UNICEF UK a 3-year grant to offer their Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) to all primary and secondary schools in Scotland. The grant meets the costs of participating in the programme, removing the financial barrier for schools and Local Authorities, and ensuring children's rights are understood and embedded in school policy, practice and culture.

As a priority in the Angus Education Plan, all of our schools in Angus are registered with Rights Respecting Schools. 45 schools, Panbride (Extended Support for Pupils) and Carnoustie Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) setting have achieved Bronze; 13 schools and Forfar ELCC have achieved Silver; and Auchterhouse Primary School has Gold accreditation.

Children and parents/carers at Auchterhouse PS have shared the positive impact being a rights respecting school has had on children's learning and wellbeing. Children see



themselves as rights respecting global citizens and are advocates for social justice, fairness and children's rights locally and globally. Pupil voice is valued highly, and the range of pupil voice groups gives opportunities for all learners to have their voices heard and inform school improvement.

### **Mental Health & Wellbeing**

The annual funding awarded from Scottish Government to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people has been used to continue the provision of Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports that offer early intervention including;

**Togetherall** is a safe, anonymous online support offering a choice of therapeutic services, including online self-help courses and resources for those 16-24 years of age and resident in Angus.

**Peer Mentoring (mental health and wellbeing peer support)** provides quick, easy access to mental health and wellbeing support for secondary school age young people in Angus, delivered by Penumbra and Hillcrest Futures.

**CEDAR (children experienced domestic abuse recovery)** is a multi-agency initiative for children and young people who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties as a consequence of their experience of domestic abuse. Cedar provides a therapeutic group work programme for children and young people, alongside a concurrent group work programme for their mothers.

**Clinical Psychology and Counselling Service** provides advice and support for social workers working directly with adults supporting care experienced young people, as well as providing direct input for foster carers, kinship carers and residential staff to better equip them to respond to and support children with complex emotional needs, impacted by their early life trauma. The need for this service was highlighted by our care experienced young people and supports our commitment to the Angus Promise.

**2021-24 Angus Promise Plan - Your Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing.** We will ensure you have access to a range of different services, so you feel supported to manage your trauma and loss. We will recognise the importance of one key relationship to support you with your wellbeing.

**Aberlour** in partnership with The Mental Health Foundation and Angus Council, provide a Primary Years Wellbeing Support Service to children in Angus. The service delivers group wellbeing sessions, provides individual support for children and young people, as well as training for school staff.

**Individual Counselling and Play Therapy** for children and young people is provided by New Solutions. Children are referred by social work to support their recovery from early trauma.

**Sport for All.** ANGUSalive membership is providing free leisure access for care experienced children and young people with a focus on those at home and care experienced young adults. The initiative is targeted at breaking down the barriers for care experienced young people, supporting engagement in education, and accessing local community activities. Feedback from young adults engaged with are after care service Horizon have confirmed

the benefits to their mental health and wellbeing as well as supporting socialisation, which has been particularly important for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people.

The number of children accessing support through the **Peer Mentoring** service has continued to grow and the positive feedback from young people, parents, and professionals is noted below. Following the funding increase in 2022-23 to extend the capacity of the service, waiting times between appointments have reduced and the service continues to offer flexibility and where required, additional support sessions for young people to better support their mental health and wellbeing. Alongside the individual support sessions offered to young people, the Peer Mentoring Service has delivered a number of wellbeing workshops across schools and provided targeted support to local communities to offer mental health support to young people who were affected by local bereavements.

The impact of the services outlined above are reported regularly to Scottish Government with the last report covering the period July 2023 to March 2024. Monitoring of the services continues to evidence that these community-based services are supporting the emotional wellbeing of children and young people. As noted below the feedback from those receiving a service, their families and professionals remains positive.

### Sport for All: Young People's Feedback



**Young person who uses the gym regularly** *"I want to get fit for my football and swimming club and most of my friends go most weeks, so we go together."*

**Young person who uses the pool said** *"I like swimming and it's exercise. I get to meet my friend and I can go anytime I want."*

**18-year-old who uses the gym regularly** *"It boosts my mood and is great for my mental health. I meet other young people there and it's a good part of my social life as I don't know very many people in the area."*

### Peer Mentoring Service: Young People's Feedback



*"Very helpful, would enjoy more sessions...Perfectly great".*

*"(Worker) is so lovely, she believes I can get through everything, and her positive attitude reflects. I feel a lot better after our sessions."*

*"Helped me and my mum get a good relationship again."*

*"I liked how he listened and gave me websites/apps to help with how I was feeling."*

*"I really enjoyed working with him. he was really easy to talk to and good at listening."*

*"The sessions have been really useful to me, making me feel more confident with each session by giving me coping strategies to relieve stress."*

*"Has helped me with my general conversation skills and has helped me to open up".*

## Peer Mentoring Service: Feedback from School Staff

A Pupil Care and Support teacher noted she was grateful for the service going in to offer mental health sessions with S4/5/6 boys. She is now able to refer into the service, is impressed with the short waiting periods and how quickly the service is able to meet with young people to provide them with support.

Pupils and their families continue to benefit greatly from peer support in school. The peer worker has particularly strong relationships with staff in the school and ensures that lines of communication are open at all times. Safeguarding procedures are excellent, and the worker is solution-focused in her approach. The peer worker has had much success with young people who are refusing school due to a variety of reasons and will also support parents through what can be a very challenging time. The peer worker is part of the pupil care and support team but also takes time to talk and listen to curriculum staff when working with young people. This is often the extra ingredient which helps to provide positive outcomes for many of our young people.

Without peer support service, the wellbeing of our pupils would be significantly impacted. Peer staff work with an increasing number of our pupils for a wide variety of reasons including mental health, pupils struggling with relationships, exam stress etc. One key positive about the peer service is that they respond quickly to referrals and ensure they meet with pupils within a few days of this initial referral. The feedback from both pupils and the guidance team is overwhelmingly positive.

The peer service has been hugely beneficial to our school community. Alongside 1 to 1 work, the service offers group work on a range of issues from exam stress, anxiety and relationships. The flexibility of the service to meet the needs of our young people is a key strength. Our Pupil Care and Support team feel confident referring young people to the service over a range of mental health issues. The peer service is a hugely accessible service, where young people feel comfortable to self-refer and speak positively about their experience.

The peer service is a hugely valuable service and the positive impact it has on the young people cannot be underestimated.

## Primary Wellbeing Service – Aberlour

332 pupils took part in Primary Years Wellbeing Workshops delivered by the Wellbeing Workers. The workshop topics included What is Mental Health, Relationships, and Identifying Feelings.

13 pupils accessed wellbeing drop-in sessions topics, and discussed issues including bullying, regulating emotions, needing time out of class to allow them to regulate their emotions, confidence/self-esteem. 7 families/pupils received 1-1 support from the service due to issues including financial support, school attendance, and behaviour.

## 1:1 Sessions: Feedback from Young People



**In response to the question 'What has been the best thing about the service?, the following feedback was received':**

*"Playing games and making school an enjoyable place"; "Having someone that I can talk to"; "Wellbeing workshops and 1:1 support".*

**Feedback from Parents In response to the question 'Can you please describe any changes (positive or negative) within the family since receiving support from the service':**

*"I have felt more listened to by the workers more than I ever had by anyone else before. Always there for me when needed."*

*"Worker has listened to everything I have said if that is me crying or shouting due to my frustration on what to do with [my child]. She has given me advice on how to handle and deal with different situations."*

**Feedback from Headteachers and School Staff In response to the question 'How do you feel your Primary School has benefited from a Wellbeing Support Worker?':**

*"It has provided a platform for children to discuss issues relating to their mental health in an open non-judgemental way."*

*"It has been hugely beneficial to have a dedicated member of staff within the school who has the time and the capacity to support children and families with wellbeing and to signpost them to other services and agencies."*

*"The service has made a significant contribution to the school through the work with groups of children. These children have all had a very positive experience that has supported their social and emotional wellbeing."*

*"Giving them the support that they need at home, has helped their attendance in school. The group sessions have been very well received and have supported the pupils in class."*

Clinical Psychology and Counselling. A range of supports have been provided including:

- 12 clinical consultations for residential staff (6 per year for each young person's house)
- 15 clinical supervision sessions for residential team leaders and manager for Residential Resources
- Monthly reflective session for Fostering, Permanence and Kinship Team workers supporting individual children and families (15 members of staff)

The support has now been extended to support groups for foster carers and kinship carers. Individual sessions are arranged with key professionals and carers when a child's placement is at risk of breaking down to identify the best way to support the child and minimise the risk of further trauma.



The impact was noted in the most recent Care Inspection report “Additional training for staff and reflective sessions with an external clinical psychologist had supported a change in culture which had improved relationships between staff and young people.”

Angus’ return to Scottish Government for services funded by the children and young people’s Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services grant, delivered in the period from 1st July 2023 to 31st March 2024, showed from either the Peer Support Service, Aberlour Primary Wellbeing Service or Cedar:

- 316 children and young people accessed a service
- 45 families, carers accessed support

School staff and health professionals were the main referrers but there has been an increase in self-referrals from young people and from family members. The reasons for referrals were varied and often children were referred due to more than one concern. The highest number of referrals related to children, young people experiencing anxiety, depression, low mood but there were also significant numbers of children, young people referred for exam stress/school issues, self-esteem/confidence and trauma.

## Counselling in Schools

The Counselling in Schools programme continues to be delivered across Tayside with the three local authorities (Angus, Dundee, and Perth & Kinross) working collaboratively in the procurement of counselling providers.

During the reporting period 1 July 2023 to 31 March 2024, 190 children and young people were supported through counselling in Angus.

Most young people supported were in secondary school, with the greatest number attending counselling being in S4. The most prevalent issues identified at counselling were anxiety, family issues, emotional/behavioural issues and self-esteem.

82 children and young people completed counselling. Of the 82, 56 completed a beginning and end Young Person-CORE (Young Person Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation). 52 of the 56 children and young people showed an improved outcome. Between January - March 2024, schools were invited to complete a Counsellor Provider Satisfaction Survey. Eleven responses were received from 5 Angus school clusters.

- All respondents were satisfied with the delivery model of counselling, variety of approaches used and information provided across the cluster.
- All respondents agreed or completely agreed that the counsellor communicates effectively with school staff, pupils and, when appropriate, parents.
- All respondents agreed or completely agreed that the counselling service enhanced the current wellbeing support services available to pupils.
- All respondents agreed or completely agreed that the counsellor provides regular updates on themes, outcomes and other relevant issues regarding the management of the service.

- All agreed or completely agreed that the counsellor has enhanced pupil and staff understanding of counselling across their school and when it is appropriate to refer a child/young person to counselling.
- All were satisfied with the overall service provided by the provider/counsellor in their school.

### Data for Togetherall Digital Mental Health Service

Between July 2023 – March 2024, 16 young people registered to Togetherall, the online wellbeing platform for over 16s.

Of the 16 young people registering during this period;

- 12% identified as gender non-conforming
- 4% identified from an ethnic background
- 12% live alone
- 79% said that Togetherall was their only formal source of support
- 39% said that they had no support at all
- 46% said they had considered suicide prior to joining Togetherall
- 62% had considered self-harm
- 46% required 1:1 intervention from a Togetherall clinician
- 76% registered out with traditional hours
- Top categories discussed
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Stress
  - Loneliness

### Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan

The three-year outcome report for CLD Partnership activity in Angus is attached to Appendix 3. The plan has been delivered by a diverse range of partners in many settings across Angus. This partnership working empowers individuals, families, and communities to identify their individual and collective goals, to learn, and to bring about positive change.

During the first year of the CLD plan, there was a strong focus on post-COVID recovery for communities, families and individuals, and CLD partners engaged with a wide range of people through outdoor activities and online and group work where possible. During years 2 and 3 the priorities became more targeted and focused on those communities, families, and households who continued to face inequalities, improving their capacity to participate in a broad range of learning-based programmes designed to overcome barriers to participation at personal, community and institutional levels.

The following areas were agreed through the Community Planning Partnership as areas of priority.

- Digital Literacy
- Family Learning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Lost learning (changed to learning and achievement in year 2)
- Youth Voice and Participation
- Community Engagement
- Community Empowerment

## **The Angus Community Justice Partnership (ACJP)**

Angus Community Justice Partnership (ACJP) has recently benefited from a new Chair, Coordinator, and Development Officer. In addition, during the reporting period, we have seen new members join the ACJP from a variety of backgrounds. The new team has had a steep learning curve, but new positive working relationships are being formed, and work has continued to progress.

The ACJP has moved into the Protecting People Angus strategic structure, and this is supporting the ACJP to become more involved in cross cutting work and is in turn, raising the profile of the ACJP amongst the multi- agency workforce.

Key interventions have continued to ensure people who use justice services needs are met. During the reporting period, this included;

- A collaborative approach to arrest referral – ensuring individualised support is being offered.
- A trauma informed approach is adapted across services, and this is supported by the ACJP.
- Proactive support is being offered at various stages of an individuals 'justice journey' (including arrest, remand and release) to ensure that needs are met.
- Careers advice and education is on offer, improving the life skills and readiness for employment of those involved in the justice system.
- The Glens Project continue to offer women involved with justice, a holistic, trauma informed approach, with several proactive initiatives being implemented.

The Scottish Government have published a set of shared Community Justice Outcomes for Scotland progress in Angus during 2023-24 towards each outcome is briefly outlined below.

### **Communities improve their understanding and participation in community justice**

Due to staffing issues, our progress in this area has been limited during the reporting period.

Our Development Officer has attended an advocacy training course in February 2024 and is working to develop a strategy for involving those with lived experience of using justice services in our strategic services planning.

Alongside this, we plan to run a communications and awareness raising campaign highlighting the benefits of community justice approaches.

### **Partners plan and deliver services in a more strategic and collaborative way**

As outlined above, 2023-24 has been a time of change for the ACJP. The committee have been undergoing a process of reviewing the strategic and delivery plans going forward and hope that this will place the partnership in a stronger position with regard to strategic oversight of local service planning and delivery.

### **People have better access to the services they require, including welfare, health and wellbeing, housing and employability**

'Voluntary Throughcare' is provided by Angus Council Justice Services for those leaving prison and transitioning back into the community. This is offered to everyone leaving prison following a sentence of four years or under. The aim of voluntary throughcare is to ensure an individual's needs are met regarding; housing, welfare, health, wellbeing and employability. This support is open to an individual for 6 months prior to leaving prison and up to 12 months after release. This is complimented by third sector partners Apex Scotland who offer a mentoring service to males aged 16-25 return to the Tayside area upon leaving prison.

NHS Tayside have protocols in place for healthcare arrangements including prescriptions to be arranged for individuals leaving prison from day one.

### **Effective interventions are delivered to prevent and reduce the risk of further offending**

Arrest referral scheme is in place in Angus. This is a proactive approach to capitalise on the arrest of an individual as an opportunity to encourage them to engage with services which may support them to end offending behaviours (e.g. drug services or welfare rights).

Gender focused services for women are available via the Glen's Project where a holistic approach is taken to supporting women. Involvement in the Glen Isla Project is generally court ordered or is taken up as a diversion to prosecution whereas the Glen Clova Project accepts referrals directly generally from other services.

The Glen Isla Project provides a therapeutic, trauma informed approach to working with women which aims to reduce reoffending through development of positive coping strategies and identify issues associated with their offending.



## Angus Health Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) Strategic Planning Group

Following a successful test of change, Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) rolled-out Care Opinion across all service areas in April 2023. Care Opinion In 2023/24 186 stories were received, the majority of which were positive.

**Angus Strategic Commissioning Plan (SCP)** was approved by the Integration Joint Board on 26 April 2023. The SCP outlines the ambitions for the adult health and social care services which have been delegated to Angus Integration Joint Board (IJB) by Angus Council and NHS Tayside and delivered by Angus Health and Social Care Partnership. The SCP reflects the many conversations that were held with the people of Angus and our professional colleagues across all sectors and services. It describes our priorities for the next three years as we aim to shape services around individuals, unpaid carers and communities to support people to live and age well in Angus.

A Living Better for Longer Stakeholder Event was held on 11 May 2023 in the Reid Hall, Forfar. The partnership event was hosted by Angus Community Planning Partnership on behalf of AHSCP, Angus Council and ANGUSalive. The event was designed to help residents and stakeholders have their say on improving health and wellbeing in Angus.

**Angus Carers Strategy** was approved by the IJB on 23 August 2023. The Angus Carers Strategy sets out our commitments to Carers and describes how Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) will support Carers of all ages during 2023-2026.

The **Angus Nature Prescribing Calendar** was launched in September 2023. Angus Health and Social Care Partnership (AHSCP), alongside ANGUSalive, Angus Council, NHS Tayside and RSPB Scotland collaborated to develop the Angus Nature Prescribing Calendar to help people in Angus see the physical and mental health wellbeing benefits of nature and provide plenty of local ideas to encourage people to get outdoors. The calendar, full of seasonal activities around Angus was developed in partnership with local groups and organisations to support local people living with various common health and wellbeing conditions, such as anxiety and depression, and encourages an increase in physical activity.

In October 2023 the Integrated Joint Board (IJB) endorsed the Inaugural **Angus Alcohol and Drug Partnership Annual Report 2022-2023**. This report represents a significant milestone in our collective journey towards creating a healthier, safer, and more supportive community for all residents of Angus and marks a significant juncture in our mission to address the complex and critical issue of substance use within our community. This annual report is a testament to the collective efforts of dedicated individuals and organisations that make up the Angus Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

The **Joint Angus Advocacy Strategic Framework** was approved by Angus IJB in February 2024. This is the first Advocacy Strategic Framework for AHSCP, Angus Council's Education and Lifelong Learning and Children, Families and Justice services. It sets out our current commissioned advocacy services, where we have a statutory duty to provide independent advocacy, as well as our ambitions for improving opportunities for children, young people and adults in our communities to have their voices heard.

The Angus Community Connector App, launched in collaboration with the Prevention and Proactive Care Group and Voluntary Action Angus (VAA), serves as an online directory aimed at promoting health and well-being in the community. This tool is designed to make information on third-sector organisations that provide health and social care services accessible to the public and all voluntary and statutory services. It not only lists resources but also allows users to find and advertise local events, initiatives, and activities. The app seeks to address social isolation, supporting people in staying healthy for longer by connecting them with opportunities within their communities.

More details can be found in the AHSCP Annual Performance Report 2023/24.

## The Angus Sport and Physical Activity Framework

The Angus Sport & Physical Activity Framework hopes to create an Angus that is a place where an active life is accessible for all.

This year has seen great strides taken forward in many aspects of the Sport & Physical Activity Framework. These include the overall makeup of the planning partnership that governs the overall strategy. The framework now has representation from senior policy makers and developers across a number of organisations including:

- Angus Council
- Angus Health and Social Care Partnership
- ANGUSalive
- Dundee & Angus College
- NHS Tayside/Public Health Scotland
- sportscotland
- Voluntary Action Angus

Some of the work in 23/24 currently ongoing through sport and physical activity includes the work of the Prevention and Proactive Care group in Angus and its drive to support people to be living better for longer.

Achievements include innovative approaches in the Angus Active Schools team to support and target those pupils from a care experienced background into sport and physical activity.

In the reporting period there was a 13% Increase in care experienced participation in school-based sport & physical activity through Active Schools Angus's targeted participation support. We can also report that 45% of the whole school population were active in 22/23 through school-based sport & physical activity. 41% were active up to the end of March 24.

We have also seen recruitment through sportscotland and Dundee & Angus College of a new "Active Campus Coordinator" who will work to increase participation opportunities for students. The innovative project will also further enhance the approach colleges take

to creating high quality, effective work-based placements for sports students, helping equip them for potential future employment opportunities.

Dundee and Angus College have represented a pilot centre in the development of a new Next Generation HNC and HND in Physical Activity and Health and a new PASS Agreement format being delivered to support college/student placements.

Partners met with some Ukrainian guests resettling in Montrose to understand and learn about what needs, challenges and opportunities they were facing. As a result of these discussions, the “Ukrainian speaking club” in Montrose sports centre was established. 50 people attend the Ukrainian speaking club in Montrose. With 6 attendees gaining employment across the health and sports sectors between October 2023 and April 2024.

Our focus on health and wellbeing through our innovative referral programme and the Expansion of ANGUSalve’s Be Active...Live Well exercise referral programme for those living with, or at risk of, long term physical and/or mental health conditions lead to 300 referrals to ANGUSalve Be Active and 480 to the Live Well programme. Additionally, 26 Regular Health Walks were delivered in Angus with 142 Health Walk Leaders Trained. A new data management system, Refer-All, implemented to efficiently manage and analyse the Live Well referrals in Angus.

ANGUSalve presented alongside AHSCP colleagues at regional and national Realistic Medicine conferences, highlighting the strong partnership working and ongoing work between ANGUSalve and health & social care partners as part of Angus Preventative and Protective Care(AP&PC).

Lastly following successful gym refurbishments across 22/23 and 23/24 to the ANGUSalve Sport & Leisure facility estate they are reporting increased usage across all sites including gym use, swimming use, coached classes, and club facility usage. 800,000 attendances were recorded by ANGUSalve Sport & Leisure Facilities in 23/24. An increase of 250,000 increase year on year.

# CASE STUDY



Through a number of Ukrainian guests resettling in Montrose, ANGUSalive and Voluntary Action Angus met with some of them to understand and learn about their needs, challenges and opportunities. AS a result of these discussions, we established the “Ukrainian speaking club” in Montrose sports centre.

Launched in July 2023, the speaking club runs every Wednesday night from 6-8pm, and is a safe, inclusive space for Ukrainians (and other foreign national’s) to come together, build some confidence using the English language, and meet new people by using the power of sport. Each week, guests arrive and have a cuppa, a conversation about topical themes, and are encouraged where possible to use their English language skills that they are learning through ESOL provision in the town or at college. This is followed by optional physical activity which has ranged from football and tennis to gentle movement and swimming.

The project has gained a reputation for being a welcoming space that foreign national’s can attend, and this has allowed everyone to not only meet other people, but build enough knowledge and confidence to use public transport, work or spend money in the local economy, and access further sport and physical opportunities which contributes to their overall positive mental wellbeing.

Over 50 foreign national’s have attended the Ukrainian speaking club since it started and while numbers have dropped (due to guests resettling again in other places across the UK), the ethos, feel and value of the speaking club has actually grown to allow



A safe, inclusive space for Ukrainians (and other foreign national's) to come together, build some confidence using the English language, and meet new people by using the power of sport.

the regular attendees to truly connect with, immerse in the town, it's culture, and the people who they now know to be neighbours or friends.

We have successfully supported 6 Ukrainian's into employment across the health and sports sectors within Angus between October 2023 and April 2024. One of those Ukrainian's is now employed by ANGUSalive to lead the Ukrainian speaking club sessions on a Wednesday night, reinforcing our commitment to a "co-design" approach and the fostering of an inclusive society.

We have utilised a number of skills and experiences from within the group to help inform activity delivery or conversations that have occurred in the project so far. This includes Archery, Art and body painting, Baking, sewing and Yoga.

Through our Mental wellbeing evaluation completed in July, November and March, we are pleased to report that mental wellbeing, English language skills, and knowledge/awareness of local sport and physical activity opportunities have all increased over the course of the project, ensuring that the Ukrainian guests have choice for their skill development, wellbeing and leisure. As a result of this initial project a further project has been developed in Forfar run by the Vibrant Communities Resettlement team. The structure is the same as the original Montrose Ukrainianian speaking club. This is testament to the value and co-design approach that ANGUSalive + the resettlement team want to achieve with foreign nationals residing in Angus.

## Caring for Our Economy

Performance measures to demonstrate impact against our priorities were reviewed and updated during the review of the 2022-2030 Plan.

Measure	Baseline 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
No. of jobs	31,000	33,000	34,000	Next update Feb 25
Economic inactivity	25.1	23.5	23.5	26.7
Claimant count as a percentage of working age population	5.5	4.5	2.8	3.0
% of the population aged 16-64 who are qualified to RQF4 (equivalent to first year degree qualification) and above	46.6	48.2	50.4	47.7
% of working age population with low/no qualifications	8.3	6.0	8.2	Due Jan 25
Gross Value Added at Basic Prices (in £ millions)	£1,284.30	£1,254.30	£1,543.8	Due Jan 25
GVA per capita	£16,059.40	£17,344.13	£18,507	Due Jan 25
New business starts per 10,000 working age population	47	49	47	Due Jan 25
Proportion of people earning less than living wage	29.1	25.2	22.3	14.5
Gross weekly earnings – Residence based	£578.30	£600.00	£609.60	£637.70
Gross weekly earnings – Work place based	£539.60	£576.80	£572.00	£682.30
Proportion of procurement spent on local enterprises	26	43	32	Due March 25
Co2 Emissions per capita	7.9	8.3	8	Due June 25

Unemployment in Angus has risen slightly to 3.6% from 3.2% the previous year. However, it is still below the Scottish average of 3.7%. (Nomis, figures from April 2022 – March 2023 and April 2023 – Mar 2024).

Economic inactivity rates in Angus have remained higher than the Scottish average since 2020. For the period April 2023 – March 2024, the rate in Angus was 26.7% compared to 22.9% for Scotland. Rates for long term sickness were 42.4% in Angus compared to Scotland with 32.7%. For retirees, the rate was 16.0% in Angus compared to 14.5% nationally.

Overall, the picture of the labour market is mixed. While some businesses struggle to find workers, or recruit suitable workers for vacant posts, overall unemployment has risen.

Gross median weekly earnings have increased, for both residence and workplace-based rates. However, for the first time since 2008, workplace-based earnings were higher than residence based earnings in Angus. In 2022 residence-based earnings (£609.60) were £37.60 higher than workplace (£572.00), and in 2023 workplace-based earnings (£682.30) were £44.60 higher than residence based (£637.70). This could be down to a number of factors including and increased demand for skilled labour, or an increase in the economic activity of Angus businesses.

The global economy, including Angus' local economy is still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst facing additional headwinds. The UK grapples with both the ongoing pandemic recovery and the aftereffects of Brexit, which has complicated trade. Further strain comes from the conflict in Ukraine, disrupting exports and driving up the cost of raw materials. This translates to a cost-of-living crisis for consumers and a cost-of-doing-business crisis for companies. This situation is further worsened by the September 2022 mini-budget. Launched during a period of high inflation and recession, the growth plan sparked market turmoil, weakened the pound, and increased costs for government borrowing and mortgages.

Priorities set out in the 2022-2030 Community Plan:

- Support Angus to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth, with a particular focus on the long-term potential of private and public investment opportunities in offshore renewable energy.
- Deliver The Mercury Programme – A Tay Cities Deal ambition for clean growth, low carbon and Agri tech, creating high paid jobs that positively contribute to our climate.
- Encourage and invest in fair work opportunities for those that live, work and study in Angus.
- Support entrepreneurship across Angus.

Priorities are delivered through each of the delivery subgroups:

- Tay Cities Regional Deal
- Angus Local Employability Partnership
- Community Wealth Building

The next section of the report provides an update from each of these groups.

## Tay Cities Regional Deal

Each of the projects within the Angus Fund are developing at different stages from demand, to Outline and Full Business Case stages to delivery. An update on project and achievements in this reporting period with the Angus Fund is outlined below:

**Mercury Drone Ports** - The Business Justification Case was approved on 24 March 2023. Now in delivery phase with partners.

**CASI Programme** - Demand Analysis started on four CASI projects: Crop Quality Centre, Innovation Farm, Agri Tech Development Centre and Neutral Spirit Still to determine need.

**Connected Montrose** – Consultants have been working on developing the options appraisal documents. Engagement was carried out with local and national hauliers to investigate the issues around the North of Angus.

## Angus Local Employability Partnership (LEP)

In 2023/24 focussed LEP work reaching our target focus groups and ensuring all residents in Angus are aware of the current employability support services available to anyone aged 16-67, through tailored keyworker support, employability programmes and contracted provision. To increase engagement with those economically inactive, we held 7 local events across Brechin, Montrose, Forfar, Kirriemuir, Arbroath, Carnoustie and Monifieth.

Through the collaborative work of our LEP, we commenced new projects for a Social Care Academy, Journeycall Academy and D&A Community Kitchen Project. The academies and project supported clients offering short-term courses with upskilling, placements, training and guaranteed interviews for successful completion.

LEP referral pathways have continued to strengthen over the year and we continue to work closely with DWP, Welfare Rights, SDS, Housing, Vibrant Communities. We have introduced new partnership working with Virgin Money and the Good Things Foundation, as well as Robertsons Construction through their Community Benefits.

Expansion of our Employability Drop-In's across Angus, with focus on targeting specific groups and tailored workshops. We continue to work on strengthening partnership working through the LEP with our monthly LEP meetings and subgroup meetings with partners to look at current landscape and wider provision.

To respond to child poverty commitments, we have ongoing support of parental keyworkers. To date, they have engaged with a total of 174 parents in Angus through referrals, events, and drop-ins. We have recruited a Child Poverty Coordinator, who will commence employment from May 2024. For this financial year 23/24, we offer provision delivered by Enable under an All in Angus programme and continue to develop partnership working with NHS and AHSCP to support participants with a disability.

Engagement with LEP members to ensure all young people in Angus are aware of our services and offer and to reduce any risk of young people leaving school without a positive destination.

## Community Wealth Building

Whilst it is acknowledged that partnership is essential to progressing CWB across Angus for the good of all communities, it is proposed at this stage that the Council develops its own CWB approach with the ambition that places it in a position to effectively engage with its community planning partners and broader group of anchor organisations in the future.



# CASE STUDY

## Caring for Our Economy 1

Amanda self-referred to the employability team which she was aware of as her daughter (who also features in the video) is a Modern Apprentice in the team. Amanda is a 54-year-old female who previously been employed as a checkout operator a pharmacy assistant.

Amanda had suffered from mental health issues and had received treatment from a psychologist. She was keen to secure employment supporting individuals with poor mental health as she had lived experience and had benefitted from the support she received during her recovery however she had no formal qualifications or experience in this type of role.

LTU offered her the opportunity to work 30 hours per week in a community mental health team as a support worker. With support from her supervisor, colleagues and keyworker her confidence increased massively, her anxiety decreased and she loved the work that she undertook during her placement.

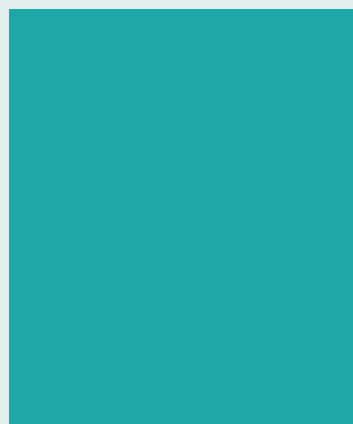
Throughout her placement Amanda demonstrated a real commitment to supporting others with poor mental health. She has embraced the opportunity to learn, both through shadowing colleagues and also undertaking training.

Her timekeeping was excellent, she enjoyed team working and her colleagues looked on her as an invaluable member of the team who demonstrated the ability to work on her own initiative and seek support as and when required.

During placement she undertook various training including:

- Safe Information Handling
- Manual Handling
- Adult support & Protection Essential
- Child Protection Level 1 Recognition and Response
- Overdose & Naloxone Training
- Child Protection Level 2
- WorldHost

Towards the end of her placement the employer created a six-month temporary position which Amanda applied for with support from her key worker. Amanda was successful in securing the temporary position.



Throughout her placement Lynn demonstrated excellent timekeeping, she worked well as a team player and her contribution to the centre was invaluable.

## Caring for Our Economy 2

Lynn is a 51-year-old female who had worked in care homes her entire working life and was training to become a manager. In 2017 she suffered a stroke which left her unable to work - she lost her speech as a result of the stroke and had to learn how to speak again. She was referred by her work coach at the DWP.

Although Lynn was keen to get back to work, she was conscious that her speech was still not great and she also tired easily. She lives in Angus and was reliant on public transport as without work she was unable to afford a car. Lynn really wanted to return to a role in a care environment but knew that the physical demands of a care home role would be too much for her and she also didn't feel that she would manage full time work.

LTU offered Lynn the opportunity of a placement for 21 hours per week in a dementia meeting centre in a town which is easily accessible by bus. With support from her supervisor as well as keyworker support, she has increased hugely in confidence, her speech has improved greatly and she thoroughly enjoys going to work saying it has given her a purpose in life and she is now much happier.

Throughout her placement Lynn demonstrated excellent timekeeping, she worked well as a team player and her contribution to the centre was invaluable. She developed excellent relationships with all of the meeting centre members started to lead on planning and delivering activities.

During placement Lynn undertook the following training:

- Dementia Ambassador
- Championing Physical Activity
- Fire Safety
- First Aid

Lynn has now secured a temporary, one year post with her placement provider.

## Caring for Our Place

Performance measures to demonstrate impact against our priorities were reviewed and updated during the review of the 2022-2030 Plan.

Measure	Baseline 2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Target 2024/25
Adults stating their neighbourhood is a good place to live	96%	96%	87%	Not available	96.5%
Recorded crimes and offences (per 10,000)	702	692	575	613	Reduce
% of total waste recycled	57.9%	54.7%	51.7% (2022)	Available Oct 24	64%
No. of new build affordable homes delivered against annual target	141	150	47	66	120
% council stock that meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	94.2%	70.7%	56.7%	72.3%	Increase
Active travel to school by primary and secondary pupils	55.6%	50.3%	56.4%	Not available	51.5%
No. of electric charging points available	51	121	NA	Requested	140
No. of changing places facilities & use	3	8	10	12	13

Indicators around place show a mixed view. While recorded crimes have increased for 23/24 from 575 in 22/23 to 613, there is an upward trend nationally and Angus is well below the national average of 870 per 10,000 population. The partnership's new Antisocial Behaviour Plan aims to tackle localised issues.

The recycling rate fell from 54.7% in 2021 to 51.7% for 2022 but remains high compared with similar local authorities. This continues to be an environmental and financial priority for Angus Council. In recent years, the threat posed by climate change come close to home with an increasing number of climate impacts on Angus, such as Storm Babet, causing considerable damage to infrastructure, businesses, homes and the health and well-being of those directly affected. It is therefore an essential priority for the CPP to support action at a national and local level, including with those undertaken by governments, the private sector, and local communities.

Further, national policies regarding tackling climate change requires committed action at a local level, with local authorities key to reducing carbon emissions and build resilience. Angus Council recognises the critical strategic leadership role it has in tackling climate change. The Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan involving all Angus stakeholders and partners was developed to support Angus in its commitment to sustainable development, environmental management, and the transition to a low carbon economy.

Priorities set out in the 2022-2030 Community Plan:

- Protect and enhance our natural and built environment.
- Enable inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe communities across Angus.
- Make our local services accessible.
- Improve connectivity in and around Angus.

Priorities are delivered through each of the delivery subgroups:

- Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan
- Angus Community Resilience Forum
- Angus Transport Network

The next section of the report provides an update from each of these groups.

## **Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)**

In 2023, the Climate Change Officer in the Environment and Climate Change team, who is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the SECAP, prepared an initial SECAP review. This review included an analysis of the Initial SECAP Work Programme and was submitted through Full Council in November 2023.

To enable action delivery of the SECAP, a Steering Group was set up involving key partners listed within the plan. The purpose of the group is to contribute to development and monitoring of the SECAP, ensuring actions are carried out on an Angus wide scale to deliver emissions reductions across various sectors including within communities, businesses, domestic and non-domestic buildings.

The first SECAP steering meeting took place on the 5th of September 2023 at Webster Memorial Theatre Arbroath. 26 attendees were present at this initial meeting including representation from 18 key partners listed within the SECAP across the action areas of Buildings, Transport, Land Use & Forestry, Agriculture & Food, Waste and Governance & Process.

Roy Neilson from the James Hutton Institute has been appointed as Chair for the SECAP Steering Group.

The SECAP Steering Group brings together key partners working on reducing emissions and improving sustainability within Angus across a variety of sectors. Stakeholders are responsible for reporting progress to Angus Council on actions they are named against within the SECAP as lead or supporting partner.

The success of the group is measured through attendance of meetings which occur three times a year and through engagement with Climate Change Officer at Angus Council including 1:1 meetings, the SECAP e-newsletter and hosting of SECAP meetings.

The purpose of the group is to enable SECAP action delivery, this is measured by the Climate Change Officer at Angus Council through monitoring and reviewing SECAP actions.

After a review in 2023, the progress of the actions listed in the Initial SECAP Work Programme is as below:

Status	No. of actions
Progressing	6
Completed	6
Stalled	1

A Full review of all 71 SECAP actions will be completed in 2024 and submitted through Angus Council later in the year.

## Angus Community Resilience Forum (ACRF)

Angus Community Resilience is community needs-driven, and it first focused on the rural communities need, which was Defibrillators in their communities; then there was Storm Arwen – power loss, the pandemic, then recently, 4 storms which caused flooding, including Storm Babet. It has expanded over the years, with groups across Angus working together to increase community resilience.

Key projects undertaken in the reporting period include:

- Storm Babet response –the communication and partnership working with resilience groups throughout the storm was excellent, with information being fed both ways using email and a What's App Resilience group. There was also a strong partnership between external responder organisations, community teams, other AC depts and community groups.
- Groups supported to apply and secure funding - Funding Opportunities are distributed and a quarterly funding plan for resilience is shared at the forums.
- Two new locality resilience groups have formed formally, with six exploring the possibility of forming their own resilience groups. The communities team have been working in partnership with the Scottish Flood Forum when groups have been focusing on flood groups.
- Forums are held quarterly, where the programme and need are identified and led by the resilience groups themselves – they are a mix of online and face to face forums due to request and they are held in different localities who offer to host.
- Communities are working with each other rather than in silo by sharing funding advice/ resilience plans and also linking up with each other to form stronger, more resilient communities.



- Communities are identifying risks and issues in their localities and highlighting them to emergency response organisations, as the community is on the ground and knows their community best. One result of this was that a mock wildfire exercise was organised with the community and the fire service, and as a result, it was added to the community's emergency resilience plan.
- Groups have been holding events—3 have been completed—to raise awareness of individual/personal household resilience, highlight the group's existence, and consult with the community on the needs that need to be included in the action plan.
- Groups have been supported and funded to distribute household leaflets to highlight the importance of personal and household resilience.
- Resources have been purchased to be distributed to vulnerable households and groups. A community officer will use them to highlight the importance of personal resilience—resilience grab bags.
- Communities team invited along to guides to support them with their resilience badge – present the impact of recent storms in Angus and to highlight the importance of community resilience in Angus including personal household resilience.

## Angus Transport Network

The Angus Transport Network was initially set up during the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic to facilitate essential transport operations during the various phases of national lockdowns. Important connections were made between Angus Council and partners including Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS and Voluntary Action Angus.

As the need for emergency operational transport dissipated, the group had identified that it could reach beyond operations and begin to analyse the wider transport issues which are prevalent within Angus. Unfortunately, the ATN did not progress beyond this initial agreement due to unforeseen circumstances and has been paused since 2022.

In 23/24, the ATN was identified as a delivery group of the Angus CPP, which can help deliver on priorities embedded within the community plan.

Additionally, there are a number of strategic challenges within the transport sector which will create both opportunity and challenges to the council.

- The newly adopted Regional Transport Strategy in the Tactran area and subsequent delivery plan will place a number of actions on the council
- Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 provides opportunity to change the way bus services are governed and operated in Angus
- Travel trends have shifted since Covid19
- Transport contract costs have vastly increased
- The physical transport network in Angus is becoming less integrated, particularly in rural areas
- Environmental challenges will be at the forefront of decision making

# CASE STUDY

## **Brechin Storm Response and Recovery**

Storm Babet hit Angus in October 2023 and caused severe flooding and devastation, with Brechin being the worst-hit area.

The Vibrant Communities team responded to the community's needs and set up a flood response centre, which was manned by a range of partners and support services. This service ran six days a week, where people or their families affected by the flooding could contact and visit us for that much-needed one-to-one, face-to-face contact. The support required ranged from accommodation, cup of tea and chat, financial help, digital support, trauma mental health and wellbeing support, as the community was shocked and traumatised.

The team led the coordination at the Crickety in Brechin. It worked in partnership with Angus Council's housing department, mental health organisations, Red Cross, Scottish Flood Forum, locality team – VAA and local community organisations including Brechin Buccaneers, Food Pantry, Brechin Community football Trust, Brechin Rotary and Brechin Furniture and Flood Project.

The team partnered with Angus Council's emergency centre staff to make follow-up welfare calls to community members who may not have visited the Crickety. The purpose was to check if flooding impacted them and inform them of available support, including financial assistance and health and well-being services. Contact details were also gathered to ensure they receive future updates through emails, newsletters, and phone calls. There was door knocking and walk rounds organised to engage with the community and reach out to anyone who may not have come forward, hadn't engaged in drop ins or had been uncontactable by phone as they had not necessarily been impacted by house flooding but had had their gardens flooded or were near missed.

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## **Climate Community Engagement Sessions**

The SECAP outlines the ambition to create a Community Climate forum to facilitate engagement around climate action with a broad range of interested parties throughout Angus. Since the publication of the SECAP, the Council has been made aware of ongoing community engagement work by the Scottish Community Climate Action Network (SCCAN), which employs an Angus regional coordinator to facilitate community climate action.

A number of positive solutions to issues were raised across all sessions including the need for improved public transport and active travel routes within the region.

To avoid duplication of work, a series of Climate Change engagement events were organised in partnership with SCCAN by the Council's Planning and Sustainable Growth Service. These events took place in Forfar, Brechin, and Arbroath along with an online session for those unable to attend in person. The events aimed to hear from members of the public about climate change and find new ways to collaborate on addressing the climate crisis.

The sessions were welcomed by the community with representation from individuals, community groups and the following organisations:

- Angus Tourism Cooperative
- Brechin Cathedral
- Brechin Community Council
- Community Council representatives
- Creative Dundee
- East Haven Together
- Food Life
- Forfar Open Garden
- Local landowners
- Montrose Land and Sea Festival
- Scotia Seeds
- Voluntary Action Angus

A number of positive solutions to issues were raised across all sessions including the need for improved public transport and active travel routes within the region.

There was desire to learn from other regions in Scotland to implement community energy projects distributing locally generated electricity.

Enabling joined up, local collaboration between communities to enable climate action was a key priority from the sessions.

During the sessions, it was noted that actions for an Angus Climate Hub need to be tangible and deliverable on scale, and it was suggested that the proposed Hub should enable a balance of advocacy and climate change action within the region.

The Council's Planning and Sustainable Growth Service plan to support the application as it goes through a review process and will aid the development of an Angus Climate Hub through future collaboration with SCCAN.

## Looking Ahead

The Community Plan is an eight-year plan, which represents a comprehensive and collaborative effort to foster positive and sustainable development within Angus. Through the collective dedication of partners, key priorities have been identified and will continue, through strong partnerships, to deliver on the established road map for the future.

This plan not only outlines specific priorities and actions but also highlights the importance of inclusivity, engagement, and partnership. The commitment to working together ensures that the diverse needs and aspirations of our community are considered and addressed. By fostering a sense of shared responsibility, we aim to build a community that is resilient, vibrant, and responsive to the evolving challenges and opportunities we face.

In the coming months the partnership is participating in a National Self-Assessment exercise supported by the Improvement Service. This will assist as we continue to evaluate and review the plan. Strategic Needs Assessments are being prepared and will provide the relevant direction to the board to allow plans to be tailored to need.