



ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024-25



south ayrshire
health & social care
partnership



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Foreword – Integration Joint Board Chairperson

Linda Semple, Chairperson said: I am delighted to present to you our Annual Performance Report for 2024-25. This is my last report during my term as Chairperson of the South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board.

I cannot fully express how much joy seeing the progress during my term has brought. Despite the challenging and at times difficult pathways which required navigating, the IJB have seen some hugely positive and innovative approaches being developed to mitigate them. As Chairperson, I speak on behalf of the Board when I congratulate the team on their dedication, commitment, drive and pursuit to ensure that our citizens in South Ayrshire receive the services they need in the right place at the right time.

We have faced and will continue to face significant pressure financially in the future where staff are tasked to continue to deliver the same services when there is reducing budgets. We know that this will bring challenging times, however, I remain confident that collectively, with our partners, we will continue to keep moving forward in the delivery of our services. As my term as chair draws closer to the end, I am able to reflect on the journey the last 3 years has taken us on. As we have transitioned out of the pandemic and returning to what was considered to be a more normal state of play, now looks quite different to the pre-covid landscape. Our move to locality modelling, placing services in the heart of communities is a key strategic change to achieve success. We know that our ageing

population will increase significantly in the coming years which places more demand on services as people live longer. Our children and young people are important to us, as our future generation we strive to ensure that they are able to reach their greatest potential with confidence. As we see an increase in those who require support to manage their mental health and physical wellbeing, we remain committed to finding sustainable solutions to meet the needs identified. By working side by side with our partners we will continue to see progress.

Financially the IJB will face more pressure as public funding reduces and service demands increase as the population changes. We should not lose sight of the positive changes which have been realised or the efforts of our front-line staff who turn up every day.

I am satisfied that the HSCP senior management group are in sync with the expectations of the IJB members and that collectively they will continue to develop appropriate responses to the changing and emerging needs.

On a personal note, I would like to thank my fellow Board members and those who I have had the pleasure of working beside since taking up the post of Chairperson. It truly has been a wonderful experience for me.



During this last year I was supported by Jean Ford, whilst I undertook a 6-month secondment. Jean is a long-standing member of the IJB and has been fully sighted on the progress that has been made, particularly since Covid arrived back in 2020.

Jean Ford, Interim Chairperson (June – December 2024) said, “I am delighted to be able to jointly present the Integration Joint Board’s Annual Performance Report for 2024-25”.

I was appointed Interim Chairperson in June 2024 for a period of 6 months. During this time, the IJB were able to be assured with the achievements and commitment that the senior management team and officers within the HSCP have made. They are fully committed and making progress towards delivering against our agreed Strategic Outcomes. There were many reports presented to the IJB which demonstrated this, and I want to thank officers for their dedication and drive in improving outcomes, providing high quality services as we take steps in achieving our strategic vision.

Our staff teams are teams to be proud of, and this sits alongside the work of our partners in developing, maintaining, and delivering services and supports to our citizens.

Over the past year there has been much progress made to address service challenges and design services to meet the future demands anticipated across the population.

I look forward to witnessing the continued success of the HSCP in facing the challenges head on as an IJB Board member”.

Linda Semple, Chairperson

Jean Ford, Interim Chairperson



Foreword - Tim Eltringham, Director of Health and Social Care



As I present this year's Annual Performance Report for South Ayrshire's Integration Joint Board, I do so with a sense of pride and gratitude. After more than a decade leading South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), this will be my final report as Director.

This year has once again seen continued strength, compassion, and resilience demonstrated by all of our teams. Despite the challenges we've faced, we have continued to innovate and adapt, delivering the care and support that enables people to live well and independently in their communities.

Across all service areas there are so many achievements for which our team should be proud that it is difficult to choose which to highlight.

One of the most significant developments of the year has been the continued success of our Ageing Well programme including the formal launch of the Ageing Well Strategy in September 2024. This programme, which focuses on preventative interventions and community-based support, has been instrumental in addressing the challenges we face in the years ahead with our ageing population. We were honoured to receive the Silver Award for Transformation in Health and Social Care at the national iESE Awards. This recognition at a national level reflects the outstanding work of our teams and partners in empowering older adults to maintain their quality of life and ensure they have access to the right support when needed.

This year has also seen the successful launch of the Connect South Ayrshire model, a joint initiative designed to provide easier access to information, advice, and support for all residents. Through a combination of a user-friendly website, a free phonenumber, and a series of community hubs, Connect South Ayrshire has already made a tangible difference, empowering people to engage with services and make informed choices about their wellbeing. This initiative is a direct response to the needs of our communities and reinforces our commitment to delivering integrated, accessible services that prioritise prevention and support individuals in living healthier lives.

Our work with children, young people, and families continues to be a key priority. Through the ongoing development of the Family First approach and our progress in delivering The Promise, we've seen the positive impact of early intervention and collaboration in improving outcomes. Fewer children are being placed in out-of-area care, and our focus on whole-family wellbeing and trauma-informed practice is helping to deliver better support at a local level.

In adult services, our digital transformation has continued to improve the lives of many. The shift to a fully digital telecare service, which was recognised with a Platinum Implementation Award, has allowed thousands of residents to remain safe and independent at home. Similarly, our adoption of Near Me remote consultations has made a real difference in breaking down barriers to access for those living in rural areas or facing mobility challenges.

A new partnership agreement with the University of the West of Scotland was signed in December and it is hoped this new relationship will support us in developing a skilled and sustainable workforce for the future. Through joint training programmes and career pathways, we're creating opportunities for local people to build meaningful careers in the care sector.

This year our staff have remained committed to providing compassionate, person-centred care. Whether through early diagnosis initiatives like the spirometry testing pilot in Girvan or the continued enhancement of our care-at-home and rehabilitation services, we are constantly striving to improve the quality of care we offer.

It is inevitable that only a small number of initiatives can be mentioned by name in this introduction. All of the work across the partnership is informed by our caring values and our desire to enhance the lives of citizens in South Ayrshire.

As we look to the future, I remain inspired by the dedication, creativity, and compassion that define our Partnership. This report is a reflection of the collective effort of our staff, partners, and communities, all working together to improve lives across South Ayrshire. I am confident that this strong foundation will support continued progress, innovation, and meaningful change in the years to come.

In addition to the staff team my thanks go also to members of the formal committees of the partnership, The Integration Joint Board, the Performance and Audit Committee and the Strategic Planning Advisory Group.

Tim Eltringham, Director of Health and Social Care

Introduction

We are delighted to present the South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board's 2024-25 Annual Performance Report. Throughout this report we aim to provide details of our services, developments and commitments which have positively impacted on our community. We also want to showcase some of the fantastic work that our teams have carried out, while ensuring where needed that any improvements are implemented. We have also included a selection of case studies from the individuals we serve in our communities, as well as a snapshot of some of the achievements of our fantastic teams.

We have taken time to reflect and can evidence that our services achieve positive outcomes and experiences; are developed with our citizens at the heart of everything we do and are as flexible as can be to ensure that we achieve our strategic vision of **“Empowering Communities to Start Well, Live Well and Age Well”**.

To achieve this vision, we must develop our services and supports through a comprehensive engagement process, involving people with lived experience, those with caring roles, professionals, service providers and many more in decision making from the beginning. We have listened to what people say which has influenced how services are designed, delivered, and monitored. We are delighted to share the tremendous successes which have been enabled through true collaboration with our many partners, stakeholders, and community representatives.

[Section 42 of the Public Bodies \(Joint Working\) \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) obliges Partnerships to produce Annual Performance Reports setting out an assessment of performance in relation to planning and delivering their delegated functions. In addition, the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Content of Performance Reports) (Scotland) Regulations 2014 (“the Performance Regulations”) sets out the content that Annual Performance Reports must contain.

As you review the report, you'll be presented with evidence of achievements and experiences, showcasing our ongoing commitment to nurturing our communities across all stages of life.

In pursuit of our vision, we are dedicated to maximising opportunity and growth, and by supporting this through a holistic engagement approach. This approach actively involves individuals with lived experience, caregivers, professionals, service providers, and stakeholders from the outset of decision-making. We embrace a collaborative ethos where every voice is valued.



Our Vision

Empowering
Communities to
start well, live well
and age well.

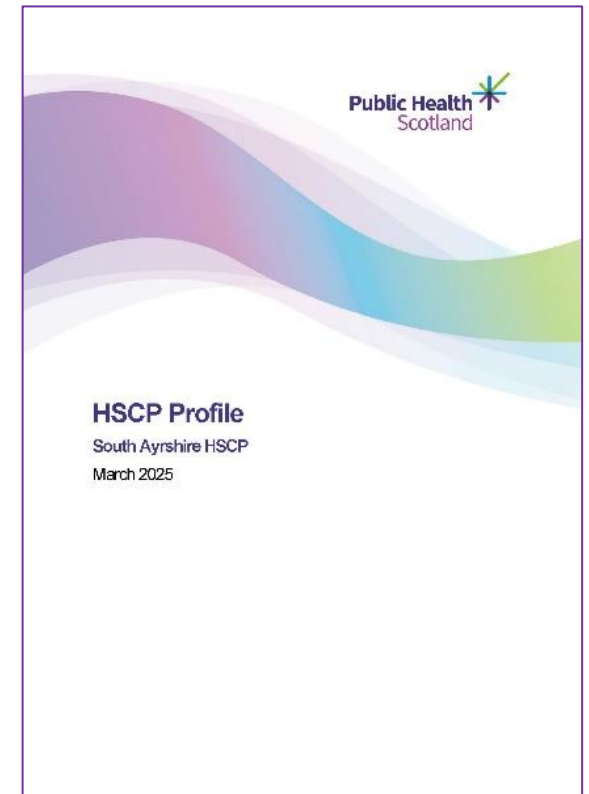
Our commitment to listening and valuing diverse perspectives has significantly influenced the design, implementation, and monitoring of our services. We take pride in our ability to effectively communicate the substantial outcomes achieved through collaboration with our various partners, stakeholders, and community leaders. This ensures that our services not only deliver impact but also resonate with a spectrum of community needs — to ensure that we understand the

potential impact on vulnerable groups, we undertake full and comprehensive Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) as part of service design, which help us to demonstrate and evidence this activity and informs our decision making.

This report is produced to meet the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership's obligations relating to performance reporting. It focuses on our performance against the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes, Outcomes for Children and Young People and Justice and adheres to [national guidance](#).

The report is delivered in the context of the national and local policy framework, the South Ayrshire Health Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2021-31 (refreshed during this reporting period) and the South Ayrshire Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

To access a more expansive range of similar statistical information relating to South Ayrshire, please see the latest data [South Ayrshire Strategic Needs Assessment - March 2025](#).



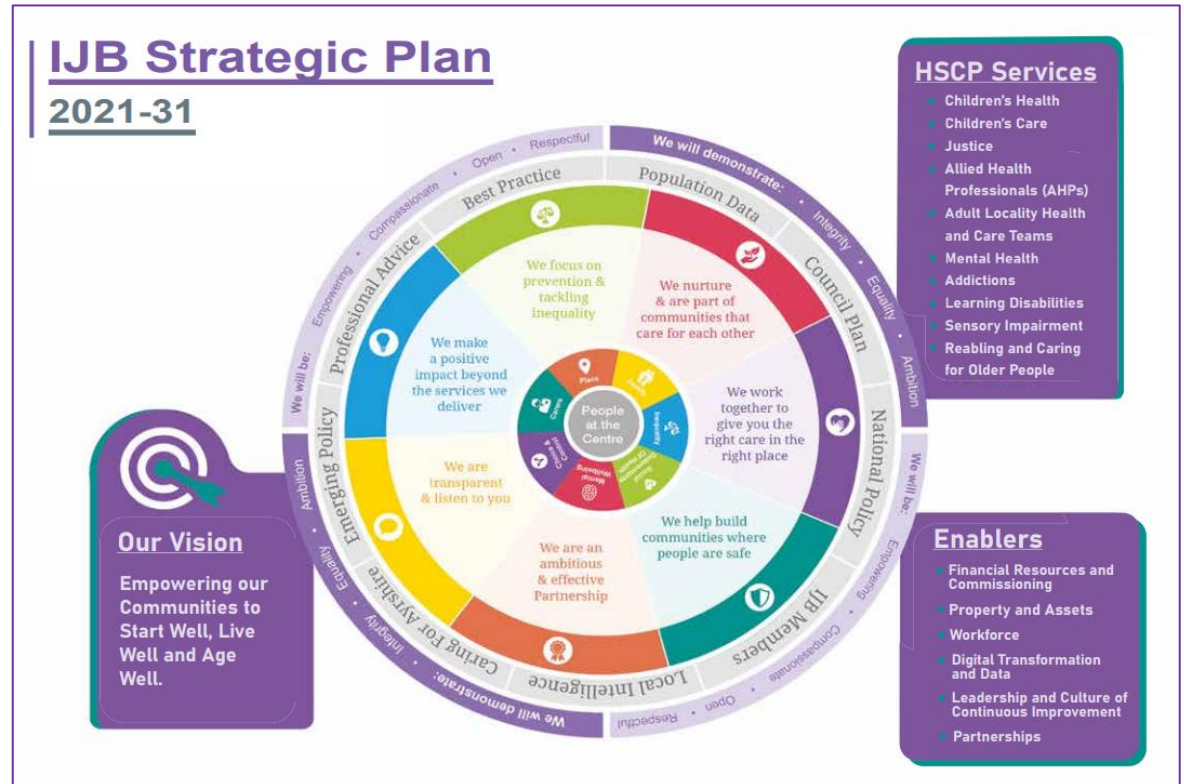
Strategic Plan 2021 - 31

On 12th March 2025 the South Ayrshire IJB agreed a refreshed [Strategic Plan 2021-31](#). This provided an update on the ten-year vision for integrated health and social care services which sets out objectives for the HSCP and how it will use its resources to integrate services in pursuit of national and local outcomes over the coming years.

The overarching aim of the Partnership remains that we will work together with the citizens of South Ayrshire to improve health and wellbeing: to support, develop and encourage communities to be resourceful and supportive of family, friends and neighbours.

Our seven strategic objectives which are outlined below have remained the same for this period as has our vision *'empowering our communities to start well, live well and age well'* with a refreshed approach to delivery for the next stage:

- We focus on prevention and tackling inequality.
- We nurture and are part of communities that care for each other.
- We work together to give you the right care in the right place.
- We help build communities where people are safe.
- We are an ambitious and effective partnership.
- We make a positive impact beyond the services we deliver.
- We are transparent and listen to you.



For more information on the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership visit:
[About us - Health and Social Care Partnership](#)

South Ayrshire Context

South Ayrshire is a diverse area home to a growing population with a range of needs and aspirations. The community has a rich history, and as we continue to evolve, understanding the diversity across the population and the challenges we face is crucial. This section highlights some key information about South Ayrshire, helping to provide context for the performance data we'll explore in the rest of the report.

Demographics

Source [HSCP Profile](#)

South Ayrshire is home to around **111,830** residents. A key demographic trend is an ageing population, with a growing proportion of residents aged 65 and over. Currently, **26.1%** of the population is over 65, and this is projected to rise to approximately **28.4%** by 2028.

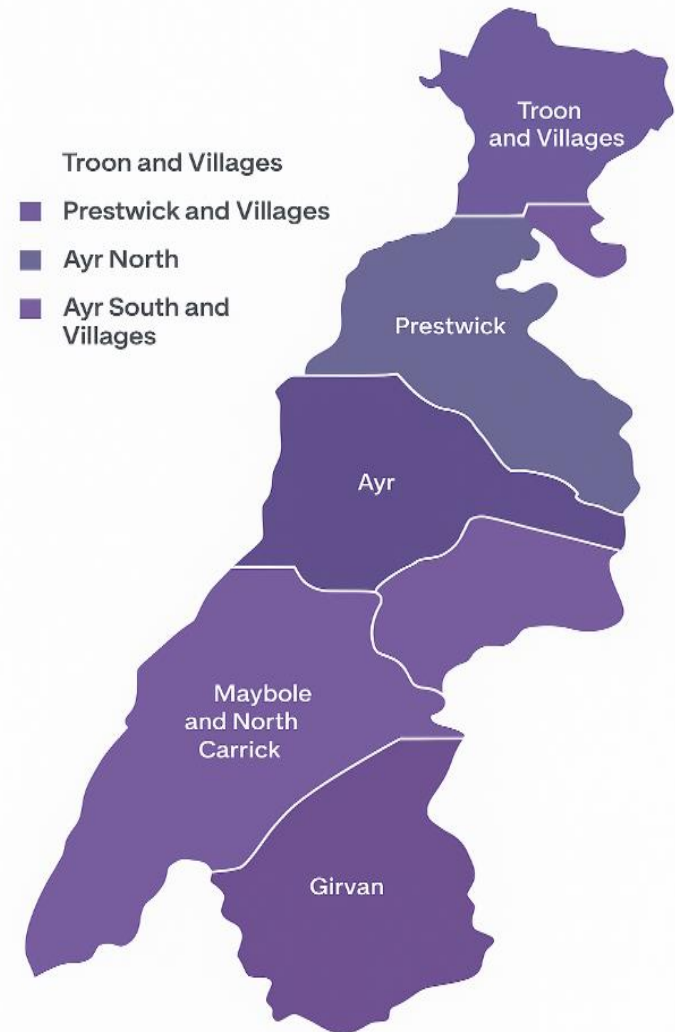
While the total population of South Ayrshire is expected to decline slightly over the coming years, the increase in older residents will have a significant impact on the future demand for health and social care services.

In addition:

- Population decline is driven largely by a falling birth rate and net migration trends.
- The number of children and young people (aged 0–15) is projected to decrease, which may have implications for children's services and schools.

Ageing Population

The ageing population presents both challenges and opportunities. Older adults often require more complex care, whether for long-term health conditions, dementia care, or support for maintaining their independence. The integration of services for older people is crucial to ensure that they receive the care and support needed to live healthy and fulfilling lives for as long as possible.



Health and Wellbeing

Source [HSCP Profile](#)

South Ayrshire is facing the combined impact of an ageing population and persistent socio-economic inequalities — both of which significantly influence health outcomes across the area.

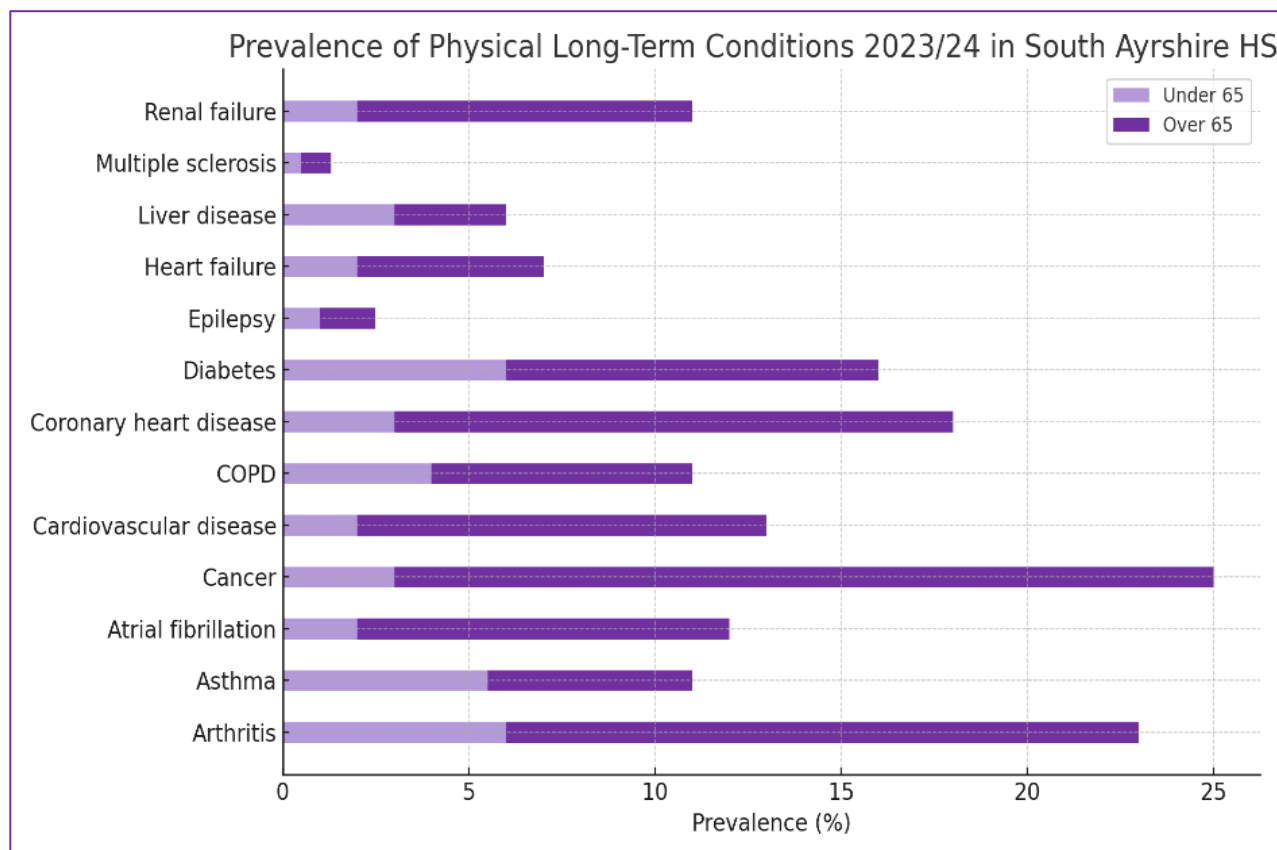
A growing number of residents, particularly older adults, are living with long-term conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and chronic respiratory illnesses. In 2020/21, **28.7%** of adults reported living with at least one long-term physical health condition, and **13.9%** reported a long-term mental health condition — both higher than the national average.

Life expectancy in South Ayrshire is slightly below the Scottish average and falls further in more deprived areas. For example:

- Healthy life expectancy is around **59.9** years for men and **61.4** years for **women**, compared to Scottish averages of **61.7** and **62.1** years respectively.
- Premature mortality for those aged **15–44** is **145 per 100,000**, also higher than the Scottish average (**130 per 100,000**).

There is also a growing prevalence of multiple and complex needs, particularly in areas of high deprivation. Approximately **25%** of the population lives in the most deprived **20%** of areas in Scotland (SIMD 2020), where people are more likely to experience poorer health outcomes and lower access to services.

These trends highlight the vital importance of integrated, preventative, and person-centred health and social care. Addressing these challenges will require a continued focus on early intervention, tackling inequalities, and ensuring that services are accessible and responsive to those who need them most.



Poverty Levels

While South Ayrshire is known for its natural beauty, some communities are facing significant economic challenges. Recent data shows that **16.5%** of households live in the most deprived Quintile (SIMD 1). These socio-economic challenges can have a direct impact on health, with those living in poverty experiencing higher rates of chronic illness, mental health struggles, and a greater need for support services.

Employment and Economic Trends

Source [South Ayrshire's employment, unemployment and economic inactivity - ONS](#)

South Ayrshire's economy includes a range of industries, though some areas still depend on more traditional sectors. Over the past year, there have been noticeable shifts in employment. By the end of 2023, only **65.2%** of people aged 16 to 64 were in work — down from the year before and well below the national average. At the same time, the number of people not working or looking for work increased, with over **30%** of working-age residents classed as economically inactive. That's much higher than the figures for Scotland and Great Britain overall.

Although unemployment in the area has slightly fallen, these trends highlight ongoing challenges in helping local people access stable, sustainable employment — especially for those already facing barriers due to income or location.

The Way Forward



As we look to the future, a clear understanding of the local population's health, wellbeing, and demographic trends is essential for shaping responsive and sustainable health and social care services in South Ayrshire.

With an ageing population, growing prevalence of long-term conditions, and persistent health inequalities, our challenge is not only to respond to current needs, but to anticipate and plan for future demand. This means continuing to shift our focus toward early intervention, prevention, and integrated care, particularly for individuals with complex or multiple needs.

We must ensure that services are designed around the people who use them — accessible, person-centred, and delivered in the right place at the right time. Strong collaboration across sectors, including communities, the third sector, and housing, will be key to achieving this.

By building on local strengths and insights, and working closely with partners and communities, we can create a healthier, fairer South Ayrshire — one where everyone has the opportunity to live well and access the support they need to thrive.

Measuring Performance Under Integration

In addition to the Core Indicators noted in Appendix 1 and following recommendations by the Ministerial Strategic Group for Health and Community Care (MSG), the following measures are also being used to track performance in Integration Authorities:

- Unplanned Admissions (Emergency Admissions).
- Accident and Emergency Performance (Emergency Department Attendances).
- Unplanned Bed Days (Emergency Bed Days for Acute, Geriatric Long Stay and Mental Health).
- Delayed Discharges (All Delayed Discharges and Code 9 Delayed Discharges).
- End of life care.
- The balance of spend across institutional and community services.

Chief Officers from each Integration Authority were invited to submit local trajectories on the proposed measures to the Scottish Government in January 2018 for the years 2017 / 18 and 2018 / 19. The South Ayrshire HSCP chose 2015 / 16 as the baseline year for all indicators with the exception of delayed discharges, where the baseline year is 2016 / 17.

Updated trajectories for 2019 / 20 were submitted in January 2019 and included a split by age for under 18's and 18 plus. The tables below show the South Ayrshire actual performance against the trajectories submitted for 2019 / 20 because Integration Authorities have not been asked to submit updated trajectories since 2019.

Calendar year 2024 is used here as a proxy for 2024 / 25 for some indicators due to the national data for 2024 / 25 being incomplete. We have done this following guidance issued by Public Health Scotland which was communicated to all Health and Social Care Partnerships.

Table 1: South Ayrshire Progress Against MSG Indicators 2024/25 (Aged Under 18) (PHS June 2025 Release)

Measure	2023/24 performance	Objective for 2024/25	2024/25 Outcome	Objective status
Unplanned Admissions	11.3% decrease (2023)	2% decrease	13% decrease (2024)	✓
ED Attendance	18.1% decrease (2023/24)	Reduce growth to 3%	20.8% decrease (2024/25)	✓
Unplanned Bed Days (Acute)	2.8% decrease (2023)	Maintain at 0%	26.5% decrease (2024)	✓
Emergency Bed Days (Mental Health)	83% decrease (2023)	62% decrease	70.6% decrease (2024)	✓

Table 1 above (under 18 years), in comparison to the 2023/24 figure, Unplanned Admissions, ED Attendance and Unplanned Bed Days (Acute) have all improved. There was a drop of 12.4 percentage points for Emergency Bed Days (Mental Health), however, the objective for this indicator was met comfortably.

Table 2: South Ayrshire Progress Against MSG Indicators 2024/25 (Aged 18+) (PHS June 2025 Release)

Measure	2023/24 performance	Objective for 2024/25 (financial year)	2024/25 Outcome	Objective status
Unplanned Admissions	7.6% decrease (2023)	Reduce growth to 10%	9.0% decrease (2024)	✓
ED Attendance	27.5% decrease (2023/24)	10% decrease	24.7% decrease (2024/25)	✓
Unplanned Bed Days (Acute)	11.8% increase (2023)	1% decrease	2.6 increase (2024)	X
Emergency Bed Days (Mental Health)	51.9% decrease (2023)	19% decrease	53.7% decrease (2024)	✓
Emergency Bed Days (Geriatric Long Stay)	19.8% decrease (2023)	60% decrease	23.8% decrease (2024)	X
Delayed Discharges (All)	96.1% increase (2023/24)	Reduce growth to 25%	66.5 increase (2024/25)	X
End of Life Care - % of last 6 months of life in community	Increase of 0.8 percentage points (2023)	Increase by 1 percentage point	Decrease of 0.1 percentage points (p) (2024)	X
Balance of spend across institutional and community services (age 65+)	Increase of 0.5 percentage points (p) (2022/23)	Maintain	Increase of 0.7 percentage points (p) (2023/24)	✓

As outlined in Table 2, there was a continued increase to the reduction of Unplanned Admissions in addition to similar continued achievements with ED Attendance and Emergency Bed Days (MH). Whilst Unplanned Bed Days (Acute), Emergency Bed Days (GLS) and Delayed Discharges has dominated the performance targets there has been significant service development undertaken with additional care at home recruitment balancing the reduction in capacity across commissioned services; front door service activity reducing the need for admission, Hospital at Home service keeping people safe at home; reablement services increasing confidence, ability and progress as well as Racecourse Road assessment and review service continuing to reduce demand on service provision. Targets have not changed in the last three years.

1.	UNPLANNED ADMISSIONS 2024 (UNDER 18'S) (Calendar year)	UNPLANNED ADMISSIONS 2024 (18 PLUS)
ACTUAL	1,765	13,174
TARGET	1,987	15,927

2.	ED ATTENDANCE 2024/25 (UNDER 18'S) (Financial year)	ED ATTENDANCE 2024/25 (18 PLUS)
ACTUAL	5,979	23,694
TARGET	7,778	28,328

3.1	UNPLANNED BED DAYS (ACUTE) 2024 (UNDER 18'S) (Calendar year)	UNPLANNED BED DAYS (ACUTE) 2024 (18 PLUS)
ACTUAL	1,390	123,675
TARGET	1,891	119,328

3.2	UNPLANNED BED DAYS (MENTAL HEALTH) 2024 (UNDER 18'S) (Calendar year)	UNPLANNED BED DAYS (MENTAL HEALTH) 2024 (18+)
ACTUAL	234	16,060
TARGET	302	28,122

3.3	UNPLANNED BED DAYS (Geriatric Long Stay) 2024 (Calendar year)
ACTUAL	8,311
TARGET	4,362

4	DELAYED DISCHARGE (ALL) 2024 / 25 (18+) (Financial year)
ACTUAL	31,351
TARGET	23,533

5	END OF LIFE CARE 2024 (Calendar year) - End of life – 6 months spent in a community setting (including Care Homes)
ACTUAL	86.4%
TARGET	87.5%

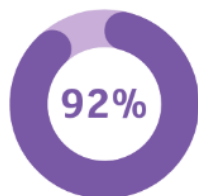
6	BALANCE OF SPEND 2023/24 (65+) (Financial year)
ACTUAL	95.8%
TARGET	95.1%

Our Performance 2024-2025

The Scottish Government has set 15 [National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes](#) against which progress will be measured towards the aspirations for Integration as set out in the 2014 Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act. These Outcomes guide the activity of the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership. They are supported by a core suite of 23 National Performance Indicators. This report sets out local progress against these Outcomes. In addition, Appendix 1 details the 23 National Indicators and trends against time.

Outcome 1

People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.



92% of adults able to look after own health very well or quite well. This is higher than the national level of 91% (HCES 2023-24 figure updated every two years)

Smoking, Alcohol and Addictions



For 2019-2023, 15% of adults in both South Ayrshire and Scotland smoke. South Ayrshire is ranked **joint 19th lowest** (alongside two other areas) out of 32 in terms of the level of smoking prevalence. This is a reduction of 1 percentage point from the previous reporting period. (Source: Scottish Health Survey dashboard, 2019-2023).

The national action plan, Raising Scotland's Tobacco-free Generation, was published in June 2018. The Tobacco Control Action Plan for Ayrshire (2018-21) was agreed by partners in September 2018 and is now nearing the end of the lifespan of the Action Plan. The focus of the plan is on cessation, prevention and protection. This plan is overseen by the Ayrshire and Arran Tobacco Free Alliance.

There were **202** drug-related hospital stays per 100,000 age-sex standardised population in South Ayrshire for the most recent time period available (2023/24), which is an increase from **194** in 2022/23; the Scotland wide rate is **212**.

For the aggregated period 2019-2023, South Ayrshire has the lowest rate of drug deaths in NHS Ayrshire and Arran at **22.9** compared to 32.8 in North Ayrshire and 31.4 in East Ayrshire. For the same period, NHS Ayrshire and Arran had the second highest rate of drug deaths for a health board, at **29.4** per 100,000 population compared with Scotland at **23.6**.

The rate per 100,000 age-sex standardised of drug-related deaths in South Ayrshire has increased from **15.2** in 2022 to **16** in 2023; the Scotland rate has also increased from **20.8** to **22.6** for the same period.

Alcohol related hospital stays in South Ayrshire per 100,000 were **515.2** in 2023/24, which was below the national average, but an increase from the previous year of **498.4** in 2022/23. Scotland also saw an increase over the past year from **532** to **548.5**. (Source: PHS Alcohol Related Hospital Statistics Dashboard).

Connect South Ayrshire

The journey so far

The development of the Connect South Ayrshire model was a key ambition of the HSCP to deliver more locality-based services across all our local communities. This was a direct result of engagement with our communities.



The plan for delivering Connect includes integrated and accessible physical locations in all localities, a dedicated website and a free telephone number all providing information, advice and support focussed on promoting wellbeing and access to social opportunities.

The Connect model was informed by a combination of public consultation, learning from other areas and our involvement as a pathfinder in the GIRFE national programme. In partnership with Voluntary Action South Ayrshire, we launched the online and telephony aspects of Connect and opened our first hub in Ayr in November 2025.

The development and launch of the Connect South Ayrshire model are key examples of how we are delivering on **Outcome 1**: People are supported to live active, healthy, and fulfilling lives within their community. Through accessible, locality-based hubs, a dedicated website and a free telephone line, Connect enables individuals to access information, advice and support on a wide range of issues including wellbeing, volunteering, benefits and community activities. This person-centred approach promotes self-management and early intervention, helping

people to stay well and connected in their local area. The strong engagement across all channels since launch demonstrates the value of accessible, community-based support in improving quality of life.

Connect Hubs

The first Connect South Ayrshire Hub opened on the 4th of November 2024 at 53 Sandgate, Ayr. Opening hours are from 9am-12.30pm and 1pm-4pm, with a shop front location, the hub provides advice, information and signposting to a range of services including benefit enquiries, employment support, wellbeing information and more.

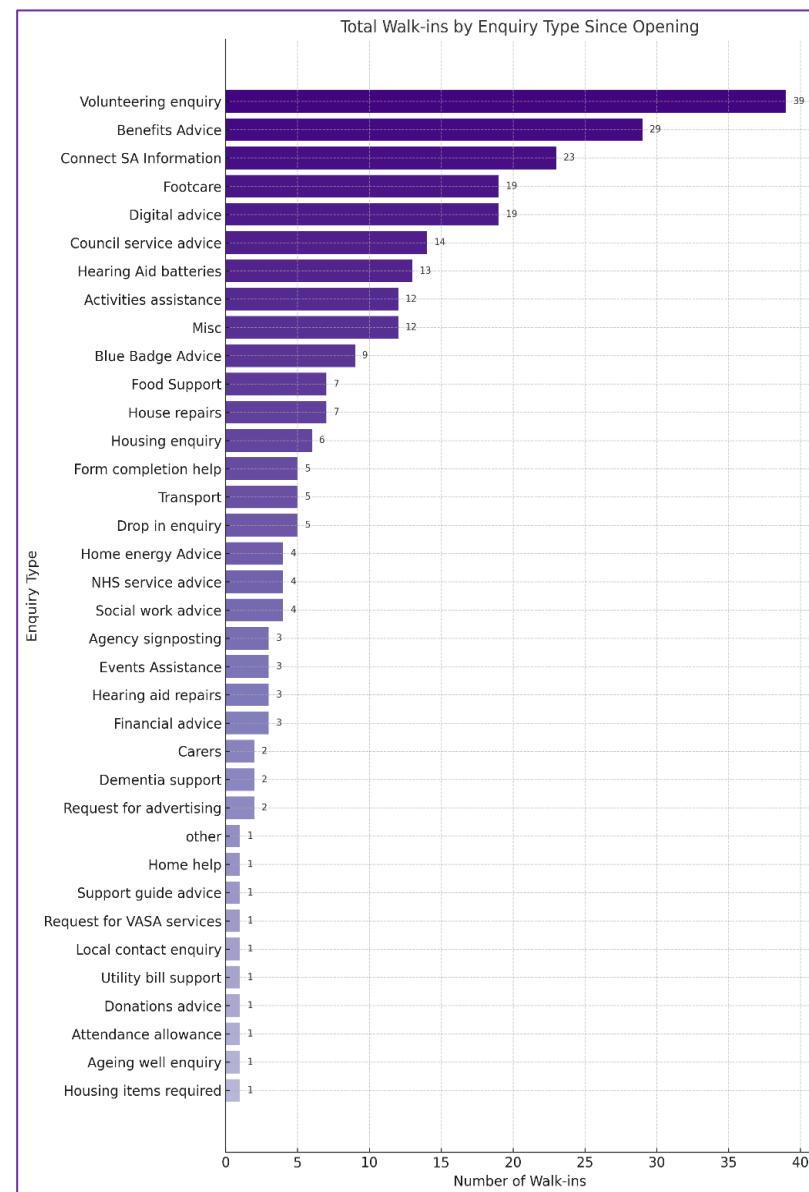
The hub also has a calendar of wider partnership services utilising space and providing a drop in and appointment-based services daily. The purpose of the hub is to provide a physical space that individuals can walk in and access a wide range of information and advice around what is available in their local communities, with a range of local services working in partnership in the same space.

Walk in enquiries span over **36** enquiry categories. The highest enquiry categories include volunteering opportunities, benefits advice and the Footcare service that is a stand alone service and has been established for some time. The following graph provides a breakdown of the **263** walk in enquiries so far:

Connect Website

The Connect South Ayrshire website was also launched in November 2024.

Currently the Connect site hosts **967** activities (established groups or clubs offering learning/social opportunities) and **397** events (one off or recurring events in SA), **24** themed support guides (local information and advice on services/topics such as bereavement, dementia etc) and also direct links to public services, local contacts and consultations.



In the VASA contact they are responsible for updating the website on a daily basis, adding new activities and making any changes to existing entries similar to the footfall in the hub we will be required to continue to promote and market the website and would want to see an increase in users' month on month.

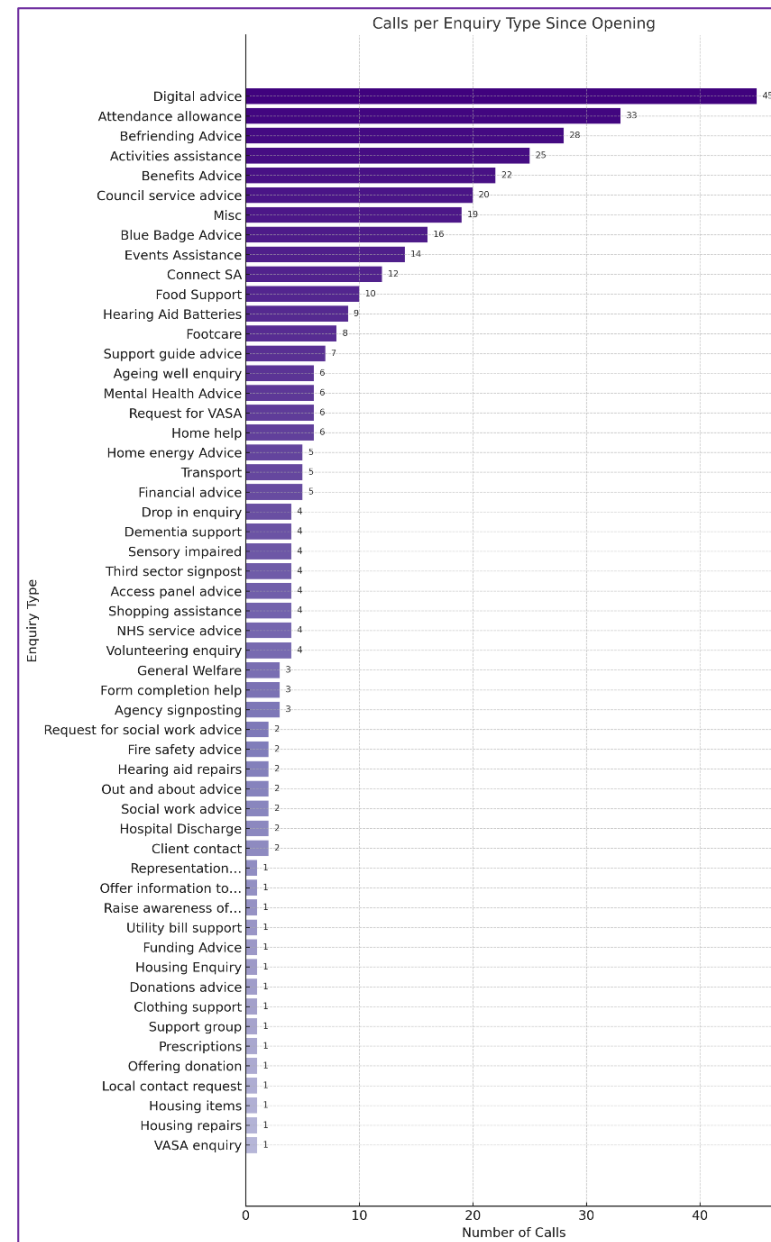
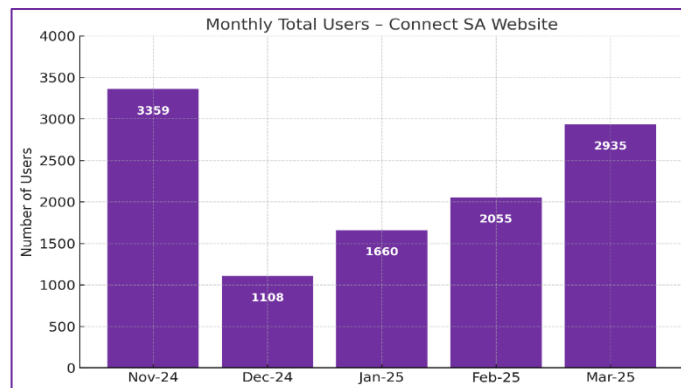
Phase 2 of the website will include the introduction of three additional 'tabs' covering 'start well' 'live well' and 'age well' and also a subscription and user feedback section.

Telephony

The Connect South Ayrshire phone line is available on weekdays from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM to provide support and guidance to a range of public and charitable services and members of the public who prefer not to or cannot navigate the website. The number of calls to the free 0800 number have been as follows:

Month	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Totals calls since opening
Total calls	55	24	53	60	141	333
Weeks open	4	3	4	4	4	19

Calls into the Connect service have seen a significant rise in March and this could be linked to the marketing of the flyer included in the February, Council Tax bill to all South Ayrshire residents. Enquiries by type are set out to the right.



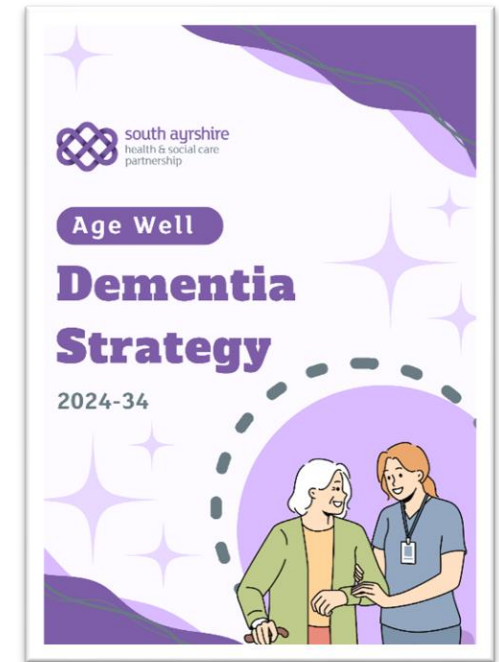
Age Well: Dementia Strategy

The South Ayrshire Integration Joint Board, at its meeting on 11th December 2024, approved the refreshed [Age Well: Dementia Strategy](#) and its accompanying Delivery Plan. The strategy sets out key strategic themes which were identified through a range of engagement activities that took place during the development process. The key themes identified were:

- Communication.
- Diagnosis and post-diagnostic support.
- Support for carers.
- Reducing Stigma.

The approach to this Strategy development was truly service user and carer focused and we have taken on board valuable feedback to ensure the Strategy meets the needs of people in South Ayrshire.

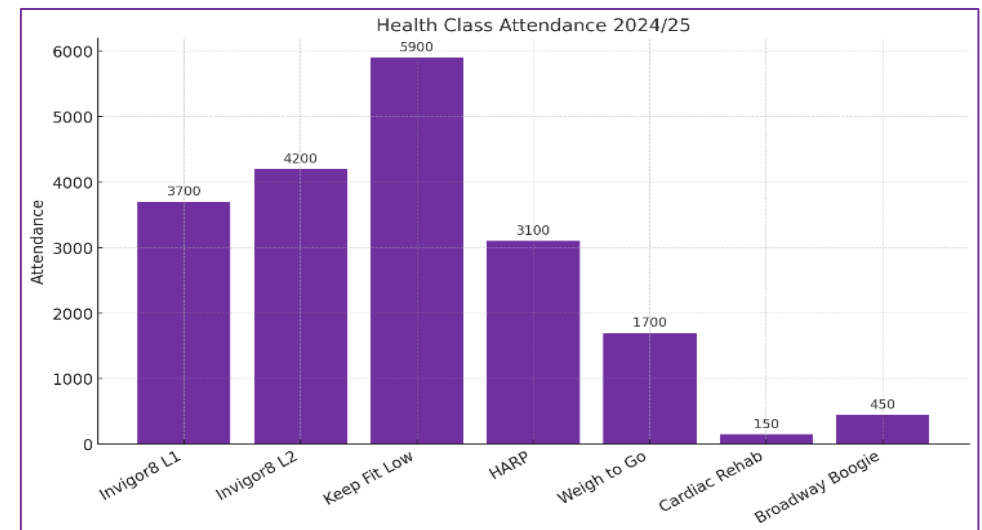
Following the approval by IJB various working groups have been set up to drive forward the delivery of the actions identified. These groups are aligned to each strategic theme to ensure there is a clear focus and drive to deliver improvement for people in South Ayrshire during the lifespan of the Strategy.



Health Class Attendances

Health classes continued to be in demand throughout 2024/25, with a clear preference for the **"Keep Fit Low"** programme, which saw the highest attendance by far.

Invigor8 Level 1 and Level 2 also attracted significant participation, reflecting a sustained interest. Notably, newer classes introduced in January 2025, such as Cardiac Rehab and Broadway Boogie, have already made a mark, with encouraging attendance numbers for their first few months.



Invigor8 and Healthy and Active Rehabilitation Programme (HARP)

HSCP continues to support people to take control of their health, recover well, and maintain independence through the Invigor8 and HARP activity programmes. Over the past year, **667** individuals were referred into the service—**451** via their GP and **216** through self-referral. Both programmes offer tailored physical activity and rehabilitation support to people living with long-term health conditions, and the impact is clearly reflected in participation levels and outcomes.

The programmes are not only improving physical health but also contributing to better mental wellbeing, social connection, and long-term condition management. Participant feedback and case studies consistently highlight increased mobility, reduced falls risk, improved mood and confidence, and even cases of reversing health conditions like diabetes. This work is further strengthened by close partnership working with NHS Ayrshire and Arran, community link workers, and local initiatives such as 'Weigh to Go' and Paths for All.



Looking ahead, the service is committed to expanding its reach through the opening of refurbished facilities, enhancing its health offering in more localities, and investing in staff training to further improve delivery.

Case Study

Individual User Stories and Outcomes Female Aged 80 – Invigor8, Keep Fit Low

Last spring a female from Troon had a nasty fall and broke her foot which stopped her in her tracks. What followed was months of rehab and walking with a stick but perhaps most upsetting was the loss of confidence, ongoing pain and low mood that Isabel experienced.

She was referred to us by her physio in the September and was welcomed into the Invigor8 falls prevention classes following a consultation with a health instructor, and it wasn't long before she had a spring back in her step and was feeling stronger, fitter and much happier again! After progressing through the Invigor8 programme she now regularly attends our Keep Fit Low impact classes as well as AquaFit at Troon Pool and is a huge advocate of exercise for women of all ages!

She told us “Before coming to these classes I didn't feel my age, I felt older! I was comfort eating, had trouble with my mobility, and was miserable” Reflecting back Isabel said, “they put me on my feet again, literally!”

Enabling Better Health and Wellbeing Through Early Diagnosis

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) is committed to improving health outcomes by making healthcare more accessible and preventative in nature. A key example of this is the launch of a new Spirometry Testing Pilot, designed to support the early diagnosis and management of respiratory conditions such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

Spirometry is a vital tool in detecting lung conditions early, allowing individuals to take control of their health and avoid the progression of serious illness. Early diagnosis can lead to better long-term outcomes and reduced hospital admissions. This aligns closely with our strategic objective of enabling people to live in good health for longer.

The pilot began in January 2025 at Girvan Community Hospital, with **1,000** spirometry tests planned over an **18-month period**. Clinics in Ayr and Troon are also in development, further expanding local access. By offering this service within the community, we are helping residents receive timely assessments and manage their conditions earlier—without needing to attend hospital.

Undiagnosed respiratory issues often lead to emergency hospital admissions and longer stays, placing strain on both individuals and the wider healthcare system. This pilot not only helps to reduce inappropriate admissions and delayed discharges, but also supports a shift towards preventative, community-based care—a key national and local priority.

The initiative was made possible through successful funding secured by South Ayrshire HSCP staff and is being delivered in collaboration with NHS Ayrshire and Arran public health teams. The outcomes of the pilot will be closely monitored, with the aim of informing future rollout across the wider Ayrshire and Arran area.

This is a clear example of how targeted, proactive approaches within primary and community care can empower people to manage their own health, reduce health inequalities, and alleviate pressures on acute services.



Vibrant Voices: Using Music to Promote Connection, Confidence and Wellbeing

South Ayrshire HSCP is proud to deliver *Vibrant Voices*, a unique and inclusive singing group designed to support adults with communication difficulties. **Initially funded through our Innovation Fund**, the project began as a pilot at Biggart Community Hospital, led by Speech and Language Therapist Fiona Burnett. Thanks to its success and strong community interest, *Vibrant Voices* has now grown into a thriving initiative reaching three locations across the region—Ayr, Maybole and Girvan.

Vibrant Voices provides a safe and uplifting space for people affected by conditions such as Parkinson’s Disease, stroke, dementia, learning disabilities, and other speech and voice challenges. Weekly sessions are attended by participants along with family members, friends and carers, promoting social connection, shared experience, and community belonging.

The group supports physical and mental wellbeing through the proven benefits of group singing—enhancing mood, memory, cognitive function, communication skills, and overall confidence. These sessions are open to any adult (16+) in South Ayrshire and embody the HSCP’s Wellbeing Pledge by helping individuals feel empowered, supported, and connected.

Thanks to growing demand and overwhelmingly positive feedback, the original group has now moved to a larger venue, with additional investment enabling further expansion across the region. Vibrant Voices is a strong example of preventative, community-based care—enabling people to improve their own health and wellbeing in an enjoyable, meaningful way.



Average monthly attendances – May 2025

Location	Average no. of attendees (monthly)	Highest no. of attendees (monthly)	Most recent no. of attendees
Ayr	46	52	47
Maybole	18	34	26
Girvan	4	10	10



Early Support for Frailty

South Ayrshire HSCP's **Stay Ahead of the Curve** team is making an impact through early intervention and preventative Occupational Therapy (OT) work.

The team supports individuals experiencing **mild frailty**, offering timely, person-centred wellbeing conversations focused on what matters most to each individual. These conversations often lead to small but powerful interventions that help people stay mobile, connected, and confident reducing the risk of falls, social isolation, and increasing dependence on services.

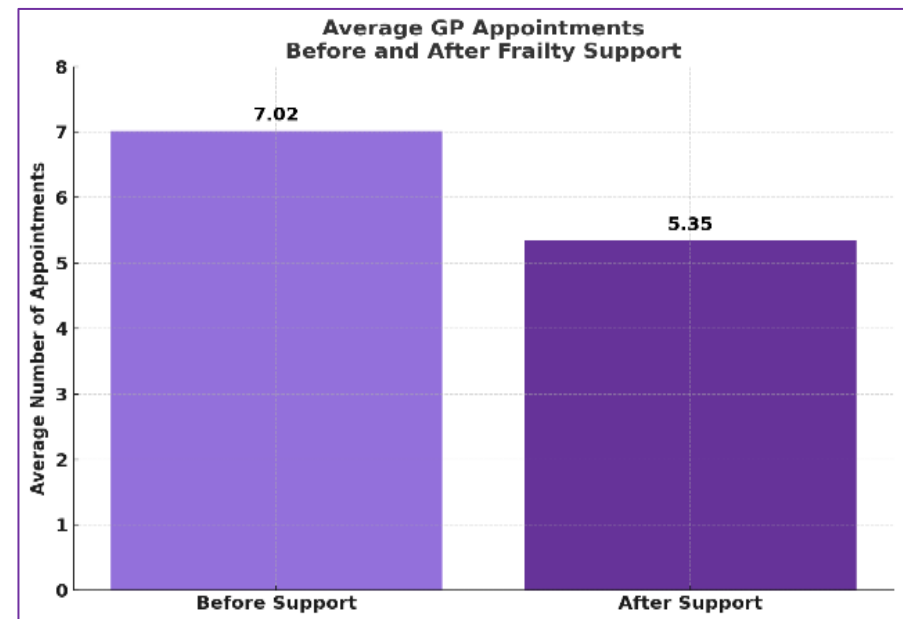
People can **self-refer** into the service, and are encouraged to reach out if they:

- Feel unsteady on their feet.
- Have had a fall in the last 12 months.
- Have lost their appetite.
- Feel easily tired.
- Struggle with everyday tasks.
- Feel socially isolated.

By working within localities and building strong community networks, the team is empowering individuals to take control of their wellbeing before more complex needs arise.

Following support from South Ayrshire's Stay Ahead of the Curve team, an analysis of 51 individuals who received a frailty assessment showed:

- **Average GP appointments reduced from 7.02 to 5.35** in the six months after intervention.
- This is a **reduction of 1.67 appointments per person on average.**



When looking at individual outcomes:

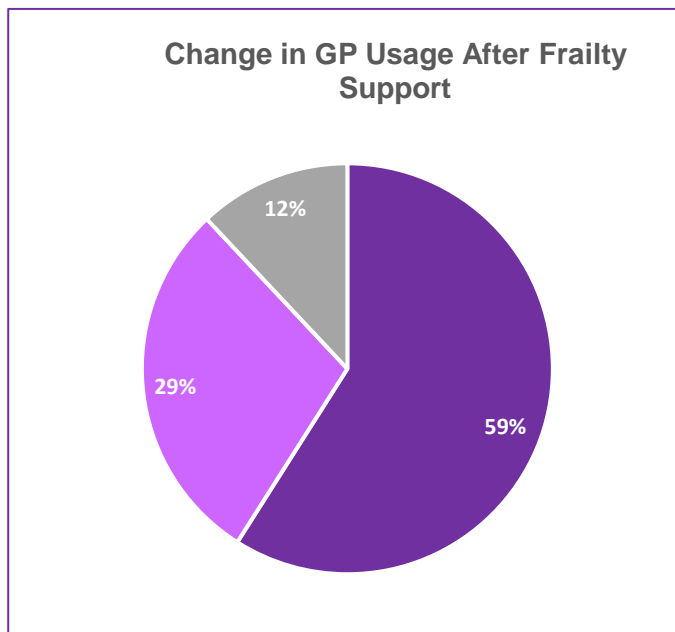
- **30 people (59%)** reduced their GP appointments.
- **15 people (29%)** saw no change.
- **6 people (12%)** had increased appointments.

This demonstrates that nearly **90% of service users** either reduced or maintained their level of GP usage, indicating a stabilising effect on primary care needs following early occupational therapy intervention.

This reduction in primary care demand highlights how proactive OT interventions can help stabilise health and reduce the need for ongoing clinical input—improving both individual outcomes and the efficiency of health and care services.

A service user recently shared her experience with the **Stay Ahead of the Curve** team, describing how early occupational therapy input helped her feel safer, more confident, and more independent in her own home.

By identifying risks early, providing personalised support, and promoting positive ageing, the Stay Ahead of the Curve team is enabling more people to live independently at home for longer, while easing pressure on wider service. This experience highlights the real difference early occupational therapy intervention can make—not just in reducing risk, but in restoring dignity, comfort and confidence for individuals living with early signs of frailty.



Case Study

Before receiving support, a service user had unknowingly been compensating for difficulties with movement—climbing stairs by leaning on walls and using awkward techniques to get in and out of bed. Following an in-home assessment, tailored solutions were introduced, including a bath chair, bed grip, and additional handrails. These small but effective changes made daily activities significantly easier and reduced her risk of falls. For example, she was able to enjoy a bath for the first time in seven years.

The individual reflected on the emotional impact of the intervention, explaining that she felt “lighter, more confident,” and reassured by knowing help was available when needed. She said the assessment highlighted needs she hadn’t fully recognised herself, and the changes made had a meaningful effect on her day-to-day quality of life.

She praised the professionalism and compassion of the staff member who visited her, saying she felt listened to and respected throughout. She also shared her concern that many others in similar situations may not realise they need support or may hesitate to ask for help due to pride or uncertainty. She urged others not to delay, noting:

“Even if you think you’re managing, you might be compensating more than you realise. It’s better to ask early than wait for a crisis.”

Connecting with the Wider Frailty Approach

This early work forms a vital part of South Ayrshire HSCP's broader **Focus on Frailty** programme, which has now entered its second phase in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland (**HIS**). While Stay Ahead of the Curve focuses on mild frailty and prevention, **Focus on Frailty (2)** targets individuals with more **significant or complex frailty** who are at risk of crisis or hospitalisation.

Through the development of co-ordinated care, multidisciplinary team (MDT) working at locality level, and the wider use of tools such as **Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA)** and **Future Care Planning**, the HSCP aims to:

- Improve quality of life and maintain functional independence.
- Reduce falls, hospital stays, and unnecessary medication.
- Strengthen support for unpaid carers.
- Ensure seamless, community-based care that adapts to changing needs.

This whole-system approach—from early signs to advanced frailty—demonstrates a clear commitment to **proactive, integrated, and compassionate support** across the ageing journey.



Looking ahead The Stay Ahead of the Curve team will continue to identify early needs and offer tailored OT input, while linking closely with the wider frailty pathway to ensure individuals can smoothly transition to more intensive support when required.

With a shared emphasis on early identification, collaborative care, and meaningful outcomes, this joined-up work ensures that **frailty is not a trigger for crisis—but a call to action for connection, dignity, and prevention.**

Outcome 2

People, including those with disabilities, long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home in a homely setting in their community.



71% of adults supported at home agreed that they are supported to live as independently as possible. This is slightly lower than the national average of 72% (HCES, 2023-24). Information provided every two years.



The number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged per 1,000 population decreased from 2,216 in 2022/23 to 1,943 in 2023/24. (NI-19 2023)



Emergency admission rates increased slightly from **14,303** to **14,722** per 100,000 population over the past year. (NI-12 2023)



Emergency bed day rate down from **172,992** to **168,754** per 100,000 population over the past year. (NI-13 2023)



Emergency readmission within 28 days increased from **100** to **104** per 1,000 discharges. This is in line with the National average of 104 (NI-14 2023).



88% of people's last 6 months of life spent in a community setting. (NI-15 2023)

Demand and capacity

Following on from previous analysis activity as reported last year to help us understand demand, capacity and queue (DCAQ) the care at home team have worked hard to implement and use the data effectively. We have spent a considerable amount of time gathering and analysing data which has given us confidence in the efficiency of the service and can account for the use of capacity. We have also successfully recruited to some additional temporary posts to look at different ways of managing demand on the service, including a training post, a Community Care Assistant, and an Occupational Therapy Assistant.

Some of the challenges that have presented during the reporting period were felt by our partners, which is evident in the table below which shows a consistent reduction in commissioned services, and we have continued to support service delivery throughout. The in-house service increased their capacity to maintain provision.

The table below shows the previous 3 years care at home service activity. During the last two years the number of people supported has remained reasonably static with an increase in the number of hours delivered. Increased complexity in care needs, robust assessments and reablement activity has contributed to these factors resulting in a marginal increase in individuals being supported in their own homes with more complex care needs.



	Average number of service users March 2022, 2023, 2024 & 2025	Hours March 2022	Hours at March 2023	Hours at March 2024	Hours at March 2025
In house	300 / 367/444/417	2255	3170	4283	3937
External	976 / 749/ 698/685	10058	6670	5778	5898
Total	1276 / 1116/ 1142/1102	12313	9840	10061	9835

Care at home

Throughout 2024/25, the Care at Home service has built on the foundations laid in 2023, consolidating the newly established locality teams and continuing to expand the workforce. Fifty new posts have been recruited into the service, increasing capacity to deliver personalised care that supports people to remain in their own homes. In a further step to strengthen staffing resilience, the service has registered with the Home Office sponsorship scheme, allowing the recruitment of care staff from overseas who are keen to live and work in South Ayrshire.

A key area of focus this year has been on supporting timely hospital discharges and addressing double care packages, ensuring that the right care is in place for people to return home safely and be supported within their communities. This targeted work has contributed to improved flow across health and social care settings and better outcomes for individuals and their families.

In addition, there has been a strong commitment to valuing and engaging with front-line staff. A comprehensive engagement programme has been undertaken across the service, leading to a co-produced action plan developed in collaboration with Trade Unions and HR. This work ensures staff voices are heard and contributes to a more empowered and motivated workforce.

Innovation in practice has also been evident through the development of the Care at Home Pharmacy Technician (CapTech) service. In collaboration with pharmacy colleagues, CapTechs are now embedded within hospital discharge teams, providing specialist medication support to facilitate safe and effective transitions home.

These developments reflect South Ayrshire’s commitment to supporting people to live independently, with dignity and choice, in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

Telecare

South Ayrshire HSCP remains firmly committed to ensuring that *“people, including those with disabilities, long-term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home in a homely setting in their community.”* A key enabler of this ambition has been the transformation of the Telecare service—now a national exemplar in digital innovation.

In 2024, South Ayrshire successfully completed its analogue to digital transition for telecare, becoming only the third Telecare Service Provider in Scotland to achieve the **Platinum Digital Telecare Implementation Award**. This accolade recognises a fully live digital service rolled out to **100%** of users—over **2,500** individuals—with no serious issues or call failures for a sustained period of at least eight weeks.



This significant milestone follows a rapid progression from achieving the Bronze award in September 2023. To meet the ambitious goals of the programme, the service deployed new digital alarm units, implemented the innovative Shared ARC Platform and the Chubb Cloud Care Control System, and provided extensive workforce training. The result is a scalable, dependable, and future-proofed end-to-end digital solution, ensuring users remain safe and supported in their homes.

Billy McClean, Head of Community Health and Care Services, praised the team’s dedication, noting: *“The move from analogue to digital has been a challenge for local authorities across Scotland. As one of the first areas to reach this level, we hope to share our learning with others on the journey.”*



To support the continued evolution of digitally enabled care, South Ayrshire HSCP has also appointed a Care Technologist. This specialist works closely with care teams and individuals to identify how technology can be used to meet assessed needs creatively and effectively. In collaboration with the University of Stirling, a set of interactive cards was also developed to help individuals and practitioners explore unmet needs and suitable technological responses. Training on the use of these cards has been delivered across the partnership, promoting consistent and meaningful conversations around care innovation.

Councillor Hugh Hunter, Health and Social Care Portfolio Holder, emphasised the impact of this work: *“South Ayrshire has one of the fastest ageing population rates in Scotland. We must ensure our residents can retain their independence for as long as possible—and technology like this allows them to do so in a safe and supported way.”*

By embedding digital solutions at the heart of community support, South Ayrshire HSCP is demonstrating how innovation can empower individuals to live independently, safely, and with confidence in their own homes and communities.

Racecourse Road Intermediate Care Unit

South Ayrshire HSCP’s Reablement Unit continues to demonstrate the positive impact of timely, focused support in promoting recovery and independence.

A key development in 2024 was the increase in the number of assessors within the Reablement Unit. This strategic investment has significantly reduced the average length of stay for individuals—from **5** weeks down to just **2.5** weeks—enabling faster transitions home and greater throughput of patients. As a result, more individuals have been able to access the service directly from hospital, supporting earlier discharge and relieving pressure across the wider health and social care system.

Between March 2024 and April 2025, the unit recorded **146 admissions** and **137 discharges**. Of those discharged, **68% (94 people)** returned home with *no ongoing care needs*, having been fully re-abled. A further **27% (38 people)** were discharged with *reduced care needs*, demonstrating the unit’s success in restoring independence and preventing unnecessary reliance on long-term care.

These outcomes reflect the Reablement Unit’s central role in supporting individuals to regain the skills and confidence they need to return to daily life in their own homes—safely, and with dignity.

By focusing on early intervention, effective assessment, and personalised rehabilitation, the service continues to deliver meaningful outcomes for individuals, families, and the wider community, supporting South Ayrshire’s ongoing commitment to help people live well at home for as long as possible.

The feedback gathered during this time has been invaluable in shaping the final strategy. Below are some reflections from those who participated in the consultation process, highlighting the strength of community involvement and the importance of hearing directly from those with lived experience:

'One of the biggest steps we have made in our Ageing Well journey has been the introduction of our Ageing Well Champions Boards.

These boards are an opportunity for local people to really have their say in shaping our communities going forward.

With three boards established across South Ayrshire with over 150 members, all residents over the age of 50 are encouraged to get involved.' – Marie Oliver, Voluntary Action South Ayrshire

**'I am happy to belong to the Ageing Well Champions Board, being asked our opinions, hearing of new things and being able to be part of decisions for older people, not only in the short term but for longer term planning of things that make the lives of older people better for them and all the community too'-
Champions Board Member**

The strategy absolutely aims to celebrate the contributions that older people make to their communities - often the unsung childcare providers, informal carers and volunteers. This strategy is the start of our ageing well social movement which will be implemented and nurtured for many years to come.

We are receiving praise and recognition across Scotland and beyond, including being asked to present our approach to national and international groups. On 5th March 2025 we were awarded an iESE Transformation Award for our work on the development of the strategy, this was recognition of the work and involvement of the communities in the co-production.



Microenterprise

The South Ayrshire Micro-Enterprise Project is led by the Ayrshire Independent Living Network (AILN), in collaboration with Growbiz, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership and South Ayrshire Council. The project aims to enhance local social care by supporting small care providers, increasing choice, diversity, and addressing local care challenges. It also supports locals in establishing small care-based enterprises offering personal, flexible, and responsive care services.

By the end of the reporting year in April 2025, the project achieved the following:

Case Study

Faced with caring for two elderly parents—one with dementia and diabetes—from a distance, the family member engaged with Kirsti, AILN (CAYR Local). Kirsti supported the family with the directory, and she connected the family with a newly formed micro-enterprise, and also later with another micro who provided additional support.

The micros provided flexible evening care, continued communication with the family member via phone, and support with appointments and shopping. The micro model offered continuity, familiarity, and peace of mind. As her parents' needs evolved, the support scaled with them. The care relationship fostered trust, preserved dignity, and enabled the family to remain together in their home.

“I honestly do not know what I would have done without Kirsti or the micro-enterprises. I’m not sure my Mum would still be without Kirsti or the micro-enterprises. I’m not sure my Mum would still be with us.”

us.” A Family Member

 **28** Micro-enterprises listed in directory

 **110** new micro referrals for potential micros to Growbiz

 **64** People in South Ayrshire accessing Micro support

 **1339** client support hours per month

 **29** clients using private or other funding

 **2** using a mix of funding

£26,780 per month being reinvested into the local community through micro earnings

Atlantic View Care Home: Community, Celebration, and Care

In September 2024, Atlantic View marked a significant milestone with its official opening celebration—a lively and heartfelt event that brought together residents, families, staff, and distinguished guests.

The care home welcomed owner Mr Manvir Singh, along with senior representatives from Scottish Care and Ayr United Football Club, who joined in recognising the importance of high-quality, community-rooted care. Local entertainers added to the festive atmosphere with music and performances, while attendees enjoyed refreshments, conversation, and a true sense of celebration.

The event served not only as a formal opening but also as a warm affirmation of Atlantic View's values: person-centred care, partnership, and community spirit. It was a proud moment for the team, highlighting their hard work in creating a welcoming, supportive environment for all who live and work there.



Dundonald House: Celebrating Excellence in Learning and Development

We are proud to share that Adam Hughes, Deputy Manager at Dundonald House Care Home, was recognised at the Scottish Care National Care Home Awards 2024, winning the Staff Training and Learning Award. The ceremony took place on Friday 15 November 2024 at the Hilton, Glasgow, and celebrated excellence and dedication across Scotland's care sector.

Adam's award is a testament to his outstanding leadership and commitment to continuous professional development. Since taking up his post, he has transformed the training and development culture at Dundonald House, resulting in a highly skilled, motivated, and qualified workforce across all staffing groups. Through an extensive review of staff skills and the introduction of innovative learning opportunities, Adam has successfully upskilled the team to better meet the evolving needs of residents.



Caring for Ayrshire

Delivering on Our Commitment to Independent Living

Caring for Ayrshire continues to support our ambition of enabling people—including those with long-term conditions, disabilities, or frailty—to live as independently as possible, in their own homes and communities. Throughout 2024/25, the focus has remained on transforming health and care services so that individuals can receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

A key part of this work has been expanding access to early intervention, prevention, and community-based care. These efforts are helping to reduce avoidable hospital admissions, speed up recovery at home, and deliver services that are more person-centred and responsive to need.

By investing in modern digital telecare, advancing home-based rehabilitation services, and improving the integration of health and social care teams through local planning, we are ensuring that more people can safely remain in familiar surroundings for longer. Through ongoing collaboration with NHS Ayrshire & Arran, local authorities, and community partners, Caring for Ayrshire continues to drive forward a system that is equitable, sustainable, and rooted in lived experience. We are creating the conditions for people to maintain their independence, dignity, and quality of life—now and in the future.



Functional Fitness: MOT at Home

In line with our commitment to early intervention and prevention, the South Ayrshire HSCP has supported the implementation of the Functional Fitness MOT at Home, an evidence-based tool that enables people aged 50–90 to assess and improve their physical wellbeing in their own homes. This initiative helps individuals maintain independence, improve mobility, and stay active for longer—key to reducing reliance on formal care and enabling people to live healthier, more connected lives.

The assessment focuses on functional fitness—the everyday strength, stamina, balance and flexibility that underpin a person’s ability to carry out daily tasks, remain socially engaged, and retain autonomy. Delivered by trained coordinators, the tool combines self-assessment with tailored one-to-one conversations to break down barriers to physical activity and support lasting behaviour change. Individuals are empowered to set goals, track progress, and access community resources to stay active in ways that are personally meaningful.

The tool is particularly suited to people who are inactive or “in transition” between full independence and increasing support needs. It enables participants to take control of their own health and wellbeing by identifying the small, manageable steps they can take to stay active and engaged in their communities.

While not an exercise programme, this is a valuable resource for promoting self-care and resilience, aligning directly with **Outcome 2** by helping older adults improve their own health and wellbeing through practical, community-based support.

Working Together Primary Care Occupational Therapy Team



The **Working Together** Occupational Therapy (OT) team continues to play a pivotal role in delivering early intervention and preventative care across South Ayrshire’s GP practices. Launched as part of a pan-Ayrshire initiative in 2022, the team now operates in **18 of 53** practices, with **9** Occupational Therapists providing short-term, goal-based interventions for individuals aged 16 and over.

This Primary Care model is designed to meet people at an early point in their health journey—supporting both physical and mental wellbeing


and reducing pressure on other parts of the health and care system. OT interventions typically span **4–6** sessions and focus on improving function, supporting self-management, and avoiding unnecessary escalation to secondary care.

One powerful case study involved a 56-year-old male carer who, following OT support, regained a healthy balance between his caring responsibilities and personal goals. He was able to reduce daily stress, consider rejoining the workforce, and even planned a holiday—outcomes that reflect the service’s holistic and empowering approach.

Key Achievements (January–April 2025 in South Ayrshire):

 **214 referrals received, averaging 54 per month.**

 **81% of referrals were for people under 65.**

 **184 discharges, with 95% requiring no onward referral to secondary services.**

 **An average improvement of 3 points on the EQ5D health outcome tool post-intervention**

 **37 fit notes issued, with 78% indicating “not fit” and 22% “maybe fit”.**

The service also provides a specialist contribution to vocational rehabilitation by issuing fit notes directly from Occupational Therapists. This supports patients who are navigating complex work-health challenges such as stress, anxiety, or carer-related fatigue. Recent data shows:

- The majority of fit notes issued were for **mental health or stress-related conditions**, often linked to caring responsibilities or workplace pressure.
- Fit notes typically spanned **1 to 5 weeks**, offering patients space to recover while supporting them with practical tools for return-to-work planning.
- Nearly all fit notes were **continuations**, reflecting the service's role in sustained support and phased rehabilitation, not just crisis intervention.

By issuing informed fit notes that reflect both physical and psychological aspects of health, OTs are helping reduce inappropriate medicalisation and enabling tailored recovery planning.

This work directly supports Outcome 2: *People, including those with disabilities or long-term conditions or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.*

By offering timely, localised, and holistic care, the *Working Together* team enables people to maintain independence, reduce reliance on medication, and stay connected to their community, employment, and daily roles.



Looking ahead, the team is committed to addressing workforce gaps and improving equity of access across all GP practices in NHS Ayrshire & Arran. Continued data analysis and Quality Improvement methodologies are being used to build the business case for expanded coverage—particularly through demonstrating financial impact such as reduced prescribing, shorter hospital stays, and effective return-to-work support.

Vocational rehabilitation outcomes were particularly strong:



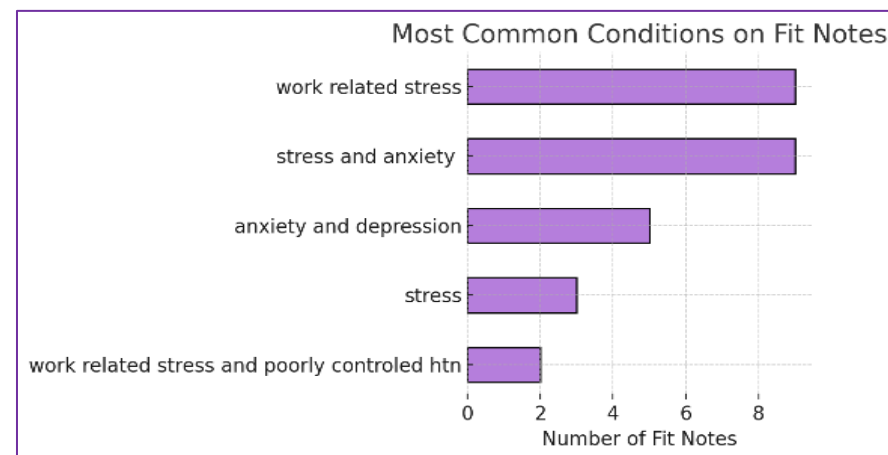
55% remained in work with or without adjustments.



25% returned to work.



Just 20% did not return or pursued alternatives.






“OT helped me understand what I’ve been through after a stroke... I’ve stayed out of bed longer and feel a real psychological benefit”

Outcome 3

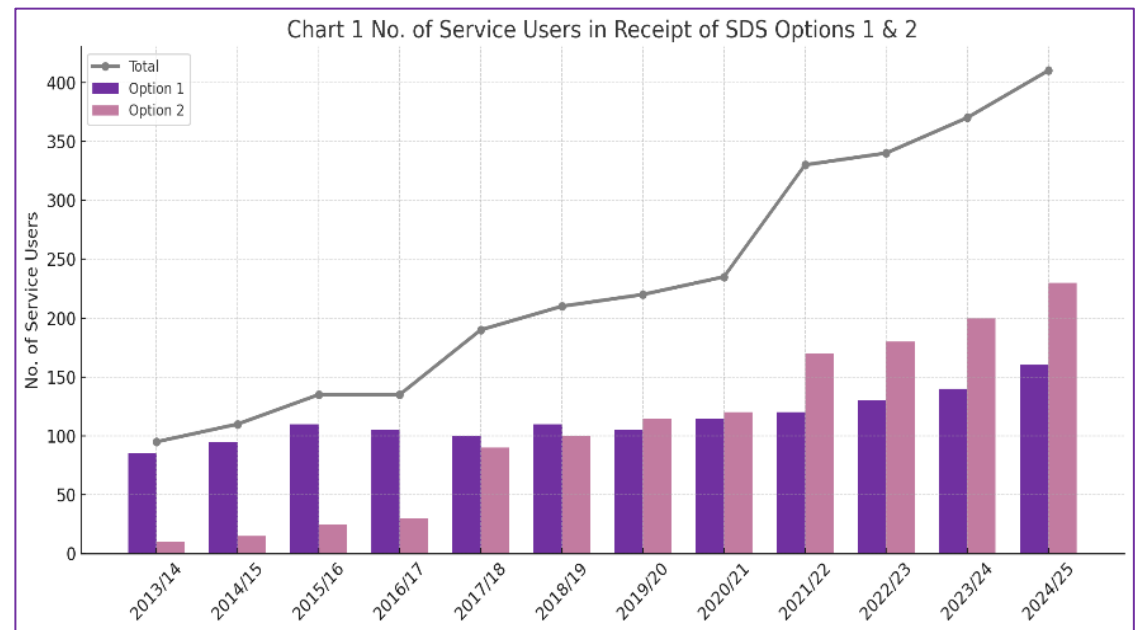
People who use health and social care services have positive experience of those services, and have their dignity respected.

- 60%** of South Ayrshire adults supported agree that they have had a say in how their help, care or support was provided. This is in line with the national average of 60% (HCES 2023/24).
 - 75%** of adults who receive any care or support rated it as excellent or good. This is higher than the national average of 70%. (HCES 2023/24)
 - 78%** of people reported positive experiences of the care provided by their GP practice. This is higher than the national average of 69%. (HCES 2023/24)
- (HCES 2023/24) Information above is provided every two years.

Self-Directed Support (SDS)

-  The uptake of SDS options 1 and 2 have increased from **374** in 2023 / 24 to **420** in 2024 / 25. Out of **1468** service users **420** direct their own care and support via SDS.
-  Option 1 (Direct Payment) levels increased from **140** in 2023 / 24 to **171** in 2024 / 25.
-  Option 2 (Individual Service Fund) has increased from **234** cases in 2023 / 24 to **249** in 2024 / 25.

The chart to the right highlights progress made with regards to the uptake on SDS options 1 and 2 demonstrating a consistent upward trend.



Building on the previously developed SDS e-learning training module, we now have completed frontline and practitioner level training sessions which further support our staff teams. The aim of the training is to start the SDS conversation earlier to give full choice and control and to ensure that staff met on various points of a service users journey are knowledgeable, skilled and confident in passing over the correct SDS information at the correct time with a suite of resources and guidance publications to further inform.

The above is further enhanced through the sharing of nationally developed tools and guidance such as the SDS Handbook, the SDS Practitioner Toolkit and further documents useful to both service user and staff.

SDS development and improvement continues in South Ayrshire with a number of joint working projects. Examples include updated systems and processes, updated contracts which encourage more flexible use of budgets as well as joint working with independent SDS advice services such as AILN and Community Brokerage.

On a broader scale, the SDS Lead continues to participate in national development workstreams facilitated by Social Work Scotland and In Control Scotland, funded by the Scottish Government. This year this includes involvement in the development of useful SDS resources, participation in the roll out of the SDS Learning and Development Framework and participation in the most recent workstream, 5&6, **'Developing a relationship based SDS practice model'**.

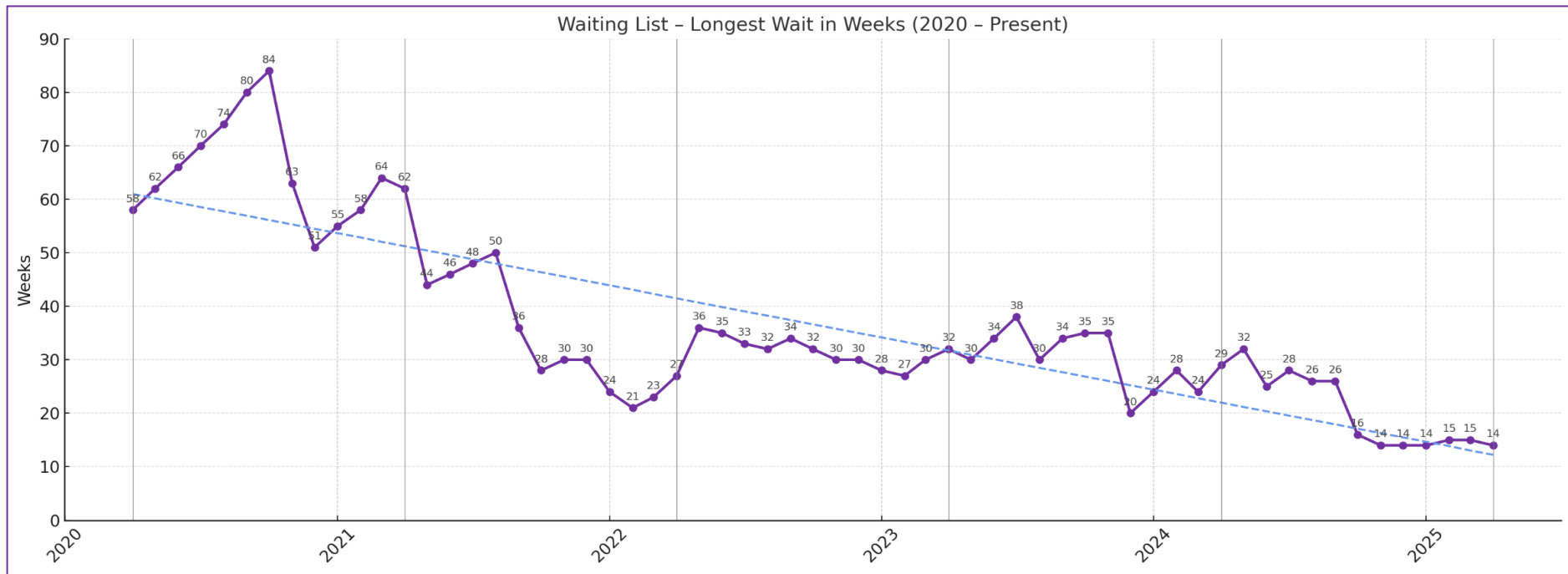
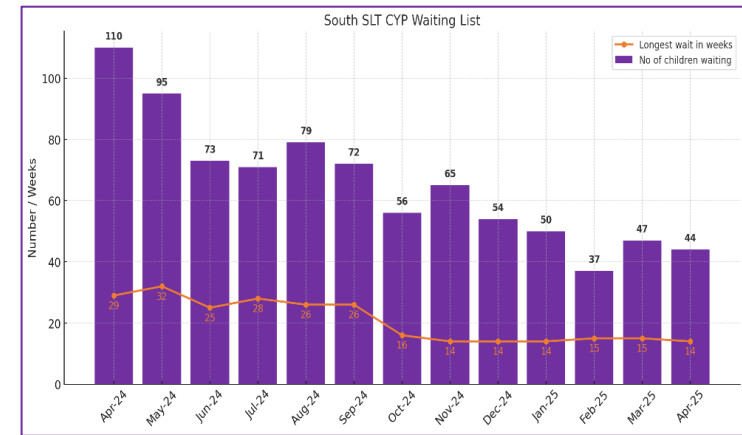
This collective effort—local and national—ensures that South Ayrshire continues to promote and embed self-directed support in a way that is consistent, person-centred, and responsive to individual needs. By equipping staff with the right tools and maintaining strong partnerships, we are helping to ensure that SDS is more than a policy—it's a practice that truly empowers people to live the lives they choose.

A promotional graphic for Self Directed Support (SDS) in South Ayrshire. The background is purple with a colorful, abstract splash of paint in green, yellow, and red on the right side. The text is white and purple. At the top, the title 'Self Directed Support' is underlined. Below it, a paragraph explains the goal: 'In South Ayrshire we want you to have choice, control and flexibility over the social support you receive so that you can start well, live well and age well.' Another paragraph states: 'With Self Directed Support (SDS) you can decide what support you need to achieve your goals.' To the left of a QR code, it says 'Find out more about Self Directed Support (SDS) and the options available on our website:'. The QR code is labeled 'SCAN ME'. At the bottom left, a white rounded rectangle contains the URL 'hscp.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/SDS'. At the bottom right is the South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership logo, which consists of a stylized white knot-like symbol and the text 'south ayrshire health & social care partnership'.

AHP Speech and Language Waiting List Initiative

Over the past year, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership’s Allied Health Professions (AHP) Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Service has made significant progress in tackling waiting times through targeted investment and innovation.

As part of the AHP Improvement Plan 2024–2026, the service set a clear objective to reduce waiting times to **16 weeks** by **December 2024**. Through a series of dedicated Waiting List Initiative posts and an expanded focus on early intervention, this ambitious target was achieved ahead of schedule – by **October 2024**.



The chart above illustrates the significant progress made in reducing the longest wait times for children and young people accessing Speech and Language Therapy services in South Ayrshire from April 2020 to April 2025.

At the height of demand in late 2020, some children were waiting up to **84** weeks for support. Through sustained improvement activity, targeted investment, and service redesign—particularly as part of the AHP Improvement Plan 2024–2026—waiting times have steadily reduced. By October 2024, the longest wait had reduced to **14** weeks and has been maintained at or below this level ever since.

This achievement reflects the effectiveness of early intervention, universal and targeted support offers, and improved access through helpline and virtual drop-in pathways. It demonstrates our commitment to delivering timely, person-centred care and ensuring that children and families get the right help at the right time.

A key contributor to this success has been the implementation of the AHP Improvement Plan 2024–2026, which introduced a number of new roles:

- A 1.0 WTE Band 5 SLT development post and a 0.6 WTE Band 4 SLT Assistant post began in July 2024.
- A 0.6 WTE Band 6 SLT post commenced in April 2025.
- A further 0.6 WTE Band 4 SLT Assistant post started in February 2025.

These posts have enabled increased capacity for initial assessments and interventions in schools, early years centres, clinics, and family homes. The initiative has also supported delivery of evidence-based group programmes such as Hanen and Bookbug for the Home. This has freed up clinical time across the wider team, allowing a greater focus on throughput and on expanding Universal and Targeted support offers in collaboration with education and health partners.

The SLT service continues to embed person-centred, holistic care approaches, empowering families and professionals by upskilling those closest to children and young people. Helpline and virtual drop-in services are playing an increasingly important role, offering timely advice and building parental confidence to try strategies without immediately needing a referral.



Looking ahead, the service is exploring innovative “**blue sky**” approaches, including the potential for families to move straight from helpline support to assessment appointments, eliminating waiting altogether.

This initiative demonstrates how targeted resourcing and partnership working can make a tangible difference to children and families across South Ayrshire.

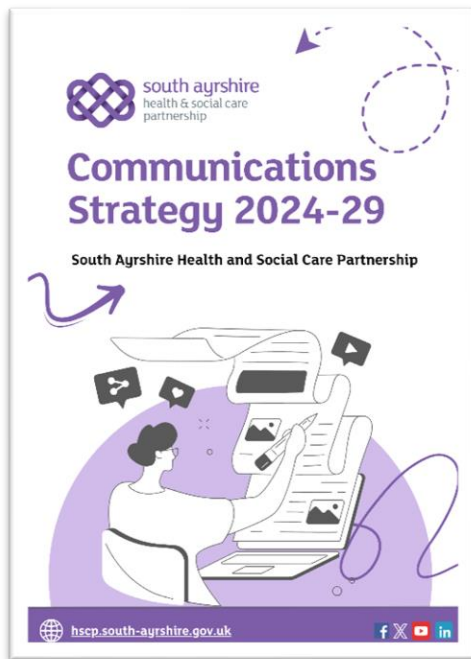
Independent Advocacy Plan

Approved by the IJB on 12th June 2024 the HSCP's [Independent Advocacy Plan](#) is a new plan that has been developed to ensure people in South Ayrshire have their voice heard, can express their needs, make informed decisions, and have their rights and interests protected.

The Plan takes us from 2024-29 and has been informed by the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, guidance from the Independent Advocacy Guide for Commissioners from the Scottish Government (2013) and by engaging with advocacy providers, people who use independent advocacy services, their carers, staff, and families.

The key themes identified which will be the forefront of improvement work are:

- Staff training and knowledge.
- Public awareness.
- Information sharing/communication.



Communications Strategy

Effective communication is at the very heart of achieving of the vision of the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership. A key objective of the IJB's Strategic Plan is for the HSCP to be transparent and listen to our communities.

The refreshed [Communications Strategy 2024-29](#) has been developed during this reporting period and was approved by the Integration Joint Board on 12th June 2024.

This strategy sets out how we plan to use communications to keep our communities, our staff and our partners up to date with work being taken forward by the HSCP. This includes improving access to information, celebrating success, providing opportunity for engagement and raising awareness of the fantastic services and support available in South Ayrshire.

Outcome 4

Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of service users.



67% of adults supported at home agreed that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life. This is lower than the national average of 70% (HCES 2023-24).



73% of care services were graded “good” or better (NI- 17).

Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP)

During 2024-25 the Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) continued to implement their [Recovery is Reality Strategy 2023 - 2026](#) which brings together the strategic commitments and commissioning priorities identified through their Learning Review and related research and scoping studies, all of which were informed by the views of individuals and families affected by alcohol or drugs, as well as practitioners and managers.

The ADP continued to work collaboratively to implement the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards. The experiential data collection process was expanded, introducing the service improvement tools in the Charter of Rights to reviews findings and identify improvement areas. South Ayrshire achieved a Provisional Green RAGB status for MAT Standard 7 and Green across all other Standards.

MAT Standards Benchmarking by Reporting Year

ADP	Reporting ..	MAT 1	MAT 2	MAT 3	MAT 4	MAT 5	MAT 6	MAT 6 & 10	MAT 7	MAT 8	MAT 9	MAT 10
South Ayrshire	2022	Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green						
	2023	Provisional Green	Provisional Green	Provisional Green	Provisional Green	Provisional Green	Provisional Amber		Amber	Amber	Provisional Amber	Provisional Amber
	2024	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green		Provisional Green	Provisional Green	Provisional Green	Provisional Green	
	2025	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green		Green	Provisional Green	Green	Green	

RAGB colour legend

- Provisional Amber
- Amber
- Provisional Green
- Green

2022 – MAT 6 to MAT 10 were not assessed
 2023 – MAT 6 and MAT 10 were assessed separately
 2024 – MAT 6 and MAT 10 were assessed jointly
 2025 – MAT 6 and MAT 10 were assessed jointly

On the 17th of June 2024 the ADP launched its new one stop shop hub 'Compass' in Ayr which aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people with multiple and complex needs by creating a multiagency, multidisciplinary hub through which access to different kinds of support can be more quickly and effectively coordinated.

Compass is supported by over 20 partners, offering a wide range of drop-in support, including evening and weekend support. In the first nine months there were over **3,000** attendances at Compass. A year 1 activity and evaluation report is being prepared ahead of an Open Day on the 17th June 2025.

The ADP continues to build on its activities to embed a whole family approach, through the provision of the multiagency Connexions Team. Additional family support groups have been launched including Hope After Loss for people who have lost a loved one due to alcohol or drugs and a new Parenting Group. The Connexions Team are also working collaboratively with @48 to offer a new monthly Family Café where parents and children can come together for social connections and support.

They continued to develop our collaborative practices with Justice Services offering a range of peer led support for people involved with justice services, including in reach support in custody settings. Their lived experience and front-line practitioner led subgroup continue to take forward activities to implement their local Stigma Charter and Stigma Awareness sessions continue to be rolled out across South Ayrshire.

RecoveryAyr, grassroots and lived experience led recovery charity, secured grant funding to take forward their ambition to open a vibrant and thriving community venue in the heart of Ayr. @48 offers a range of activities for individuals and the whole family including alcohol and drug free social events and activities, peer lived recovery focussed groups, volunteering, and training opportunities. In November 2024 RecoveryAyr welcomed the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, to @48 to visit the new premises and meet with volunteers and family members.

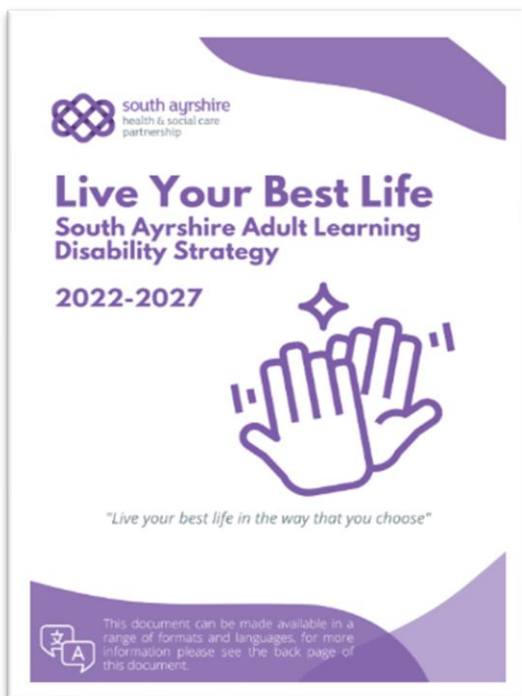
On the 30th of August 2024 the ADP hosted a Connecting Recovery Day which aimed to bring people together, raise awareness of support available families affected by alcohol or drugs, and to remember those we have sadly lost to alcohol, drugs, or suicide. The morning saw the office launch of Compass where partners and members of the community were invited to find out more about the new venue and support available.

The second part of the day saw communities coming together to remember those we have lost to alcohol, drugs, or suicide at our Annual Flower Walk. The local Flower Walk a yearly activity which takes place in Ayr as part of International Overdose Awareness Day where participants are



joining a global movement for understanding, compassion, and change. The final part of the day was a celebration of individual and family recovery as RecoveryAyr, officially launched @48. The family friendly afternoon offered a range of free activities including live music, balloon modelling, Owl Magic, alternative therapies, creativity, information stalls and much more.

Through a clear commitment to person-centred, recovery-oriented, and stigma-free support, the ADP's work during 2024–25 has made a tangible contribution to **Outcome 4**. The expansion of accessible services such as Compass and @48, alongside targeted family and peer-led initiatives, ensures that individuals and families affected by alcohol and drugs are not only receiving support, but are also actively involved in shaping it. These inclusive, multiagency approaches are improving access, reducing harm, and fostering stronger connections—all of which directly support the aim of maintaining and improving the quality of life for people across South Ayrshire.



Learning Disability Strategy 2022-27

Since its launch in August 2022, the South Ayrshire HSCP has made great strides in implementing the Adult Learning Disability Strategy. This strategy, which aligns with *The Keys to Life*, aims to empower individuals with learning disabilities to lead healthy, independent lives, have control over their decisions, and actively participate in their communities.

As of today, we've achieved over **99%** of the strategy's objectives, with **37** out of **38** actions completed. This progress demonstrates the ongoing commitment to ensuring people with learning disabilities in South Ayrshire have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The strategy's success is also down to the continuous collaboration with service users, their families and carers, as well as professionals from across various sectors. The League of Champions, a group of individuals with learning disabilities, their families, and staff, plays a key role in ensuring the principles of the strategy are put into action and that these principles continue to guide our work.

What We've Achieved:

We've successfully completed **37** of the planned actions, which include:

- **Community Involvement:** People with learning disabilities have been actively engaged in local activities, with a particular focus on ensuring these groups meet their varied needs. Information about these groups has been made accessible through platforms like Connect South Ayrshire. 
- **Housing Solutions:** We've made significant progress in creating a 'Market Position Statement' that addresses housing needs for individuals with learning disabilities. This includes exploring different housing models and support options, and it remains a work in progress, with a final report due in July 2025. 
- **Learning and Employment:** Through partnerships with Thriving Communities and Ayrshire College, we've improved opportunities for learning and employment, particularly for people over 30, and reviewed local recruitment practices to ensure inclusivity. 
- **Quality Assurance:** Our Quality Assurance process has been integrated into service delivery, with regular audits ensuring the views of service users and their carers are heard and acted upon. 
- **Volunteering and Community Engagement:** The Community Connector role has helped foster community inclusion and volunteering opportunities, further supporting individuals with learning disabilities to contribute meaningfully to their communities. 

The strategy has made significant progress, and we're proud of the results so far. The Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities has acknowledged the strategy as a leading example, which is a testament to the work done. However, we remain committed to ongoing self-evaluation to ensure the strategy continues to meet the changing needs of the Learning Disability community.

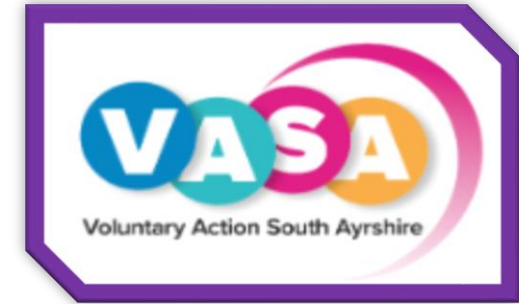
As we move forward, it's essential to keep training our staff to work in a person-centred, trauma-informed way. We're dedicated to ensuring the strategy adapts to the needs of our community, and that everyone with learning disabilities has the support they need to live their best life.

The implementation of the Adult Learning Disability Strategy clearly reflects a commitment to **Outcome 4** by placing people with learning disabilities at the heart of decision-making, service design, and community life. Through actions that promote independence, inclusion, and choice—such as accessible community groups, tailored housing options, meaningful employment, and volunteering opportunities—the strategy has directly enhanced quality of life. The ongoing involvement of the League of Champions ensures that lived experience continues to shape services, while the emphasis on trauma-informed, person-centred support strengthens individuals' sense of control and wellbeing. Together, these efforts are creating a more inclusive South Ayrshire where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Partnership Working for Wellbeing

We have continued to work closely with a range of partners, this includes Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA), the Third Sector Interface for South Ayrshire.

SA HSCP has continued to support VASA to take forward a range of projects, some of which are highlighted below:



Case Study

Mrs G was referred to the Telephone Befriending Service by the Intermediate Care Team. She had become housebound and had no close family nearby. Mrs G was matched with a Telephone Befriender who provided kindness and support.

The phone call has become the highlight of her week. Over the last year Mrs G has had a lengthy stay in hospital and suffered a significant bereavement, so the friendship of her Telephone Befriender became more important than ever. Mrs G described her Telephone Befriender as an 'Angel'."

Telephone Befriending

The Telephone Befriending Service continues to support those who are socially isolated and normally extremely inactive, to receive a telephone call from a matched volunteer at least once a week. This call is a friendly chat about things such as hobbies, days gone by, books, family, TV etc. It is an uplifting and positive chat with the aim of lifting the spirits of the Befriender.

69 volunteers support the co-ordinator to deliver this service, calling a referred clients on a weekly basis. All volunteer recruitment and induction are conducted by the Co-ordinator as well as continued support to both volunteers and Befrienders.

Many conversations are had with clients before the Co-ordinator makes the 'match' between the Befriender and the Befriender, ensuring they are compatible. The Co-ordinator oversees communication throughout the length of the match, picking up any concerns the Befriender may have about the client. This may then lead the Co-ordinator to signpost to other services or report back to the original referrer.

Attendance Allowance

The Attendance Allowance/ Blue Badge service has continued to be an important service, with referrals coming mostly from Healthcare Professionals. Self-referrals are also accepted and mainly come from people who have heard of the service through a friend, relative or from the outreach service at libraries.

01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025 - 10 months out of last 12 months (officer had 2 months compassionate leave): **171** referrals.

- **133** were taken forward to application as **38** were either not eligible to claim (once officer spoke to them), did not wish to progress, were in hospital or are currently on the waiting list to be seen by our officer.
- Out of **133** applications, **97.75%** were successful (**130**).
- **130** successful applications bring in weekly income to South Ayrshire of **£12,898.35** or annually **£670,714.20**.
- **26** blue badge applications also completed in above period with **100%** success rate.

Since the start of this service, the total annual amount that is now being brought into South Ayrshire through AA totals just under **£2m**

We encourage those in receipt of the benefit to use the additional money to buy-in services that they need to help them with housework, shopping, etc. and it can make a great difference to people's quality of life. It also keeps that additional income local, having a positive effect on the local economy.

Community Support

2024 has been the second year of providing low level support to those within the community to try and link them back with their wider community. Most of the clients have been older people who have been in hospital and require services from the Enablement Team, who refer them on for any additional support VASA can offer to help them back into the community.

Case Study



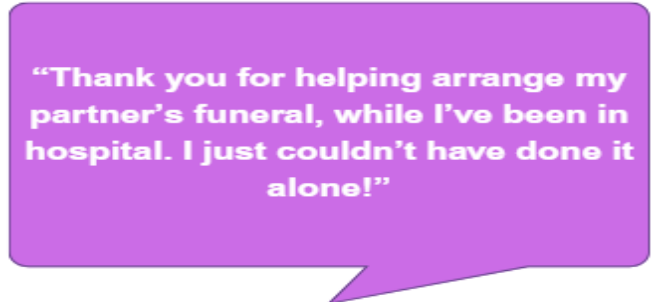
Mr A has lived alone since the death of his wife and his health has deteriorated. He could no longer drive and had lost his confidence on public transport.

A claim was made for Attendance Allowance and a blue badge. Both were successful and Mr A could now afford a taxi to take him out to the prom where he and his wife loved to walk. He was also able to use his blue badge to allow the taxi to take him to the high street to enjoy shopping or meeting people without the worry of public transport. He said he had got his life back.

“Really grateful for taking the time to talk to mum and I and putting us in touch with VASA to get my mum Attendance Allowance”.

The types of interventions have included: arranging counselling for a client, confidence building, engaging with the community, connections to foodbanks and arranging shopping delivery services, encouraging and supporting clients to travel either by bus, train or returning to driving, end of life support and signposting to other services.

As part of this service, over **450** level three prescriptions were also collected and delivered to housebound older people.



“Thank you for helping arrange my partner’s funeral, while I’ve been in hospital. I just couldn’t have done it alone!”

Hospital Discharge Support

The Hospital Discharge Support role saw a non-clinical staff member work within Ayr & Biggart Hospitals listening to patients and actioning their bespoke needs, where possible, to allow for a speedier and smoother transition discharge from hospital back to home.

Areas where patients were supported included: building confidence up again after a fall, supplying a toiletry bag with hygiene products, facilitating the installation of key safes and community alarms, setting up befrienders, chaperones, shoppers and cleaners. The officer also supported patients and their families maximise their benefits by referring them to the right people and signpost them to local activities and clubs to keep not only their bodies active but also their minds.

Within **6** months of working with the discharge team, our Hospital Discharge Support Worker has seen nearly **100 patients**.

Out and About Service

The Out and About Service supported people in South Ayrshire who were feeling isolated or required a boost to their confidence in getting back into their local community, focusing on socialising and becoming more active. Referred clients could get up to **6** interactions.

Demand for this service saw a significant reduction during 2024 and this service came to an end in December 2024. This was seen as a positive move towards recovery since this service was developed as a result of COVID and the then demand for people to be supported back out into their communities. In the 9 months (April-Dec24) **30** active referrals were taken forward with around **220** hours of face-to-face interactions within the community delivered across South Ayrshire.



Age Friendly Communities

Promotion of the Ageing Well Champions Board and Age Friendly communities has continued apace throughout 2024. Following on from the successful launch event in June 2023, VASA and the Champions Board organised the One Year On event, again at Ayr Town Hall, bringing together around **100** over 50s reflecting on the successes over the past 12 months and to focus on the year ahead, primarily the unveiling of the new Ageing Well Strategy. The event presented the partnership the opportunity to launch the consultation process with attendees providing feedback on both appearance and content. VASA supported the very successful formal launch event at the Gaiety Theatre for the strategy in September 2024. VASA continues to provide strong support via the action plan which accompanies the strategy and our many and varied events ensuring we are providing all encouragement to everyone to Age Well in South Ayrshire.

International Day of Older Persons Celebrations

Events for International Day of Older People are now well established in the annual planning and 2024 again saw a busy calendar of activities.

Over 300 people participated over the space of the four days. Hosted at the Cutty Sark Centre in Ayr the first event focused on Health and Wellbeing with a range of free activities on offer in addition to the opportunity to have a Fitness MOT courtesy of the Stay Ahead of the Curve team. Returning to the Cutty Sark Centre for the second event provided the location for Over 50's Volunteering and Recruitment Showcase bringing together local employers and volunteer organisations.



Outcome 5

Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities

Premature mortality



The death rates for those aged under **75** increased from **426** per 100,000 in 2022 to **458** in 2023, which is higher than the Scottish average of **442**.

Life expectancy

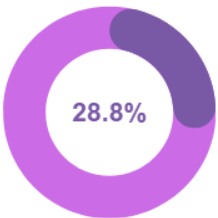
In the latest time period available from 2021 - 23 (3-year aggregate), the average life expectancy in South Ayrshire was **76.7** years old for men, and **81.1** years old for women. This is higher than both the NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Scotland wide life expectancies for females. The South Ayrshire life expectancy for males is higher than NHS Ayrshire and Arran, but lower than Scotland.

	South Ayrshire HSCP	Ayrshire & Arran Health Board	Scotland
Female	81.1	79.6	80.8
Male	76.7	75.5	76.8

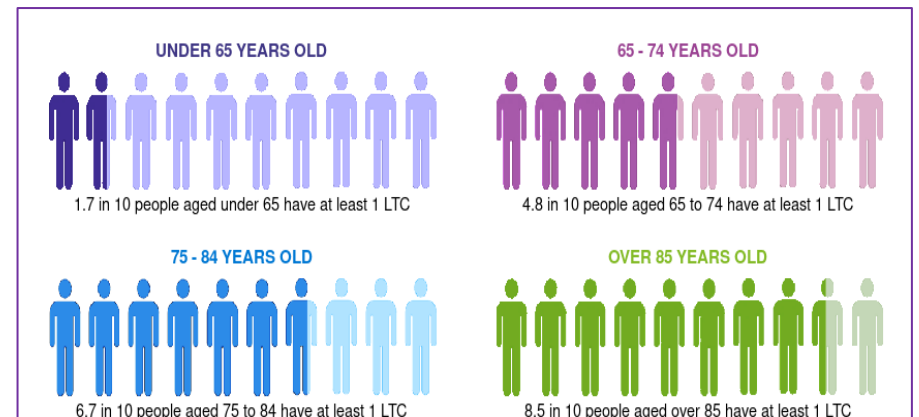
The table to the right provides the average life expectancy for men and women in different areas for the latest time period available. Please note that these are 3-year aggregates from 2021 – 2023 at HSCP, Health Board, and Scotland level.

Life expectancy in South Ayrshire varies between each locality with Prestwick and Villages having the highest average expectancy for males at **79.7** and **82.3** for females. The lowest life expectancy for males and females was in Ayr North, with **71** and **77.7**, respectively.

Long-Term Physical Health Conditions and Multimorbidity



For the financial year 2023/24, **28.8%** of the total population in South Ayrshire had at least one physical long-term condition (LTC). These include cardiovascular, neurodegenerative, and respiratory conditions, as well as other organ conditions (namely liver disease and renal failure), arthritis, cancer, diabetes, and epilepsy.



The co-occurrence of two or more conditions, known as multimorbidity, is broken down in the table below, distinguishing between age groups. Overall, **4%** of those under the age of 65 have more than one LTC, compared to **33.5%** of those aged over 65.

Below is a table demonstrating Multimorbidity of physical long-term conditions by age group in 2023/24 as well as a breakdown of the most common physical Long-Term Conditions (LTCs)

	Proportion over 65 (%)	Proportion under 65 (%)
1 LTC	26.3	13.1
2 LTC	15.7	2.8
3 LTC	9.1	0.8
4 + LTC's	8.7	0.4

South Ayrshire HSCP	Scotland
Cancer 7.64 %	Arthritis 5.72 %
Asthma 7.23 %	Cancer 5.49 %
Arthritis 6.78 %	Asthma 4.96 %
Coronary heart disease 6.67 %	Coronary heart disease 4.68 %
Diabetes 4.6 %	Diabetes 3.47 %

Communication Friendly Environments: Tackling Inequality Through Inclusive Practice

The South Ayrshire Communication Friendly Environments (SACFE) project is making a significant contribution to reducing health inequalities by removing barriers for individuals with speech, language and communication needs. By enabling services and community settings to become more accessible and inclusive, SACFE ensures that people who might otherwise be marginalised can engage meaningfully with health, care and wider support systems.

Led by a Speech and Language Therapist and Assistant, the SACFE Communities Team works with a diverse range of partners—businesses, charities, playgroups and voluntary organisations—supporting them to adopt inclusive communication approaches. These include visual signage, communication boards, Makaton resources, and trained staff using supportive communication strategies. Each setting



receives tailored input, including environmental assessments, bespoke tools, and a two-hour training session. Once accredited, settings are added to the South Ayrshire Communication Friendly map, raising visibility and public awareness.

As of April 2025:

- **35** settings have begun their SACFE journey.
- **14** have achieved full accreditation—including Tempura, Kitty Cat Café, Ayr Housing Aid Centre, and various early years and after-school groups.
- Large, publicly accessible communication boards have been installed in parks, beaches and woodlands, with QR codes linking to Makaton videos—many funded by local businesses.



A parent of a non-verbal child described their son’s birthday meal at an accredited venue as “**a wonderful dining experience**”—highlighting the real-life impact of staff training and visual supports.

Staff themselves also report greater confidence and connection when communicating with individuals who have additional support needs.

To build this confidence and capability, SACFE delivered **Total Communication** training to staff, focusing on speech, language and communication strategies, communication boards, and a Makaton taster session. Following a two-hour session, **11 staff members** completed a questionnaire combining quantitative and qualitative questions to reflect on their learning.

The results showed clear, measurable improvements:

- Understanding of speech, language and communication needs rose from **9% to 100%**.
- Confidence in communicating with individuals with communication difficulties increased from **27% to 100%**.
- Knowledge of supportive strategies rose from **9% to 100%**.
- Awareness and understanding of Makaton increased from 0% to **82%**.
- Staff themselves also report greater confidence and connection.



These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of practical, focused training. By embedding inclusive communication into everyday practice, SACFE is helping to close the gap in service access and experience—ensuring that more people, regardless of communication ability, can participate fully and equally.

The SACFE project is making a clear and measurable contribution to **Outcome 5** by actively addressing communication as a key barrier to equitable access. Through practical, inclusive interventions and training, the initiative enables individuals with speech, language and communication needs to access services and community settings that might otherwise be inaccessible.

By empowering staff with the knowledge and tools to communicate inclusively, and by adapting environments to meet diverse needs, SACFE helps reduce disparities in service experience and outcomes. This targeted work ensures that those who are often excluded are instead welcomed, understood, and supported—tackling inequality at its roots and promoting fairer access to health and social care across South Ayrshire.



"I was able to use Makaton with a patient this week. I felt so confident introducing myself. I'm buzzing"

Outcome 6

People who provide unpaid care are supported to reduce the potential impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing

Young Carers

Key Highlights 2024-2025

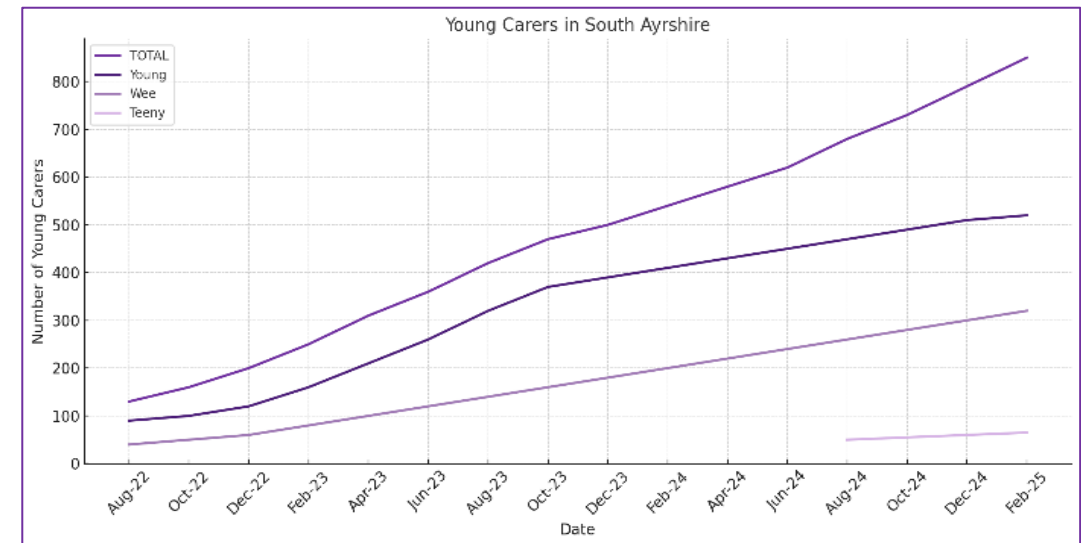
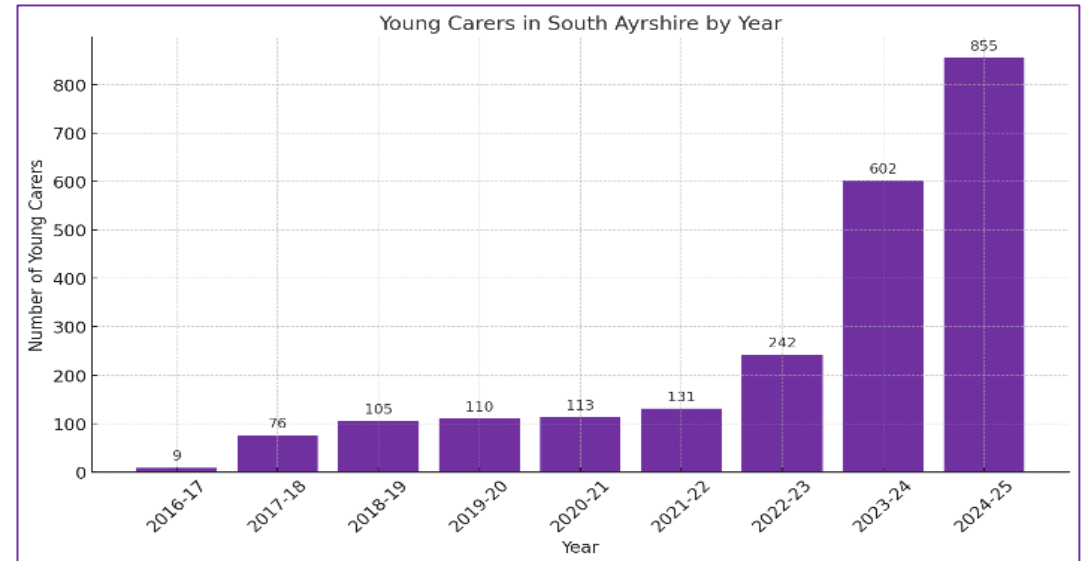
In South Ayrshire, we are proud to lead the way in recognising and supporting our young carers – children and young people who help to care for a family member due to illness, disability, mental health or substance use. Between April 2024 and March 2025, we've made significant strides in raising awareness, reducing stigma, and providing practical support to ensure young carers feel seen, valued, and supported.

Reaching Hidden Young Carers

As of 31 March 2025, we identified:

- **22** early years carers
- **362** primary-aged young carers
- **359** secondary school young carers
- **1** young carer in an additional support needs school
- **110** young carers supported through Employability & Skills

Recognising that many young carers remain hidden, we partnered with education colleagues to address this invisibility. With a strong evidence base showing that **1** in **5** pupils could have a caring role, we worked across every school in South Ayrshire to raise awareness and improve identification. Training was mandated for all education staff – a UK first – and each school appointed a Young Carer Champion.

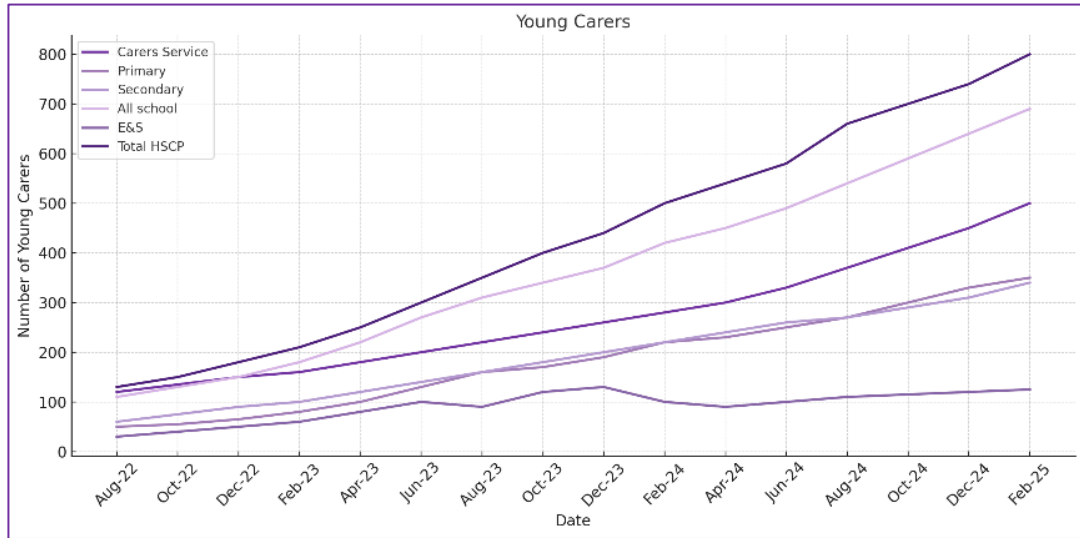


Making Schools Safe and Supportive Spaces

With support from the HSCP, schools have embedded young carer policies, created tailored supports, and promoted awareness through:

- Peer support groups and Young Carer Ambassadors
- Assemblies led by young carers
- Information boards, badges, and lanyards
- Recognition in school handbooks and social media

This has transformed schools into more inclusive communities, improving engagement, confidence and emotional wellbeing for young carers. Every school in South Ayrshire – and two Early Years Centres – have now achieved the **Young Carers in Schools Award**, making us the **only local authority in the UK** where this has been accomplished.



“Young carers support is now a central part of our work in South Ayrshire to ensure we meet the needs of children and young people in an inclusive and supportive system.”
Lynsey McRoberts- Director of Education / Depute Chief Executive

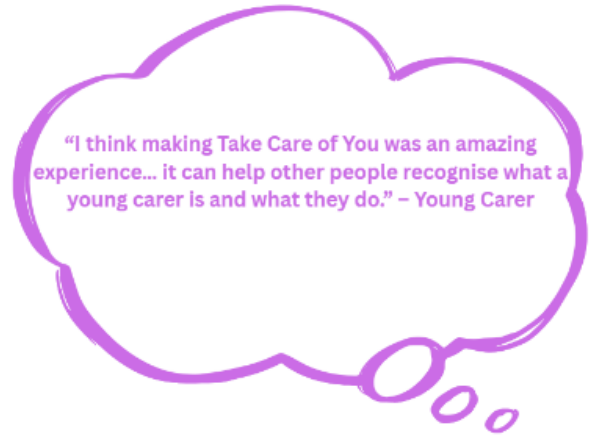


Celebrating Stories: Take Care of You

Building on the award-winning success of our previous film *The Weekend*, we launched **Take Care of You** – a heartfelt film created by young carers for young carers.

Developed in partnership with The Iris, the film was written, performed and filmed by primary-aged carers, sharing their real-life experiences through fictional storytelling.

The premiere event, **A Wee Night at the Oscars**, was hosted by two of our wee carers, Abi and Fraser. It was a joyous celebration of talent, courage and creativity. The film is now being shared in schools as a powerful awareness-raising and training tool.



Young Carers Action Day & Meeting Ministers

This year's Young Carers Action Day, themed "**Give me a break!**", saw young carers travel to Edinburgh to visit the Scottish Parliament. They met with Deputy First Minister Kate Forbes, participated in the Cross Party Group for Carers, and enjoyed a visit to Dynamic Earth – many for the first time.

Young carers also engaged with the Scottish Government's Travelling Cabinet during its visit to Ayr. They shared personal stories – and even left Ministers with South Ayrshire Young Carer logo tattoos!



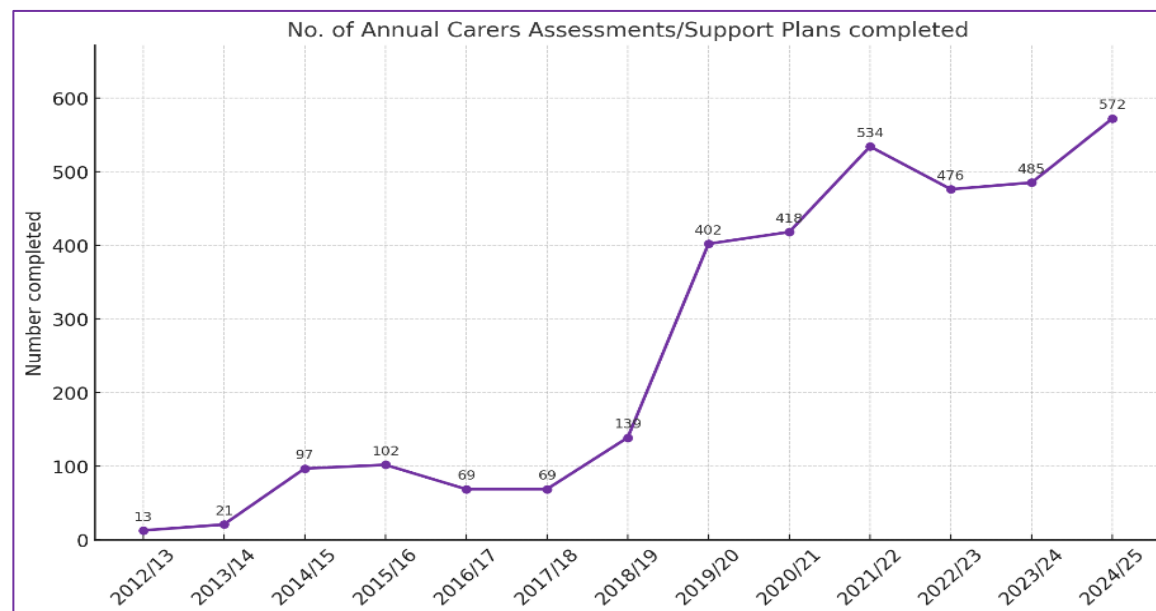
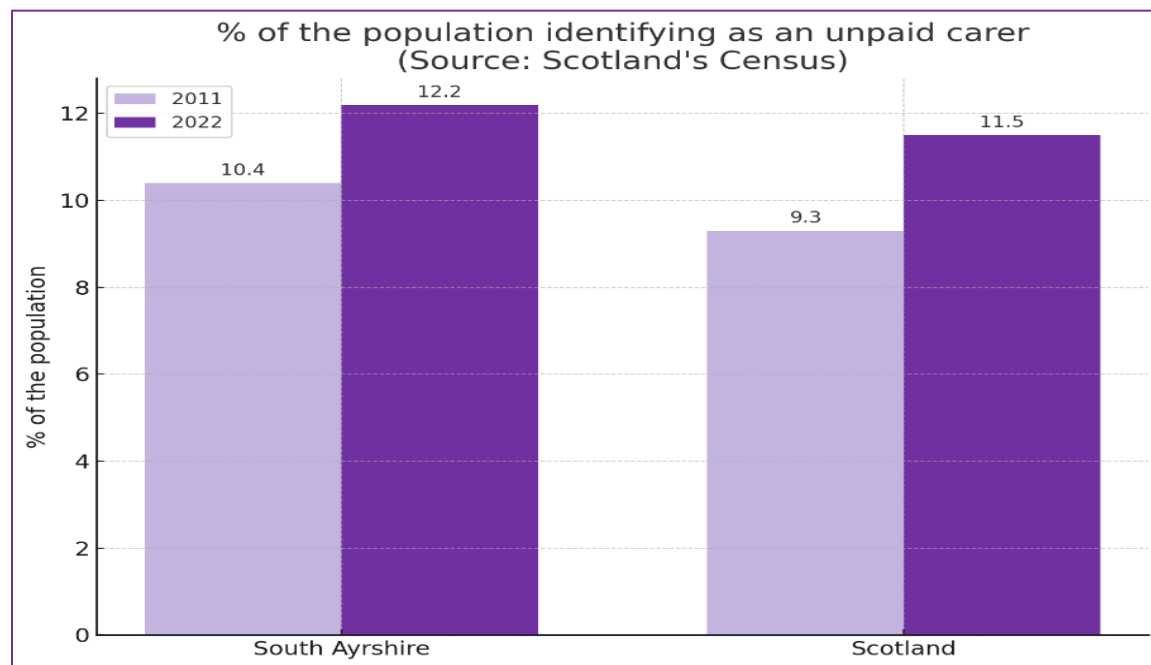
Adult Carers

The Scottish Carers Census was last published in December 2023, identifying **52,000** Carers known to Services across Scotland from 2023-2024. This represents a **17%** increase from the reported number of carers in 2022-2023 (**44,310**).

Figures from the 2022 Scotland's NRS Census showed **12.2%** of the population in South Ayrshire were carers compared to Scotland's average figure was **11.5%**, this compares to **10.4%** in South Ayrshire in 2011 therefore numbers are increasing.

As South Ayrshire represents two percent of the Scottish Population this figure would mean by population average, we are presently supporting more than average (**1,040**) with **1,666** known carers presently active within our commissioned service – **1,141** Adult and **525** Young carers, and a further **572** having been identified and opting to have a Support Plan completed via our Adult Services Teams in 2024/25.

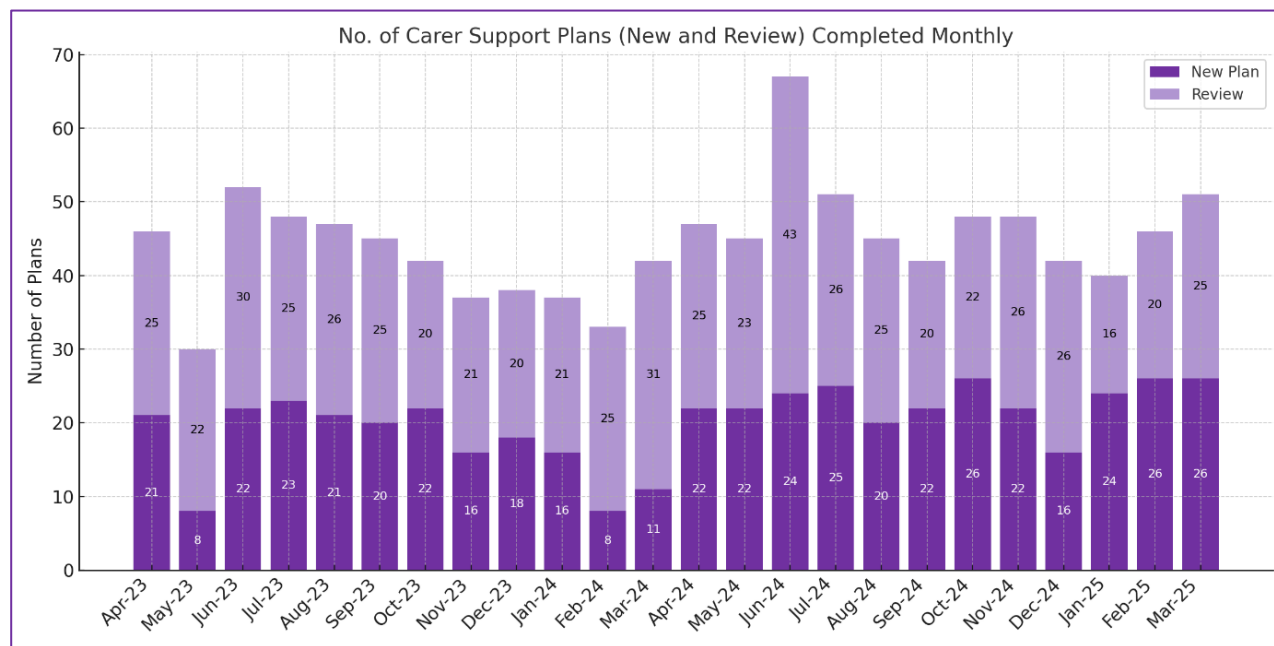
Within the 2022 Scotland Census **13,623** people in South Ayrshire had identified themselves as a Carer, this number considers both Adult and Young carers and displays there are likely more carers within South Ayrshire to be identified by services and offered a support plan. Not every carer is known to the HSCP. Furthermore, of those who are, not all have requested or accepted an assessment. This is an area that we continue to raise awareness and actively promote.



There has been an improvement in the numbers of Adult Carer Support Plans being offered, generated and reviewed over the reporting period April 2024 to March 2025.

Adult Carers Strategy 2019 - 24

The [Adult Carers Strategy 2019 - 24](#), which was published in May 2019 has now concluded, and we are in the consultation phase of developing a refreshed strategy for Adult Carers. The refresh of the Adult Carers Strategy commenced in January 2025. We considered from the outset both learning from the previous strategy alongside the updated Scottish Government National Strategy 2022 and more recent updated statutory guidance. A refreshed Adult Carers Strategy will be presented to the IJB for agreement in Autumn 2025.



Carers Week (10th-16th June 2024)

Carers week took place from the 10-16th June 2024 where the theme was ‘Putting Carers on the Map’, highlighting the invaluable contributions of carers across the UK and ensuring their voices are heard. We worked in partnership with our commissioned carers service and partners to provide a weeklong celebration of adult carers.

There were 10 different experiences on offer for adult carers, which included beach wellbeing walks, an Adult Carer Workers event, Carers Awareness information stalls, Carers Natter group Tea Party, adult carers lunch and workshops. Employability and Skills hosted an amazing employability event at the Riverside Sports Academy for Adult carers with activities, stalls from various organisations, live music, and food. As well as having the opportunity to discuss opportunities with stall holders, the adult carers who attended also enjoyed interactive games. Besides celebrating with adult carers, we had a social media takeover, articles in local press and held information stalls across South Ayrshire.



The programme of activities for carers week will provide events covering all our localities. Carers week will first and foremost be an opportunity to identify and celebrate the role of unpaid carers and at the same time we can use the opportunity to gather feedback to inform the development of our new strategy.

Carers Events

SA HSCP continue to develop, deliver and support a full programme of events including Local Carers Days. Planning has included Carers Days in Prestwick, Troon and Ayr to increase identification and the profile of celebrating Carers, drawing attention to support that can be accessed.

cAyrFest:

In South Ayrshire, an estimated **70%** of young carers and **93%** of adult carers remain part of a hidden population. To shine a light on their vital contributions and connect them with support, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership partnered with **Voluntary Action South Ayrshire** to host **cAyrFest**—a free, inclusive event dedicated to recognising and celebrating unpaid carers of all ages.

Held across five Ayr venues—**Cutty Sark, Ayr Town Hall, The Place, Grain Exchange, and Grammar Primary School**—cAyrFest brought together a diverse range of services, organisations, and community groups, all working to support carers and their families.

Officially opened by the provost and launched with a vibrant performance by the Rock Choir, the event aimed to: Raise awareness of unpaid carers and their roles

- Encourage carers to seek support
- Challenge stigma surrounding caring
- Foster open conversations around caring responsibilities and the conditions of cared-for individuals

cAyrFest was designed to be fun, accessible, and welcoming for all, with activities and entertainment across all venues for every age group.

Activities included:

- **Interactive drumming** – *Drum 4 Ur Life*
- **Balloon animals and magic** – *Fabulous Fraser*
- **Outdoor activities** – *Bike track, archery, and games by Active Communities*



- **Face painting and crafts** – *Thriving Communities*
- **Photo booth** – *Ayrshire College*
- **Silent disco and cinema** – *The Iris*
- **Escape rooms** – *Ayrshire Escape Rooms*
- **Wellbeing and mental health spaces** – *Ayrshire Healing Centre and ThreeSixty*
- **Rock painting** – *Alloway Tunnel Project*
- **Vintage vehicle display** – *Cumnock Heritage*
- **Petting zoo** – *Bunny Luv*
- **Climbing wall** – *The Outdoor Partnership*
- **Live music** – *Scott Nicol and local young musicians*
- **Scavenger hunt** – *Family-friendly fun across venues*
- **Market stalls** – *Various local organisations and services*

To make the event as inclusive and comfortable as possible the event also offered:

- Free refreshments were provided across all venues, including **hot dogs, tea and coffee, sweetie bags, biscuits, popcorn, ice cream and slushies**
- Free **transport** was arranged, ensuring carers and families from across South Ayrshire could attend with ease.

A highlight of the day was the **Unpaid Carers Art Exhibition**, showcasing powerful creative expressions from carers themselves.

The winning entry received a unique prize: their portrait will be painted as part of the **Alloway Tunnel Mural**, a lasting tribute to the unseen contributions of carers in our communities.



Outcome 7

People who use health and social care services are safe from harm

The IJB and HSCP have a key role in ensuring people are cared for well, free from harm and safe in their home or homely environment. Governance across this area is carried out by the Chief Officers Group, Performance and Audit Committee and Health Care Governance Committee. These groups seek assurance and hold managers to account across a wide range of performance measures.

Adult Protection (ASP)

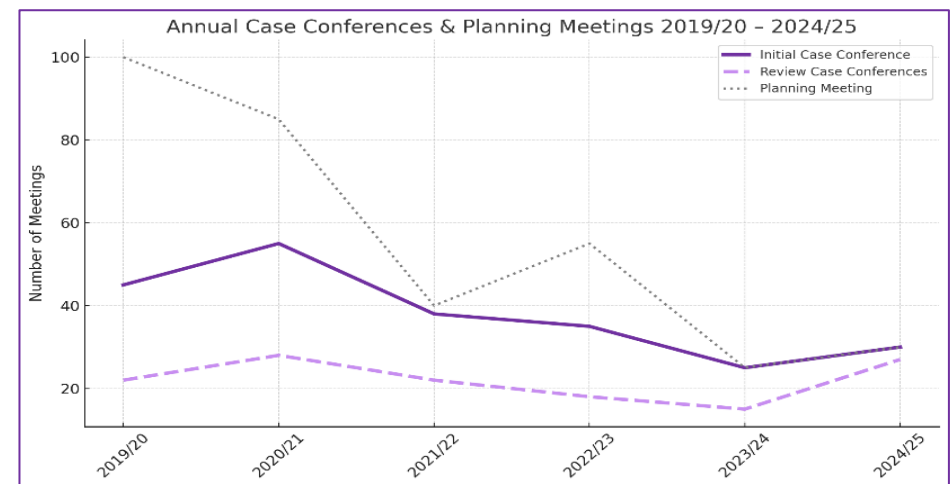
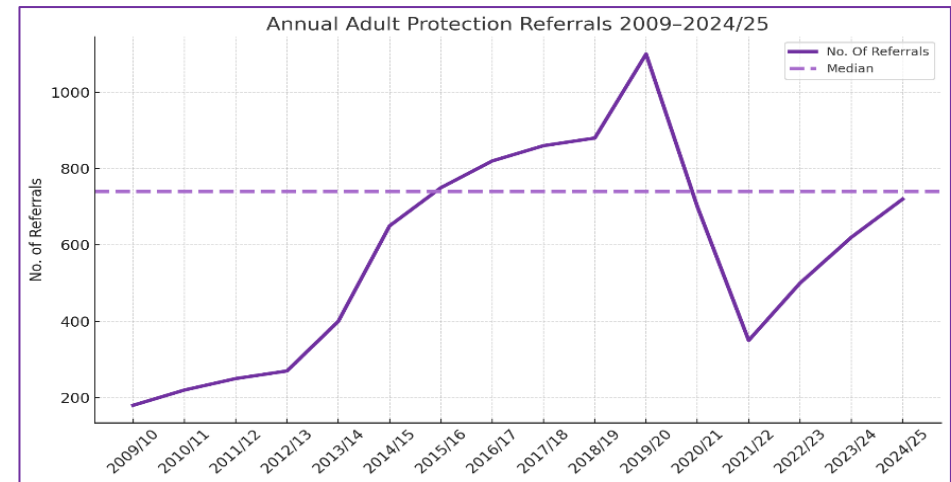
The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 protects adults at risk of harm due to disability, illness, or infirmity. South Ayrshire's Adult Protection Committee (APC) continues to drive improvement and collaboration across services.

Key Activity in 2024–25:

- Referrals: **723** Adult Protection referrals received a **13% increase** from 642 the previous year.
- Investigations: **223** ASP Investigations conducted—a **42% increase** from 157 in 2023–24.
- Case Conferences: **30** progressed to ASP Case Conference (13% of investigations), similar in number to the previous year.

There are likely several reasons behind the recent rise in Adult Support and Protection referrals and investigations. Ongoing training and closer working relationships—especially with care homes—have helped staff better recognise when to raise concerns.

Efforts to improve guidance and encourage professional curiosity have also made it easier for frontline workers to identify risks earlier. At the same time, more complex situations involving issues like dementia, mental health, and frailty are being reported, which may explain the jump in



formal investigations. Rather than suggesting an increase in actual harm, the figures point to stronger awareness and a more responsive protection system.

There was a slight increase in Initial and Review Case Conferences and planning meetings, reversing a previous downward trend.

Adult Concern Referrals:

- **1,803** Adult Concern/Vulnerable Adult referrals were made, a 150% increase over the past decade, indicating sustained rising demand on services.

The sustained rise in Adult Concern referrals reflects significant progress in awareness, partnership working, and safeguarding practice. Strong engagement from key referrers—particularly Police and care homes—demonstrates improved multi-agency collaboration. Broader efforts, including enhanced training, clearer recording practices, and a shift in language from “**Vulnerable Adults**” to “**Adult Concerns**,” have helped reduce stigma and promote early identification of risk. This long-term increase is understood to reflect a more responsive and vigilant system, rather than a proportionate rise in actual harm.

Inspection Findings:

In 2024–25, South Ayrshire ASP services were jointly inspected by the Care Inspectorate, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland, and Healthcare Improvement Scotland. The inspection reviewed progress against 2021 findings and noted:

Strengths:

- Strong strategic leadership and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Enhanced management skills through targeted training.
- Effective collaboration and information sharing.
- Improved strategic oversight through restructuring APC priorities.

Areas for Improvement:

- Strengthened collaboration needed with police partners.
- Development of a multi-agency self-evaluation framework.
- Greater integration of lived experience in service development.

An improvement group will oversee continued action, with progress updates reported to the Health and Care Governance Group.

Additional Highlights:

- APC held a successful all-Ayrshire seminar on self-neglect (June 2024).
- Participated in National ASP Awareness Day (February 2025), focusing on general awareness and financial harm in older adults.
- Continued efforts to improve consistency in referral thresholds and early identification of ASP concerns.

The Adult Support and Protection work in South Ayrshire plays a vital role in keeping people safe from harm and contributes directly to **Outcome 7**: People using health and social care services are safe from harm. A rise in referrals this year reflects greater awareness and a strong, coordinated response across agencies. Multi-agency working ensures timely action and personalised protection planning. Continuous learning and improvement remain central to this work, helping to safeguard adults at risk and uphold their rights with care and consistency.



Looking ahead, the APC will co-produce a new ASP Strategy shaped by the voices of people with lived and care experience.

Child Protection

In principle, the South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) operates as a subgroup of the Community Planning Partnership under the direction of the Children's Services Planning Partnership, which holds overarching responsibility for the integrated Children and Young People's Services Plan.

The CPC is a locally based, multi-agency partnership committed to driving continuous improvement in child protection practice across South Ayrshire. Its remit includes the development, implementation, and evaluation of child protection policies and procedures, with the goal of safeguarding children and promoting their wellbeing.

The CPC recognises that South Ayrshire, like many areas in Scotland, faces significant challenges linked to poverty and deprivation. The area includes some of the most deprived data zones in the country—ranking 12th nationally—with concentrations in Ayr Central, Ayr North and parts of Carrick. Between 2022 and 2024, data showed that **29% of children placed on the Child Protection Register** and **47% of children being looked after** were living in the Ayr Central and Ayr North localities.

In response to these findings, South Ayrshire’s Child Protection (CP) analysis activity took a deeper dive over the academic year to better understand the local trends and underlying factors influencing child poverty and its relationship to child protection concerns. This work was undertaken in collaboration with the South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership and aligned with the local Child Poverty Strategy. The aim was to identify which mitigating factors could be influenced and supported to reduce risk and improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

The analysis drew on a wide range of information sources, including quarterly trend reports, Child Protection Register data, Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration statistics, learning reviews, case file audits, and national developments. This informed a more targeted, data-driven approach to service planning and delivery.

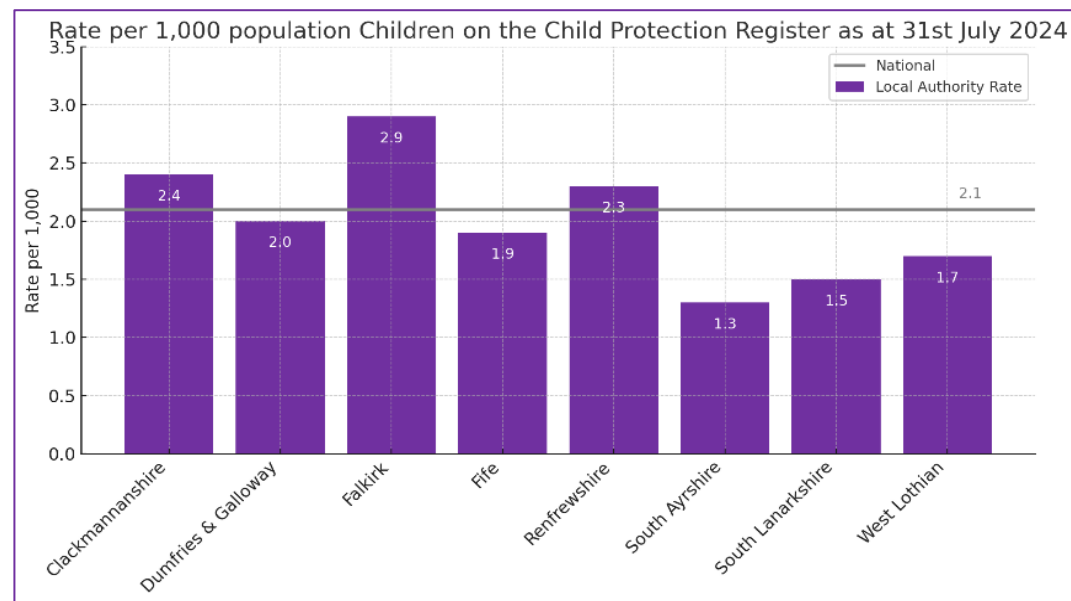
As a result of this work, 2024 saw the launch of the first **Child Protection Lead Officer’s Quarterly Report**, providing the CPC and the Chief Officers Group (COG) with timely updates on key national developments and local issues likely to impact child protection work across South Ayrshire.

Recognising the complexity of many child protection cases, the CPC has continued to enhance its multi-agency oversight processes. In particular, efforts have focused on developing a robust framework to review complex cases—especially those involving children who have remained on the Child Protection Register for over a year. This new multi-agency model supports collaborative problem-solving by enabling professionals to reflect on current interventions, assess their impact, and explore alternative approaches to improve outcomes for children and families.

As of **31 July 2024**, there were **25 children** on the Child Protection Register in South Ayrshire, a decrease from **43 children** at the same point in 2023. This included **two unborn babies**, also a decrease from the previous year. (Source: *Scottish Government CP Returns; NRS Mid-Year Population Estimates (2016–2023)*)

The CPC has continued to seek assurance around the quality and consistency of Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRDs), including regular auditing of IRD processes and referrals not progressed to IRD. These audits are reported annually and serve to evaluate the quality of inquiry, decision-making, risk analysis, and the identification of any multi-agency training and development needs.

Recent audit findings confirmed that child protection referrals were appropriate, with referral information found to be clear, concise, and reflective of current risks and mitigation efforts.



Children on Child Protection Register: Rate per 1,000 (0-17 population)

Source: Scottish Government CP returns, Population Figures Source: NRS mid-year population estimates for 2016-2023

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
South Ayrshire	3.4	2.5	2.1	1.7	1.1	1.3	2.5	1.3
Scotland	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.1

A refreshed **CPC Improvement Plan** is now in place to ensure that safeguarding work continues to evolve, underpinned by a commitment to keeping children safe while supporting families to stay together where possible. Central to this is a strong emphasis on the voices of lived experience. The **'Our Stories'** programme remains a cornerstone of this approach—ensuring that children, young people, and families influence CPC priorities and bring valuable context to policy decisions made by partners.

Child protection activity in South Ayrshire is central to delivering **Outcome 7**: People using health and social care services are safe from harm. Through strong multi-agency partnerships, we ensure that children and young people at risk are identified early and supported through consistent, coordinated action. The work of the Public Protection Team, alongside initiatives such as the Child Protection Committee's improvement programme and the development of trauma-informed practice, strengthens our collective ability to safeguard children and uphold their rights in safe, supportive environments.

Outcome 8

People who work in health and social care services are supported to continuously improve the information, support, care and treatment they provide and feel engaged with the work they do

Staff Wellbeing and engagement

iMatter survey

In line with all Health Boards in Scotland, NHS Ayrshire & Arran conducts the **iMatter staff survey annually**. This tool continues to play a vital role, particularly in the post-pandemic context, by offering managers meaningful insight into team dynamics and providing evidence of strong and effective relationships across services.

Detailed results are produced for NHS Ayrshire & Arran as a whole, with sub-reports for each of the three Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs). **For the third year, South Ayrshire recorded the highest staff response rate** among the three HSCPs, with **1,258 staff participating a 66% response rate**.

While this represents a small decrease from the 69% response rate achieved in 2019, participation remains strong. Each service and team is expected to develop an action plan based on their individual results to support continuous improvement.

We will continue to promote engagement with the iMatter survey across the workforce, recognising it as a key driver in shaping a **positive staff experience**, improving team performance, and highlighting areas for development. The **Employee Engagement Index (EEI)** of **80** in 2024 is testament to the strength of our workforce and commitment to a supportive, inclusive working environment.

Staff Response rate for South Ayrshire HSCP

Overall, staff engagement with the iMatter survey has been positive, with an increased uptake. A total of **1,258 staff** responded, representing a **66% response rate**, and the **Employee Engagement Index (EEI)** for the partnership stands at a strong **80**, placing us firmly in the "**Strive & Celebrate**" category.

Measure	2023	2024	Progress
Response Rate	67%	66%	Decline
Employee Engagement Indicator	80	80	Maintained
Total Number of staff respondents	1202	1258	Improved
Overall Experience indicator	7.3 (Scale 0 -10)	7.4 (Scale 0-10)	Improved

Highlights from the Directorate Report include:

- **91%** of staff are clear about their duties and responsibilities.
- **91%** feel their line manager is sufficiently approachable.
- **88%** would recommend their team as a good one to be part of.
- **84%** report receiving the information they need to do their job well.

While these results are encouraging and reflect strong team dynamics and clarity of roles, we also acknowledge areas requiring improvement. Two key issues have been identified for development:

- **Only 61%** of staff feel sufficiently involved in decisions relating to the organisation, and **11%** actively disagree that they have any say in decision-making about their service.
- **Board visibility remains a concern**, with only **61%** of staff agreeing that board members responsible for the organisation are sufficiently visible.

These findings reinforce the importance of improving communication and visibility at senior leadership levels and creating more inclusive opportunities for staff input into decision-making processes. Work will be taken forward to address these areas while continuing to build on the positive results achieved.

Action Plan KPI (completed within 8-weeks) was **75% - 3%** increase on 2023.

The continued implementation of the iMatter staff survey in South Ayrshire demonstrates a strong commitment to **Outcome 8** by ensuring staff voices are heard and acted upon. High response rates, a consistently strong Employee Engagement Index, and positive feedback on team culture and leadership all point to an engaged and motivated workforce. The expectation that teams use their individual results to inform improvement plans promotes a culture of reflection, accountability, and continuous development. Importantly, the identification of areas for growth—such as staff involvement in decision-making and leadership visibility—underscores a proactive approach to improvement. By fostering open communication, valuing staff experiences, and investing in action, South Ayrshire HSCP is helping ensure its workforce feels supported, empowered, and equipped to deliver high-quality care.

Workforce Plan

Source PHS [HSCP Profile](#)

As consistently reflected in previous reports, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (SAHSCP) remains committed to building and sustaining a skilled, experienced, qualified, and valued workforce. In delivering our services, we also rely on a range of commissioned organisations, making strong partnership working essential.

To support our ambitions, the Staff Governance Group (SGG) was established in 2022 in direct response to the actions set out in the 2022–25 Workforce Plan. Since its inception, the SGG – through its dedicated subgroups – has led meaningful progress in workforce development. However, we are acutely aware that continued effort is essential to maintain momentum and respond to emerging demands.

While some developments have now become embedded as ‘business as usual’ – such as strengthened recruitment into the Care at Home service – the wider workforce landscape remains dynamic. Our work continues to focus on key priorities including recruitment and retention, staff training, quality improvement, and closer collaboration with commissioned providers.

The impact of the SGG’s work has been tangible. Recruitment into traditionally hard-to-fill posts has improved, and we have successfully launched a “Grow Your Own” social work programme, offering new career pathways for local people. Training provision has been expanded and refreshed, covering a broader range of topics. A review of the Practice Development Team has supported alignment with evolving service needs. In response to pressures in certain services, we have introduced ‘assistant’ roles that offer progression routes while ensuring that service users continue to receive high-quality care. These roles are supervised by fully qualified and registered professionals.

We recognise that challenges remain. These include variations in terms and conditions across employing bodies, inconsistent training standards among commissioned services, and complex qualification pathways in certain professions. Nonetheless, we remain committed to innovation and partnership to address these issues.

During 2024/25, workforce planning was impacted by several challenges, particularly among commissioned providers. National policy changes affecting employer contributions have placed additional financial pressure on providers. We continue to work closely with our partners to support their financial resilience, recognising them as vital to service delivery.

Several service reviews were completed in 2024/25, including those of the District Nursing team, Girvan Community Hospital, and Administration Services. These reviews helped to identify improvement opportunities and facilitated team-level engagement with performance and impact analysis. In many cases, the Improvement and Innovation Fund – agreed by the Integration Joint Board – enabled temporary and targeted resource investment to drive change aligned to the Strategic Plan’s outcomes.

We also strengthened our collaboration with education partners in 2024. A key milestone was the formalisation of our partnership with the University of the West of Scotland, with an agreement signed in December 2024. This will underpin future workforce development and pipeline planning.

Also in December, the Scottish Government issued guidance on workforce planning for 2025/26, recognising the scale of the challenges facing HSCPs. To provide flexibility and a more responsive planning cycle, partnerships were asked to prepare one-year workforce plans. This shift supports a more focused and agile approach to workforce development during a time of significant system pressure.

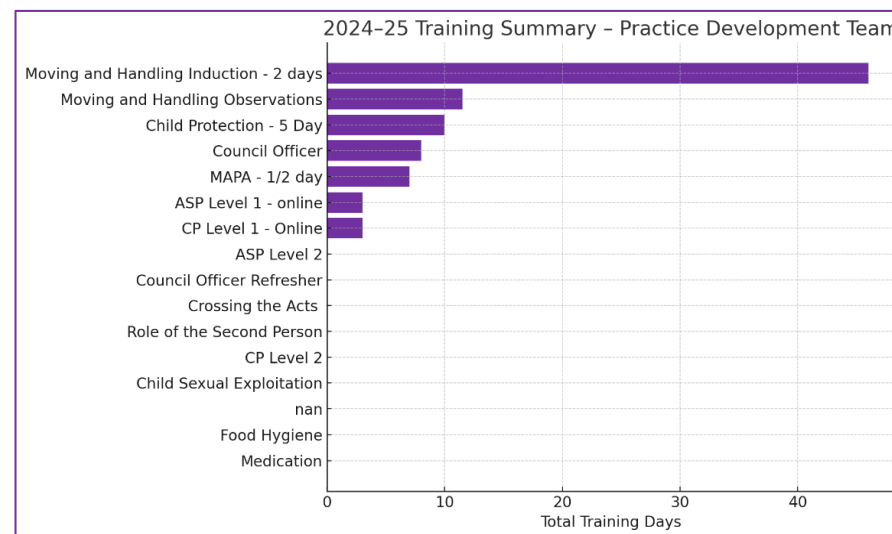
In planning for future workforce needs, it is vital to consider South Ayrshire’s demographic profile. As of 2023, **27%** of the population is aged 65 and over – significantly higher than the Scottish average. The current dependency ratio stands at **72.6%** and is projected to rise to **87.2%** by 2033. This shift reflects both a growing older population and a declining working-age base. These trends have profound implications for workforce planning, particularly in the health and care sectors, as they intensify both demand for services and competition for skilled staff. Our continued focus on recruitment pipelines, retention, and innovative roles is essential to addressing this dual pressure.

Practice Development

Development Training

The HSCP Practice Development Team plays a vital role in delivering training and development across the partnership. The team is primarily responsible for Social Care and Social Work training within South Ayrshire HSCP, ensuring that mandatory and core training requirements are met. This supports staff registration, professional development, and the acquisition of specialist knowledge needed to promote wellbeing and safeguard the health of individuals in our communities.

The team coordinates a broad range of learning and development opportunities, including **Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)**, **Public Protection Training**, **Leadership and Management development**, and access to post-qualification study. This includes postgraduate programmes in **Child Protection**, **Adult Support and Protection**, the **Mental Health Officer Award**, and the **Practice Teaching Award**. These efforts are central to effective workforce and succession planning.



Currently, **186 staff are enrolled in SVQ programmes**, with numbers increasing weekly as new carers join the partnership. This figure remains dynamic, influenced by staff availability, turnover, and engagement with assessors.

The team also leads on **practice learning** by coordinating a cohort of practice teachers, enabling the HSCP to offer placements to social work students from higher education institutions. This is a key component of the partnership's recruitment pipeline. In addition, the team has been instrumental in implementing the **Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQS) supported year**, which, from 2024, sets out national mandatory standards for new workers and supports their retention within the workforce.

Public Protection Training

The organisation's offer of Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection Training is informed by training needs analysis and available via the [Practice Development Training Calendar](#). Key highlights from the reporting period include:

- **5** of our Public Protection training courses have now been formally accredited by The CPD Certification Service. Each course has undergone a rigorous independent assessment process, confirming that they meet the standards for structured, high-quality Continuous Professional Development (CPD) learning. South Ayrshire HSCP became a registered CPD provider in February 2024, with individual course accreditations awarded throughout 2024/25.
- We collaborated with our colleagues in North and East Ayrshire to increase our offer and availability of Adult Support and Protection training by developing selected training courses to be delivered on a Pan-Ayrshire basis.
- We delivered **3** bespoke sessions for Council Officers to support the provision of trauma informed and responsive practice, in line with the Adult Support and Protection Code of Practice.
- We delivered ten bespoke sessions to Police Scotland Ayrshire Division between these inputs delivered across Ayrshire, were attended by **163** officers across front line groups, Local Policing Teams and the Public Protection Unit and aimed to enhance partnership working and facilitate more effective safeguarding of adults at risk of Financial Harm.

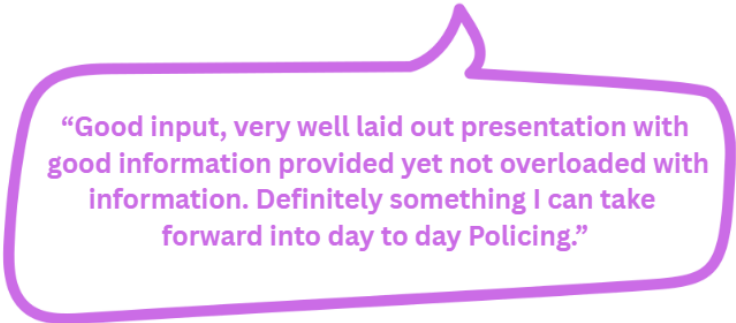
"Interesting, and clarified some confusion regarding Power of Attorneys and what to look for. Thanks."

"Gave me a better understanding of what powers Health and Social Care have."

"This has been good as previous dealings with Power of attorney documents is not easy and can be mis interpreted."

Practice Learning

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership continues to facilitate its Practice Learning Programme with regards to meeting its primary objective of providing learning opportunities for social work students. South Ayrshire has been able to meet **100%** of allocation as well as supporting placement opportunities due to placement shortages in other areas. The programme continues to be a key contributor in relation to the recruitment in social work positions in South Ayrshire



“Good input, very well laid out presentation with good information provided yet not overloaded with information. Definitely something I can take forward into day to day Policing.”

Practice Educator numbers remain healthy at **23** including **6** candidates on the Professional Development Award in Practice Learning.

We continue work in partnership with East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire in the delivery of Pan Ayrshire Social Work Student Group programme to enhance learning while on placement.

Practice Teachers numbers in South Ayrshire have remained steady over the years although we recognise that continual training of new practice teachers has enabled numbers to be maintained. South Ayrshire has been able to support all placements with practice teachers from within the organisation and has not been required to access independent practice teachers.

The Learning Network West which coordinated placement activity and practice teacher/link worker training in the West of Scotland was forced to cease operations in November 2025. This presented several challenges in placement coordination and the development of practice teachers and link workers. We have been working closely with universities and local authorities across Scotland to ensure we can continue to respond to demand. In addition, we continue work in partnership with East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire in the delivery of Pan Ayrshire Social Work Student Group programme to enhance learning while on placement and have plans to jointly deliver the Professional Development Award in Practice Learning, Practice Assessor training and Link Worker training in 2025.

Newly Qualified Social Worker Supported Year

South Ayrshire HSCP were involved in a 2-year pilot of the Newly Qualified Social Worker Supported Year which has since been nationally implemented by the SSSC from October 2024. Involvement within the early implementation programme brought about an opportunity for South Ayrshire to secure additional grant funding from the SSSC, alongside financial investment from the partnership to support and consolidate the initial implementation of the programme. This funding was used to support the NQSW Supported Year programme through appointing a temporary Senior Practitioner Post, responsibility payments to mentors who support newly qualified workers throughout the Supported Year programme and to provide training to mentors to support their role.

We currently have **14** Newly Qualified Social Workers employed within South Ayrshire. To support the mandatory implementation of the programme we have we have progressed with the following areas of work:

NQSW groups

Monthly NQSW groups are in place to support the learning and development of NQSW's. These groups are aligned to the Core Learning Elements and Mandatory Learning activity in which the NQSW's must achieve within their Supported Year.

Mentor training

We have facilitated accredited mentor training and a train the trainer programme through the Scottish Mentoring Network. We are now providing all mentors with training which will support a standardised approach to their supporting role and promote their skills around mentoring and knowledge of the requirements of the Supported Year.

Briefing sessions

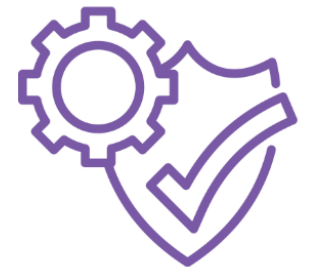
Briefing sessions have taken place with Senior Managers and Team Leaders across the partnership to provide an understanding of the role and requirements of employers and supervisors of NQSW'S.

Quality Assurance

As part of our commitment to supporting high standards in professional development, random sampling and review of Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) documentation is carried out routinely. This process is currently overseen by the NQSW Supported Year Lead.

Recently, South Ayrshire took part in a national mid-year cluster sampling exercise in partnership with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The feedback from this process was extremely positive, with examples of strong practice identified among our Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs).

The sampling highlighted that NQSWs in South Ayrshire are producing well-crafted, reflective self-assessments that clearly articulate their practice experiences, learning, and training journeys. These were supported by relevant evidence, demonstrating thoughtful engagement with both reflective and practical tasks that align with developmental goals and mandatory learning requirements.



Supervisors were also recognised for the quality of their input, providing clear and insightful feedback that showed a strong grasp of each NQSW's progress and areas for growth.

Support arrangements for NQSWs were well documented, with consistent reference to structured supervision, protected time, mentoring, and manageable caseloads—all core expectations of the Supported Year framework.

Overall, the SSSC noted excellent examples of work from NQSWs in South Ayrshire, reflecting a strong culture of professional learning and support.

South Ayrshire HSCP Social Work Training programme – Grow Your Own



South Ayrshire's Social Work Training Programme continues to progress well, with **20** staff currently enrolled in the Open University programme. Of these, **5** have successfully completed the course and are now working in qualified social work roles within the Partnership. Plans are in place to expand the programme further, with an additional four trainees expected to join next year.

At the national level, work is ongoing to develop an Apprentice Graduateship pathway, which would offer a new route for training social workers within local authorities. While funding and cost structures for this are still being finalised, it represents a promising workforce development opportunity. The Partnership will consider how best to incorporate this option into its future workforce planning once further details become available.

Experiential Pathway for Public Protection

South Ayrshire HSCP has developed and is implementing an innovative experiential learning pathway for child protection, tailored specifically for professional social workers. This new model departs from traditional training methods and is grounded in current research into how social workers learn most effectively in real-world settings. The approach aims to strengthen both practice and learning through meaningful, workplace-based experience.

At the heart of this model is the Child Protection Learning Passport, aligned with both the National Child Protection Learning and Development Framework and the Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) Supported Year. The Passport offers a structured and creative way to track learning progress, capturing knowledge, skills, and competencies in child protection through direct work and reflective learning.



The pathway has been co-designed with colleagues at operational, strategic, and governance levels. It reflects insights from focus groups and audits conducted as part of an ongoing research and evaluation project. This has included input from:

- Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs)
- Qualified Social Workers
- Managers and Team Leaders
- The Organisational Advisory Group

Key themes emerging from this work include:

- Strong evidence that NQSWs gain valuable experience early in their careers when supported through direct practice, peer learning, and structured supervision.
- Recognition that assessment and risk analysis skills are best developed in real case contexts, not solely in classroom environments.
- Support for the integration of mentoring, shadowing, and reflective tools as core elements of the pathway.
- Positive feedback on the Passport's role in helping both NQSWs and their managers plan, support, and assess learning over time.
- Flexibility of the approach, allowing learning to begin at the right point in each social worker's trajectory, and to evolve as confidence and exposure increase.

Early findings suggest that this experiential model is helping to '**draw out the complexities of family work**' and support high-quality child protection practice in ways that are tailored to individual and team needs. While it remains early in the implementation and evaluation process, the work is already informing changes to organisational learning culture and has the potential to influence national practice. A formal evaluation is underway and will conclude in summer 2025, with findings expected to contribute to the wider Scottish social work learning network.

External Training Opportunities promoted

In addition to the valuable opportunities, we have created and delivered, we continue to actively support and promote a range of further training and development opportunities for HSCP staff. These opportunities are offered both jointly and separately by our partnership agencies, ensuring our team has access to comprehensive professional growth and development.

Leadership Pathway

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership is committed to providing the support and development to all of its Leaders and Managers to be the very best they can be. It is recognised that all staff can be leaders and the important contribution that this brings to the partnership is welcome and supported through a variety of other approaches. This framework focuses on aspiring managers and staff who are already in

management or supervisory positions. The framework has been designed to ensure that all staff members have the opportunity to maximise their full potential by understanding the leadership and management requirements of their role and how to access and apply the learning appropriate to their level.

In developing the framework, we have drawn from development opportunities available within NHS Ayrshire and Arran and South Ayrshire Council and brought these together into one framework. These courses have been developed with the priorities in terms of what leaders and managers are required to deliver over the coming years.

All staff are required to be fully compliant with Mandatory and Statutory training both with NHS (MAST) and South Ayrshire Council (Employee Essentials/Management Essentials) and it is through the Performance and Development Review process that managers will be able to support staff to identify, inform and plan the specific development needs of Leaders and Managers.

The learning and training interventions are developed and distributed across the four levels to provide a progressive structure for the development of effective leaders and managers at all levels within the partnership.

Level One	Core	Is aimed at aspiring or new supervisors and managers or who had no, or little training in this discipline. This aims to provide the core training required for their appointed post.
Level Two	Operational	Is aimed at consolidating managers and those who are responsible for providing management and leadership to multi-disciplinary teams or departments.
	Operational Specific	This level provides bespoke leadership and management opportunities that relate to specific areas of practice.
Level Three	Transformational	Targets service or divisional managers and who may have had some responsibility for providing strategic management and leadership.
Level Four	Strategic	Focuses on senior with responsibility for governance and providing a higher level of strategic management and leadership.

The framework will operate as a 'live' system, allowing for updates and refinements throughout the year to ensure it remains relevant and up to date. It is expected that additional support resources and self-directed learning materials will be made available online to further support the workforce.

The framework is ready but has not yet been launched. The decision to pause at this stage is due to the following factors:

- As the framework was being finalised, South Ayrshire Council withdrew several Level 4 courses for redesign. This has temporarily weakened the offering at that level.
- Level 2 provision could also be strengthened, but a decision is still pending regarding the allocation of a dedicated budget. This funding would enable the inclusion of additional postgraduate courses.

Quality Improvement Framework

The Partnership's Framework for Quality Improvement was approved 2022 and describes the Partnership's desire to embed a culture which empowers our workforce to deliver quality services through continuous improvement.

A QI Delivery Group, consisting of a diverse group of passionate individuals oversee and support implementation of the Framework for Improvement, using improvement leaders from across the Partnership no matter their job role or level. The Group has met monthly since June 2022 and has focussed on delivering against the following Primary Drivers:

- An improvement culture is embedded at every level of the organisation.
- A framework is in place to support a quality improvement approach.
- A programme is in place to build capacity and capability.
- A technology enabled community of improvers are equipped and supported to deliver improvements.
- A comprehensive communications plan ensures that a variety of methods are used to communicate and support the Partnership's model for improvement.

For the 2024/25 period our priority was building QI capacity/ capability through tiered training designed to meet the needs of all staff, based on their role and level of involvement in improvement work:

- Executive and Strategic (DMT and IJB) (100%) – provide all with an overview of QI methodology by 30th June 2025.
- Lead Level **(1%)** – **18** to complete national QI training by 30th June 2025.
- Practitioner **(10%)** – **180** to complete local QI training by 30th November 2025.
- Foundation **(75%)** – **1350** to complete online QI training by 30th June 2024

Executive and Strategic: A session focused on improvement was held with the Senior Leadership Team on the 4th September 2024 which provided members of the Integration Joint Board and Directorate Management Team with an update on our progress to date in implementing the Partnership's Framework for Improvement; a brief overview of the Model for Improvement methodology; and some short presentations highlighting some of the improvement work that is currently being progressed/ has been delivered as a result of our QI activity. Feedback from the session was extremely positive with attendees reporting that they enjoyed the format and content of the sessions and in particular the opportunity to learn more about some of the improvement work being carried out across the Partnership.

In terms of capacity building within DMT, **1** member is trained to Lead Level in QI and **2** members are trained to Practitioner Level. The remaining DMT members have had access to the online Foundation Level training available to all staff.

Lead Level: Achieving good capacity at Lead Level is essential to ensure that staff throughout the partnership receive the support and mentorship they will require from suitably qualified/ knowledgeable peers. In support of this, our aim was to increase the number of staff trained to **'Lead Level'** to **18 (1% of 1800)** by 30th November 2025. Our starting position in 2023 was **9**. Since then, **3** members of staff have successfully completed ScIL (plus one staff member who is now on secondment to Scottish Government and has not therefore been included in

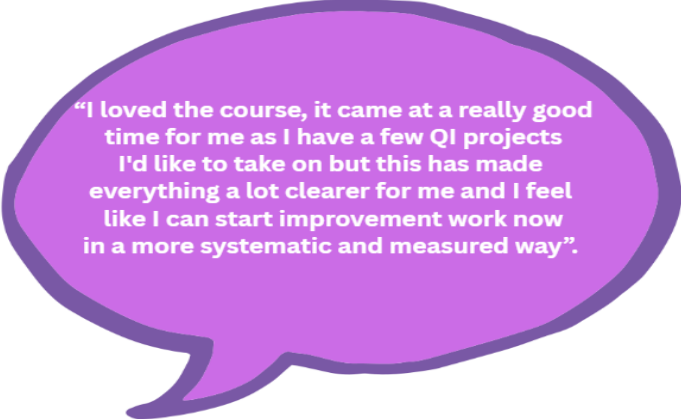
the revised total). In addition, we have both lost and recruited staff with Lead Level QI qualifications over the last 12 months bringing the number of QI Leads to **13 (0.7% of 1800)** in December 2024.

Access to places on national QI training is extremely competitive due to the limited number of spaces available. We have however secured a place for a staff member on the current ScIL Cohort which concludes in June 2025.

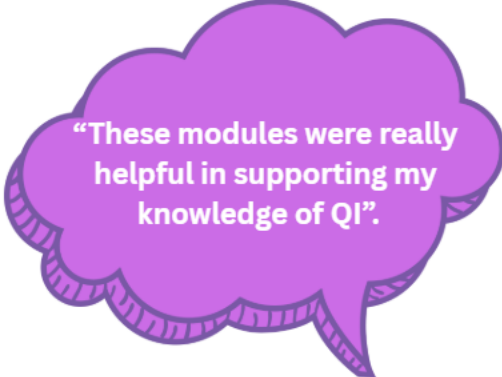
Options for an intermediate level of QI training to bridge the gap between Practitioner and Lead Level are currently under discussion; and we are also investigating other suitable national Lead Level training opportunities available.

Practitioner Level:

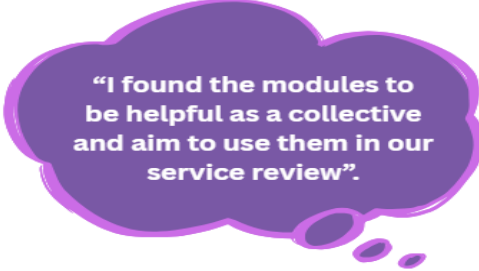
Our aim was to increase the number of staff trained to 'Practitioner Level' to **180 (10% of 1800)** by 30th November 2025 and we are well on our way to achieving this with **123 (7% of 1800)** staff members having already completed Ayrshire & Arran Improvement Foundation Skills (AAIFS) QI training, supported by our colleagues in the QI team within NHS Ayrshire & Arran, as at the end of November 2024. Feedback on training has been positive.



"I loved the course, it came at a really good time for me as I have a few QI projects I'd like to take on but this has made everything a lot clearer for me and I feel like I can start improvement work now in a more systematic and measured way".



"These modules were really helpful in supporting my knowledge of QI".



"I found the modules to be helpful as a collective and aim to use them in our service review".

Foundation Level:

To build overall improvement capacity and capability within our workforce, mandatory (Foundation Level) QI training was introduced for all staff in February 2023, with a June 2024 compliance target of **1350 (75% of 1800)**. We have exceeded this target as **76% (1366 staff)**, have completed their Foundation Level training as at 31st December 2024.

This online training consists of 3 NHS Education for Scotland QI modules. Each module takes around 45 minutes to complete and will require to be completed by staff every 3 years. These learning resources have provided a helpful introduction to QI and widely used improvement methods which in turn are supporting staff to deliver on team plans developed using self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement; as well as providing the knowledge and tools needed to participate in improvement projects at team level. The training has been received favourably by staff as indicated within recent feedback.

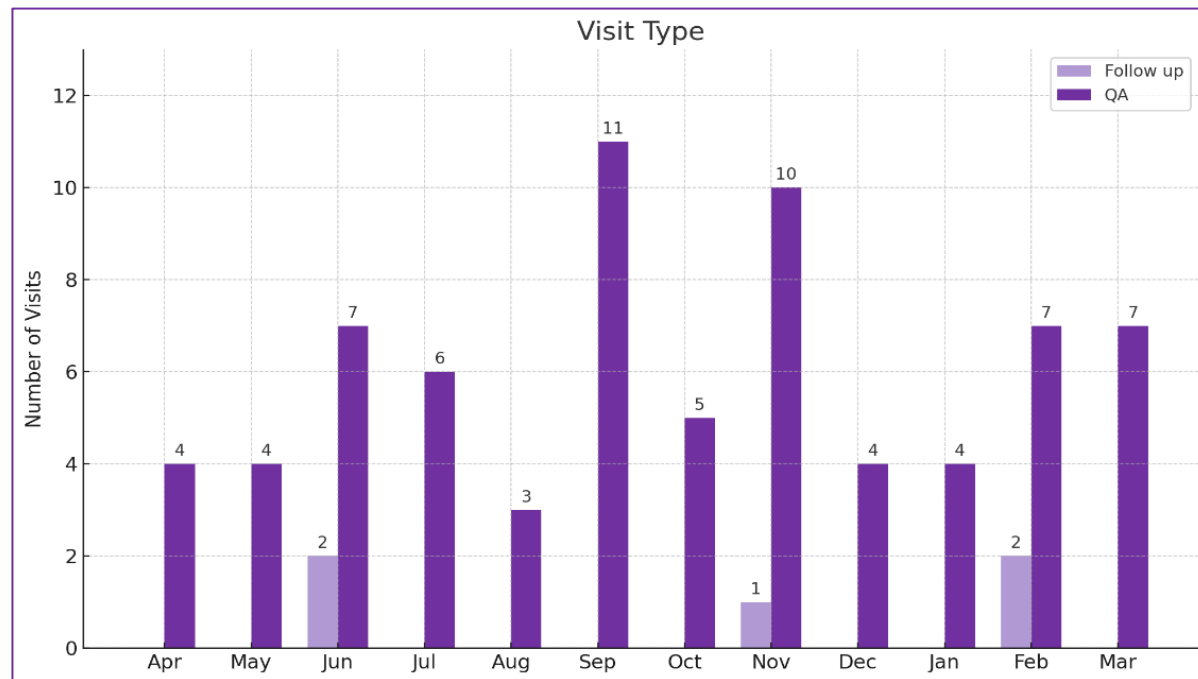
Quality Assurance

SAHSCP ensure that external commissioned services are supported to provide high quality and safe services to our citizens.

SAHSCP Quality Assurance Framework is underpinned by an intelligence-based approach to provide SAHSCP assurance that our commissioned services are providing high quality care and support consistently.

Between April 2024 – March 2025, a total of **77** quality assurance visits took place equating to **72** full visits and **5** follow up visits.

“The Quality Assurance Framework sits alongside South Ayrshire Council’s Contract Supply Management (CSM) desktop evaluation tool administered by the Council’s Procurement Team. Between April 2024 – March 2025, 62 Balanced Scorecards were completed by evaluators. Collectively, both methodologies continued to offer a calculated, corroborated approach to evaluating our commissioned services quality of care and support.”



Wellbeing Fund Update 2024/25

During 2024/25, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership continued to invest in staff wellbeing through the dedicated HSCP Wellbeing Fund. Building on the success of summer activities and wellbeing weeks, a formal bidding process was launched, enabling HSCP, health, and third sector staff affiliated with the Partnership to apply for funding to support localised staff wellbeing initiatives.

The application process—developed with input from both Council and NHS processes and approved at DMT—focused on team-wide benefits with specific eligibility criteria. Funds (capped at **£1500** per application) were available to support wellbeing events or physical improvements to staff wellbeing spaces, with exclusions placed on individual benefits, core service costs, or alcohol-related activities.

This initiative was widely promoted through staff newsletters and emails. By the end of February 2025, **16** applications had been received and reviewed by a multi-disciplinary panel including administration and finance staff.

The wider wellbeing programme in 2024/25 also included:

- The rollout of Project Wingman (a wellbeing bus offering a mobile staff lounge experience).
- Participation in World Wellbeing Week (June 2024), offering activities such as chair yoga, Nordic walking, financial wellbeing sessions, and health checks.
- The appointment of a Council Wellbeing Assistant to coordinate activities across health and council services.
- A pilot initiative introducing reflective practice to teams less frequently offered supervision, such as admin staff and community carers.
- Development of training and support pathways for middle managers and continued delivery of trauma-informed training.

These initiatives support **Outcome 8** by enhancing staff morale, promoting a culture of trauma-informed practice, and embedding wellbeing into everyday work. Feedback highlighted the value of outdoor and **“blue health”** activities, while learning points—such as attendance variation and the need for consistent engagement across sectors—are informing future planning. The HSCP remains committed to fostering an inclusive, compassionate, and supportive working environment.

Strategic Partnership to Strengthen Workforce Development

In 2024, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) formalised a strategic partnership with the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), aimed at developing a skilled, sustainable local workforce and enhancing education and research across health and social care.

The partnership focuses on growing entry-level and graduate opportunities aligned to service needs, while also supporting the upskilling of existing staff through tailored learning and development pathways. South Ayrshire HSCP will contribute directly to course design and delivery, helping to prepare students for real-world practice.

This collaboration also promotes shared learning, evaluation, and the integration of best practice to improve outcomes for individuals and communities across Ayrshire. It supports several UN Sustainable Development Goals, including good health and wellbeing, quality education, and decent work.



By investing in workforce development and strengthening ties with academic partners, South Ayrshire HSCP continues to create a culture of learning, innovation, and improvement across its services.

This strategic partnership with the University of the West of Scotland directly supports **Outcome 8** by fostering a culture of continuous learning, professional development, and innovation across the workforce. By shaping course content, supporting staff upskilling, and aligning educational pathways with service needs, South Ayrshire HSCP is ensuring that current and future staff are well-equipped, confident, and prepared to deliver high-quality care. This investment in people not only strengthens workforce capability but also reinforces staff engagement and pride in the work they do.

Wellbeing Pledge Showcase

On Friday 17th May 2024 South Ayrshire HSCP hosted its second annual Wellbeing Pledge Showcase. This event was targeted at staff, partners, organisations and members of the public around South Ayrshire. The focus on this event was about networking, a learning opportunity and a chance to celebrate success.

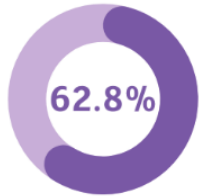
The event took place at the Walker Hall in Troon and opened with a 90-minute main presentation featuring a welcome introduction from Tim Eltringham, Director of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership and a panel session featuring speakers from a number of organisations from the South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership. The event featured a marketplace with over 50 organisations sharing information on wellbeing, taster sessions and a number of speed presentations taking place throughout the day.

Feedback from the event was extremely positive and agreement was made to carry out this event on an annual basis as an opportunity to network and share best practice as well as a chance to celebrate success.

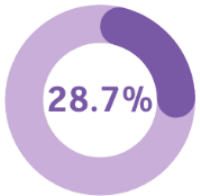


Outcome 9

Resources are used effectively in the provision of health and social care services, without waste



62.8% of adults supported at home agreed that their health and care services seemed to be well coordinated. This is higher than the national average of 61.4% across Scotland (HCES 2023-24).



28.7% of health and care resource in South Ayrshire in 2019-20 was spent on hospital stays where the patient was admitted as an emergency. This is higher than the national average of 24.0%. (NI-20) (These figures are the most up to date available).

Governance and Performance management

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership is committed to delivering the right care, at the right time, and in the right place. To ensure this, teams across all service areas are supported and encouraged to continuously evaluate service delivery and outcomes, address unmet need, and work collaboratively with partners and locality groups. As a public body, we have a responsibility to ensure that the resources we invest in deliver meaningful and measurable improvements for those who need our support most.

A key component of this commitment is the systematic collection, analysis, and use of performance data. This not only supports a strategic understanding of how services are performing but also ensures a continued focus on the outcomes and experiences of individuals accessing care and support in South Ayrshire.

Governance and accountability for performance management sit with the Planning and Performance Team, who provide regular, structured reports to key governance forums including the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, the Performance and Audit Committee, and



the Integration Joint Board (IJB). These reports support robust decision-making and ensure transparency and accountability across all levels of the Partnership.

We also have a statutory obligation to provide accurate and timely performance information. This data contributes to national performance reporting, validates local service delivery, and underpins evidence-based planning at both local and national levels.

During 2024–25, the frequency of governance meetings fully returned to pre-pandemic arrangements, strengthening oversight and accountability. All published performance reports are available for review on the [South Ayrshire HSCP website](#), offering an open and transparent view of our progress and priorities.

This ongoing focus on performance management and evidence-based planning demonstrates a clear commitment to **Outcome 9 – Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services**. By embedding continuous evaluation into all aspects of service delivery, South Ayrshire HSCP ensures that investment decisions are informed by real data, targeted at areas of greatest need, and aligned with achieving meaningful outcomes for individuals and communities. The strong governance framework, transparent reporting, and collaborative approach to improvement help to maximise the impact of available resources—ensuring services remain responsive, accountable, and sustainable over time.

Digital Strategy

The South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership brings together a wide range of community and the purpose of this [Digital Strategy](#) is to guide our Health and Social Care Partnership towards a future where technology and data are seamlessly integrated into our operations, service delivery, and decision-making processes. It outlines a vision to transform our HSCP into a digitally empowered, data-informed, and user-centric organisation.

A new Digital Strategy for the Partnership was approved on 12th June 2024 and aligns with our core values of empowerment, compassion, respect, openness, equality, integrity, and ambition. It is designed to ensure we meet our strategic objectives, such as building safe communities, tackling inequality, promoting transparency, nurturing caring communities, delivering effective partnerships, and making a positive impact. To deliver on this the Strategy focuses on 5 key areas:

The development and implementation of the new Digital Strategy directly supports **Outcome 9** by ensuring that resources are used more effectively and efficiently through the intelligent use of technology and data.



By embedding digital tools into everyday operations, service delivery, and decision-making, South Ayrshire HSCP is enabling smarter working practices, reducing duplication, and improving access to timely information.

This data-informed approach enhances the ability to target resources where they are most needed, streamline processes, and deliver more responsive, person-centred care—maximising both value for money and impact for service users and communities.



NearMe Video Calling

Enhancing Dignity and Experience Through Digital Access:

In 2024, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership successfully launched the Near Me video calling platform, transforming how people access services by enhancing dignity, privacy, and choice. This secure and user-friendly technology enables individuals to attend appointments from home or other remote locations—removing barriers such as travel, mobility issues, and time constraints.

Since the summer rollout, **334** staff across the Partnership—including teams from Social Work, Occupational Therapy, and Housing—have been trained to use Near Me. The platform is now active across **33** virtual waiting areas, supporting a wide range of services. One of its key features allows individuals to include carers or family members in appointments, helping promote shared decision-making and offering emotional reassurance.

Near Me supports a person-centred approach, offering greater flexibility while maintaining the highest standards of confidentiality—all calls are secure and not recorded. It also enables professionals to involve colleagues from other services seamlessly, improving communication and coordination across teams.

The platform has been positively received by both staff and service users, especially those living in rural areas, where access to services can often be more challenging. Feedback highlights how Near Me helps individuals feel more comfortable, supported, and in control of their care, ensuring their experience is positive and respectful.

This work has been nationally recognised by Marc Beswick, the National Near Me Lead, who commended the project as an example of best practice. Two of our Social Work staff were recently interviewed by Marc for the Near Me YouTube channel, where they shared their experiences to help inspire confidence in other HSCPs and Social Work teams considering adoption of the platform.

We are also contributing to the Realistic Medicine Forum, offering valuable insight into expanding digital access across NHS Ayrshire & Arran.



Looking ahead to 2025, South Ayrshire HSCP has joined the Near Me for Social Work in Prisons steering group, working in collaboration with Social Work Scotland and the Scottish Prison Service. Near Me is now fully operational in HMP Stirling, with plans underway to roll out the platform to HMP Glenochil and HMP Polmont. This development supports regular and meaningful engagement between social workers and people in custody, strengthening relationships while reducing travel time and associated costs.

Public engagement is a key focus. Our teams have been attending community and partnership events, providing live demonstrations of the Near Me platform. These sessions aim to build user confidence by walking individuals through how to access and use the one-time video link, highlighting the benefits, and explaining how to request video appointments as their preferred communication method.

In recognition of this ongoing work, we've been invited to join the Timely and Effective Services group, as Near Me is now embedded within the Live Well: Adult Mental Health Strategy 2024–2034.

The successful rollout of the Near Me platform demonstrates a strong alignment with **Outcome 9** by using digital innovation to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and improve service accessibility. By enabling remote appointments, reducing travel demands, and integrating carers and professionals into sessions seamlessly, Near Me ensures resources—both time and personnel—are used more effectively across services. The platform's secure, user-friendly design also supports better coordination and continuity of care, particularly in rural areas and custodial settings where access has traditionally been more limited. This person-centred, technology-enabled approach not only optimises service delivery but also contributes to a more sustainable and responsive health and social care system.



Outcome 10

Our children have the best possible start in life

Breastfeeding rates



The percentage of babies who are exclusively breast fed at 6-8 weeks has increased over the past year from **25.7%** in 2022/23 to **29.5%** in 2023/24. This is higher than both the NHS Ayrshire and Arran (**23.1%**) and Scotland figure (**28.3%**).



From 2022/23 to 2023/24, the overall percentage of those reaching the developmental milestones at the time of their 27 – 30-month review has decreased slightly from 78.1% to 77.2%.



We will continue to focus on improving this across South Ayrshire.



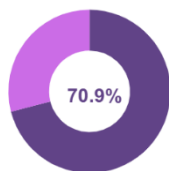
	2022/23	2023/24	Scotland average
% age of babies exclusively breast fed at 6-8 weeks	25.7%	29.5%	28.3%
% age reaching developmental milestones at 27-30 months	78.1%	77.2%	77.6%
Overall number of reviews for those reaching milestones	620	537	

Healthy Weight in P1



The percentage of children with a healthy weight in P1 has decreased from **77.7%** in 2022-23 to **75.9%** in 2023-24 in South Ayrshire. The national figure across Scotland (not all areas are included) was **76.5%** in 2023-24.

Dental Health



The oral health of children in South Ayrshire continues to perform slightly higher compared to NHS Ayrshire and Arran, but lower than the Scottish percentage. In 2023/24, **70.9%** of children in Primary 7 presented with no obvious decay experience compared with **69.8%** within NHS Ayrshire and Arran, however slightly under the **76.0%** across Scotland

South Ayrshire HSCP Helps Secure Prestigious UNICEF Baby Friendly Reaccreditation

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), alongside NHS Ayrshire & Arran and the other Ayrshire HSCPs, has once again achieved national recognition for its commitment to high-quality infant feeding support, securing continued Gold accreditation from the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative.

The UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative is a UK-wide programme that supports public services in promoting breastfeeding and building strong, loving relationships between families and their babies—ensuring every child gets the best possible start in life. This latest revalidation reinforces the sustained commitment across Ayrshire to evidence-based, compassionate care for families—led in part by the dedicated work of South Ayrshire HSCP teams.

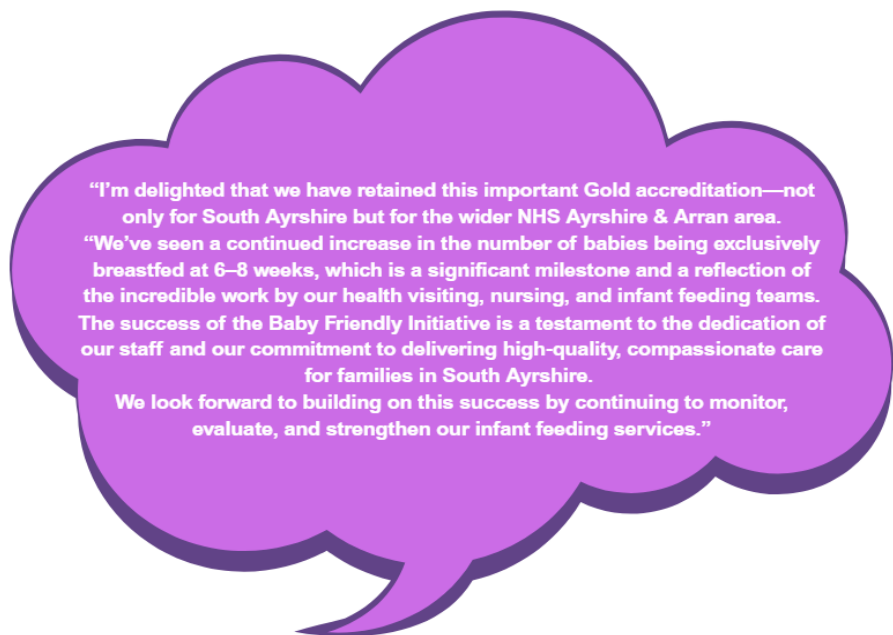
First awarded Baby Friendly accreditation in 2012, Ayrshire’s Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership teams—supported by the Community Infant Feeding Team—have maintained the standard through reaccreditations in 2014, 2017, and 2020, before achieving the Gold Award in 2022. The Gold standard is particularly significant as it focuses on long-term sustainability, ensuring services are not only of high quality, but consistently embedded into everyday practice.

The reaccreditation process, which occurs two years after gold status is achieved and every three years thereafter, commended the strong leadership and strategic planning across Ayrshire. Of note was the continued investment from the Health and Social Care Partnerships, with South Ayrshire HSCP recognised for playing a key role in embedding and developing infant feeding support at a local level.

Importantly, while the initiative promotes breastfeeding as the optimal source of nutrition, protection, and comfort for babies, it also recognises



the importance of supporting all families, including those who choose formula feeding. The Baby Friendly approach promotes responsive feeding and nurturing relationships, regardless of feeding method.



The UNICEF report praised NHS Ayrshire & Arran and the three HSCPs for their "**Thorough approach to embedding and progressing Baby Friendly standards,**" highlighting a coordinated commitment to training, consistency, and family-centred care.

The achievement of UNICEF Baby Friendly Gold reaccreditation demonstrates South Ayrshire HSCP's clear alignment with **Outcome 10 – Supporting people to have positive experiences of health and social care services.** By embedding consistent, evidence-based, and compassionate infant feeding support into everyday practice, the HSCP ensures that families receive high-quality, respectful care at one of the most critical stages of life. The focus on responsive relationships and inclusive support—regardless of feeding method—reflects a person-centred approach that values choice, dignity, and trust. Feedback from the reaccreditation process highlights the positive impact this work has on families' experiences, reinforcing South Ayrshire's commitment to delivering services that are welcoming, supportive, and built around individual needs.

South Ayrshire GIRFEC

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership is proud to champion the national Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, which lies at the heart of our work to ensure all children have the best possible start in life.

GIRFEC is Scotland's overarching framework for promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of infants, children, and young people. It is built on the principle that children and families should receive the right help at the right time, from the right people. In South Ayrshire, this principle is being fully embedded across our services through our localised model: 'Team with the Family'.



This single-planning approach places the child at the centre while recognising the importance of understanding their wellbeing within the broader context of family life. By working collaboratively across services—including social work, education, health, and the third sector—we ensure support is coordinated, holistic, and tailored to each family's unique circumstances.

Our commitment to GIRFEC is reflected in the development and implementation of the [Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023–2026](#), where GIRFEC underpins all strategic priorities. In practice, this means our staff are equipped with clear guidance, tools and training to apply GIRFEC principles confidently and consistently across their roles, whether that's in direct care, planning, or community support.

Key to our local success is the creation of practical, accessible GIRFEC guidance and materials designed to support professionals in identifying wellbeing needs early, engaging meaningfully with families, and building strong relationships rooted in trust and respect. These materials help reinforce a shared language and understanding across agencies, strengthening our collective ability to act early and prevent escalation of need.

By embedding GIRFEC in everything we do, South Ayrshire HSCP is creating an environment where children are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included—the **eight SHANARRI** wellbeing indicators that guide our work. This whole-system commitment ensures that all children and young people in South Ayrshire are supported to reach their full potential from the earliest stages of life.

As we continue to strengthen GIRFEC across our services, our focus remains on working in genuine partnership with families, listening to their voices, and building a responsive system of care that helps our youngest residents thrive and grow with confidence.

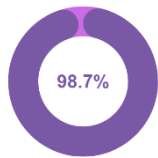
This work demonstrates a clear commitment to **Outcome 10** by ensuring children, young people, and their families experience services that are responsive, compassionate, and tailored to their needs. By embedding the GIRFEC approach through the 'Team with the Family' model, South Ayrshire HSCP promotes positive, relationship-based practice that values the voice of the child and supports families as equal partners. This not only enhances trust and satisfaction with services but also creates a culture where support is experienced as timely, respectful, and genuinely helpful. The alignment with the [Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023–2026](#) strengthens this further, as GIRFEC is embedded across all strategic priorities—ensuring a unified, whole-system approach to wellbeing. Together, these efforts ensure that every child and family engaging with health and social care services in South Ayrshire feels understood, included, and empowered on their journey.



Outcome 11

Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

Positive destinations for care experienced young people.



Figures from the School Leaver Destination Report (SLDR) show that an impressive **98.7%** of pupils across South Ayrshire progressed to a positive destination after leaving school, surpassing the national average of **95.7%**. This marks an increase from last year's figure of 97.3%.

Champions for Change - Champions Board

South Ayrshire Champions Board (Champs) team comprises 2 Participation Assistants, 2 Sessional Participation Assistants and 1 Youthwork Modern Apprentice who all use their lived experience of care to influence positive change across the services we provide.

The team have also supported 2 social work student placements over the last year and the Domain Champs group is supported by a groupwork volunteer.

The team also housed the Promise Research Assistant who has supported a range of consultation activity with young people with care experience across 2024.

A graphic featuring a quote in a speech bubble and two Polaroid-style photos. The quote reads: "Hundreds of care experienced young people have a voice through their participation in Champions Boards and know they have influenced decision making in areas of real importance to them." The photos show a group of young people at an event and a group sitting on a lawn outdoors. Both photos have the 'Champions for Change' logo at the bottom.



South Ayrshire Champs Team: top left Olivia Sessional Participation Assistant, top middle Chloe Participation Assistant, top right Sheena Promise Research Assistant, bottom left Tonie Participation Assistant, bottom middle Martin Youthwork Modern Apprentice, bottom right Amy Sessional Participation Assistant

The network of young people who take part in South Ayrshire Champions Board continues to grow with over 100 young people with care experience aged 8-26 regularly connecting with Champs through weekly groups in Ayr Academy, Queen Margaret Academy, and Belmont Academy and evening groups in Ayr and Girvan supported by Thriving communities.

Champs exist to offer young people an opportunity to use their lived experience to influence positive change, this happens in a range of ways through a participation network which nurtures a sense of belonging and community. Through quarterly Champs meetings where common themes and issues raised by young people are shared with key decision makers across South Ayrshire Council. The Champs also deliver awareness raising sessions around care across south Ayrshires workforce and nationally consulting with young people and their families and delivering an individual small grants scheme for young people with care experience.



Shine even Brighter: Champions Board Small Grants

[Shine-even-brighter Small Grants Scheme](#) is codesigned by people with lived experience of care to challenge stigma and address inequalities of being care experienced.

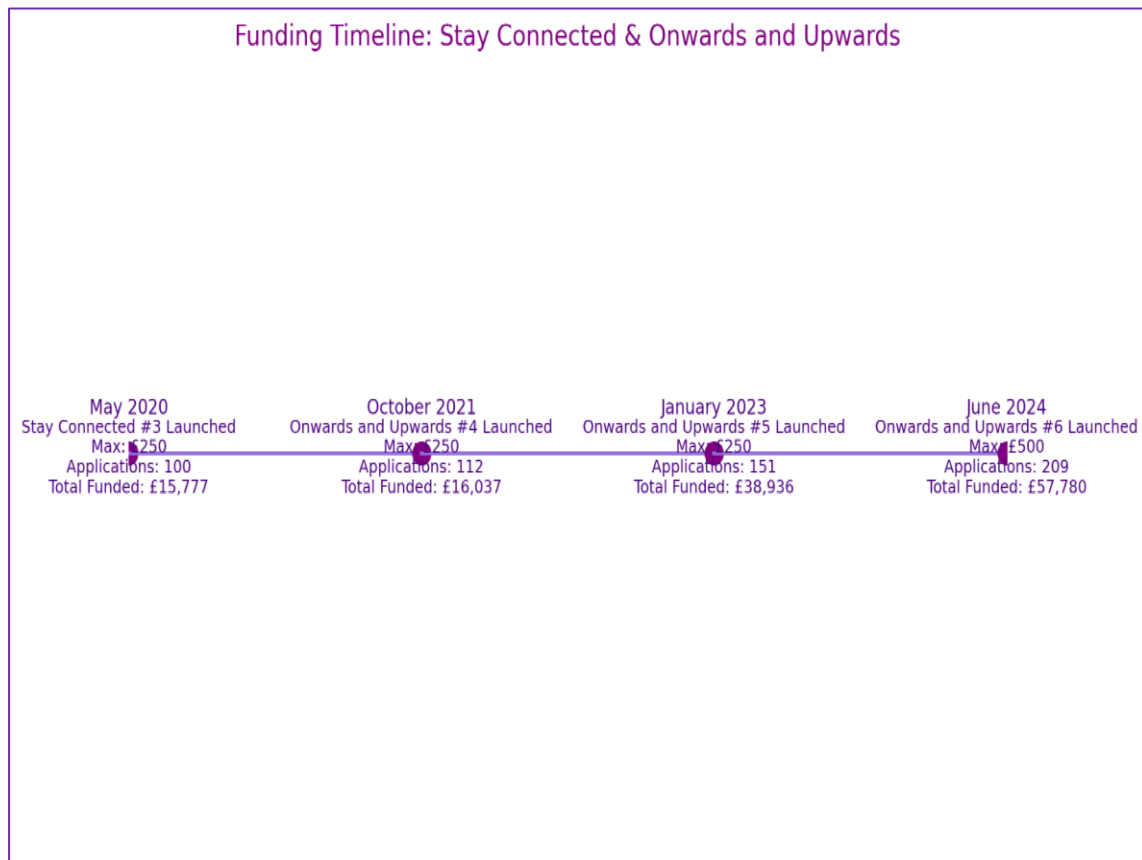
The awards scheme supports care experienced young people directly through listening to what they feel they need to help them improve their wellbeing and to grown up safe, loved and respected.

“Offering the Small Grants has proven to be a great way to connect with other care experienced children, young people, and adults in South Ayrshire. Reading about what they are applying for helps us spot themes in things that might be missing or desired by the care experienced population. The Small Grants scheme has also offered us the opportunity to connect people with supports that they did not know existed, including free travel and access to leisure services”.
Olivia – Participation Assistant South Ayrshire Champions Board.



In 2024, South Ayrshire Champions Board received additional funding from the Whole family Wellbeing fund which allowed the funding of **209** applications totalling **£57,780** which distributed in partnership with South Ayrshire Thriving Communities admin team.

In June 2024 Champions for Change South Ayrshire Champions Board secured whole family wellbeing funding which allowed us to distribute a total of **£57,780** of individual grants to **209** young people with care experience aged 14-26 years. The grant funding scheme has continued to grow since 2020 as outlined in the timeline below.



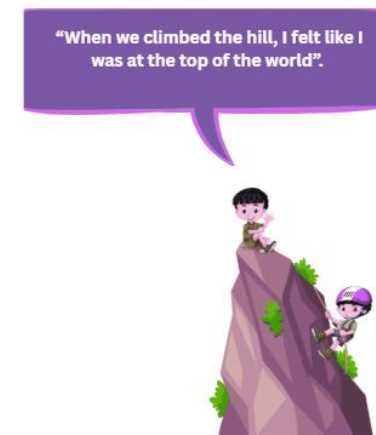
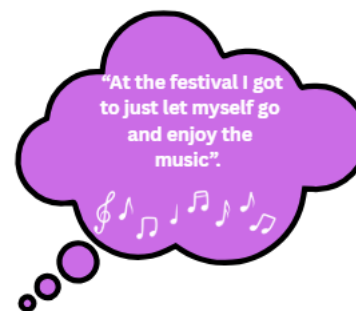
The Small Grants scheme has also offered us the opportunity to connect people with supports that they did not know existed, including free travel and access to leisure services. In 2024, **18** young people who had asked for basic need items were supported to access these by the Young People’s Support and Transition team.

This money totalled **£3,145**, additional funding which went directly to young people. This allowed the Champions for Change team to go back to young people and ask them to change their application to something aspirational.

For more information on the Champs small grants please click on this link [Shine Even Brighter 2025 - Health and Social Care Partnership](#)

Summer 2024

South Ayrshire Champs Summer programme 2024 consisted of **21** activities offering **168** spaces for children and young people over the 7 weeks of the school summer holidays. The programme was co designed with young people and started with Youtbeatz in Dumfries at the end of June and finished with South Ayrshires Bouncefest in August. Other activities included weekly outdoor activities at Dolphin House and weekly rowing on the river Ayr with Scottish rowing trips to Edinburgh, Millport, art workshops and Hill walks. The champions board team could not have provided such a varied programme without the support of Thriving communities and our champs volunteers all willing to share their skills and spend time with young people to make memories.



Care Connects App

Launched in February 2025 South Ayrshire Care Connects offers help and support for care experienced young people as they navigate the transition from leaving care.

The app provides useful information and advice on topics such as money and finance, housing and accommodation, health and wellbeing, education, training, and employment and much more.

The app was coproduced by members of our Champion's Board.

Cultural Programme

During easter and summer 2024 members of South Ayrshire Champions Board worked with Scottish Youth Film Foundation to produce a series of short films around issues important to them including self-doubt, loss, and grief. The final films were showcased at Care Day in February 2025.

Language Creates Realities: in February 2025 young people from Champs started working with playwright Fiona Evans to 'reclaim their stories' by creating a word bank of care-based language and book of poetry.

At the 2024 South Ayrshire Youth Awards our Champions Board Creative writing group won the Arts and Culture category for their songwriting and filmmaking work as part of the Gaiety Theatres Culture Collective the group worked on the development and recording of 3 songs and music videos exploring themes of love, navigating life, resilience and coming of age.



Care Day 2025

South Ayrshire Champs celebrated love, trusting relationships and connections as part of Care Day 2025 young people shared what feeling loved felt like here's what they told us:

The work of the South Ayrshire Champions Board exemplifies **Outcome 11** by ensuring resources are shaped and directed by the voices of care-experienced young people, leading to meaningful, personalised outcomes. Through initiatives like the *Shine Even Brighter* small grants scheme, the co-production of the *Care Connects* app, and a vibrant programme of cultural and recreational activities, resources are not only distributed equitably, but used in ways that reflect the real needs, aspirations, and experiences of young people. This approach ensures that funding—such as the Whole Family Wellbeing allocation—is not only efficiently administered, but also delivers tangible improvements in wellbeing, access to opportunities, and a sense of belonging. By centring lived experience in planning, delivery and evaluation, the Champions Board demonstrates how proportionate, responsive resource use can build trust, reduce inequalities, and support young people to thrive.



The Promise Across South Ayrshire (1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025)

South Ayrshires Parenting Promise reflects South Ayrshire's commitment to improving the lives of Care Experienced children and young people, and their families and illustrates the need for change across the whole system to ensure every child grows up loved, safe, and respected.

South Ayrshires promise activity is underpinned by an approach which ensures that children's rights are upheld in all our work and that loving nurturing relationships form the bedrock of our practice. South Ayrshires accompanying promise action plan places significant emphasis on understanding and addressing psychological trauma to best support our care community by recognising the importance of safety, collaboration, trust, empowerment, and choice and designing our services around these principles.

Between 2020 and 2021 We identified ten areas for improvement, with **thirty-one** associated actions and **forty-seven** measurable improvements which we call benefits. We built in a benefit tracking process to measure the impact of our promise activity.

South Ayrshires promise activity was evaluated between November 2024 and March 2025. This resulted in the [Embedding The Promise in Practice 2021-24](#) report.

Of the thirty-one Promise actions identified 2021-24. Fifteen **(48%)** are now complete a further sixteen **(52%)** are on target and will be carried onto plan 24-30. Over the course of 21-24 one action was superseded by a new action and two actions required an extension to the due date to accurately measure their impact.

Of the **47** benefits that were identified **14 (30%)** have been realised as intended and delivered on in relation to the Promise action they were set within. **9 (19%)** are green and on target **21 (45%)** are amber and have been carried forward to phase 2 of our promise activity and 3 benefits are red these will be reevaluated and carried forward to phase 2.

South Ayrshire's Ten Promise improvement Areas

1 South Ayrshire's workforce and commissioners will have comprehensive understanding of the promise including how to embed the promise values in their approach.

2 Services and provision will be designed on the basis of need and with clear data rather than a perception of need and the system has always operated.

3 Trauma informed and nurture approaches are standard and widely recognised across South Ayrshire.

4 South Ayrshire recognises that 'language creates realities' those with care experience will hold and have the narrative of their own lives.

6 10 principles of intensive family support are embedded into the practice (planning, commissioning and delivery). 365 approach across all families or children and commission services.

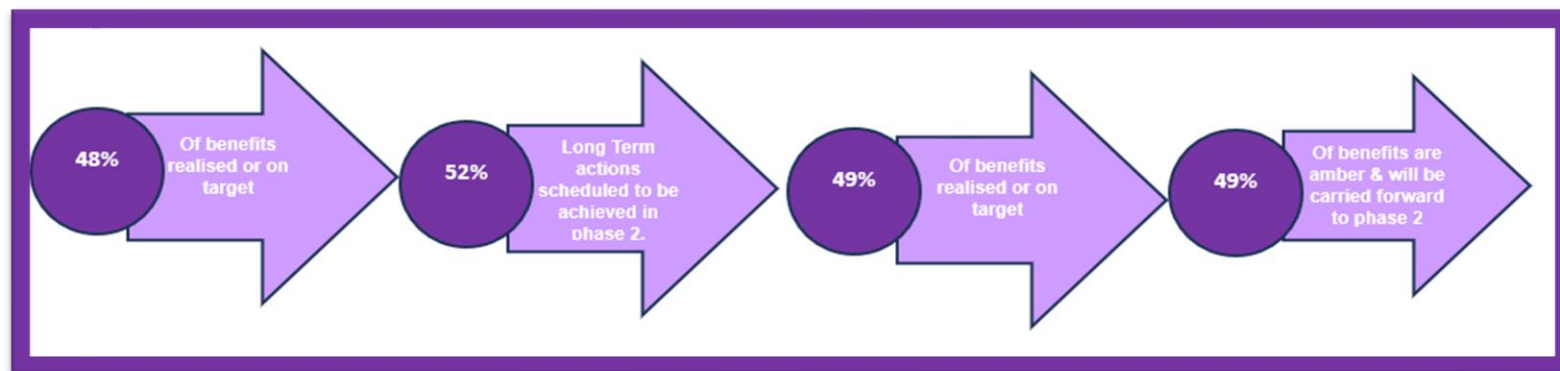
7 There must be swift, ongoing and then sustained support afforded to young people, their families and supporting adults.

8 South Ayrshire must support the workforce to contribute a broader understanding of risk. South Ayrshire must understand, through training and support what must be done differently to build strong supportive relationships.

9 A framework of support will be in place to reduce poverty and inequality, eg. funding support, collaborates person lead supported everyone at course, and have supportive relationships for rela-

10 Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive with equal access to opportunity and free from stigma they education and schools who have their care experien-

This is significant meaning that of the initial intention from the 2021 Plan, **49%** are being delivered within the time scale established. The **45%** of benefits which are amber link to longer term actions which will be carried over into the Plan 2024 – 2030. This reflects what we know about whole system, culture change, it is not without its challenges, the approach to care in Scotland requires a persistent and tenacious attention to ensure the change that the Promise told us was necessary.



Some of the key milestones achieved across South Ayrshire include:

- **Amplifying voices of young people with care experience** and working towards of culture of co production through structures such as South Ayrshire Champions Board that enable children and young people to use their lived experience to influence decisions about the care system locally and nationally and across wider council services.
- **Data Mapping:** improving our understanding and linking our data sources to improve how we deliver services, inform our focus and accountability.
- **Care-Based Language:** Shift from terms like "LAC" to more positive and non-stigmatising language reflecting a change in how care is discussed and perceived.
- **Increased Investment to further develop Workforce Wellbeing and a Supportive school Structure:** South Ayrshire secured Promise Partnership funding from Corra to support staff wellbeing in line with the independent care reviews assertion that **“The workforce needs support, time, and care to develop and maintain relationships. Scotland must hold the hands of those who hold the hand of the child”**.



Next Steps for the Promise in South Ayrshire 25-30

We know that there is still more work to do to keep the promise by 2030. As we look ahead to the next phase of our plan, we will work towards the following:

Care as a protected characteristic: more work is required to map out implications this includes an exploration of our recruitment processes in relation to care experience. This may pose a challenge if extra resource is required to map implications and create additional provision.

Education and a supportive school structure: We have a strong long standing virtual school and will build on the family first model and take the learnings from the supportive school structure to progress improvement area 10 and engage the whole school community in the realisation of this improvement area.

The language of care: more time and energy is required to help to broaden our use of language that is easily understood, is positive and that does not compound stigma. Working alongside our trauma lead we can look at combining cross cutting agendas to incorporate trauma informed language. Support is required for some sections of our workforce to feel comfortable and able to push the boundaries of language.

Commissioning: We now need to extend the work we have been doing around commissioning and the Promise beyond services commissioned by South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership, to ensure that South Ayrshire will incorporate 'quality of relationships' into all commissioning and monitoring frameworks as standard.

Data: We will continue to work with the promise to do data differently and will explore our data sets to understand their relationship and identify the gaps.

Place-based: We will explore how to align the Promise in a place-based way and will collaborate more closely with our Thriving Communities and Housing colleagues to look at the supports offered to those leaving care within the context of the recent redesign of our leaving care services.

Childrens Services Planning: We will map all the actions of the 5 priority areas; families, Included, Voice, Healthy and People through the lens of the promise to support the delivery of integrated, effective, and caring services in our communities.

Listening to those with lived experienced: All our work will place those with lived experience at the heart and we will measure our success through the experiences of the people who use our services. This will require commitment and resource to do well, and we are aware that there is always a danger that participation may be tokenistic if not valued as central throughout all aspects of our service, design, delivery, and monitoring of our progress.

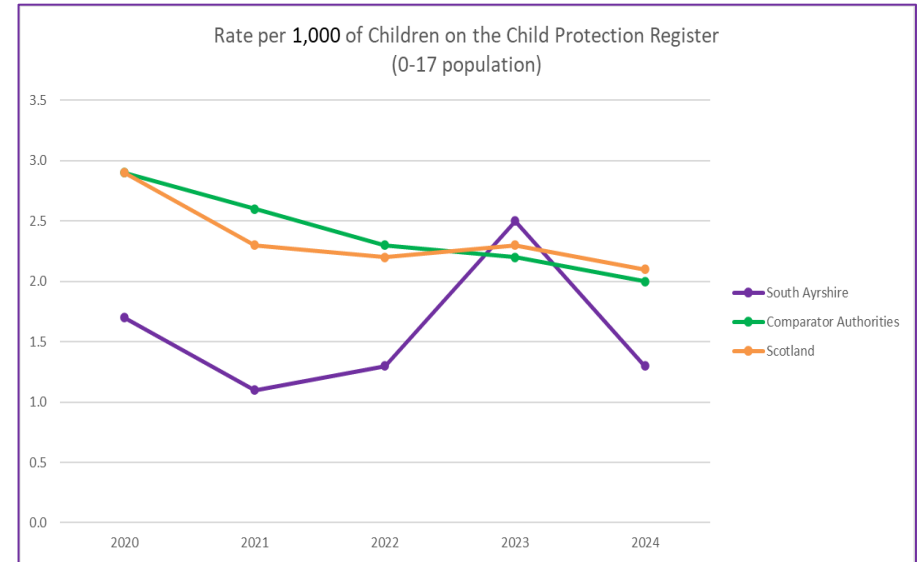
More detailed information on the work relating to the promise in South Ayrshire can be found on our website [The Promise in South Ayrshire - The story so far - Health and Social Care Partnership](#)

Outcome 12

We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk

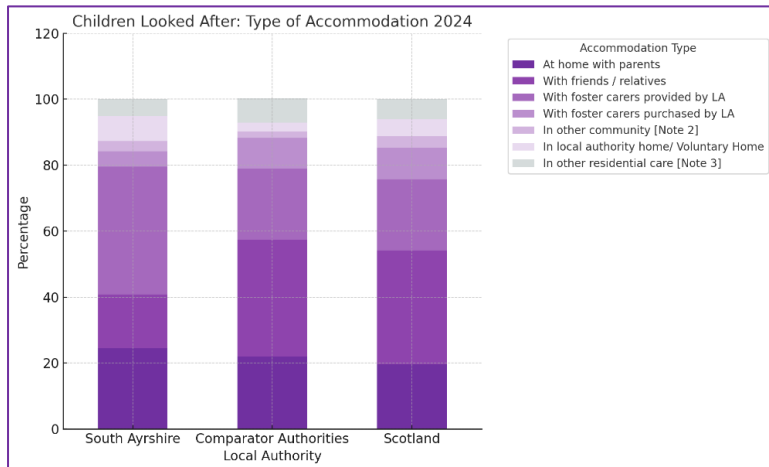
The rate of children (aged 0–17) on the Child Protection Register in South Ayrshire has remained consistently below the national and comparator authority averages between 2020 and 2024. While South Ayrshire experienced a temporary rise in 2023, reaching 2.5 per 1,000, this was followed by a notable reduction in 2024 to **1.4 per 1,000**, returning to one of the lowest levels over the five-year period.

This decline reflects the positive impact of early intervention, integrated working, and a continued focus on supporting families at the earliest opportunity. The 2024 figure demonstrates encouraging progress in safeguarding and supporting vulnerable children locally, reinforcing South Ayrshire’s commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people.



Source: Scottish

Government CP returns, Population Figures Source: NRS mid-year population estimates for 2016-2023

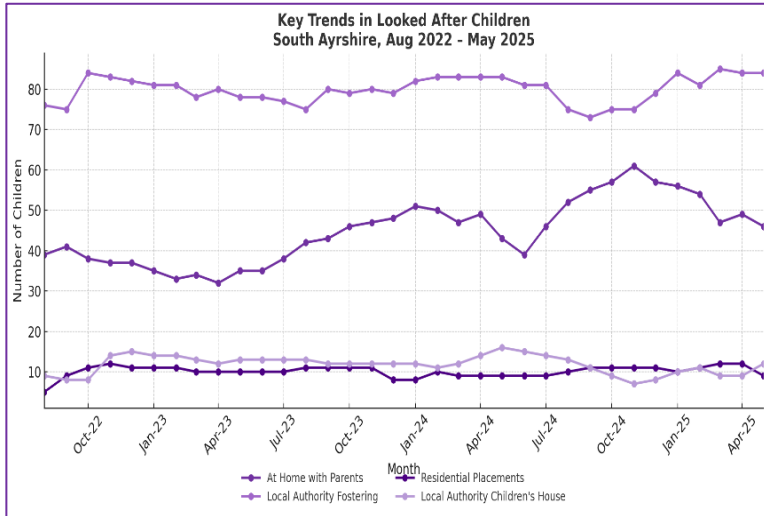


As at 31st July 2024, the majority of children looked after in South Ayrshire (approximately **81%**) were being cared for in community settings — either at home with their parents, with friends or relatives, or with foster carers. This is broadly in line with the national figure of **79%** and slightly lower than the **82%** observed across comparator authorities.

Around **13%** of South Ayrshire’s looked after children were in residential accommodation, which includes local authority or voluntary homes and other residential care settings.

The proportion of children looked after and accommodated in South Ayrshire has remained stable between 2023 and 2024.

Sources: Scottish Government CLAS Returns Looked after children’s statistics 2023-2024: local authority benchmarking tool



The chart illustrates key trends in the number of Looked After Children in South Ayrshire across four main types of accommodation from **August 2022 to May 2025**. The most notable trend is the **consistent increase in the number of children supported to remain "At Home with Parents"**, without the need for formal statutory intervention. This reflects a deliberate shift in practice aligned with the **"No Order Principle"** in the *Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011*, which promotes the least intrusive form of intervention where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

This approach is grounded in a robust, relationship-based **assessment process**, informed by the principles of **The Promise, Children's Rights**, and our commitment to **Signs of Safety**. By focusing on strengths, early help, and meaningful family engagement, we are safely reducing the need for formal placements in residential care, foster care, or children's houses — as shown by the stable or declining trends across those accommodation types.

Source: CHC&J Performance Data

South Ayrshire's model is one of **preventative, rights-based family support**, aiming to keep children in their homes and communities wherever possible, while still meeting their needs and safeguarding their wellbeing.

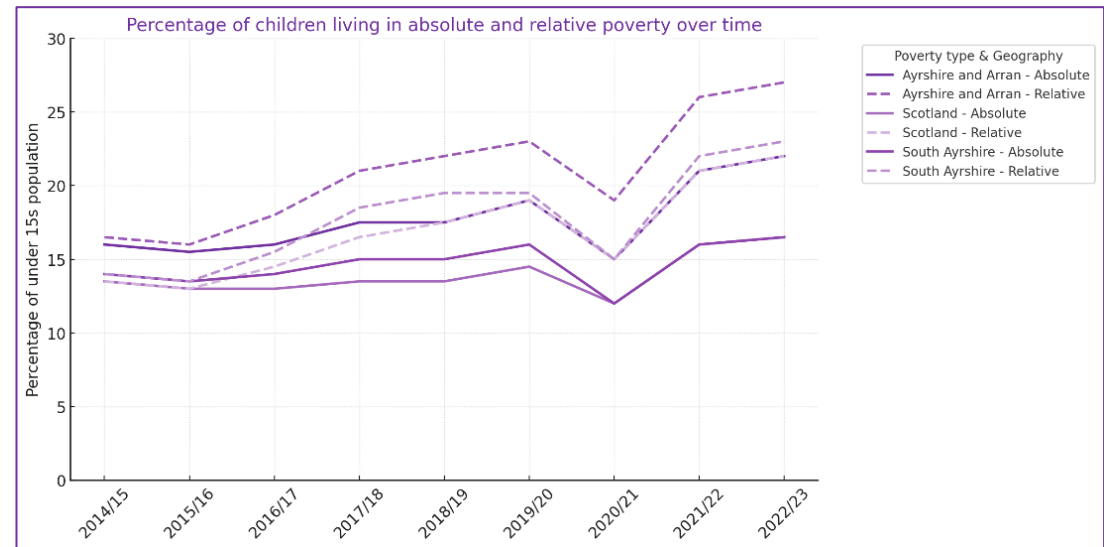
Child Poverty

Source - Households below average income (HBAI) statistics, Department of Work and Pensions (gov.uk) and NRS population estimates.

From the latest available data Child poverty in South Ayrshire, as measured by both **absolute** and **relative poverty after housing costs**, has shown a fluctuating trend over time, reflecting wider national patterns.

Relative child poverty in South Ayrshire rose from around **14%** in 2014/15 to **23%** in 2022/23, aligning closely with the Scottish average and slightly below Ayrshire and Arran's relative rate of **27%**.

Absolute child poverty followed a similar trend, increasing from **14%** in 2014/15 to **16.5%** in 2022/23, remaining consistently lower than the Ayrshire and Arran average but slightly higher than the national average of **16%**.



A notable dip in both poverty measures occurred during 2020/21, likely influenced by temporary government support during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., furlough scheme, uplift to Universal Credit), followed by a sharp rise in 2021/22 and 2022/23 as support was withdrawn and inflationary pressures grew.

Implications:

Despite targeted local interventions such as the [Child Poverty Action Plan](#), [Financial Inclusion Pathway](#) and [South Ayrshire Councils Child Poverty Strategy 2024-2029](#), relative child poverty remains a significant challenge. Continued efforts to address the root causes of poverty — such as income insecurity, housing costs, and energy affordability — will be crucial in reversing this trend and narrowing the gap with national performance.

In recognition of the fact that South Ayrshire had the 8th highest child poverty level in Scotland (2015), the Community Planning Partnership developed a Child Poverty Action Plan. The Partnership implemented one of their identified actions which was to develop a financial inclusion pathway to support families in need. Families are easily and quickly referred to the Information and Advice Hub for the support they need. The Financial Inclusion Pathway was developed and circulated to all health and social care staff, training staff to support families to maximise their income by referring them to South Ayrshire’s Information and Advice Hub. Support can also be provided from Home Energy Scotland to help reduce their energy costs. It is now mandated that all HSCP staff must ask all service users about income maximisation.

The table below details the number of families and the total income generated in the previous years.

2020 / 21	357 Service Users	£1,109,400 Generated Income
2021 / 22	499 Services Users	£1,241,377 Generated Income
2022 / 23	801 Service Users	£857,021 Generated Income
2023/24	198 Service Users	£701,563.31 Generated Income
2024/25	846 Service Users	£576,669.56 Generated Income
5 Year Total	2701 Service Users	£4,486,030.87 Generated Income

Small steps to wellbeing – Family First

South Ayrshire Council are Leading the Way in Innovative Support for Young People and Families

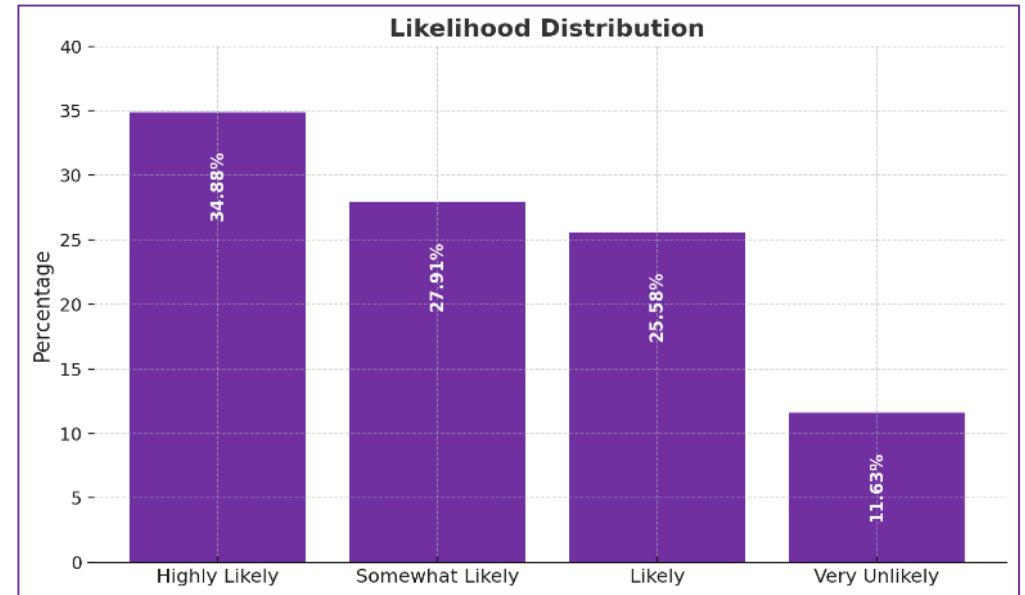
South Ayrshire Council had been at the forefront of exploring innovative ways to support their residents during the national crisis, particularly focusing on helping young people and families recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. One significant initiative was the Small Steps to Wellbeing Service, piloted in March 2022, aimed at supporting young people within secondary education at the earliest possible stages to avert crisis. This initiative was made possible by funding from the Scottish Government's Wellbeing Recovery Fund.

Promoting The Promise and GIRFEC Principles

The Small Steps to Wellbeing Service embodies the principles of The Promise and GIRFEC by providing early intervention and support to young people in the heart of their communities. This service ensures that children and young people receive the necessary scaffolding to promote their wellbeing as they grow and develop. By working collaboratively with education and partner agencies from health and police, the service fosters professional relationships and effective communication, ensuring South Ayrshire's young people receive the right support at the right time.

Expansion and Impact

The initial success of this project within four secondary schools has led to its expansion across all eight secondary schools, with support extended to include associated primary clusters for young people in Primary 7. To date, Small Steps to Wellbeing is proud to have provided one-to-one support to over 220 young people, their caregivers, and families through the Small Steps school-based programme. Additionally, multiple group work sessions have been conducted to address wider themes within school communities, such as conflict with the law and developing healthy relationships. These groups are open to the wider school community and do not require individual referral forms, allowing for broader early support.



Future Strategy and Development

Embedded within schools and promoting positive relationships, the Small Steps to Wellbeing Service enables young people, families, and education professionals to access support and guidance on an ad-hoc basis. This approach will continue to be a key focus in South Ayrshire Councils future strategy and development, ensuring that the principles of The Promise and GIRFEC are upheld, and that young people receive effective support to thrive in their communities.

How have we made a difference

Looking at the 86 young people who are currently working with the service:

Prior to support requests being received, referrers were asked to rate likelihood they would refer to social work without the support: - Highly Likely, likely, somewhat Likely, unlikely and very unlikely.

Likelihood distribution chart demonstrates only 10 of young people supported were unlikely to have a request for assistance submitted to social work services. With majority of young people likely being referred to Social Work Locality Services if support was not in place.

Small Steps to Wellbeing primary aims continue to be around providing -

- Effective early intervention model to reduce pressure on resources.
- Embedded practice within a multi-agency service, fostering a partnership approach.
- Continued development of communication, enhanced information transfer
- Reduced referrals to Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)
- Young People and families feel more supported and confident with services. More amenable to services
- Young People feel connected to their Small Steps Worker and changing views of Social Work in communities.
- Supporting the delivery of whole family wellbeing approach, tailored to the Principles of The Promise and adhering to Children's Rights.
- We take pride in supporting the implementation and delivery of service to meet these aims and continue to be on track in each of the service aims.

The Small Steps to Wellbeing service is making a meaningful contribution to **Outcome 12**: Families are supported to stay together by delivering early, preventative support that strengthens family resilience and reduces the need for statutory intervention. Through its embedded presence in all eight secondary schools and associated primary clusters, the service intervenes at the earliest signs of concern, offering tailored one-to-one and group support for young people and their families. The likelihood distribution data shows that without this support, the majority of young people would have been referred to Social Work services, highlighting the preventative impact of this initiative. By offering accessible, school-based help and fostering strong multi-agency collaboration, the service not only de-escalates emerging issues but also empowers families to

remain together and thrive within their communities. This approach aligns fully with the principles of **The Promise** and **GIRFEC**, ensuring that children and families receive the right support at the right time in a way that is rights-based, relationship-focused, and community-anchored.

Family First – Whole Family Wellbeing Support Service

Purpose of the Service

Family First is a whole family wellbeing support service embedded in education, designed to provide short-term, early intervention supports for young people and families. It is rooted in the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), The Promise Scotland, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and Scotland's national Education Frameworks. The service seeks to uphold children's rights to be heard, supported, and thrive within their families and communities.

Family First Forums

Family First Forums operate within secondary school clusters and include representation from:

- Secondary and associated primary schools
- Education Inclusion Coordinators
- Educational Psychology
- School Nursing
- Thriving Communities
- Social Work – Small Steps to Wellbeing
- Campus Police Officers

Forum Focus

The forum brings together key partners to:

- Discuss young people where there are concerns around school attendance, risk of exclusion, and key periods of transition.
- Identify strengths, risks, and protective factors for each child or young person.
- Explore and coordinate scaffolding supports for young people and families to improve wellbeing and engagement.
- Review all supports after 8 weeks to monitor impact and adjust interventions as needed.

Each forum also takes time to reflect on wider community themes, helping to highlight emerging issues and local strengths. This insight supports thoughtful planning of future actions and services across the cluster.

The Family First – Whole Family Wellbeing Support Service is directly supporting **Outcome 12**: Families are supported to stay together by providing coordinated, early intervention that strengthens family functioning and promotes wellbeing. Through the multi-agency Family First Forums, the service identifies and responds to concerns around school attendance, exclusion, and transitions, offering timely, proportionate support that helps families address challenges before they escalate. By working collaboratively with key partners across education, health, and social work, and embedding its work within school communities, Family First empowers families to stay connected, supported, and resilient—aligning closely with the principles of **The Promise, GIRFEC**, and a rights-based, whole family approach.

Family Support Team

Over the last year there have been several changes within the Team. There is a new Team Leader and an additional Level 8 post (Senior Intensive Family Support Worker) created. Additionally, there have been several workers move on to promoted roles within the HSCP and some new Team members. The Teams developed Vision and Values statement has remained but as a new team has emerged, this is being reviewed as the needs of the service develops.

The intensive family support team have continued to see a significant rise in the work they do with children and families as preventative support and care. Currently the team have 53 children as open allocations. This is made up of families referred via IRT, other families that are supported alongside locality teams and YPST as well as a number of families held by the 2 level 8 Senior Intensive Family Support Workers within the team for a period of assessment and intervention. Of these cases allocated, there are 16 families that are allocated to the 2 Senior Intensive Family Support Workers working to manage the risk presented, develop an assessment, and provide intervention alongside this. Some of the families allocated also have multiple children allocated to the service.

From January 2025 there have been **16** families referred to the service, all of which are allocated to workers within the team. Of these **16** families, **3** have been referred for assessment of need as well as having presenting issues of non-school attendance that seem to be impacted by other areas of vulnerability such as bereavement or domestic violence experiences. A further **6** families have been referred for support around boundaries, routines, and home conditions whilst the remaining families have been referred in for support around general well-being concerns, parenting support, emotional regulation difficulties, housing support and targeted supports relating to Neurodiversity – specifically ASD and support in understanding and managing distressed behaviours at home and in the community.

In the period May 24 – Dec 24 the team also received **36** referrals for support to families from the Team. Most of these referrals have been related to assistance in developing parenting skills, emotional regulation skills, support around home conditions as well as improving the routines of families.

The Team also had an uptake in referrals received from IRT within their role as duty worker. Since February 2025, the Team has merged with the IRT service. This joint approach has strengthened relationships, communication and a culture of support. The Teams have reflected on this experience and has assisted in shaping a preventative and intervention service that maintains a vision and culture of care, protection and support to each other and the families referred into front door services. Whilst these current figures are not available at this time, anecdotally, the team reflected as a whole and advise that the number of referrals received over the past 2-3 months has significantly increased alongside having increased opportunity to undertake visits as a second worker with IRT. From practice, the inclusion of IFS and IRT has opened up further learning and improvement opportunities for staff to work within a duty service, has upskilled their experience and stretched learning.

Throughout the past 4 months there has been focus given to establishing and reviewing the identify for the team as well as looking to improve relationships and credibility with the wider teams. Together, with the merging with IRT, this continues to be a focus for development over the next 6 months.

Support and training have been delivered to staff to support their development and use of evidenced based interventions for families and how to clearly record intervention within record keeping systems. Further work and upskilling the team on evidence-based interventions that address various areas of vulnerability is required. This includes supporting children with neuro-diverse profiles, attachment needs and related behaviours, social stories, and emotional literacy.

The team have identified a range of tools and materials for engaging young people within the family centre, which have been purchased - this includes sensory items, arts and craft materials, books and games that consider emotions, physical and emotional health as well as other items to support learning for the young people. Additionally, a parenting group work programme is currently being developed and will begin over the summer months – this will provide practical and emotional support, links to external agencies as well learning around attachment, brain development and emotional regulation. Further to this, improvement work is required to adapt feedback forms and information leaflets for the service.

Recently there have been positive examples of good practice and multi-agency working within the team. These have generally been during periods of crisis for families but have required workers to work as part of teams with health and education as well as various teams across our services including, YPST and fostering and adoption to ensure that we are appropriately responding to the vulnerabilities presented.

This has included avoiding children being looked after and remaining living at home with some identified short breaks needed through our fostering and adoption team. There are examples of the team being involved at point of referral with IRT and remaining involved with the family as they progress to locality or YPST. Preventative support has been provided for families being referred from IRT and remaining within IFST for assessment and intervention to avoid escalation into wider statutory teams or systems and ensuring families receive the right support at the right time.

Calm Chameleon is our commissioned service for early intervention to families affected by trauma, neglect and abuse. The service sits alongside Intensive Family Support and provides Trauma Release Exercises to children and their wider families. Furthermore, as part of this service being recommissioned for 2024/25, training from the Therapist has been delivered to the IFST and wider children and family teams.

The Intensive Family Support Team is contributing significantly to **Outcome 12**: Families are supported to stay together by delivering intensive, early, and trauma-informed support to families facing a range of complex challenges. Through collaborative working with IRT and other multi-agency partners, the team provides targeted interventions that prevent escalation into statutory care and help children remain safely at home. Their work around parenting support, emotional regulation, and neurodiversity, alongside a growing use of evidence-based tools and group programmes, demonstrates a clear commitment to stabilising families and promoting long-term wellbeing. This preventative, relationship-based approach reflects the values of **The Promise** and ensures families receive the right help, at the right time, in the right way.

Functional Family Therapy

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is an evidence-based program aimed at improving outcomes for young people aged 8-18 and supporting families to stay together and avoid becoming looked after or accommodated by the local authorities. We work in line with the ten principles of the family support plan outlined in “The Promise Scotland” (2020) to deliver a service that helps families meet their individual needs and improves outcomes for children, young people, and their families. The aim is to improve families' wellbeing, strengthen their protective factors and help teach new skills to address the underlying risk factors that contribute to crisis and a breakdown in family relationships.

As adolescence is inherently a time when parents and teens clash over rules and expectations it remains that parent and child conflict is one of the main presenting issues for referral to FFT. Many referrals are made at a time when parents/carers are stating that they can no longer cope and are requesting that their child be accommodated. This also includes parents and carers planning for young people to access homeless accommodation when they reach 16. The FFT team continues to work with families to change the focus from blame of the young person to working together collaboratively on the parent/child relationship, appreciate their individual and relational strengths and improved communication.

FFT is now an established service within South Ayrshire's Health and Social Care Partnership. This evidence-based model involves short-term work with families with the intervention typically being delivered over a three to five-month period. The intervention ranges from 12 to 30 sessions and takes place in the family home. The intervention continues to be family focused and strives to be an inclusive project working to a family's individual set of values, culture, needs, and addressing any barriers in their treatment planning process.

Referrals for FFT are made direct to the supervisor or senior therapist, referrers are encouraged to phone for consultation to make sure the family meets the criteria for the service, or they may be signposted for IFFS or other agencies for alternative support if needed. In year 24/25 there were **32** referrals made to the service and currently **12** families are open to FFT.

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is making a clear and measurable contribution to **Outcome 12**: Families are supported to stay together by delivering focused, evidence-based interventions that prevent family breakdown and reduce the need for young people to enter care. By addressing conflict, strengthening communication, and promoting collaboration within families, FFT supports parents and carers to build resilience and manage challenges more effectively. The model works proactively with families at risk of separation, including those considering accommodation or homelessness for their children, and helps shift the focus from blame to shared solutions. Delivered in the home and tailored

to each family's values and needs, FFT embodies the principles of **The Promise** and supports long-term stability, safety, and wellbeing for children and young people within their own families.

Neuro Connections

The Neuro Connections programme, delivered by **Aberlour**, has played a vital role in improving the life chances of children, young people, and families at risk by providing timely, person-centred support and enabling access to sustainable, community-based services. As the final phase of Aberlour's direct family support work concludes, all families previously engaged with the service have been successfully transitioned into peer support groups or referred to trusted third-sector partners including NEST, NAS, BeFriend, Barnardos, Spotty Zebras, 360, and Connect South Ayrshire.



By guiding families toward consistent peer support and trusted local services, the programme reduces isolation, builds resilience, and empowers families to navigate the challenges of neurodivergence with confidence. This approach not only ensures continuity of care but also supports early intervention and prevention—key elements in improving long-term outcomes for families at risk.

Through proactive signposting, emotional support, and capacity-building activities, Neuro Connections is delivering on the South Ayrshire HSCP strategic outcome of **improving life chances** and enabling families to thrive in their own communities.

As of January 2025, the programme has:

- Facilitated six peer support groups across Ayr, Prestwick, and Maybole
- Prepared a year-long schedule of support sessions across five South Ayrshire towns, including monthly online groups starting March 2025
- Successfully closed direct support for the final families, ensuring seamless transition to peer support or community-based services
- Referred families to trusted partners, including:
 - NEST (10 referrals)
 - Spotty Zebras (5 referrals)
 - Barnardos (2), NAS (1), BeFriend (1), 360 (1), and Connect South Ayrshire (1)

This structured handover from 1:1 support to sustainable group and partner-led services has enabled families to access ongoing help while building informal support networks—reducing social isolation and improving emotional resilience.

By embedding support in local communities and schools, and aligning closely with Autism Outreach to avoid duplication, the project is creating a more coordinated system of care. This proactive, partnership-based approach promotes stability, empowerment, and inclusion—fundamental components in transforming outcomes for families who may be at greater risk of disadvantage.

The Neuro Connections programme is effectively supporting **Outcome 12**: Families are supported to stay together by providing early, person-centred support for families navigating the challenges of neurodivergence. Through timely interventions, emotional support, and structured referrals to trusted community partners, the programme has helped families build resilience, reduce isolation, and develop sustainable networks of support. By enabling families to access ongoing help through peer-led and third-sector services, Neuro Connections prevents escalation into crisis and promotes long-term stability. This strengths-based, community-embedded approach empowers families to stay together and thrive, in line with the principles of **The Promise** and South Ayrshire’s whole family wellbeing strategy.

Bfriend

Building Confidence and Connection through Befriending

The Bfriend service has continued to make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people across South Ayrshire throughout 2024–2025, by providing trusted relationships, opportunities for connection, and access to new experiences. With the support of dedicated volunteers and partners, Bfriend has created safe spaces for young people to thrive socially and emotionally, helping to reduce isolation and build life skills that will serve them well into adulthood.



Performance at a Glance

Over the past year, the Bfriend team has:

- Delivered **455+ one-to-one outings**.
- Supported **49 befriending matches**.
- Facilitated **14 group outings**.
- Trained **17 new volunteer befrienders**.

These activities are directly linked to positive outcomes across key areas:

Outcome 1: Reducing Social Isolation:

- **91%** of young people regularly participated in one-to-one outings (up from **80%** in 2023/24).

- **76%** attended group activities (up from 70%).
- **82%** reported improved social networks (up from 71%).

Outcome 2: Improving Emotional Wellbeing and Confidence:

- **85%** of young people tried two or more new experiences.
- **88%** experienced a positive change in their emotional wellbeing (up from **76%**).
- **30%** achieved a personal goal.

Outcome 3: Empowering Young People to Have a Voice:

- **91%** chose their own activities (up from 83%).
- **97%** contributed to the direction of their befriending match (up from 71%).
- **67%** were involved in project decision-making.

These outcomes reflect Bfriend's commitment to co-production, person-centred support, and building young people's confidence through consistent, trusted relationships.

The Bfriend service is supporting **Outcome 12**: Families are supported to stay together by fostering trusted, stable relationships that reduce isolation, enhance emotional wellbeing, and build resilience in young people. Through one-to-one befriending and group activities, Bfriend provides early, informal support that strengthens young people's confidence, social connections, and ability to cope with challenges—thereby reducing pressure on family relationships and preventing crisis. By empowering young people to have a voice, try new experiences, and feel heard and valued, the service contributes to a more stable home environment and promotes long-term family cohesion in line with **The Promise** and South Ayrshire's commitment to whole family wellbeing.

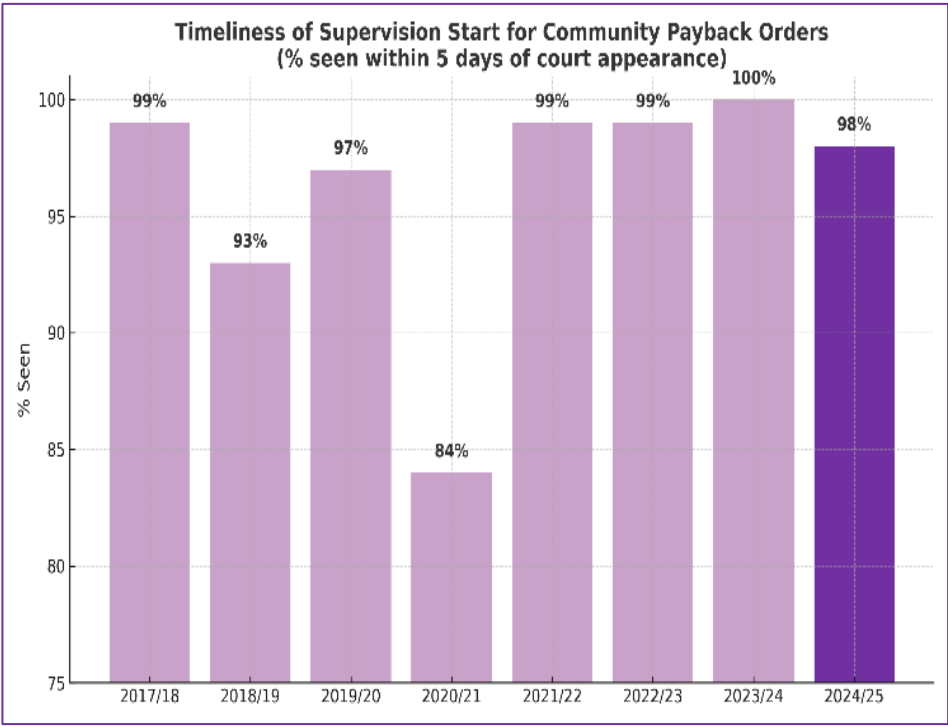
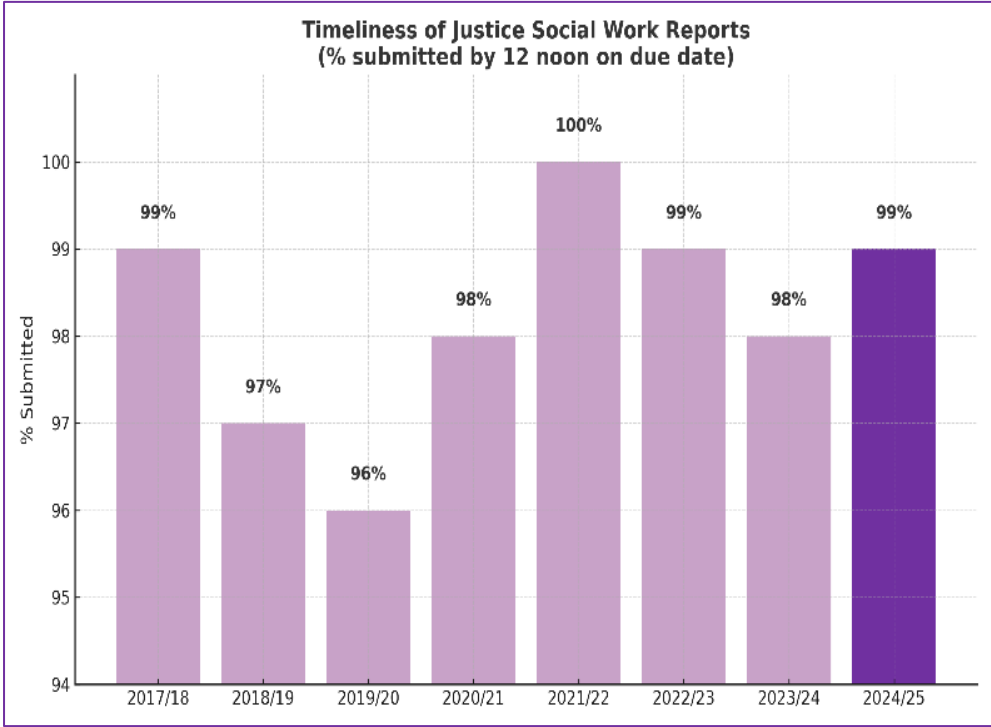
Outcome 13-15

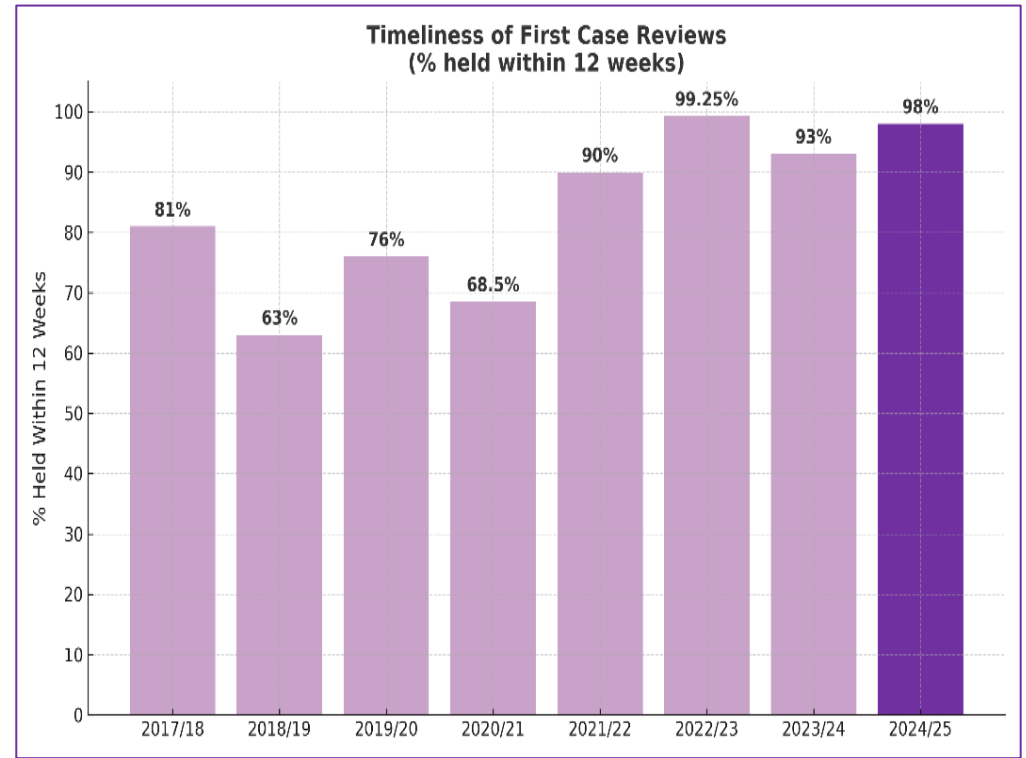
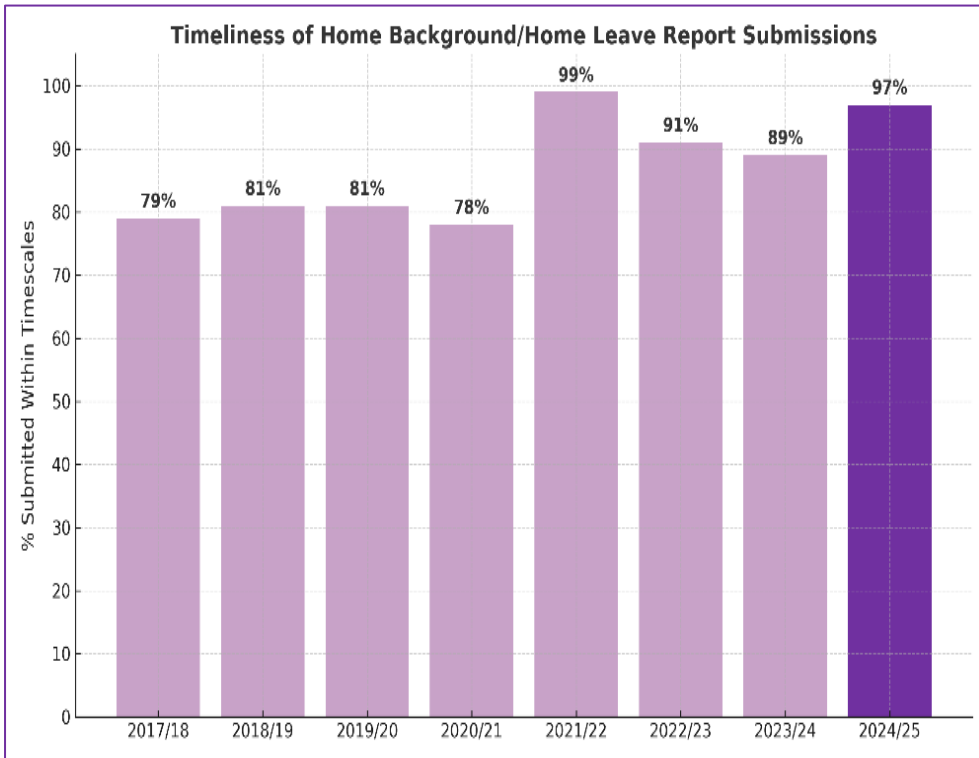
Justice

The National Outcomes for Justice Social Work are to work toward reducing reoffending, while aiming to gain and sustain the public's confidence in the work of justice related services through promoting the values of safety, justice, and social inclusion.

Performance against the National Outcomes for Justice Services

Performance against some of the National Outcomes for Community Justice Services and associated National Performance Indicators is detailed below.





Community Safety and public protection

Justice social work continue to monitor and provide interventions for individuals subject to sex offender registration, through the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements.

Social inclusion to support desistance from offending

By working with Third Sector agencies, such as Barnardo's, individuals appearing at court are supported to re-integrate back into the community. Justice links with South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership are particularly strong and have joint support groups, including a service user engagement group.

Justice

South Ayrshire's Justice Social Work Service continues to play a vital role in supporting individuals involved in the criminal justice system—helping them make meaningful progress towards change while prioritising community safety and wellbeing.

The service supports people at various stages of the justice process, from those awaiting sentencing to individuals returning to the community following a period in custody. Justice social workers provide courts with detailed risk assessments, particularly in complex cases involving domestic abuse or sexual offences. They also supervise individuals subject to Community Payback Orders or Parole Licences, supporting them to address the underlying causes of their offending and reintegrate safely into society.

This work is underpinned by strong partnership working. Through collaboration with Barnardo's, individuals—particularly women leaving court—can access immediate practical support with housing, benefits and healthcare. Links with the Alcohol and Drug Partnership and the wider recovery community ensure that people affected by substance use receive timely and effective interventions. The presence of a peer mentor within the team brings lived experience and hope to those at the beginning of their recovery journey.

Unpaid Work Requirements remain a key element of many community-based sentences. Over the past year, individuals subject to these requirements have contributed hundreds of hours to local projects across South Ayrshire—from maintaining school grounds and cleaning beaches to supporting improvements in community centres. These activities deliver tangible benefits for communities while also helping individuals develop purpose and connection.

Throughcare—support provided before and after release from prison—remains a core priority. Social workers maintain close links with prison staff and are regularly involved in Integrated Case Management (ICM) processes. There has also been a notable increase in invitations to attend Risk Management Team meetings within prisons, reflecting improved collaboration across agencies, albeit adding to existing workload pressures.

Justice staff also manage a growing number of cases under Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). These often involve individuals convicted of serious sexual or violent offences and require careful coordination between partners to assess and manage risk within the community.

Like many public services, Justice Social Work continues to experience administrative pressures linked to increasing demand. The team is actively exploring ways to streamline processes, particularly around the production of reports for prison-based hearings. Despite these challenges, staff remain committed to upholding high standards and ensuring that vital information is delivered to decision-makers promptly.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in South Ayrshire

South Ayrshire continues to play a key role in the development and delivery of MAPPA across the South West of Scotland. These arrangements bring together key agencies—including justice, health, housing and police—to manage the risk posed by registered sex offenders (RSOs) and others subject to statutory supervision in the community.



Strengthening Practice and Public Confidence

In response to heightened public concern and a previous spike in “outing” incidents—where people protested outside the homes of RSOs—a MAPPA awareness video was produced. While currently used as an internal training resource, it forms part of a wider public awareness strategy supported by posters, banners, leaflets and a newly refreshed MAPPA brand. These materials aim to enhance understanding, promote trust and reduce stigma.

In March 2025, South Ayrshire took part in the first MAPPA Ayrshire webinar, featuring input from Professor Hazel Kemshall, a leading expert in public protection. Her contribution, along with an earlier training session supported by the Risk Management Authority (RMA), provided valuable insight into improving Level 2 and 3 case management and developing effective Risk Management Plans.

Enhancing Oversight and Decision-Making

Following a review of MAPPA governance structures, a new approach is being trialled in South West Scotland. The long-standing MAPPA Operational Group (MOG) is being replaced by six smaller, specialist service delivery forums covering areas such as training, housing, public engagement and quality assurance. These forums will offer more targeted support to the Strategic Oversight Group (SOG), chaired by South Ayrshire’s Head of Justice Services, enabling more agile, efficient, and evidence-led decision-making.

Innovation Through Data and Risk Management

To better manage the distribution of individuals subject to MAPPA, a new Heat Map has been developed. This confidential tool visually highlights concentrations of MAPPA-managed individuals and supports safer placement decisions. In addition, an enhanced MAPPA Data Dashboard has improved performance monitoring and strategic oversight by integrating key performance indicators and audit findings.

South Ayrshire MAPPA Snapshot – Quarter 1, 2025:

- **159** RSOs were managed locally as of 31 March 2025
 - **96%** at Level 1, **3%** at Level 2, and **1%** at Level 3
- **125** RSOs were living in the community, including **19** assessed as high risk
- **2** RSOs were convicted of further Group 1 or Group 2 offences during the reporting period
- **9** individuals were subject to Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHPOs)
- **1** “Near Miss” Initial Case Review (ICR) was reported, with learning shared across partners



Looking ahead, Justice Social Work in South Ayrshire will continue to build on its strong foundations. With a sustained focus on early intervention, collaborative working, and the integration of lived experience, the service remains committed to creating safer communities—not by punishing people, but by supporting them to change.

Integration Joint Board – Governance and Decision Making

The table below highlights the key decisions taken by the Integration Joint Board in 2024-25. Copies of the relevant reports can be found on in the [committee reports and agendas section of the website](#).

During the period April 2024 – March 2025 a temporary change in chairperson was introduced. Linda Semple was replaced by Jean Ford, June - December 2024.

Date of Integration Joint Board	Key Decision
3 rd April 2024	The IJB received a series of updates on services for Health and Care Services.
15 th May 2024	Meeting Cancelled.
12 th June 2024	A series of Strategies were presented including Communication; Independent Advocacy; and Digital. Financial reports were also presented.
11 th Sept 2024	The IJB received our Annual Performance Report along with the final report on the review of Administration services in the HSCP.
13 th Nov 2024	Alcohol and Drug Partnership budget presented and the Children’s Service Annual Report was brought to the IJB.
11 th Dec 2024	Mental Health Strategy; Age Well Dementia Strategy presented. Chief Social Work Officer Annual report and the Quality Improvement Framework presented to the IJB.
12 th Feb 2025	An update on the Getting it Right for Everyone (GIRFE) approach was presented. A refreshed Governance Framework was also presented.
12 th March 2025	Budget setting, Charging Policy and a Strategic Plan refresh presented to the IJB.

Strategic Risk

The HSCP has identified a number of strategic risks which are detailed within Pentana. Risks are assigned to the relevant owners who are required to review and update these regularly. Strategic Risks are reported to the Council, NHS and governance committees within the HSCP. Furthermore, there is oversight of these performance targets taken to the IJB.

The Performance and Audit Committee (PAC), Health Care Governance, Adult and Child Protection Committees, have oversight to these and for transparency once agreed, these are shared with appropriate groups.

During 2024/25 there has been further work undertaken to streamline and improve the reporting of Strategic Risks. This format clearly details the high-level risks; Financial, Workforce and Premises. There is an agreed process for reducing risk, which includes the identification of mitigations, actions and reductions/improvements.

Strategic Risk and Operational Risks registers (where services have developed these) are co-linked and used to inform, hold account, drive change and improvements and benchmark positive outcomes or, where risk needs to be managed, ensure that the best practice is embedded and sustained to keep citizens across South Ayrshire safe, well, healthy and living their best life and to provide factual evidence of the HSCP achieving their Strategic Aims as detailed in the HSCP Strategic Plan 2021-31.

Reports can be accessed here: [Annual Performance Reports - Health and Social Care Partnership \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/annual-performance-reports).

Annual Financial Performance and Best Value 2024-25

Summary of Financial Performance

Financial information is part of the performance management framework with regular reporting of financial performance to the IJB. This included an integrated approach to financial monitoring, reporting on progress with savings delivery, financial risks and any variations and changes to the delegated budget. During the year regular financial monitoring reports including progress on transformation and improvement activity, proposals to utilise reserves and financial risks and any changes to the delegated budget were presented to the IJB.

Within community care and health there were significant overspends in delivering care in the community this includes community care nursing, transport, community care equipment store, and residential care placements. Allied Health Professionals continued to be underspent due to slippage in filling vacancies. Recruitment challenges have been mitigated through work on a Pan Ayrshire basis with open evenings, school careers fayres, collaboration with the higher education institutes (HEI's) and events to engage new graduates into employment, along with other opportunities for support roles and international recruitment options.

South Ayrshire has a high dependency ratio meaning there is less of a working age population available to support the ageing population. This year the HSCP continued to progress recruitment in care at home to provide additional capacity in the community to meet the demand from delayed transfers of care.

As well as increasing capacity, services to reduce the level of demand continued in year including the frailty team, reablement unmet need assessment team and Racecourse Road Intermediate Care Unit. These teams focus on supporting people to reduce their level of care needs and maintain their independence for longer, ultimately reducing the level of mainstream care required.

There continues to be an underspend in looked after children's placements, an anticipated demand in need for foster and kinship carers has not materialised, and we have continued to provide support for children in our neighbouring authorities. This can be attributed to the Whole Family, Whole System approach including the Signs of Safety training and Functional Family Therapy.

During the year young adults transitioned from children's services to adult services within community care and health resulting in a further underspend within children and justice services budget.

The overall financial performance against budget for the financial year 2024 - 25 was an underspend of £1.203m, prior to earmarking. Following earmarking of £3.543m relating to specific funding allocations and improvement and innovation fund underspends to be carried forward for use in 2025-26, the actual outturn will be an overspend of £2.340m, this will be funded from uncommitted general reserves.

Key successes for 2024-25 include:

- Improvement and Innovation Fund approval of £4.730m of projects to date, supporting development of new ways of working, and investing in early intervention approaches as well as supporting current demand and backlogs.
- Continued progress with reducing the number of children placed in family placements in 2024-25 has been achieved through transformation in Children Services.
- Investment in our internal care at home services increasing internal capacity to meet community care needs has progressed this year.
- Investment in new ways of working to provide care in the right place at the right time such as AHP Front Doors and Occupational Therapists included in GP practices.
- Use of uncommitted reserves to fund in year emergent demand for residential care within Adults and Older People.

Strong financial leadership will continue to be required to ensure that future spend is contained within the budget resources available, and the IJB moved into 2025-26 with an approved balanced budget, recognising that the savings targets are challenging and the level of resources available have significantly reduced to meet any unexpected financial pressures.

Financial Reporting

Financial monitoring reports were presented to the Integration Joint Board throughout the year. A full analysis of the financial performance for 2024-25 is detailed in the [Year End Financial Outturn report](#).

The total expenditure and financial funding made available from NHS Ayrshire and Arran and South Ayrshire Council to the IJB to deliver services and the costs associated with delivering these services over the last 5 years is detailed in the table below from 2020/21 to 2024/25. The financial information presented in the table is from the Annual Accounts Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the surplus in years 2020-21 and 2021-22 were carried into reserves and have been release over the last three years, noted as a deficit on the provision of services in the table.

Services	Total Spend 20/21 £m	Total Spend 21/22 £m	Total Spend 22/23 £m	Total Spend 23/24 £m	Total Spend 24/25 £m
Community Care & Health	62.666	69.152	76.624	81.184	90.522
Children and Justice Services	23.069	24.607	25.163	24.497	25.281
Mental Health Services	28.871	29.869	33.972	36.558	40.735
Support Services	4.697	7.909	5.835	10.097	9.778
Integrated Care Fund/ Delayed Discharge	3.057	1.052	0.845	0.675	0.870
Aids and Adaptations	0.785	0.780	0.797	0.654	0.650
Primary Care	44.026	44.403	44.814	46.082	46.632
Hosted Services	2.107	3.334	3.456	4.337	4.565
Lead Partnership Services	41.926	41.889	49.84	55.244	61.138
Acute Hospitals	27.54	28.311	30.626	28.372	34.488
Covid Costs	8.216	5.549	2.182	0	
Cost of Services	246.960	256.855	274.154	287.700	314.659
Funding					
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	178.631	188.434	169.931	191.059	205.511
South Ayrshire Council	78.124	86.919	95.438	94.280	102.743
Total Funding	256.755	275.353	265.369	285.339	308.254
(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	(9.795)	(18.498)	8.785	2.361	6.405

At the end of 2024-25 the IJB had £0.597m of uncommitted reserves remaining, going forward into 2026-27 and beyond the financial outlook is challenging, additional funding will be required into health and social care to meet the needs of South Ayrshire' ageing population.

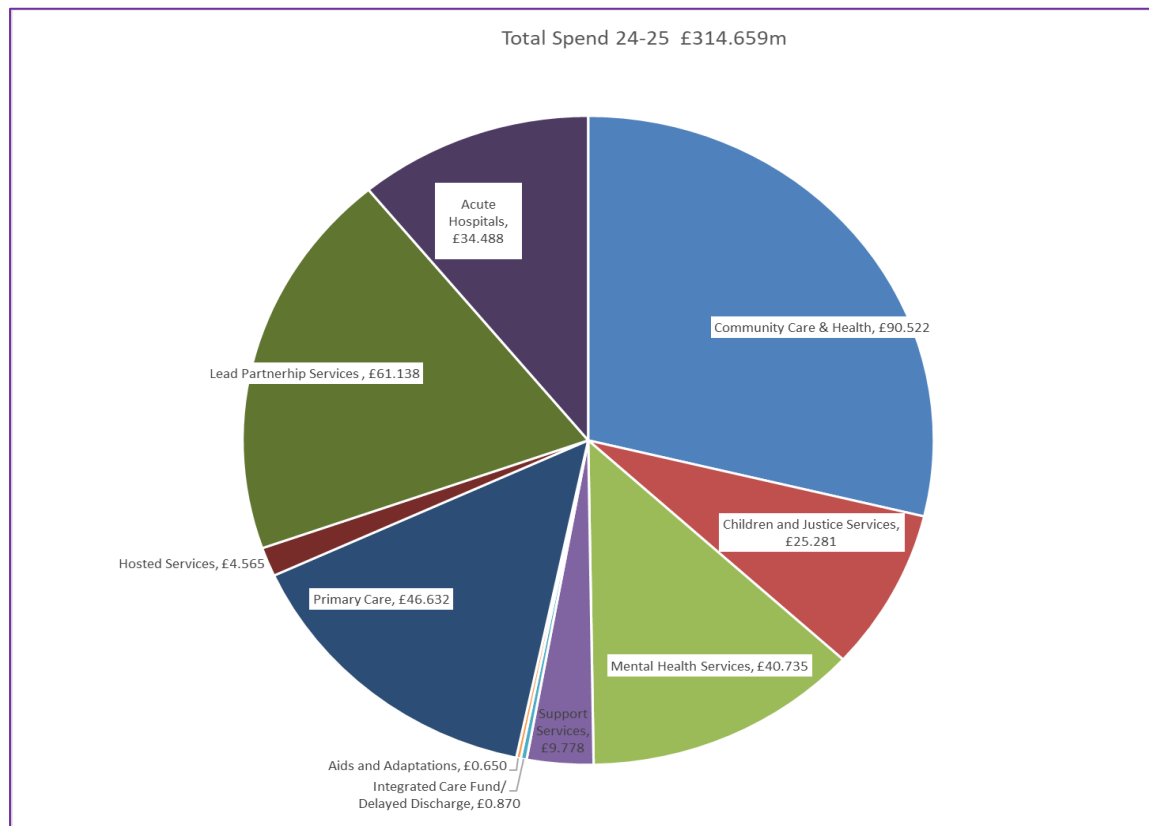
Best Value

NHS Ayrshire and Arran and South Ayrshire Council delegate functions and budgets to the IJB in accordance with the provision of the Integration Scheme. The IJB decides how to use these resources to achieve the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan. The IJB then directs NHS Ayrshire and Arran and South Ayrshire Council to deliver services in line with the objectives and programme set out in its Plan.

The governance framework sets out the rules and practices by which the IJB ensures that decision making is accountable, transparent and carried out with integrity. The IJB has legal responsibilities and obligations to its stakeholders and residents of South Ayrshire. The IJB also has a duty under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to make arrangements to secure Best Value, through continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, the need to meet the equal opportunity requirements and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.

During this year transformational change within services has continued as well as development of new ways of working to mitigate against challenges from lack of workforce capacity and improve services through early intervention and prevention approaches. It is recognised that transformation is key to shaping health and care services for the future, shifting the balance of care to more early intervention and prevention approaches and community-based services with less reliance on institutional based services.

Reports to the IJB this year included progress reports on the Improvement and Innovation Fund.



Inspection Findings








Inspections

In 2024/25 the Care Inspectorate visited for a follow up to our Adult Support and Protection Inspection. They told us progress was made in all areas previously identified for improvement.

They highlighted in response to the 2021 inspection, the partnership commendably oversaw significant improvement in almost all key areas for improvement including investigations, risk assessments, protection plans and case conferences. The drivers for change were initiated by decisions made by the strategic leadership team and overseen by all staff from right across the partnership. The inspectorate told us our approach to improvement was sound and well structured.

We were told the partnership had a firm understanding of what needed to improve and clearly laid this out in our improvement plan. Capacity and resources were prioritised, new roles developed, tools and templates re-designed, operational guidance revised, and operational oversight strengthened considerably. Training for staff supported these initiatives and there was evidence of progress assessment and refinement.

The partnership's strategic leadership team had made significant progress to improving the overall quality of adult support and protection working practices. New key leadership roles were initiated as a result of the initial inspection, and this provided the needed change to our adult protection committee structure. As a result, the leadership team is more accurately sighted on the performance of adult protection work. Leadership was founded on strong collaboration and a culture of continuous improvement and learning. Strategic leads empower staff to drive improvement initiatives and clearly prioritise work. Investment in frontline and strategic oversight through robust audit activity and reflection opportunities has also proved successful in driving improvement across the partnership.

Priority areas for improvement from Phase 1 in June 2022	Progress	Progress review findings in September 2024
1	Management of risk for adults at risk of harm including chronologies, risk assessments and protection plans required improvement.	 Significant progress made
2	Social work should involve police and health in adult protection investigations when required. Investigation reports should set out clearly how staff conducted investigations, including interviews with the adult at risk of harm and other parties.	 Some Progress Made
3	Social work should always convene an adult protection case conference when necessary. Social work should invite police and health when required. They should attend when invited.	 Some Progress Made
4	Social work leaders should ensure standards of adult support and protection practices are consistently good, and operational management is sound and effective.	 Significant progress made
5	Quality assurance, audit and improvement were minimal for adult support and protection. The partnership should urgently make sure these important activities expand appropriately.	 Some Progress Made
6	The partnership's chief officers' group and its adult protection committee should put robust measures in place to closely monitor adult support and protection practice. They should act decisively to rectify problems when they arise.	 Significant progress made
7	Adults at risk of harms' lived experience did not inform the adult protection committee. The partnership should improve in this area.	 Some Progress Made

Significant progress
Some progress
Minimal progress

Participation and Engagement

Communications

Communications activity plays a crucial role in ensuring we can engage and inform at all levels, whether this is with staff and partners, with key stakeholders or with service users and the general public. The new Communications Strategy 2024-29 mentioned previously in this report is an important document for ensuring good communication in all areas of the HSCP.

All communications activity is coordinated, produced and implemented by the Communications Officer which sits within our Planning and Performance officer to ensure quality assurance and to provide support to all staff to utilise our communication methods in the most effective way.

During this reporting period a temporary post was introduced, specifically looking to support the digital communications methods used within the organisation. This Digital Systems Assistant has a focus on the review and refresh of our public website presence as well as supporting communications cover and assisting with the growing demand on the communications service.

Press Activity

SA HSCP has seen a continued increase in press activity over the reporting period. Both in proactive and reactive activity.

- **11** Proactive Press Releases issued. These articles are developed and distributed to the local press to showcase good news and best practice. All are available on the HSCP website: <https://hscp.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/News>
- **19** Media Enquiries were received and responded to in line with our media protocol.
- **2** radio interview requests have been approved and co-ordinated.

Social Media

The SA HSCP utilises four social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. These accounts are manned by the Communications Officer and Digital Systems Assistant. While the volume of posts has decreased this year, this is a strategic decision to focus on

quality over quantity, ensuring that our audience is not oversaturated with content and that each post delivers meaningful and impactful information.

The content posted on our platforms is a mixture of messaging from both internal teams within the SA HSCP as well as sharing posts from partners in particular South Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire & Arran.

Notably, on 13th January 2025, we launched our Instagram account, further broadening our social media presence.

🏠 Posts		
Facebook Page	-9.9%	1,422
Twitter	-8.8%	1,340
LinkedIn Page	-35%	152
Instagram Business	+%	103

🏠 Average post engagement rate		
Instagram Busin...	+%	8.39%
LinkedIn Page	+23.6%	5.81%
Facebook P...	+14.7%	3.18%
Twitter	+5.6%	2.39%

🏠 Post impressions		
Facebook...	+35.5%	648,242
Twitter	-39.7%	133,518
LinkedIn P...	+43.9%	11,734
Instagram Business	+%	2,520

Public Website

Since June 2024, a Digital Systems Assistant has been in post to actively lead a review of the SA HSCP website. The Digital Systems Assistant has engaged with a range of teams and services to review existing webpages, identify content gaps and gather feedback on how we can improve the information we provide.

To date, **51** existing webpages have been reviewed and updated and **39** new webpages have been created where there have been gaps. The website review is still underway, with ongoing efforts to ensure content remains up to date, accurate, and user-friendly.

Additionally, work has begun on implementing the use of SharePoint to support more effective internal communications within SA HSCP. The Digital Systems Assistant has been collaborating with various teams to establish dedicated SharePoint pages for services, promoting streamlined information sharing and enhanced collaboration across the organisation.

Locality Planning Partnerships (LPPs)

Team Around the Locality

A key focus for localities and the golden thread throughout delivery of locality plans, has been the design and implementation of the Team around the Locality model.

The objective of the model is to connect practitioners and people from health, social care, independent sector, the voluntary sector, and the community with a focus on the needs of individuals and their local community.

Within the model is a vision that includes integrated hubs serving as a convenient point of access for individuals seeking support. These hubs will provide information, advice, assessment, treatment and various support services all in one local location.

The model has evolved to ensure close alignment, synergy and language to key national and local priorities to deliver this, the locality management team have been working in partnership with the locality and key stakeholders to shape and deliver services that empower individuals and communities to start well, live well and age well.

Examples of this such as;

- Connect – provision of physical hubs across localities, as well as a website and phone line, where citizens can access information and advice that matters to them and access a directory of supports and groups available in their local area(s).
- GIRFEC and GIRFE – enabling locality-based delivery of services that matter to children, families, citizens, and communities wherein they feel safe, respected and included.
- Ageing Well Strategy and Frailty Standards - recognising the older population within the locality, and the value they bring to communities and families, and enabling actions, providing information and advice, and delivering support that will empower older adults to live as independently as possible.
- Mental Health and Dementia Strategies– ensuring the tiered approach within the strategies are delivered locally.
- Digital Strategy – enabling locality planning and care delivery towards a future where technology and data are seamlessly integrated into operations, service delivery, and decision-making processes, and empowering individuals to feel more empowered to ownership and control of their care, wellbeing and independence.
- Alcohol and Drug Partnership – building on the strong partnership working across the ADP and working together to ensure citizens affected by alcohol and/or drugs receive the support which meets their needs when they need it.

- Adults and Young Carer Strategies - ensuring that carers are recognised, valued and supported.
- Integrated Neighbourhood Teams – adopting a whole system, placed based approach to development and delivery of services.

Maybole and North Carrick

Maybole and North Carrick LPPs continue to take place monthly, and meetings are facilitated using a hybrid approach of face to face and online. The meeting venue has rotated in North Carrick to support wider attendance in villages.

Maybole and North Carrick have provided funding to 17 community groups and projects this year, all of which make a great difference in the community as well as meeting local priorities. Funding has been provided via participatory budgeting and small grants, and all group have been allocated a mentor to support with utilisation of funding, synergy with local priorities and networking with other groups and services.

The three main priorities for Maybole and North Carrick are listed below.

- Tackling social isolation and loneliness
- Promoting good physical and mental health including Ageing Well
- Tackling drugs and alcohol issues

A well-attended community engagement event took place to bring services and groups together to enhance community and working relationships and to focus on delivery of the Team around the Locality Model. There was recognition of many assets within the local area, as well as exploration around areas for improvement. Assets include:

- Good links between health, council and community groups.
- Numerous assets within the community.
- Increased services in rural areas although this could continue to improve.
- Good awareness of the impact of social isolation and loneliness.
- Signposting.
- Increase in peer support and people with lived experience.

Areas for improvement:

- The Connect physical hubs will be a welcome additional to communities.
- Better partnership working required.
- More accessible services for rural areas.

- Better transport links.
- Better connectivity – Wi-Fi/phone signal isn't great especially in rural areas.
- Technology/systems – directory of services, digital skills especially for older people.
- Requirement for rooms/spaces.
- More intergenerational work.

Areas for improvement are being taken forward within the LPP and wider planning. In addition, the community as part of the LPP have taken part in communication and engagement in relation to development of the SAHSCP Mental Health and Dementia Strategies.

Girvan and South Carrick

Girvan and South Carrick LPP meetings are well attended and have good representation. There is a hybrid approach to the meetings which allows people to join online if they are unable to travel to the meeting. The priorities for the LPP are listed below.

- Promoting good mental health wellbeing and physical health.
- Managing long-term health conditions.
- Tackling social isolation and loneliness.
- Tackling drugs and alcohol issues.
- Support unpaid carers in the community.

Girvan and South Carrick Locality Planning Partnership organised and delivered a Participatory Budgeting (PB) process, which was successful. Following the PB event in September 2024, 13 groups received the full allocation of what they had bid for and 1 group receive a part funding.

The LPP Chair has attend and contributed to the Girvan Community Hospital Site Review meetings and good progress has been made. New additions to the site include a Carers Wellbeing Programme, Diabetic Eye Screening Clinic, a Spirometry Clinic, and an Injectable Therapies Group for Type 2 Diabetes. Moving forward in the next 12 months there are aspirations to host a technology demonstrator site, a community appointment day for individuals waiting on a muscle-skeletal appointment, wraparound support for the Diabetic Eye Screening Clinic and an increase in out-patient appointments.

There has been commencement of a review into the model of care in Davidson Ward, inclusive of in-patient beds, minor injury unit and day cases. The review of the model reflects changing policy and drivers such as primary care improvement, transforming roles, locality planning and planning with people, integrated care, workforce planning and use of digital approaches, and outputs from the review are expected in the first

quarter of 2025/2026. From review it has been apparent that day cases increased from **93** in 2023/2024 to **187** in 2024/2025 demonstrating a desire to deliver care closer to home.

The LPP has been involved in the engagement process for development of Mental Health and Dementia strategies and a community engagement event took place bringing service providers and community groups together to network and find out about what services/supports are available in the locality.

North Locality

North Locality disciplines have progressed a Team Around the Person approach. This was established utilising the principles of Getting it Right For Everyone (GIRFE), which is a national approach which South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership have contributed to as a Pathfinder. This approach supports shared risk management, shared decision making and provides a forum to support and discuss our most vulnerable individuals. The GIRFE principle of identifying a Care Co-Ordinator is fully adopted as part of this approach and the team have received positive feedback from colleagues and more importantly service users who have experienced the support of the team. The team are also finalists for the Jane Davies Award, which focuses on compassion and person-centred care. Standard Operating procedures and a presentation has now been finalised and this will now be taken to other localities across SAHSCP and Primary Care.

In terms of promoting that locality hub approach and CONNECT, teams are moving to Freemans Hall and a working group is being established to progress the CONNECT model.

The Prestwick and Villages LPP membership has grown over recent months, strengthening the LPP approach. Sadly the Chair stood down last year and the LPP has not identified a chair going forward. The HSCP Senior Manager currently chairs the group.

The LPP has a real sense of supporting and actively doing events to support the communities across Prestwick, Monkton and Symington. There have been **2** events in Prestwick, held in Monkton, the first focussing on The Cost-of-Living Crisis and Money Matters and the second celebrating International Women's Day. Moving forward the Partnership Engagement Officer is proactively engaging with groups and Community Council to promote engagement at the LPP. The LPP recently agreed a number of key priorities and themes to inform meeting moving forward:

- Fire Safety.
- Carers.
- Children Services – The Promise.
- Health and Social Care Partnership- Locality Work.
- Power of Attorney.

The LPP has also been focussing on their approach to Participatory Budgeting and small grant awards. They supported 14 community groups through PB in the last financial year, and also a number of applications were made for small grants which were successful. The LPP has reflected on learning from these events and approaches and are in the process of establishing a sub-group to consider how Prestwick LPP wish to support this moving forward.

The Troon and villages LPP has recently re-established with key members in attendance and this membership has grown over recent months. The main focus moving forward will be to:

- Consider the membership of the group and the Partnership Engagement Officer has been pro-active in engaging with community groups to encourage attendance.
- Ongoing conversations regarding priorities.

Troon LPP also does not have a chair and HSCP Senior Manager currently support this. However, the LPP have supported 14 community groups through PB event and also small grant awards.

In September after summer recess both LPP's will be engaged to review their Locality Plans and priorities, which will inform budget/grant provisions. There is also work ongoing with Community Planning Partnerships to align plans and priorities.

Carers day in conjunction with Marr College has also been agreed and this will take place 21 May 2025.

Central Locality

Within the Central Locality, the focus continues on developing and expanding the membership and contributions made by participants of both the Ayr North LPP and Ayr South and surrounding villages LPP.

The Ayr North LPP continue to meet in the HUB @ Ayr United which has been very successful. The HUB offers a central location, free parking and access to multimedia as well as additional seating for small breakout sessions.

The LPP continue to take a priority approach to the structure of their meetings. Since Autumn 2024, there have been 3 months dedicated to work relating to 'promoting good mental health and wellbeing' followed by 'supporting an inclusive economy that reduces poverty and inequality', two of four priorities identified within this area. Speakers are invited to attend at the first of the 3 dedicated meetings, to provide an oversight of the topic area and to share data and updates from key services in the area.

The group created a public facing information leaflet detailing a range of organisations that provide services and support for those with mental health concerns in Ayr North. This has been distributed, through support from Police Scotland Youth Volunteers to every household in the LPP area. Plans are underway to host a community event in Ayr Academy in early August to promote the wide range of services and supports

available to residents of Ayr North. The event will be open to anyone living, working, volunteering, or learning in Ayr North and will be a mix of information stalls and activities. This will be done in partnership with NHS Ayrshire and Arran's MSK Physiotherapy Team to deliver a community appointment day, which is a method adopted by the MSK Team in a bid to reduce their waiting times.

The work, originally referred to as Getting it Right for Ayr North, has now progressed in size and scale. With support from across the Community Planning Partnership, the Integrated Neighbourhood Team – Ayr North, is now in place. This has been supported by Leadership from the HSCP and South Ayrshire Council, with a vision to adopt a whole system place-based approach to development and delivery of services.

Ayr South LPP continue to meet monthly in Kincaidston Community Centre and attracts representation from service providers and community representatives, however the group remains underrepresented from our more rural communities.

There has been a similar workshop style approach taken to addressing the priorities within this area. The focus so far has been on 'promoting good mental health and wellbeing' and 'community connectedness'. The community connectedness activity was particularly well received and included inputs from Annbank Community Association and Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team. The group have discussed issues relating to community connectedness and have agreed to progress a targeted piece of work looking at how the villages of Annbank, Mossblown and Tarbolton can consider the resilience of their respective villages, and what resources and information can be shared and learned from. This will progress through 25/26.

Following on from a successful engagement event for the Central Locality that took place in March 2024, a follow up session will take place in April 2025 which will contribute to a refresh and update of both LPP Plans.

In Ayr North, **£20,400** was distributed to groups via participatory budgeting and small grants. The submissions were required to meet the priorities of the LPP. For Ayr South and surrounding villages, a total of **£21,085** was distributed to groups.

Both LPPs have been keen to be considered within the consultation process of local strategies and policy and have contributed to the development of the Mental Health and Dementia strategies.

For both LPP areas, an Annual Report detailing the work of respective areas over the past twelve months is being produced and will be available by June 2025.

Clinical Care and Governance

Clinical Care and Governance

South Ayrshire IJB are confident that Clinical Care and Governance; assurance; compliance and due diligence are key performance requirements. The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 was introduced and implemented with effect from 1 April 2024. During this reporting period there has been significant progress to develop robust data and reporting to meet the requirements of the Act.

Our governance meetings, in keeping with national guidance to ensure a joined-up approach to governance of both health and social work / social care services, are scheduled in advance in accordance with the decision making required.

Our governance arrangements include the Health Care Governance Group (HCGG). The HCGG received reports from each of the HSCP's service areas and other internal governance groups such as the Social Work Governance Board. During the early stages of 2023 the template for annual reporting was refreshed and the first generation of this revision was presented in the summer of 2023 to the various Committees and Boards and has been continued during 2024. In addition to the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 requirements these reports collectively offer assurance of good standards.

Complimenting the regular Health and Care Governance business, our now well-established Community Services Oversight Group (CSOG) was refreshed during 2024 to reflect both the membership of the group and the aims and objectives. We have continued to build strong positive relationships with professionals, regulatory partners, agency representatives and corporate services. These relationships are built on trust and openness with a key goal in mind – improving outcomes for the citizens of South Ayrshire. The multi-disciplinary approach remains strong and has become an embedded work stream. Moving into 2025 the group recognised that this was a supportive, 'improvement' platform, with each member having a common goal and therefore rebranded as the Community Services Collaboration Group (CSCG).

From a Public Protection perspective, Adult Support and Protection reports, along with Child Protection, reviews which support learning for the HSCP and these wider multi-agency protection-based Partnerships. Good governance arrangements (through the Adult and Child Protection Committees) ensure that all staff are supported to share issues in a safe and confidential environment. Learning Summaries are shared, and the HSCP supports education and learning through the work done by the Education and Learning Sub-Group. This approach ensures that governance procedures improve, assure and, where necessary, result in remediation to drive the quality of our joint services. The Partnership Improvement Plan emanating from this governance approach, ensures that continuous improvement is embedded throughout every aspect of care delivery, from corporate leadership values to clinical and partnership support for staff. We continue to keep our governance processes under review and are constantly seeking to improve these.

In year progress and year ahead

This year's Annual Performance Report covers the twelve months to 31st March 2025. We have faced many challenges head on, with delayed transfers of care continuing to be a major element and priority. South Ayrshire has consistently pursued options to bring improvements to the statistics as behind the numbers are real people who are victims of systems which are not always working effectively. In recent years we have continued to push hard to create pathways which support people navigate through a complex health and care system. Some of our progress has been hampered with difficulty around recruitment and retention which affects services across all of the specialist areas.

This has been further impacted on with financial pressures which we have explored ways to support our commissioned services, develop creative solutions and work better together and reduce insular team approaches – we are changing cultural to consider whole system approaches much better. We have been able to celebrate at an international level our successes and hope that this goes toward finding long term solutions, not just for South Ayrshire, but also for other HSCP's and wider. We have known for a long time that many of the challenges we face are nationally recognised but a unified approach to identifying and implementing solutions at a national level is needed – in trying to achieve this, we have shared our learning with other HSCP's and explored solutions in equal measures.

We continue to push forward with our previously agreed Digital Strategy, have refreshed our Mental Health and Dementia Strategies, have successfully navigated our Learning Disability Strategy and improved our consideration and accountability of meeting our Equality requirements. Moving to an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) which is a corporate approach to assessing against recognised protected characteristics and the impact service design and change has on these has been a major success.

Through the development of 'focus' groups we have increased our ability to listen to our citizens. Our Communications Strategy sets out our aims and commitments to ensure that the voice of our citizens, communities and individuals who are supported, including their carers, is captured and considered.

We know that good, qualified, and skilled staff who are supported, valued and respected in their workplace remain committed to quality services. To achieve this, we have continued to develop training opportunities. We have expanded and developed our Quality Improvement activity and mandated quality improvement awareness across the whole of the staff group.

Our positive relationships with supporting future workforce development has seen us linking directly with Colleges and University's and progress to a recognised working agreement with the University of West of Scotland has created a strengthened development space. This will allow us to access graduate level knowledge and skills, offer research and innovation opportunities, create practical and live learning environments across a number of professions.

Looking forward we will continue to pursue positive outcomes for our communities by working collaboratively.

Lead Partnership Responsibilities

In 2024-25 South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership was the Lead Partnership for the following services across Ayrshire and Arran:

Family Nurse Partnership

The Family Nurse Partnership is a licensed, intensive home visiting service for first time young parents of 20 years and under and up to age 25 years with previous care experience. The service, delivered by specially trained Family Nurses, starts in early pregnancy and continues until the child is two years of age at which time the child is transferred to Health Visiting service. The aims of the service are to improve pregnancy outcomes, improve child development and improve parent's economic self-sufficiency.

To date almost **1000** young women have been offered the service in Ayrshire and Arran. The success of this programme has been highlighted in the Scottish Governments Family Nurse Partnership Annual Report with improvements noted in breastfeeding, reductions in harmful health related behaviour such as smoking and increases in uptake of education or employment.

Continence

The Integrated Continence Service promotes continence by empowering patients to self-manage through behaviour and lifestyle interventions. The objectives of the service are:

- Intermediate clinics across Ayrshire, the Continence Team delivers clinics in 12 locations throughout Ayrshire, including a monthly clinic on Arran.
- An advisory and educational service to NHS clinicians thus enhancing the quality of evidence-based continence care being delivered to patients and carers. The service delivers an annual programme of education.
- An advisory service to patients, carers and voluntary organisations and a Monday to Friday helpline.

This year the national contract for the supply and provision of continence products was re-negotiated with Ontex being successful in the tender process and retained the contract. We continue to work closely with Ontex to ensure service delivery, effectiveness of products and cost efficiency.

The Team Leader role within the Continence Service has been supported to progress key areas of development across our Community Nursing

and Care Homes in regard to ensuring cohesive links are made to provide referral pathways, supporting assessments, and appropriate interventions to support continence.

A number of improvement areas have been identified and the Integrated Continence Service are currently developing an action plan to progress this work.

Other Lead Partnership Arrangements

[North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership](#) is the lead Partnership in Ayrshire for specialist and in-patient Mental Health Services and some children's health services. They are responsible for the strategic planning of all Mental Health in-patient services, Unscheduled Care Mental Health services, Learning Disability Assessment and Treatment Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Psychology Services, Perinatal, Infant, Maternity and Neonatal Mental Health services, Child Health administration team, Children's Immunisation Team and the Community Infant Feeding service.

[East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership](#) is the lead partnership with responsibility for Primary and Urgent Care Services. 'Primary Care' refers to the four independent contractors who provide the first point of contact for the Ayrshire and Arran population. These contractors are General Practitioners (GPs), Community Pharmacists, Optometrists and General Dental Practitioners. Leadership arrangements are well-established across all contractor groups. This lead responsibility relates to:

- General medical services.
- Community pharmacy.
- Community Optometry.
- Dental Services: General Dental Service and the Public Dental Service.
- Ayrshire Urgent Care Service.

Looking Ahead



As we move into 2025–26, South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership remains focused on delivering safe, effective, and person-centred care in a challenging and evolving landscape. Increasing demand, financial pressures, and workforce constraints continue to shape our services, but our commitment to improving outcomes for people and communities remains strong.

This year, we will build on firm foundations, driving forward transformation through prevention, early intervention, and collaboration. The updates that follow set out the priorities and ambitions highlighting how we will respond to challenges, embrace opportunities, and continue delivering high-quality, integrated services.

Community Health and Care Services for Adults and Older People

During 2024-25 there have been several significant challenges and developments. Demographic changes continue to drive increased demand for services with increasing numbers of people and increasing complexity meaning that service demand across all health and care services are increasing whilst the available funding and workforce is diminishing. With these demographic pressures at the forefront of our thinking we are working hard with partners to redesign and transform South Ayrshire into a place where older people can thrive. In line with the “Life Curve” we are also prioritising investment in services that support prevention and early intervention. It is hoped that by focusing on enabling people to remain well, independent, and happy for as long as possible that they will live healthier, happier lives closer to home and will require fewer services for a shorter period.



As Head of Service for **Community Health and Care Services for Adults (including Mental Health, Learning Disability / Sensory Impairment and Adult and Older People)** Billy McClean has set his vision high across Adult Services, to move from “**Good to Great**”. The Health and Social Care Partnership have invested significantly to drive quality improvement, professional standards, and integrated working with a focus on prevention, early intervention and partnership working. Building on the positive Joint Inspection of Adult Services in 2023, and the positive inspections of in-house services where **100%** of services are graded good or better, and **28** out of **30** inspection criteria have been graded very good or excellent, Billy and his team are striving to deliver, commission and celebrate sector leading services. During 2024-25 the team have received several UK and Scottish Awards and presented at a number of national and international conferences to showcase their sector leading work for Ageing Well, Community Engagement, Team Around the Locality and CONNECT Information Hubs.

During 2025-26 we will work with partners to build on these strong foundations to deliver our emerging multi-agency, Integrated Neighbourhood Team which will be tested in Ayr North, open CONNECT shopfronts in all localities and progress the development of a new purpose-built Health

and Care Centre in Ayr. The strategic change programme necessary to deliver on this ambition aligns to Caring for Ayrshire in the NHS and the Transformation Programme in South Ayrshire Council and is set out in three Service Level Strategies and six Locality Level Plans:

Learning Disability and Sensory Impairment

Our Learning Disability Strategy was published in 2022 and is celebrated as an excellent example of partnership working and service user engagement having been developed and delivered in partnership with people who have a learning disability, and their carers. Held to account by our “League of Champions” we have delivered on all the improvement actions set out in the strategy two years earlier than anticipated and are reaping the rewards with people being supported to have more choice, be more independent and be more engaged and actively participate in their communities. We have a number of sector leading supported housing projects one of which was completed in Ayr town centre during 2023-24 and have supported people to return to Ayrshire. During 2024-25 we’ve worked with the Commission for People with a Learning Disability to evaluate the impact of our work before beginning the cycle of engagement and development for the new strategy. During 2025-26 we are engaging again with people to develop our new strategy that will focus on those with more complex needs, support people to return closer to home from out of area and look at more effective transitions from Children’s Services so that we can take a more planned approach to providing housing and care support.

Mental Health and Addictions

The previous Mental Health Strategy was completed in 2022 but development of the new strategy was delayed due to the recruitment of a new Senior Manager. During 2024-25 we have developed our new Mental Health Strategy alongside a Strategy for Dementia. Positive engagement with service users, workforce and partners in developing the new strategy has resulted in proposals for a new tiered approach to service development and delivery with a heavy emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

Building on our approach to integrated services closer to the community the strategy dovetails with the newly established “**Team Around The Locality**” model whilst maintaining specialist support for those that need it. Mental Health and Addiction Services are also key partners in the development of the emerging Integrated Neighbourhood Team which builds on our Team Around The Locality and CONNECT work to take a coordinated, relational based, multi-agency approach to supporting families with the most complex needs.

Key Challenges

- Workforce recruitment, retention and wellbeing has significantly improved but continues to be precarious.
- Large Scale Investigation successfully supported a care home to move from crisis into a stable position which had positive outcome for the residents.
- Ongoing challenges with the stability of the private care at home and care home sector.
- Tightening finances mean that our ability to deliver the high standards we expect will become more challenging.

Key Successes and areas of continued focus

- Reduced delayed transfers of care from **176** in January 2023 to **70** in March 2025. We aim to reduce delays to fewer than 30.
- Successful recruitment to additional in-house Care at Home vacancies supporting improvements in performance. We aim to reduce the number of double care packages to ensure more care is available to more people.
- Trained over **72%** (against a goal of **75%**) of staff in foundation level and **130** staff (against a goal of **180** staff) in practitioner level Quality Improvement Science. We aim to improve these numbers to meet the goal by the end of 2025-26.
- Developed data dashboards at team and service level to provide better information for service planning and delivery. We aim to build on these early dashboards to ensure automated performance information at team, service and directorate level.
- Established formal partnership with University of West of Scotland to develop research and workforce development pathways that benefit all partners. We aim to build on this partnership and begin a number of formal research and workforce development projects during 2025-26.
- Silver Award Winners in the iese UK Public Sector Transformation Awards for our whole system approach to planning and delivering Ageing Well initiatives. We will continue to nominate our work for local and national awards.
- Presented work at several national and international events including the NHS Scotland Conference, Royal College of GPs and Royal College of Occupational Therapy Conferences, UK Community Led Support Gathering, International Federation for Integrated Care (IFIC) Conference in Calgary, UK webinar (Mutual Ventures), HIS Focus on Frailty Collaborative, Scottish Frailty Roundtable Event, Voluntary Health Scotland Conference, Getting It Right For Everyone (GIRFE) collaborative. During 2025-26 we have already been asked to present our work at conferences in Portugal, Australia, NHS Scotland and IFIC Scotland.

Adult and Older People

The Service Improvement Plan for Adult and Older People was originally developed in 2019 and refreshed and published in 2022. We have delivered on most of the ambitions set out in this plan including expanding reablement and the responder service, reviewing care at home services, strengthening micro-enterprise development, developing “home first” pathways and MDT discharge planning and review of community equipment services.

As part of the Health Improvement Scotland Focus on Frailty Collaborative, we have developed a whole system approach to improving the services and alternatives to services to enable people to thrive into older age. This includes developing and publishing an Ageing Well (Places, Spaces and Communities) Strategy and Movement (aligned to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and reported through the Community Planning Partnership) which was launched in September 2024, Ahead of the Curve which aims to identify people at risk of frailty early and support them to remain active with alternatives to services, coordinated proactive support for those with moderate frailty through our ‘Team Around The Locality’, improved Future Care Planning and responsive community services for those at end of life, and seamless, joined up acute care for those who need it. We have now delivered on these actions which is recognised as sector leading having received a number of awards and conference requests and a number of colleagues from across the UK and beyond looking to learn from our approach.

During 2025-26 we will continue to work with partners to deliver the actions set out in the Ageing Well Strategy and we will engage with partners to develop our new Age Well: Health and Care Services Plan.

Locality Health and Care

During 2024-25 the new locality leadership teams led engagement within our six localities and as part of the Locality Planning Partnerships to develop locality plans that set out the improvements that each locality will make over the coming three years. These were published in autumn 2024 and will be overseen by the Locality Planning Partnerships.

There has been significant progress made with the implementation of our new “Team Around the Locality” model with the full implementation of the recommendations set out in the Community Nursing and Adult Social Work reviews. A new “Connect” model has been developed to provide easy to access information about services and alternatives to services in person, by phone and online within each locality. Our first shopfront was opened in Ayr in November 2024 along with the launching of the new website and telephone number.

We have worked closely with Scottish Government through the 'Getting It Right for Everyone' programme where we have shared learning with other Health and Social Care Partnerships across Scotland and the approach has gained UK wide and international recognition. During 2025-26 we will build on this success to open shopfronts in each of the localities, develop CONNECT outreach sites in libraries and town halls and work through the Locality Planning Partnerships to deliver the actions set out in the plans.

Children’s Health, Care and Justice Service

As Head of Service, **Mark Inglis** is clear on his aims and aspirations for Children’s Health, Care and Justice services:

Children’s Health Care and Justice Services continue in our ambition to deliver on the principles of the Christie Commission published in 2011 and which are still as relevant for the year which has just past as they were when they were first produced.

Principles of Empowerment of individuals in how we deliver services through listening to them and learning from their lived experience.

- Integration of Health and Care services and working in partnership across Children Services Planning Partnership and Community Justice Ayrshire and the Southwest Scotland MAPPA, have been key in how we coordinate and deliver services together towards better outcomes for our local residents. Children’s Health in South Ayrshire through School nursing and Health Visiting, deliver on the Universal Health Visiting and School Nursing Pathways, with ongoing work to ensure there is coordinated and cohesive support available for those who need it through the SA HSCP.



- Prevention remains a significant focus as we work with Children and Families and work to keep the Promise and work with families to stay together when it is safe to do so. Also, to work with those adults in the justice system to reduce reoffending by empowering individuals towards meaningful work, appropriate accommodation and access to peer lead supports which enable recovery and meaningful positive community engagement.
- Finally, Efficiency, we have been working to understand where there is duplication in the system, where some families can feel overwhelmed with too many supports and services provided all at one time. Also, by delivering on the Promise and GIRFEC we have once again been able to evidence the efficient use of our resources in shaping our balance of care, with more children living within South Ayrshire and in families or family type care.

The Transformational journey that Children Services have been on, over the past six years in particular, has not only been acknowledged through last year's iESE Public Sector Transformation Silver Award, but through the work done on the Promise and Audit Scotland recognising the work achieved over the year. This year we have also been encouraged and supported by South Ayrshire Council to apply for an APSE award under health and wellbeing and will await the outcome of that award application.

Over the past four years, we have focused our whole system change to deliver on the Promise, through our ten improvement areas. This year past saw us report on the **Promise and The Plan 2021 – 2024**, where we were able to reflect on our progress to date. Through this approach we have been able to measure authentic transformation through our benefits tracker on **47** measurable improvements benefits. Of the thirty-one actions identified 2021-24. Fifteen (**48%**) are now complete a further sixteen (**52%**) are on target and will be carried onto plan 24-30. While we are pleased at the evidence in South Ayrshire of work to deliver on the Promise at the halfway point of the ten-year plan, the need to challenge care in Scotland, requires persistent and tenacious attention and scrutiny from Community Planning Partners to ensure the change that the Promise told us are delivered on, more is yet required from us as Corporate Parents.

South Ayrshire Children Services Plan 2023 – 2026 continues to be sector leading on its delivery on Whole Family Wellbeing. This work draws together all our Community Planning Partners in Children Services Planning, to deliver on key priorities which were identified through the work that our partners in Horizons research gleaned from engaging with families in South Ayrshire.

This past year has seen the further embedding and development of a “**Family First**” approach in South Ayrshire across all eight Locality School clusters. As Head of Services, over the year I have met, face to face, with all Eight School Head Teachers cluster meetings (being **64** Head Teachers) to discuss our collaborative approach, this was well received and supported this works implementation. Family first has continued to support and enable the embedding of partnership resources, such as Thriving Communities, Social Work, School Nursing, Police Scotland in locality School clusters, to deliver on GIRFEC principles.

This approach to improving outcomes for Children and Young People has reduced escalation through the care system and the need for more intrusive and expensive interventions. Family First has supported increased school attendance in South Ayrshire over the year and also reducing exclusions for our Looked After Children. There has also been investment in “supporting our school structure” from Promise Cora funding and the

creation of our RiSE team who deliver on a partnership alternative education programme to children and young people who would have previously been sent to other expensive provision with taxi costs all making this an inefficient use of resource.

The accumulation of all the work described above has led to significant improving outcomes for South Ayrshire, with a **50%** reduction in the number of children removed from families and placed in expensive Out with Authority (OWA) residential placements over the past 5 years. This has resulted in a **50%** reduction in costs for OWA private residential care, amounting to **£3.785** million cost avoidance over the past three years.

Through the Family First approach and applying the Signs of Safety model, there has been a change in the overall balance of care. The approach to working with Families and Children and young people at an earlier stage has also led to a **76%** reduction in the number of Children referred to the Children's Report on Non-Offence Grounds and a **88%** reduction in referrals to SCRA on offence grounds over the past two years, (2022/23 – 2024/25):

The approach to Family First approach to Prevention and Early Intervention means that **81.9%** of South Ayrshire Social Work caseloads are supported on a non-statutory basis, Early Intervention and Prevention basis and **18.1%** are Looked After and Accommodated, which aligns strongly with the Children Scotland Act's "*No order Principle*", as well as the Christie Commission.

Also, according to Social Work Scotland "*Setting the Bar for Social Work Scotland*", high caseloads lead to reduced work quality and excessive hours and poor staff wellbeing. The recommendations being that Children Social Workers have a Maximum of **15** cases.

In South Ayrshire, we manage caseloads well and in the most part Children and Families Social Workers maintain caseloads within the "*Setting the Bar*" recommended range. Justice Social Workers, Health Visitors and School Nurses hold different numbers and types of case load, which we are continuing to work to understand and manage within existing resources. Having manageable caseloads enables more relational practice with Children and Families which leads to better outcomes, and greater staff satisfaction.

As of March 2025, all Social Work posts in Children & Families and Justice Teams are filled and sickness absences in Children's Health Care and Justice has gone from **10.23%** in February 2024 to **6.39%** in February 2025.

Children's Health Care and Justice have also given themselves to team self-evaluation and developed their own understanding of how they are currently performing and what they are ambitious for, for the year ahead. This is all part of our work in being "Inspection Ready".

Throughout January 2025, there were a range of "**Culture**" workshops for the service where staff were brought together, and the values of the Council/NHS and the Partnership were re-enforced as means of driving our culture. These sessions were attended by the entire staff group and resulted in a Marketplace event in March (as an action) to bring people together to understand and appreciate what each service does and to enhance relationship building. The action plan from these sessions will be worked through over this coming year.

In 2023 CHJC completed a second Signs of Safety audit report to capture if there was any notable change in the culture from its implementation. One of key findings was that following his re-evaluation, there was a significant decrease in differing views between frontline staff and leadership. For example, in question "**Creates a learning organisation so that everyone learns from success and struggles**" there is almost no notable

difference between leadership and staff perspectives. As stated by Leigh Taylor from Signs of Safety; *“There has been a positive change in the climate and culture across South Ayrshire’s Children’s Services. The shift towards a learning organisation that aims to practice in a risk sensible manner (Munro:2020) is strongly evidenced by the findings from staff and leadership surveys”*. South Ayrshire can be described throughout 2024 as being a learning culture, however clearly this is an ongoing journey and will require ongoing attention to sustain.

Finally, over the past year, Children’s Health Care and Justice have contributed to the Radical Place thinking as part of the work with Mutual Ventures. There are staff aligned to the operational shaping of the thinking of the work in Ayr North and this will form a significant part of the work plan for next year.

For the coming year, the team will continue to focus on:

- The embedding of the Family First approach applying the learning from the Small Steps to Wellbeing project and the Belmont First model.
- To have teams in localities working with partners to respond to local needs and develop strong community partnerships, applying “Whole Family” approaches with an eye on the work of Mutual Ventures and Radical Place, in Ayr North and beyond.
- To continue to develop and improve the delivery of care through our two Children Houses, towards excellence.
- To deliver on the new YPST model including Youth Justice, UASC, Care Leavers, Through Care, Continuing Care and improved Housing options.
- Improve methods of feedback from families and service users, to build in Quality Assurance and service improvement which is well informed by those who use our services.
- To deliver on the findings from the Culture Workshops, including bringing teams together and supporting staff wellbeing, recruitment and retention.
- To strive to be “Inspection ready” through creating a proactive Position Statement and continuing with audit and self-evaluation activity. The work around Chronologies and three-monthly summaries is seen as important to deliver on over the next year.
- Continue to develop the work with Children and Families and Neurodiversity.
- To deliver on a range of Child Health outcomes, as per the HV and SN Team self-evaluation and action plan.
- Develop trauma informed therapeutic services for children looked after in Foster and Kinship Care, including the continuation of the Play Therapist role and enhanced training to reduce the number of family care break downs.
- To deliver on the Promise 2024 to 2030 and ensure that we can evidence that we are delivering on the findings of the Care review and improving outcomes for our Looked After Children and those with Care Experience. In particular the challenge to use Care based language.
- To deliver on the Parenting Promise and our objective of loving our Care Experienced Children and young people in word and in action.
- Improve the use of Data and the presentation of it, to inform service design and resource allocation.
- To also devolve more data and local decision making to front line managers.
- To deliver on the UNCRC in South Ayrshire and ensure that not only Children Services, but the whole Council and HSC Partnership understand their duties and responsibilities to uphold Children’s rights.
- Continue to ensure that Social Work Posts are filled through South Ayrshire’s Grow your own Social Work.
- To retain and recruit Foster Carers.

Allied Health Professionals

Louise Gibson, Professional Lead and Senior Manager Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) describes the valuable work undertaken by the services:

The AHP (Allied Health Professionals) services comprise of Dietetics, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language therapy and Podiatry. The services cover across all areas within the partnership linking with many of the teams from Community from both Health and social care, Adults and Older people, Mental health and Children and Families services. They provide holistic rehabilitation and specialist treatment to many patients and clients from all ages.

In the last year following a review of governance and assurance structures we have strengthened reporting structures and mechanisms available. In addition, an AHP Priority Plan has been updated and covers AHP services on a Pan Ayrshire basis. In addition to the South Ayrshire Strategic drivers, this provides direction for AHP services to focus on service and staff development. The areas covered include workforce development, innovation, use of digital, data capture, quality improvement and communication as part of a 3-year vision.

AHP services have actively participated in the Rehabilitation review across South areas which looks at how we provide rehabilitation from the patient journey through the hospital and out into community. Our staff have contributed to the development of the many strategies developed in recent months which continue to shape our vision going forward. There has been a significant improvement in our ability to recruit new staff which is a huge improvement on last year.

The further role out of an early intervention approach has continued with the added capacity to the Staying Ahead of the Curve team, Community and Primary care teams and Diabetes prevention. Work continues with a focus on Frailty, Falls prevention and AHP services at the front door of the Hospital.

Several initiatives are illustrated in this report detailing the fantastic innovative work from our teams including the work of the Vibrant Voices choir, the support of patients in Primary at GP practices and the wider early intervention and prevention work around Frailty. In addition, the project on increasing Communication friendly environments is going from strength to strength.

Significant advances in our Data management reporting have been undertaken with the development of a database and dashboard for services. This has enabled us to begin to measure our impact and inform our workforce development.

The focus on the coming year will include:

- Further work on Early invention, Falls and Frailty
- Further development of our Data measurement and Key Performance indicators.
- Continued focus on staff development and wellbeing, workforce development and maximising the rehabilitation contribution of our teams.



Tim's looking ahead - South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

As Director **Tim Eltringham** celebrates the previous year's achievements and reflects on the strength of the current position:

As I reflect on the achievements of the past year, it is clear that we have continued to grow, learn, and innovate across all areas of our work. There are countless individuals and teams who go above and beyond on a daily basis, often without recognition, and I want to acknowledge their invaluable contribution to our success. While many positive developments have been highlighted in this report, there are always more stories of dedication and excellence happening behind the scenes.

This year, we have seen the benefits of closer working within our communities. The structural changes we've implemented are now firmly established, and the impact of our collaborative efforts is becoming increasingly evident. Our ethos of empowering and trusting our staff, volunteers, and carers has supported significant improvements in both the quality of services and access to care. We remain committed to providing the right environments for our teams—places where they feel valued, proud of their work, and able to present to the community a Health and Social Care Partnership that is dedicated to building thriving, supportive communities.

As always, our staff are our greatest asset. It is essential that they feel respected and supported for the incredible work they do every day. We will continue to invest in their development, ensuring that they have the training, technology, and systems they need to excel in their roles. While the challenges of health and social care remain significant, we are committed to promoting this sector as a positive and rewarding destination for employment. We will offer real career path opportunities and continue building a workforce that is resilient, motivated, and focused on continuous improvement.

In partnership with our stakeholders and community organisations, we will work tirelessly to make South Ayrshire the location of choice for people to live, learn, and work. Our ambition is clear: to continue moving from good to great, striving to be sector-leading in all that we do.










As I retire from my role as Director of South Ayrshire HSCP later this year, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to each and every person who has contributed to this incredible journey. It has been an honour to work alongside so many dedicated and compassionate individuals, all focused on making life better for the people of South Ayrshire. I am deeply proud of what we've achieved together, and I am confident that the values of care, collaboration, and ambition will continue to guide the Partnership as it moves forward.












Thank you to our staff,
carers, and partners.

Together, we help
people start well,
live well, and age well



Appendix 1: National Health and Wellbeing Indicators Data

NATIONAL INDICATORS		South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Data										Scotland Latest Data	RAG STATUS	
		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25		
NI-1	Percentage of adults able to look after their health very well or quite well	N/A	95%	N/A	94%	N/A	94%	N/A	92%	N/A	92%	N/A	91% (2023/24)	
NI-2	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible	N/A	83%	N/A	82%	N/A	82% ¹	N/A	76% ¹	N/A	71% ¹	N/A	72% ¹ (2023/24)	
NI-3	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided	N/A	80%	N/A	77%	N/A	75% ¹	N/A	76% ¹	N/A	60% ¹	N/A	60% ¹ (2023/24)	
NI-4	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their health and social care services seemed to be well coordinated	N/A	74%	N/A	85% (s)	N/A	72% ¹	N/A	63% ¹	N/A	63% ¹	N/A	61% ¹ (2023/24)	
NI-5	Percentage of adults receiving any care or support who rated it as excellent or good	N/A	83%	N/A	85%	N/A	81% ¹	N/A	76% ¹	N/A	75% ¹	N/A	70% ¹ (2023/24)	
NI-6	Percentage of people with positive experience of care at their GP practice	N/A	90%	N/A	88% (s)	N/A	86%	N/A	78% (s)	N/A	78%	N/A	69% (2023/24)	
NI-7	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life	N/A	83%	N/A	87% (s)	N/A	81% ¹	N/A	72% ¹	N/A	67% ¹	N/A	70% ¹ (2021/22)	
NI-8	Percentage of carers who feel supported to continue in their caring role	N/A	40%	N/A	36%	N/A	37%	N/A	34%	N/A	30%	N/A	31% (2023/24)	
NI-9	Percentage of adults supported at home who agree they felt safe	N/A	85%	N/A	85%	N/A	87% ¹	N/A	76% ¹	N/A	74% ¹	N/A	73% ¹ (2023/24)	

NI-10	Percentage of staff who say they would recommend their workplace as a good place to work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
NI-11	Premature mortality rate per 100,000 persons	391 (2014)	422 (2015)	451 (2016)	380 (2017)	419 (2018)	428 (2019)	435 (2020)	451 (2021)	426 (2022)	458 (2023)	tbc	442 (2023)	
NI-12	Emergency admission rate (per 100,000 population)	15,811	16,334	16,573	17,498	17,904	16,829	14,852	15,809	14,303	14,918	14,758 (2024) ²	11,857 (2023/24)	
NI-13	Emergency bed day rate (per 100,000 population)	166,173	176,340	178,190	179,753	166,658	165,627	139,251	153,725	172,992	170,190	155,344 (2024) ²	119,922 (2023/24)	
NI-14	Readmission to hospital within 28 days (per 1,000 population)	107	110	116	120	127	118	128	114	100	104	102 (2024) ²	104 (2023/24)	
NI-15	Proportion of last 6 months of life spent at home or in a community setting	86%	86%	85%	86%	86%	87%	89%	88%	88%	89%	86% (2024) ²	87% (2023/24)	
NI-16	Falls rate per 1,000 population aged 65+	24.9	24.4	22.4	24.8	24.1	22.6	22.1	21.5	19.4	18.9	19.7 (2024) ²	22.7 (2023/24)	
NI-17	Proportion of care services graded 'good' (4) or better in Care Inspectorate inspections	86%	89%	86%	87%	80%	80%	79%	73%	68%	73%	87.4%	81.9% (2023/24)	
NI-18	Percentage of adults with intensive care needs receiving care at home	67% (2014)	63% (2015)	64% (2016)	63% (2017)	61% (2018)	64% (2019)	69% (2020)	73% (2021)	64% (2022)	63% (2023)	68% (2024) ²	65% (2024) ²	
NI-19	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged (per 1,000 population)	900	838	1,273	967	1,354	1,699	886	1,365	2,216	1,869	1,690	952 (2024/25)	
NI-20	Percentage of health and care resource spent on hospital stays where the patient was admitted in an emergency	26%	27%	28%	29%	29%	29% ³	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24% ³ (2019/20)	

NI-21	Percentage of people admitted to hospital from home during the year, who are discharged to a care home	Indicator under development
NI-22	Percentage of people who are discharged from hospital within 72 hours of being ready	Indicator under development
NI-23	Expenditure on end of life care, cost in last 6 months per death	Indicator under development

The above figures were provided by Public Health Scotland to all Partnerships for inclusion in Annual Performance Reports.

(p) provisional figures




(s) statistically significant difference in the percent positive result between SA THE PARTNERSHIP area and Scotland as reported through the Health and Social Care Experience Survey.

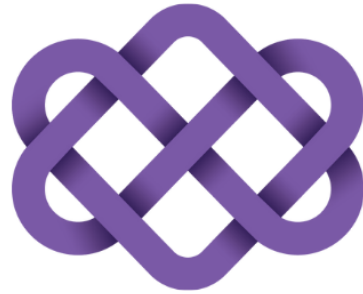
Notes

1 Please note results for indicators 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 for 2023/24 are not comparable to previous years due to changes in survey wording. Also results for 2019/20 and 2021/22 for indicators 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 9 are comparable to each other, but not directly comparable to figures in previous years due to changes in survey wording and methodology.

2 Calendar year 2024 is used here as a proxy for 2024/25 for indicators NI-12, NI-13, NI-14, NI-15, NI-16 and NI-18 due to the national data for 2024/25 being incomplete. We have done this following guidance issued by Public Health Scotland to all Health and Social Care Partnerships. Using more complete calendar year data for 2024 should improve the consistency of reporting between Health and Social Care Partnerships.

3 Indicator 20 - NHS Boards were not able to provide detailed cost information for 2020/21 due to changes in service delivery during the pandemic. As a result, PHS have not provided information for indicator 20 beyond 2019/20. PHS previously published information to calendar year 2020 using costs from 2019/20 as a proxy but, given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on activity and expenditure, PHS no longer consider this appropriate.

	No concerns		Some concerns		Major concerns
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south ayrshire
health & social care
partnership

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