

CD News

News, updates, information, and sharing success in our communities



Stirling Council to launch New Community Benefit Portal

Stirling Council is taking a big step toward making public spending work harder for local people. Beyond delivering essential services, the Council is committed to creating added value through its procurement activity; bringing economic, social, and environmental benefits to our communities.

What does this mean?

Whenever the Council awards contracts worth more than £50,000, suppliers are asked to include *Community Benefit clauses*. These clauses encourage businesses to give back—whether that's through local job opportunities, skills training, or sustainable practices.

Over the years, this approach has delivered real benefits. But the Council knows that local groups and third-sector organisations understand best what matters most to Stirling's communities. That's why a new initiative is being introduced: The Community Benefit Portal.

What is the Community Benefit Portal?

The Portal is an online platform designed to connect suppliers with community needs. Here's what it will do:

- Bridge the gap between businesses and local priorities.
- Allow community groups to submit requests for support.
- Enable suppliers to view and commit to these requests when bidding for contracts.
- Track and report progress through the Council's Procurement team.

This means that benefits generated through public contracts will be more targeted, meaningful, and aligned with what our communities really need.

Why is this important?

The Portal is part of Stirling Council's commitment to Community Wealth Building—an approach that ensures public spending creates lasting value locally. By working together, we can turn procurement into a powerful tool for positive change.

Get involved

Soon you'll be able to submit requests via the Community Benefits page on the Stirling Council website. Full details, guidance, and updates will also be available on the dedicated Community Benefit page.

Watch out for more details coming soon.



Christmas Help

With the colourful lights, festive concerts and other special events, it's easy to think of this time of year as being full of pure joy. But for many people in our communities, it can be a much more difficult period, with increasing feelings of grief, loneliness, or strain around family and food.

[Kooth free, anonymous platform](#)

24/7 for children, young people, and adults.

[Papyrus HOPELINE247](#)

Suicide prevention (young people)

Call: 0800 068 41 41

[Samaritans](#)

Emotional support, 24/7

Call: 116 123

[Breathing Space \(Scotland\)](#)

Low mood, anxiety and support resources Call: 0800 83 85 87

[Cruse Bereavement Support](#)

Call: 0808 808 1677

[Clear Your Head Scotland](#)

Tips for coping during festive stress:

[Beat Eating Disorders](#)

Call: 0808 801 0433

NHS 24: 111

The phone line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Inside this issue:

- Start Up Stirling
- Age |Scotland Support
- CAB Energy newsletter
- Social Enterprise Support
- and much more

Support this Christmas



We all need a helping hand at some point in our lives. We remember how one gesture made things just a little easier - the cup of tea and a listening ear that was given by someone who cared, the gift that helped to raise your spirits when times were tough, or the meal that was made when funds were tight.

This Christmas, Start Up Stirling invite you to provide a helping hand to support people living in hardship in our communities throughout the Stirling Council area. Their services are busiest during the Winter months, when people find it particularly difficult financially. Last year they provided 500 Christmas dinners and supported 900 people over the festive fortnight. Almost 40% of the support provided was for children.

Please donate any of the items on the winter shopping list at one of the donation stations in supermarkets, shops, churches and community centres throughout the area. If you have a larger donation, please contact Start Up Stirling in advance.

For other ways of donating and supporting Start Up Stirling, [visit their website](#).



Stirling Good Food Fortnight 1-14 March 2026

The Stirling Food Partnership is planning the first **Stirling Good Food Fortnight** in March 2026. This Fortnight will celebrate the food community and serve as a platform for public engagement on the journey towards becoming a Good Food Nation.

If you want to get involved in the Fortnight, organise your own events, open your community garden for the day, run a community café or lunch, have a cooking demonstration in your local hall, create a fruit bar or larder or any food related activity, or to find out more [please get in touch](#).



Heritage and Climate Action in Communities



Are you, or the communities you work with, interested in learning about the impact that climate change is having on your local heritage and about the steps you can take to help protect it?

Keep Scotland Beautiful is your national charity that inspires action to combat climate change, reduce litter and waste, restore nature, and improve places across Scotland. They run programmes and campaigns for schools, communities, and businesses, with a vision for a clean, green and sustainable Scotland.

The Our Heritage, Our Future programme supports communities to explore, record and protect their heritage through hands-on activities, skills development and youth learning programmes. They can support your community to create a bespoke Community Heritage Climate Action Plan. By identifying the heritage buildings, places and traditions that are important to the community, they will explore future threats and opportunities, including the impacts of climate change.

This free service would be delighted to hear from voluntary organisations, and community representatives to discuss opportunities.

More details about the workshops can be found on our website: <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/our-heritage-our-future/heritage-and-climate-action-in-communities/> or get in touch with the team on communities@keepsotlandbeautiful.org

Energy Support

FEL Scotland, a local environmental charity, are delighted to introduce their new energy advice service which is working to reduce fuel poverty and help households and community groups across Forth Valley and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs stay warm and save money on their energy bills.

Their Energy Team provide free home and community visits, calls, and digital support with impartial energy advice and personalised plans covering energy efficiency, simple savings tips, tariffs, bills, and more.

From January to March, they will also be offering free thermal imaging surveys to help householders and communities identify heat loss in their buildings.

If you are interested in finding out more about their services, or wish to sign up for a home or community visit you can visit [our website here](#), call 01786 234782 or email at energy@felscotland.org.

Consultations

Big Survey - Age Scotland

Age Scotland has launched the third edition of The Big Survey. It is the largest survey of people over the age of 50 in Scotland and covers a wide range of questions about people's lives including how they feel about their health and wellbeing, planning for the future, ageism, issues the government should tackle, navigating the increasing cost of living, and use of technology.

The responses received identify the challenges faced by people as they get older and help shape their priorities. The voices of older people really matter, and we want to ensure that your members have a chance share their experiences and views.

Respondents can enter a prize draw for one of the £50 vouchers available.

Deadline: 31 December 2025

To access the survey, visit the [Age Scotland website](#).



Climate policy and healthy equity

Climate X Change is working with Lucidity Services Ltd and the University of Glasgow on a project measuring the impacts of climate policy on health in Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government.

They are calling for evidence, data and case studies that demonstrate how climate change mitigation and adaptation policies in Scotland are affecting health outcomes and health equity – and how these outcomes are measured.

To contribute to this call for Evidence, visit the [Climate Xchange website](#).



STEP Business Survey

STEP, Central Scotland's business support organisation, has launched their Annual Business Survey. The survey takes around 10-15 minutes to complete and responses help guide the support they offer in areas such as employment, skills development, recruitment, workplace learning, specialist advice, funding and more.



Deadline: Friday 19th December.

To share your views and participate [visit here](#).



Engage Stirling is Stirling Council's Online Engagement & Consultation Platform. Sign up to give your views and get involved.

Get analysis or reports from the consultations you took part in: [visit here](#).

Forth Valley



Climate Action Hub

Climate Action Hubs are here to help people understand what is happening to our environment, see how others are making changes that will protect their communities, and be inspired and supported to act themselves.

They all belong to a national network set up by the Scottish Government as part of its efforts to prepare communities for climate change and ensure a just transition to net zero emission living.

Forth Environment Link (FEL) operate one of these 24 hubs for Forth Valley.

Find out more on [the website](#).

Training and Events

Exploring Climate Change & Sustainability with Social Enterprise Academy -

Session 1: *Thurs 29th Jan*,
Session 2: *Thurs 5th Feb*

This programme consists of two half days and is specifically for community groups, small businesses, social enterprises, and other organisations in the Forth Valley area to examine and develop their organisational and financial sustainability, whilst helping them to tackle the climate emergency at the same time.

To find out more and register visit [the website](#).

Forth Flood Forum Forth-Valley Wide

Early 2026 onwards

FEL are looking for community organisations or individuals involved in flood resilience or water management in their communities.

If you're interested in talking more, please [email](#) for further information.

FUNDING

Funding Stirling

Funding Stirling is Stirling Council's online funding search tool, provided in partnership with Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

You can search for funding opportunities by location, activity and other features and receive regular bulletins. For more information visit [Funding Stirling](#) on the Stirling Council website.

Local Energy Scotland: Community Solar Fund

Grants up to £80,000 are available for incorporated community groups, charities, and faith organisations for the installation of solar panels and battery storage in self-managed community buildings such as village halls, community hubs, sports facilities, and faith buildings.

This is a short-term pilot, funded by the Scottish Government and Great British Energy, with funds needing to be spent and claimed by 31 March 2026.

Demand is expected to be high for this funding, with many communities already in a position to mobilise projects very quickly. Funding will be allocated on a first come first served basis.



To find out more and apply, [visit the website](#).

Tesco Stronger Starts

Tesco Stronger Starts is open to all schools, registered charities and not-for-profit organisations that support children and young people to apply for a grant of up to £1,500. A wide range of projects fit the bill - improving school playgrounds, growing and food projects, outdoor play and purchasing kit for healthy activities. Projects that include a food element (e.g. providing healthy snack or lunch) are currently being prioritised.

Greenspace Scotland's team of friendly Community Enablers can support anyone to apply. To find out more and apply [visit the website](#).



Macmillan CARE Grants Programme

The CARE Grants Programme supports community organisations across the UK to tackle unfairness in cancer care. They want to fund projects that challenge the current system and create lasting change for people facing the greatest barriers to care.

Grants up to £150,000 over two years are available to experienced community groups and voluntary organisations supporting people.

Deadline: **23 January**

To find out more and apply [visit the website](#).



Creative Scotland

This fund for amounts between £1k and £100k supports organisations to deliver a wide range of creative activity. This includes for:

- a specific one-off project or production or
- a period of creative research and development or
- a longer term programme of work.

This fund has no deadlines and is open all year round.

To apply [visit their website](#).



Culture Night Funding



On 1 May 2026, Stirling Council and local partners will deliver a new annual celebration of culture, which will see the whole area come alive at night with an exciting range of events and activities.

Culture Night Stirling will be for everyone to enjoy and will bring together communities and organisations from a variety of sectors including the arts, heritage, education, hospitality and tourism. We will be encouraging local communities, businesses and organisations to work with Stirling's creative community using the [Scene Stirling Creative Directory](#).

Would your community consider hosting a cultural event on the 1st of May? A funding pot is open. For full guidance, and support from the Scene Stirling team visit the [fund site here](#).



Local School Nature Grants

Supporting schools and early years settings to make the most of their outdoor spaces, the grant programme is open to schools and early years.



The outdoor learning grant fund has four elements — an outdoor learning training course for your staff, a school grounds climate survey, a Climate Curriculum Kit (valued at £150) and £500 of outdoor equipment chosen from a catalogue of over 100 items.

Next Deadline:
4 January 2026

To find out more and apply visit [their website](#).



We're helping older people stay warm and well this winter

Are you over 50 years old or do you know a family member, friend or neighbour who could benefit from a little extra support this winter?

Age Scotland, the Scottish charity for older people, and SGN, the gas distribution network that keeps gas flowing into homes in your area, have partnered to provide lots of free support and top tips for staying warm and safe this winter.

Staying warm and safe in your home

Colder weather means we typically turn up our heating and close our windows. However, if carbon monoxide (CO) leaks in your home, this can be extremely dangerous.

Age Scotland and SGN are offering **FREE CO alarms** if you don't have one or your alarm is over 7 years old.

You are our priority

If you require extra support, for instance if you have special communication needs, a disability, or a chronic illness, you can sign up to the **Priority Service Register** for free.

- The Priority Services Register (PSR) helps identify who needs priority support in a gas emergency, power cut, or water outage.
- It's free and confidential and ensures that you receive extra support.

The Age Scotland helpline can sign you up to the Priority Services Register (PSR) - or you can do it yourself online.

Heating your home efficiently

Age Scotland offers free advice on heating your home and how to save money on your bills.

Our free **Energy Workshops** power you with the knowledge to make the best decisions for keeping your home warmer for longer.

Do you need extra help to stay warm and well?



Age Scotland's expert advisors can check your benefits — even if you already get some.

You could be entitled to more, especially if you or someone you care for needs additional help.

We can also offer a **FREE fuel voucher** and **'Complete Warmth Bundle'** which provides practical support to stay warm and well.

Call Age Scotland on
0800 12 44 222

Free Energy Advice Helpline and workshops



Age Scotland provides an Energy Advice Helpline and workshops both online and face-to-face supported by SGN.

- Our '**Heat your home for less**' workshop offers energy efficiency advice, financial help with energy costs, advice on future heating options, and how to stay safe at home.
- The '**Being prepared: Power cuts, winter storms and other emergencies**' workshop offers advice on how to stay safe at home in the event of a power cut.

The Age Scotland Helpline is here for you, it's free, friendly and could make a real difference in helping you stay warm and well this winter.

Call us between 9am and 5pm any weekday on **0800 12 44 222**.

Scott Stewart,
Head of Information, Advice & Friendship
Age Scotland



Stay CO safe this Winter

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas you can't see, smell or taste. It's known as the 'silent killer'. But you can protect yourself by following these safety tips:



Get your free CO alarm!

- Age Scotland and SGN are proud to offer a **FREE CO alarm** if you don't already have one or your alarm is over 7 years old.
- Put your alarm near appliances in your home such as your boiler, open fire or wood burner and test it regularly.
- Have your gas appliances, flues, and chimneys checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer every year.



Smell gas? Call immediately

- Contact the **National Gas Emergency Service** on **0800 111 999** if you smell gas, suspect a gas leak or if your CO alarm goes off.
- You feel dizzy, sick or have other symptoms of CO poisoning.
- You can also use textphone (minicom) on **0800 371 787**

How to stay warm and well this winter



Freephone Helpline
0800 12 44 222



Visit
age.scot/warmandwell



or scan the QR code

WINTER
2025

STIRLING DISTRICT CITIZENS ADVICE
BUREAU



Energy Team Newsletter



Winter is here with the colder temperatures and darker nights! Check with your energy supplier if you are on or eligible to be on the Priority Services Register as they can offer extra assistance if you experience a power cut. Get preparing now for the increased costs by ensuring you set your thermostat to a suitable temperature, setting your radiators appropriately and turning off any unused appliances! Find out more ways you can save by checking out our socials or getting in touch with the energy team - energy@stirling.cas.org.uk

CASE STUDY: LOCAL LIBRARY OUTREACH

A client attended our local library outreach sessions seeking advice about their entitlement to benefits. The client was working part-time however were concerned they would have to give work up due to their health. During the conversation, they shared that they were on a pre-payment meter and struggling to keep it topped up. Our advisor completed a benefit check and offered a Home-Visit to resolve client energy concerns. This resulted in client receiving energy support to top up, stay connected and registered with the Priority Services Register. During the Home-visit we discovered client had a broken appliance. We were able to support the client to apply for a grant to replace get a replacement which was successful!



SUPPORT THIS WINTER

Be on the lookout for energy suppliers opening up their **Warm Home Discount** schemes! Apply online or contact CAB if you would like support to apply. If you receive Pension Credit then you should have received a letter to say you will receive it automatically, if not get in touch

Changes to the **Pension Age Winter Heating Payment** will be instated this year. Only those with an annual income of less than £35,000 will receive the payment. You don't need to apply and should receive the payment automatically in December.

GET IN TOUCH

Our email - energy@stirling.cas.org.uk

The Team

Gary - Senior Energy Advisor

07498988993

Eleanor - Energy Advisor

07932324975

Leanne - Energy Advisor

07984310986

Peter - Rural Energy Advisor

07498925158

For regular updates about our outreach schedule, visit our website or socials linked below!



WWW.STIRLINGCAB.ORG.UK



Social Enterprise Support

Do you have an amazing idea, but need some support to make it happen?

Community Enterprise has 35 years of experience in providing tailored support to social enterprises, community groups and charities to help them towards greater sustainability and effectiveness.

Their team of experts are here to help you overcome any challenges you might face in making your ideas become a reality and your organisation a long-term success.

Accelerate is one of their support programmes for the Third Sector and community organisations. Support is **FREE** and aims to help groups and organisations become more sustainable and enterprising.

To find out more about how your organisation could benefit, [visit their website](#).



Joint Employability Framework for Stirling and Clackmannanshire Local Authority areas

Tuesday 9 December 2025,
2:00-3:30pm

A Framework for employability and skills provision is being set up jointly by Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils. Individual contracts will be awarded via this framework, depending on external funding and on local priorities identified by Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) in both areas

To encourage local providers to engage with the framework (as well as regional and national providers), these events are intended to introduce potential bidders to the opportunity and to support them with the process.

To find out more about the Framework and register for the event [visit the website](#).



Area Newsletters

The Community Development Team have introduced two area specific newsletters, to keep residents and local groups up to date as we continue to gather feedback and interest in setting up a community councils and local groups.

Hillpark and Top of the Town (Mercat Cross & City Centre) Newsletters will help connect the neighbourhood ensuring that local voices shape decision-making.

The newsletters will share updates on what's happening across the area, including Fundays, local groups, community development projects and news on improvements to the area.

If you live in these areas and want to stay informed - or get involved - sign up for the newsletters [here](#) or [email us here](#).

Community Newspapers

Did you know there are a wide range of independent newspapers in the area - find out more [here!](#)

Winter Warmth in the Community

Winter is here, and while the days are chilly, our community spirit is glowing! This season is the perfect time to spread kindness—check in on a neighbour, share a smile, or lend a helping hand.

Festive Fun Awaits

Look out for local markets, carol singing, and community events to bring joy and connection. Supporting local businesses and joining in the celebrations keeps our area vibrant.

Come and have a cuppa

The Community Development Team have pulled together details on local community cafes in the area. So why not pop in for a cuppa and a chat with other local people.

The list can be found on our website [here](#).

Together, we can make this winter bright and full of cheer for everyone. Here's to a season of friendship, and community!

Happy Christmas for the Community Development Team



Contact

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01786 233076

Find us on Facebook

Accessibility

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Send us your articles and information for the next issue in February 2026

Have a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year