



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2004 / 2005**

### **Board Meeting – 23 June 2005**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek the Board's endorsement of East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership's 2004/05 Annual Report, due to be submitted to Communities Scotland by 30 June 2005.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Submission of an Annual Report is a requirement of the Scottish Executive's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Social Inclusion Partnerships and guidance on the format of the report has been provided by the Executive and Communities Scotland.

#### **3. ANNUAL REPORT: 2004 / 2005**

- 3.1 The sixth Annual Report of the Coalfield Area SIP summarises progress made over the year, 2004/05, and sets out forward information in the form of the Transition Action Plan and Regeneration Outcome Agreement. As the final Annual Report, it also includes an overview of Coalfield SIP achievements since 1999.
- 3.2 In addition, a progress report in relation to the extra resources provided by Communities Scotland as part of the Empowering Communities and Tackling Drugs Misuse agendas has also been included.
- 3.3 A range of background information is requested by the Executive and Communities Scotland, including:
- Appendix 1 - East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership Board 2004/05 Membership;
  - Appendix 2 - East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership Staff Structure 2004/05;
  - Appendix 3 - Summary of Financial Out-turn Expenditure for 2004/05;
  - Appendix 4 - Monitoring Report 2004/05; and
  - Appendix 5 - Transition Action Plan.

These appendices will be forwarded to Communities Scotland with the main document and will be available for inspection at the Board Meeting on 23 June 2005.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 It is recommended that the Board:

- i) endorses the 2004/05 Annual Report, subject to minor textual changes, for submission to Communities Scotland by 30 June 2005;
- ii) remits the Community Planning and Partnership Manager to commission the production of the Annual Report in an interesting and attractive format, which can be widely circulated within the Coalfield Area; and
- iii) otherwise notes the content of the report.

**Gwen Barker**  
**Community Planning and Partnership Manager**  
**9 June 2005**



EAST AYRSHIRE COALFIELD AREA  
social*inclusion*partnership

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COALFIELD AREA SOCIAL INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2004 / 2005**

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# ***Our Shared Vision***

The vision for East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership shared by the partners is:

***“To enable each person within the Coalfield Area to realise his/her potential. To prevent social exclusion and promote social inclusion. To create sustainable communities in an attractive environment through co-ordinated and innovative action and community participation.”***

This is an ambitious aim and will only be achieved over time with the combined efforts of all of our partners.

It is with pride and pleasure that I welcome you, on behalf of East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP), to the sixth and final SIP Annual Report 2004/05.

Throughout 2004/05, the SIP has supported a range of successful projects and initiatives aimed at combating social exclusion and promoting the social inclusion agenda. We have worked successfully towards reducing inequalities between the most disadvantaged groups and communities and the rest of society by closing the opportunities gap, and ensuring that support reaches those who most need it. Partnership working and community participation have yet again remained integral to the success of the SIP.

The projects and initiatives supported this year have focused on our themes of People into work, Community participation; Promoting positive health; Community learning opportunities; and Improving the quality of the environment. A summary of some of our most noteworthy successes over the course of 2004/05 are detailed within the Executive Summary of this report and include the continued growth and development of Coalfield Community Transport and East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth, the mainstreaming of the Recreation Partnership Project, and the opening of the new swimming pool in Cumnock.

At the end of the year, the SIP made the final transition to Community Planning in East Ayrshire. From 1 April 2005, a three-year Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA), underpinned by the new Community Regeneration Fund (CRF), will be the driving force to ensure the promotion of the regeneration agenda across East Ayrshire. The ROA will provide the strategic and operational framework for Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire to deliver local regeneration objectives and contribute to addressing the national priorities set by the Scottish Executive. We have much to strive for to meet the challenges in the years to come.

I would like express my appreciation to all those involved in securing the achievements of the SIP in 2004/05 and, indeed, since its inception in 1999. We have much to be proud of and I look forward to continuing the work to regenerate our most disadvantaged communities within the East Ayrshire community planning process.

**Councillor William Menzies**  
**Chair, East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The sixth Annual Report of East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) provides us with the opportunity to highlight the achievements of the many projects and initiatives funded and supported by the SIP in 2004/05. The activity of the SIP has continued to make a real difference to the lives of local people by directly tackling poverty and disadvantage, and by actively promoting social inclusion across the Coalfield Area. As 2004/05 is the final operational year of the SIP in its current form, we have also taken this opportunity to look back on six years of SIP activity and to reflect on the longer term impact in our local communities.

It has been a year of transition for the Partnership as we complete the integration of the SIP within East Ayrshire Community Planning structures, which will take effect from 1 April 2005. The SIP Board has welcomed the opportunity to work closely with our Partners in Community Planning to ensure that the transition is realised smoothly and to the benefit of the communities which we serve.

Throughout this report we will highlight the steps that have been taken to ensure that the good practice demonstrated by the SIP will be carried forward and replicated in the future activity of East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership. The existing good practice is perhaps best illustrated by the progress and achievements of some of the most successful SIP funded initiatives over the last year.

### **Coalfield Community Transport**

Coalfield Community Transport (CCT) continued its tradition of beating all previous performance standards in 2004/05 and also managed the successful launch of an innovative new scooter loan service.

CCT seeks to promote social inclusion by tackling the transport barriers faced by some of the most disadvantaged Coalfield residents. In the last year alone over 19,000 passengers travelled with CCT and a total of 166 community groups were registered with the initiative at 31 March 2005. However, CCT's key achievement in 2004/05 was the development of a new and innovative service to tackle transport issues as a barrier to employment in respect of identified user need.

'Wheels2Work' was launched in April 2004 and is the first service of its kind in Scotland. It offers a scooter loan to young unemployed people to enable them to access employment and training opportunities. The success of the initiative was immediate and demand soon outweighed the initial provision of 10 loan scooters. The project reacted quickly to these developments and further funding has been secured from Jobcentre Plus to purchase an additional 10 scooters.

The innovative developments within CCT were recognised by the Scottish Executive, which has already included the project in a Rural Transport Video as an example of good practice to be replicated by similar initiatives across the rest of Scotland. CCT is keen to share its experience and has already hosted a series of 'learning visits' from other local authority areas.

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## **East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth (EASY)**

The excellent performance of the EASY project in tackling the disadvantage facing young people who are distanced from the job market continued throughout 2004/05 with a total of 87 young people aged 16-18 years participating in the programme over the year. One of the key strengths of this project is the level of partnership working which is involved and two outstanding examples of this approach have been evidenced in project activity over the last year.

A 'Get into Enterprise' Programme was developed and successfully piloted in association with Glasgow School of Art and Investment in Drama, another SIP funded project. This initiative offers young people the opportunity to learn about art design, production and retail through a genuine enterprising opportunity. As a result of this activity, T-shirts were designed, printed and will be put on sale with national retailers in Glasgow, and the trainees themselves staged a fashion show to showcase their work. Following the success of this pilot, the initiative will now be rolled out to more young Coalfield residents as part of the ongoing service provided by EASY.

In addition, funding was secured to send two young EASY trainees on an educational trip to Romania in May 2005. As a result of a partnership initiative with the Scottish Wider Access Programme, EASY trainees will be offered an opportunity to work with young people from other countries, which are members of the SOCRATES Grundtvig 2 Learning Partnerships, including Romania, Spain, Italy and the Czech Republic. It is anticipated that this partnership approach will lead to future exchange work, with the potential for EASY to host similar visits in the future.

## **Recreation Partnership Project**

The Recreation Partnership Project exceeded its targets for 2004/05 and continues to provide an exciting and varied programme of activities and programmes for local primary school children both in school, through Active Recreation and Health Awareness sessions and in the community via a range of opportunities. The combined total attendances at the range of Kids Clubs and School Holiday sessions, which have operated over the last year, was almost 7,000, and young people from across the SIP area benefited from a broad range of recreational and healthy lifestyle opportunities.

A particular highlight for the project this year was the welcome announcement that mainstream funding for future provision of the service had been secured from NHS Ayrshire and Arran's Health Improvement Fund. This is an excellent example not only of a SIP funded project moving towards longer term sustainability but of 'partnership working' in East Ayrshire. As with so many of our projects, the far reaching success of this initiative has been underpinned by true partnership working across a range of agencies.

## **Cumnock Swimming Pool**

The success of a SIP funded project in partnership working was again demonstrated in October 2004 with the official opening of 'Visions', the new Cumnock swimming pool. This community led initiative has been in development throughout the lifetime

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of the SIP and its final completion provided the Cumnock Community with its first indoor swimming pool and leisure centre. Other partners involved in the £2 million development included SportsScotland, Minerals Trust and East Ayrshire Council.

This project has been successful on many levels and is typical of many of the most significant SIP achievements in this regard. As well as evidencing strong partnership working and community engagement, it also contributes to the achievement of a range of Closing the Opportunities Gap Objectives by offering sport and health improvement facilities to the local community, providing access to facilities within the local community, and creating a range of much needed job opportunities in the Cumnock area.

## **CONCLUSION**

The partnership approach adopted by the SIP over the last six years has been fundamental to the success of our work, which has made a real and lasting difference to the lives of local people. The examples above are just a sample of the range of initiatives which have been progressed on 2004/05, and the Annual Report provides further information on these and the other exciting achievements of the last year.

The SIP vision is gradually being realised but we are aware that the work that we have begun so effectively must continue over the coming years. We are confident that the East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership will build on the existing achievements and good practice of the SIP, and look forward to working closely with Community Planning Partners to achieve social inclusion and social justice for all residents in East Ayrshire.

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## **PART A – REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2004 / 2005**

### **INTRODUCTION**

East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) has worked closely with the local community over the last six years to tackle poverty and disadvantage across the Coalfield Area. We take pleasure in welcoming you to this sixth and final Annual Report, in which we present our progress and achievements in 2004/05. In addition, we will take this opportunity to showcase some of the significant achievements and good practice of the SIP since its inception in 1999 and to reflect on the overall impact of our work in the Coalfield Area.

2004/05 has been a year of transition for the SIP and we look forward to working within the East Ayrshire Community Planning framework in the future. While preparations for this integration have been ongoing throughout the year, we have retained our central focus on the core objective of tackling social exclusion and promoting social inclusion across the Coalfield Area. We have continued to make real progress towards these aims through the ongoing funding of a range of high quality, innovative projects, which directly address priority issues identified by local communities and a range of stakeholders.

Over the last twelve months we have built on the success of past years, providing a solid platform for continuing regeneration activity, which will be taken forward under the Community Planning framework. A three-year Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA), underpinned by the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF), will provide the strategic and operational framework for Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire to deliver their regeneration objectives and contribute to addressing the national priorities set by the Scottish Executive.

The experience and good practice of the SIP has provided a strong model on which much of the future community planning and regeneration activity will be based, particularly our strengths in community consultation and engagement, and our commitment to partnership working. These achievements have already had a significant impact on the communities that we serve and this activity will continue to be driven forward in the future by East Ayrshire's Community Planning Partnership.

### **OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES 2004/05**

The main objectives and priorities agreed by the SIP Board for 2004/2005 included:

- continuing to listen to and respond to community needs;
  - ensuring that our programme of projects continue to be responsive to local need and assists the SIP Board to realise its vision;
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- considering the key recommendations identified in the independent SIP evaluation 2003 report;
- raising awareness of the SIP transition process and implementing the actions detailed in the SIP Transition Action Plan;
- organising and implementing community, project and partner engagement/consultation exercises throughout Summer 2004;
- building on and improving community involvement/engagement structures, and continuing to ensure that communities inform the decision making process;
- strengthening and developing the links already established with the East Ayrshire community planning process;
- assisting in the commissioning of a Residents' Survey;
- continuing to provide a range of support in respect of sustainability options, where appropriate, for the current programme of projects funded by the SIP;
- ensuring that the good practice highlighted in the evaluation report, including effective partnership working, community engagement and project activity, is taken forward through the community planning process;
- assisting the development of monitoring/evaluation and research/information arrangements within the community planning process;
- informing the preparation of the Statement of Readiness and the Regeneration Outcome Agreement; and
- ensuring that the smooth transition of the SIP into the strategic context of community planning is completed by 31 March 2005.

### **Summary of Progress 2004/05**

The SIP Board, the membership of which is detailed at Appendix 1, has remained firmly committed to making a real difference in the Coalfield Area and the Partners have continued to work together to ensure the effective implementation of regeneration activity in the local area. The summary below demonstrates some of the progress in relation to the agreed priorities for 2004/05.

### **Listening to and responding to community need**

SIP activity is based on local community need and a 'bottom up' approach to community regeneration has been at the heart of SIP development since 1999. The community continues to be represented on the Board by eight community representatives (as detailed below). Their membership of this Partnership has served three key purposes over the last year:

- to ensure continued community representation in SIP decision making;
- to facilitate communication with the people who live in our communities; and
- to ensure that the SIP transition into the Community Planning process is informed by the views of communities across East Ayrshire.

In addition, the SIP has continued to benefit from the strength of the local Coalfield Communities Federation (CCF), which is a highly successful SIP funded initiative. The CCF has direct links to each settlement within the Coalfield Area, and as such has been uniquely responsive to the key issues as perceived by the communities themselves. Four CCF representatives have continued to participate on the SIP Board in 2004/05 and have made an invaluable ongoing contribution to ensuring that

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SIP initiatives directly address real community need. In addition, four further individual community representatives participate fully in SIP Board activity ensuring the involvement and engagement of the wider community in the local decision making process.

### **Strengthening and developing links with the East Ayrshire community planning process**

The Community Planning and Partnership Manager who manages the SIP Support Team within the Community Planning and Partnership Unit, has retained lead responsibility for ensuring a smooth transition of the SIP to Community Planning. Routine reporting of SIP activity is made to the Community Planning Core Partners' Group and Joint Officers' Group, which respectively determine the strategic policy direction for East Ayrshire and ensure the implementation of agreed actions. In addition, the Community Planning Officer continues to support SIP activity, as required, within the Community Planning and Partnership Unit.

The key milestones which have marked the SIP transition over the last year include the following:

- SIP Board approval of the Transition Action Plan from March 2004;
- the Statement of Readiness endorsed by SIP Board on 23 June 2004;
- a series of 'Working Together Learning Together' community/stakeholder sessions convened between July and November 2004;
- formal endorsement of the ROA from all core Community Planning Partners and its approval at a combined meeting of the North Social Inclusion Initiative and the Coalfield Area SIP Boards on 3 February 2005;
- establishment, in early 2005, of a working group of community representatives of the Coalfield Area SIP Board and North Initiative Board to consider the future operating structure within the East Ayrshire community planning process; and
- establishment of a new Community Planning Partnership, which will be convened on 23 June 2005.

### **Community, project and partner consultation and engagement**

Effective partnership working and community engagement have been consistently identified as key strengths of the SIP, and the Board has sought to build on and develop this activity in its final operational year. Ensuring that the existing good practice in this area will be carried forward through the SIP transition to community planning has been a key priority for the Board throughout 2004/05. The extensive consultation undertaken during the summer 2004 with Partners, Stakeholders and the local community has informed the development of the ROA.

Structures and systems for community consultation and engagement which already exist in the Coalfield Area, and will be carried forward into Community Planning include:

- local committees;
- equality forums;
- partnership groups;
- Dialogue Youth, as the main means of involving and consulting young people;

- community councils;
- community associations;
- the Coalfield Communities Federation; and
- community and voluntary groups.

## **Sustainability**

The strong commitment of the SIP Board to ensuring that SIP funded projects are sustained, where appropriate, beyond the current period has continued throughout 2004/05. Throughout the lifetime of the SIP, projects have been actively supported to address longer term development planning and sustainability issues. SIP support staff and project Supervising Officers have continued to work closely with projects in this regard.

In addition, the SIP Board has commissioned sustainability studies on a range of projects since 1999, most recently funding an independent evaluation of yipworld.com, which was concluded in June 2004. This independent report highlighted the innovative nature of yipworld.com and signposted a range of future development and growth opportunities. One future initiative, which has been developed as a result of this work, is a Mobile Internet Café, to further develop the outreach element of project activity. Funding to support the establishment of this new service has recently been secured from East Ayrshire Community Safety Partnership Local Action Fund.

The annual review meetings, now a standard feature of the support package offered to SIP projects in East Ayrshire, were convened in November 2004. These sessions build on the long term relationship of mutual development and support that has underpinned the partnership between the SIP and the programme of projects, which has been funded in the Coalfield Area since 1999. This round of meetings provided a further opportunity to explore project development beyond the SIP integration with community planning, and to offer support and guidance to each of the projects, as required. East Ayrshire Council's External Funding and Sustainability Officer and the External Funding and Sustainability Worker, part-funded by the SIP, have also been working closely with 'existing projects', offering further support to secure alternative funding, where appropriate.

As a result of ongoing support in respect of sustainability issues, a number of the SIP funded initiatives are moving towards mainstream funding, including the Recreation Partnership Project, which has recently secured funds from NHS Ayrshire and Arran's Health Improvement Fund. Others, such as Coalfield Community Transport, continue to develop their own income generation potential through innovative service diversification.

## **Quality and good practice**

As SIP regeneration activity moves forward into Community Planning, the Board is particularly keen to ensure that the good practice of the SIP and the projects and initiatives, which it funds, continues beyond the current funding period.

The independent SIP Evaluation of 2003 highlighted the SIP as "an excellent example of partnership working", and particularly noted the high level of community

engagement and empowerment which was demonstrated. This report further emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Coalfield Area's community voice would be represented equally strongly in Community Planning, beyond the lifetime of the SIP itself. Particular efforts have been made throughout 2004/05 to ensure that this will be the case.

The SIP tradition of active community consultation and engagement will be taken forward through the East Ayrshire Residents' Survey, which will be undertaken in summer 2005 and followed by a series of Citizens Panels. In addition, the success of the CCF, as the voice of the local community, will be replicated in the north of East Ayrshire with the anticipated establishment of a 'North Communities Federation'. The CCF has facilitated this process, ensuring that the good practice of CCF activity is shared with the North Federation Working Group.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, the local community will continue to be represented on the new Community Planning Partnership Board.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The SIP has been represented on the Community Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group since its establishment in 2003 and this Group has continued to meet to develop appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems for community planning structures. The Group has demonstrated a keen desire to build on the robust monitoring procedures which the SIP has implemented in the Coalfield Area and is working to develop a 'one touch' reporting framework, which will be based on the SIP model. The aim is to ensure an effective, rigorous and co-ordinated approach to the monitoring and evaluation of future Community Planning initiatives.

Communities Scotland is currently developing a national Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Regeneration Outcome Agreements and representatives from East Ayrshire Community Planning and Partnership Unit attended a focus group for practitioners in December 2004 to consider appropriate reporting structures.

## **INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN 2004/05**

### **'Wheels2Work'**

Coalfield Community Transport has continued to tackle disadvantage in rurally isolated Coalfield communities, through the ongoing development of new and innovative transport solutions to address the expressed needs of the local community. The 'Wheels2Work' initiative was launched in April 2004 and is the first of its kind in Scotland.

The project aims to assist young unemployed people aged 16-25 years to access training and employment opportunities through a scooter loan scheme. Young people are referred to the project by a range of local agencies including Jobcentre Plus, East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth (EASY) and East Ayrshire Employment Initiative, and are provided with a fully insured, taxed and serviced 50cc scooter for up to nine months. Initially ten scooters were purchased, however, following high

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demand for the service, a subsequent successful funding bid to JobCentre Plus has recently secured an additional ten scooters.

'Wheels2Work' participants are required to save regularly with the local Credit Union, which is also funded by the SIP. This aspect of the scheme seeks to ensure that, at the end of the scooter loan period, the individual beneficiary has saved money towards a deposit for their own transport in the longer term. Individual access to employment or training will, therefore, be sustained beyond the actual period of SIP funding.

### **Working Together - East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth (EASY) and Investment in Drama**

An innovative enterprise initiative has been developed by the EASY project in partnership with the SIP funded Investment in Drama project and Glasgow School of Art. The 'Get into Enterprise' Programme was successfully piloted in 2004/05 and offered young people the opportunity to learn about art design, production and retail, and to turn their art into attractive T-shirt designs.

Investment in Drama offered a series of creative drama based workshops, to provide the young people with the confidence to take advantage of the Programme, while Glasgow School of Art provided the creative and technical knowledge which enabled production of the T-shirts to become a reality. National retailers were also involved in the initiative and the final T-shirts will be on sale in Glasgow during summer 2005. This programme has provided EASY trainees with an enterprising opportunity and the chance to have their work recognised commercially, as well as opening the door to potential future careers in art design and retail.

The 'Get into Enterprise' initiative was launched in January 2005 and a recent official opening event 'Enterprise Onwards' was held to showcase the work to date. The day included a fashion show, organised by the trainees themselves.

### **Barony 'A' Frame Trust**

The Barony 'A' Frame is the last remaining mining monument of its kind in Britain and the restoration of this site will preserve the mining heritage of the Auchinleck area for future generations. The capital works will restore and floodlight the frame and will provide a fully interactive visitor attraction. In addition, an oral history project is being developed with local schools. Educational packs, including CD-Roms, have been developed to bring local history alive for children and young people across the Coalfield Area.

A number of partners have been involved in this development over the last year, including the SIP, the Minerals Trust, East Ayrshire Council and the local community. 2006 will bring the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the 'A' Frame, and it is hoped that the new development will be at the centre of these celebrations.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

### **Community Involvement and Development**

Eight community representatives have continued to participate as full members of the SIP Board, ensuring that the community is directly represented in key SIP decision making processes. Four of the representatives are members of the CCF, which

represents the interests of communities across the Coalfield Area, and four members are representatives from the wider community.

The community voice has been the driving force of the Coalfield Area SIP since its inception in 1999 and significant resources have been directed towards capacity building within the local community, enabling local residents to contribute effectively to the decision making process. In 2004/05 community representatives have continued to benefit from the provision of computer equipment, Internet access and IT support at home, and have been encouraged to access a range of training opportunities. A dedicated support worker, funded under the Community Empowerment budget, has continued to work directly with CCF and SIP Board community representatives throughout the last year.

The result of this investment and development is an informed and active citizenship in the Coalfield Area, which is committed to working closely with the partner agencies to ensure that the success of the SIP is replicated in future activity of the Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire.

### **Private Sector Involvement**

The private sector has continued to participate as a partner in a range of SIP funded employment initiatives and to be represented on a number of project boards. Over 100 work placement opportunities in 2004/05 contributed directly to the success of the SIP in assisting 118 people into employment in the last year. In addition, local business has contributed to the ongoing consultation process, which has informed the development of the ROA.

### **Voluntary Sector Involvement**

The commitment of the 'third sector' has been at the heart of the success of many of the SIP funded initiatives over the last six years and this has continued in 2004/05, with an increasing number of volunteers offering to support a range of projects. As well as assisting projects to tackle the disadvantage faced by those in most need within the community, many volunteers themselves have benefited from increased confidence and skills gained through volunteering opportunities, and have moved on to further education, training or formal employment.

One notable success of the SIP has been its mobilisation of young people as volunteers. yipworld.com recently celebrated its volunteering achievements by hosting an event, at which Cathy Jamieson MSP presented 20 young volunteers with Certificates of Achievement. In addition, one young 'yipworld' volunteer was honoured with the Young Citizen of the Year Award in February 2005. The Volunteer Centre (part funded by the SIP) has also continued to attract youngsters to volunteering through the Millennium Volunteer scheme.

The voluntary sector is formally represented on the SIP Board by the local Council of Voluntary Organisations and this will continue under the Community Planning Partnership. Two voluntary sector projects also continued to be supported by the SIP in 2004/05, namely Kickstart and Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire, and a range of SIP funded initiatives is managed by a voluntary management committee.

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## **Public Sector Involvement**

Community Planning Partner agencies in East Ayrshire have continued to work harmoniously with the SIP Board throughout 2004/05. Partners, including East Ayrshire Council, NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, have provided valuable match funding and support to a range of SIP funded initiatives. Approximately £900,000 Partner funding was secured by the projects and initiatives in the last year. The smooth integration process has demonstrated the strength of existing partnership structures and relationships in East Ayrshire and all public sector agencies have effectively contributed to the success of the transition.

## **Support Team**

The Support Team, detailed at Appendix 2, continues to be managed by the Community Planning and Partnership Manager, who has responsibility for Community Planning, Better Neighbourhood Services Fund, Community Based Youth Justice, external funding and corporate public health as well as social inclusion, not only in the formally designated SIP area, but throughout East Ayrshire. The Community Planning Officer, based at the SIP Office within the Community Planning and Partnership Unit, has supported a range of SIP activity, particularly in relation to the integration of the SIP with Community Planning.

The Support Team within the Community Planning and Partnership Unit will continue to drive forward future corporate regeneration initiatives and community planning across the whole of East Ayrshire.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **Financial and performance monitoring systems**

The robust financial and performance monitoring systems developed over the lifetime of the SIP have continued to operate effectively in 2004/05 as follows:

- grant payment claim forms submitted to the SIP on a quarterly basis;
- all grant claims and payments subjected to strict auditing procedures as laid down by both the SIP and East Ayrshire Council as grant recipient;
- project performance monitoring reports submitted to the SIP on a quarterly basis and performance updates presented to the full SIP Board on a bi-annual basis;
- annual review meetings with all SIP and Better Neighbourhood Services Fund funded projects and initiatives, undertaken by the Community Planning and Partnership Manager, Community Partnership and Regeneration Officer and Members of the SIP Board in November 2004.

In light of the forthcoming integration of SIP initiatives into the broader community planning framework, Community Plan Action Plan Lead Officers were also invited to participate in the November 2004 review sessions.

### **Community Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group**

The Monitoring and Evaluation Co-ordinator and Monitoring and Evaluation Worker contribute to the multi-disciplinary Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group, which

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was established in 2003 to measure progress towards the targets set down in the East Ayrshire Community Plan Action Plans. The robust and effective financial and performance monitoring systems, which have been developed by the SIP, will be taken forward and built on by East Ayrshire Community Planning Partners through this Working Group.

A monitoring and evaluation 'toolkit' is being developed, which will include standard monitoring and evaluation procedures. Development of the 'toolkit' has been directly informed by the experience of the SIP in monitoring and evaluating the various initiatives funded since 1999. It will also include a Community Planning 'Glossary of Terms' which has been developed in order to guide funding recipients through the terminology which is used in Community Planning in East Ayrshire. The 'Glossary' will be a tool for Community Planning Partner agencies and community and voluntary groups providing a common language which will cover standard terms used in Community Planning and national regeneration as well as performance monitoring.

The 'toolkit' and related procedures will be piloted with CRF projects and initiatives in 2005/06.

### **Evaluating Partnership Working**

The success of the SIP in respect of partnership working was independently recognised in the SIP evaluation commissioned in 2003, and it is anticipated that the good practice will continue under the new Community Planning structures. The Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group has been remitted to develop a tool to measure the impact of partnership working in East Ayrshire. To this end, a 'Partnership Assessment Scorecard' was recently piloted with Community Planning Partners. The results of the pilot are currently being analysed and if successful, this tool will be rolled out across the Partnership and with partner agencies in the future.

## **SUMMARY OF OUT TURN EXPENDITURE 2004 / 2005**

Robust and effective systems to ensure regular financial reporting to the SIP Board by both the Community Planning and Partnership Manager and East Ayrshire Council's Executive Head of Finance remained in place in 2004/05.

Detailed at Appendix 3 is the full financial expenditure for the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005.

## **HIGHLIGHTS 2004/05**

### **Continued Excellence from East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth (EASY)**

The EASY project has continued throughout 2004/05 with its outstanding efforts to break down the barriers which prevent the most excluded young people in the Coalfield Area from accessing employment and training opportunities. Hot on the heels of Scottish Enterprise recognising the project as an example of good practice for the Lifeskills Programme, EASY has recently secured funding through the SOCRATES Grundtvig 2 Learning Partnerships to send two trainees to Romania on a fact finding educational visit. Throughout the duration of their trip, the young people will be working in a series of workshops with young people from other

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countries who are members of SOCRATES, including Romania, Spain, Italy and the Czech Republic.

It is anticipated that this will be the start of a series of international educational visits, which will offer continued development opportunities to young Coalfield residents and may even bring European visitors to Cumnock in the future.

### **East Ayrshire Carers Centre receives national recognition**

East Ayrshire Carers Centre was this year's winner of the Great Scot Award Better Life Category and was actively involved in the production of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers Good Practice Guide. Much of this recognition is based on the Carers Centre's work with young carers, which has been specifically funded by the SIP.

2004/05 also saw the establishment of a new Young Adult Carers Group to build on the success of the four existing young carers groups. Over 2,300 attendances were recorded at the young people's sessions in the last year, and 138 young carers are now registered with the Centre. In October 2004, a team of young carers took part in an Ocean Youth Trust Sailing Trip around the west coast of Scotland, just one of the 10 respite breaks offered to 78 young carers over the past year.

### **Cumnock Swimming Pool opened**

Cumnock's first indoor swimming pool and leisure centre was officially opened in October 2004. The facility is now open seven days per week, offering a comprehensive range of fitness facilities to the local community, including a pool, sauna, steam room, spa and fitness suite. The opening of the centre is the culmination of eight years of planning, and has created 11 full-time and 10 part-time job opportunities, which have been welcomed by the local community.

This £2 million project was part funded by the SIP and a range of partners, including SportScotland, Minerals Trust, East Ayrshire Council and the local community, which initiated a series of highly inventive fundraising events. The successful conclusion of this work provides yet another example of the SIP's excellent track record of effective partnership working.

## **SUMMARY OF PROJECTS 2004 / 2005**

The SIP is committed to ensuring that every initiative within its programme is of the highest quality and that services are developed based on identified need rather than the availability of funding. In addition, the SIP has continued to ensure that the projects which it funds, link strategically to the activity of all partner agencies working in the Coalfield Area and to the community planning priorities in East Ayrshire.

To this end, the SIP has funded and supported a range of projects and initiatives, which can deliver an effective, quality service and assist the SIP to realise its vision. It is these projects, which deliver the achievements of the SIP. Listed below, under the themes to which they most directly relate, is the Programme of Projects 2004/05 and a summary of achievements against set targets for the year.

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## Theme: People into Work

**CONDUIT ILM** provides training and support to enable unemployed people to access employment opportunities in administration and information and communication technology. The project also enables service users to access a public intranet service and offers practical support to local community and voluntary groups and small businesses. Achievements include:

- 40 individuals (9 male and 31 female) participating on the programme, 17 of whom had been unemployed for more than 12 months (**Largely achieved**);
- 12 participants (5 male and 7 female) securing employment, and 1 individual progressing into further education/training (**Largely achieved**);
- 19 individuals achieving SVQ Administration Level 2 and 4 individuals achieving part SVQ Administration Level 2 (**Achieved**);
- 19 participants achieving the European Computer Driving Licence qualification (**Achieved**);
- 29 local employers providing a range of work experience placements to all project participants (**Achieved**); and
- 60 community/voluntary organisations receiving assistance from the project through the provision of administrative and IT support (**Achieved**).

**East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth (EASY)** provides a programme of intensive support, guidance and training to assist young people aged 16-18 years to realise their full potential and to secure work or further training. An aftercare service provides continued support for up to six months. Achievements include:

- 87 participants (37 male and 50 female) recruited, 3 of whom had been unemployed for more than 12 months (**Achieved**);
  - 14 participants securing employment, 17 into further training and 6 into full-time education (**Achieved**);
  - 21 participants completing ASDAN Foundation Training Award and 12 completing the ASDAN Lifeskills training programme (**Largely achieved**);
  - 58 participants completing a work experience placement with a local employer (**Achieved**);
  - the innovative, 'Get into Enterprise' programme, successfully piloted in partnership with Investment in Drama and Glasgow School of Art (**Achieved**);
  - funding secured to provide an opportunity for 2 trainees to make an educational visit to Romania (**Achieved**);
  - 6 'Lifeskills' trainees receiving the John Muir Environmental Award (**Achieved**);
  - European funding application approved in June 2004 allowing the project to deliver an outreach service to local communities (**Achieved**); and
  - one former participant, who had progressed to a construction apprenticeship with East Ayrshire's Building and Works, winning Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire's 'Get Ready for Work' Award in October 2004 (**Achieved**).
-

**East Ayrshire Works** is an ILM project which provides on-the-job training opportunities for unemployed individuals who are most removed from the labour market. Achievements include:

- 15 participants attending the 18-24 programme and 19 participants attending the Doon Valley programme secured employment (**Achieved**);
- 34 work placement opportunities offered to programme participants by local employers (**Achieved**);
- 27 participants completing short-term job focused training, including health and safety, chainsaw, welding, pesticide, Sage 1 accounting and Advanced ECDL courses (**Achieved**); and
- project participants benefiting from a range of aspirational and motivational learning tools, including Steps to Excellence, Thomas International and Richter Scale (**Achieved**).

**Individual Employment Fund** provides tailored support and guidance on an individual basis to help unemployed people to re-enter employment by providing grant assistance and vocational courses, which link to skills shortages and job vacancies. Achievements include:

- 49 applications supported, 47 individuals supported into employment and 2 into training (**Achieved**);
- 14 individuals supported, who had previously been unemployed for more than 6 months (**Achieved**);
- the co-ordination of support maintained with the Action Team for Jobs (**Achieved**);
- the continued provision of a range of financial support to enable individuals to take up employment, including travel expenses, training costs, childcare, equipment and clothing costs (**Achieved**); and
- the project providing a gateway into a range of job opportunities, including football coaching, Personal Assistant, and Heavy Goods Vehicle driving (**Achieved**).

**East Ayrshire Woodlands** is an ILM project, which provides opportunities for long-term unemployed people through the planting and management of native woodlands. SIP funding has allowed the project to extend the range of training and temporary employment opportunities in the Coalfield Area and to enhance the range and nature of the environmental improvements undertaken. Achievements include:

- 21 individuals participating in training, 6 of whom had previously been unemployed for more than 12 months (**Achieved**);
  - the provision of maintenance work and community liaison focusing on a number of sites throughout the SIP area (**Achieved**);
  - 10 participants achieving LANTRA (**Partially achieved**);
  - 18 NPTC qualifications gained in sectoral related skills, including chainsaw operation and the use of pesticides (**Largely achieved**); and
  - 6 participants securing full-time employment (**Partially achieved**).
-

**East Ayrshire JobRotation project** assists small/micro/medium enterprises (SMEs) in relation to the training and development of staff. In addition, the project tackles unemployment by providing work, training and paid employment for long-term unemployed people. Achievements include:

- 4 SMEs from the SIP area supported and 28 SME employees from the SIP area released to attend a wide range of training opportunities, including ECDL, SVQ Level 2/3, SVQ Assessor Units and REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene courses **(Achieved)**;
- the recruitment of 6 JobRotation trainees (3 male and 3 female) from the SIP area, 4 of whom were aged 25+ years **(Achieved)**;
- 5 JobRotation trainees from SIP area securing employment and 1 entering further education/training **(Achieved)**; and
- the relocation of the project into new premises with onsite training facilities, increasing project capacity **(Achieved)**.

**Enterprising Towns Initiative** offers training and support to enable unemployed individuals to form enterprise groups, and to develop and set up social enterprises within the service sector. Achievements include:

- the development of a process model for social enterprises, resulting in the establishment of 7 Social Enterprises **(Achieved)**;
- 10 unemployed SIP residents recruited to complete a range of vocational and personal training courses, including business planning, marketing, team leading and citizenship **(Achieved)**; and
- project participants being the first candidates to achieve the Institute of Leadership and Management Exploring Enterprise Award **(Achieved)**.

### **People into Work Summary**

A total of 118 individuals have been supported into work, 27 into further education/training, 23 completed SVQ qualifications, 19 achieved the European Computer Driving Licence qualification and over 200 accessed training opportunities throughout 2004/05. In addition, SIP funded projects have continued to provide a range of job opportunities for local residents as project staff.

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## Theme: Community Participation

**Active Citizenship** develops a range of citizenship initiatives, which support the involvement of young people in community activity and particularly in decision making processes, while also providing them with improved access to information and citizenship opportunities. Achievements include:

- 170 young people participating in the Youth Forum at the East Ayrshire Youth Conference in April 2004 **(Achieved)**;
- 23 young people supported throughout the year within the East Ayrshire Youth Forum and Multi-Agency Youth Forum to participate in decision making processes relevant to their issues and agenda **(Achieved)**;
- 10 young people supported to participate in a six day Active Citizenship Summer School in July/August 2004 **(Achieved)**;
- the development of a range of other methods of engagement with young people, including questionnaires (over 500 returned from young people) and 6 consultation events/think tanks, involving over 100 young people **(Achieved)**; and
- 'Basic' and 'Smartened' Young Scot cards distributed to young people across East Ayrshire, and a localised East Ayrshire Young Scot Information Portal developed and managed **(Achieved)**.

**The Children's Holiday Project** provides the opportunity for a low cost, one-week quality holiday break for children and families in most need. It can also help families who cannot afford a holiday, carers who need to relax and recharge their batteries or youth or lone parent groups. Achievements include:

- the continuation of awareness raising of the project throughout the Coalfield Area and promotion of the service in 8 targeted communities and 5 rural areas **(Achieved)**;
- 58 holiday opportunities offered to SIP residents and accessed by 98 children and 85 adults **(Achieved)**
- the continuation of the healthy eating, dental awareness, home security and saving scheme initiatives as well as the book project **(Achieved)**;
- new decking installed around two of the caravans, including the disabled caravan to facilitate access for wheelchair users and older people, and to increase the floor space available to users **(Achieved)**.

**Coalfield Community Transport** provides accessible, affordable and appropriate transport solutions for community and voluntary groups and excluded individuals in the Coalfield Area to encourage greater community participation and social inclusion. Achievements include:

- the re-affiliation of 166 new or existing groups during the year **(Achieved)**;
  - 19,376 passengers using the service and 1,542 bookings recorded **(Achieved)**;
  - the registration of over 926 members with the 'Dayhopper' service, which now operates 7 days per week **(Achieved)**;
-

- the launch of the innovative Wheels Work project in June 2004, with all 10 of the original scooters allocated by August 2004, and a further 10 scooters purchased to enable the service to keep up with demand **(Achieved)**;
- the completion of a feasibility study in respect of an 'Awayhopper' service, offering overnight and weekend trips away with positive results, which will be introduced in the next financial year **(Achieved)**; and
- the inclusion of the project in a Scottish Executive Rural Transport Video as an example of good practice and facilitating the development of similar service models across Scotland **(Achieved)**.

**Cumnock and Doon Valley Credit Union** has been established to promote thrift by encouraging members to save regularly and to provide loans to members at a reasonable rate of interest. Achievements include:

- the sustained membership of 261 members and 47 junior savers **(Achieved)**;
- over £41,000 currently in savings with the Credit Union, and over £45,800 of loans awarded **(Achieved)**;
- 34 volunteers actively participating in the project **(Achieved)**;
- the development of a formal staff induction programme for all new volunteers **(Achieved)**; and
- the investigation of a partnership with Ayr College to develop tailor-made and potentially accredited training courses for future volunteer development **(Achieved)**.

**East Ayrshire Carers Centre (Satellite Service)** provides information, advice, support, training, leisure and social activities to people who have a responsibility for looking after someone who is ill, frail or has a disability. Achievements include:

- the registration of 600 carers/138 young carers with the Centre at 31 March 2005 **(Largely achieved)**;
- 8 carers support groups being supported on a regular basis **(Achieved)**;
- 81 group sessions attracting 306 carers (55 male and 251 female) **(Achieved)**;
- the distribution of 1,285 information packs, and extensive project awareness raising activity completed, including presentations to local schools, GP Practices, and Community Groups **(Achieved)**;
- the involvement of the Centre in the development of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers Good Practice Guides; **(Achieved)**; and
- the Carers Centre winning the Great Scot Award Better Life category **(Achieved)**.

**Young Carers Initiative** supports young carers by offering advice, weekly support groups, respite holidays, training, one-to-one support and befriending service. Achievements include:

- the establishment of 4 Young Carers Groups for different age groups, offering 148 group sessions, with a total of 2,358 attendances **(Achieved)**;
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- the establishment of a new Young Adult Carers Group for 18-25 year olds, which meets on a monthly basis **(Achieved)**; and
- the provision of 10 respite breaks for young carers, including an Ocean Youth Trust Sailing Trip around the West Coast of Scotland in October 2004, and 78 Young Carers benefited from these breaks **(Achieved)**.

**Ethnic Minority Inclusion** develops effective communication strategies with ethnic minority families to facilitate better access to services, resources and community initiatives; offers a range of supports, using community languages where appropriate; allows informed decision-making; and increases opportunities and participation. Achievements include:

- Bilingual Support Assistants continuing to work in nurseries and schools to support ethnic minority pupils and their families **(Achieved)**;
- 10 local groups targeted and supported by the project, including KULOC (Chinese Support Group) and the Asian Women's Group **(Achieved)**; and
- the continued availability of dual language resources and translation/interpreting support to ethnic minority families, groups and educational establishments **(Achieved)**.

**Investment in Drama** – Over three years, this initiative has increased access for excluded people over 16 years to professional drama activity designed to respond on three levels:

- Level One - Outreach into Rural Communities;
- Level Two - Training to Employment - Skill Building; and
- Level Three - Investing in the Future of Drama.

Achievements include:

- the continued development of 4 community drama groups, each completing a ten week programme of workshops, which culminated in a performance entitled 'Our Community' which involved 40 participants and played to an audience of 125 people **(Achieved)**;
- 42 participants taking part in a range of Level 2 Skill Building Workshops, including role play, relaxation and interview techniques **(Achieved)**;
- The recruitment of 5 Drama Trainees recruited to the project, with three remaining in post to support the future development of the project. One trainee left to pursue a career as a freelance drama worker, and another moved onto a full time college drama course in Glasgow **(Achieved)**; and
- the implementation of a 'Shriek Week' event, staged over 3 days at Halloween, including parades, music and dance. A 'Ghost Walk' took place at Glaisnock House, Cumnock and a theatre performance in Cumnock Town Hall attracted 300 people **(Achieved)**.

The **Kickstart Programme** managed by the local Council of Voluntary Organisations (CVO) provides support to assist groups to secure external funding and build the capacity of local organisations. Achievements include:

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- 17 events and over 70 groups assisted in the Coalfield Area **(Achieved)**;
- 48 groups assisted with funding applications and 92 applications submitted **(Achieved)**; and
- approximately £428,000 of external funding secured by community and voluntary groups **(Achieved)**.

**Prince's Trust Volunteer Programme** is a personal development and training programme, assisting 16-25 year olds to develop motivation and skills through team work in the community. Achievements include:

- the recruitment of 43 participants (20 male and 23 female) to three programme 'Teams' **(Achieved)**;
- 19 participants (8 male and 11 female) completing the programme and achieving SVQ qualifications **(Achieved)**;
- 5 unemployed participants (2 male and 3 female) securing employment, 5 unemployed participants (3 male and 2 female) entering full-time education and 4 female participants continuing to work in a voluntary capacity **(Largely achieved)**; and
- project activity contributing to a range of local community projects, including work with the 'Lisalanna' respite centre for children with disabilities **(Achieved)**.

**Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire** supports the development of volunteering within East Ayrshire. Achievements include:

- 114 volunteers from SIP area (52 male and 62 female) assisted **(Largely achieved)**;
- 43 groups (23 from the SIP area) registered and 30 volunteer engager groups (15 from the SIP area) assisted **(Achieved)**; and
- The confirmation of core funding from the Scottish Executive for a further three years, and the contract to deliver the Millennium Volunteer Awards Programme **(Achieved)**.

**yipworld.com** is a high profile, dynamic and innovative Internet model of youth provision incorporating a range of formal and informal activities for young people aged 8–25 years living in the Coalfield Area. yipworld.com hosts a range of initiatives designed to enhance the personal and social development of young people. Achievements include:

- 503 new registered members (381 male and 122 female) **(Achieved)**;
  - all staff offered training in SVQ qualification with 85% uptake **(Achieved)**
  - the continued delivery of the 'Pathways to Progress' initiative, with 20 young people accessing employment and work experience opportunities **(Achieved)**;
  - over 20 young people actively volunteering with the project **(Achieved)**;
  - the project being recognised as a Social Enterprise, through the provision of out of school care, sub-contracted work and room hire and nationally recognised and listed in Carisdata Top 1,000 Charities in Scotland **(Achieved)**;
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- a number of issue based health initiative workshops implemented, with over 1,000 participants **(Achieved)**;
- the undertaking of detached street work, with over 60 young people contacted per evening, particularly in most deprived rural areas **(Achieved)**; and
- the implementation of a range of summer activities, including a Duke of Edinburgh Expedition **(Achieved)**.

### **Theme: Positive Health Opportunities**

**Healthy Living Initiative (CHIP Van)** provides a mobile resource, which ensures improved access to health information and advice, greater community participation through the establishment of local health forums, greater access to specialist health services, such as community dieticians and exercise consultants, and improved health and well being. Achievements include:

- over 70 visits and 680 visitors to 12 targeted communities in the Coalfield Area **(Achieved)**;
- 721 individuals participating in the GP Referral Exercise Programme and 268 referrals to the Lifestyle Referral Scheme **(Achieved)**;
- the piloting of a Men's Health Initiative within the project, and initial programmes of activity developed for full delivery in 2005/06 **(Achieved)**;
- the provision of 'Cookwell' demonstrations across East Ayrshire, including Netherthird, Bellsbank, Cumnock and Drongan, with 92% of participants stating they continue to use the recipes at home **(Achieved)**; and
- the recognition of the project in the national press, with the Sunday Herald running an article on how East Ayrshire is responding to the Scottish Executive 'Let's Make Scotland More Active' campaign **(Achieved)**.

**Creative Skills Programme** is aimed at people who require support with learning, specifically those disadvantaged by mental health problems and/or learning difficulties, and focuses on personal and social development within an art and craft type environment. SIP funding allows the project to expand and develop in the Coalfield Area. Achievements include:

- project participants continuing to work towards both modular and non-modular achievement in Core Skills, IT, Communication and Numeracy, Recreational Art, Screen Printing and Picture Framing **(Achieved)**;
- 21 participants (5 male and 16 female) from the Coalfield Area currently participating on the programme **(Achieved)**; and
- 1 student leaving the programme to enroll in a course at Ayr College **(Achieved)**.

**Recreation Partnership Project** focuses on primary school aged children to provide a broad range of recreational opportunities and healthy lifestyle awareness for children aged 5-12 years. Achievements include:

- over 2,000 attendances recorded at four Saturday Kids Clubs operating in the SIP area **(Achieved)**;
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- a total of 1,416 attendances recorded at the four After School Clubs in the SIP area (**Achieved**);
- over 3,400 attendances at sessions implemented during Easter, Summer and October school holiday periods at venues in the SIP area (**Achieved**);
- 13 different communities visited by 'Summer Motivators on Tour' within the SIP area, providing 24 sessions per week in the summer holiday period (**Achieved**);
- 368 attendances recorded at 'FIT for IT!' Health Development Sessions implemented within Community Libraries in the SIP area (**Achieved**);
- delivery of the health element of the 'Activity Motivation Initiative' within the school programme (**Achieved**);
- over 700 children accessing the activities free of charge or at a discounted rate, using their RICK (Recreation Inclusion Card for Kids) card (**Achieved**);
- the continued delivery of 'Active Recreation Health Awareness' Sessions, expanded to all East Ayrshire Primary Schools, with over 2,700 children participating (**Achieved**); and
- the project securing mainstream from NHS Ayrshire & Arran's Health Improvement Fund (**Achieved**).

### **Theme: Community Learning**

**Business Technology Training Centre (BTTC)** is a high quality, multi-purpose facility, which provides a focal point for training, an advisory service and access to ICT for everyone. Achievements include:

- 298 people registering with the Centre, and a total of 2,746 attendances recorded (**Achieved**);
- 46 business employees utilising the Centre, including 40 from the Dalmellington area, and 6 from the wider Doon Valley area (**Largely achieved**);
- 69 individuals achieving full or part qualifications (**Largely achieved**); and
- the Centre obtaining 'Learn Direct' branded status (**Achieved**).

**Bellsbank Women's Project (Men's Project)** is a client led educational and social activity programme, which seeks to tackle social exclusion and health related issues by encouraging men to participate in community activity. Achievements include:

- the establishment of the Wednesday evening Men's Group, with 15 regular members from the Bellsbank area (**Achieved**);
  - the participation of regular guest speakers on a range of topics, including Genealogy, Countryside Rangers, and History of the Doon Valley (**Achieved**);
  - the delivery of a range of courses in direct response to local demand, including introductory computing, gardening and woodturning (**Achieved**); and
  - the refurbishment of the existing office accommodation and equipped to accommodate the new men's group (**Achieved**).
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## Theme: Living in a Quality Environment

**Community Environmental Action Plans and Projects** – The project improves the environment of East Ayrshire as a place to live, work and visit producing individual Environmental Improvement Action Plans (EIAPs) for settlements within the SIP area with the full involvement of local communities. Projects identified through the EIAPs are also implemented. Achievements include:

- the production of finalised Action Plans for 3 local areas, namely Netherthird, Cumnock town centre and Cumnock (excluding town centre), and 5 projects implemented **(Achieved)**;
- the approval of 33 external funding applications, which levered in £401,000 for local environmental regeneration projects **(Achieved)**;
- a further 13 projects being drawn up, costed and implemented, including Teen Shelter, Tree Trail, Well Road Park, Aird Avenue Community Garden and the Community Newsrooms **(Achieved)**;
- the purchase of a wind turbine and lighting system for the Barony 'A' Frame Project, which continues to be developed **(Achieved)**;
- the development and implementation of Main Street, Auchinleck 'Property Improvement Scheme' **(Achieved)**;
- the progression of extensive and ongoing community consultation, and in excess of 80 meetings convened regarding the development of a range of projects, including the Barony 'A' Frame **(Achieved)**; and
- continuation of the Revolving Maintenance Fund in partnership with East Ayrshire Council's Development Section, to ensure long term sustainability of project sites **(Achieved)**.

## Capital Projects

The SIP Board funded a range of capital projects during 2004/05 and progress in year includes:

- **Dalmellington Brass Band**

Work to build a new band hall on a previously disused site next to the Dalmellington Community Centre has progressed well in 2004/05. It is anticipated that the completion of the works will be announced in Summer 2005, to be followed by a launch event when the community will be invited to join the band for an evening of celebration.

- **Dalmellington Youth Centre**

This project will establish a much needed community youth facility, 'The Zone', in Dalmellington, which will be housed in a previously derelict building at the centre of the community. Capital works are progressing well, and the centre is expected to open in August 2005.

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- **Dalrymple Youth Provision**

Capital work on this new centre has been completed and it officially opened in September 2004. Revenue funding has been secured from a range of funding sources to develop youth work service provision in 2005/06.

- **Glaisnock Trust**

Work has continued on the large scale refurbishment of Glaisnock House and the building work is now in the final stages of completion. The building will be established as a national Centre for Enterprise and Creativity, which will particularly benefit people living in the Coalfield Area. In addition, a range of facilities will be made available to the local communities, including public gardens, a community kitchen and function/meeting rooms.

- **Nith Valley Co-operative Regeneration Project**

Capital work to consolidate and regenerate a collection of disused and derelict buildings in New Cumnock Town Centre has recently begun on site. Partners contributing to this development include East Ayrshire Council, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, Nith Valley Co-op, as well as the SIP.

## **Other Projects**

- **Ayrshire Key Fund**

Ayrshire Key Fund (AKF) was developed to support the expansion of community economic activity within the four Ayrshire Social Inclusion Partnerships. It was established in 2002 as an intervention to overcome the limited opportunities available to social economy organisations accessing structural funds and other financial programmes.

MCM Associates Limited was appointed in September 2004 to undertake an independent evaluation of the AKF. The results of the evaluation confirm that AKF operated effectively and made significant impact in terms of supporting a range of community economic development activity within designated areas, including:

- 43 projects (11 in East Ayrshire), providing a range of community economic activity, supported;
- all available AKF funds, totalling £816,750 allocated;
- over £637,000 of additional resources levered into the area by local organisations utilising AKF, providing a combined investment of approximately £1.5 million; and
- a range of programme targets achieved, including 35 new jobs created and 15 jobs safeguarded.

The SIP Board endorsed continued East Ayrshire participation in the AKF and approved 'in principle' support for a Phase 2 application to Strathclyde European Partnership from Ayrshire Key Fund Limited, subject to approval by the new Community Planning Partnership.

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The SIP Board funded a range of smaller initiatives in 2004/05 including, a sample of which includes:

- Dalmellington Primary and Nursery Parents Association, to provide play equipment;
- New Cumnock Swimming Pool, to provide entry cards for school children; and
- Muirkirk Enterprise Group, to provide handsets to facilitate visitor tours of key heritage sites in the village.

## **Tackling Drug Misuse**

An allocation of £102,025 was made to the SIP by Communities Scotland for 2004/05 to continue to address the SIP's key priorities in respect of addiction and gaps in service in the Coalfield Area.

Detailed below is the position in respect of the projects funded to tackle drug misuse in the SIP area to the end of March 2005.

### **Alternatives to Addiction**

This project aims to provide innovative services to individuals experiencing difficulties in relation to addiction and to intervene to prevent children and young people becoming involved with drugs and alcohol. Achievements include:

- a summer school for pupils at Dronan Primary attracted recorded 279 attendances. **(Achieved)**;
- a total of 10 primary schools were offered the opportunity to participate in Fablevision Helter Skelter performance aimed at P4/5 pupils, which looks at the dangers of tobacco and alcohol, and issues of peer pressure, self image and decision making. A total of 455 pupils took part from various primary schools in the SIP area. **(Achieved)**; and
- a male service users group was established, for young men with drug or alcohol issues. The initiative attracted four participants who attended 8 sessions and completed a photography project. A selection of their work was exhibited in Bridge Addiction Services premises. **(Achieved)**.

### **Employability Initiative**

The Employability Initiative (Elevation Project) was developed in response to a locally identified need to support stabilised substance abuse users into training, education and employment. The aim of the project is to increase both their personal development and their employment skills in order to become more 'opportunity ready' to access mainstream services.

A total of 12 individuals participated in the programme in 2004/05 and accessed a range of training and development opportunities including:

- an Investment in Drama course which looked at personal presentation, interview techniques, CV writing and practical employment related issues. **(Achieved)**;
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- the Essential Skills Programme – a computer based course run in conjunction with Ayr College, which covers literacy and numeracy as well as basic ICT skills. **(Achieved)**;
- the Pacific Institute STEPS to Excellence Programme, a personal development course which looks at self esteem, confidence and feelings of self worth using interactive learning techniques and recognised psychological concepts. This course was offered over a six week period at the end of the programme, participant evaluations were extremely positive. **(Achieved)**; and
- various information sessions in partnership with external agencies, covering diverse topics such as Men's Sexual Health, Benefits and Relaxation Techniques. **(Achieved)**.

A total of three participants have since moved into employment and the remaining 9 are ready to participate in the mainstream Jobcentre Plus Progress2Work initiative to assist them to access further employment and training opportunities.

These achievements, with a user group which is particularly hard to engage, evidence the success of this SIP funded initiative. The project has been recognised at a national level, receiving a Scottish Executive Effective Interventions Unit recommendation of good practice. In June 2004, the initiative was also commended by the Deputy Minister for Justice in his address to the European Drugs and Social Inclusion Conference.

### **Community Drugs Worker**

This post was created in order to assist the most chaotic drugs users with complex social and personal problems to achieve some stability in their lives and give them time and space to look at the issues impacting on their drug use. Project achievements in 2004/05 include:

- approximately 40 chaotic injecting drugs users accessing the project. **(Achieved)**;
- a tailor made individual needs care plan drawn up for each participant. **(Achieved)**; and
- the provision of a range of advice and support services including Reike relaxation services, advocacy and practical work to address housing, debt and related issues **(Achieved)**.

### **Sport as an Alternative to Drug Misuse (New Sporting Futures)**

Sports as an Alternative to Drugs Misuse was established to offer positive diversionary activity to young people aged 10-18 in the evening. Key achievements in 2004/05 include:

- the establishment of successful 'Premier Night Leagues at Auchinleck, Cumnock and Doon Academies, attracting a total of 1215 young participants. **(Achieved)**;
  - mini football and basketball leagues operating in conjunction with Bellsbank Adventure Playground at the Multi-Use-Games-Area two nights per week. **(Achieved)**; and
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- partnership working with Community Wardens and Local Police continuing to develop, and the Night Leagues are recognised as positive alternatives to Youth Crime and drug/alcohol misuse, both by these partners and within East Ayrshire Council's Improving Community Safety Action Plan. **(Achieved)**

## Future Developments

Our work to tackle addiction issues and drugs misuse in the Coalfield Area has largely focused on preventative and diversionary measures, and has been highly successful in this regard. It is anticipated that East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership will build on this success and future activities will be driven forward through core CRF funding.

## Community Empowerment

Community capacity building has remained a key priority for the SIP in 2004/05 as in previous years, and the Community Empowerment Fund allocation of £60,000 facilitated the continued development of this work in the last year.

As previously, much of this support was directed towards the designated Community Representatives, to enable them to fully participate in the decision making processes affecting their own communities. This support included:

- a dedicated Community Empowerment Worker to support community representatives on the SIP Board and the Coalfield Communities Federation;
- computers with email links and Internet access maintained in the homes of community representatives on the SIP Board;
- individual training programmes provided for community representatives participating in social inclusion activity; and
- community representative's expenses.

## Coalfield Communities Federation

In 2004/05 significant financial support has also been provided to the Coalfield Communities Federation (CCF) via the Empowering Communities budget.

The CCF encourages representation from all local communities to participate in a forum, which informs the strategic direction and future programme activity of the SIP. Achievements include:

- the recruitment of 4 new members **(Achieved)**;
  - 23 members representing local areas and communities of interest, and 1 individual member registered **(Achieved)**;
  - the distribution of the 'Glennie' bi-annual newsletter to every household in the Coalfield Area **(Achieved)**;
  - CCF members contributing to and participating in a range of initiatives, including the Dalmellington Partnership, the Volunteer Centre East Ayrshire, Cumnock and Doon Valley Gift Furniture Scheme and the Barony 'A' Frame Trust **(Achieved)**;
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- the continued development of the CCF website [www.coalfieldcommunities.org](http://www.coalfieldcommunities.org) and over 334 'hits' recorded since its establishment (**Achieved**); and
- CCF members actively participating in the formation of the East Ayrshire (North) Communities Federation, sharing knowledge and good practice in community consultation and representation (**Achieved**).

### **Forward Plan 2005/06**

The Community Voices Programme (CVP) is a Scottish Executive funding initiative which has been established to support the engagement of communities in local regeneration in the context of the ROA.

East Ayrshire Community Planning Partners have received an indicative grant allocation of £258,000 for the period 2005/2008. The CVP programme will enable the successful work of the SIP in actively engaging the people of the Coalfield communities and the wider East Ayrshire area in the regeneration of their own area to continue under the auspices of Community Planning.

### **A FEW HIGHLIGHTS AMONG THE MANY SINCE 1999**

The achievements of the SIP over the last six years are diverse and far reaching. The summary below will provide a flavour of some of the key highlights under each of the five thematic headings:

- People into Work;
- Community Participation;
- Positive Health Opportunities;
- Community Learning; and
- Living in a Quality Environment.

### **People into Work**

Since its inception in 1999, the SIP has contributed effectively to the 'People into Work' agenda. Approximately 500 people have been directly assisted into employment via SIP funded projects under the 'People into Work' theme since 1999. This figure does not include the many people who have accessed job opportunities through projects falling under the other themes, or the people who have taken up employment within the projects themselves. Projects funded under this theme have made a particularly significant contribution towards the achievement of the Closing the Opportunity Gap (CtOG) Objectives of 'increasing the chances of sustained employment for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups', and 'reducing the proportion of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment'.

The main focus of the projects funded under this theme has been to invest in the skills levels of local people and to remove barriers to employment. Partnership working has been the key to our success by ensuring a 'joined up' inter-agency approach to tackling unemployment and local skills shortages. A range of Partners, including Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, East Ayrshire Council, the Employment Service and European Funders, have particularly contributed to the success of a number of SIP funded employment initiatives. In addition, local employers have

provided invaluable in-kind support and, to date, over 300 SIP project beneficiaries have benefited from work placement opportunities in 'real' jobs since 1999.

One of the most successful initiatives funded under the 'People into Work' theme heading has been **East Ayrshire Strategy for Youth**. This project offers personal development and lifeskills training under the Scottish Enterprise Get Ready for Work Programme. It is particularly noteworthy because it seeks to work with those young people who are furthest removed from the job market. Project beneficiaries often come from chaotic home backgrounds and face a number of economic and social barriers, which would otherwise prevent them from accessing employment and training opportunities. Between April 2000 and March 2005 over 350 young people directly benefited from this project, with over 60 of them moving on to paid employment.

The success of the **Individual Employment Fund** is illustrated by the number of people supported into work and by the clear value for money offered in terms of the level of investment in each individual beneficiary. One of the real strengths of this project has been that it benefits individuals who are ineligible to access support from other agencies. Any unemployed person in the Coalfield Area facing barriers to work, and who cannot access support from other agencies, such as The Action Team for Jobs, is eligible to apply for support and as such it has been a truly inclusive initiative.

A total of 269 Coalfield residents have benefited from this project since 1999, with 225 people moving into employment as a direct result of this intervention. In many cases, a relatively small level of financial support has enabled an individual to take up employment by, for example, providing help with the cost of transport to interviews or in the first month of work. Grant awards totalling £15,000 in 2004/05 enabled 49 residents of the Coalfield Area to enter employment or training. Another noteworthy feature of the project is the sheer range of employment opportunities accessed by beneficiaries, from football coaching to the armed forces.

Grant awards have ranged from small allocations to fund bus fares to interviews, or in the first days of employment, through to larger scale training or equipment awards to enable the uptake of employment opportunities. One local resident recently benefited from an award to pay for a two day health and safety course, which enabled him to secure a Health and Safety Passport, now a requirement for working in the Construction industry. This individual can take up employment on any construction site across the UK, and has since secured a full time position with a local employer. This is typical of the impact that an Individual Employment Fund award can have on the life of one individual.

## **Community Participation**

The SIP has devoted a high proportion of its resources to providing a range of facilities and services to communities in order to encourage active participation by local residents. The CtOG Objective of 'improving access to high quality services for the most disadvantaged groups and individuals in rural communities' has been at the heart of much of this work. This has led to an eclectic range of highly successful and innovative initiatives, many of which have received national recognition. To illustrate the success of the SIP under this theme, it is important to provide a flavour of the diverse range of initiatives which has been funded over the lifetime of the SIP.

The SIP funded **East Ayrshire Carers Centre** and the **Young Carers Initiative** have targeted 'hidden carers' in the Coalfield Area. Over 700 carers within the Coalfield Area are registered with the Carers Centre, including 138 young carers who benefit from a range of services, for example, weekly support groups, individual counselling and respite breaks.

The SIP has also funded a ground breaking arts project, **Investment in Drama**, which has provided some of the most disadvantaged Coalfield communities with access to drama workshops and performance, and offered four traineeships in drama work. The project offers an innovative arts based training toolkit, which seeks to build confidence and self esteem as well as offering a range of more practical skills.

Another issue that the SIP has been keen to tackle under the Community Participation theme has been how to engage young people in community based activity. The award winning **yipworld.com** project has been highly successful and since it opened in April 2000, as a cyber suite and social facility for young people in the Cumnock area, has developed exponentially over the last five years. At the end of March 2005, the project has over 2,700 registered users between 8 and 25 years of age, employs 8 staff, utilises over 50 regular project volunteers and offers a comprehensive range of youth oriented services.

**Coalfield Community Transport (CCT)** has had immense impact in the SIP area and was initially developed through the SIP funded Coalfield Communities Federation as a direct response to community need. CCT directly tackles social exclusion by offering safe, affordable and appropriate transport solutions to community and voluntary groups, and to socially, economically and geographically disadvantaged individuals across the Coalfield Area. The project offers the following services:

- Group Transport – 5 minibuses available to voluntary and community groups 365 days per year. A total of 166 groups are registered with this service at 31 March 2005;
- Dayhopper Service – over 3,000 individuals utilised this service in 2004/05 alone, which offers a door-to-door shopping service from outlying rural areas into local hub towns, as well as regular excursions out with the local area;
- Wheels2Work – an innovative new service launched in 2004, offering 16-25 year olds with a low cost transport option to access employment or training;
- a range of add-on services, including volunteer training in MiDAS, Disability Awareness training, and a First Gear training programme aimed at addressing road safety and related issues with young people aged 14 years plus.

CCT is well established and carried over 19,000 passengers in 2004/05 alone, has over 150 qualified volunteer drivers and employs 7 staff. The project has consistently exceeded all targets set and continues to develop innovative new services to better meet the needs of the local Coalfield communities. It has also worked continuously to develop further income generation opportunities and to attract external funding from a range of sources, in order to secure its future beyond the SIP funding period. CCT stands as an excellent example of good practice, recognised by the Scottish Executive, and continues to make a real difference to the lives of the most disadvantaged individuals in the Coalfield Area.

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## Positive Health Opportunities

Highlighting the SIP projects specifically funded under the 'Positive Health Opportunities' theme will only go some way to demonstrating our full contribution to the CtOG Objective of, 'Increasing the improvement of the health status of people living in the most deprived communities improving their quality of life'. The SIP has provided a range of successful initiatives promoting healthier and more active lifestyles, and many of the projects funded under different thematic headings have contributed to this agenda.

Two particular projects, directly funded by the SIP under the health theme can be highlighted as models of excellence. Both of these projects started off on a relatively small scale but have snowballed over the last few years, and stand now as outstanding examples of innovative and dynamic new approaches to tackling health inequalities.

The **Recreation Partnership Project** seeks to tackle health inequalities at an early stage by engaging primary school children in health related activities. It has been acknowledged as an example of good practice in the Scottish Executive's publication 'Child Poverty in Social Inclusion Partnerships' and in the East Ayrshire Community Plan. It offers a network of after-school and weekend Kids Clubs across the Coalfield Area, as well as an exciting programme of school holiday activities. These services recorded almost 7,000 attendances in 2004/05 alone. In addition, the project works in close partnership with the local education department to deliver a programme of 'Active Recreation and Health Awareness' sessions in every primary school, not only in the SIP area but across East Ayrshire. The project has recently secured mainstream funding from NHS Ayrshire and Arran's Health Improvement Fund.

Another outstanding project, which seeks to have a long term impact on the health of Coalfield residents, is the **Healthy Living Initiative (CHIP Van)**.

The CHIP Van is a mobile outreach health promotion facility offering improved access to health information and advice, greater community participation through the establishment of local health forums, greater access to specialist health services, such as community dietitians and exercise consultants, and improved health and well being to residents across the SIP area.

It has carried out over 370 community visits throughout East Ayrshire and undertaken almost 700 health consultations with local residents since its establishment in 2001. In 2004/05 the CHIP Van made over 70 visits to 12 targeted areas in the Coalfield Area, attracting 680 visitors. In addition, 721 individuals participated in the GP referral exercise programme, evidencing the fact that the award winning CHIP initiative is an outstanding example of partnership working, particularly with NHS Ayrshire and Arran, and is in a strong position to continue to deliver its valuable work in local communities beyond the lifetime of SIP funding.

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The CHIP Van is now well established across East Ayrshire, and the mobile outreach service has brought health and lifestyle services into the heart of the most disadvantaged Coalfield communities, including many new services which were not previously available, such as the Drongan fruit and vegetable scheme, where youngsters on bikes deliver fresh fruit and vegetables to local residents aged over 50 years. Furthermore, the preventative nature of much of the project work means that the Coalfield Area will be reaping the benefit of this project activity for many years to come.

## Community Learning

Project funding under this theme has been directed towards initiatives which specifically support community learning opportunities. Several of these projects, have focused very effectively on opening up ICT technology and skills to the wider community and have also directly contributed to the 'People Into Work' agenda. One particular example of success is the **Business Technology Training Centre (BTTC)**.

The BTTC was established in 2001 to provide ICT access and training to local businesses and residents of the SIP area. This addresses several of the CtOG Objectives by enabling rural residents to access services and facilities within their own communities, and by offering skills and training to enable people to compete in the job market. BTTC also contributes to the economic regeneration of the area by supporting local businesses and offering employee training as well as meeting room and conference facilities. Digital exclusion has also been identified as a real barrier to the most disadvantaged sections of society and again this has been directly addressed by this project in recent years.

Approximately 300 SIP residents are registered users of the BTTC at 31 March 2005, and over 2,700 individual attendances were recorded in 2004/05 alone. Over the last year 70 residents used the Centre to access a range of full and part qualifications, including ECDL. More basic certificate based courses offered, including 'Computers for the Petrified', provide a gateway into modern technology for older and less confident service users. The Centre recently attained 'Learn Direct' branded status, providing an excellent basis for its future service development and the continued promotion of lifelong learning in the Coalfield Area.

Beyond the particular projects funded to provide community learning opportunities, the SIP has a broader commitment to capacity building within the local community, and has used an extensive range of community learning tools to achieve this goal. It has, for example, invested in an **Aspirational Learning Programme**, utilising the materials of the Pacific Institute. This programme has operated successfully in the SIP, with community representatives and participants in initiatives addressing, for example, addiction and unemployment. It seeks to build confidence and self-esteem, raise aspirations and effect attitudinal and cultural change. It also promotes new ways of thinking and works on the premise that in order 'to do differently we need to think differently'. The success of this work to date has led to a decision to pilot this material with Community Planning Partner agency staff to build their capacity to work in new ways together and with communities to continue to engage them effectively in the community planning process. This is yet another example of SIP good practice, which will be carried forward through Community Planning.

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## Living in a Quality Environment/Capital Projects

Research consistently indicates that the most deprived communities across Scotland are the most likely to be living near to derelict land and buildings, and to be subjected to environmental hazards in the course of day to day life. The SIP Board has sought to tackle this issue directly through the Restoring Communities Programme and by funding a series of Community Environmental Action Plans for settlements within the SIP area, as well as a range of stand alone capital projects.

One early success supported by the SIP under this heading was the **Dalmellington Area Centre**, which was opened by HRH Princess Royal in September 2001. This project transformed an unsightly abandoned industrial site in Dalmellington into a valuable resource for the community, providing a range of services including Council, Health and Police, 'under one roof'. It was the first centre of its kind in Scotland, winning a number of prestigious awards, and has since served as a benchmark against which subsequent integrated public services have been judged. Within the SIP area itself the success of this initiative resulted in the development by the Council and its partners of a similar 'one stop' centre in Dronagan.

One of the SIP's most significant environmental achievements has been undertaken through the highly successful **Restoring Communities Programme**, which has been piloted in Auchinleck, an area which suffered greatly from the collapse of the local coal mining industry. The Main Street is a previously declining thoroughfare at the heart of the village and extensive development and refurbishment work has been undertaken in partnership with local businesses and the local community. Issues around absentee landlords and boarded up shop fronts have been tackled directly and the town centre has been revitalised as a result of this initiative. In order to ensure the long term sustainability of projects such as this, a 'Revolving Maintenance Fund' has also been established.

This project also provides a clear illustration of the SIP's ongoing commitment to the CtOG objective of 'regenerating the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods' and 'improving access to high quality services'. It is an excellent example of a project which has worked in close partnership with the community in order to improve people's day to day lives. Extensive community consultation has underpinned this project activity from its inception.

## Progress in relation to targets/indicators

The following progress has been made in relation to targets/indicators has been made in the last year:

### Core Compulsory Indicators

In November 2002 Communities Scotland revised the arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of Social Inclusion Partnerships to simplify arrangements and establish closer links to the Social Justice Milestones. The revised Monitoring Report has been updated with the most recent data available and is presented at Appendix 4.

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## **Project Performance Information**

SIP funded projects continued to provide a range of performance information in 2004/05, which was incorporated into the Performance Monitoring reports presented bi-annually to the SIP Board to demonstrate progress and achievement.

In preparation for the SIP integration with Community Planning, each of the existing SIP projects required to demonstrate how it would fit in future with the local and national priorities, and how its performance would make an impact and assist in achieving the identified outcomes of the East Ayrshire ROA.

## **Closing the Opportunities Gap Objectives**

The Closing the Opportunities Gap Objectives were set down by the Scottish Executive in 2002 to provide a national framework for the regeneration of the most disadvantaged communities. Each and every SIP funded initiative has contributed effectively to the realisation of these objectives in East Ayrshire. Particular examples of good practice have been highlighted throughout this report.

## **Sustainability**

The SIP Board has throughout its lifetime retained its commitment to ensuring that the initiatives which it has funded are sustained, where appropriate, beyond the current funding period. Consequently a series of independent evaluations of SIP funded initiatives have been commissioned over recent years, including the independent Evaluation of yipworld.com in 2004.

The particular remit of this work was to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of yipworld.com and to identify opportunities for its long term sustainability. Overall this report was highly positive in recognising the considerable progress of this initiative in addressing the issue of youth exclusion in the Coalfield Area, but also made a series of recommendations for the future development of the project.

Yipworld.com Board of Directors embraced the findings of this study by devising an Action Plan and establishing a directorial sub group, tasked with ensuring the continuation of the project in the future. The social enterprise element of the project has been a focus of their work, with concentration on the development of commercially viable services, such as childcare, to minimise future reliance on external funding. In addition, work to expand the outreach element of the project has been progressed with through a funding award from East Ayrshire Community Safety Partnership's Local Action Fund, towards a mobile Internet café.

In respect of the broader range of SIP funded projects, a number of these initiatives are also working to increase their own income generation potential, notably the highly successful Coalfield Community Transport initiative, which offers a range of training services to external agencies. In addition, a range of SIP initiatives is moving towards mainstream funding. One notable success in this area in 2004/05 was the Recreation Partnership Project, which secured mainstream funding from NHS Ayrshire and Arran's Health Improvement Fund.

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## **SIP INTEGRATION WITH COMMUNITY PLANNING**

In order to ensure the smooth integration of the SIP with the local community planning process, the SIP Board approved a Transition Action Plan in March 2004. A copy of the Action Plan, outlining the agreed actions and progress to date, is presented at Appendix 5.

The formal three stage process for the SIP transition/integration with Community Planning, as laid down by the Scottish Executive, has been progressed over the course of 2004/05 and is detailed as follows:

- Assessment of Readiness of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), demonstrated by the production of a Statement of Readiness, which was submitted to Communities Scotland on 30 June 2004;
- Resource Allocation (based on the Scottish Index of Deprivation 2004 (SIMD04) issued by the Scottish Executive in June 2004, with the 2005/06 indicative financial allocation from the new Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) received on 5 August 2004 and an 'interim offer' of grant received on 30 November 2004); and
- Regeneration Outcome Agreement - received formal endorsement from all core Community Planning Partners and was approved at a joint meeting of the Coalfield Area SIP and North Social Inclusion Initiative Boards on 3 February 2005.

The final ROA has been submitted to Communities Scotland for officer assessment, and it is anticipated that Ministerial approval will be received by July 2005.

### **Community Engagement**

The Partners in East Ayrshire have an unshakeable commitment to community engagement and to building on the widely recognised good practice in the Coalfield Area SIP. We are committed to listening to people and involving them in the decisions that affect them. We recognise that to bring about real and lasting change, the people and communities of East Ayrshire must be engaged at the heart of the community planning process, and must be fully involved and represented in decision making structures.

We have been working to improve the systems, which we have in place in the SIP area, to ensure that we can be confident that we are delivering the services that those living in our communities need, value and want. We are working towards establishing a joint consultation and engagement framework, which lets people know what is happening and, more importantly, enables and supports them to play an active part in achieving the shared vision for East Ayrshire with Community Planning.

Supporting genuine, ongoing community engagement in the ROA process and Community Planning in general are two dedicated community engagement staff. In addition, a Project Development Worker has supported the CCF. These dedicated staff supplement the work of staff within Partner agencies, such as the Council's Community Learning and Development service, who work within communities to build the capacity of individuals and groups.

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Additionally, and more importantly, community engagement is an essential element in the remit of all staff and, through the SIP, we have a history of successfully involving non-traditional staff groups in community engagement.

### **Community/Stakeholder Consultation**

Building on the existing good practice of the SIP, extensive community consultation has already shaped the transition of the SIP to Community Planning. A series of consultation events was convened during 2004/05 to raise awareness of the SIP transition process and to ensure that Partners and, in particular, the local communities themselves were actively involved in the decision making process.

Over July and August 2004, a series of participative workshops was organised to identify future priorities for Community Planning in East Ayrshire. Representatives of the local community, existing SIP projects, Partner agencies and a range of stakeholders actively participated in these sessions. This was followed, in November 2004, by a two day 'Working Together/Learning Together' session to consider the findings of the transition consultation exercise. These events have directly influenced the integration process and the subsequent development of the ROA.

### **The future of existing SIP funded initiatives**

The SIP Board and support staff have continued to work to support all SIP funded projects and initiatives in their development and future sustainability planning. As we move forward into Community Planning, future regeneration activity in East Ayrshire will be directed by the East Ayrshire Community Plan and by the ROA, underpinned by the CRF. Extensive work was undertaken in 2004/05 to ensure that, where appropriate, existing SIP projects and initiatives would receive a share of this funding.

In order to assess the potential of initiatives currently funded through the SIP programme to contribute to the identified regeneration outcomes in the ROA and to addressing local and national priorities, all existing projects and initiatives funded by the SIP and Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF), were required to participate in a comprehensive review process as follows:

- All projects were grouped under the Community Planning theme with which they fit most closely.
  - Each grouping was allocated a Project Review Group, comprising a Community Plan Action Plan Lead Officer, a member of the SIP Board, community representatives and a member of the Community Planning and Partnership Unit, which reviewed the projects.
  - Each project/initiative was tasked with demonstrating, through written material and a presentation to the Project Review Group, how it would fit in future with the national and local priorities, how its performance would make an impact and assist in achieving the identified outcomes, and why it should be funded.
  - Following the reviews, the Project Review Groups assigned projects/initiatives a priority rating against planned intentions and how they intend to assist partners in addressing local and national priorities. Recommendations were then made in respect of future funding, mainstream finance from Partner organisations and monitoring and evaluation timescales.
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- The project reviews were undertaken during the last week in October and the first week in November 2004.
- There was a second half-day Working Together Learning Together session on 30 November 2004 when the financial option in terms of the CRF was endorsed.
- Further work was undertaken in January 2005 to take account of the changes made in December 2004 by Communities Scotland to the timescale for submission of the ROA following the outcome of the Scottish Executive's Spending Review, and subsequent indicative allocations from the CRF for the years 2006/07 and 2007/08.

This process was agreed by the Community Planning Joint Officers' Group and the SIP Board, and we are confident that it was a strategic and thorough process.

The key recommendations from the review process were presented to and subsequently endorsed by the Community Planning Partners, the SIP Board, the North Board and East Ayrshire Council's Policy and Resources Committee as grant recipient.

Many successful SIP funded initiatives will continue to be funded through CRF to deliver the identified ROA outcomes. Under the overarching framework of Community Planning, all activity will be subject to review at the end of the first four-year Action Plan period of the Community Plan in March 2007. This will afford an opportunity to review CRF projects and initiatives to ensure continued effective delivery on outcomes, in particular, in our most deprived communities.

### **Future Governance under the Community Regeneration Fund**

To ensure governance of the CRF, Community Planning Partners require to nominate a grant recipient. As the Council has a duty to lead on and facilitate Community Planning and has acted as the nominated grant recipient for both SIP and BNSF programmes, Community Planning Partners have requested that the Council continues with this role, with decisions on future allocation of CRF resources delegated to the new Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Board. The existing arrangements of separate Coalfield Area and North Social Inclusion Boards, therefore, required to be reviewed by Community Planning Partners.

Consequently, as the first stage of the review process, the Community Planning and Partnership Manager was remitted to establish a working group with community representatives of the Coalfield Area SIP Board and the North Social Inclusion Initiative Board to consider options in respect of the future operating structure within the community planning process. The recommendations of the Working Group have been endorsed by both the SIP and North Social Inclusion Initiative Boards and the inaugural meeting of the new CPP will be convened on 23 June 2005.

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## PART B - FORWARD LOOK TO THE COMING YEAR

### Summary of priorities for the year ahead 2005/06

The SIP has a successful history of tackling poverty and disadvantage and contributing to the effective regeneration of the Coalfield Area. Future regeneration activity in the most disadvantaged communities throughout East Ayrshire will be taken forward by a new Community Planning Partnership (CPP), which will have decision making responsibility for CRF resources and any future funding allocated to the Community Planning Partners.

The new CPP will unite the Coalfield Area SIP Board and the North Social Inclusion Initiative Board, which will be underpinned by the Coalfield Communities Federation, already operating in the south of the authority, and plans are underway to establish a similar structure in the North of the Authority.

The CPP will aim to deliver the Community Planning priorities, which have been developed under the following themes:

- Promoting community learning;
- Improving opportunities;
- Improving community safety;
- Improving health;
- Eliminating poverty; and
- Improving the environment.

In addition, the CPP will aim to deliver the five identified outcomes within the ROA, each of which are underpinned by effective community consultation and engagement, and are as follows:

- **Active Communities**, where people are actively participating in their communities and influencing the democratic process;
- **Skilled Communities**, where people have the skills, capacity and opportunities to access employment, training and community-based learning;
- **Safe Communities**, where crime and the fear of crime are reduced;
- **Healthy Communities**, where everyone can enjoy and have equal access to a healthy life; and
- **Attractive Communities**, where people are proud and happy to live.

### Conclusion

The SIP has continued to make significant progress during 2004/2005, building on past success in tackling poverty and deprivation faced by the most disadvantaged residents of the Coalfield Area. Through effective community engagement,

partnership working and the achievements of a range of successful projects and initiatives, we have made a significant contribution to the regeneration of our communities. We take pride in our progress and achievements in 2004/05 and throughout the lifetime of the SIP. However, we realise that the problems remain and the work which we have started will continue under the framework of Community Planning in East Ayrshire.

It is anticipated that 2005/2006 will be a further transition year for the new CPP and we look forward to participating in the emerging decision making structure. The ROA, underpinned by the CRF, will lay the foundation for continuing to tackle disadvantage locally, addressing issues in respect of deprivation and inequalities, to ensure that we close the opportunities gap between the most and least disadvantaged communities in East Ayrshire.

