

# **COMMUNITY PAYBACK ORDER ANNUAL REPORT**

FINANCIAL YEAR: **2017/18**

LOCAL AUTHORITY: **Argyll and Bute Council**



**Types of unpaid work projects and activities which have been carried out; the total number of unpaid work hours completed during the year; and information and examples that help to demonstrate how communities benefit from unpaid work.**

In Argyll and Bute, we seek to prioritise projects that offer the most benefit to the most people in the local community. We work to make the local community more accessible, safer and pleasant. We work with local community projects to improve the area that offenders live in.

Current projects include assisting **Operational Services** in gritting footpaths and snow clearance which allows Care Workers and emergency services to visit if required. We are also cleaning railings, washing down walls and generally tidying up the community footpaths and litter picking across Argyll and Bute.

We are continuing to work at **Glenfinnart Walled Garden, Ardentinny**, developing the sensory garden and laying paths for locals and tourists to benefit. We have a plot of land to use to grow vegetables and offenders can take these vegetables home to their families thus improving health and wellbeing. We are now involved with a large project at **Blairmore Community Trust near Dunoon** creating footpaths and play areas. The Trust recently won a Gold award from Beautiful Scotland and they also received a trophy for winners in the Coastal Village category.

On **Bute** we have been given a piece of land to create, develop and maintain a garden that all the community can benefit from and this is still in progress. The local hospital on Bute contacted us to see if we would be able to help in turning a bit of waste ground at the back of the hospital in to an area that people receiving palliative care can sit out in and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine. We completed a tidy up of the garden and local businesses provided materials such as stones, woodchips and wood to build a fence. We were involved in laying down membrane to stop weeds growing, laying stones and cleaning out old planters and planting with flowers to make a calm and pleasant environment. An opening day was held, which unfortunately we were not able to attend, but we were sent a letter thanking us for our help and we will continue to maintain this garden.

**Chapel Hill** accessible raised beds was a project in Rothesay that was run by Fyne Futures who asked if we could assist in renovating a piece of waste land that they were given by the Council. They applied for a grant to build raised flower/vegetable beds that are accessible for everyone in the community to use and this was granted. We levelled the ground and helped in the making of new paths and laid decking. We had clients on individual placements there as well as squad days. It was opened on June 26<sup>th</sup> 2018 by Brendan O'Hara MP. On opening day a raw food cuisine demonstration was part of the launch on how to prepare the sorts of vegetables that the group will be growing on the site. They described cooking for a vegan diet and the positive impacts it can have in reducing a carbon footprint. This garden will be used by all the community to learn how to grow their own vegetables and fruit and they have now started group days.

**South Kintyre Development Trust** aim to provide or advance the accessibility of recreational facilities and/or organising recreational activities, which will be available to members of the public with the object of improving the conditions of life of the community. Whisky barrels were very kindly donated by Glen Scotia Distillery and were halved then filled with soil by the unpaid work squad who placed them in locations mapped out by the South Kintyre Development Trust. We assist when we

can in helping out with any projects they have from cleaning up to working in the community gardens. There is also an old church that has been converted into the town heritage trust which we go and help keep their garden tidy.

In **Oban** we are working at the **Sensory Garden and Green Shoots Garden**.

**James Street Community Garden, Helensburgh** is an ongoing project that was first built by West Dunbartonshire Council a few years ago. It has been an ongoing job over the last year and will remain so for the foreseeable future. One of our first jobs here was to move approx. 10 tonnes of top soil to give the garden a pavement level and allow the grass to grow. Further to this there was another four tonnes of top soil moved to build raised beds for the garden's three different flower displays.

Thereafter squads dug four drainage channels across the rest of the garden and ran them all into one big sump. This was due to a previously overflowing drainage pipe. Further, to assist in drainage, our squads dug and built a "wet" flower display bed whereby this run off and drain was assisted by water loving plants.

Also we have removed and repaired the old wooden benches from the garden, and have since relocated them to Duchess Woods, a woodland trust located in Helensburgh. James Street Community Garden then purchased £8,000 worth of renewable benches made from recycled material and maintenance free. The squads built them, dug them in and concreted the bases, then followed this up by cementing in slabs and flat bases beneath. During this time we also slabbed a path to the new benches and created a hedge border.

This site is an ongoing project as our squads weekly cut the grass. We have also strimmed and again, maintain a maze whilst in growth stage in the middle circle of the garden.

**Duchess Woods** is a large wood to the north of Helensburgh. We are in regular contact with the Chairman who provides ongoing work in and around the woods. To date our squads have maintained the drainage ditches throughout the wood and yearly in autumn we start to clear them out after the last leaf fall. Also in the farthest northern path our squads repaired a wooden bridge and dug out a new drainage channel to direct the rain water that puddled here away from the timber bridge and down to the adjacent river. We have also dismantled, stored and dried out picnic benches. These were then repaired, sanded and painted and given a new slab base within the woods come spring 2018. We also maintain the "pony field" and picnic area by grass cutting, strimming and bush/tree cut back.

**Helensburgh Access Trust** is also another organisation we work closely with as they own and work the fishing pond and skating rink at the north of Sinclair Street. We maintain the path around the skating pond by strimming and tree cut back. We also built them a new path around the fish pond using approximately 30 tonnes of road planings. We are also currently working on building new and improving the access path toward Sinclair Street from Abercrombie Crescent.

Our squads routinely do a litter pick and fly tip run up and down the **A82**, across the Glen Fruin, Glen Luss and Glen Douglas roads. Here we have found everything from the usual fast food chain litter, bottles and rubbish to 48 car tyres and a rear tractor tyre.

We have also conducted a clear out of the old derelict **Bonnie Braes Café car park** at the request of our cleansing department and the Trossach Rangers service. In doing so we take our collection back to Blackhill depot and dispose of appropriately.

We are currently in contact with the **Loch Lomond National Park** Senior Manager and when requested try to assist in any way possible by doing the above litter clear ups, lay by maintenance by cutting trees and bushes back to beach clearance. We are waiting to hear and thereafter gain approval for a litter pick on the largest island, Inch Murrin, with assistance from the Ranger Service.

When **Cameron House** had the unfortunate fire the previous year we offered our assistance in rubbish clearance. During this time the inclement weather hit and to keep access for staff and emergency personnel, our squads cleared the road of snow.

During the bad weather, our squads routinely cleared the paths to the local hospitals, ambulance depot, fire depot, police station, homes of the elderly and any step inclines around the housing estates – not only in Helensburgh, but as far out as Kilcreggan, Rosneath, Rhu, Garelochhead and Cardross.

Our current job is probably the largest that our squads have taken on. This is a large derelict and overgrown garden at **Rhu Primary School**. We are currently in contact with the head teacher. We have so far dug out all the weeds and derelict land and have removed approximately 10 tonnes of loose material – again disposing appropriately. It will house four rockeries for planting, said tractor tyre that has been upcycled into a potato patch, disused bike wheels that we are making into flowers and windmills. The other side of this area is being dug out and a new path built, edged with flower beds and raised planters. We will also build a new pergola and paint the whole perimeter fence. One area has also been designed into a fairy garden for the children.

With the winter fast approaching our work changes due to the weather and we will focus on litter picks and beach clearances but also have an **Enable Scotland House** that requires a large paint job.

These projects create areas of tranquillity for people to visit and also benefits the community by providing a means to promote public health. Two of them incorporate a sensory garden and plot of land for growing vegetables.

List of individual placements used during period:

Barnardo's Charity Shop  
Shelter charity  
Hope Kitchen  
Debra charity  
Salvation Army  
Fyne Futures recycling  
OxfamBute Produce  
Green Shoots  
Cyber Cafe  
Bute Oasis  
Re-jig Islay  
Kintyre Recycling

Cancer Research  
Blarbuie Woodland, Lochgilphead

For orders completed within the year the total hours of unpaid work was 18,502.

**Quotes from people on CPOs and beneficiaries about the impact of the unpaid work on them and/or the community.**

Blairmore Trust *“what a wonderful job has been done and it’s showing now with the recent awards that have been won”*

The Committee of the Pipe Band Hall in Dunoon have again written a thank you letter for all the hard work we have given them - painting inside and tidying up around their building before and after Cowal Games.

Strachur Village Hall committee have also sent in a letter thanking the Payback Team for all the continued help in keeping their building and surrounding area tidy and clean all year round.

Some service users see a project before and after completion and a comment we have heard is *“I feel if I have given something back and feel good about the job that was done and for all to see and can’t believe it could make such a difference”*

Other comments from offenders show the real benefit of structured other activity and skills needed for employment:

“Helpful gardening skills”

“Attended Anger management & Health & Safety training for other activity”

“Attended H&S course for working on building site”

“I have felt valued & useful throughout my time with the team”

“Business Gateway courses as other activity”

“Voluntary Careworker as other activity”

“Attended H&S course as other activity; good for finding employment; I’ll think more before I commit an offence”

“Involved in Community Garden; learned about growing your own”

**Types of "other activity" carried out as part of the unpaid work or other activity requirement.**

Other activity is now imbedded in our unpaid work scheme. It is used to provide training for skills and education gaps using Community Education courses, literacy support, computer skills and health and safety courses

We also support individuals with health and wellbeing and life skills and get support from Turnaround, tenancy agencies and drugs/alcohol agencies.

We have recently started to run CPR courses with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service initially in Oban and Bute with plans to extend to all areas of Argyll and Bute. These courses are open to service users and staff members.

Some of the modules of our offender programme are also open to those undertaking other activity where this is relevant to their needs. This has proved very successful in improving life skills and addressing offending behaviour.

**Activities carried out to consult prescribed persons and organisations, pursuant to section 227ZL of the 1995 Act, and wider communities on the nature of unpaid work and other activities and how the consultation results helped determine which projects were undertaken.**

The Unpaid Work Co-Ordinator is in regular contact with the councillors and communities that we are able to carry out work in. In turn they share the information with their local Community Councils and groups.

He also meets regularly with Operational Services to offer assistance where permitted.

All requests for the services of the Community Payback Squads are assessed by the Unpaid Work Co-Ordinator. Work that benefits the majority of the community gets prioritised.

Open, ongoing communication with Community Groups and charities.

We undertake annual consultation with prescribed persons as per legislation which has had a good response. We now have new areas of work to pursue within local communities following this year's consultation.

**Use by the courts of CPO requirements other than unpaid work, for example what, and in what way, different requirements are being used for those whose offending is driven by drug, alcohol and mental health issues; or how requirements such as programme or conduct are being used to address offending behaviour.**

**Supervision Requirement:**

Supervision requirements are frequently imposed along with the unpaid work requirement where the court finds it necessary to impose both a welfare approach to address the underlying issues identified at the report stage for rehabilitative purposes whereas the unpaid work requirement is more a punitive disposal available to the courts.

A supervision requirement must be imposed if the court was to be considering imposing any other requirement other than unpaid work which can be a stand-alone disposal

At the report stage an Alcohol and Drug Audit is completed which is based on the service users self-reported use over the past 12 months and the scores would dictate which service would be best suited to that individual's needs. These would include no intervention required or brief intervention required which could be addressed by way of social work intervention via supervision sessions. Alcohol Brief Intervention scratch cards have recently been introduced for this purpose. The next level would be to refer to 3<sup>rd</sup> sector agency and the highest level would be to refer on to Argyll and Bute Addiction Team (ABAT). These different levels of treatment and

intervention are required to address the individual's personal needs. Both alcohol and drug use are dealt with in as much of an individual manner as possible. Problematic illicit drug use is always referred on to a specialist agency for treatment, be that 3<sup>rd</sup> sector or statutory.

**Alcohol Treatment Requirement and Drug Treatment Requirement:**

If at the report stage it is identified that a specific alcohol or drug treatment assessment is required then that assessment must be provided by the services which would deliver it, as the treatment plan must be included within the body of the court report to allow the court a full opportunity to know what they are asking the person to comply with. If there is any delay in this being available at the requested court date the court would have all the other information, but would be asked to defer for the specialist assessment to be carried out. This is important especially in cases where substance misuse or mental health issues are of concern. Questions regarding mental health, history of such or of self-harming are included within the report interview process.

**Mental Health Treatment Requirement:**

We have not had any orders with a Mental Health Treatment Requirement.

**Conduct Requirement:**

These have been imposed. Some have been imposed incorrectly, as they should not be imposed in relation to alcohol or drug counselling but they often are. On occasions there has been conduct requirements imposed with the instruction that the person must attend for alcohol or drug treatment, for example where there has been no such assessment or plan sought at report stage. These have been returned to court as being incompetent and have subsequently been amended by either amendment or removing the requirement. Attendances for such counselling can be part of the agreed supervision contract and a conduct requirement is not needed. There have been cases in relation to domestic assaults where the conduct requirement would be that they do not enter certain areas, such as the victims address. Comprehensive conduct requirements are routinely used in the management of sex offenders, particularly around access to internet enabled devices, restrictions around entering areas where they pose risks and also contact with victims.

**Programme Requirement:**

Programme attendance, e.g. Domestic Abuse Programme, Sex Offender Programmes which are often imposed in Courts out with Argyll and Bute are problematic in as much as there are no such accredited programmes available at this time with the Authority. In these cases the imposing courts are notified of the lack of such programmes and supervising officers have to adapt what resources we do have to suit the nature of the offence focused work required. This is an area for development.

**Residence requirement:**

There has been no order imposed within Argyll and Bute with a residency Requirement

**Compensation requirement:**

Compensation Requirements are often imposed sometimes without the supervision requirement which is legally required, These have been amended on return to Court

and the compensation must be paid two months prior to the expiry of the supervision requirement or the order is in breach.

**Any issues affecting access to services which are provided by other partners (e.g. drug and alcohol services) and, where such issues have been identified, what work is underway to resolve them.**

The incorrect alcohol and or drug treatment requirements have reduced since the courts have had to rectify their incompetent orders but some still come through. There are no identified gaps in service provision by partner agencies at this time. We have a good working relationship with mental health services, however, access to these services can be problematic due to NHS waiting times and service users moving between geographical areas. This is monitored and if necessary action taken to address this on a case by case basis.

**Any other relevant information. This might include details of work which is carried out with people on CPOs to address their offending behaviour but which does not fall into the category of a specific requirement.**

The lack of accredited programmes has been a source of concern for some time but there is some positive movement taking place to address this issue with the introduction of MFMC for sex offenders and UP2U for domestic abuse next year. These will be delivered on a 2:1 basis with service users. Due to the large geographical and rural nature of Argyll and Bute, the delivery of group work programmes is not viable. Arrangements are in place to train staff and appoint a Treatment Manager in partnership with East and West Dunbartonshire Councils. We have also introduced our own offending behaviour programme.

Due to progress evidenced we have had orders discharged early as Courts are satisfied that outcomes have been achieved.

All qualified staff undertook Trauma Informed Practice training which has resulted in positive work being carried out. The emphasis on relationships matter resulted in one case example where a referral had been made to the community mental health team who were to pick up the work at the end of the supervision period. Due to the CMHT not being in a position to provide a service in the timescales required, voluntary contact with the former supervising officer has been offered to the service user in an attempt to continue with the support he requires to assist in the transition and prevent a decline in his mental health and reduce the risk of re-offending.

There is good practice being delivered with veterans who have experienced post-traumatic stress and some have been able to access specialist resources such as Hollybush, a specialist resource for veterans in Ayrshire. Sometimes it is welfare issues which result in the offending behaviours and lack of stable homes. Support is always made available to empower the service user to achieve their goals to remove themselves from the criminal justice system. In accordance with the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, support, guidance and advice is always available.

COMPLETED BY: Kirsteen Larkin

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