

**Connect**  
monthly

**December  
2016**



**OPEN  
ALL  
HOURS**

**moray**  
council

# Inside story



## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the last *Connect* for 2016!

Dear Colleagues,

My daughters are now in their early twenties and the festive season is often a time to reminisce about previous Christmases when they were much younger. One of my girls had a particular fondness for Monopoly (groan!) and my wife's family played to the Rennie clan rules (may well be the correct version) which clashed with the rules that had evolved in my own family in the 1970s. Oh what fun we had!

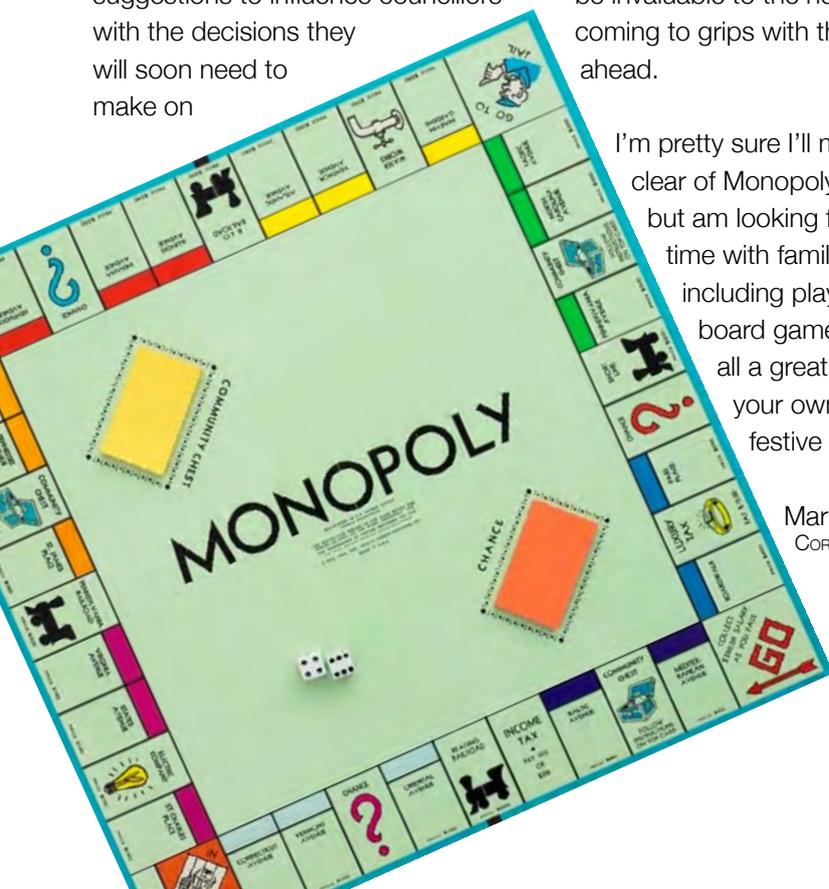
So, it was great to see the Morayopoly boards appear at this year's employee conferences. Using a game approach to the serious issues faced by the council, in terms of a reducing amount of money, was a great success. It was good to hear the different views being debated and for colleagues from a range of services explain how the budget was used in their area.

The employee conferences have been one part of the many engagement activities the council has promoted this year to encourage comments and suggestions to influence councillors with the decisions they will soon need to make on

prioritising services. A cross party group of councillors is now meeting on a regular basis. The Group is called the Transition Board and has been established to help prepare the foundations for the tough decisions that a new set of councillors will have to make soon after the elections on 4 May 2017. All of the feedback received is now available on the council's website and over the next few months work will be done to provide responses to the ideas and suggestions that have been submitted. All of this information will be invaluable to the new council in coming to grips with the challenges ahead.

I'm pretty sure I'll manage to steer clear of Monopoly this Christmas, but am looking forward to time with family and friends, including playing a few new board games. I wish you all a great break enjoying your own traditional festive activities.

Mark Palmer  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR



Last month we said we'd be publishing our 21st birthday issue to round out the year, but we've had a few emails in to point out that next April is actually the correct month to celebrate that anniversary. So in true democratic style we've changed our plans as a result and will be producing that celebration issue in the correct month – watch this space. Thank you for the steer on that!

There's no escaping the Christmas theme this month. However, while most of us will be switching off for the holiday period, in this December issue we'd like to highlight the efforts of our out-of-hours colleagues and on-call teams that have to keep going whatever the occasion. The council's reputation rests on their shoulders over the Yuletide, and we're sure it's well looked after there.

Merry Christmas and Happy Hogmanay!

The Ed

## TEAM CONNECT

Peter Jones  
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Raymond Shewan  
PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Jess Barbier-Marsden  
PROJECT OFFICER

Angus McNicholl  
DESIGNER

### CONTRIBUTORS THIS MONTH

Jane Fordyce, Ian Todd, David Morris

# OPEN ALL HOURS



Alice McLaughlin

While you're at home enjoying your Christmas turkey or out 'first footing' on Hogmanay, spare a thought for our out-of-hours (OOH) colleagues who are working tirelessly over the festive period. Crews from gritting and roads, waste and recycling, social work and the homeless teams are working or on call over the holidays to provide a service for our communities. *Connect* caught up with the out-of-hours (OOH) response team as they got their preparations in order.

Maggie Murdoch is our Supported Accommodation Manager at Cameron Park Brae, and heads up the team – but is retiring at Christmas after 21 years with us. *"It's astonishing when you think about it,"* says Maggie, *"all of the out-of-hours calls for the council are coming through to one place, one person with one phone."* Together with Olive Scotson, Supported Accommodation Officer (Sheltered

Housing); Mary Smith, Supported Accommodation Officer (Hostels); and Callum MacKenzie, Supported Accommodation Officer (Estates), they head up a tight-knit team. *"It's a hard job. I never appreciated how busy it is 'til I came to work for the council,"* says Mary. *"It's not unusual for staff to complete 50 calls on a shift!"*

The OOH service started in 1996 and moved to the newly-built Cameron Park Brae hostel in Bishopmill, Elgin later that year. The seven-member team based there is on a 24-hour rota, covering daytime duties and two OOH night shifts from 5:00 pm to 9:00 am. Alice McLaughlin, Housing Support Worker, recently ended 12 years on night shift to being part of the shift rota in preparation for retirement. *"You get used to working things round family life,"* Alice says. *"When I come off of night shift I have to stay up for 24 hours to get back to normal, to sleep at night!"*



*"All of the out-of-hours calls for the council are coming through to one place, one person with one phone."*

Maggie Murdoch



*"If the phone rings, we come running. If we can't help you, we'll know who can."*

Brian McPherson

Not only do the team handle all incoming calls outside of office hours, they are back-up for the Community Wardens and sheltered housing officers, and they manage a 12-unit temporary accommodation hostel.

Some residents only stay in the hostel overnight, but most are there for a few weeks or months but this varies depending on the residents' situation. *"We try to help before people are sleeping on the street,"* says clerical assistant Lindsey Robinson. *"There's still a stigma to being homeless, but it could happen to anyone."*



9:00 shift change and handover: Lindsey and Maree settle in

The downturn in offshore work and changes to tax laws has led to some private landlords selling instead of renting, and as a result more families with two working parents – who would not normally need support – are presenting as homeless.

In between handling the hostel residents' queries, the team are taking calls about icy roads, broken boilers, noisy neighbours and everything in between.

Variety is routine for the team; they've been called about a dead whale on Portgordon beach, a dead bull floating down the River Lossie, fallen trees, a sinking boat, fire in a block of flats – you name it. They've taken the call and *"learn something new each week,"* according to Mary.

Brian McPherson, a Housing Support Worker since 2009, said: *"If the phone rings, we come running. If we can't help you, we'll know who can."*

With the exception of a major crisis, we know we can all switch off over the holiday period and re-charge our batteries. Not so our colleagues who man the OOH service and the teams who are on-call or out keeping Moray moving. We – and the wider community – owe them a debt of thanks. In particular I would wish Maggie a happy retirement, and thank her for her years of service.

Notwithstanding our colleagues' commitment to these vital on-call and OOH services, I sincerely hope they all manage to have some time with their families and friends over the holiday period.

Roddy Burns, Chief Executive





“Homeless situations can happen to anyone. And there’s a lot more domestic abuse cases being reported.”

Maree Geddes

“We’re the first point of contact, and we do take some abuse from people – it’s hard sometimes”

Maggie Murdoch

Looking after the hostel at the same time as dealing with incoming calls can be a tricky balancing act. Priority is given to situations at the hostel so there is a ‘call minder’ system to enable ringing people back if staff haven’t been able to pick the phone up immediately.

If more than 20 calls are received in one hour – for example, during a crisis such as the last time of flooding – the team can call for back-up. Different times of year are busier than others, and the OOH team is expecting a hectic holiday period – especially if the weather is frosty or snowy. “Members of the public phone in to say where the roads are bad,” explains Maggie. “They want to know if a gritter is in their area.”

But it’s not just the public that the OOH team looks out for. “All council vehicles have a tracker,” explains Maggie, “so if a gritter turns over in the snow, they have an alert button

that they can press, and we can see where they are on the tracking system, and get help to them.” The team also checks in with Duty Housing/Homelessness Officers during their shifts, and endeavours to manage customer expectations to take the pressure off of service providers. “We’re the first point of contact, and we do take some abuse from people who are angry or upset – it’s hard sometimes but we’ve got to be polite and reasonable,” she says.

Maree Geddes, the newest team member, has been a support worker since 2005 but joined OOH six months ago. “I love it;” Maree says. “You’re working with social work, DHO, Police Scotland – it’s really interesting. Homeless situations can happen to anyone. And there’s a lot more domestic abuse cases being reported; it’s high on the police agenda now so a lot more women – and men – are coming forward.”

“You’ve got to come in with an open mind and not be judgmental.”

With low staff turnover, the OOH team have real job satisfaction. They agree that positive attitude, empathy, a sense of humour and a genuine desire to help people are essential qualities for a housing support worker. Brian said: “If you don’t like people, it’s the wrong job for you!” Alice agreed: “We get people coming back much later to say they’ve got their own place and to show us how their kids have grown. People come in at their lowest point, but when they leave here to move on they’re so full of confidence in themselves. It’s great to see it!”



# HR Noticeboard

## DISCOUNTS FOR STAFF

If you're still looking for that Christmas treat for a loved one, don't forget to check out the list of local companies that offer discount to Moray Council staff. The list includes clubs and activities such as those available at: Curves in Elgin, Kinloss Country Golf Course, and Landmark Forest Adventure Park; services from Arnold Clark, Elgin Express Dry Cleaners and Buckie Furniture and Carpets; gifts from Little the Jewellers, Elgin, McCalls in Elgin and Witkowski Jewellers, Elgin.

If you fancy eating out at the Pancake Place in Elgin offers a discount. Full details of these and other staff benefits on the interchange.

## SEASONS GREETINGS

*Merry Christmas  
to one and all*

# PRINT READY

Earlier this year we signed a contract with Xerox for the supply of new print devices and related software. The contract will be in place until 2021, and we have the option to extend this for another two years after that.

While the contract is a major investment for the council, it is anticipated that it will lead to annual efficiency savings of approximately £192,000. These savings will be achieved through the combination of a new fleet of more efficient and cost-effective print devices together with the managed print software that monitors their use.

A 2014 audit of all council locations found that we had around 900 printers in place at that time. The vast majority of these were laser printers that were not 'on contract' and therefore incurred substantially higher costs for the purchase of toner. In the new contract, consumables such as toner are included in the price and this contributes to the savings being achieved.

After considerable user consultation we took the opportunity to greatly reduce the number of printers in our overall fleet – the final number now in place is 385. Each one of these is fully supported by Xerox which has reduced the resource requirement on the ICT team, who were previously responsible for supporting all non-contract printers. This change will generate additional efficiency savings.

Further advantages of the new contract include the ability for staff to release their print job at any multi-function device on the relevant domain (i.e. corporate or education), secure print to ensure confidentiality, and the ability to monitor the volume of prints being produced. Improved monitoring will enable budget holders to ensure that the cost of printing is minimised wherever possible.

As well as reducing the overall volume of printing, costs can also be minimised by sending larger print jobs to the print room. While the option to print in colour is available, the cost of a colour page is significantly more than for mono. Staff are therefore encouraged to keep colour printing to a minimum.

The installation period ran between July and October and staff from ICT, the print project team, and Xerox worked as a close-knit team to ensure that all new print devices were up and running as per schedule. Despite some anticipated 'teething problems' – and also some that were not anticipated – the installation has been completed successfully and on time.

The project has now entered its business as usual phase and Margaret Stewart, Printing Services Manager, has resumed responsibility for the operation of the fleet. Therefore if you have any questions Margaret can be contacted on [margaret.stewart@moray.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.stewart@moray.gov.uk) or ext. 3468.

As part of our commitment to sustainability, it is council policy to use 80gsm unbleached recycled paper. This paper has been fully tested on our new fleet of print devices and is fully compatible.

## TOP TIPS FOR YOUR NEW PRINT DEVICE

To minimise the chance of a printer jam please follow the steps below:

- *Fan the paper before inserting into the paper tray.*
- *Insert a whole ream of paper at once.*
- *Avoid putting 'new paper' on top of 'old'.*
- *Ensure the paper is inserted neatly.*

If you have any queries please contact the Print Room on 3054/3156

***Please do not remove this poster***



# 11

## Performance Management

To improve continuously means setting stretching, measurable service standards and targets that are related to priorities which can be monitored and managed to ensure progress is achieved.

For managers this means:

- ✓ • Ensuring performance indicators and targets relate to outcomes
- ✓ • Regularly monitoring, reviewing and reporting in line with the Council's corporate performance management framework
- ✓ • Scrutinising performance management data for trends and comparison with relevant available benchmarking information
- ✓ • Planning and undertaking regular self-assessment activities such as Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) to assist in continuous improvement

For all of us this means:

- ✓ • Ensure we are on track to achieve our stated vision and objectives
- ✓ • Identify strengths and areas of good practice which can be shared
- ✓ • Identify areas for improvement
- ✓ • Inform decision making, planning and resource allocation
- ✓ • Compare and benchmark against other organisations
- ✓ • Ensure accountability

Continuous improvement for the Council is about maximising the benefits to our customers through the continual review of services, decision-making and action to implement improvement. This is something we are all committed to but managers have a particular role and the bullet points above from the Moray Management Methods service as a useful aide memoire to help us meet our obligations.

# SWITCH OFF RESULTS

Thanks to everyone who took part in Switch off Fortnight – here are the results.

# Carbon Connect

	2015 Electricity Consumption	2015 Electricity Cost	2016 Electricity Consumption	2016 Electricity Cost	Saving over 2 weeks	Potential Annual Savings
HQ	15,519 kWh	£2,172	15,125 kWh	£2,117	-£55	-£1,430
HQ Annexe	27,223 kWh	£3,811	27,151 kWh	£3,801	-£10	-£260
Ashgrove Offices	8,411 kWh	£1,177	8,371 kWh	£1,172	-£5	-£130

All three buildings recorded reductions in their electricity consumption through the application of good house-keeping measures, with the HQ achieving the best results.

If the same performance was extrapolated across all of our sites,

this could achieve an annual saving of over £16,000 – that would cover the annual electricity and heating fuel costs at both Alves and Craigellachie Primary Schools.

We would also like to mention the special effort made by the Elgin

Academy Eco Group, who saved £272 over the fortnight, equivalent to an annual saving of over £5,500!

Many thanks to all staff for their efforts and we hope you can all continue the good work every fortnight of the year!

# RECYCLING XMAS

Ho ho ho-ly cow – our colleagues in waste and recycling have a busy time at Christmas! Looking at last year's figures from a four-week period in May/June versus a four-week period over the December/January holidays last year, it's clear that we are a county of dedicated recyclers and should be proud of our recycling success.

The amount of cans and plastics recycled shot up by 80% over the festive period last year – great job! With all that wrapping paper, mixed paper/card recycling jumped by 37% and the packaging from Santa's deliveries increased the cardboard recycling rate by 33%. Don't forget about those festive tipples: the glass recycling area was full to overflowing after Christmas and Hogmanay – a jump of 17%, saving 10 tonnes of extra glass from ending up in the landfill.

Material Stream	May–June Weights	December–January Weights
Dry Mixed Recyclates (DMR) (Household Collections)	699.82	844.09
Glass (Recycling Points)	61.02	71.67
Cans/Plastic (Recycling Points)	7.02	19.68
Mixed Paper/Card (Recycling Points)	31.94	43.76
Card (Recycling Points)	63.92	85.24

A big thanks to the waste and recycling teams for working hard over the holidays to handle the increased rubbish and recycling – keeping Moray looking its festive best.



The Chief Executive's Award for Excellence went to secondary history teacher Amanda Tiddy for her tireless work on behalf of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards which has resulted in an ever increasing number of young people taking part in the scheme.



Staff whose sterling efforts have made an invaluable contribution to the work of the council over the past year were honoured at the latest STAR awards ceremony held at Elgin Town Hall. Twelve individuals and teams from across the council were presented with awards for Outstanding Contribution by the convener, Councillor Allan Wright, in the presence of colleagues. The ceremony culminated in the announcement of the three overall winners – and very worthy winners they were too. The full list of awards:



*Educational Resources Team*

### **Elgin High Admin Team**

In recognition of their commitment to delivering excellent customer service during a time of significant pressures. Each member of the team took on extra responsibilities for almost the entire school year and handled it with good humour and professionalism to ensure they continued to present a friendly and welcoming atmosphere as front-of-house service to the school.

### **Amanda Tiddy**

In recognition of her commitment and dedication to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Outwith school, Amanda takes groups on expeditions and training and is chair of a charity that fundraises to cover costs and assist with expeditions. Having voluntarily given up a significant amount of her time, she has impacted the lives of many young people who have successfully progressed through the awards, the number of which has steadily increased since her involvement.

### **Educational Resources Team**

In recognition of their professionalism and enthusiasm which has enabled numerous school building projects, with a combined value in excess of £95m, to be kept on track. The work of the team is critical to the council's ability to deliver education across Moray and is being managed by what is an exceptionally small but efficient team.

### **CLIVE Implementation Team**

In recognition of their hard work and commitment in development and delivery of the new online learning management system, known to us as CLIVE. Since its introduction CLIVE has delivered over 10,000 online courses which would not have been possible face to face and has saved the council over £400,000.



The new Colleagues' Choice Award was presented to Graham Dunlop, an engineer with the flood risk management team, in recognition of his outstanding work in dealing with an emergency flooding situation.

### Graham Dunlop

In recognition of the positive impact he had on a local community during an emergency flood situation. Outwith the normal duties of his engineer's role, Graham provided hands-on assistance with his calm, effective handling of the situation, allowing management to make decisions using real time information. Graham's on-site advice to a local contractor also prevented action that may have increased flood risk to several other properties.



### Keith Grammar Kitchen Team

In recognition of the strong and committed team effort that has delivered a significantly improved and cost efficient service. The team, led by Lorraine Nicol, have pulled together following tough changes and challenges to significantly improve the service through innovation and enthusiasm for their jobs. They have worked tirelessly to improve uptake through better school and pupil relations which has resulted in an increase in footfall and large annual savings for the department.

Lorraine Nicol and Marii Whyte receive their award on behalf of the kitchen team which runs the school meals service at Keith Grammar where uptake has seen a significant increase thanks to their efforts.

### Anderson's Primary Support Staff

In recognition of their hard work, dedication and commitment to the children and school colleagues. They regularly go beyond the remit of their roles to contribute to improvements and have a strong positive influence on the school ethos. They regularly give up their personal time to attend development meetings and run after-school clubs amongst a long list of other things to contribute to help improve the children's school experience.



Anderson's Primary Support Staff

*continued over page*



Colin Petrie

### Jane Stables

In recognition of the positive impact she has had on the cleaning service within Moray Council. Jane voluntarily extended her role to develop a training programme that has enabled staff across the whole of Moray to carry out their roles with more confidence and enthusiasm. She is now the main assessor for Moray and plays a crucial role in ensuring staff complete their refresher training each year as well as having rolled out the ERDP process.

### David Philpot

In recognition of the exceptional flexibility that he demonstrates on a daily basis as operations assistant in environmental protection to ensure the services he supports operate smoothly. This encompasses 57 school kitchens and cleaning staff in a 100 buildings. David also works hard to keep the service as efficient as possible and has generated a great deal of savings for the council over the years.

### Colin Petrie

In recognition of his exemplary attitude to the work he carries out in his role as a street sweeper driver. Colin is often seen going the extra mile, regularly stopping to clear rubbish in lay-bys and roadsides across Moray – doing the jobs no one else wants to and often outside his working time. His positive, diligent attitude and work ethic makes a difference to the communities of Moray and to Colin's colleagues.

Kelly Dawson



### John Pearson

In recognition of his strong positive contribution to service and partnership working. His involvement in a joint working exercise has led to financial savings for not only Moray Council but neighbouring councils and the NHS through adoption and sharing of best practice. John's strong passion to reduce carbon footprint has seen him trial the use of cooking oil to power vans and the implementation of Scottish Government electric vehicle grants which has seen the council take ownership of more electric vehicles.

### Kelly Dawson

In recognition of her commitment and effort as Milne's High School librarian in organising and supporting pupils through a range of school activities, often outwith her core remit and responsibilities and done in her own time. She has supported students in the careers fair, co-ordinated university visits and S5/6 study periods, organised the staff book club and school newsletter and manages the school twitter account as well as supporting out of school activities.

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT



If you are about to start a project and need advice or assistance, then please do not hesitate in contacting the Programme Management Office (PMO). The team has experience, tools, techniques and resources to help you take your project from concept to closure.

The Programme Management Office (PMO) was set up on 01 September 2016. It is a small team of three, whose primary role is to support all those leading, managing or working on council projects.

The PMO has four main aims:

1. establish a consistent approach to managing small and large projects across the council
2. ensure that we do the right projects well
3. develop a project management culture where managers and staff feel comfortable both with approach and language
4. make sure every project delivers results



The PMO has developed the council's Project Management Governance Policy which provides a framework for senior managers, project managers and elected members – a good starting point for all those looking to start a project.

A key component of the Policy is the 'Gateway Process.' The PMO are there to co-ordinate the process on behalf of the council. The Gateway Process is designed to assist the prioritisation, decision-making and monitoring of all council projects.

The Gateway Process goes live on 23 Nov 2016 with more information available here ([Gateway Process](#))

If you need more information about the Gateway Process or any project management related business then please do not hesitate in contacting David, Mark or Shona in the Programme Management Office (PMO) on Ext 3801, 3810 or 3961 or email: [ProgManOffice@moray.gov.uk](mailto:ProgManOffice@moray.gov.uk)

# WELCOME ABOARD

A festive forum of new staff took part in the Corporate Induction at the start of December to learn about the council, how it works and where their roles fit into the bigger picture. Read all about our new colleagues here. If you've joined us recently or have changed roles, why not get a refresher as well? Sign up now by [logging into CLIVE](#), searching for 'Corporate Induction' and clicking on the button for the next session on 28 February.



Jenny MacIndeor has joined us with SDS at Spynie, after making the move up from Glasgow and a previous role at South Lanarkshire Council.

Frances Cribbes brings her experience of local authority social work to her new role in Placement Services with Education and Social Care.



Duncan Holm has just joined us in the ICT department, with a background in the video game industry gained in Dundee and Edinburgh.

Gail Thomson is an HNC student from Moray College UHI who is working with the Housing Needs Department.



Alana-Jane Mansfield is joining us as a support worker in day centres for the elderly, quite a change from her previous role as a steward on the oil rigs.

Each month we feature our new starts, colleagues who are leaving us and special life events – please send all submissions to: [connectnews@moray.gov.uk](mailto:connectnews@moray.gov.uk).

# BON VOYAGE

After 21 years with us, Maggie Murdoch, Supported Accommodation Manager at Cameron Park Brae, is retiring at Christmas. Maggie plans to enjoy a break for a bit before pursuing other opportunities. Also leaving us in December is Sandy Forsyth, Senior Project Officer, who is retiring to spend more time on the golf course after 13 years with us.



# BUT NOT REALLY

Colleagues in employment support services said farewell to employment development manager Alan Weaver (below) on his departure after 12 years.

However, Alan is only moving rather than leaving altogether. He is joining Health and Social Care Moray's commissioning team based at Spynie.



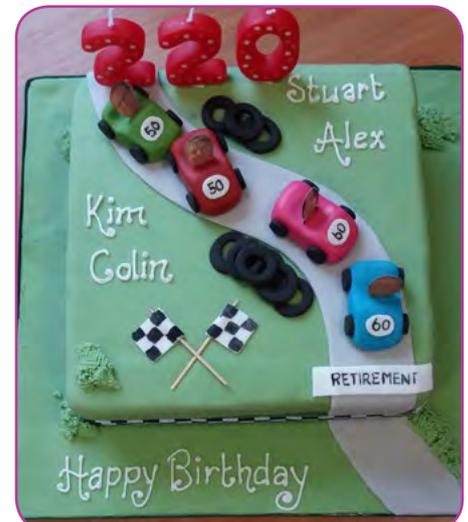
# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Wishing Anne Davidson, Unit Supervisor at Elgin High School, a very happy work anniversary: Anne celebrated 10 years with us this year.



# BIRTHDAYS

We recently celebrated a number of big birthdays within the Estates Department: Stuart Beveridge, Estates Manager, and Alex Burrell, Estates Surveyor, celebrated their half-centuries, while Colin Sowden, Estates Assistant turned 60. Rumour has it that Kim Smith, Estates Technical Clerk, was also 60 – but as she looks nothing like it, we couldn't possibly say! A grand total of 220 years of fun was depicted in this wonderful cake made by colleague Penny Oliver. Many happy returns to all.



# Long Service AWARDS

Seventy-three members of staff with combined service of more than 1,650 years were honoured at the council's latest long-service awards ceremony at Elgin Town Hall. Those able to attend were presented with their certificates by the convener, Councillor Allan Wright.

The list of recipients who had completed 20, 30 or 40 years' service was one of the longest in recent years. Three of the recipients – Bob Drysdale, Euan Martin and Kim Paterson – were featured in a series of short films talking about their careers.



In last month's *Connect* you read that the council was receiving the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Silver Award, which recognises the commitment of employers who demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the Armed Forces community.

On 10 November, Councillor Chris Tuke – the council's Armed Forces Champion – attended a ceremony to receive the award in the Great Hall of Edinburgh Castle.

The ERS Silver Award has been awarded to reflect our positive stance towards employees who are members of the armed forces community – whether veterans, currently serving, or family members – and our

commitment to supporting military personnel and their families.

It follows on from the ERS Bronze Award which we received this time last year, and Moray joins 12 other councils in Scotland at silver level. Following the awards, the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff addressed the audience on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence.

**20 years:** Grace Anderson, Deborah Brands, Amanda Cameron, Sally Coull, Grant Cruickshank, Linda Dey, Andrew Donegan, Susan Duncan, Carol Errington, William Fitzsimmons, Morag Flett, Iain Forbes, Margaret Gallagher, Emma Gormley, Michael Grant, Susanne Greer, Zoe Hamilton.

Katja Hansen, Marion Hardie, Frances Hughes, Sharon Inglis, Deborah Ingram, Fiona Innes, Gordon Innes, Brian Johnston, Lorraine Lawson, Gillian Macaulay, Colin Macdonald, Julie Macwatt, Susan Manson, Alasdair McEachan, Susan McRitchie.

Janice Meldrum, Valerie Mullen, Sarah Mumford, Deborah Nealon, Gillian Nicol, Kim Paterson, Pauline McKenzie, Jennifer Petrie, George Picksley, Shirley Ramage, Kathryn Reid, Samantha Robertson, Susan Rose, Moira Senkiw, Irene Shearer, Sandra Shewan, Karen Sievwright, Jane Sinclair, Sonia Sinclair, Patricia Spence, David Strachan, Alan Taylor, Anne Thomson, Anne Wilson.

**30 years:** Marjory Adams, Sharon Aitken, Dawn Burgess, James Cruickshanks, Stephen Davies, John Ferguson, Elizabeth Gibson, Glynis Hopes, David Iannetta, Irene Mair, Euan Martin, Jean Reid, Carol Smith, Susan Taylor.

**40 years:** Hilda Clark, Robert Drysdale, Sheena Duffus.

# NEW HOME CARERS

The Care at Home team recently welcomed seven new home carers.

A hugely important but often underestimated role, the council works hard to recruit just the right folk. We need special people to be carers. It's not for everyone.

Carers must have the ability to relate to people from a wide variety of backgrounds, be able to communicate with tact and sensitivity, and be able to remain calm under pressure.

Their day-to-day duties may include:

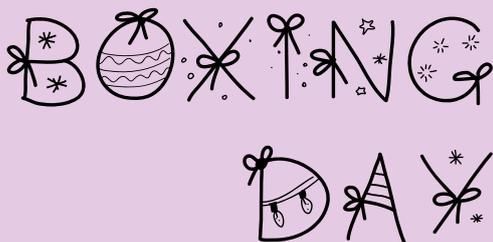
- ✓ getting to know clients, their interests and their needs
- ✓ helping clients with daily personal care such as washing, dressing, using the toilet and feeding themselves
- ✓ carrying out general tasks such as housework, laundry and shopping
- ✓ helping clients manage their budget, pay bills and write letters
- ✓ helping families get used to new caring responsibilities
- ✓ working with other health and social care professionals to provide individual care and development plans

✓ helping to organise leisure activities

✓ going with clients to and from a residential home

Our new colleagues are currently undertaking extensive training before starting with their individual teams and will be expected to keep their skills up to date with further training (including e-learning) throughout their care career. This job is definitely not for the faint hearted!!

Our new colleagues are: Beryl Robson, Pamela Nairn, Kim Yeaman, Andrea Campbell, Caroline Gordon, Maggie Duncan and Lauren Brandon



Admin staff in Development Services have been thinking of the less fortunate in the run-up to Christmas.

They have filled a number of shoeboxes with a wide range of items which will be distributed to Eastern Europe and beyond by the humanitarian aid charity Blythswood.

Staff were inspired by Welfare Development Network Officer Rosemary Pannell, who was formerly located with the Development Services admin team in the HQ annexe, and her charity work with children in Malawi.

They filled shoeboxes with hats, gloves, scarfs, torches, toiletries, stationary, colouring books and pencils and toys, many of them donated by colleagues.



The boxes will find their way to needy families and individuals in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine and Pakistan.



# CHILLED WORKING

Some of us will be hoping for a mild snow-free winter, while others have an inner child just waiting to escape into the soft white powdery stuff. Whatever weather you wish for, as employees we need to be planning ahead to make sure our services can continue if the weather takes a turn for the worst and that we make it to work wherever possible.

After all, that's what we are paid for – to turn up and do a day's work. The council generally has supportive employment policies with good holiday and sick pay arrangements but there is actually no requirement for an employer to pay you if you don't manage to arrive at work, due to the weather or for any other reason. Of course, it is important to stay safe and not to take undue risks when travelling in bad weather so we are reminding everyone to plan ahead now.

These suggestions won't suit everyone or all services, but here's a checklist if ideas for forward planning:

- ✓ know how to contact work to let them know if you can't make it in or will be delayed
- ✓ find out about public transport available in your area (bus times are available on the council's website)
- ✓ check if you could car share if you prefer not to drive on winter roads
- ✓ plan alternative arrangements for childcare in case schools are closed
- ✓ could you arrange to work from another location or take work home? Discuss flexible working arrangements for emergencies with your supervisor now



And if you are not able to work because of the weather, can you use annual leave? Do you have any flexi / TOIL to use up? Could you work from home? If none of these are possible there is discretion for your manager to approve one day per year if you can't attend work despite making all reasonable efforts.

The full Adverse Weather Guide is available via the Human Resources Section on the Interchange.

# WINTER DRIVING

Bad weather and longer hours of darkness are upon us and they make driving more hazardous, but the risks presented by these hazards can be reduced by careful forethought and relatively simple precautions. In very bad weather your first consideration should be: do I need to drive? Take advice from TV and radio weather reports, as well as Police Scotland and Transport Scotland at <http://trafficscotland.org/>

During bad weather make sure you let people know where you are going, your route of travel and when you expect to arrive. Plan your route in advance. Allow for extra travelling time or even consider delaying your trip if the weather is poor.

The first precaution you can take is to make sure that your vehicle is fit and serviceable for the drive.

Check the following:

- ✓ the vehicle is clear of snow and ice and remember snow or ice on the windscreen will affect your visibility. A small scraped viewing hole is totally inadequate and snow left on the roof will slide forward over the windscreen when you brake
- ✓ the windscreen is undamaged and clean, the wipers work and the washer bottle is full, with the correct screenwash mix for the conditions. A dry cloth or kitchen roll is handy for helping to keep the inside of windows clear. Remember, whatever the weather, don't drive unless you can see properly all around
- ✓ lights are clean and working
- ✓ the tyres are in good condition with adequate tread and are to the correct pressure, including the spare
- ✓ the brakes are working properly
- ✓ the radiator coolant has antifreeze in it and that it is topped to the correct level
- ✓ the engine oil is at the correct level

During the winter months you should carry an emergency kit. It is recommended that this includes:

- ✓ a shovel
- ✓ de-icing equipment
- ✓ a charged mobile phone
- ✓ a working torch
- ✓ a hazard warning triangle
- ✓ winter boots or wellies
- ✓ warm clothing

Depending on the weather forecast and the job to be done, you may want to add:

- ✓ a blanket
- ✓ a flask with a hot, non-alcoholic drink
- ✓ something to eat





# NOVEL



## CREATIVITY

As the saying goes, you can take the boy out of Glasgow but you can't take Glasgow out of the boy.

And so it is with the council's Community Support Manager, Ian Todd, who has just published in print form the first in a series of books based on his early years in Glasgow. Ian has been writing for only five years but has already produced eight books in the Glasgow Chronicles, with more to come. All eight are available in e-book form on Amazon but *Parly Road* is the first to come out in print.

It is set against the backdrop of a slum area of condemned tenement buildings in 1965 and the grinding poverty which many families faced. Full of shady characters, it is set in the Townhead district of Glasgow where Ian grew up and many of the characters are based loosely on people he knew as a youngster. The storyline follows a group of feral young schoolboys during their summer holidays.

The sequel, *Run Johnboy, Run*, is due to be released in print form any day now and the others will be published shortly in chronological order. *Parly Road* can be ordered from Amazon at £10.49 and copies are also available from Elgin library.

The Glasgow Chronicles has its own Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/theglasgowchronicles](http://www.facebook.com/theglasgowchronicles) – which already has 17,000 friends, many of whom have posted photographs of Glasgow from the period in which the books are set.

