

Cemetery Work

The Community Payback Team have been supporting Bereavement Services with the upkeep of cemeteries; keeping these sacred grounds well-maintained and a place of beauty all year round. Cemeteries hold significant importance both practically and symbolically and the maintenance of cemeteries is often a priority for many communities, demonstrating reverence for those who have passed and providing a dignified environment for remembrance. A well-maintained cemetery reflects the values of its community. It promotes civic pride and fosters a sense of responsibility in caring for shared spaces. The team are committed to continuing their support which includes grass cutting, fence painting as well as the winter essentials documented below.



Over the autumn / winter months fallen leaves can become an unsightly, slip hazard. The team gathered these into large piles and disposed of them in the green waste section at local recycling centres, allowing them to decompose and be reused for compost. The compost is then used by members of the public and the Community Payback Team for residential and community gardens to enrich soil and reduce the need for chemical fertilisers.

"Thanks for your efforts and that of your supervisors and teams. I don't know what our service would do without the Community Payback Team – the pictures from before and after are the proof"

Brian Jones – Team Manager Bereavement Services

"The partnership working and hard work from your teams is invaluable to the service and I know from the work they do it makes a massive difference to the community"

Nick Kelly – Service Manager, Greener Communities

Discarded Christmas wreaths can become environmental hazards. Synthetic materials like plastics and wires can be harmful to wildlife. Recycling ensures these risks are minimised and aligns with the team's ethos to keep cemeteries clean and tidy. Recycling also encourages natural components such as branches and leaves to be recycled for compost. The team collected 81 van loads of Christmas wreaths across 20 locations and disposed of them at local waste management sites.



Extensive work has continued throughout many cemeteries in East Ayrshire which includes removing moss from pathways to promote a more aesthetic appeal and minimise slip hazards. Edging walkways to re-establish and create wider access for wheelchairs, pushchairs and hearses and back filling sunken lairs to ensure the integrity, safety and respect of burial sites which can be emotionally distressing for families when left unstable.



WEA Charity, Kilmarnock

WEA in Kilmarnock is a voluntary sector organisation for adult education, who work with many of societies disadvantaged adults in some of the most deprived communities. The aim of WEA is to raise aspirations, develop learning opportunities and target provision at underrepresented groups including women, ethnic minority communities, non-English speakers and learners with no qualifications. WEA, Kilmarnock not only provides education and training support, but they are also developing a growing space and Community Garden, where those who volunteer can grow fruit and vegetables for themselves whilst donating a large portion of produce to the local foodbank. They are constantly expanding with 14 raised beds along with a newly installed polytunnel and this year have branched out to growing their own flowers to attract wildlife such as bees, butterflies and small birds. The Community Payback Team lent a hand by providing a valuable grass cutting service, helped to weed, trim hedges and undertake groundwork.



"The Community Payback Team in a short space of time have made an incredible difference to our Community Garden. The entrance to our garden was a problem area for us to maintain, and in terms of first impressions it wasn't very welcoming. The Community Payback Team came in and in no time at all weeded our front borders. They then moved onto laying weed membrane on the path around our hedge and the chipped area just inside it. Once done, they added a lovely layer of bark. The difference is incredible and we have already had some amazing comments about the change. The team is amazing, and we can't wait to collaborate further going forward"

Tom Murphy – WEA Senior IT Service Desk Analyst

New Farm Loch

"A big thank you from all at NFLCC for all the significant work you have managed to complete, we can't thank you enough!"

Steve Ewing – New Farm Loch Community Council



"Thank you for the noticeable improvements in pathways including edging greenery at Dundas / Fraser Walk, McNicol Gardens, paths leading to McPahil Drive and litter picking at the loch"

Elected Member

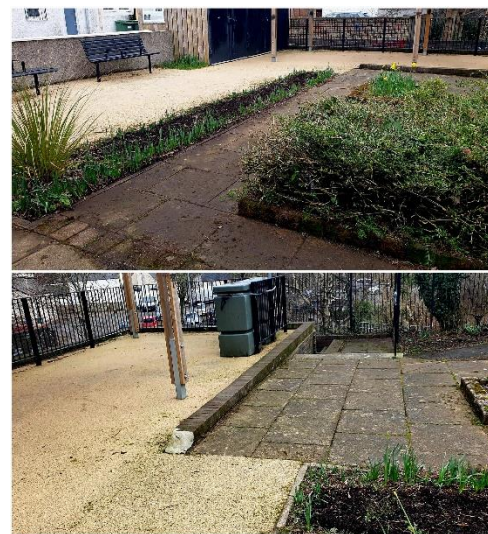
COMMUNITY PAYBACK SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Tower Street Pocket Park, Cumnock

In 2022 an undeveloped, vacant site in the centre of Cumnock was transformed into an attractive, accessible greenspace. It included raised beds for community growing, a social space for sitting / gathering, improved planting for biodiversity and wildlife, storage space for tools / games and an interpretation board to tell the story of Tower Street itself. More recently, the space had become neglected and overgrown but with the help of the Community Payback Team it was given a fresh new look to entice the community to use this once loved space again.



"It is looking so much better. Thank you so much to the team for what they have done"
John Senior -
Cumnock Community
Council / Action Plan



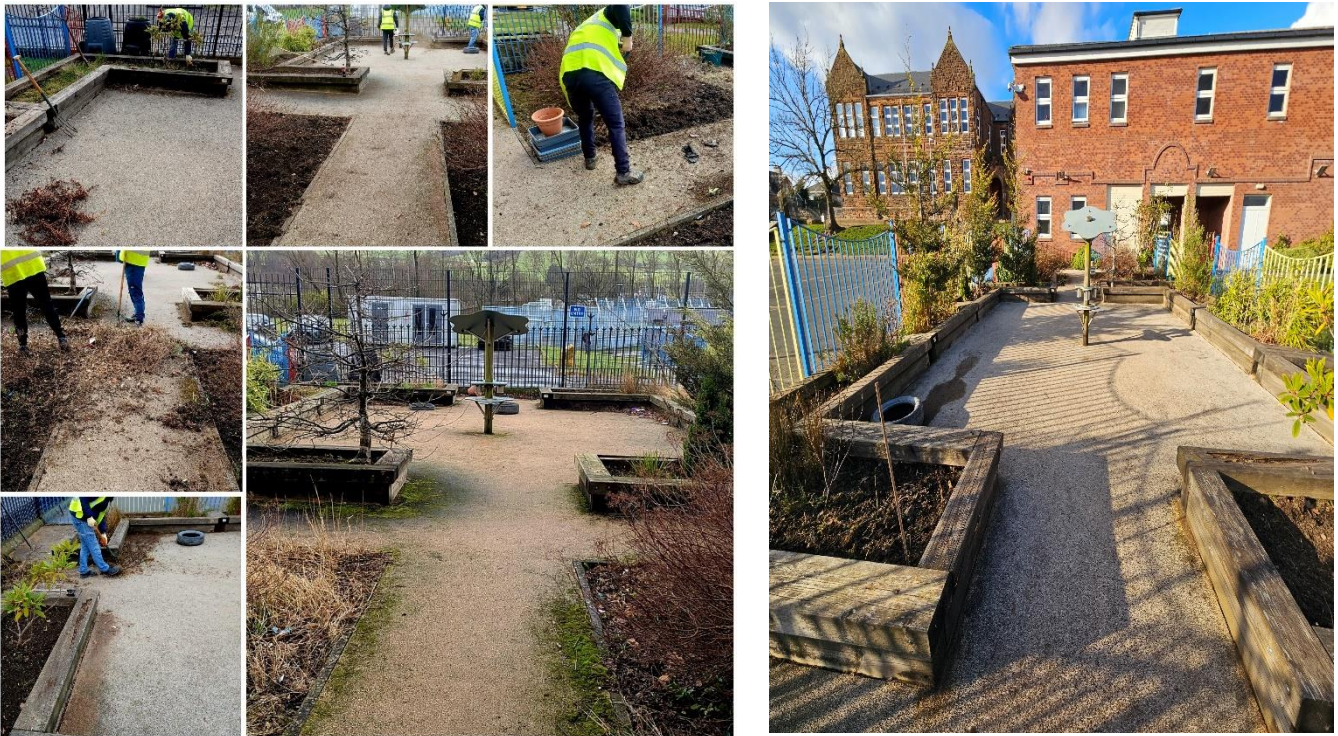
Kay Park, Kilmarnock

Amid the increasing demands on Council services due to challenges posed by the reduction in Local Authority budgets, the Community Payback Team continues to play a vital role in supporting Greener Communities through essential environmental initiatives. Recently, the team undertook the substantial task of clearing a neglected and overgrown section of the Kay Park. Their efforts included strimming and removing dense layers of leaves, branches and undergrowth, transforming the area into a cleaner and more welcoming space.

The work has not only improved the park's appearance but earned widespread appreciation from the public. The collaboration between the Community Payback Team and Greener Communities exemplifies the power of partnership working to overcome resource challenges and to enhance local areas.



Darvel Early Childhood Centre



Outdoor play is an essential component of early childhood education, offering significant benefits for a child's overall development. It fosters physical and cognitive growth, enhances emotional well-being and mental health, and provides valuable opportunities for social interaction, all while encouraging children to connect with nature in a fun and engaging way. Recognising the importance of these opportunities, the Community Payback Team recently partnered with Darvel Early Childhood Centre to revitalise their front garden grounds. This transformation has created an inviting and interactive space where children can learn, seed, plant, and grow. The enhanced outdoor area now complements the back garden and indoor classroom environment, providing a holistic approach to learning and development.

"A huge thanks to the Community Payback Team for clearing the front garden of Darvel Early Childhood Centre. The supervisor was so friendly and helpful. You could tell he really cares about supporting his team to work hard but also to understand the significance and positive impact their work has on other people. The garden had become a bit of an eyesore but it's now a welcoming area where our parents can spend time with their children. The children have enjoyed spending time in the garden exploring, mark making and playing ring games. We hope to plant in the garden and hope to carry out some wellbeing activities such as yoga and "a snack and a chat". We really encourage lots of outdoor opportunities and although we have a brilliant back garden for our children to access throughout the day, it's brilliant to have the front garden to allow smaller groups of children to experience nature on a smaller scale.

Without your team this would never have been possible"

Claire McAllister – Early Years Practitioner

The GRAFT Project (Third Sector Organisation)

East Ayrshire Community Payback Services also work in close partnership with third sector organisations such as the GRAFT Project and other partner agencies, social enterprise and charity organisations to provide alternative work placements outwith the local authority's unpaid work teams. The GRAFT project is one of many external providers that offers twenty-five unpaid work placements, over five days per week. To give you some insight into the work they do here is a summary of recent tasks.

Grafix Studio

The GRAFT unpaid work team have shown dedication and worked tirelessly to refurbish a large room in the CVO's local premise at Belford Mill, Kilmarnock. The team transformed the room into a new Grafix Print Studio, providing time and skills to empty the old unit, paint walls, repair furniture, complete joinery tasks and install new fixtures to enhance the room, creating a welcoming environment for all. Their collective efforts have transformed the space into a vibrant area for future trainees and volunteer placements; helping to reduce isolation, promote confidence and develop new skills. Their hard work not only revitalised the facility but also fostered a strong sense of community spirit, proving that collaboration and generosity can make a meaningful impact.



"I can't thank the guys or praise them highly enough for the role they've played. They've worked so hard and have become an integral part of our team"

**Fiona Fawdry – Chief Executive CVO East
Ayrshire**

Gym and Fitness

The GRAFT unpaid work team also helped to build a gym area within Belford Mill which has gone from strength to strength. The gym was introduced to encourage people with lived experience of the justice system to turn their backs on a life of crime.

Regular participation in exercise has been shown to decrease overall levels of tension, elevate and stabilise mood, aid sleep and improve well-being and self-esteem. Two of the supervisors, who are boxing coaches have offered their time to support people to develop essential life skills to help service users thrive both in and outside of the gym. Classes are delivered in a controlled environment to channel the participants energy, whilst also providing respite from any difficulties at home. In addition, a free hot meal is available at every session.

Offering boxing training with a difference, the programme helps young people develop six core values: purpose, adaptability, imagination, discipline, emotional control and teamwork, as well as providing practical advice and progression routes to help its graduates enter employment or further education.

The **Main Objectives** of an unpaid work requirement as part of a Community Payback Order are:

- To provide courts with a community based penalty which has the potential to achieve a positive outcome in respect of the individual's likelihood of reoffending.
- To ensure the courts have access at all times to a community sentence for use as a first response which requires the individual to undertake unpaid work for a specified number of hours in the community (from 20 hours to 300 hours).
- To provide a high quality community based intervention which balances pay back to the community with opportunities to address offending behavior whilst supporting individuals towards positive change; and
- To provide individuals with an opportunity to gain the skills and to access the supports required to lead positive lives and desist from offending.

When considering a project for Unpaid Work it must meet the following criteria ...

- It must benefit the local community.
- It must not deprive others of employment opportunities.
- It must be worthwhile and constructive for the individual/team.
- There cannot be funding available for the task.
- No individual can profit from the work.

Every project will be individually assessed for its suitability and health & safety implications. If you have a project you would like to be considered, please contact the Unpaid Work Co-Ordinator.

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Responsible for the Provision, Co-Ordination & Delivery of Unpaid Work Placements across East Ayrshire

Justice Services

EAST AYRSHIRE

**Health &
 Social Care
 Partnership**