



Spending money where it matters

Frontline services, particularly those serving the most vulnerable members of our community, have been protected in the Council's 2010/11 budget.

The budget, which also saw council tax levels frozen for the third year in a row, involved unprecedented levels of savings being made and focused on ensuring the organisation is lean, flexible and ready to respond to future financial demands.

As the Council's financial challenges continue, services will be more and more focussed on the needs of our customers, particularly vulnerable adults and children who depend on vital frontline services.

Despite the necessary efficiencies, the Council has managed to safeguard and improve essential services, such as Centre Space, the new name for the Learning Disability Day Support Service.

With the closure of the ALLOA Centre, the service is now provided from four newly-renovated community bases with service users, who range from teenagers to pensioners, taking part in a wide range of community-based activities. These include gardening, shopping, using local leisure facilities, going out for meals and learning everyday skills.

See page 6 to find out more about Centre Space, and find out how service users reacted to the changes.

As well as ensuring that the Council's provision continues for the most vulnerable members of the community, the Council has approved capital funding and the housing revenue fund for 2010/11. The capital fund pays for permanent improvements to buildings and infrastructure while the housing revenue fund is spent on improving council housing. See page 3 to find out more about the 2010/11 budget.



Client Carolyn Rutherford and attendant Tricia Lamb enjoy the new facilities at Centre Space.

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Wildlife centre p2



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Fishcross is new home for wildlife centre

A multi-million pound national wildlife centre is planned to open in Clackmannanshire creating eight jobs.

The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals intend to develop the facility after the Council agreed to sell the Beam Engine House, Devon Equestrian Centre and adjoining land near Fishcross to the charity.

The Scottish SPCA intend to develop the centre within the area previously occupied by the equestrian centre to include a veterinary hospital; sea pools for sea birds and marine wildlife; aviaries and an education centre.

Garry Dallas, Director of Development and Environmental Services, said this is exactly the type of development the county wants to attract.

He added: "As well as jobs and investment, the wildlife centre will bring educational opportunities. The Council has acted decisively to secure the centre for Clackmannanshire, bringing the area a new, green business that will benefit Scotland's wildlife and the community."

Scottish SPCA Chief Superintendent Mike Flynn, added: "The society is delighted that Clackmannanshire Council has approved the sale of land at Fishcross for our proposed new National Wildlife Rescue Centre.

"We very much look forward to working with Clackmannanshire Council in achieving the required planning permission and to creating a new flagship project for helping Scottish Wildlife."

The Council is anticipating a price of £800,000 for the sale of the site and the development will go forward for planning consent later this year.



Imagine Alloa creates jobs

Steven Christie and Ross Muir are two local men who have benefited from the Imagine Alloa project.

The £2.4 million regeneration of the town centre started late last year and has seen huge changes in the town thanks to the work of contractors QTS.

Now the firm has employed the two locals with help from the Government's Future Jobs Fund, which aims to get young unemployed people into work.

Neil McCallum, Managing Director with the Lanarkshire-based firm said: "When we won the contract to redevelop Alloa Town Centre we agreed to work with the Council to try to recruit local people to work with the company.

"We have been able to work with Clackmannanshire Works, the local employment service, to recruit Steven and Ross as labourers. I'm sure they'll be a valuable addition to the company."

Clackmannanshire Works is an Alliance-

supported service offering a wide range of support to people who want to get back into the workplace.

Council Leader Janet Cadenhead said: "When we started work on the town centre we spoke to QTS about the possibility of creating local employment opportunities, which is a big ask given the current recession. But, as with their approach to the town centre works in general, QTS were very receptive and keen to help. Many of their workers are already local and they could see the benefit Clackmannanshire Works could bring to their recruitment process."

Steven, who is from Alloa, and Ross, who is

from Menstrie, took part in a workshop event at the Claremont Hotel in Alloa earlier this year, before being successfully interviewed and appointed by QTS.

Neil added: "We're looking forward to seeing the guys start on site and learn some of the skills involved in the industry."

The two new jobs are part of the programme to create 77 additional jobs following the successful bid by the Clackmannanshire Alliance to the Future Jobs Fund. Clackmannanshire Council is the lead partner in this project, supported by Clackmannanshire Works, JobCentre Plus local employers and the voluntary sector.

School Term Dates 2010/11	
Session 2009/10 ends	Wednesday 30th June 2010.
Autumn term begins	Tuesday 17 August 2010
Start of full day attendance for P1	Monday 13 September 2010
Autumn term ends	Friday 8 October 2010
October holiday begins	Monday 11 October 2010
October holiday ends	Friday 15 October 2010
Winter term begins	Monday 18 October 2010
Winter term ends	Thursday 23 December 2010
Christmas holiday starts	Friday 24 December 2010
Christmas holiday ends	Wednesday 4 January 2011
Spring term starts	Thursday 5 January 2011
February holiday begins	Monday 14 February 2011
February holiday ends	Friday 18 February 2011
Spring term ends	Friday 1 April 2011
Easter holiday begins	Monday 4 April 2011
Easter holiday ends	Friday 15 April 2011
Summer term begins	Monday 18 April 2011
Summer term ends	Friday 24 June 2011

Supporting the working population

One of the Council's major priorities is to ensure that the area has a positive image that attracts people and businesses to Clackmannanshire. We do this by providing services to help:

- Improve skills levels of the workforce
- Promote and secure training and employment opportunities
- Support people to overcome barriers to skills development
- Identify and take action to address barriers to employment and training
- Promote enterprise
- Improve connections and infrastructure

Did you know?
The average full time weekly wage in Clackmannanshire is £494. This compares favourably with the Scottish average of £473.

Did you know?
32% of the working population have a HND, degree or higher degree level qualifications or equivalent. This compares favourably with 2002 when 20% of the working population had a HND, degree or higher degree.

Did you know?
Clackmannanshire Council attracted £2m from the Scottish Government's town centre regeneration fund to help develop the town centre of Alloa.

Did you know?
Clackmannanshire Council attracted over £500,000 from the Futures Job Fund to help get 77 young people back into work. These jobs are designed to give people who have been out of work a long time the experience and confidence that will help them find long-term work.

Did you know?
71% of the working population of Clackmannanshire are currently in work.

Did you know?
6.1% of workers are currently unemployed. Many receive help from the Council and its partners in the Clackmannanshire Alliance to get them back into work.

Did you know?
Clackmannanshire continues to be the most responsive Council in Scotland in dealing with business planning applications. We received 152 business applications during 2008/09, of which 76% were dealt within two months.

Did you know?
We have launched a new marketing campaign to promote Clackmannanshire as a place to live, work and visit and results show a positive increase in perceptions of Clackmannanshire and high awareness of the campaign.

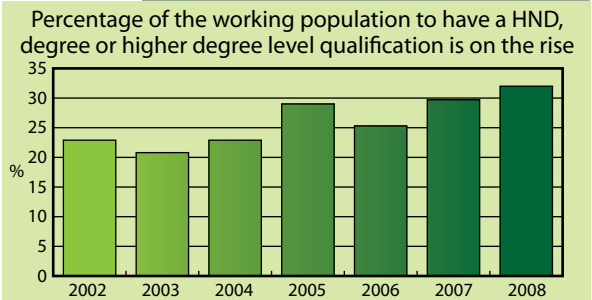
How do we know it is working?
A recent survey has highlighted that Clackmannanshire is one of the best places in Scotland to live, work and do business in. And an Alliance campaign raised the profile of Clackmannanshire's good quality of life across the central belt.

We continue to attract major investment in Clackmannanshire and the £330 million private sector development at Forestmill will create nearly 1000 jobs in the future.

The area has seen a significant rise in population growth over the last few years.

Increasing numbers of schools leavers continue to choose education, training or employment as their main destination upon leaving school.

Since 2004 relative levels of deprivation in Clackmannanshire have decreased.



For more information on the Council's performance please visit www.clacksweb/council/progressandperformance/

Council spending for the year ahead

It's been a difficult budget year for Clackmannanshire Council - as it has across the public sector in Scotland and the UK. The impact of the recession and the reduction in public sector resources mean all organisations and households are having to take difficult decisions about where the money goes.

Councils are getting less money in from council tax and business rates because more people are out of work. We're also spending more on housing and council tax benefits and there is more demand for housing, social care and other services because customers are struggling financially.

But we have approved a budget that puts money where it matters most: into child protection, education and front line care services.

Despite the need to make unprecedented savings, we will be investing additional resources into key areas and meeting commitments that have been agreed at national level.

These include:

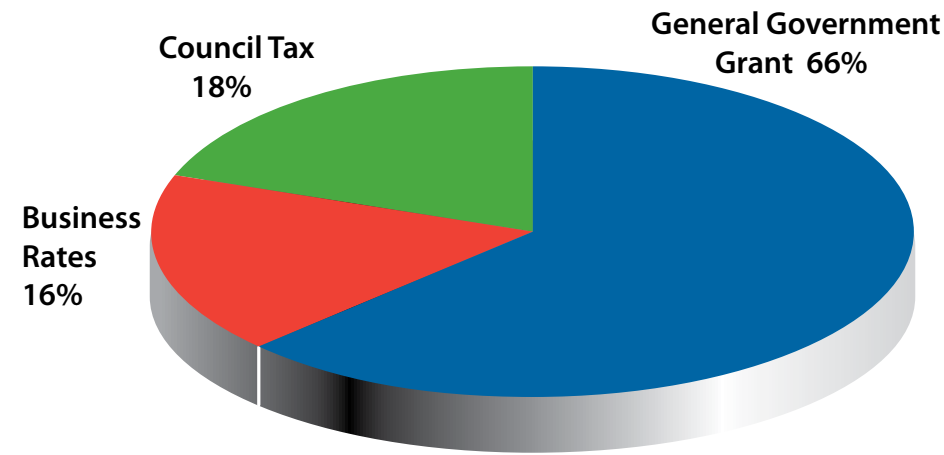
- providing free school meals for children in Primary 1 - 3, reaching 20% of children in the most deprived areas in Clackmannanshire
- also keeping paid-for school meals at the same price as they have been the last six years
- reducing class sizes in Primary 1 - 3, with 20% of classes having less than 18 children
- investing more in the recycling service so that Clackmannanshire can play its part in Zero Waste Scotland
- increasing the amount of respite care available
- investing in technology to make services more efficient

We have had to make significant savings to meet our priorities. Some of these involve reorganising services. For example, we will start providing some youth justice services locally, giving better targeted care at lower cost. Lower priority services, such as cleaning bus shelters, will take place less often. And by encouraging local business to sponsor floral displays and making small increases in charges for leisure, we can put money into front line care services for those who need them most.

We are also saving £2.3 million by making changes to the way the Council organises itself. The number of senior managers has been reduced in a restructure that will help services work more closely together, saving £400,000. Administrators previously scattered across services have been brought together into a new Business Support service, giving greater flexibility and career progression, with a saving of £50,000. A further £300,000 will come from offering early retirement to eligible staff.

We have recognised the important role the voluntary sector plays in delivering services in the community and have tried as far as possible to protect the many groups we fund by maintaining levels of funding at current levels.

Where the money comes from



Where the money goes



Education £54.9m



Police £8.5m



Social Work £22.6m



Fire £3.0m



Roads, property, recycling etc £13.5m

Future budget communication & consultation

Given the current financial climate, we expect that money will remain tight in the next few years. We intend, therefore, to consult you about what your priorities are to inform decisions that we take in future about how we allocate resources.

There will be different ways you can get involved in learning more about Council finances and services and in giving us your views on spending priorities. Keep an eye on our website, The View and the local press in the coming weeks and months to keep in touch with how you can participate.

Council Tax - What you will pay in 2010/2011

Band	Council Tax	Water	Waste	Total
A	£765.33	£122.34	£140.04	£1,027.71
B	£892.89	£142.73	£163.38	£1,199.00
C	£1,020.44	£163.12	£186.72	£1,370.28
D	£1,148.00	£183.51	£210.06	£1,541.57
E	£1,403.11	£224.29	£256.74	£1,884.14
F	£1,658.22	£265.07	£303.42	£2,226.71
G	£1,913.33	£305.85	£350.10	£2,569.28
H	£2,296.00	£367.02	£420.12	£3,083.14

The water and waste charges are set by Scottish Water

Funding for new community facilities

The Council will invest £35.755 million on improving its buildings over the next five years.

The capital programme to 2014/15 ensures that funding is targeted at the heart of our communities.

Funding includes:

- £4.3 million to develop community and leisure facilities in Alva
- £2.9 million to redevelop the Speirs Centre in Alloa
- £11 million on the proposed new Alloa primary school, bringing together St John's and Claremont primary schools
- £750,000 on refurbishing Alloa Town Hall

The capital budget also covers the continued upgrading of roads and footpaths and flood prevention schemes: given this winter's bad weather and the growing risk of flooding across the country, these schemes are important to all who live and work in Clackmannanshire.

Because of the tight budget, we will not be able to fund every capital project and a small number of proposals have been put on hold in the meantime. These include: extending the national cycle route; building a railway halt at Cambus and building an outdoor centre in Alva.

New kitchens and bathrooms set to sparkle

Over £7.5 million will be invested in the county's council housing during the forthcoming financial year.

Our housing revenue fund - which reinvests the income from Council house rents in improving those houses - is on track to give us one of the highest standards of council housing in the country.

We expect to have replaced all the kitchens in our council houses by March 2011, with new bathrooms to follow.

And for the first time in decades the housing capital programme incorporates investment of £1.5 million in building new council houses. The 24 new houses are expected to be built in 2011/12. This funding includes a contribution of £600,000 from the Scottish Government.

Rents will rise by 5% for 2010/11 which means an average increase of £2.69 to £56.55. Even with this increase, rents in Clackmannanshire are still below the Scottish average.

Our Shining Stars

Sandra Gruar was named Citizen of the Year at the annual Clackmannanshire Awards ceremony. The glittering event was held in February in Alva Academy hosted by Provost Derek Stewart.

Sandra received the award in recognition of her dedication to the Sauchie community.

The Awards was a joint event with Clackmannanshire Council Clackmannanshire Arts Forum and Clackmannanshire Sports Council with four different categories of award - Citizen of the Year, Sports Council Awards, Arts Forum Awards and the Enterprise in Education Award.

A selection of local successful Duke of Edinburgh achievers were also acknowledged as part of the ceremony.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Sheila Bulloch, the Council's Leisure Services Manager.

A panel of judges made up of Trustees of the Lord Lieutenant's Fund selected 9 finalists in the Citizen of the Year category who were invited to attend the gala awards ceremony. As well as receiving a certificate, each finalist received a bottle of wine, courtesy of Diageo and a crystal vase sponsored by Glencairn Crystal.

Amongst the many guests who enjoyed the gala award ceremony were a number of former Citizens of the Year including Dr Alf Martin, Willie Murray, and Roy Ramage.

This year's winner, Sandra Gruar is a former member of Sauchie Community Group. She now runs the Sauchie Active

8 programme which provides training and learning courses for the whole community. The programme ranges from physical activities for over 50s and classes for young parents and children to sign language classes and first aid courses.

Over 80 young people regularly attend the Active 8 sessions on a Wednesday evening in Sauchie Hall and Sandra is also involved with the junior youth club based at Deepark Primary and a club for teenagers.

Sandra was also instrumental in the return of Sauchie Gala in 2009 after a gap of 25 years.

Sandra said: "I'm chuffed to bits and over the moon. I can't believe it, especially after hearing about the achievements of the other nominees. I've had my photo taken so many times, I feel like a film star!"

She was presented with her prestigious honour by Depute Lord Lieutenant Kit Gow.

The eight other nominees who were shortlisted for the Citizen of the Year 2009 were:

Tom Arnott, Alloa

A devoted volunteer at Claremont Primary School as well as at the local church and elsewhere in the community, acting as a great role model.



Anna Forbes, Alloa

The mainstay of many community and voluntary organisations over the past 35 years. Currently a member of Alloa Central Community Council and represents community councils on the Clackmannanshire Alliance.

John Forrest, Alloa

Over 50 years unstinting service to the 26th Alloa Boys Brigade, playing a key role in developing countless boys into 'sure and steadfast' young men.

John Fraser, Menstrie

Founder of the Clackmannanshire branch of the St Andrews Ambulance Association, giving over 50 years' service to the charity, training hundreds of people in first aid.

John Gillon, Sauchie

Heavily involved in assisting

retired miners and their widows to make claims for industrial diseases. An NUM official for 30 years, he also serves on the board of the Home of The Scottish Mineworkers Convalescent Trust in Culross.

David Hunter, Alloa

A volunteer at Alloa Tower and Strathcarron Hospice he is also a member of Alloa Players and Alloa Field Studies Society.

Nancy Pollock, Alloa

A tireless volunteer with Sauchie Community Group who hold the role of treasurer and helps out at every social event from carpet bowls to youth discos.

John Wynne, Alloa

Former Squadron Leader of Alloa Air Training Corps, John has served for over 35 years, working with countless teenagers to help them to improve their lives.

at Annual Awards

Clackmannanshire Arts Forum uses the award ceremony to pay tribute to people who have enhanced the lives of others by providing guidance, talent and expertise in all forms of arts.

Arts Forum chairwoman Councillor Tina Murphy and treasurer Councillor Donald Balsillie presented the winners and runners-up with prizes in four categories.

Visual / Craft Award winner - St Serf's Primary School, Tullibody, for their exciting playground mural; runner-up - digital media artist Kenny Bean for his work inspiring amateurs at Tullibody Art Shop.

Performing Arts Award winner - female barbershop singers Hillfoots Harmony who were named last year as 2nd best small chorus in the UK; joint runners-up - Yasmin Burns and Stephanie Ewing, dancers who run classes for other girls and perform at many community events. Yasmin and Stephanie were also presented with cheques from the Arts Forum to help them achieve a dance teaching qualification.

Music winner - talented young musician Josh Currie, who makes a great contribution to his school, Lornhill Academy; runner-up - Hillfoots Music for Youth and the Academy Singers who have performed at the Glasgow Concert Hall as well as at many local events.

Outstanding Contribution to the Arts winner - Drum Major Graham Winters who supports three bands - Denny & Dunipace, Alloa Bowmar and Balaklava - and has overcome cancer twice. He was unable to attend last year's World Championships, but hopes to compete this year.

The Sports Council Awards recognise outstanding ability, dedication and achievement in sport over the past year.

This year's winners are:

Junior Sports personality of the Year - Sponsored by the Wee County News

Kathryn Gillespie - Athletics. Kathryn is ranked 1st in the UK in her age group (U13) in 800m, 1200m and 1500m and smashed the U13 records in these distances which had stood for 20 years. She took gold at the Scottish Schools and inter district cross country and gold in the 800m and 1500m at the Scottish Schools Championships.

Triumph Over Adversity - Sponsored by Machin Associates

Claire Robertson - swimming and gymnastics. Started swimming and gymnastics just three years ago and now competes at a national level and swims with the Forth Valley Disability Sport regional development squad and with the Alloa swim club. She has won gold at the CPSSA swim gala twice, gold at the FVDS regional gala and gold in the gymnastics at the Special Olympics.



Senior Sports Personality of the Year - Sponsored by Alloa & Hillfoots Advertiser

Joanne Eccles - Equestrian Vaulting. The first British vaulter to win a medal at the European Championships, Joanne won the American National Championships and is current the Scottish, British, European and Commonwealth champion.

Enid Barton Coach of the Year Award William Gardiner - Football. William has been coach to the Alloa Saints U10 football team for three years

and rarely misses a training session - even after breaking his leg! Always encouraging, without his dedication and commitment, the team would not be what they are today.

Service to Sport - Sponsored by SALSC

Colin McLaren & Alan Harper - Wrestling. Tullibody men, Colin and Alan, joined Tullibody Wrestling Club when they were 8. After the club closed they both devoted time and energy to help the club re-open its doors in 2006. Thanks to them, youngsters can enjoy wrestling.

Disability Sport Team excelled themselves in the 8th National Special Olympics GB Summer Games which were held in Leicester last July. Their medal haul totalled 31 medals - 11 gold, 9 silver and 11 bronze.

School Team of the Year - The Judy Collier Trophy

Alloa Academy Swimmers (pictured below). They have competed at the Central Schools Swimming Gala and qualified for the Scottish Schools Swimming Championships where the standard was extremely high and the swimmers competed well and were a credit to both themselves and the school. The two best results being a 4th in the 50m breaststroke and a 6th in the 100m backstroke.

Team of the Year - Sponsored by Russel + Aitken

Clackmannanshire Special Olympic Team - The Clackmannanshire members of the Forth Valley



The Provost's Award recognises school / business partnerships. This category is sponsored by Determined to Succeed which aims to better prepare young people for the world of work by offering them experiences in enterprise while at school.

The following were nominated:

St John's Primary School and Rhymemaker
Alva Academy and BBC Radio Scotland
Strathdevon Primary School and Dollarbeg Farm
Primary School Support Service and Alloa Athletic Football Club
Deerpark Primary School and Do-Be-It
Clackmannan Primary School and El Shaddai Charitable Trust

The overall winners of the Determined to Succeed Award were Alva Academy and BBC Radio Scotland for their work on the Soundtown project. A radio station was installed in Alva Academy for a year from which a number of shows were broadcast.



Stephen Hollywood of Radio Scotland and Alva Academy's Stuart Clyde

Staff and pupils were given the opportunity to work with staff from all areas of the BBC and now have a working relationship with them as they run their own school radio station. The prizes were presented by Sandra McEwen of Determined to Succeed.



The ceremony also included awards to a representative selection of Duke of Edinburgh Award achievers: Heather Hardman of Lornhill Academy (Bronze), Alistair Eadington of Lornhill Academy (Silver), and Gold Awards to Ashleigh McRobbie (pictured with Provost Derek Stewart), of Play Alloa, Andrew Greenhill, Alastair Stirling, Graeme Stirling, Robert Stirling and Kate McFarlane all of the Hillfoots Open Award Group.

Users welcome service modernisation

The Learning Disability Day Support Service has been modernised with the opening of four newly-renovated community bases.

The service has been renamed Centre Space and continues to provide therapeutic, social, educational and employment opportunities to adults with a learning disability, as it did from the now closed ALLOA Centre.

Ideas about day support services have been changing, from the traditional setting in a single building, to providing more community-based activities.

Service Manager Stuart Landels said: "Over the last six or seven years we have been using the ALLOA Centre less and less. We have provided more community-based activities. It means the service is far more inclusive - the whole philosophy has changed."

Centre Space is delivered from 4/6 Mill Street, Alloa, 7/8 Miller Court, Alloa, Marchside Court, Sauchie, and the Ochil Community Garden based at Menstrie.

Service users were key to the modernisation and a 'redesign group' representing all users of the ALLOA Centre met regularly with external

consultants. They explored the options for a year and chose the new service with bases dispersed throughout the community. They also came up with the name 'Centre Space.'

Sharon Morgan, care information worker with the Carers Centre, represents parents and carers on the redesign group. She said: "None of us are very good at dealing with change and many of the service users are vulnerable people. Being on the group meant that there was a way to feed back concerns and have these addressed as well as being able to reassure carers with information about what was going to change."

Stuart added: "We support about 80 people a week, from teenagers to pensioners. Around 60% of activities are now done outwith the base."

Ann Coyne (48) from Sauchie, has attended the day support service for many years.

She said: "I now go to Miller Court on



a Tuesday and Mill Street on a Wednesday. It's much nicer than the ALLOA Centre. It's fresher and more modern, but there are still the same people to talk to."

One of the most popular activities is gardening at Ochil Community Garden.

"It is a space where people with learning disability can integrate and share an interest in horticulture with the wider community," said Stuart.

The 'redesign group' of service users will continue to give feedback, ensuring that Centre Space goes from strength to strength.



Glowing report for Strathdevon Primary

Strathdevon Primary School's head teacher and staff have been praised for the consistently high attainment in English language and Mathematics and the contributions they are making to improving the learning of the children.



A report by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education also states that children in the nursery class are making very good progress in their development and learning. The happy, confident, well behaved children who are keen to learn and the contribution they make to enhance the school environment were also recognised as strengths of the school.

Highlighted as an example of good practice is the joint working with parents to support the education of the children, for example in the organisation of the 'health week'.

Inspectors found the children are confident and articulate. They were impressed by the children's skill in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support their learning, participation in after school clubs and regular educational visits, sporting achievements and work within the Pupil Council and Eco School committee. The school has

achieved three Green Flags and is working towards becoming a permanent 'eco school'.

Strong leadership, effective teamwork and highly committed staff were praised by Inspectors. The active involvement of pupils in improving the school and the success of staff in taking account of children's personal interests to improve learning were also highlighted. Children have high expectations of themselves and respond well to challenges and responsibilities.

The report recommended that the school should continue to develop the good work they are doing in meeting children's learning needs. It concluded that as a result of the very good education provided, inspectors would make no further visits to the school.

Head teacher Fraser Forsyth, commended for his clear and effective leadership and his commitment to the school, said: "We are very pleased that HMIE have recognised many of the strengths of our school. Strathdevon is a welcoming, caring, active and inclusive school where staff and parents work together to provide the best educational experience for all children. We have high expectations of our children and we regularly celebrate their achievements."



Council Tenants Reward Draw

Three lucky Council tenants have won themselves some vouchers - just by paying their rent on time! The three winners are Mr Middleton from Alloa, Mrs Clark (pictured) from Clackmannan and Mr Hendrie from Sauchie.

As a big thank you from the Housing Service all the winners received shopping vouchers for keeping their rent account up to date and being good tenants.

For your chance to be one of the next lucky winners look out for information in your local CAP as the next Tenant Reward Draw will be in August 2010.

To be in with a chance of winning, all you need to do is make sure your rent account and any other payments due to the Council are clear or in advance on the publicised date.

If you would like to discuss your rent account, please contact Housing on 0845 055 7070 and choose option 3.

Have you installed gas central heating?

The Council has a duty to service gas central heating every year in all of its homes.

If you have installed gas central heating and have not notified the Housing Service please tell us now and we will update our records and arrange to have it serviced.

Tenants should apply to the Council for permission before carrying out any home improvements such as the installation of gas central heating.

You can call us on 01259 450000 or email housing@clacks.gov.uk

Primary Schools welcome new head teachers



Kay Strang - Claremont Primary

Kay Strang, the new head teacher at Claremont Primary in Alloa, is delighted to have returned to Clackmannanshire where she started her teaching career.

"My first teaching job was at St Serf's Primary. I then moved to Falkirk and then Stirling. I was at Riverside Primary before coming to Claremont and it's great to be back in Clackmannanshire. I've been made to feel very welcome and there are some familiar faces from when I worked here before," said Kay.

Kay lives within her school catchment area in Alloa. Her son attends Alloa Academy and her daughter is in P7 at Sunnyside Primary.

"Claremont is a great school," she added. "I've got a good range of kids and the staff are fab. Everyone is so friendly and I feel like I've been here forever already. The school was already doing a good job with good inspection reports and I'm just trying to build on that success."

Kay sees building community links as one of her main tasks for the future.

"We have a good Parent Council and PTA who make a great contribution to the school," said Kay. "I think one of the areas for the future is to build on these relationships and make more links and partnerships in the wider community. There are exciting times ahead."

Lisanne Henderson - Fishcross Primary



Lisanne Henderson is the new head teacher at one of Clackmannanshire's smallest schools - Fishcross Primary.

Lisanne, who lives in Stirling, was previously principal teacher and acting head at Claremont Primary School and prior to that taught at Jordanhill Primary in Glasgow.

"Fishcross is a great school," she said. "It's the smallest school I've worked at and it's a real contrast. There are definite advantages and challenges associated with the size of the school. I am enjoying it. The staff have been really supportive, as have the pupils, and made me feel very welcome."

Fishcross Primary, located on the village's main road, has a roll of around 70 pupils and three classes.

"I like Fishcross a lot," Lisanne added. "I would like to build our links with the wider community and will be encouraging the pupils to develop links, especially with the nearby care homes, and become more visible."

"We are also surrounded by some beautiful countryside and scenery and we are participating in the Grounds for Learning pilot so I hope our pupils will be getting out and about more."

Jane's making great strides

A new initiative to get people walking is being launched by Clackmannanshire Healthier Lives, the community health programme supported by the Council and NHS Forth Valley which offers support and advice to people to help them make changes that can improve their health and wellbeing.

Jane McArdle will be managing the initiative from her base at Clackmannanshire Community Healthcare Centre.

She said: "I plan to set up and support a walking group network in Clackmannanshire. I'll be promoting health walks which are aimed at people who don't take any regular exercise. Walking is one of the easiest forms of exercise to take up and I'm hoping for a good response. It's a chance to get out and about and make the most of the beautiful countryside that Clackmannanshire has to offer."

The walking network will also be part of the Braveheart programme, the charity which helps people in Falkirk and Clackmannanshire with long term health problems.

Jane, who comes from East Kilbride, was made redundant from her sales job in the financial sector in May 2008. Losing her job hit her hard and she became depressed.

"I joined a walking group and it did so much to lift my mood," she said. "Then I was a voluntary walk leader in South Lanarkshire and getting out in the fresh air and doing something I enjoyed was a huge help to my recovery."

Jane says that walking is for everyone. "It can also be beneficial to us all, mentally as well as physically, whilst being refreshing and relaxing at the same time. The walks can be from 10 minutes to an hour and as far as only a couple of miles. There will be different walks for different levels of fitness and we hope people will graduate."

"You can go for a walk around your local park or around your own neighbourhood. Walking can be such a sociable activity, where you meet many new people with relative ease. It's right on your doorstep and is free and easy."

Financial support for the initiative comes from a range of sources including Comic Relief, Paths for All, The Forestry Commission, NHS Forth Valley and Healthy Futures Network.

To get involved in walking or to find out more, call Jane on 01259 290323.



County Welcomes New Area Commander

Clackmannanshire's new Area Commander started his police career 25 years ago as a cadet.

Superintendent Alan Douglas will be in charge of policing operations within Clackmannanshire. This follows the retiral after 30 years' service of Superintendent Andrew Price who was in charge

of policing operations in Clackmannanshire for the past three years. During this time he has been involved in a number of high profile cases including a number of significant drugs busts.

Superintendent Douglas was previously based within Strategic Development.

He said he is looking forward to taking up the challenges of policing in Clackmannanshire. He added: "My priorities will centre around providing highly visible, highly effective community policing in Clackmannanshire tackling the issues which impact on the public - anti-social behaviour, disorder, drug dealing and road safety. Working closely with partners within Clackmannanshire will also be a priority so we can make a real difference to the safety of communities."

After joining Central Scotland Police as a cadet in 1985, Superintendent Douglas has worked in a variety of operational and corporate roles. He was the project manager for the construction of the new Falkirk Area Command office, has been seconded to HM Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland and served previously as Dunblane Sub Area Commander.

Helping children to feel less worried and improve their social skills



The Council's Psychological Service works closely with staff in all Clackmannanshire's schools, nurseries and family centres to support children and young people.

Over the past year psychologists from the Service have been supporting the use of two new programmes from Australia in our schools and nurseries: Friends for Life and Playing and Learning to Socialise (PALS).

Research suggests that the development of social skills is an important preventative factor for good mental health and this is something that PALS tackles. The programme is designed for use with small groups of 4-8 children, aged from 3-6 years.

The programme is in two parts, the first covering social skills such as greeting and sharing. The second part focuses on skills of self management, such as dealing with angry feelings or stressful situations. Puppets are used to act out illustrative stories. The programme also includes videos of children solving a social problem. The programme includes original songs written for PALS.

Joy Bradford's son Jamie, is a pupil at Claremont Primary (pictured). She praised her son's experience of the PALS programme.

She said: "Nursery isn't just about playing or teaching motor skills. The PALS programme really helped my son Jamie. He's an only child so nursery was the first time he'd socialised with other children. The programme taught the kids about sharing and greeting and gave them words to use to solve problems amongst themselves. Parents were kept involved with a sheet telling them what the children had learnt so that they could practise at home. It made a real difference to Jamie and he's made a smooth transition to primary school."

Meanwhile, the Friends for Life programme aims to reduce anxiety and depression in children between the ages of 4 and 17. It is estimated

that around 20% of children have anxiety symptoms which interfere with their quality of life. Friends for Life helps children develop more positive thinking styles and increases their self-esteem. There are 3 versions of the programme: Fun Friends for 4 - 6 years olds, Friends for Life Children for 7 - 12 years olds and Friends for Life Youth for those aged over 12 years.

Friends for Life helps children to recognise the signs their bodies give them when they are getting anxious or sad. It helps them to learn relaxation techniques to help them calm their bodies down, to change their unhelpful (pessimistic) thoughts into more helpful (optimistic) thoughts, and to develop Coping Step Plans which help them break big worries such as being afraid of the dark or meeting new people, into small achievable steps. The programme can be delivered to a whole class or to small groups of between 6 - 8 children and involves ten weekly sessions plus two booster sessions and two parent sessions. Friends for Life is so successful that it is used throughout the world and has been translated into Spanish, Chinese and Russian.

You can contact Psychological Services by calling 450000 or email psychological@clacks.gov.uk

All Aboard for Better Health

Clackmannanshire Council and NHS Forth Valley are working together to make sure that patients, staff and visitors from Clackmannanshire will be able to get to and from the new acute hospital at Larbert easily by public transport.

The £300 million state of the art hospital (pictured), which has been constructed just off the M9 at Larbert, is due to open in August 2010. It will have about 860 inpatient and day beds and offer a full range of acute hospital services, including a mental health facility and a women and children's unit.

The Council, on behalf of NHS Forth Valley, has published tender documents for the provision of bus services between Clackmannanshire and Larbert Hospital. Two different options have been tendered. One would serve Alva, Menstrie, Tullibody, Dollar, Tillicoultry, Coalsnaughton and Sauchie every two hours, combining to offer an hourly service for Alloa and Clackmannan. The other would be a half-hourly service for Alloa and Clackmannan only, with existing services from other areas connecting to it. NHS Forth Valley and Clackmannanshire Council will decide, on the basis



of the bids submitted, which of these two options offers best value as well as the best service for people in Clackmannanshire.

The new hospital will open in three phases with services based currently at Falkirk Royal Infirmary moving first following by services from Stirling Royal Infirmary moving within a year.

While Larbert Hospital will provide specialised treatment, many health services will still be delivered locally. The recently opened Clackmannanshire Community Healthcare Centre offers a wide range of services and facilities, including 45 inpatient beds that are used primarily for older people following hospital treatment. Bus links to the Centre, which is in Sauchie, are being improved from 29th March 2010, with services provided by First Scotland East, Stagecoach and WAVE.

All change for lottery group

The employee payroll lottery committee of Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling Council has decided to dispose of all its stock of equipment – tables, stalls, generators etc.

If you are a community group or charity and want some of the equipment or need new equipment, resources etc for your organisation you are invited to apply now.

Application forms for assistance etc are available to download from the website www.CFSLA lottery.org.uk and a list of equipment can be obtained by emailing lottery_russell@hotmail.com

Doing well at school

An exciting and innovative approach to health improvements has kicked off in Clackmannanshire's schools. The Health and Wellbeing in Schools Project is a two year national project to ensure that children and young people can access health care services for advice and support.

"This approach is a preventative model," explained the Council's Health and Well-being Support Officer Kaye Hills. "It concentrates on building the confidence and self esteem of young people, helping with communication skills, sexual health and healthy weight and nutrition."

There is an emphasis on the time when children move to primary and secondary schools and parenting approaches with partners working closely together to improve health outcomes.

A team of professionals is now in place, supporting the existing school nursing team and general health care provision in schools.

New developments include:

- The Language Intervention Project, which works with parents and primary school children to enhance language and communication skills.
- A Primary Mental Health Worker, who supports children whose parents or carers have mental health problems.

- Public Health Nurses supporting young people with additional needs.
- More staff nurses working with family centres, in schools and supporting clinical work.
- Family Support Workers, who help vulnerable families to access services, and support for behavioural and sleep difficulties by setting routines and promoting healthy eating.

Working with external partners and across Council services is key to Health and Wellbeing in Schools. The important thing is to make sure children have the right start in life, no matter where the support they need comes from.

"The project is fundamentally about getting it right for children and young people," said Kaye. "It is about supporting them to make positive choices that will benefit their health and wellbeing not only in school but throughout life."