



Welcome to the winter edition of the North Ayrshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership's newsletter.

The ADP Support Team will 4 newsletters per year highlighting positive recovery stories, what is going on in the community, 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

Cafe Solace Irvine Christmas Dinner

This Christmas we brought the festive spirit to life at Café Solace Irvine with a special Christmas dinner celebration! Customers enjoyed a delicious three-course meal, complete with all the trimmings. The evening was made even more special with a surprise visit from Santa, who delighted everyone with selection boxes for all our customers! It was a heart-warming night filled with laughter, good food and the true spirit of Christmas. Thank you to everyone who joined us and to all our amazing volunteers on the night – we loved sharing this special occasion with you!



Christmas Day at the Recovery Hub

On Christmas Day, the Solace Recovery Hub opened it's doors to help reduce isolation and offer a safe space with a sense of community during a time that can be especially challenging. We had around 20 attendees including volunteers who came together to share conversations, enjoy a party atmosphere and connect over refreshments.

To make the day even more special, service users were also given the opportunity to take home a free hot meal generously provided by a local takeaway shop, reflecting the hub's commitment to inclusivity and care.

"It gave me somewhere to go where I always feel safe and welcome."
"I would've been on my own at Christmas but I felt like part of a family."
"It gave me a wee bit of hope on a day I usually find really hard."



Prevention & Education Update

Building on the success of previous events in Ardeer and Arran, the Prevention & Education team has continued its impactful work through a series of Roadshows supported by the ADP Support Team in collaboration with local partners. Organisations such as the Prevention & Service Support Team, NADARS, Children First, Turning Point Scotland PEAR, Police Scotland, KA Leisure, and Quit Your Way have delivered engaging workshops that have been well received by both pupils and education staff.

Roadshows have been held at Irvine Royal, Greenwood Academy and Kilwinning Academy, reaching all S1 pupils to educate them on the risks and harms associated with alcohol, drugs, and vaping. We have dates in the diary to take the Roadshow to Ardrossan Academy, St. Matthew's, Garnock Campus, Auchenharvie, Largs, and Lockhart schools.

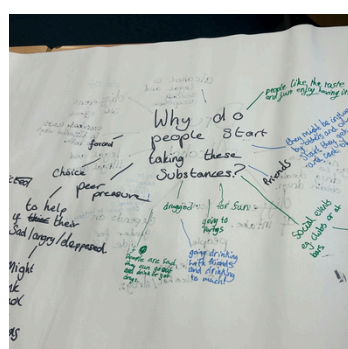
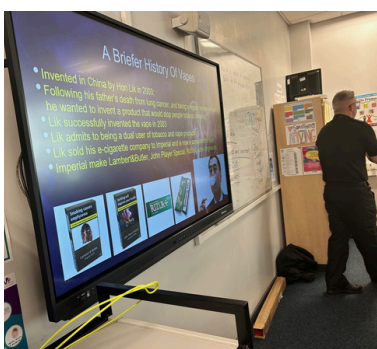
Over 700 pupils have participated so far and feedback suggests that interactive talks, activities, and quizzes are among the most effective ways for young people to learn about drugs and alcohol.

"It was good to hear about people's personal experiences"

"I loved the quiz, and they made it really interesting, and it was fun"

"The beer goggles were fun 👍"

"I learned about stigma, how it effects people and not to judge people by their looks"



Pathways to Progress College Course

As we pass the halfway point of the course, it's remarkable to see the group's progress since July. All 13 students have excelled in their modules, growing significantly in confidence. Under Elaine's exceptional guidance, topics have ranged from IT skills and PowerPoint to Health and Wellbeing. Recent highlights include interview preparation and a standout debating module, where students showcased structured arguments and mutual respect, reflecting their strong bond and the supportive environment created by Elaine and Ross.

Key achievements include completing Naloxone training and a 'Walk Leaders' course with KA Leisure, enabling students to lead community walking groups. Friday fun sessions like badminton, table tennis, and pickleball have given opportunities for physical activity too.

Looking ahead, students are excited to start placements with partner organisations, equipped with the skills and confidence they've gained so far to tackle new opportunities.

Our next Pathways to Progress course will be due to start in July 2025.

If you or someone you know is interested in joining this course, please contact Turning Point Scotland using the email or telephone number below:

NorthAyrshireInfo@turningpointscotland.com
01294 447407



Justice Services/ Minds of Recovery

There are currently 6 conversation cafes being delivered by Minds of Recovery and Justice Services within the Irvine locality. These run on a monthly basis with people from across North Ayrshire attending. The groups give the participants the opportunity to explore different Recovery Capitals / Coping Mechanisms and build connections within the local recovery community, plus improving their overall wellbeing.

December 2024 saw 11 participants and 5 staff come together and celebrate Christmas with lunch at the Carrick with gifts being provided.

Minds volunteer, Laura, who supports the recovery community and participated said:

“Everyone loved the day and supporting each other in their recovery community helped share their own experiences. It was a very special memorable experience for all involved, it was like 16 pals coming together”

Andrew McComish from Justice Services said:

“Justice Services had requested Minds of Recovery to deliver Conversation Cafes in all Ayrshire localities, with each being positively received, we asked Minds of Recovery to facilitate another block of educational programmes for our clients in North Ayrshire”

The aims of the conversation cafes to help educate people about themselves regarding their future, to help them achieve their goals within the community and to build connections with a positive mindset.



Support for Families

Turning Point Scotland PEAR had recently been jointly facilitating a CRAFT family support group every Tuesday afternoon alongside Barnardo's at the Barnardo's office space in Kilwinning Town Centre.

There are hopes to facilitate this group again in the coming weeks and it will likely be a Tuesday from 12pm – 2pm, with the venue still to be decided.

If anyone would be interested in potentially attending or finding out more information, please contact Turning Point Scotland on 01294 447407 and ask for Allanna, or alternatively email NorthAyrshireinfo@turningpointscotland.com

Recovery Story



Tracey's Story

Hey! My name is Tracey and I'm 41 years old, from the Three Towns and I have two sons. All my life, I believed that addiction was a choice. As I grew up, my mum struggled with alcohol and I never really understood her illness, I had always thought that she was choosing addiction over her family. Looking back, I just could not understand it, and I thought that my mum just didn't want to be our mum anymore; it always felt like alcohol was more important to her. I felt rejected, abandoned, not good enough and as a result of these emotions, I turned into a chronic people pleaser throughout my life, craving love and attention from people. I used to act out a lot just to get some attention from her, but deep down I was just a scared little girl who wanted to be loved.

I grew up with trauma within the family and my mum was absent a lot due to her own mental health, so I never ever had that nurturing bond with my mum, and not having this affected me more than I ever realised. As a result, I kept people at a distance because I felt let down and unwanted, so I always found it hard to trust people and let them in.

I first tried buzzing gas in school, and I've jumped about from one substance to the next trying to block out how I was feeling because substances gave me that ease and comfort, I had been craving all my life.

Five years ago, my mum died from her long struggle with alcohol, and I became dependent on drugs every single day just to get up and get myself through them. It was my way of coping with this loss. My sister and I even began to use drugs together during this period. We would say we would never end up like her, but we were lost in our grief and were just broken girls inside.

My sister and I went to Turning Point Scotland two and a half years ago because my sister felt that she needed help, whilst I was still in denial. In the end, my sister had to go to rehab because we were both our biggest enablers and when she left, I instantly felt rejected all over again and I resented her for it. At this point, I found myself all alone, and my addiction got worse because I felt like I had nobody left to turn to.

My sister came back from a Christian rehab like a shiny new person and to protect herself and put herself first, she had to avoid me initially when she first came home. At the time, I couldn't understand why but I do now. However, she never gave up on me. She invited me to a Broken Chains zoom meeting where I heard my sister share her experience, strength, and hope, and I instantly felt attracted towards recovery. At that moment, my thinking changed for the first time in my life, and I realised that I had an issue, and I needed help to stop using substances as a way of coping with life. The following week, I went to Broken Chains in Ayr, and I had a spiritual experience and found faith (a profound change of thinking). From the day forward, I have not picked up or used a substance since.

Recovery Story



Tracey's Story

I joined the Cocaine Anonymous programme and got a sponsor to go through the 12-steps. I've been to numerous retreats with Broken Chains for healing and fellowship with other people like me. I received trauma counselling through Freedom Fighters which has been an amazing experience, and I've learned so much about myself as a person now.

All that pain I felt throughout my life has been removed from me today. I have a new sense of life and hunger for recovery. I am now 10 months free from any mind- and mood-altering substances including, drugs, alcohol, prescription drugs, and gambling – it's all been removed. I no longer depend on a substance to use today as I now get to help others find recovery and can let them know that they do matter!

Today, I am a peer support worker at Turning Point Scotland PEAR service based in Stevenston and I absolutely love it! I want to be an example and share my experience to show people in my area that your life can change. In addition to this, Freedom Fighters are opening a new hub in Ardrossan soon and I am hoping to volunteer in there, as dependency to substances is massively related to childhood trauma and I want to be able to help those people still in addiction that may have suffered from the same things that I have. My experience of completing the 12 steps and accessing support through various services and charities has enabled me to get to a place in my life where I feel that I can offer others help and I absolutely love doing it.

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 Monday to Friday 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

Please contact **01292 623 016** if you require this service