



Welcome to the Autumn 2024 edition of North Ayrshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership's newsletter. The ADP Support Team will produce 4 newsletters per year highlighting positive recovery stories, what is going on in our communities, and sharing information about local services. If you would like to get involved in helping to produce the newsletter or have a positive story we can highlight, get in touch by e-mailing:

[adp@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:adp@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## **Children 1st Family TRIBE Group**

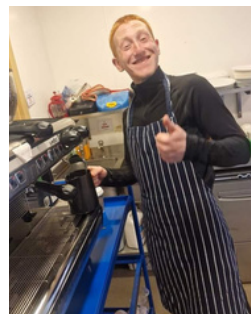
Children 1st successfully applied for ADP Grant Funding in early 2024, leading to the development of the TRIBE group for families they support. The purpose of the TRIBE group is to focus on the well-being of families who have faced significant challenges due to substance use.

Children 1st collaborates with families to co-design activities tailored to their needs, enhancing their overall well-being. The aim is to help families create long-lasting, meaningful, and sustainable outcomes while empowering them to access support through Children 1st and foster an environment where individuals with similar experiences can support one another.

*“At Children 1st, we want to create a community of families who feel they have not found their place of support by bringing together families impacted by substances in various ways.”*

## **Breakfast Club at Caley Court**

The breakfast café at Caley Court has not only been providing nourishing food, but also fosters a sense of community and belonging. By involving volunteers who have experienced addiction, it helps reduce stigma and promotes empathy among all attendees. Additionally, it provides staff benefits by offering fresh food on-site. The pay-it-forward scheme is a wonderful way to ensure that everyone can access meals, regardless of their financial situation. Overall, it seems to be a vital space for healing and connection, where understanding and compassion are at the forefront.



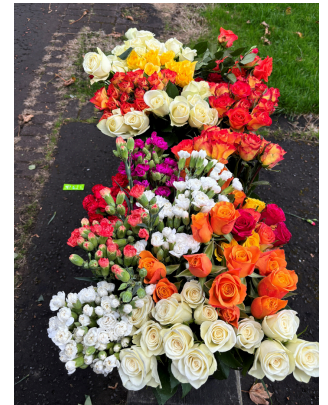
## RISE Recovery Festival

North Ayrshire hosted its first alcohol and drug free festival at Irvine Moor on Saturday, September 14th. The event began with a memorial walk and flower ceremony attended by over 100 people, who walked to the Low Green and held a minute of silence before throwing flowers into the River Irvine to honour those loved and lost to addiction. Volunteers from the Recovery College in North Ayrshire supported the walk by drumming as the crowd moved back and forth.

The main event ran from 12 PM until 4 PM. Funded by the ADP, and supported by MINDS of Recovery and TPS PEAR, it included information stalls on services and support available for those affected by substance use, children's activities, therapeutic massages, a drum circle, and a fairground. Live entertainment featured bands, DJs, and rappers, with Billy Kirkwood serving as a fantastic compère. Attendees could also enjoy food from catering vans as part of the festivities.

The event was developed after engaging with recovery communities throughout North Ayrshire, indicating that a festival would help bring people together, raise awareness of addiction in the wider community, challenge stigma, empower individuals, and demonstrate that recovery is possible.

We would like to extend a massive thank you to everyone who helped organise the event, all partners across North Ayrshire who attended, and our stewards and volunteers who contributed their time to ensure everyone had an amazing day.



## Harbour Community Event

Harbour Ayrshire hosted a community event in Kilbirnie in August following conversations with recovery communities in the Garnock Valley. This event aimed to engage families and featured children's entertainment, arts and crafts, face painting, and a bouncy castle. Additionally, various information stalls were set up with partners from across North Ayrshire. Cafe Solace Kilbirnie provided breakfast and lunch, ensuring all attendees enjoyed a free day out. The event was a success, filling the halls with smiles from beginning to end!



## Justice Partnership Delivery Team

Research shows that when service users are given opportunities to become active members of their community, it reduces their risk of reoffending. North Ayrshire's 'Making A Difference' (MAD) service user involvement project provides a positive platform for members to engage in the development and delivery of Justice Services. Service users can have their voices heard, learn new skills, increase their confidence, and participate in ongoing development activities.

Currently, they run weekly football sessions, a boxing class, and a walking group (weather permitting). They also have a monthly cooking challenge where participants receive a recipe from a cookbook to prepare at home, competing for a prize for the best dish. Additionally, group members have expressed a desire to raise awareness about how individuals become involved in the justice system and the challenges they face, leading to the creation of a bi-monthly newsletter. This newsletter shares updates from the service and allows members to share their stories. It is emailed to a variety of recipients, including probation workers in America and social workers in Australia! They are always looking for new initiatives for their members and hope to develop leaflets for individuals when they are referred to Justice Social Work Reports or subject to community orders or licenses—all created with MAD members' input.



## Overdose Awareness Day

On Saturday, August 31st, MINDS of Recovery partnered with Cafe Solace Irvine for a heartfelt event honoring loved ones lost to addiction. Turning Point Scotland PEAR also joined to raise awareness about their support services for individuals and families affected by substance use. They offered naloxone training and provided attendees with take-home supplies.

The event took place at Fullarton Community Hub and featured a memorial walk to the river, where participants tossed flowers in remembrance of their loved ones. Lunch and refreshments were provided, creating a supportive and communal atmosphere for all involved.



## Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards

In our previous newsletters we have highlighted information surrounding the MAT Standards. This edition will cover MAT Standards 9 and 10.

### **MAT 9: (Treating Mental Health)**

People have the right to ask for support with mental health difficulties and to engage in mental health treatment while being supported as part of their drug treatment and care.

### **MAT 10: (Respecting Trauma)**

This ensures staff listen to people and offer the kind of relationship that promotes their recovery, does not cause further trauma or harm, and helps build resilience.

If you have any questions in relation to MAT, please contact NADARS: **01294 476000**.



## Stronger Families and Family-Centred Wellbeing Service

In October 2023, Barnardo's successfully applied for the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund within North Ayrshire to upscale the Stronger Families service. This initiative now includes support for kinship families affected by substance use, allowing the service to accept referrals from various sources.

### Aims:

- Improve family relationships
- Support access to relevant services
- Provide practical and emotional support
- Raise substance use awareness
- Link young people and families with their local communities
- Support families to reduce the need for further statutory intervention

### Criteria for Support:

- Families with young people in their care who are in kinship placements due to parental drug and/or alcohol use.
- A key aim of the service is to prevent placement breakdowns, thereby minimizing further involvement from statutory services.
- self-referrals or referrals from agencies.

Alongside one-on-one and family support, they also provide group work. Currently, the groups include a 'Seasons for Growth' program for primary-aged children and a series of fortnightly activities for secondary-aged young people, such as B-Wild outdoor learning, canoeing, rock climbing, crafts, movies, and more. We also offer a Kinship Carer Monthly Drop-In that started this month. For more information, please call or email the details below.

If you would like more information on Stronger Families, please phone **01249 558811** or email **SouthWestScotlandServices@barnardos.org.uk**, and someone will get in touch with you.

Quotes from a person supported by Stronger Families:

*"I really like talking to you. You don't brush me off as being dramatic or attention-seeking; you listen to me and actually try to help."* (Young Person, aged 14)



# Recovery Story



## *Louisa & Irene's Story*

Ben and Barry were twin brothers who were a year younger than me and although they were my cousins, they felt like my brothers because of how close the family was. Growing up, the three of us always done everything together as we had the same friend group and the family always went on trips and spent holidays together, especially Christmas. The boys always had that 'twin thing' where they would unknowingly do the same thing as each other. I remember a time in Florida they both went into the Nike shop at separate points and came out with the exact same thing, it's like they were synced up!

Ben and Barry were both extremely intelligent and they loved reading books. They were both handsome boys, and they were always immaculate. They were hilarious and loved music, some of their favourite bands were Oasis, The Beatles, The Kinks, and The View – they loved The View! They both loved animals and also had so much love to give to their kids, nieces, and nephews. They were such kind-hearted individuals and would speak to everyone. They were always up to mischief and thick as thieves and they done everything together. My Aunt Irene couldn't have been a better mother, but they could really test her! One time when they were young teenagers, Irene got a phone call from the police, and she had to go to Arran as they had stolen a boat. I remember another time at Christmas, there was a long table with about 20 of us sitting there and Barry dipped a napkin into a candle and set the entire Christmas table on fire! My gran was going off her head and Irene was cracking up.

When they were 16, Barry got in with the wrong crowd and started dabbling with drugs, and because they done everything together, Ben got into it too. Eventually they both got into heroin and although they would try to stop, it would never last long, as there was no support back then, or it felt like there wasn't any and their drug use was soon out of their control.

We lost Ben to an overdose in 2012, and it was a total shock as he was doing great before it and was going to the gym etc. When Ben died, we thought it would be a wake-up call for Barry, but Barry couldn't cope without him. I think grief is hard as it is, but because they were twins, Barry really struggled without Ben. Even though he had four kids that he absolutely adored and loved, he struggled to be there, but he always tried his best when he was well. Despite his grief, Barry would still come on family holidays with us, and it was nice to see him being his mental and hilarious self.

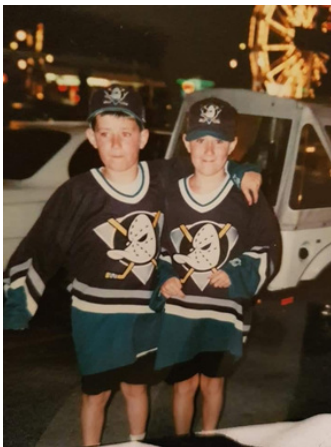
Sadly, Barry passed away 10 years after Ben with a heroin overdose. This was such a horrible time for the entire family, but I think having a big close family was the main thing that helped us cope. After a while, Irene started going to a family support group on a Friday night which led to her going to other support groups. Meeting people who have experienced similar situations and have lost people to addiction helped her cope with grief. It was Irene who inspired me to volunteer with Café Solace Irvine and we've been on this journey together ever since.

# Recovery Story

## *Louisa & Irene's Story*

Irene and I have always had similar interests. It was Irene and my mum who taught me how to cook, we both love arts and crafts, party planning, and we have always done everything together. So, it's so nice to be able to do this together now. Being amongst the recovery communities is such a rewarding experience and we feel like we can give back. At the time where Ben and Barry were going through their struggles, if the recovery communities that exist today existed then, it's possible there might have been a different outcome. However, back then the only option was to go on methadone. If it was today, they would have been supported, and although the family was always there for them, it wasn't enough, as people need holistic support. Also, if the family is supporting someone with their substance use – who is supporting them? There was nobody to speak to about it. We were just trying our best to keep them clothed, keep them warm, and keep them alive – but we didn't know how to keep them off drugs. I can't stress enough everything my Aunt Irene has done for her boys; she never ever turned her back on them and she really did try her hardest and always loved them. It showed though, as both adored their mum and even though they drove her crazy, they never meant it.

My aunt Irene is so strong, and she has so much love to give people despite everything she has experienced. If everyone sticks together and strives to be kind, then maybe one day we can hopefully make a bit of a difference to people affected by addiction.



## ***Do you or someone you know need support?***

If you are concerned about your own or someone else's alcohol or drug use, support is available

Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm.

North Ayrshire Alcohol & Drug Recovery Service (NADARS): 01294 476 000

Turning Point Scotland PEAR Service: 01294 447 407

Outside of these times please contact NHS24 on 111 for advice.

Harbour Ayrshire provide Out of Hours Support Mon-Fri: 5pm-10pm & Sat-Sun: 10am-10pm:  
01292 623 016