

**Connect**  
*monthly*

**June  
2018**

# Awesome Engineers



**moray**  
council

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### Editorial

- 3** Welcome to your June *Connect*!
- 4** As you will have read the council's ruling coalition group have been in the news following the decision by Conservative councillors to leave the group.
- 7**
- 10** By the time you read this, matters may have been resolved but it's still very unsettling for us all when these issues arise.
- 11**
- 12** Nonetheless the show goes on; the business of the council and the many services we provide can't be put on hold.
- 13**
- 14** One group that are carrying on designing, planning and building regardless are our engineers, and in the month where we celebrate Women in Engineering Day (June 23) we thought we'd show you the women engineers we have in the council. It's good to hear they experience no sexism in the course of their work, and to see Moray Council employs on merit, providing a good example to employers with our high equality standards.
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■ Cover Image: Our awesome engineers rendered as lego people.

### Team *Connect*



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# HeadsUp

Steve Williamson, Waste Management Officer

Dear Colleagues

**M**y career began in October 1977 when I joined the then Grampian Regional Council's water services department as a Trainee Technician. I do remember at the time thinking how old the Senior Technicians were... they were around 30! My how the time has flown by – and how the tables have turned!

I joined Moray District Council 12 years later, just after the birth of my son, which spurred me on to do greater things with my life. Now, with more than 40 years of handling other people's waste in both liquid and solid form, I'm looking ahead to early retirement at the end of the year after, having thoroughly enjoyed the majority of my working life.

I'll need all the time I can get with two newly-arrived grandchildren. In descending order, I've been doing Judo for 47 years, I'll have been in local government for 41 years and will have been married for 32 years by the time I retire, so I hope you agree that I deserve a wee rest!

We've come a long way since I first joined the council, with only glass banks and some paper recycling at the time, and under two per cent of waste being recycled. Now we're consistently among the top five ranked authorities in Scotland for recycling.

Every single person in Moray produces waste and my job as Waste Management Officer is to ensure that this waste is collected, stored, treated and disposed of as efficiently, and in as an environmentally friendly way as possible, now and in the future.

The only way that I can do this is to rely on the great support and dedication from my team of 125 members of staff. Day in, day out – and it all weather conditions – my colleagues undertake their duties and are one of the most visible council assets out there, providing a great service to our residents.

What do these unsung heroes of waste do? Well, did you know that we undertake more than six million bin collections every year? And that's just the start of it...

If you've just bought a new suite or a new cooker – we collect it as part of our bulky waste service. We take out and return bins for those who are ill or infirm; carry out medical collections; clean up after fly-tipping by mindless individuals (polite version!) and dispose of waste from the recycling centres – the 'tip' to most of us.

As for the stuff that can't be recycled, well we take it to landfill, squeeze gas from it which feeds an engine, supplying electricity to the grid.

We also provide a bespoke trade waste collection service for businesses the length and breadth of Moray, are responsible for public toilet provision and keeping roads, road verges and streets free from litter.

I could go on and on, did I mention that we undertake over six million collections every year?!

Best wishes  
Steve

starting this month

we're going, going  
**GR3EN**



[www.moray.gov.uk/waste](http://www.moray.gov.uk/waste)

# Awesome Engineers



■ L-R: Kenna Warren, Katie Cruickshank, Debbie Halliday (back), Leigh Moreton

**A**mid all the recent debate about gender pay gaps and equality in top jobs, it's good to know that Moray Council recruits the best person for the job. That's it. There are no 'no-go' areas for men or women when it comes to pay and posts; a guy can be a nursery worker and a gal can be well, an engineer. We don't do stereotypes.



We're lucky enough to have a number of women engineers, all with expertise in different areas from flooding to roads. Engineers work within Direct Services, so to mark International Day of Women in Engineering, *Connect* caught up a group of them to find out their career path and how they find working in an environment that's traditionally male-dominated. All of them were keen to see more women embrace engineering as a career.

**Debbie Halliday** is our Acting Consultancy Manager, a section that deals with major construction projects and flood risk management. She says her entry into engineering started late, when she went to university at 27 years old. Although her first choice was architecture, the seven-year course of study put her off.

*"It seemed a long time to wait," she said.*

*"So I went to Napier University to study civil engineering first, then onto Glasgow University to undertake a Master's in water resource engineering and management.*

*"After that I worked for the large construction and engineering group Babbie for about eight years, and moved around quite a lot with them.*

*"That included a period in southern India on a rebuilding programme after a huge cyclone hit the area and destroyed lot of the infrastructure."*

Debbie worked for Royal Haskoning, who were the consultant engineers on all the Moray flood alleviation schemes, before joining Moray Council.

*"The great thing about working for the council is that I get to see projects through from design to completion; in most engineering jobs you specialise in one element and that's where you can get stuck."*

On site Debbie says she's never noticed any issues with the teams that are putting her projects together.

*"In university I was the only woman, but it's changed a lot in the 20 years I've been doing this job.*

*"On site they tend to be mainly guys, but I'm the one with a yellow jacket on and always feel they don't see me as a woman, rather an experienced engineer that knows her stuff," she said.*

■ Kenna Warren  
Technician



**Kenna Warren** has been with us for 29 years, 14 of those as an administrator, then a technical clerk within the consultancy section when the flood schemes started. She was encouraged by managers to gain engineering qualifications on block release to UHI.

*"So at the age of 40 I was in class of men and one other woman!" she said.*

*"I was always interested in engineering but we were never encouraged to see that as a proper career for women when at school.*

*"All we were steered towards was secretarial or jobs in a bank.*

*"That's changed now, thankfully, and I use some of my time visiting schools in the area to talk about my career path and to help the youngsters see engineering as an option for boys and girls. I feel there's a deal of conditioning of young people at primary school level that they still see women occupying roles such as secretarial, beauty industry, care, etc. "*

Having completed her HNC, Kenna graduated in 2013 and is now working towards her diploma. Named by UHI as Student of the Year at the end of her course, she praises her managers for encouraging her along the path, and hopes that she can persuade young girls to study engineering at university.

■ Leigh Moreton  
Technician



**Leigh Moreton** was told by career advisers to get a job in a supermarket, but instead worked hard and enrolled on a civil engineering course at Aberdeen University. There were four girls among 100 boys! After graduating she went on to complete a Master's in renewable energy, leading to work in the oil sector before landing a role in Moray Council.

*"I suppose I did it to prove those advisors wrong," she said.*

*"Now I'm working on harbour repairs, finding defects and working out how they can be remedied. A lot of them are very old and they're starting to crumble."*

Harbours are a major issue for councils with coastal borders, so Leigh is likely to be in demand for some time yet.

**Katie Cruickshank** started off as geology graduate, then undertook a Master's in hydrology and hydro-geology. As the partner of an RAF serviceman she moves around a lot and her biggest struggle is finding work in her specialist field in the location the couple are posted to.

Katie's using her experience to help with the council's flood risk management, advising on drainage and flooding requirements on new planning applications and managing surface water management plans which are sustainable.

It's not all bricks and mortar though. Elaine Penny is a transport engineer and designs traffic systems. Her most recent claim to fame is the reconfigured junction at Elgin's Hay Street, but she is also responsible for road safety and small scale accident investigations.

*"I started off in a temporary job counting cars for Lothian Council," she said. "I had a maths degree so they obviously thought 'at least she'll be able to count!'"*

Elaine liked the variety of the transport section, so she went through the council's graduate programme to become an engineer, and has a Master's in transportation engineering.

*"In engineering terms the projects tend to be smaller, but they have a huge impact on public behaviour," she said.*

*"That's very satisfying, particularly when you know it's going to make life safer for everyone using the road or pavements."*

In her 19 years at Moray Council Elaine's had very few experiences of sexism.

*"In the past they may have been some older engineers that couldn't quite accept a woman in this job, but I can't say I've had any issues," she said.*

*"It helps to have a sense of humour and to get involved with the teams that are implementing your schemes. I always make a point of appreciating the work that's been done, they often go the extra mile and that boosts the whole team."*

■ Elaine Penny  
Transport Engineer





# BEST FOOT FORWARD

**H**ow do you get to work? To the shops? Dropping the kids off at school, or football/dance classes?

Chances are many of us hop in the car without a second thought, and off we go about our business. But actually, almost 65 per cent of journeys undertaken in Moray are less than 5km in length, so lend themselves perfectly to more sustainable – and active – ways of travel.

Step forward Janet MacDonald, who joined us in April as our new Sustainable Travel Officer. She's tasked with pushing the sustainable travel agenda in Moray, promoting the (many!) opportunities which already exist and continuing to link communities, residents and the council to achieve more sustainable travel in the area.

Janet has degrees in music and business and event management, bringing an eclectic set of skills to the job.

*"It's a completely new subject matter for me," she told Connect, "Although I am not an engineer, in this role I'm going to be the link between the community and the council in continuing to raise the profile of, and improve infrastructure to support sustainable travel."*

# “SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL IS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR US AS A LOCAL AUTHORITY

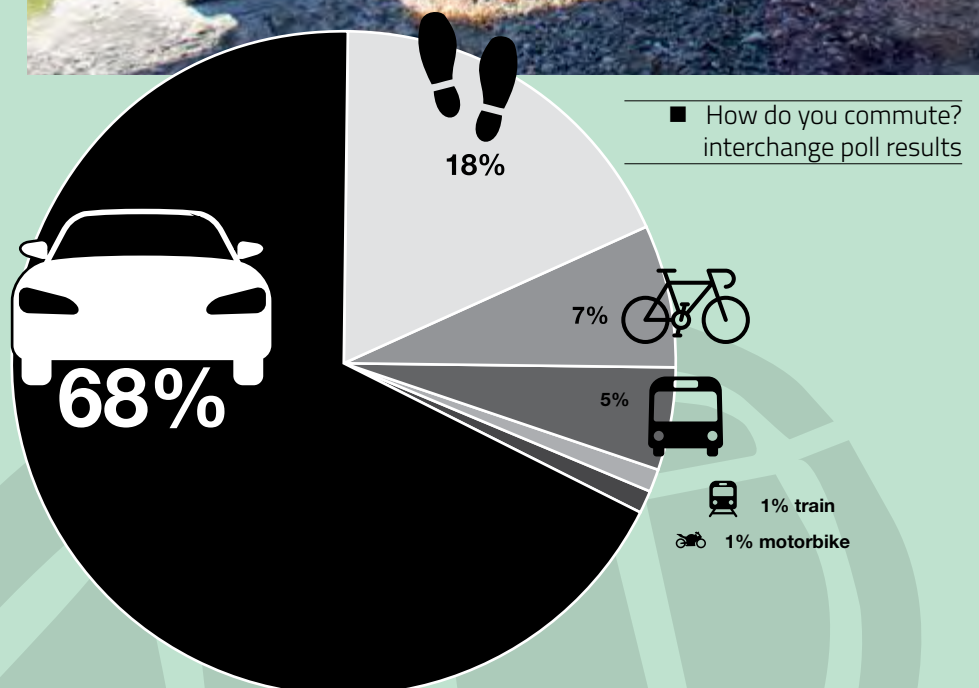
■ Janet MacDonald

Originally from Stornoway and now living in Elgin, Janet comes from a background in customer services, fundraising and community engagement, which she wants to use to bolster sustainable travel by involving communities from the design stage, working with planners and engineers to develop forward-thinking and long-lasting solutions to embed sustainable travel in everyday life, and encourage behaviour change so that residents embrace it.

For Janet herself, it took something as simple as walking to work and back each day while she was living in Stornoway to change her mindset.

*“It was only a mile each way, I walked because I didn’t have a car and it completely changed the way I thought about health and exercise. It spurred me on to lose a lot of weight. On a personal level I can now really relate to why active and sustainable travel is so important,”* she says.

*“Sustainable travel is a high priority for us as a local authority and my predecessor, Pat, has set the bar high. A lot of people think it’s just about cycling, but it’s much more,”* says Janet, *“for example electric cars are climbing the government agenda so we need to promote the opportunities and benefits these can bring.*



“THE INFRASTRUCTURE HERE IS ADVANCED AND I’LL CONTINUE TO PUSH LOCAL COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS INVOLVEMENT

■ Janet MacDonald

*“Walking, public transport and other forms of active travel also play their part.”*

Of course it’s easier for those living in more urban, connected areas of Moray to switch to more sustainable forms of travel, compared to those in rural Moray.

*“Being in a rural location can limit sustainable and active travel options so we want to link up these areas and explore opportunities with them.*

*“However, across the board, the infrastructure here is advanced and I’ll continue to push local community and schools involvement, linking communities so we’re all working to the same agenda.”*

Transportation Manager, Nicola Moss, is pushing for funding for improvements to the offering in

Moray so that more residents can take up active travel opportunities.

*“We have an active travel strategy within the council, which explains that active travel encourages more physical activity and provides fair travel choices to everyone.*

*“We have a developing network of active travel routes that provide good connectivity in parts of Moray, particularly in some urban areas, however the infrastructure needs to be developed more if we’re to offer a comprehensive network that gives real travel choices to everyone.*

*“Infrastructure alone isn’t enough to bring about the change needed to meet the national targets for the number of journeys made by active travel, so we’ll continue to offer a series of behaviour change programmes to encourage more use*

we’re in the  
**TOP 5**  
Scottish Authorities  
for **cycling**  
to work

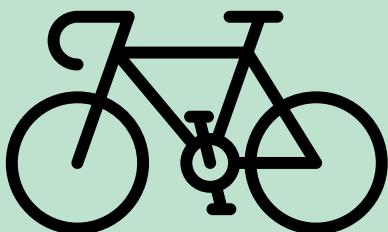
*of the existing and future network.”*

This is where Janet comes in with public engagement events, social rides and walks, network promotion and branding, cycle maintenance classes, try out events, promotional leaflets, maps, signs and participation in national campaigns like Give Me Cycle Space, Walk Once a Week, etc. In fact last month was National Walking Month, and featured Walk to School Week.

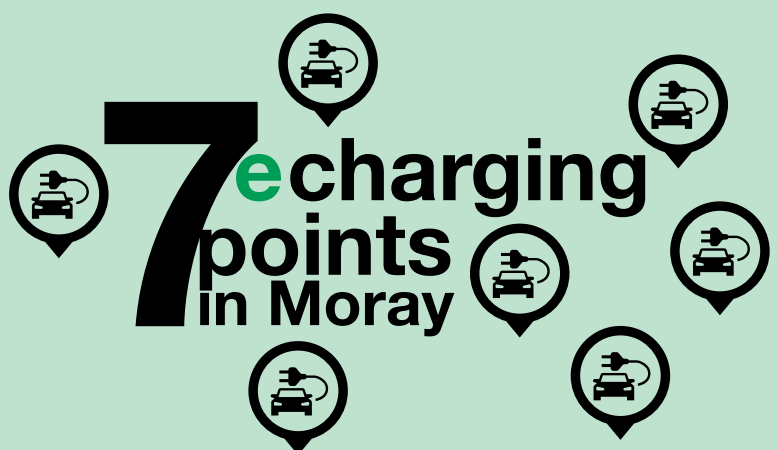
*“Active travel has been a part of the school life in many schools for so long now,” says Janet, “we need to keep up the momentum and push this out wider than just the schools.*

*“It’s about making sure infrastructure is there, we’ve got the right plans in place and we’re meeting the needs of those that live here, and will here in the future.”*

**700+**  
schoolkids  
got Bikeability training in 2015/16



**10** pool of  
bikes @



# ALCOHOL

## AND WORK

**A**s a responsible employer, we're keen to promote good health and to stress the importance of drinking responsibly, looking after your health and staying safe.

Many people are not actually aware how much they drink, nor of the short and long-term health implications. All of us should also consider how alcohol may impact our work.

For managers and colleagues it may be difficult to assess if alcohol is impacting on someone's performance and if they need help. There are some obvious signs, for example if somebody is coming into work intoxicated, or regularly smelling of stale alcohol. Other signs are more difficult, as the 'sign' may be due to a number of different causes. Think about:

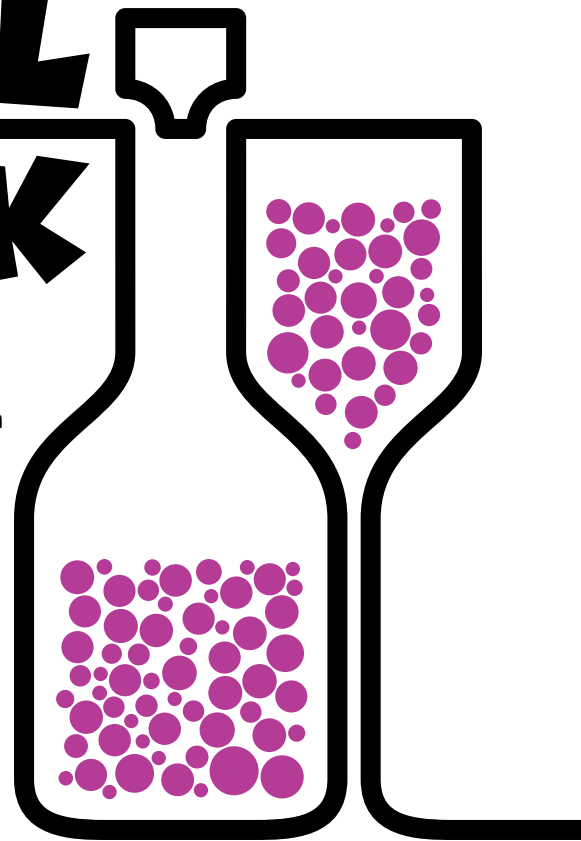
- 🗨 Are tasks being completed; deadlines not being met?
- 🗨 What is the attendance level like e.g. unexplained absences?
- 🗨 What is the sickness level like; is there a pattern?
- 🗨 What is the relationship with colleagues like – moody, guarded, tense?
- 🗨 Is the person distressed and anxious?
- 🗨 And simply; am I worried about the person?

It's important that colleagues are supported. Sometimes just asking questions like the ones above provide the prompt somebody needs to ask for help.

The best way to approach someone you're concerned about is with sensitivity and empathy. Think about how you would want to be approached if someone were to tell you that you had a problem with alcohol. It's also best to keep your questions open, *"I've noticed X, is happening, what do you think?"* rather than *"don't you think you have a problem?"* You need to have as much information as possible so you can offer the person you are concerned about the right facts and advice on where they can go to for support and what may happen.

We have support in place to help those who may be struggling with alcohol, and you can view our health and work policy, and alcohol and drug policy on the interchange. We also have a free and confidential helpline available 24/7, 365 days a year: 0800 970 3980, and you can check out [www.timefortalking.co.uk/](http://www.timefortalking.co.uk/).

Arrows – based in Moray – offer advice, support, and access to treatment. Give them a call on 01343 610500, 07812 228547.



## could you spot the signs and help a colleague?

Some more useful sites:

[www.drinkaware.co.uk/  
quarriers.org.uk/services/arrows-drug-and-alcohol-  
support](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/quarriers.org.uk/services/arrows-drug-and-alcohol-support)

To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level  
it is safest not to drink more than 14 units per  
week regularly.

That is:

- ☞ 6 x 175ml glasses of wine
- ☞ 6 pints of lager at 4%
- ☞ 5 pints of cider at 4%
- ☞ 14 x 25ml (single measure) of spirits at 40%



## Raising the flag with Pride

**T**he annual LGBT pride celebration takes place this month. Every year events are held around the world to recognise the influence of the LGBT community.

The 'Mother of Pride' Brenda Howard, organised the first pride parade, after the Stonewall riots in June 1969 and the Christopher Street Liberation Day March.

Moray Council Convener, Cllr James Allen, and Equal Opportunities Officer, Don Toonen, are pictured after raising the Rainbow flag earlier this year.

Cllr Allan, who is also our Equalities Champion, said: *"I am determined that we clearly demonstrate our commitment to equalities across all sections of our community. I'm very proud of Moray Council's record in this regard, and I feel that flying this flag from our rooftop sends out that message loud and clear."*

# Summer of fun

**K**eeping the kids entertained during the school holidays can be exhausting, not to mention expensive. So you'll be pleased to hear that our sports development summer holiday programme is being finalised, with sessions being held throughout the summer to keep the kids active, and you sane.

From football and badminton, to trampolining and gymnastics there's something for all kids from pre-school up to Primary 7.

To hear when the programme has been released – expected mid-June – let the team know by emailing [educationandsocialcare@moray.gov.uk](mailto:educationandsocialcare@moray.gov.uk) to join the parent database and requesting that your details are added.

The standard cost for an hour-long session is £3.80 but, if you've a Fit Life family membership, they're included – bonus!





# Good to all day Park for just £1

**C**hanges to car parking charges in Elgin came into force last month, so make sure you know how much your parking costs – and where is cheapest!

You can park for just £1 per day at Batchen Lane (levels 2-4), Lossie Green and Lossie Wynd.

We're now charging for parking at North College Street West, the Railway Station car park and at Cooper Park. Hours, spaces and charges are all detailed on our website: [www.moray.gov.uk/moray\\_standard/page\\_80774.html](http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_80774.html)

Parking is free for Blue Badge holders and motorcycles.

Parking permits are available from £20 per month and can be paid monthly by direct debit.

# Welcome Aboard



**Margaret Smith** joined us in February as a Sheltered Housing Warden (Relief). She's based in Elgin, having previously been a carer for her elderly father.



Licensing Standards officer **Rebecca Kendrick** has been with us since April. She's worked at the Met Police, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, and at St Clare Hospice.



**Joanne Larsen**, who was Aberdeen City Council's Community Safety Service Manager, is our other new Licensing Standards Officer. She also worked for us previously, spending five years in benefits and revenues.



Active Schools Co-ordinator **Lisa Bathgate** started at Lossiemouth Community Centre last month, after working with NHS Grampian as a Dental Health Support Worker.



Former Masters Student at the University of Sheffield, **Joe Taylor** took up a new role with us as a Planning Officer in March.



Contracts Co-ordinator **Callum Buchan** is based at Keith Roads Depot. He started at Moray Council in April, having previously worked for Breedon Group as their Contracts Manager.



**Paul Giles** is our new Principal Technician, based at Ashgrove. He comes from neighbouring authority, Aberdeenshire, where he worked as a Technical Officer.



**Eden Naylor** has taken on a new role with us; she worked in customer service for over two years, and is now a Clerical Assistant.

# SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT



**H**ow can working relationships, motivation and engagement all be improved? By socialising – and we want you to do more of this!

Our workforce culture team have been working closely with colleagues over the years to create a more positive working culture, and offering support to help you make a difference in your own workplace and develop positive working relationships with colleagues.

Social activities can play a part in this and during 2017, a number of you participated in activities like:

- ☞ Comic Relief Red Nose Day
- ☞ Carers Week
- ☞ Baxters Loch Ness Marathon
- ☞ Wear Red Day: Show racism the red card
- ☞ Winter Driving Campaign

We've also been encouraging services to participate in social events, build social engagement into their work plans, decide what else they want to participate in – and actually make it happen.

A prime example of this are the staff at Ashgrove Depot, who've organised and taken part in:

- ☞ Easter competition
- ☞ Burns supper
- ☞ Sweepstakes linked to an event (Grand National or the World Cup)
- ☞ Curry night – meet up for a curry and a pint
- ☞ Macmillan coffee morning
- ☞ Macmillan murder mystery
- ☞ Craft teaching in lunch breaks, for example crochet
- ☞ Fundraising cycling challenge
- ☞ Summer supper night out
- ☞ Dress down charity days
- ☞ Christmas activities – decorating desks, Secret Santa, Christmas lunch

We recently ran a poll on the interchange, asking you to tell us what type of social events you would like to participate in this year. The results of this will be published on the interchange soon – so keep an eye out for them.

We're also still encouraging you to identify which social events you want to participate in within your service and take responsibility to actually make it happen. It may be that you have a charity close to your heart and would like to raise money to support them, or you'd like to improve your health and wellbeing and have set a goal of running a 5k as a team. It's up to you to! So get thinking about how your service can get involved, ask your manager for support and start planning your event!

# HR Noticeboard

## cycle2work

Just a wee reminder that the Cycle2Work scheme will stay open until 22 June – details are available on the interchange and the C2W website – [www.cycle2work.info](http://www.cycle2work.info)

## Annual Leave

We can't speak for all departments, but there have been a couple of exclamations here along the lines of "oh my goodness, it can't be June already, where is the year going?"

So, as the rest of the summer stretches out ahead of us and you're looking forward to a couple of weeks off, with maybe some more booked in the Autumn – have you remembered to keep a couple of days for the end of the year? You need a couple of days to cover the 27 and 28 Dec – best to book them in early and know you have enough leave.

Sorry to say it but usually tagged on to the previous exclamation is "it will be Christmas before we know it!"



email [connectnews@moray.gov.uk](mailto:connectnews@moray.gov.uk)  
to get Connect emailed to your  
personal email address, every  
month.

## Employee Conference – invites coming soon

Invitations for this year's conference will be 'in the post' shortly, so if you're one of the lucky ones who receive an invite we look forward to seeing you. Your attendance will have been cleared with your service manager before sending your invitation but please speak to them to confirm the details. Places will be limited this year and we have a waiting list, so if for any reason you won't be able to make it then please let us know.

The programme is in the final stages of planning and there will be more information to follow soon – so keep an eye out! We anticipate holding three events during September in Buckie, Forres and Elgin.

The conference is a good opportunity to talk with Directors and Heads of Service about issues that are important to you as well as meeting colleagues from across council services.

Feedback from previous conferences has always been positive and has helped give a better understanding of the issues that matter at all levels within the organisation.

Don't miss your chance to contribute to the ongoing challenges and changes we face!



## Bright Ideas is coming back!

We know that the people who know our business best and who have the greatest impact on what we do are our colleagues. Our staff suggestion scheme, Bright Ideas!, will be open next month and we'll be looking for your suggestions.

All ideas are welcomed whether big or small, but ideas that contribute to the council's priorities and help in delivering our services more efficiently where budgets are challenging are really what we are looking for.

Last year's Bright Ideas: [interchange.moray.gov.uk/int\\_standard/Page\\_107211.html](http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_107211.html)

# Back to the floor

**I**n the second of our 'Back to the Floor' visits Acting Corporate Director, Denise Whitworth, ventured to Pilmuir nursery in Forres to experience a day in the life of staff – and the kids.

*"It was my first time setting foot in a nursery since my own children left over a decade ago," Denise says, "it seems like no time has passed and it looked very similar – but straight away I could tell the approach has moved on."*

Back to the Floor gives our senior managers the chance to visit and speak with frontline staff, experience frontline services and, in Denise's case, get stuck in to arts, crafts and playing!

*"I was enthusiastically herded into Percy the Park Keeper's bothy (although it was a bit different to the bothies I've been to at Cooper Park or Waterford!), dressed in his cap and shown the animals in his park."*

*"We made some hedgehogs to go with the park theme, by cutting up paper circles – I'd forgotten that three year-olds don't know how to use scissors so it was fun trying to show them and seeing how delighted they were with their success."*

*"Then it was out for some fresh air in the garden where the water tray had some very realistic feeling, squidgy frog spawn, some good old-fashioned wooden telephones on a hose pipe to talk to friends on and, the highlight for one little boy, the council bin lorry collecting the wheelie bins on the street outside."*

While it all sounds like great fun,

it's part of our rather more serious employee engagement programme and affords our colleagues the opportunity to showcase best practice, engage with senior managers and explain the challenges they face, and allows the managers themselves to experience at first-hand the delivery of essential services within their community setting.

For Denise, it was a real eye-opener as she took in the fast-paced and fun environment at Pilmuir.

*"It was full on for the staff as they tried to encourage sharing and co-operation, include and support each child, organise snacks and keep up a positive vibe to ensure everyone enjoyed being there – me included," she said, "and once the children had gone there was the inevitable tidying of the toys and equipment ready for the next day, with a bit of planning and reflection squeezed in at the end of the shift."*

Reflecting on the busy day, Denise thanked the nursery staff and the head teacher for their patience and support, and the children for making her feel so welcome.

*"Although the day was so full on with no room for waning energy or enthusiasm, it was so rewarding. The vibrancy of the children and commitment of the staff gave me a real boost for my return to the office for the rest of the working day."*



# ARMED FORCES COVENANT

**This month sees the annual Armed Forces Day marked in a variety of ways across the UK**

In previous years we've worked with our two local bases to celebrate Armed Forces Day with equipment demonstrations, parades and exhibitions. As operational demand on the military has increased this has become less feasible, and we're now putting our energies into making a tangible difference to the lives of our armed forces community with the post of Armed Forces Project Officer. This is an all-year-round service rather than a one-off event, which will provide lasting benefit to our military community.

The council is fully signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant, which is a promise that we acknowledge and understand the issues that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, may have.

The Moray armed forces community (regulars, reserves, veterans and their families) is estimated to be 15 per cent of the total population of Moray. The number of Moray Council staff that belongs to community is not known but is likely to be considerable as Kinloss and Lossiemouth have been operational military bases at since 1939.

As part of the commitment to improve local delivery of services Moray and Highland Councils were awarded a grant to fund the Armed Forces Project Officer post, and we were lucky to appoint Jo Lenihan.

Jo said she's delighted to be part of this project

*"I served in the RAF for eight years, twice at Lossiemouth," she said.*

*"My husband and father both served in the RAF for 29 years and 39 years respectively, so I've been part of the*

*armed forces community as a dependent, a serving officer and now veteran. We were fortunate to be able to move back to Moray in 2017, fulfilling a long-held desire to return here.*

*"So far I've met lots of amazing people who work to support the armed forces community locally. This includes volunteers and staff who work for military charities, the armed forces community, staff from Highland and Moray Councils and other statutory bodies. All pursuing the same endeavour – to recognise and support the armed forces community to ensure that Moray is considered a 'forces friendly' destination."*

Moray Council has an appointed Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Donald Gatt, and an Armed Forces Covenant Group provides a forum for interested stakeholders to share information and identify priority areas for action. A new joint Highland/Moray microsite being developed will provide streamlined information for the armed forces community in the region and those being posted here.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Covenant or the work of the Armed Forces Covenant Group please contact [jo.lenihan@moray.gov.uk](mailto:jo.lenihan@moray.gov.uk)



# HAS LISA GOT YOUR LUCKY TICKET?



**A**N ICT colleague who helped raise a staggering **£23,000** during a Macmillan coffee morning is knee-deep in organising the next, well, knees-up.

After the roaring success of the Buckie-based Macmillan coffee morning, ICT Officer, Lisa Sutherland, is part of the organising committee pulling together a dinner dance in July, a charity golf day (held last month) and a grand raffle which includes some fantastic prizes including hotel stays, meal vouchers, cash prizes and more.

Lisa said that Macmillan acknowledged the previous donation as one of the largest ever made to the charity through a coffee morning, and says they are on track to raise a substantial amount this time around.

*"We're looking to capitalise on the success of this previous fundraiser to make this year as successful as possible," she told Connect.*

*"We were delighted in 2016 when Macmillan agreed to keep the funds raised within the Moray area but this year we wanted to raise funds on for some research elements of cancer.*

*"We've selected the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) Oncology Research Fund, which is a local charity working to produce internationally-recognised results in the field of research into cancer and treatments, and on a local level also performs clinical audits of care for local cancer patients."*

More than 200 people will attend the sold-out dinner dance, which local band Current Affair (featuring our colleagues, Mark Aldridge, from the Corporate Policy Unit and supply teacher Peter McKay) have freely given their time to play at, with chefs and waitresses on the night volunteering their time too.

If you've not managed to bag a ticket, but still want to donate money to this very worthy cause, raffle tickets and lucky squares are available to purchase. Email [lisa.sutherland@moray.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.sutherland@moray.gov.uk) who'll be happy to help.