



**DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT  
2002-2003**

**Board Meeting - 22 May 2003**

**1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to the Board for information and approval the draft North Social Inclusion Initiative Annual Report for 2002/03.

**2 ANNUAL REPORT - 2002/03**

- 2.1 The second Annual Report of the North Board details progress made in the North of East Ayrshire to address social exclusion and promote social inclusion in the financial year 2002/03.
- 2.2 The report covers each of the priority areas identified previously by the Board for 2002/2003 and sets the priorities for 2003/04. These include:
- supporting people into work
  - promoting positive health opportunities, particularly for those dependent on alcohol and drugs
  - attractive and sustainable communities, and
  - encouraging community participation.
- 2.3 The Report recognises the valuable contribution made by partners to the effective delivery of programmes in the North of the East Ayrshire.

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Board:
- i) endorse the draft Annual Report; and
  - ii) remit the Manager Social Inclusion to issue the report to the Initiatives' stakeholders and other interested parties.

**Gwen Barker  
Manager Social Inclusion  
15 May 2003**



# **DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT**

**1 April 2002- 31 March 2003**

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## **Achievements and Aspirations**

Within this annual report for 2002/2003 you will read about the many achievements of the North Social Inclusion Initiative as summarised below.

**Supporting People into Work:** In addition to our continued support to the Individual Employment Fund, we have supported the development of the East Ayrshire JobRotation Scheme.

**Promoting Positive Health Opportunities:** Whilst our commitment to combating alcohol and drug addiction in East Ayrshire remains strong, we are particularly proud of our success in securing New Opportunities Funding for a sport and social inclusion project aimed at young people in East Ayrshire. The development of the a GP Pilot Initiative has also been a key notable success.

**Transportation Links and Accessibility:** Working in conjunction with East Ayrshire Council's Development Services Department, we have contributed both financially and professionally to a successful bid to the Public Transport Fund.

**Encouraging Community Participation:** A range of projects aimed at encouraging active citizenship amongst children and young people were successfully developed.

**Building Capacity in the North Board:** Community Representatives on the North Social Inclusion Board were provided with home computers, Internet access and extensive administrative and developmental support, to assist them to play a more active part in the decision making process.

Key aspirations for 2003/2004 include:

- the foundation of a Federation of Community Representatives for the North
- new ideas to promote attractive and sustainable communities, and
- a continued emphasis on social inclusion issues around addiction and employment.

## **FOREWORD**

The North Social Inclusion Initiative enjoyed further success throughout 2002/2003 and we should be justly proud of our achievements to date. Our strong commitment to partnership working and community participation have played key roles in enabling the development of a number of projects and this success should encourage us to remain focused on our overall goal of promoting the social inclusion agenda within the North of East Ayrshire.

Developments of particular note include our continued prioritization of issues surrounding addiction and the promotion of positive health opportunities, with substantial bids for projects relating to both addiction and sport being submitted in 2002/2003 to the New Opportunities Fund.

Work was also undertaken by the Board to promote and encourage community participation particularly amongst young people following the Board's agreement to adopt the principles contained within East Ayrshire's Children and Young People's Charter.

The Community Representatives on the North Board provide an invaluable service in helping us form a better understanding of the needs of our local communities, and their contribution to the Board in 2002/2003 is once again acknowledged and congratulated. Efforts have been made throughout the year to ensure that community representatives play a full part and are equal partners in the North Initiative, including the provision of ICT access and training with the installation of computers in Community Representatives' homes.

In December, resources were secured to create the post of a temporary Social Inclusion Co-ordinator in the North with the specific remit of taking lead responsibility for implementing actions and operational matters from the North Board. This concentration of resources will allow for a more dedicated approach to drive forward the Social Inclusion Agenda across the North of the Authority.

The year ahead promises to be both exciting and challenging, and by maintaining our enthusiasm and commitment to the social inclusion agenda, I am sure that it will be a successful one.

**COUNCILLOR MENZIES  
CHAIR OF EAST AYRSHIRE NORTH SOCIAL INCLUSION INITIATIVE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the second annual report for East Ayrshire North Social Inclusion Initiative (North Initiative). The North Initiative was formally constituted in April 2001 with the aim of promoting social inclusion and tackling social exclusion in the North of East Ayrshire.

Although the North Initiative is not a formally designated social inclusion partnership, through innovative partnership working it succeeds in addressing the identified priorities of the partners in the area. The partners are committed to making a significant difference to communities and, through joint working and sharing resources such as premises, staff and finance, they aim to maximise the benefits to residents of the area.

## **SETTING PRIORITIES**

The community representatives and partner agencies of the North Initiative Board (Board Members listed in appendix 1) have identified five themes under which agreed priorities for the North of East Ayrshire will be addressed, namely:

- people into work
- community participation
- positive health opportunities
- community learning, and
- living in a quality environment.

### **Guiding Principles**

The work of the North Initiative is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

- partnership working
- equality of opportunity

- empowerment and capacity building
- sustainability
- continuous improvement
- quality and innovation, and
- effective communication and access to information.

### **Forward Planning**

As a result of a planning event held in 2001/2002 to identify local issues, prioritise action and foster partnership working, the following priorities were agreed and remained constant during 2002/2003:

- supporting people into work
- promoting positive health opportunities, particularly for those dependent on alcohol and drugs
- encouraging community participation .transportation links and accessibility, and
- building capacity within the North Board.

It was further agreed that within these priorities, it was important to concentrate on high level actions and initiatives which would achieve significant and demonstrable outcomes rather than on small scale projects with limited impact.

### **Publicity**

Awareness raising of the initiatives and the good work that has been undertaken has been facilitated through Press Releases and Design Work prepared by the Public Relations section within East Ayrshire Council's Corporate Resources Department.

## **SUMMARY OF PROGRESS**

Detailed below is the range of initiatives which have been funded or are currently awaiting funding through the North Initiative.

### **Supporting People into Work**

#### **Individual Employment Fund (IEF)**

Financial assistance from the North Initiative helped to implement this fund, which provides financial assistance to jobless individuals, allowing them to re-enter employment and/or access vocational training, in the North of East Ayrshire.

The financial assistance provided means that grant assistance can be made available to purchase equipment, pay fares for interviews or initial childcare costs, or to allow individuals to undertake short vocational courses which link to skills shortages and job vacancies.

22 applications were supported in the North of East Ayrshire during 2002/2003 leading to employment being attained by 14 individuals. Financial assistance provided led to a range of qualifications being attained, including fork lift driver certification and HGV driver qualifications. In addition, monies were made available to individuals for travel and clothing.

The Action Team for Jobs operates within targeted communities in the North of East Ayrshire and currently provides a similar service to the Individual Employment Fund, providing tailor made support for individuals, such as employer subsidies, work clothing, fares to work and training, all designed to tackle barriers to employment.

The IEF operates outwith the Job Action Team's designated areas thus ensuring access to services to all eligible residents in the North of East Ayrshire.

#### **JobRotation Scheme**

The East Ayrshire JobRotation scheme was launched on 14 March 2003 with the remit of preparing, training and placing unemployed people in paid employment within private sector SME's. Key agencies providing funding and support include East Ayrshire Employment Initiative, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership, Workers Educational Association Scotland and East Ayrshire Council.

Companies can access substantial vocational training for existing employees by recruiting an extra worker as a JobRotation Trainee (JRT). The company provides a work placement for the JRT for 6 months at the rate of the job. The JRT substitutes

for and releases 4 or more staff for training agreed with the company, tailored for the company and paid for through JobRotation.

JobRotation assists companies to improve their performance, by developing the skills, motivation and overall contribution of both existing staff and potential employees. The flexibility of the job rotation tool has made it possible to tailor it to the needs of individual companies, specific local or regional sectoral or employment challenges, and also to the needs of individual learners.

The project has the following key objectives:

- to support the development of 25 SME's within East Ayrshire
- to raise the skills level and develop life-long learning opportunities for 120 SME employees and 30 JobRotation trainees, and
- 10 provide real job opportunities for 30 unemployed individuals.

The North Initiative supported the development of the JobRotation scheme in the North of East Ayrshire.

## Promoting Positive Health Opportunities

### Addiction Update

The Addiction Sub-group, comprising representatives of the North Board and its core partners, identified a gap in existing services in respect of aftercare for substance users in their rehabilitation stage. Their findings were further corroborated by East Ayrshire Council's Education and Social Services Department, Ayrshire & Arran Alcohol & Drug Action Team (ADAT), the Bridge Project and Ayrshire Council on Alcohol (ACA).

At its meeting of 14 March 2002, the North Initiative Board agreed to make an application to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) Better Off Programme to take forward an initiative to address the issues surrounding the aftercare of substance abusers.

The title of the proposed initiative is Life Paths and is aimed at individuals in the North of East Ayrshire who are recovering from substance abuse.

If funding is approved, the project will provide support through individual development plans to those who no longer require the intensive support of treatment services. Individuals will benefit from personal and social opportunities, information and advice, resources for healthy lifestyles, support into employment, education and training, and a drop-in facility to address the issues of social isolation.

The initiative will be managed, on behalf of the Initiative, by East Ayrshire Council's Department of Educational and Social Services to ensure that the work of the addiction initiative fits strategically with other activity in relation to addiction in the North of the Authority. Ownership of the project resting within this Department will also ensure that issues surrounding the future sustainability of the project can be addressed.

*Notification was received from NOF in April 2004 that the bid had unfortunately been unsuccessful. Alternative sources of funding are currently being investigated.*

### Young Person Alcohol Information Initiative

There is clear evidence that some young people in East Ayrshire are misusing alcohol and the need and mechanisms with which to address this issue were identified through partnership working between Strathclyde Police, East Ayrshire Council's Department of Educational and Social Services, Ayrshire & Arran NHS Board and Ayrshire Council on Alcohol (ACA).

At the Board Meeting of 6 February 2003, it was agreed to endorse a Young Person Alcohol Information Initiative, funded using a North Board allocation of £15,000. The project will begin in May 2003 and be in operation for one year.

Under this initiative, young people under 16 years of age who come to the attention of the policy for misusing alcohol and for whom, in most cases this is the first offence, will be requested to attend a formal Police Warning which will take the form of a discussion. During the initial discussion, a senior officer will encourage the young person and her/his guardian to participate in the Young Person Alcohol Information Initiative. Only young people who are considered suitable and who will benefit from participating will be offered this opportunity, with participation being voluntary.

The young person will be required to attend a 5-week programme, facilitated by ACA, that will include the following sessions, with the emphasis on interactive learning involving small and large group discussions.

Week 1	General Information / Attitudes
Week 2	First Aid input
Week 3	Outing / Activity
Week 4	Video and Discussion
Week 5	Alternatives to Alcohol - Community Learning and Development

The sessions will take place in the ACA offices in Kilmarnock town centre from 4.30pm - 6.30pm on school days, ensuring optimum attendance amongst the young people identified.

### **Anti Poverty / GP Initiative**

The Anti Poverty Initiative was first developed in 2001/2002, with funding provided to develop promotional material to address the increase in problems in relation to bad debt and to ensure an increased awareness of benefit entitlement in communities.

Money and Benefit Advisers from both East Ayrshire Council and the Citizens' Advice Bureau were made available in a range of publicity accessible locations across the North of the Authority at the end of November 2001.

A more recent development in the Anti Poverty Initiative took place in 2002/2003 with the development and distribution of the 'For Your Patients' Benefit' information pack. This pack is for use by health professionals and was produced by East Ayrshire Council in conjunction with the North Initiative, the Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership, the Citizens' Advice Bureau and NHS Ayrshire and Arran. The purpose of the information provided is to give an overview of the range of confidential specialist advice and assistance regarding benefits and debt problems. This service is available free within East Ayrshire from the Reception and Anti Poverty Services team based within the Department of Educational and Social Services and the Citizens' Advice Bureau. Advisers provide assistance with claim forms, provide benefit information, undertake benefit checks in order to ensure income maximisation, undertake debt negotiation on a clients' behalf and will provide home visits if necessary.

Additionally, Welfare Rights and Money Advice specialists from both East Ayrshire Council and the Citizens' Advice Bureau will work over a six month period with the GP practices in Auchinleck and Crosshouse/Kilmaurs. They will take referrals from the range of health professionals working within the practice as well as self-referrals from individuals, resulting in an increase in the level of welfare rights and entitlements amongst practice patients.

### **Princess Royal Trust East Ayrshire Carers Centre**

The North Initiative provided additional and dedicated resources to allow the Carers Centre to expand the range of services provided to carers in 2001/2002 and continues to support the development of the centre.

East Ayrshire Carers Centre provides information, advice and support to carers of all ages who have responsibility for looking after someone who is ill, frail or disabled.

Achievements in 2002/2003 include:

- young carers respite breaks to Aviemore and Devon
- stress management / relaxation training for adult carers
- media training for young and adult carers
- moving and handling training for adult carers, and
- a craft course and trip for adult carers.

### **Sport and Social Inclusion**

East Ayrshire Council's Community Services Department, with the support and assistance of the North Board, submitted an application under the New Opportunities Fund (PE & Sports in Schools, Active Steps Programme) entitled New Sporting Futures. The available funding from NOF is £96,000 and this has been combined with a similar application to SportScotland's Social Inclusion Partnership Programme of £113,000 in order to implement the project on an East Ayrshire wide basis. Approval was received from SportScotland in November 2002 and NOF approval was received in March 2003.

The philosophy of the project is to:

- promote more equitable participation in sport
- develop new ways of delivering sport by working with, and linking to, new policy areas and partners
- promote a community development approach to delivering sport

- promote sport and physical activity as a contributor to helping to combat social exclusion
- access new resources for sport and target existing resources and funding programmes
- develop innovative solutions to local needs and sharing progressive practices, and
- contribute to a long term strategic approach to the provision of sport.

The project will employ four members of staff, 2 Youth Sport Development Officers, 1 Club Coach & Volunteer Development Officer and 1 Clerical Assistant.

With funding approved, implementation of the project will begin in April 2003. The Board will be kept aware of all developments throughout the lifetime of the project.

## Transportation Links and Accessibility

### Transport Barriers in the North of East Ayrshire

During 2002/2003 Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire allocated £5,000 funding to the North Board which was used to contribute to a feasibility study to identify solutions to transport barriers in the North of the Authority. Funding was also provided by the Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership and the Development Services Department of East Ayrshire Council.

As a result of the findings of the feasibility study, East Ayrshire Council's Development Services Committee agreed to the preparation of a bid to the fifth round of the Public Transport Fund (PTF5). The bid comprised 2 elements.

- quality bus corridor improvements in the A71 Irvine Valley Corridor between Kilmarnock and Darvel and in the A76 corridor between Kilmarnock and Cumnock, and
- access measures in Cumnock to improve bus facilities and enhance pedestrian and cycle linkages.

The measures contained within the full bid are briefly summarised below.

**Irvine Valley Public Transport Corridor & the Kilmarnock to Cumnock Public Transport Corridor** - Improvements to bus facilities along the A71 from Kilmarnock to Darvel and improvements to the bus and pedestrian facilities along the A76 corridor. These include enhanced bus shelters at the busier locations, bus timetable information panels, lighting at bus stops and raised kerbs at appropriate locations. Improved pedestrian crossing facilities, speed reduction measures, enhancements to footways and footpaths and reviews of traffic regulation orders will also be considered where necessary to provide safe pedestrian access to public transport facilities.

**Cumnock Access Measures** - Improvements to bus facilities and pedestrian access measures in Cumnock and Logan. Enhancements to pedestrian and cycle facilities and linkages between residential areas and schools, employment centres, shopping centres and the bus station are also proposed. The measures include footway and lighting improvements to improve safety and security and encourage the use of public transport.

On 14 November 2002, the Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Life Long Learning confirmed that the sum of £2,100,000 would be made available from the Public Transport Fund to enable East Ayrshire Council to implement the measures contained in the main bid. It is anticipated that the work will be completed by 2006. A transportation consultant has been commissioned to carry out the preliminary design and consultation for the project. This will involve a leaflet and questionnaire survey and public exhibitions in June 2003.

## **Shopmobility Scheme**

East Ayrshire Council's Development Services Department commissioned a feasibility study in relation to a shopmobility scheme based in Kilmarnock. The North Board fully supported the ethos behind the scheme and part funded the study.

The study found that:

- a shopmobility scheme was essential within Kilmarnock town centre
- premises would need to be centrally located
- a company limited by guarantee should be formed
- continued liaison with disability organisations was necessary, and
- an application to the National Lottery should be made.

To drive forward this agenda, a fully constituted Steering group has been formed comprising members of Kilmarnock Forum on Disability, East Ayrshire South Forum on Disability, the Disability Access Panel and East Ayrshire Elderly Forum. It is the intention of this group to continue to meet with officers and progress the formation of a company limited by guarantee leading to a bid being submitted to the National Lottery for 3 years capital and revenue funding.

Staff within East Ayrshire Council's Development Services Department will assume lead responsibility for the provision of assistance to the steering group and the initiative continues to receive the full support of the Board.

## Encouraging Community Participation

### Young People - Active Citizens

In May 2002 the Board agreed to adopt the principles contained within East Ayrshire's Childcare and Young People's Charter, written in conjunction with East Ayrshire Children's Service Plan, and endorsed by NHS Ayrshire and Arran in June 2002.

The service plan entitled "Inspiring Children and Young People" is a multi-agency plan prepared in consultation with partner agencies, local voluntary organisations, community groups and young people. The plan sets out the strategic direction for services to children, young people and their families for a three year period, in this instance from 2001-2004.

Within East Ayrshire there already exists a number of initiatives, established to ensure that young people's voices are heard, including a multi-agency children and young person's forum, an annual youth conference and student councils linked to local youth forums. In addition to this East Ayrshire also has 19 Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament.

Further work on the development of a set of projects to encourage young people to become active citizens was completed with the support of the North Initiative. A strong partnership approach involving the Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership, the North Initiative and East Ayrshire Council, was adopted in developing the proposals and the North Initiative played a significant part, both financially and in development terms, in getting the projects off the ground. A detailed breakdown of each project, supported through a multi-agency funding package, is provided below:

#### **Support to Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament**

East Ayrshire has 19 members of the Scottish Youth Parliament and funding has now been allocated to support and assist these young people to further promote the work of the Youth Parliament and active citizenship with other people across East Ayrshire.

#### **Shout Out Loud - Citizenship Pack**

The citizenship pack consists of a range of information material with an East Ayrshire specific orientation, including a poster, bookmark, leaflets and a workbook aimed at exploring a range of issues including inclusion, equality, local democracy, health, safety and stakeholding in the community. It will seek to address the children's rights and citizenship information needs of Primary Seven children and those young people whose links with school are limited for reasons of health or social exclusion.

The development of the citizenship pack has five main aims:

- to raise children and young people's awareness of rights and responsibilities

- to foster a sense of self-esteem and respect for others among children and young people using the pack
- to empower children and young people to have a voice recognise that they are stakeholders in their communities and facilitate their participation in local learning activities
- to encourage active citizenship, an
- to provide a functional, community-orientated resources for teachers, youth workers, voluntary based organisations and other professional bodies.

### **Children and Young Person's Rights Video**

A Children and Young person's Rights video has been developed as a coherent part of a broader public information strategy to ensure that the promotion of rights and responsibilities is part of an ongoing process. The video targets children and young people, for personal, social and community learning focusing on:

- peer education
- children and young people's special needs
- young people living away from home (accommodated children), an
- young carers

Children and Young People participated in the hour long video on a voluntary basis and were involved in the identifying a title for the video and in the design of its cover.

### **Drama Initiative**

A drama initiative was developed targeting children aged nine to twelve years and comprising of eight one-hour long after school sessions. The sessions were based around constructed scenarios developed from existing case studies with the aims of:

- developing improvisation and other drama skills to explore priority issues and concerns arising from the Children and Young Person's Service Plan
- introducing students to different styles of forum and debate
- developing and shaping the material into forum theatre to stimulate discussion and debate, and
- including interested adults in a final presentation/forum

It is hoped that the implementation of these innovative projects throughout East Ayrshire will encourage active citizenship amongst children and young people and lead to an increase in their participation within the communities in which they live.

East Ayrshire Council's Support to Communities Team assumed lead responsibility for the overall programme of work ensuring that the views of young people were truly valued.

## **Building Capacity in the North Board**

In order to ensure that community representatives play a full part and are equal partners in the North Initiative, the North Board introduced a range of support systems designed to foster community participation, namely:

- providing access to ICT facilities
- introducing a comprehensive expenses procedure, and
- providing administrative and developmental support.

Detailed below is the progress made to March 2003 in relation to empowering community representatives in the North of East Ayrshire.

### **ICT Access in the Homes of Community Representatives**

The North Board agreed to the installation of computers in the homes of the eight community representatives participating on the Board, to assist them in communicating effectively with all members of the North Initiative on a routine basis and to ensure equality of access with other Board Members.

With an agreed budget of £17,000, it was decided to fund the purchase of computers for Community Representatives on the North Board.

Computers and additional BT lines have now been installed and 4 ICT training sessions were organised through CONDUIT in Kilmarnock. In addition to this training, ECDL manuals were also provided for all community representatives to further assist them with their training requirements.

### **Expenses Procedure**

A comprehensive expenses procedure has been introduced which ensures that community representatives are not 'out of pocket' as a result of participating in social inclusion activity. The North Board endorsed a comprehensive expenses scheme which comprises:

- travel expenses
- subsistence allowance
- childcare and carers' expenses, and
- loss of earning.

East Ayrshire Council also made a commitment to allow paid leave to employees who participate on the North Board to attend each Board meeting and two training events per year, with the opportunity of additional leave subject to discussion with service departments.

### **Administrative and Developmental Support**

Effective community participation has been identified as a vital component to ensuring the development of the Initiative's agenda. Discussions centre around the established of a Federation of Community Groups for the North of East Ayrshire, building on the existing foundations for community participation which already exist, are still ongoing.

The purpose of the Federation of Community Groups will be to:

- inform the preparation of strategy and the future programme of projects delivered by the North Initiative
- participate fully on the North Initiative Board
- ensure effective community participation in the North Initiative
- ensure that the priorities of the North Initiative reflect local need, and
- take forward a programme of projects which reflect the priorities of the North Initiative

The creation of a Federation of Community Groups for the North will only be possible with a strong commitment from all partners within the North Initiative, but the success of the Coalfield Community Federation in the South of the authority will undoubtedly act as a catalyst for the future development of a North Federation.

It will be a key priority in the forthcoming year to further explore and develop the possibility of establishing a Federation of Community Groups for the North and the Board will be updated in relation to progress in 2003/2004.

A newly appointed temporary Social Inclusion co-ordinator has been remitted to drive forward the Social Inclusion agenda across the North of the Authority. The aims and objectives of the post holder are to:

- take lead responsibility for implementing actions and operational matters arising from the North Board
- take the lead role in preparing agenda papers for consideration at the North Board
- undertake project development work as initiated by the North Board

- co-ordinate the organisation of committees/groups established to further local Social Inclusion activities
- assist the Social Inclusion Board to fulfil its strategic commitments, and
- assume lead responsibility for effective community consultation in respect of inclusion work.

The post was filled in December 2002 and the benefits of this new appointment are already being felt, with a greater level of responsiveness to the needs of community representatives. A more co-ordinated and dedicated response to measures impacting upon the social inclusion agenda in the North of East Ayrshire and the priorities of the Board has also been a key benefit.

### **Aspirational Learning**

The Aspirational Learning Programme utilises the materials of the Pacific Institute, which has operated in the areas of cultural change, organisational performance and personal growth for over 25 years. The curriculum uses the following programmes:

- Investment in Excellence - the core programme for individual and organisational growth
- STEPS to Excellence - for adults of all ages and ability levels who are not in an organisational setting
- Breakthrough to Excellence for your people aged 14-19 years, and
- Additional materials to work with 5-13 year olds.

Applying the programmes in a consistent way opens up opportunities for a whole community approach to raising aspirations and building capacity, thus allowing greater community participation.

In East Ayrshire, 8 service users benefited from the STEPS programme through East Ayrshire Works as well as 16 volunteers with the Bridge project and 4 recovering substance abusers.

Community Representatives on the North Board and 2 members of the support team were also invited to participate in the STEPS programme and benefited significantly from both personal and professional perspectives. Participants felt that other members of the community could also benefit from the programme and the opportunity to further roll out the programme in 2003/04 will therefore be explored.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

The strength of the North Initiative lies in its resolve to maximise the available resources of all partners by working together, pooling financial resources, skills, expertise, knowledge, ideas and imagination.

### **Partnership Structures and their Effectiveness**

The partnership structure on which the work of the North Initiative is based has been as effective in 2002/2003 as it was in its first full year in operation. All members of the North Board have an equal voice and have been working together to achieve agreed priorities.

### **Links to other organisations**

#### **East Ayrshire Council Departments**

##### **Educational and Social Services, Community Services, Development Services**

Through sustained partnership working with targeted Council Departments and their commitment to contribute to the aims of promoting social inclusion in the North of East Ayrshire, the Initiative has been able to maximise its impact and promote its agenda through a wide range of innovative projects.

**Ayrshire Council on Alcohol** - this is a voluntary organisation which offers a non-judgmental confidential counselling service to those whose lives are being adversely affected by alcohol. Counsellors, trained to professional standards, enable people to look at their lifestyle and make informed choices. It has the commitment to inform and educate organisations and individuals in the community on the safe, sensible use of alcohol and of its potential dangers. Membership is open to all who share its values. The ACA is a key partner of the Board in the implementation of the Young person Alcohol Information Initiative.

**East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership** - links through the Manager Social Inclusion ensure the sharing of good practice and the commitment and expertise to 'roll out' successful projects from the South of East Ayrshire to the North.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Challenge Fund**

East Ayrshire Council's Policy and Resources Committee agreed to make a financial contribution of £65,000 to the North Initiative in the form of the Challenge Fund for 2002-2003. An additional £5,000 was also allocated from Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire to assist the Board to undertake a feasibility study into transport barriers in the North of the Authority.

### **Maximising External Funding Opportunities**

It is essential to attract substantial funding from a range of providers if the issues identified by the North Board are to be effectively addressed. Such opportunities include access to European Structural Funds, Lottery Funds and Scottish Executive funding.

The Council's External Funding & Sustainability Officer has provided information, guidance and support to a range of groups throughout the North of the Authority. Achievements throughout the year have included:

- 22 community and voluntary groups receiving assistance, and
- applications to a value of £1.3 million submitted to a variety of external funders, with confirmed funding totalling £170,000.

Together with core partners the North Board has also submitted bids through the New Opportunities Fund Better Off Programme for £223,000 and the New Opportunities Fund Active Steps Programme for £96,000.

## COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVES IMPACTING ON THE NORTH OF EAST AYRSHIRE

The North Initiative appreciates the invaluable work carried out by partner agencies to secure additional resources for the area and adjust priorities and projects to ensure a targeted response to the programme's delivery, most notably the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund.

### **Better Neighbourhood Services Fund**

In 2001, the Scottish Executive awarded East Ayrshire Council and its partners £6.75 million over three years to improve the quality and quantity of services in the pathfinder area of North West Kilmarnock and Shortlees/Riccarton. In September 2001, a community consultation questionnaire was sent to every home in those areas to determine the issues that were most important to the community. The results were the foundation of a Local Outcome Agreement to turn around these disadvantaged communities and create a better life for those who live within them. The vision is that by 2005, these communities will be safe, attractive and active.

**Safe Communities** where crime and the fear of crime, either at home or on the streets, are reduced

#### **Outcomes**

- reduced crime levels
- increased detection rates
- reduced fear of crime both inside and outside the home
- improved road safety

**Attractive Communities** where residents feel proud to live

#### **Outcomes**

- improved estate management
- improved upkeep of open and public spaces

**Active Communities** where there are increased opportunities that raise the quality of life for all residents

- improved access to local health provision
- increased levels of home contact with and involvement of older people within the community
- increased involvement of young people within the community
- increased child care places for children

The Board continues to receive progress reports on the success of the BNSF programme and continues to ensure that the work of the North Board complements the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund programme.

## **LOOKING FORWARD TO 2003-2004**

In the coming year, the North Initiative will continue to tackle the issues and priorities identified within the North of the Authority by the communities and partner agencies under the following key priority areas:

- supporting people into work
- promoting positive health opportunities, particularly for those dependent on alcohol and drugs
- attractive and sustainable communities, and
- encouraging community participation.

### **Addiction Initiative**

Addiction to both drugs and alcohol will continue to be one of the main priorities of the North Initiative. The Board will particularly explore alternative funding arrangements to finance the proposed aftercare initiative which was unsuccessful in 2002/03.

### **Federation of Community Groups**

One of the initial priorities of the North Social Inclusion Co-ordinator will be to assist Community Representatives with the establishment of a Federation of Community Groups.

### **Environmental Issues**

At the request of Community Representatives on the Board it is the intention of the Manager Social Inclusion to investigate the possibility of funding to implement a programme of small scale environmental improvements across the North of the Authority.

### **Community Planning**

The priorities of the North Board sit comfortably with East Ayrshire's Community Planning priorities. The Community Planning vision seeks to ensure that East Ayrshire will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.

The strength of the community planning process lies in the way in which it links together social, economic and environmental actions that will improve the quality of life of people who live in East Ayrshire. The Community Plan is comprised of 6 main themes, covering:-

- promoting community learning
- improving opportunities
- improving community safety
- improving health
- eliminating poverty, and
- improving the environment.

The North Board will continue to establish links with the community planning process and ensure a complementary approach to service planning and delivery.

## **CONCLUSION**

Progress within the North Initiative during 2002/2003 has been encouraging but the task of tackling social exclusion and driving forward the social inclusion agenda in the North of East Ayrshire is a continuous one. The formation of a Community Federation for the North during 2003/2004 will facilitate and focus the efforts of the North Initiative. Greater emphasis will be placed upon facilitating the role of community representatives on the North Board and work will remain partnership focused in order to achieve sustainable and significant results within the field of social inclusion.

**North Social Inclusion Initiative Board Members  
2002/03**

Councillor William Menzies (Chair)	East Ayrshire Council
Councillor Jane Darnbrough	East Ayrshire Council
Councillor Willie Coffey	East Ayrshire Council
Fiona Lees	Depute Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Resources East Ayrshire Council
Matt Donnelly	Community Representative
Gerard Cassidy	Community Representative
Jimmy Miller	Community Representative
Beryl Graham	Community Representative
Linda Thomson	Community Representative
Graham Piggott	Community Representative
Maurice Ashbridge	Community Representative
Kenneth Stewart	Community Representative
Bob Gardiner	Ayr College
Dave Wilcock	Kilmarnock College
Heather Knox	Ayrshire and Arran Primary Health Care NHS Trust
Joyce Black	Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire
Margaret McWilliam	Ayrshire and Arran Health Board
Superintendent James Thomson	Strathclyde Police
Jim Burns	Job Centre Plus
Ciss McCreadie	Council of Voluntary Organisations (East Ayrshire)
Cathy Roarty	Local Health Care Co-operatives