

AGENDA ITEM No. 6
NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT

To: NORTH AREA COMMITTEE		Subject: GOOD NEWS
From: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES		
Date: 3 December 2004	Ref: PJ/LMcM/JP	

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to advise committee of current 'good news' stories within the department.

2. GOOD NEWS ITEMS

A list of the current 'good news' stories is attached as appendix 1.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That members note the report.

3.2 That the report be referred to the Area Committees for information.

Paul Ginties

There are no background papers relevant to this report

1. DEPARTMENTAL

1.1 Success for 'Breakout' summer activity programme

Over 70,000 children and young people from across North Lanarkshire participated in the department's Breakout summer activity programme.

There were a wide range of activities on offer, from drama workshops and free swims, to countryside ranger activities and arts and crafts. One of the most popular activities was Sport & Recreation's 'Kids Klubs', which were a partnership between Community Services, SportsScotland and the Golf Foundation. Other favourites included outdoor climbing at Auchinstarry Quarry and the varied events programme at North Lanarkshire's libraries.

2. COUNTRYSIDE & LANDSCAPE

2.1 North Lanarkshire lights up the sky

An estimated 80,000 people attended four council-run fireworks displays at Broadwood Loch, Strathclyde Country Park, Dunbeth Park and Airdrie Leisure Centre. The displays were delivered by the winner of the UK Pyrotechnics Championships 2004 - Hilary Events Ltd.

Despite a poor weather forecast, the displays at Airdrie, Coatbridge and Cumbernauld attracted 65,000 spectators, while over 50,000 turned up at Strathclyde Country Park. This was an event jointly promoted by North and South Lanarkshire Councils, and provided four hours of family entertainment, including a spectacular 25-minute firework display.

3. SPORT & RECREATION

3.1 Things are going swimmingly at the Tryst

Work is about to start on the refurbishment of the 30-year-old swimming pool at the Tryst Sports Centre in Cumbernauld. The work will bring a new lease of life to the pool, and will see a new filtration plant installed, together with a new roof and ceiling, general re-tiling and a replacement boom. The changing accommodation will also be revamped and there will be improved disabled access.

The pool is closing on 13 December 2004 and is expected to re-open on 31 July 2005.

4. CREATIVE SERVICES

4.1 Rewards for artistic talent at the annual Arts Awards

The department's Creative Services section hosted its annual Arts Awards ceremony on Saturday 30 October at Motherwell Concert Hall. The awards were hosted by Radio Clyde presenter Gina McKie, and provided the winners with the opportunity to perform and exhibit their work. The winners in each of the nine categories were as follows:

Writer of the Year

Junior section:	Eilidh McCabe (Wishaw)
Intermediate section:	Stuart Watson (Uddingston)
Adult Poetry:	Deidrie McAuley (Wishaw)

Adult Prose:	Duncan Tolmie (Coatbridge)
Overall winner:	Deidrie McAuley (Wishaw)
Dance Group of the Year	
Junior winner:	Yvonne Wright School of Dance (Caldercruix)
Intermediate/Senior winner:	Abronhill High School (Cumbernauld)
Photographer of the Year	
First prize:	Maxine Johnston (Cumbernauld)
Young photographer:	Angela Tierney (Plains, Airdrie)
Digital photographer:	Duncan Tolmie (Coatbridge)
Musician of the Year	
Junior section:	Ross Baker (Gartcosh)
Intermediate section:	Craig Reilly (Cumbernauld)
Senior section:	Scott Abercrombie (Motherwell)
Singer of the Year	
Beginners section:	Marc Rooney (Bellshill)
Junior section:	Christopher McKnight (Muirhead)
Intermediate section:	Lisa McKechnie (Bellshill)
Senior section:	Amanda Miller (Cambuslang)
Artist of the Year	
Junior section:	Lizzie Rea (Bellshill)
Intermediate section:	Billy-John Pitcairn (Motherwell)
Senior section:	Isobel Thomson (Airdrie)
Craft Person of the Year	
Junior section:	Ailie Gardner (Falkirk)
Intermediate section:	Rebecca Scott (Wishaw)
Senior section:	David Rankin (Airdrie)
Silver Stars	
First prize:	Tom McIntosh (Cumbernauld)
Battle of the Bands	
First prize:	Crazy Chester (Motherwell)

4.2 **Street Talking**

The Streetsmart team has been using an innovative approach to get its environmental improvement message across to the young people of North Lanarkshire. It commissioned a special multi-media production called 'Street Talking', which toured secondary schools throughout the area during October and November. The play tackled the issues of littering and graffitiing, in an informative and imaginative way, by stimulating discussion and provoking debate. Over 4,500 S1 and S2 pupils from 26 schools saw the production, which will re-run in February as part of the Youth Arts Festival.

After each performance the audience were encouraged to take part in a 'forum workshop' where they explored events and topics from the show. They were encouraged to look for solutions and to consider what they could do personally to protect their local environment.

The play, which was produced and directed by the Community Arts and Marketing teams, was written by Iain McAleese and starred a professional cast.

4.3 **Flying ticket sales for Mother Goose**

Over 70% of the tickets have now been sold for this year's pantomime, Mother Goose. The production opened on Monday 29 November and will run until Sunday 9 January, with both matinee and evening performances. It stars one of Scotland's top entertainers, Dean Park.

5. COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 50:50 event brings young and old together

In an event organised by Community Learning & Development and the Volunteer Centre North Lanarkshire, 50 young people and 50 older people came together to discuss the issues which affect their communities.

The event, which was held on 1 November, featured presentations, opinion surveys and round-the-table discussions. It also included a question and answer session, which enabled the audience to enter into debate with Councillor Bill Martin (Vice Convener of the Community Services Committee), Linda Fabianni MSP, Alex Hendry (Development Officer – Children & Young People), Narelle Cunningham (Dialogue Youth Information Worker) and Mary McNeil (Manager – Volunteer Centre North Lanarkshire).

5.2 Funding success for the ACCESS initiative

The ACCESS initiative has received a grant of £35,000 from the Homelessness Strategy Group, to offer tailored programmes of learning for young adults aged 16-24. The programme, which is aimed at those experiencing homelessness or have just received their first tenancy, will include literacy and numeracy help, driving lessons, participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and job seeking skills. 60 young adults will benefit from the initiative, which is designed to raise the employability skills of participants.

5.3 Free holiday activities for 12-16 year olds help to reduce crime levels

A programme of free summer holiday activities for 12-16 year olds has helped to reduce crime levels by 3.6% across North Lanarkshire.

Over 5,000 young people participated in the programme, which aimed to divert them from crime and anti-social behaviour, by providing them with constructive and relevant activities. The majority of these were available in areas where Strathclyde Police identified youth disorder as being the most prevalent. These included Abronhill, Carfin, Jerviston and Sikeside.

A number of positive outcomes resulted from the initiative. Most notable, these were on the levels of street drinking, which are often felt to impact on minor and serious crimes, as well as on the public's fear of crime. The number of people reported for this offence fell by an average of 26% across all areas, however the most marked change was in Sikeside, which saw a decrease of 72%.

In Abronhill, the number of people reported for carrying an offensive weapon fell by 60%, although as a result of intelligence-led proactive community policing, there was a slight increase in other areas of North Lanarkshire.

The programme of free summer holiday activities was funded through a grant of £47,937 from the Scottish Executive and co-ordinated by the Community Safety Partnership.

5.4 North Lanarkshire on the road to 'Safer Seniors'

During September and October, a series of six roadshows sponsored by the Community Safety Partnership took place across North Lanarkshire. Over 450 residents attended.

The roadshows aimed to empower older people, through advice and information, with the knowledge to keep themselves safe and free from harm. The events were also designed to have a positive impact on older people's fear of crime and to provide an opportunity for them to interact with the agencies which assist them directly.

A number of organisations took part in the events, including Strathclyde Police and the council's Home Safety, Road Safety and Food Safety teams. There were also information stands staffed by representatives from Community Services, Social Work, Scottish Power, Scottish Gas, Age Concern and NHS Lanarkshire.

It is anticipated that further roadshows will be held in the new year.

6. LIBRARIES & INFORMATION

6.4 Bookmark sponsorship generates £1,500 for libraries

Libraries & Information has received sponsorship for 20,000 bookmarks and outside posters. The sponsorship, which has come via the Central Community Press Agency on behalf of the Alcohol and Drug Action Initiative, is worth £1,500. The bookmark will be devised in partnership with the Adult Literacy & Numeracy team. It will be used to promote literacy collections in libraries and the adult literacy and numeracy classes in North Lanarkshire.

7. TRANSPORT

7.1 Transport success in fundraising 'drive'

Teams from Transport Services, Finance and Policy & Development have raised over £2,340 for the children's charity Debra, which aims to relieve the suffering of children with Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB). In order to raise the funds, the teams have taken part in sponsored white water rafting, organised a dance and obtained donations.

7.2 Transport Services voted Local Authority Fleet Operator of the Year

Transport Services Manager, Donald Morrice, has been presented with the Local Authority Fleet Operator of the Year award by the Princes Royal. The ceremony took place on 12 November at the Moat House Hotel, Glasgow.

Details on any of the above are available from the Director of Community Services.