

VIEW

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Clackmannanshire Council
www.clacksweb.org.uk

Bitten by the Bookbug



Christine the Children's Librarian with Luka at Hillfoots Family Centre. See page 9 for more.

You answered our call



It has been widely publicised that there will be a minimum 12% reduction in public sector budgets, to pay back large scale public sector borrowing at a national level. For Clackmannanshire Council that means budget savings of around £18m over the period 2011-2014. However, we don't yet know the details of our grant and we could have to make even greater savings, perhaps up to 20%.

At the same time, we'll have to find ways of dealing with increased demand for some Council services, with a growing elderly population and more young people requiring our support. For example we expect to see a rise in the number of 5th and 6th year pupils staying on at school because of the decline in available jobs for school leavers.

There has been a great response to our public appeal for feedback which will help us to make decisions on the future shape of Council services in Clackmannanshire.

We launched our wide-ranging budget engagement programme in the summer, seeking comments from the people who use the hundreds of services we provide every day to help inform some of the difficult choices ahead.

And you responded to the call, sending us letters and emails with ideas, filling in the questionnaire and telling us their thoughts at face to face events.

All the comments and suggestions received are being considered and will be fed back into the decision making process. Many will ultimately help to inform those decisions that the Council will take in achieving the required savings.

The initial results of the budget engagement process will be reported to councillors in November, with the full results

along with initial proposed savings, coming forward in December, once the Scottish Government has announced its funding for the public sector.

Then specific budget savings will be proposed in January and the 2011-12 budget will be presented to a full Council meeting in February for councillors to take a decision.

Council Leader Sam Ovens said: "We're delighted with the response to our budget engagement programme. The process has generated lots of ideas and debate and we are now developing the solutions as we plan for the future. Local government is accustomed to making major efficiencies, which generate millions of pounds of savings every year. While we will all continue to modernise the way we work, there is no way that we can find these significant savings by making efficiencies alone. We have to look at doing things differently, possible stopping some services and perhaps charging for others."

"Our engagement exercise has raised awareness of the challenges the Council is facing and what it means for public services. Thanks to the feedback we've received the decisions we make in February will be well informed and their impact will be understood."

Inside VIEW...



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Who Cares Wins



Some of Clackmannanshire's most inspiring people were recently recognised for their outstanding efforts at a special event.

Provost Derek Stewart invited foster carers to attend a Civic Reception at Greenfield House in recognition of the vital role they play.

Provost Stewart said: "This event highlighted the important role foster carers play. Clackmannanshire Council relies on a fantastic group of foster carers to support and care for vulnerable children. As well as being a chance to thank our foster carers, the Civic Reception was a chance to raise awareness and help attract people who can work with the Council to build better futures for children in Clackmannanshire. It was also a chance to present long service certificates and retirement gifts.

"Being a foster carer can be an incredibly rewarding role and we are always looking to attract new carers and to hold on to those who provide this vital service. Children thrive in families and finding people who can offer local children a loving home can be difficult - so the more we can do to show our

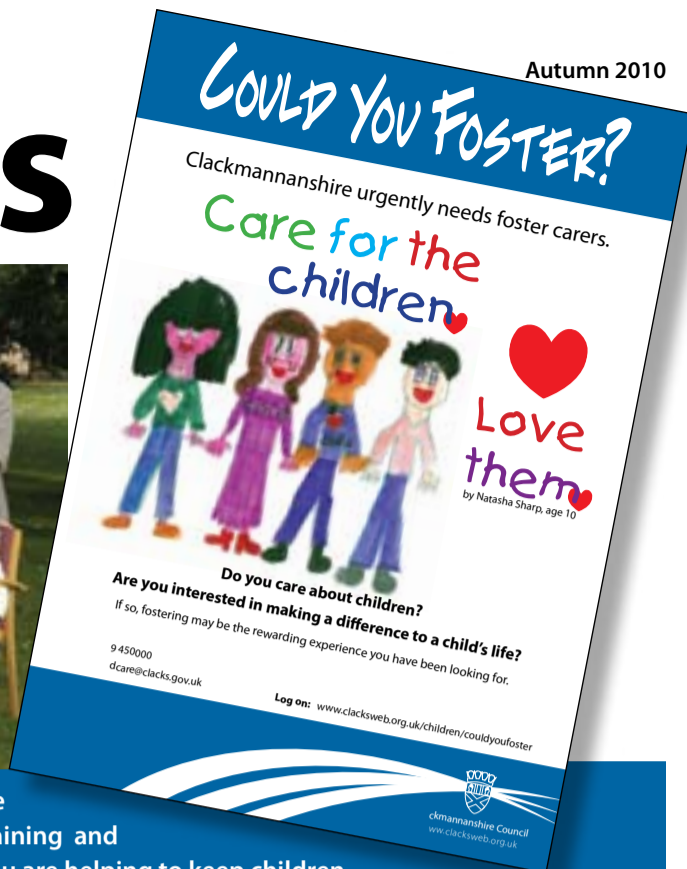
foster carers how much the Council appreciates them, the better."

More foster carers are needed to offer children suitable long and short term placements. To be a carer you can be single, married or in a relationship and don't have to have children of your own. The important thing is that you have the space, time and patience to help vulnerable children.

There are currently 23 foster families in Clackmannanshire. So far this year Clackmannanshire Council has recruited an additional three foster carers and we hope that another seven people will come forward and foster children by the end of the year. We currently have a number of children in foster care out with Clackmannanshire and new recruits means these children can be cared for in their own community.

Although she was unable to attend the reception, the event marked the retirement of Jean Johnstone who has been a foster carer for 22 years.

Clackmannanshire foster carers receive a weekly fee and an allowance for each child placed as well as training and support. By fostering through your local Council, you are helping to keep children near their schools, family and friends. To find out more, call 01259 450000 or go to www.clacksweb.org.uk/children/couldyoufoster



Supporting young people and families

We constantly work to ensure people have learning and employment opportunities. Our priorities also include supporting vulnerable people and families. To achieve these aims we have rolled out a series of plans and strategies and have made progress towards local and national targets.

Vulnerable Children & Families

Did you know? Nearly three quarters of looked-after children in Clackmannanshire achieved more than one foundation level award in the 2009/10 exams: substantially higher than the Scottish average of 59%. We try to keep these children's home environment stable, with an average of only one move per child last year.

Did you know? Though the number of children on the child protection register has increased this year, the average time children are spending on the register is falling. We're implementing child protection plans more quickly, keeping children safe.

Did you know? Perceptions of drug and alcohol misuse in Clackmannanshire are improving. The proportion of residents who said alcohol was something they disliked about their neighbourhood reduced from 37% in 2008/09 to 28% in 2009/10. The proportion who say drugs are a dislike about their neighbourhood has also gone down, from 33% to 21%.

Health & the Environment

Did you know? In Clackmannanshire, 63% of primary and 60% of secondary age children walk or cycle to school. The UK average is just half.

Did you know? All pupils in our primary schools receive at least an hour and a half of physical education per week from a PE specialist. All P4 and P5 pupils receive 20 swimming sessions each year.

Did you know? 15 of our educational centres reduced gas and electricity usage last year. Muckhart Primary School made the biggest cut, with a huge 18% reduction!

Skills & Employment

Did you know? The number of young people achieving at least five foundation level awards has increased 2.5%, up to 96%. Those achieving five or more general level awards increased to 76%. Fifth year pupils achieving at least three higher increased by almost 2%, and there was an impressive 6% increase in those achieving at least one higher.

Did you know? 86% of young people from Clackmannanshire leaving school in 2009 moved into employment, education or training: equal to the Scottish average. Just under 200 young people started the national training programme in 2009 and 439 participated in Modern Apprenticeships, helping people improve their employability. We've also seen an increase in accredited training for both young people and adults within the community.

Did you know? 2359 new books were added to Clackmannanshire's children and teenage library stock in 2009/10 to help improve young people's literacy skills.

Schools & Education

Did you know? Our three new high schools are now complete and the new Forth Valley College in Alloa is expected to be completed for the 2011-12 academic year, providing young people with a modern learning environment.

Did you know? We got positive school inspections throughout 2009/10. So far in 2010/11, the Care Commission has rated the Hillfoots and Alloa Family Centres, the Schools Support Service, Woodside Children's Unit, Abercromby and Clackmannan Nurseries, and Clarendon, Coalsnaughton and St John's Primary Schools all as Very Good or Excellent.

It pays to be a good tenant

Congratulations to the winners of the recent Tenant Reward Draw. Three lucky Clackmannanshire Council tenants received shopping vouchers after being chosen at random from all the tenants who were up to date with their rent.

"This is our way of saying thank you to all the tenants who pay their rent on time. As more tenants continue to pay their rent on time and in advance, in line with the tenancy agreement, the less need there will be for resources to be directed to managing rent arrears. This means that more resources

can be devoted to providing value for money to tenants across the full range of housing management services," said Jennifer Queripel, Service Manager, Housing Management.

The draw is carried out twice a year, in August and again in January. To be in with a chance of winning next time, make sure your rent is up to date.

£100 winner - Craig Kortje,
£75 winner - Anna Alcock,
£50 winner - Yvonne Boyle

Clacks trio shine in Delhi



Three young people flew the flag for Clackmannanshire and Scotland when they took part in the Commonwealth Games handover ceremony in Delhi.

Tammy Breingan, Kerstin McKelvie and Jamie Devlin were picked for their dedication to sport in the county, through volunteering and coaching. Their places were funded by the Glasgow 2014 community engagement fund.

Tammy (20) from Sauchie is a coach with Alloa Gym Club and has taken her squad of 9 and 10 year old boys to national competition level. The former Lornhill pupil is currently in her 3rd year of a Sports Studies degree at Stirling University.

Kerstin (20) from Alva is also a gymnast and competes for Midlothian Teamgym at a national level - she's going to the European Championships in Sweden later this month. The former Alva Academy pupil is currently studying Health, Fitness and Exercise at Forth Valley College.

Jamie (20) has recently moved to Stirling and has worked for over a year with Street Sport, which helps young men to improve their lives, from improving their housing situation to help with drug and alcohol issues.

Before leaving for Delhi, the trio spoke to the View.

Tammy said: "I filled in an application form and didn't think any more about it. I was really surprised to be chosen. I still can't really believe we're going."

Kerstin added: "We had an orientation day in Glasgow which was good and they showed us a recording of the handover ceremony from Melbourne to Delhi so we had some idea of what we're taking part in. We then had a three week bootcamp to learn the routine. It's all very exciting."

Jamie said: "I do a lot of outdoor activities with Street Sport, as well as sports such as martial arts and football. I'm very excited about going to Delhi - I never thought I would be visiting India."

The Council's sports development manager Marjorie MacFarlane called for applicants to take part in the event earlier this year and received lots of nominations from local clubs and individuals.

The Closing Ceremony, which the Handover Ceremony was part of, concluded the Delhi Games. It was expected to have a celebratory and festival feel. The Ceremony was due to take place in the main Jawaharlal 60,000 seat stadium on the last day of the sports competition on 14 October. A special big screen transmission of the closing ceremony - which featured Tammy, Kerstin and Jamie - was due to be held at Alloa Academy followed by the release of prayer lanterns.

The Handover included an eight minute performance to celebrate the honour of hosting the next Commonwealth Games, which is the responsibility of Glasgow 2014. The dance performance showed traditional aspects that the world associates with Scotland as well as a modern and urban feel to represent Glasgow as the host city. The 346 members of the cast were from the whole of Scotland and all backgrounds. The routine was expected to be watched live by 1 billion people.

Glasgow 2014 aims to use the handover ceremony as a catalyst for engaging communities across Scotland. They will be establishing a network of people who will become ambassadors for Glasgow and the Games over the next four years.

Council spokesman for Sport and Leisure Councillor Bobby McGill said: "Choosing the individuals to take part was a difficult task, as Clackmannanshire has such a strong culture of sport and of volunteering. Tammy, Kerstin and Jamie stood out as being hardworking and dedicated young people who have made Clackmannanshire and Scotland proud."

New buses hit the road

New-style buses featuring photographs of a Forth Valley family have been spotted throughout Clackmannanshire. The buses first hit the road at the beginning of August and have been specially commissioned by NHS Forth Valley to serve the new Forth Valley Royal Hospital at Larbert. The new H1/H2 service is open to everyone, not just staff, and passengers can be picked up and dropped off anywhere along the route.

The H1 bus serves Alva, Menstrie, Tullibody, Alloa and

Clackmannan while the H2 bus serves Dollar, Tillicoultry, Coalsnaughton, Alloa and Clackmannan.

The H1 bus serves Menstrie from two new bus stops on Tullibody Road, opposite Broompark East and Middleton.

These buses provide a direct service to Alloa and Forth Valley Royal Hospital. Journey time is 14 minutes to Alloa from the Hillfoots and 42 minutes to the hospital. The services operates every two hours from 6.41 am to 8.41pm Monday to Saturday, with a reduced service on a Sunday.

Councillor Eddie Carrick, the Council's Sustainability Portfolio Holder, said: "While these new bus services have been created primarily to connect Clackmannanshire with the new Forth Valley Royal Hospital at Larbert, it is worth noting that they also provide an improved local service with a journey time of 14 minutes between Alloa and Menstrie, every two hours. There will also be an hourly service from Alloa and the new hospital."

The new buses are part of an overall transport strategy designed to making getting to

the new hospital easier. A new shuttle bus is also operating from Larbert train station which is free for rail ticket holders.

They feature pictures of Wendy Harley, who works as a clerical services co-ordinator in the laboratories at Stirling Royal Infirmary, with her family.

She said: "It may not be everyone's cup of tea appearing on the side of a bus, but we have had great fun as a family taking part in the project. It's strange to see ourselves whizzing past and is a bit of a talking point amongst friends and colleagues."

A range of new travel leaflets and timetables for the new bus services have also been produced and distributed widely. They are available in GP practices, bus stations, libraries and on the Forth Valley Royal Hospital website www.nhsforthvalley.com/forthvalleyroyal

National Entitlement Cards are accepted on the H1 and H2 services, but please note this is an exact change service for fare payers.



Clackmannanshire in Bloom

The winners and runners-up in the Council's annual garden competition have been announced.

This year's overall winner is Haldis Scott of Gean House, Alloa (main photo), who was runner-up last year. She also picked up Alloa's top floral garden award.

Around 80 people entered this year's competition with a particularly strong entry in the allotment category.

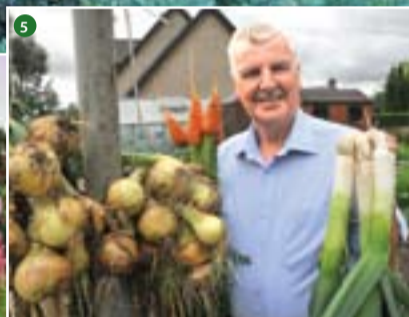
The competition, which is in its 35th year, recognises achievement in the areas of Biodiversity, Best Council Tenant, Commercial Premises, Floral, Vegetable, Allotment, Floral Containers and Best Newcomer.

The regular judges were joined by Martin Jeffcot from Fife Council along with Provost Derek Stewart.

Martin said: "Everyone who entered the competition can be proud of their efforts - the gardens I visited were great and I thought Clackmannanshire was beautiful. I was impressed by all the gardens I visited and enjoyed the vibrant colours and mix of plants on show. The allotments and vegetable gardens were also very tidy and well looked after. The overall winner's garden was absolutely marvellous. It was a real pleasure to visit, very well designed and contained some unusual plants, which was nice to see. Congratulations to all the prizewinners."

The lucky winners received a range of vouchers to spend in garden centres. The competition trophies, certificates and prizes were presented at a reception hosted by Provost Derek Stewart in September.

1 Ann Russell, of Hill Street, Alloa, who won Best Council Tenant's Garden and was 3rd overall. 2 Andy and Marjory Warrender of Harviestoun Grove, Tillicoultry, who won the Best Containers category. 3 Catherine Forsyth and her son Aaron of Donaldson Drive, Tillicoultry, who won the Biodiversity category. 4 Eddie Newlove of High Street, Tillicoultry, was named Best Newcomer. 5 Archie Lesslie of Sorley's Brae, Dollar, who won Best Vegetable Garden. 6 Len Hadlow won Best Allotment for his plot in Tillicoultry.



Garden Party Glamour

Staff at the Woodside Residential Unit for Children brought the glitz and glamour of a royal garden party to Clackmannanshire when they held their own celebration for the young people in their care.

The idea for the 'not-royal garden party' came from Woodside manager Kaye Smith who was invited to attend the annual Royal Garden Party at Holyrood Palace this summer.

She said: "I was nominated to attend because of our consistently excellent inspection reports. I was allowed to take a guest and had hoped to take along one of our young people, but was disappointed to be told that I couldn't take anyone under the age of 18. I took our Senior Care Officer Edwina Jenkins with me to Holyrood and then we did our best to recreate the garden party at Woodside a few weeks later."

Invited guests included Provost Derek Stewart and Councillor Sam Ovens along with Chief Executive Angela Leitch and Deirdre Cilliers, Head of Social Policy. Tony Clark from the Care Commission, who has awarded the unit top marks during his inspections, also attended. Kaye also invited neighbours and friends.

Councillor Ovens said: "This event was an excellent example of corporate parenting. It was lovely to see everyone dressed in their best, especially the young people in their suits and dresses, and enjoying the occasion, chatting to guests. The young people themselves make a huge contribution to Woodside receiving these excellent reports, so it was only right that they got to celebrate. I was also pleased that neighbours attended and it was great to hear how supportive they are of Woodside and the interest they take in the young people."

Staff recreated the garden party atmosphere with cucumber sandwiches, fancy cakes and tea served in bone china cups - sourced from local charity shops!

Woodside Residential Unit for Children is managed by Clackmannanshire Council. It provides domestic scale, individualised support for five young people between the ages of 12 and 16. And three young people who have recently left Woodside to live independently also returned for the day to mark the occasion.





Did you know that all sorts of organisations are working together to make Clackmannanshire better?

Public sector organisations like the Council, police and NHS work together with local businesses and voluntary and community groups to improve issues the county's communities care about; things like creating jobs, encouraging tourism, tackling the fear of crime and increasing opportunities for young people.

When these organisations work together, they are known as the Clackmannanshire Alliance: the area's community planning partnership.

The partners of the Alliance have agreed priorities based on circumstances facing Clackmannanshire and taking into account the views of Clackmannanshire residents.

We want Clackmannanshire to be a safe and attractive place for people to work, live and visit. We want there to be jobs in Clackmannanshire and for residents of the county to be able to get and maintain these jobs. We want to help people improve their health and lifestyles and we want to offer support to those who have particular needs. Overall, we want all the services we provide to meet your needs.

Despite the difficult economic climate nationally and internationally, there was still positive news for Clackmannanshire in 2009-10.

The Scottish Index of Economic Resilience, which compares Council areas, showed Clackmannanshire as the second top improver in having a resilient economy.

This is reflected in the fact that in relation to a number of key economic indicators which have declined nationally in the last year, the decline in Clackmannanshire has been proportionately less.

Each year, the Alliance sets out the things it wants to achieve across its various priorities. In these pages, we tell you about the progress we've made in this in 2009-10.

Young People Fill 52 New Jobs



Colin Douglas with David Haswell of Thredgards.

The Future Jobs Fund has exceeded expectations in Clackmannanshire, creating more than the 50 new jobs originally planned.

The target was surpassed as the project drew to a close with an additional two jobs being created, bringing the total to 52.

This follows a successful bid last year by the Clackmannanshire Alliance, led by the Council, for money from the Future Jobs Fund, run by the Department for Work and Pensions. This employment initiative aimed to create 150,000 new jobs in the UK for 18-24 year olds who have

been unemployed for over six months.

Clackmannanshire Works Employability, the Alliance's employment service, has managed the project and matched potential candidates, identified at the Job Centre, into positions. Once matched to a suitable vacancy and in work, the candidates are paid the minimum wage funded by the UK Government for six months. The jobs all have a community benefit, and the Alliance has also allocated additional funding for on-the-job training. Together with work experience, this will enhance

their employability in the labour market.

Of the 52 jobs, 22 were placements within the Council, with the remaining 30 new jobs in the social enterprise and small and medium sized enterprise sectors of Clackmannanshire.

Stacey Craig has been employed as an admin assistant with the Council. She said: "Future Jobs Fund has been a great opportunity for me. I have gained so much relevant experience

and got back into the world of work. I have been grateful for this opportunity and I have met amazing new people."

Did you know?

90% of adults are very or quite satisfied with Clackmannanshire as a place to live

Bucky Busters spread the word



This group is made up of young people from Alloa who are raising awareness about the dangers of alcohol and safety as well as distributing information to their peer group.

The group had been meeting with the detached youth workers at various locations in Alloa on a Friday night. The topic of alcohol and health was often discussed with the group, however, they felt that much of the information available was not relevant to their experiences.

The detached workers therefore agreed to support this core group to develop this peer education project.

As part of the project, group members worked with our detached youth workers in putting together an information leaflet geared towards young people.



The project was launched on in March 2010 by Keith Brown MSP at the Bowmar Centre to raise awareness, distribute the information leaflet as well as giving young people attending the opportunity to try out different activities.

Following the success of this event, the Bucky Busters held a summer roadshow with events every Friday for six weeks at different venues throughout Clackmannanshire. These provided young people with the opportunity to take part in interactive alcohol workshops led by group members, learn about health and community safety issues associated with young people and alcohol as well as take part in healthy taster alternative activities and participate in a prize quiz.

Did you know?

We have reduced the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill

Clackmannanshire Healthier Lives is a community based health and wellbeing programme which aims to tackle health inequalities in Clackmannanshire.

Using a unique partnership approach, the programme prioritises those from more deprived areas or who are vulnerable in some way and supports and encourages them to achieve their own goals.

CHL's aim is to empower people with the greatest need to improve the quality of their lives, progress, and contribute to a thriving Clackmannanshire.



Did you know?

Class A drug offences have reduced.

Did you know?

The number of house fires has fallen.

Safe and Sound

Levels of recorded crime have fallen by more than 18% in Clackmannanshire - with crime reported across the whole of the Central Scotland Police area falling by 12%.

The figures, published in the Chief Constable's annual report for 2009-2010, show there were 2286 fewer crimes across the force area during that period than the year before.

The force detection rate was 60%, which is above the national average. Crimes of violence, dishonesty, vandalism and anti-social behaviour all decreased during 2009-2010.

Calls to the police in relation to anti-social behaviour and disorder dropped by 6% in Clackmannanshire, with 419 fewer calls received than the previous year.

Vandalism is still a major problem - it is the single biggest factor in

the crime statistics - but levels of such crimes are down by 22% in Clackmannanshire in the past year, with 276 fewer crimes reported.

Crimes of violence in the Clackmannanshire area are also down by 31%.

The crackdown of drug dealers has resulted in some significant successes during the year, with one particular case involving the seizure of a large amount of heroin and bulking agent in Clackmannanshire. Had the drugs reached the streets, their estimated value was approximately £1 million.

On the roads, seven people lost their lives across the force area, compared with 15 the previous year, while the number of people injured in road accidents has continued to fall. One death is too many and public agencies are working to ensure we all take road safety seriously.



The programme is funded through the Clackmannanshire Alliance and its main aim is to improve health and employability through the provision of tailored packages of support designed to meet clients' specific needs.

CHL provides a full range of services from holistic health assessments and confidence building to how to increase your physical activity, support to stop smoking and healthier food shopping, cooking and dietary skills.

The team includes, two Health and Wellbeing Nurses, a Food Development Worker, Physical Activity Worker, Health and Wellbeing Mentor, Alcohol Support Workers, a Stop Smoking Support Worker and a Communications and Marketing Officer.

Earlier this year, a Learning Disabilities Nurse, Voluntary Sector Development Worker and a Walking Development Officer joined the team.

Did you know?

Car journeys are on the decrease.

The community programme also launched its own website - www.healthierlives.org.uk - and a new range of free exercise and activity classes throughout Clackmannanshire.

Healthy



Kathy O'Neill, General Manager of Clackmannanshire Community Health Partnership, said: "This programme is very exciting for Clackmannanshire.

"CHL staff and partners are working with clients, at the client's own pace, to help them overcome barriers to improving their health and well-being.

"Small changes to food, physical activity, stress, smoking etc together with increased confidence can have a huge impact on things like blood pressure, heart disease and cancers.

"These small changes can also help clients to take control of their lives and make decisions that work for them and their families."

The CHL team works closely with colleagues in a range of partnership organisations including Tullibody Healthy Living, Clackmannanshire Works, Braveheart, Council for Voluntary Service Clackmannanshire (CVSC), Signpost and the Volunteer Centre Clackmannanshire (VCC).

People can book individual appointments for health checks or with specific workers. A programme of various group activities is also available at venues throughout Clackmannanshire.

More information about CHL can be found on the website - www.healthierlives.org.uk. To make an appointment with one of the key workers, please contact 01259 452209 or e-mail info@healthierlives.org.uk.



helping you make the changes that matter

www.healthierlives.org.uk

Encouraging impressions and attracting jobs

Clackmannanshire Alliance was delighted to support a successful bid for funding to transform Alloa town centre.

The Imagine Alloa project was awarded £2 million from the Scottish Government's Town Centre Regeneration Fund and work was carried out over eight months delivering improvements in the roads, pavements and shop fronts.

The initiative included opportunities for many artists to contribute to the project and the 'Make Room' became a focal point for workshops and creativity involving many local people as well as professional artists.

Primrose Street, High Street, Drysdale Street and Shillinghill have seen the most benefit from the work.

The High Street has a new events space made of top quality sandstone, taking away the tricky and uneven cobbles that used to be at the top of the town's main street. Three 10ft tall stainless steel figures by Aberfoyle-based artist Rob Mulholland are a focal point in the new space.

The town centre now has new lighting, street furniture and more litter bins.



Did you know?

Alcohol related driving incidents have reduced for the second year in a row.

Working together for kids in Clackmannanshire



All the members of the Alliance, particularly the Council, NHS Forth Valley and Central Scotland Police, work together to ensure that vulnerable people and families are supported.

Following an independent inspection in January, a report was published which showed that significant progress had been made across all agencies to ensure the needs of children and families are being met in Clackmannanshire.

The following particular strengths that make a difference to children and families were noted by HMIE:

- Trusting relationships built up by staff who know children well
- Services which help and support children and families at an early stage

- Immediate actions taken by staff to keep children safe
- Strong teamwork by staff helping individual children and their families
- The leadership of improvements in services to protect children

This level of commitment can only ensure that Clackmannanshire remains at the forefront of providing the highest quality of service to our children and families.

CLACKMANNANSHIRE PRIORITY OUTCOMES

The area has a positive image and attracts people and business

Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive

People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment

Our communities are safer

Vulnerable people and families are supported

Substance misuse and its effects are reduced

Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing

The environment is protected and enhanced for all

Public services are improving

For more information, contact: Community Planning Greenfield House, Tullibody Road, Alloa, FK10 2AD

Tel: 01259 452012 / 450000

Email: communityplanning@clacks.gov.uk



Joint Community Council Forum



Keeping it green



Clackmannanshire is one of three local authorities in Scotland who have joined forces with the BBC Breathing Places campaign to turn their communities into breathing places.

BBC Breathing Places is a five year BBC Learning Campaign to inspire people to connect with nature. Developed in partnership with a huge range of wildlife and conservation organisations the campaign encourages new audiences to get involved in doing one thing for nature, while creating Breathing Places across the UK.



Did you know?

77% of Council houses meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard

Living and Learning



The Alliance will make sure that people in Clackmannanshire are trained and have the skills they need to go onto employment.

The new Alloa, Alva and Lornhill Academies opened in 2009 and the three schools are embracing the changes and benefits of Curriculum for Excellence.

Looking ahead, the new Forth Valley College campus in Alloa is due to welcome its first cohort of students in August 2011.

Construction work on the £21 million development is well underway in the Hawkhill area of Alloa.



The new campus development will have space for up to 2900 students per academic year, across all modes of attendance, and will include high tech-specification teaching rooms, workshops, fitness suite and cafeteria. The campus will offer provision in subject

areas such as construction, engineering, motor vehicle maintenance, science, business, computing, childcare and education, creative industries, hairdressing and beauty therapy.

Forth Valley College have recently completed a project which implemented a bespoke programme for young people leaving Clackmannanshire schools. The programme involved attendance at the College's Clackmannan Campus and a work placement with a local employer. The programme intended to give young people in Clackmannanshire the support they need to develop a good work ethic, relevant skills, knowledge and experience to help them secure future employment or further study/training options. 12 young people started on the course with 10 completing the course at the end of the project. 8 have secured full time College courses, with the remaining 2 being supported by careers staff. The programme has welcomed support from local employers for future projects and Forth Valley college have ensure sustainability of the programme by including it for future years within its mainstream activity.



A Breathing Place is a green space that is great for wildlife and people. It could be a local woodland, roadside, park, nature reserve, pond, green corridor or meadow. It has an active community of people creating, enjoying and maintaining it.

The Clackmannanshire Green Map Initiative established by CVS Clackmannanshire and Action for Change has been the driving force that has nurtured and co-ordinated activities from a wide range of community organisations and local schools in developing the area's two Breathing Places.

Over the past 18 months funding from the Big Lottery Fund and BBC Breathing Places, along with funding from the Clackmannanshire Biodiversity Partnership, Clackmannanshire Healthy Futures Network and Clackmannanshire and Stirling Environment Trust, has enabled work to be carried out at the Delph Pond in Tullibody and Cowpark Wood in Sauchie.

Huge improvements have been carried out at both areas, making a positive impact on the environment and making the areas more attractive to wildlife and more accessible to local people.



Did you know?

45% of waste was recycled in Clackmannanshire in 2009-10

This review covers just some of the positive things which the partnership has been delivering for Clackmannanshire. If you are interested in reading about the Alliance's work in more detail, a full Annual Report is available on ClacksWeb.

Youngsters catch the reading bug



Youngsters as young as six weeks old will be encouraged to catch the reading bug thanks to the new Bookbug bags.

The bags are part of the Scottish Book Trust's new Early Years Programme, formerly known as Bookstart. The programme is run in Clackmannanshire by the Bright Start Worker Angela Watson who is based at Hillfoots Family Centre. Over the summer she handed out 1690 free packs to babies, toddlers, three year olds and primary ones. The bags are gifted to families at venues such as local libraries, nurseries and family centres and by health visitors.

The Bookbug Baby Pack is handed out to babies between the ages of 6 -16 weeks and is a fantastic introduction for parents to sharing books with their child from birth. The pack includes two sturdy board books, a musical CD and a

parent's guide to sharing books with your child, all contained within a strong canvas bag.

The Baby Pack, contains age appropriate, family favourite books *The Baby* by Rod Campbell and *Tickle Tickle* by Helen Oxenbury

Youngsters aged from 13-24 months receive a Bookbug Toddler Pack which aims to boost a child's language building and listening skills with fun, engaging books and materials. As well as age appropriate books - *The Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and *Can I have A Hug?* by Debi Gliori - the pack contains brightly coloured crayons and a 'My Storybook' pad to encourage early mark making.

Three and four year olds receive a small canvas bag full of exciting pirate themed contents, including a sturdy metal 'Treasure Chest' pencil case, filled with a variety of different writing and drawing tools, a bundle of postcards which can be used to tell friends and family about their adventures on the high seas, and two beautifully illustrated picture books - *A Pirating We'll Go* by Kaye Umansky and *The Fish Who Could Wish* by John Bush.

Councillor George Matchett, the Council's Inclusion Portfolio Holder, said: "Building on the success of Bookstart, the

new Bookbug programme encourages all parents and carers to enjoy books with children from as early an age as possible, helping to develop a lifelong love of books. This scheme is based on scientific evidence and is part of the solution to increasing literacy levels in all our communities."

As well as the packs, the programme includes free Bookbug sessions in libraries with singing and rhyming for youngsters. Within Clackmannanshire, free Bookbug Sessions are run in Alloa Library on Mondays at 10am and on Thursdays at

2pm, at Hillfoots Family Centre on Mondays at 1.30pm, at Clackmannanshire Community Healthcare Centre on Thursdays at 1.30pm and at Sauchie Hall on Fridays at 1.30pm. Bookbug Sessions are fun, free events for children aged birth to four and their parents, incorporating songs, rhymes, books and play.

Bookbug Sessions are fun, free events for children aged birth to four and their parents, incorporating songs, rhymes, books and play.

The packs and sessions aim to raise awareness of the importance of early literacy.

Pupils benefit from new curriculum

This term has seen hundreds of secondary school pupils across Clackmannanshire being taught using the new Curriculum for Excellence.

Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18.

Everyone involved in education in Clackmannanshire has been preparing for the launch of the new curriculum since 2006, when the first document on the subject was published by the Scottish Government.

Curriculum for Excellence promises a challenging and enjoyable education for all young people which ensures they have learning opportunities relevant in today's world and in the future. The curriculum was revised to accommodate changes in a fast changing world, such as developments in technology. Young people today also need to develop their skills in investigating, analysing and working together.

Clackmannanshire's nursery, primary and secondary schools have all been working together to look at ways of ensuring a joined up approach.



"my staff have embraced the new curriculum in a positive way"

Jackie Dunlop, the Acting Head Teacher at Lornshill Academy, has taught at Lornshill for the past 27 years and has been a Depute Head for the past five years, she said: "Staff have a good understanding of the changes and benefits A Curriculum for Excellence will bring to the education of our children and young people. A Curriculum for Excellence offers an opportunity for creativity, flexibility and thus an enriched learning experience."

Cabinet Secretary for Education Michael Russell visited Lornshill

Academy in August where he hosted a public discussion on Scottish education, which included a number of questions from parents about the new curriculum.

Curriculum for Excellence is all about children/young people developing skills for learning, future life and the world of work.

Iain McGhee, the Acting Head Teacher at Alloa Academy, has taught at the school since 1997

and was previously a Depute Head Teacher, he said: "For staff this has meant building on the best practice that already exists. For pupils a Curriculum for Excellence means the chance to experience a much more exciting, relevant and dynamic curriculum."

Alloa Academy was invited to showcase its innovative work on Curriculum for Excellence at the Scottish Learning Festival in September.



"the new curriculum is strengthening the work of the school"

One of the major differences of Curriculum for Excellence relates to 'how you teach' rather than 'what you teach'.

John Meney, Head Teacher at Alva Academy said that in designing their own unique curriculum, they had closely followed the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.



"Pupils will experience a broad education and a sense of progress and achievement through active learning."

He added: "Significant gains have been made in pupil attainment at Alva Academy in recent years by allowing pupils to choose subjects at the end of the S1 for more in-depth study. The new curriculum has allowed us to build on that."

Councillor George Matchett, Portfolio Holder for Inclusion, said: "Curriculum for Excellence is all about building on the strengths of the existing system by bringing a new focus on the skills we want pupils to develop and changing the way they're taught to maximise the opportunities to build the skills they need for a job when they leave education. Thanks to the years Clackmannanshire has spent preparing for this change, we are well placed to embrace the changes and benefits Curriculum for Excellence is already bringing to the education of our children and young people."

Save money with home insulation

It's easy to save energy and money with the Home Insulation Scheme.



A successful bid by Clackmannanshire Council means the Home Insulation Scheme will be offered to around 11,800 properties in Clackmannanshire. The Scheme is funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by the Energy Saving Trust and will see residents being offered insulation for their home at special prices, or even for free.

Teams of Home Energy Assessors will work their way across Alva, Clackmannan, Dollar, Fishcross, Sauchie and Tullibody this autumn taking a street-by-street, door-by-door approach. If your home is one to benefit from the scheme you will be given prior notice of when Home Energy Assessors will be in your area. All Home Energy Assessors are

Disclosure Scotland approved, and can be easily identified through wearing a Home Insulation Scheme uniform and carrying an ID card.

The scheme offers:

- 🏠 A home energy check and report
- 🏠 Impartial and personalised energy saving advice
- 🏠 Cavity wall insulation at a specially negotiated price ¹
- 🏠 Loft insulation at a specially negotiated price ¹
- 🏠 Loft top-up insulation free of charge if you already have between 60mm and 160mm existing loft insulation

🏠 If you need additional support to install insulation, for example your loft cleared or scaffolding, we may be able to help

🏠 Links to other initiatives and services which might help you to stop wasting energy and money such as home renewables and eco-driving

This offer is for private tenants and homeowners. If you live in a property owned by your local authority or housing association our assessors can explain how the scheme can help you.

Insulating your loft and cavity walls may save you up to £150² a year on your energy bills.

Top-ups will be offered free to everyone, within the area, who already has loft insulation that is not up to the recognised standard.

A third of all the heat lost in an uninsulated home is through the walls. Typically, a quarter of the heat in an uninsulated home is lost through the roof.

To find out more about the benefits of the scheme, and what to do next, visit www.homeinsulationscheme.co.uk Alternatively call your local Energy Saving Scotland advice centre on 0800 512 012 for more information.

¹ The assessor will explain the full conditions, but it's usually free if you are receiving benefits or are aged 70 or over.

² Based on a three bed semi-detached house with gas heating and a gas price of 3.67p/kWh. Installing cavity wall insulation can save around £110 a year. Installing loft insulation if you already have some (50mm or 2 inches) can save around £40 a year. Installing loft insulation if you do not have any at the moment can save around £145 a year.

Investment in Council housing



Clackmannanshire Council aims to maintain its housing stock in the best possible condition to ensure that every tenant has a good quality and affordable home that meets their needs.

In 2004 the Scottish Government announced that all social landlords would have to meet a new national standard for housing - the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). The Council is committed to achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, as well as the enhanced Clackmannanshire Standard, by 2015.

In 2009/10 we invested £4.3 million in improving the condition of Council houses. This included installing 160 new bathrooms.

At the moment 76.5% of the Council's 5000 houses meet the

SHQS. By the end of this financial year this level will have increased to 79%, rising to 87% in 2012 and 100% by 2015.

Clackmannanshire Council is committed to going beyond the standards set by the SHQS through setting out a Clackmannanshire Standard:

- All properties have had a new secure door fitted or been offered a new door that meets the Clackmannanshire Standard
- By the end of 2010/11 all properties will have been offered a new kitchen, with 4,340 already installed throughout the county

■ 942 properties now have a new bathroom, with 2953 still to be installed

Over £7.5 million will be invested in Council housing during this financial year. We expect to have replaced all the kitchens in our Council houses by March 2011, with new bathrooms to follow. This investment will enable vast improvements to take place, ensuring that tenants' homes are modern and safe.

As well as major work such as installing new kitchens and bathrooms, every year the Council carries out maintenance which involves inspections and repairs to any external defects which will hopefully prevent more extensive damage happening in the future. This includes work such as roof

It is anticipated that the following will be carried out in 2010/11:

Project	Number Complete
Kitchens	403
Bathrooms	892
Central heating	130
Electrical rewiring	167
Electrical testing	500
Roof replacements	19
Communal door upgrade	16 blocks
Structural works (refurbishments)	18

repairs, external woodwork and decorating common staircases. In this financial year work is being carried out in Alloa, Tillicoultry, Tullibody and Sauchie and a total of 989 properties will be surveyed and maintained.

We are committed to continually

improving the service that we provide and the standard of Council housing throughout Clackmannanshire.

If you require any further information on any of the improvement projects planned for this financial year please contact the Council on 450000.

Protecting you and yours



Photographs of training undertaken at Alloa Fire Station in line rescue techniques.



Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service protects the Clackmannanshire community 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are two Fire Stations in Clackmannanshire - Alloa and Tillicoultry. Alloa is a full or whole time station based in Clackmannan Road and the Tillicoultry Station in Devonvale Crescent operates on a retained or part-time basis.

Although Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service is geared up to respond to a range of emergency situations, we would prefer they didn't happen in the first place. Fires within the home are often

preventable and can often have long-lasting, serious consequences. The Service provides a Home Fire Safety Check, which is free to all Forth Valley residents by calling 0800 012 1465. You will receive an appointment at a convenient time and if you need one, we will fit a free smoke alarm. We will also look around your home and offer tips on how to prevent fire.

Often small adjustments like not overloading sockets or ensuring you have an escape plan should a fire break out can make a big difference.

We also work closely with a number of organisations in Clackmannanshire to inform of the dangers from fire, including regular contact with schools and voluntary organisations.

A little known fact! Alongside attending fire related incidents, road traffic collisions, chemical and biological incidents and rescue operations, Alloa Fire Station is also home to the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team. The USAR capability includes equipment to lift, cut and remove rubble from collapsed structures and to locate and rescue casualties. There are lots of different causes of USAR incidents. They include accidental events, such as severe weather conditions, like snow, ice and floods and events that are deliberate such as malicious or terrorist acts which

may result in structural instability or collapse of buildings or any other structures.

Station Manager at Alloa and Tillicoultry, Gregor Dobbie said: "Alloa and Tillicoultry have attended almost 1000 incidents in the last year, mostly within Clackmannanshire. Often these can be serious incidents with long lasting consequences such as rescuing a person from a burning building or freeing a casualty trapped as a result of a road traffic collision. Whatever the incident our crews are both professional and efficient and their actions are rightly valued by our communities. However, a lot of the incidents we attend are preventable so please contact the Service for further advice and information."

Please visit our website for more information about Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service and the job we do: www.centuralscotlandfire.gov.uk

Action on metal thefts



There has been a rise in the number of metal thefts recently - with railways, utilities substations, businesses, houses and even road signs and drain covers being targeted by criminals.

During the summer officers from British Transport Police (BTP) and Central Scotland Police joined forces in a day of action to target thieves and scrap yards – the method of choice for criminals to sell on their stolen metal.

The desirability for metal has been fuelled by increasing commodity prices which have seen various metals reach all time highs on world markets.

In Clackmannanshire thefts have included dozens of cast iron metal gully covers, beer kegs, scaffolding poles, drain covers and even a disabled access ramp.

Paul Crowther, Deputy Chief Constable of British Transport Police said: "There is no doubt that metal theft is a huge problem for the UK. The conservative estimate is that it costs UK businesses around £770million each year – although it is difficult to put a true cost on the impact this crime has.

"There have been incidents around the country in which homes, businesses and even hospitals have suffered power cuts and surges as a result of criminals stealing copper from power substations."

Sergeant Kevin Chase of Central Scotland Police said: "In the last three years, we have investigated over 150 crimes relating to the theft of metal."

But it is not just power supplies that have fallen foul of criminal behaviour.

Man-hole covers, domestic gas pipes and lead flashing from homes and churches have also been taken by criminals looking to make a quick profit.

DCC Crowther added: "Often dealers are unaware that the metal is stolen and can be left out of pocket when checks carried out by police result in the material being seized. It is imperative that we continue to work with other forces and agencies to educate scrap yards, stop them from unwittingly taking in stolen metal and, in turn, reduce the opportunities for thieves to make money. No one organisation can deal with metal theft in isolation. But, collectively, and through partnership working, we can make a difference."

Industry experts predict the price of copper and other metals will continue to rise throughout 2010 and into 2011.

Be Prepared for Winter Road Conditions

Winter weather conditions can affect roads and paths anytime between October and April.

The Council is responsible for around 285km (177 miles) of road and 447km (278 miles) of paths. The priority of our winter service is to keep the roads and paths safe for public use and minimise delays and the economic impacts of winter weather.

We do this in a number of ways depending on the forecast conditions:

- 'pre-salting' to prevent ice forming
- 'post-salting' to melt ice & snow already there
- snow ploughing to remove snow
- providing & maintaining salt bins

We cannot treat all roads and paths at the same time so we prioritise the routes we treat. We aim to treat the most heavily used routes first, taking into account bus services and school transport.

Priority 1 roads are main roads between communities or major traffic routes within communities including all major bus routes

Priority 2 roads are roads giving access to housing and industrial areas and certain roads opening up less populated rural areas

Priority 3 roads are the rest of the road network with priority being given to areas with known difficulties

The emphasis is on keeping the higher priority routes open and treatment of other routes will only be carried out when major routes are clear.

We also deal with paths on a priority basis. In ice and snow conditions paths leading to schools, hospitals, health centres, shopping areas and where there are heavy pedestrian flows are treated first.

In addition there are over 200 salt bins across the county to allow the public to treat public roads and paths. Salt bins are only provided in locations with particular difficulties such as steep hills and sharp bends.

Contacting the Council

Queries, requests or complaints relating to the winter treatment of public roads and paths should be directed to the Council as follows:

By phone - 01259 450000

By email - roads@clacks.gov.uk

In writing - Roads & Transportation Manager Kilncraigs, Greenside Street, Alloa, FK10 1EB

Other Sources of Information

Local radio stations are a good source of information. Information is also available from: AA Roadwatch at 0906 88 84322 (Premium Rate) www.trafficscotland.org



Take Action for Better Mental Health

World Mental Health Day was on Sunday 10th October. Every year, around this time, thousands of people across the world raise awareness and understanding of mental health and mental illness. Clackmannanshire Integrated Mental Health Services are keen to raise awareness of the importance of looking after our own mental wellbeing, the positive steps we can take to do so and the help that is around to raise our understanding and ability to cope.



Steps to deal with stress
A simple guide to stressing less and enjoying life more

appropriate professional help.

SMHFA is a FREE 12 hour course that can be delivered in a variety of ways, to fit in with people's busy lives. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact us on 01259 215048

Top 10 tips for positive mental health

- Talk about your feelings ✓
- Keep active ✓
- Eat well ✓
- Drink sensibly ✓
- Keep in touch with friends ✓
- Ask for help ✓
- Take a break ✓
- Do something you are good at ✓
- Accept who you are ✓
- Care for others ✓

Clackmannanshire Integrated Mental Health Services:

We provide a range of services for our local community, ranging from services dealing with mild to moderate mental health problems to psychiatric services. Referrals are via General Practitioners.

You can find out more about our services on: www.clacksweb.org.uk/social/mentalhealthdayservices/

Working with Community Groups:

Do you belong to a community group? Are you sometimes stuck for speakers?

We can deliver FREE Mental Health Awareness sessions, approximately 2-3 hours long, to community groups. These sessions are informative, interactive and always get people wanting to know more....please contact us on 01259 215048

Supporting someone with a mental health problem?

Ochil Carers can be of use to you if you live with, are related to, or are simply close to someone who has a mental health problem. We provide up to date information as well as support. For further details, please contact Isobel Reed on 01259 290343

Fancy becoming a Mental Health First Aider?

Scottish Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) is based on the concept of general First Aid training and aims to improve the general public's awareness and understanding of mental health.

The course teaches you to:

Give initial help to someone experiencing a mental health problem.

Deal with a crisis situation or the first signs of someone developing mental ill health, and

Guide people towards

Eastern Routes in Clackmannanshire

A festival of 'live storytelling' and exhibitions celebrating Clackmannanshire's trading links with the Far East will take place in various venues from Saturday 23rd October until Saturday 30th October.



Regional Partner to the Scottish International Storytelling Festival

Events

Saturday 23rd October

Adventures on the High Seas

Alloa Library 11am

Drysdale Street, Alloa FK10 1JL

Tel: 01259 722262

A special event for children and families. Create your very own adventure story in words and pictures.

Are you a swashbuckling pirate or perhaps a stowaway on a ship? Come along with your imagination and have fun.

Artist Talk with Paul Binnie

GR McFarlane's Art Gallery 2pm

41 Mill Street, Alloa, FK10 1DW,

Tel: 01259 723303

International artist Paul Binnie will be discussing his work, his travels, and the inspiration behind his images.

The exhibition is open 9am to 5pm from Saturday 23rd October until Saturday 30th October

Tuesday 26th October 2010

Ghost Walk

Alloa Tower 8pm

Join us for a ghost walk around Alloa's famous 'ghostly' haunts!

Saturday 30th October 2010

Dollar and the Orient - Live Storytelling

Dollar Museum 10am

1 High Street, Dollar FK14 7AY

Tel: 01259 742895

Storyteller Ewan McVicar hosts a fun, lively interactive storytelling event, inspired by Dollar Museum's latest exhibition celebrating the fascinating travels of Ella Christie, creator of the Japanese Garden at Cowden, 19th century travel writer Wang Tao and Chinese translator and missionary James Legge.

The Wee County in the Far East - 'Live Storytelling'

GR McFarlane Art Gallery 2pm

41 Mill Street, Alloa, FK10 1DW,

Tel: 01259 723303

Clackmannanshire is the smallest county in Scotland, with a big story to tell. A 'Live Storytelling' event exploring Clackmannanshire's historical links to the Far East will be fun for all ages.

Exhibitions

23rd October until 19th December 2010

Dollar and the Orient

Dollar Museum

1 High Street, Dollar FK14 7AY

Saturday 11-1 and Sunday 2 - 4.30

Intrepid Victorian traveller Ella Christie, James Legge, missionary and translator and Wang Tao the 19th century scholar and travel writer, are just some of the inspirational people who have left their mark on Dollar. Learn more of their fascinating stories, and the legacies they left behind, with this new exhibition at Dollar Museum.

23rd - 30th October 2010

The Wee County in The Far East

GR McFarlane Art Gallery 9am - 5pm

(closed Sunday)

41 Mill Street, Alloa, FK10 1DW,

A selection of photographs and artefacts will be on display, documenting Clackmannanshire's historical links to the Far East. The Paton and Baldwin wool spinning mill in Shanghai and John Johnson of Alva's career as commander of the artillery with the East India Company, where he played a part in the Battle of Plessey, in are just two of the themes being explored.

All events are free but places are limited. Please book via the venue or visit www.clackmannanshiretourism.com for full details of all events.

16 Days of Action

The Clackmannanshire Action for Change group is once again working with partners from across Forth Valley to support the 16 Days of Action campaign. This international campaign aims to eliminate all forms of violence against women. The campaign runs from 25th November to 10th December each year. A number of awareness raising activities are currently being planned and the full programme of events will be published on ClacksWeb nearer the time.

19th Alloa Octoberfest

The annual Alloa Octoberfest Beer Festival organised by the Forth Valley Branch of CAMRA is at Alloa Town Hall on Friday 22nd October and Saturday 23rd October.



For more information visit www.camra-forth-valley.co.uk

View is delivered to every house in Clackmannanshire four times a year. It contains news from all Council services as well as information from our partner organisations that we hope you find interesting and informative.

We pay for View by using it to distribute information that would previously have been printed in separate leaflets or advertised in local press. We've calculated that each copy of View costs less than 11p to print and deliver.

If you have any suggestions, questions or comments on View please contact us by writing to The Editor, View, Communications Unit, Clackmannanshire Council, Greenfield House, Alloa, FK10 2AD or email us at press@clacks.gov.uk and put the word 'View' in the subject box.