



TheView

March 2014

All the news from YOUR South Lanarkshire Council

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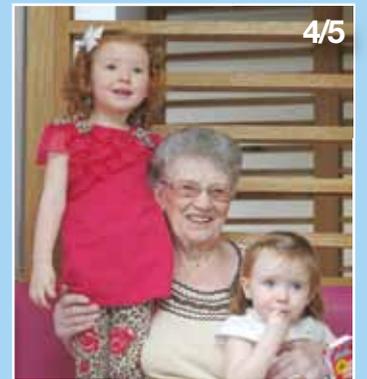
Picture by Anne-Janine Nugent



Pupils at St Elizabeth's Primary in Hamilton, including Keeva and Evan, are busy working on a food project, exploring where their food comes from, and how to grow their own, as well as how to make their own bread.

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Sheltered housing facilities raise standards to new high

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Schools join together for Holocaust Memorial Day

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Bring your community together by taking part in the Big Lunch

Dog poop blitz is howling success

THE hard-hitting campaign to tackle dog fouling in South Lanarkshire is already helping to create a cleaner environment.

The poop scoop blitz was launched last month in response to widespread public concern over the issue, and involves a targeted campaign of increased patrols by enforcement officers and a new 'dish-the-dirt' poster campaign reminding owners of their responsibilities.

There is massive support for

the crackdown from members of the public fed-up with thoughtless owners failing to pick up after their pets.

Members of the public are being asked to report any owners they spot disobeying the law to the special hotline.

And those collared flouting the law and leaving their dog's mess behind face a £40 spot fine.

According to Shirley Clelland, Head of Fleet and Environmental Services, the 'Wanted for Reward' posters, which have been going up all over South Lanarkshire,

have received a very positive response from the public.

"Although early in our campaign, calls are already beginning to come in reporting irresponsible dog owners and this is a fantastic help to us in determining areas our wardens should be best targeting," she says.

And Council Leader Eddie McAvoiy is urging the public to keep up support for the anti-fouling campaign.

"Dog fouling is a blight on our streets and public spaces," said

the Council Leader. "As we are showing, we are determined to tackle this issue for the good of everyone – local residents and visitors to our great parks and leisure attractions alike.

"We all have to take pride in our area and that includes dog owners, who may not fully realise the impact their thoughtless behaviour has."

● Report lazy dog owners to 0845 740 6080 (standard rate call) and help create a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone.



USEFUL CONTACTS

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PROJECT MAKING THE WRITE NOISES

A UNIQUE project to promote positive images of looked-after young people and young carers from across South Lanarkshire is giving them the opportunity to learn instruments, song writing and rehearse with professional musicians.

The Creative Identities 'Sold on Song' project has involved young people working at Glasgow Music Studios since May last year.

They have been involved in intensive music instruction, creative song writing and recording workshops.

The Cultural Co-ordinator team in South Lanarkshire formed the Creative Identities group in 2009 and, in 2013, funding was received from Creative Scotland's Cash Back for Creativity fund to continue the project.

The young people have formed two bands and will perform their own original songs and some covers at a special invite-only gig at Rutherglen Town Hall on March 25.

Keeping lunch club members munching

By Mhairi Anderson

SOUTH Lanarkshire Council and SPT's MyBus joined forces to help keep a local community group lunching.

When Braehead Lunch Club had to move to Carnwath Village Hall for six weeks while Braehead Hall was refurbished, SPT's MyBus service and the council's Facilities Services pulled out all the stops to ensure members kept munching.

Mrs Mary Gibson and her late husband, Allan, founded the Braehead Lunch Club for elderly people 27 years ago.

The club, which started with 35 members, now has 77 regular attendees from villages and towns across South Lanarkshire.

A number of the people who attend don't have public transport available in their area to help them get to the club.

So Mrs Gibson organises the MyBus service to collect people direct from their door and drop them back at home so they can go along.

Lunches for the club are prepared by the council's Facilities Services staff at Braehead Primary and delivered to the hall by Fleet & Environmental Services staff.

When the club's move to Carnwath Village Hall was announced, SPT worked with members to ensure they could still get their transport, while Facilities staff at Carnwath Primary stepped up to provide the usual lunch service.

The £150,000 refurbishment of Braehead Hall includes a new heating system and new kitchen, flooring in the lesser hall, kitchen and toilets.

Helping to drive rogue traders out of business

By Lynne Carstairs

SOUTH Lanarkshire's Trading Standards Team went on the buses – to spread the word about Buy With Confidence.

The link-up with First Bus saw billboards promoting the approved trader scheme on 16 bus routes across Lanarkshire.

And it's hoped the campaign, which ran last month, raised the profile of BWC among traders and consumers alike.

Designed to boost consumer protection and promote fair trading practices, Buy With Confid-

ence is the largest scheme of its kind in the UK, with up to 60 councils as members.

South Lanarkshire Council, which has 33 businesses signed up for its scheme, incorporating a wide variety of trades, was the first to take up the baton north of the Border.

Every business that displays the BWC logo in the area has been rigorously checked and assessed by the council's consumer watchdogs to ensure compliance with a wide variety of criteria, offering peace of mind for anyone trading with them.

Michael Thomson, co-owner of

Mr and Mrs Gardens, of East Kilbride, explained: "We believe the 'Buy with Confidence' scheme is a great way to promote good business practice across South Lanarkshire.

"Membership of the scheme is recognition that we are committed to honesty, reliability, fairness and professionalism in our business.

"The promotion of these principles is not only a positive for businesses and customers, it is also a positive for communities across South Lanarkshire."

Meanwhile, Mark Whip, owner of Need a Joiner, based in Stonehouse, has seen business

increase significantly since joining the scheme.

"Membership has given my business a boost across a number of areas," he says

"I can credit thousands of pounds of new business directly to Buy with Confidence.

"As a relatively young business, I have also gained so much from the help and advice given by the Trading Standards team.

"I would highly recommend the scheme to any business operating in South Lanarkshire."

● **More info on the BWC scheme from Trading Standards on 01698 455696.**



Wood artist honoured in exhibition at Low Parks



A UNIQUE opportunity to see a comprehensive display of the late artist Tim Stead's iconic sculptures in wood is running at Low Parks Museum in Hamilton until the end of the month.

Tim, who lived in the Borders until he died aged 48 in 2000, made furniture for galleries, castles, cathedrals and even for Pope John Paul II's visit to Murrayfield in 1981, as well as tables and seats for one of Glasgow's iconic restaurants, Cafe Gandolfi.

His most powerful pieces relate to architecture, including the rood screen and furniture for the North Sea Oil Industries Memorial Chapel in Aberdeen, which was commissioned in 1989.

The initial letters of the woods used in the chair backs spell out the simple but poignant "We remember yew".

Diana Barr, South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture's Libraries and Museums Manager, Diana Barr, says: "Due to expansive activity and public exposure within a relatively short career, Tim Stead's furniture, as well as derivations made by numerous followers, is familiar to many throughout Scotland.

"It is now 13 years since his death and his name and work are unknown to a new generation.

"The key aims of the exhibition are therefore to introduce new and younger audiences to his work and promote Tim's sculptural practice in advance of its integration with his furniture."

● **The Tim Stead exhibition runs at Hamilton's Low Parks Museum until March 31.**

New homes plan given green light

THE council has given the go-ahead for 76 new homes to be built in Uddingston.

Outline planning permission was originally granted in 2011 to Second Site Property Holdings Ltd for housing on the former gasworks site in the town's Bothwell Road.

The current proposal, on behalf of Barratt West Scotland, will create a mixture of semi-detached and detached homes, including 21 for affordable housing.

Barratt will also make a contribution of £44,000 towards upgrading community facilities in the area.



KNEADS MUST ...

Great British Bake-Off finalist James Morton brought his bread crusade to Rutherglen Town Hall recently, where he gave the enthusiastic audience a master class in raising dough.

● Don't miss the next issue of *The View* (May), when we will have an exclusive interview with James.

GANGS TRADE NAMES OF ELDERLY AND VULNERABLE IN CRUEL SCAMS

How to stay off con artist 'sucker lists'

By Lynne Carstairs

HUNDREDS of South Lanarkshire residents were named on a 'suckers list' held by a convicted fraudster in Bedford.

The details were passed to the council's Trading Standards Team by colleagues south of the border following a raid on premises run by Hendrick Emeka Meniru.

The names were among an estimated 100,000 held on file by the 49-year-old and have now been passed to almost every local authority in the UK.

Essentially, it amounts to a comprehensive 'suckers list' - a who's who of consumers that Meniru believed would fall for scams that turned over more than £60million in 2010 alone.

During the raid the stunned team found what amounted to a worldwide scam mail processing centre, with mailings received from the UK, Europe, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America, Asia and the Far East.

As a result, and in what is thought to be the first prosecution of its kind in the country,

Meniru was jailed in April 2013 for orchestrating a series of international fraud schemes.

Organised criminal gangs are trading 'sucker lists' with the personal details of several hundred thousand Britons considered susceptible to fraud, say the Serious Organised Crime Agency.

According to Councillor Hamish Stewart, Chair of South Lanarkshire's Community Services Committee, the work for other local authorities is just beginning - as names will already have been sold on to many more potential fraudsters.

"The sad reality is that this list is just the tip of the iceberg - there will be many hundreds of these in circulation across the country," says Councillor Stewart.

"However, this is the first time that we have been able to get our hands on a document like this.

"The job of our teams is to try to make contact with as many of these consumers as possible, without causing alarm.

"Sadly, the majority of those involved are elderly or vulnerable, and are seen as easy targets in such despicable fraud attempts.

"We are already looking into a number of

cases where consumers have been targeted multiple times by a wide range of fraud schemes, ranging from prize lotto funds to clairvoyants.

"Indeed, the worst case we have seen was of a pensioner who handed over £100,000 in five years to fraudsters.

"This is a sickening practice that can devastate the lives of those it targets and manipulates, and we would continue to urge all consumers to steer clear of such schemes."

So, as scammers employ ever-more sophisticated ways to con people out of their hard-earned cash, how can you avoid being duped?

Premium rate competition scams, bogus lottery "winning" tickets and other get-rich-quick schemes are just a few of the ways fraudsters part the unwary from their money.

If you receive cold calls or letters offering you a deal that seems too good to be true - remember that it is almost certainly too good to be true and is a criminal trying to fleece you out of your hard-earned money.

● **Anyone concerned about a letter, email or other contact received should contact Trading Standards on 08457 406080.**



Residents have settled into their new homes quickly ... and young visitors have made themselves at home, too

NEW GENERATION OF SHELTERED HOUSING



Council create the perfect

By Andy Livingstone

PROVIDING first-class care facilities for elderly and vulnerable members of the community continues to be a key priority for South Lanarkshire Council.

And that commitment is underlined by the council's new Eastcroft Gardens and Clydeford View sheltered housing complexes, in Rutherglen and Cambuslang respectively, which are setting new standards of excellence in the sector.

Eastcroft Gardens is the result of the transformation of the former David Walker care home to a first-class sheltered housing development, providing 17 self-contained flats fit for 21st century living.

While Clydeford View, a sheltered housing development providing 24

self-contained flats in the heart of Cambuslang, has been created on the site of the town's former fire station.

Both developments are fine examples of the council making best use of resources.

By re-using both the former care home building and fire station, supported by Scottish Government grant funding, the council has been able to provide high-quality housing for older people close to the town centre and local amenities.

The twin developments incorporate a range of facilities and new technology that will support tenants to live independently for years to come.

As well as light and spacious accommodation, they give residents plenty of opportunities to meet up and socialise with a choice of lounges and common kitchen.

Tenants also benefit from a range of

services that are provided in the comfort of a visiting services salon and a hydrotherapy room, while a guest bedroom is available for relatives.

Council Leader Eddie McAvoys is delighted with the new facilities for the elderly and says they are helping meet growing demand.

"With an ageing population, there is a great need for purpose-built housing for older people and I'm pleased that Eastcroft Gardens is here to help meet that need in the Rutherglen area and Clydeford View in Cambuslang," he adds.

"This provides the essential ingredients of success – a location close to the town centre, great amenities, the right size of property and high standards.

"Making the changes from their former uses as a care home and fire station to sheltered housing presented a consider-

able number of technical challenges.

"But I'm really delighted to see that these have been overcome and the quality of the finished developments speaks for itself.

"The most important aspect of any housing development is, of course, how it works for the people living in the houses. And so I'm delighted that the feedback from tenants has been extremely positive.

"I would like to pay tribute to all those involved in making this a success, from the council's design team and contractors, to our housing staff and to the Scottish Government for helping with funding."

The council's Executive Director of Housing and Technical Resources, Ann Gee, said the greatest demand for sheltered housing in South Lanarkshire was in Rutherglen and Cambuslang.

"These complexes, will together



RAISE STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE ...



Pictures by Anne-Janine Nugent

The new complexes offer a chance for different generations to relax in their homes and tenants to have time with visitors in communal areas, and staff members to be readily on hand for residents.



homes away from homes

41 much-needed homes for local people," she adds.

"The design of these flats, to the standard that can be seen at Eastcroft Gardens, has sparked a huge amount of interest locally and it is wonderful to hear the comments from the people who have moved here, and to see the smiles on their faces.

"I am grateful to everyone who has worked so hard to make that possible."

Many residents have now settled into Eastcroft Gardens, including Caroline McKenna, who was one of the first residents to move into the complex.

"I am absolutely chuffed to bits. I moved from the sheltered housing at Cathcart Road and this is much handier for the shops, which is helpful because I am partially blind," she says.

"My daughters stay locally, so they



have been able to help me out with moving in and decorating my flat.

"I am so delighted with the way the complex has turned out and I love all the different facilities that are available to residents."

At Clydeford View in Cambuslang, as well as the mix of one and two-bedroomed apartments centrally heated by a biomass-fuelled central boiler, the complex has great spaces for residents to meet up.

There is a winter gardens room – or quiet room – on each floor and a common kitchen and general-purpose meeting area.

Residents also benefit from a range of services provided in the comfort of the visiting services salon for various purposes including hairdressing, chiropody and health services.



Proud young medallists collect DofE awards

IT was a proud day for 58 young people from across South Lanarkshire when they received Duke of Edinburgh Awards at a ceremony in the council's Banqueting Hall.

Participants came from Youth Learning projects, Hamilton Information Project for Youth (HIPY), Duncanrig Secondary School, Larkhall Academy, Strathaven Academy and Trinity High, along with pupils from Fernhill School.

The past year has seen 15 gold, 37 silver and 59 bronze awards awarded to young people from across South Lanarkshire.

The awards ceremony was attended by Provost Eileen Logan, Councillors Davie McLachlan, Brian McKenna, Alice Marie Mitchell and Catherine McClymont, as well as the council's Chief Executive Lindsay Freeland and Executive Director of Education Jim Gilhooly.

Barry Fisher, Director of Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scotland, and Jamie Proudfoot from Scotrail also attended.

During the event, Natalie Johnstone, from Universal Connections Lanark, spoke inspirationally about her goals and motivation that helped her to achieve the gold award.

Councillor McLachlan, South Lanarkshire Council's spokesperson for youth, said: "I was very proud to attend the awards ceremony and to hear first hand what encourages young people to challenge themselves and commit to something like Duke of Edinburgh.

"At a time in their lives when there are school pressures and other commitments, these young people excel and make time to do something worthwhile and something that will stand them in good stead for their future careers.

"Very well done to each and every one of the 58 young people who received awards."

Be prepared if the power goes out at home

A CAMPAIGN is underway to ensure everyone is ready and prepared to deal with a power cut in their home.

A Government survey revealed that 45 per cent of South Lanarkshire's residents were not prepared to cope in the event of a loss of power.

And SP Energy Networks launched a campaign to help increase awareness among residents on the best ways to stay safe and informed should they ever experience a power outage.

While loss of power for most people is a rare occurrence, being unprepared for these events can put them at risk and places additional strain on the emergency services, so it's vital that you take the time to prepare.

Residents should check they have the following items at home:

- Torches with charged batteries or a wind-up dynamo torch
- A battery-powered radio so you can receive updates on any incident
- An analogue telephone – most modern phones rely on an electricity supply, in addition to the phone line, but an analogue phone can work on just the phone line.

Frank Mitchell, CEO of SP Energy Networks, said: "Power cuts can occur at any time for a variety of reasons, many outside the network operator's control.

"This can include severe weather interruptions, theft of substation metals and vandalism. Given the storms we've seen recently, we would like to help more residents to have the information they need to be prepared for any loss of power."



Singer and former Britain's Got Talent contestant Edward Reid joined St John's Primary School choir in Hamilton to support adoption week

Change a child's life for the better with adoption

... AND THEY WILL GIVE YOU BACK MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE

By **Andrew Thompson**

THERE are children from babies to teenagers in South Lanarkshire right now who need a family for the chance to get the best out of life.

And the council's Family Placement Team is keen to speak to anyone interested in adoption or fostering.

The team is being supported in its recruitment drive by local people who have successfully adopted a child, or who are involved in fostering.

Among them are adoptive mothers, Michelle and Lyndsay.

"When someone calls you 'Mummy', you've just got to be their mother", said young South Lanarkshire mum Michelle, when she was asked to consider what adopting her son had brought to her life.

For Michelle and her husband, adoption was the natural choice when they discovered they couldn't have children and, in their case, the process from application to bringing home their son took just under a year.

"When we applied, the process seemed a bit nerve-wracking but when we contacted South Lanarkshire Council they did so

much to let us know what to expect and walked us through the whole thing, that it all seemed to fall into place very naturally," she explained.

"There are a lot of questions and research but when you see how hard they work to make sure they match the right parents to the right children you realise it is worth it.

"The classes we attended helped us understand why children need adoption, to think about issues they face growing up and about the situation of children in care."

Three years ago, Lyndsay and her husband adopted sisters aged three and four.

"We had originally thought of adopting a baby but then we were given approval for one or two children up to the age of four," explained Lyndsay.

"We put a lot of careful thought into it and even made a list of pros and cons of having two children.

"But the adoption service clearly knew what they were doing, because we just can't imagine the girls with any other family."

Michelle admitted the assessment process was very thorough, adding: "But having been through it, we realise how

important it is to fully engage with it.

"The team is very committed to ensuring families are well matched and that does help reassure you that they are helping you get it right."

Of course, life has changed considerably since the two young sisters came into their lives and, according to Lyndsay, all for the better.

"I can't remember what it was like having five minutes to myself or not having to pack a survival kit to go out for dinner," she joked.

"But the girls are most definitely worth it. We gave them a safe, loving home when we adopted them but we can't even start to quantify what we receive in return."

And Michelle has no hesitation in encouraging other people to consider adoption.

"It is sad that some people, who can't have children but want them, won't even consider adoption," she said.

"There are families out there who could give a child in care a permanent family and, I promise, that what that child can give back is more than you can imagine."

● **If you think you could be a child's future, please phone the family placement team on 01698 454895.**



Jobs boost as mining is restarted

OPERATIONS at Scotland's largest surface coal mine have resumed with more than 100 jobs being created.

Broken Cross, near Douglas, shut down in April last year when the previous owners, Scottish Coal, went into administration, leaving considerable concern over the future of the site.

However, South Lanarkshire Council successfully led negotiations with the bond holder for the mine, securing considerable funds to deliver restoration.

Now, Hargreaves Surface Mining Ltd, working in partnership with the council, has restarted operations at the site, extracting the remaining coal and delivering the restoration of the mine.

Hargreaves will now re-engage with the site's former workforce and other experienced coal mining operatives throughout the country to utilise Scotland's extensive knowledge and capability in the sector.

Michael McGlynn, the council's Head of Planning and Building Standards, said: "The council is delighted to have been able to secure the funds to enable site operations at Broken Cross to resume.

"Hargreaves Surface Mining will create vital employment for the area and, when mining operations are complete, ensure the restoration of the site."

'Tell us once' service cuts the red tape

REGISTERING a birth or death is easier than you think when you use the council's 'Tell Us Once' service.

It means one of the council's registrars can now help a new parent or recently bereaved person through a step-by-step process that will automatically notify central and local governments of their change in circumstances.

Working with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the service provides a much easier way for bereaved families and new parents to report their change in circumstances, as they do not have to contact government bodies as many times as was necessary before.

● For more information email registration@southlanarkshire.gov.uk. Report a bereavement at www.direct.gov.uk/death-tellus once. Report a birth at www.gov.uk/register-birth. You can also contact your local registration office.

Make your vote count

MAKE sure you are registered to vote in this year's European election on Thursday, May 22, and in the Scottish Independence Referendum on Thursday, September 18.

To register or check if you are registered contact Electoral Registration Office, North Stand, Cadzow Avenue, Hamilton, ML3 0LU. You can also call 0800 030 4333 or email ero@lanarkshire.vjib.gov.uk

WINNERS OF COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION ANNOUNCED



Picture the scene



Report by Mhairi Anderson

AMATEUR snappers from all over Britain ensured South Lanarkshire's eighth annual photography competition attracted a bumper entry.

Organised by South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture (SLLC), the competition is open to all residents and visitors to South Lanarkshire, and entries in this year's competition showed great talent.

The competition features junior and adult sections with six categories within each, and all images entered must have been taken in South Lanarkshire within the last five years.

Councillor Hamish Stewart, Chair of SLLC board, said the competition had gone from strength to strength since its launch eight years ago.

"I am delighted to see so many entries again this year from locals and visitors alike, and from so far a-field, too," he adds. "It was very difficult indeed to choose winners from such an excellent array of entries. Congratulations to the

winners and I would urge visitors to come along and see the full exhibition of all this year's entries.

"Thanks must go to the Opus V photography Group and all who have helped make this such a successful and growing annual event."

First place in the adult section and Overall Competition Winner, with his entry 'Fine and Dandy', was Steven McAllister, of Uddingston.

Steven's entry was in Category 6 of the competition - Wildlife: Wild and Cultivated Flowers/Plants.

Steven, left, was also presented with a certificate and an engraved glass plaque by Opus V Photography's Stephen Lipton.

First place in the junior section and overall junior winner with her entry 'Autumn Drops', was seven-year-old Eve Gavin, above, from Hamilton. Eve's entry, in the same category, also earned her an award certificate and an engraved glass plaque.

● If you wish to take part in next year's competition you can get a copy of the entry form by contacting Chatelherault Country Park on 01698 426213 or email chatelheraultcountrypark@southlanarkshireleisure.co.uk



Learning less Holocaust

Report by Sarah Burrows

PUPILS commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day as they remembered the millions of people killed in the Nazi persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

The event at Uddingston Grammar School was attended by more than 500 people, including members of the Jewish community and local councillors, as well as parents of the 260 pupils from schools across South Lanarkshire who took part.

Guests were immediately drawn into the theme of 'Journeys' by a striking art installation created during a one-day master class in the school's art department.

This consisted of canvases, artefacts and texts inspired by the 'journey' theme.

A selection of other related artefacts loaned to the Uddingston school by Low Parks Museum and the Tron Theatre, Glasgow, further set the scene.

Music was provided by a musical school ensemble, as the audience took time to appreciate the art work. Headteacher John

McKay gave the opening address, commenting on the partnership working that had been forged between the participating schools despite the difficulty of the subject matter.

Councillor Jackie Burns, depute council leader, also addressed the audience.

"This is our 11th year hosting a memorial event that gives our young people the opportunity to reflect on what happened, and to tell us through their thoughts, performances and emotions what the holocaust means to them in the 21st century," he said.

The school captains gave eloquent introductions for each performance, with the opening performance given by the combined school choirs of Muiredge and Bothwell primaries.

The voices of 100 youngsters sang two songs that encapsulated the journey from despair to hope.

St Andrew's and St Bride's High School then performed a drama about the inhabitants of a tiny French farming village, who risked their own lives to provide a safe haven for whoever knocked on their doors, heroically defying both the Nazis and the



Lessons of the persecution

French government. This was followed by primary 6 and 7 pupils from David Livingstone Memorial, who shared some of the poetry inspired by their World War Two topic.

Uddingston Grammar enacted a mime depicting the plight of a group of Jewish refugees who were turned away at borders.

Their message still rings true today, as it reminds us of those refugees who continue to flee war, poverty and persecution.

The moving words found inscribed on the walls of a cellar in Cologne, Germany, where Jews were hiding from the Nazis during World War II was the focus of Woodhead Primary school choir.

In contrast, the journey depicted by John Ogilvie High School's presentation was a generic one and represented, not only a painful physical journey, but the metaphorical emotional journey that all persecuted people must travel.

Calderwood Primary shared a song that spoke of the simplest things in life being the most precious, as a reminder of the love of family and the joy of friendships.

In October last year, a group of pupils and staff from Larkhall Academy visited

Krakow in Poland. Their presentation and poignant duet, written by one of the students, encapsulated the lasting effects the experience had on both staff and pupils.

Two very personal journeys were depicted by Hamilton Grammar's presentation.

A personal reflection on a visit to Auschwitz was followed by a haunting rendition of Albertine, a song written to commemorate the plight of a young Tutsi girl orphaned during the Rwanda genocide.

The closing performance was reserved for Uddingston's concert band, who played two pieces, closing proceedings in an air of contemplation.

After the lighting of a memorial candle, members of the audience were invited to write a personal reflection on luggage labels.

These were then collected and tied to part of the art installation, a fitting end to the evening. One read, "An emotional, moving and heart-wrenching journey, depicted by such remarkable young people."

Head pupils introduced each of the performances at the Holocaust Memorial event held at Uddingston Grammar. There were poignant art installations, as well as poetry readings, songs and a play, all depicting both the suffering of the Nazi persecution, and the heroism of those who found the courage to resist them



Charity album raises awareness of head injuries

Report by Andrew Thompson

WHEN music-loving Occupational Therapist James Restrict decided to write a song about the impact of brain injury, he could scarcely have imagined it would lead to a charity album, *Still Here Fighting*.

But that's exactly what happened and the whole experience has proved to be life-changing for those involved.

James, who specialises in working with people who have suffered a brain injury, has been writing and performing music since long before he qualified as an Occupational Therapist in 2004.

"I have been involved in music since I was at school and the idea to write a song about brain injuries was, initially, just to set myself a musical challenge," he says.

"It was further into the process that it occurred to me to see if anyone wanted to collaborate and from that came the possibility of using the music we produced to help raise awareness, and also some money, for the brain injury charity Headway."

The recruitment drive resulted in a diverse range of collaborators coming forward, such as Bexx – a London teenager – who had written her own song on the subject, as part of her rehabilitation after suffering a brain injury. Seasoned performer Robin Lucas, from the Scottish Head Injury Music Support

Group, brought his experience to the project, as did Thurso music teacher Karen Steven.

Two local collaborators came forward in the form of Larkhall man Scott Burns and Malcolm Torrance, from Halfway.

According to James, the diversity of the performers, who have all suffered a brain injury, is a reflection of the fact that it is a



health issue that could strike anyone.

"Generally, brain injury is classed as either 'traumatic', which can result from a fall, a car crash or any other severe head trauma, or 'acquired', which could be the result of a stroke, virus or tumour," he says.

"Whatever the classification, the effects can be devastating and a full recovery may not be possible.

"But my job is to help people's rehabilitation and to work with them, and their families and carers, as they learn to cope with their changed circumstances."

While the music project obviously has a strong connection to his work, James said it wasn't something he undertook as a work project.

"I came into this purely as a musician but, funnily enough, it has brought some real, tangible benefits to those involved, explains James.

"Scott had given up music after his injury but is now back performing regularly and Malcolm has been describing himself as a changed man."

Says Malcolm: "I am a better person now than I used to be – I have a better attitude and I want to help people. I carry a recording of my track, *Second Chance*, with me on my phone so I can listen to it wherever I am and remind myself of the message it carries."

● **The six tracks on the CD are available to download on iTunes. For further information contact james.restrict@southlanarkshire.gov.uk.**



New school is

By Sarah Burrows

THE magnificent new St Mark's Primary School in Rutherglen has been given the unanimous thumbs-up by pupils, staff, parents and the local community.

There were cheers of delight as children and families were piped into the school to start the first school day of 2014 in style.

The impressive £7.1million building was constructed by one of the council's building partners – Lend Lease – as part of South Lanarkshire's ambitious £812million Primary Schools Modernisation Programme.

Even in this tough economic climate, it is ensuring that all of the area's primary schools are fit for 21st century learning.

The new St Mark's Primary was built on the same footprint as the old school, so

for the year-long build period pupils and staff were decanted to the former Spittal Primary.

The new state-of-the-art building comprises of a range of modern and flexible accommodation.

The school has seven classrooms, gym hall, separate dining hall, a computer suite and general purpose room.

It also houses a nursery class for up to 30 children per session that can be accessed via a separate entrance.

A new 'MUGA' (multi-use games area) pitch was also constructed in the playground, which can be used for formal PE lessons and for play during lunchtimes and breaks.

The pitch can also be used in the evenings and weekends by the wider school community.

Head Teacher Brenda McNott said: "It was a fantastic way to start 2014 by moving into our new building. It is every-

thing we had hoped it would be and more. It provides such a dynamic learning and teaching environment and is a pleasure to work and study in.

"The pupils, who were involved in planning various aspects of the new school, are delighted to see their ideas take shape.

"They were involved in the large entrance feature that details some of the words that are important to our school community."

Pupils are equally positive about their new building, saying they like the bright classrooms, the superb IT suite, MUGA pitch and playground equipment.

"I love coming to school every day because our school makes me happy," says Mia, of P2.

While Sean of P6 says "learning is easier in our new school".

Primary 7 pupil Niamh adds: "I am so glad I got the chance to settle into this



The new £7million St Mark's Primary has been a huge hit with pupils and teachers





in a different class

beautiful building before I went to high school." For Alexander of P5, it's all about the outdoor space.

"I love learning outdoors", he says.

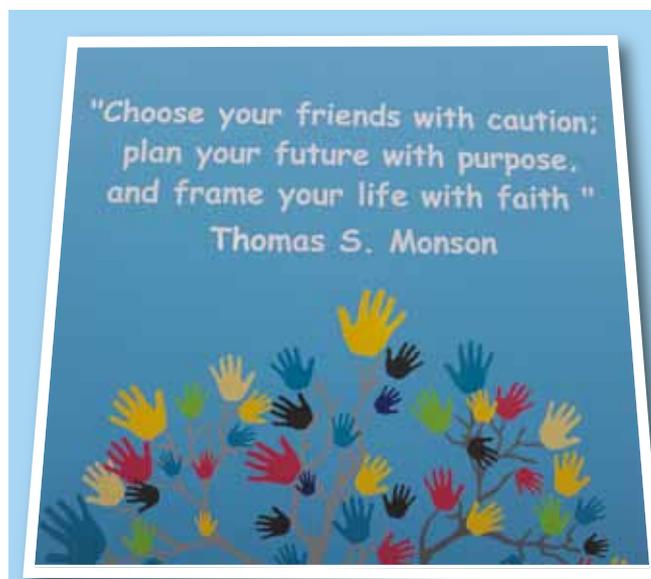
Meanwhile, the council's new budget includes almost £161million more for South Lanarkshire's Schools Modernisation Programme.

"That programme has already created what is arguably the best learning environment for pupils in Britain, with every one of our secondary pupils learning in state-of-the-art schools," says Council Leader Eddie McAvoy.

"Almost 18,000 younger pupils – about three-quarters of the total – are being taught in 85 new-build primaries or one of four totally refurbished schools.

"And our work to complete the primary modernisation programme is on track.

"It's not just bricks and mortar either – a total of £4.59m has been committed for ongoing investment in new computer



Pupils were involved in the large entrance feature that details some of the words that are important to the St Mark's school community

technology in schools, to ensure our children and young people have access to up-to-date learning technology in a modern and changing environment."

Four other new schools were green-lighted late last year, with the council approving £33.5million for the quartet.

Agreed were the rebuilds of St. Leonard's and South Park primaries in East Kilbride, Muiredge Primary, Uddingston, and Kirkton Primary in Carluke.

When complete, it will mean that another 900 pupils will be able to enjoy their education in modern and vibrant surroundings.

Planning committee chair, Councillor Hugh Dunsmuir, welcomed the schools boost on behalf of the committee.

"This is great news for pupils in East Kilbride, Uddingston and Carluke," he said.

"We are committed to providing the very best educational facilities we can for our young people. The Schools Modernisation Programme has already provided thousands of children with splendid new surroundings in which to learn and play."





IT'S BEEN A BUMPER YEAR FOR SOUTH LANARKSHIRE'S MUSEUMS, PARKS,

5m visits prove attractions have pulling power

By **Mhairi Anderson**

SOUTH Lanarkshire's eclectic mix of award-winning museums, attractions, theatres, sports and leisure venues has attracted a bumper five million visits.

Sport and leisure facilities recorded more than three million visits, with cultural venues, including libraries, notching up two million.

Thanks to some extremely successful exhibitions and events, such as the 'Robots' exhibition at Hamilton's Low Parks Museum, almost 40,000 people visited, up more than 9000 over the previous year.

Gerry Campbell, General Manager of South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture (SLLC), said: "There have also been increases in bookings for weddings, community and corporate events in the museum.

"And the mezzanine cafe has been doing a roaring trade with customers appreciating the regularly changing menu."

Among the most popular cultural events of last year was Hamilton's Mausoleum Festival of Living History, which transported visitors back in time to the 1500s with a commemorative re-enactment of the brave Lanarkshire men who fought for King James IV at Flodden Field in 1513.

Mr Swan, from Carluke who, like many others went along with his family on the day, praised the event.

"My young family and I popped over to Hamilton after my wife had spotted a flyer in one of the museums a few weeks beforehand," he said.

"The plan was to simply grab some lunch in the sun with a picnic in the park and then pop our heads into the mausoleum, as it must have been about 15 years since I had visited.

"But the day proved to be much more enjoyable and fun-filled than that.

"Cooking habits, knights, battles, sword play, muskets and dress-up – it was all fascinating and had us all captivated – from five months to 42.

"It was all very well done and we were impressed. A thoroughly enjoyable day and very well put together."

Despite the rise and rise of e-books, South Lanarkshire's excellent local libraries continues to attract an increasing number of users thanks to the provision of facilities such as free internet.

There were 96,817 additional visitors to

libraries, taking the total to almost 1.5million. Larkhall Library's move to a more central location and shared premises with the Q&A office, Money Matters and the Community Learning Services has proven very popular with local residents.

Stonehouse Library also benefited from relocation to shared premises in a brand-new facility, joining with community halls and social work partners.

South Lanarkshire's 26 libraries are playing a key role in extending computer and, crucially, internet access to members of the community who would otherwise have limited opportunities.

Gerry continued: "It is very rewarding to see that visitor numbers to our cultural services are up by five per cent."

The varied range of workshops and classes available for youngsters has also been hugely successful, as they have flocked along to draw cartoon characters, create monsters and dinosaurs, design wacky T-shirts, make puppets and create a 'scene in a box'.

"We are enjoying a welcome boost to all our classes, such as our painting summer school, arts and crafts workshops, or our popular music courses with expert tuition," said Gerry.

"There is something for every taste and classes fill up so fast early booking is imperative."

Another hugely popular event was the annual Summer Fest in East Kilbride, which saw more than 2000 visitors enjoy the varied line-up.

Yarn bombing, which is taking place all over the world, 'exploded' in South Lanarkshire as part of the Summer Fest programme.

Known as urban or guerrilla knitting in Europe, it is becoming as much of a phenomenon as graffiti street art, with fibre artists covering everything from water towers to buses.

South Lanarkshire Leisure & Culture has been encouraging the resurgence of the traditional craft of crocheting and knitting, with staff teaming up with experienced crafters across the area to teach children and adults.

This culminated at the East Kilbride Summer Fest with trees, lampposts, benches, pillars and chairs being covered in colourful yarn.

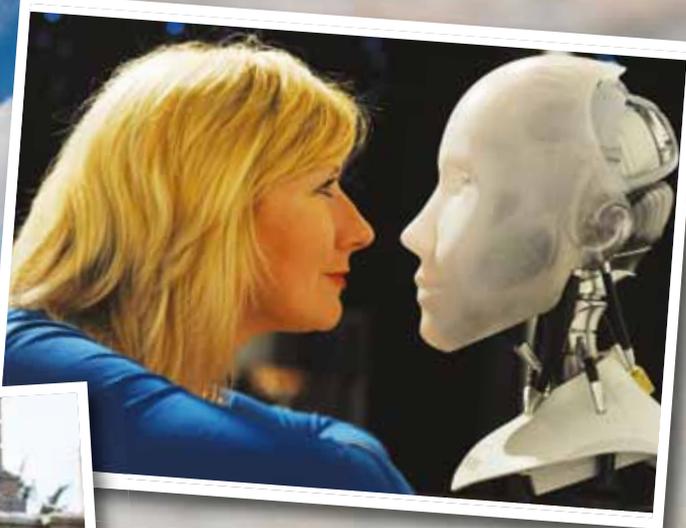
"The yarn bombing certainly proved to be a great topic for conversation and interest among passers-by and visitors to the Summer Fest," said Councillor Hamish Stewart, Chair of the Board, SLLC.

"It brightened up the area around the East Kilbride Arts Centre and brought





AND LIBRARIES WITH A RECORD NUMBER OF VISITORS



From history festivals to library book events, museum exhibitions and sporting challenges, there is huge interest in the myriad of activities, attractions and venues available in South Lanarkshire

something a little different to the town.

"Not only that but, at the end of Summer Fest, all that fabulous knitting was completely redesigned to make warm blankets for the cats and dogs at the Scottish SPCA animal rescue centre in Hamilton."

While there is a comprehensive programme of events, classes and activities aimed at the younger members of the community, the over-50s haven't been forgotten.

Specially aimed at the 50-plus age group, the 'Young at Heart' Festival aims to celebrate the arts with popular events such as 2 o'clock recitals, craft fair, exhibitions, classic film screenings, informative talks and a range of participatory sessions, as well as have-a-go ceramics or textiles workshops."

"Figures for people enjoying sport and physical activity are up by seven per cent across all South Lanarkshire centres," explained Gerry.

Following the success of the 2012 Olympics and to promote interest in this year's Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, SLCC organised a variety of sporting events to inspire young people to get active.

The Gateway to the Games Festival helped to encourage, inspire and motivate thousands of primary pupils to get involved in local sport by giving them an opportunity to experience a selection of sports, such as judo, bowls, netball, athletics, rugby, badminton, hockey, dance, taekwondo, karate and golf, all delivered by local clubs.

Gerry concluded: "Our classes have been proving very popular indeed, particularly after the festive season, with a big increase in people joining the gym and taking part in fitness classes.

"There were 1.6m visitors to our swimming pools, up around seven per cent on the previous year. Our outdoor resources and country parks have also enjoyed the same high level with attendances reaching 2,180,428.

"The increase in user numbers for sports and culture's diverse range of activities shows that even more people are enjoying the facilities, shows, classes and courses we have to offer."

Good will hunting pays off as lodge receives £100k funding boost

Report by **James Davitt**

MORE than £100,000 has been awarded to a community group to improve the heating system at their historic hunting lodge premises.

Wiston Lodge was awarded the grant from the Clyde Wind Farm Community and Development Fund, which is provided by energy company SSE throughout the lifetime of its 350MW Clyde Wind Farm near Biggar.

The fund is administered on SSE's behalf by South Lanarkshire Council, who advise potential applicants, assess the applications and monitor projects to ensure community benefits are delivered.

Wiston Lodge is a rural charity and social enterprise formed in 2007. Its main aim is to support the personal, social and emotional development of people facing disadvantage and inequality.

They do this by delivering outdoor learning, environmental education and arts-based programmes.

The base for their activities is Wiston Lodge itself, a large 1870s former hunting lodge with a wide variety of sizeable rooms suitable for meetings, conferences, courses and overnight accommodation.

Local community groups regularly use the facilities for meetings and community events but there have been consistent complaints about the temperature of the rooms due to the inefficient and out-of-date heating system.

The organisation therefore made a bid to the fund for the installation of a woodchip fuelled biomass heating system to replace the existing Kerosene and LPG systems resulting in an award of £100,762.

It was approved at February's meeting of South Lanarkshire Council's Enterprise Services Committee.

Councillor Chris Thompson, chair of the council's committee, said: "Wiston Lodge is a fairly unique charity and the work they do has a significant impact for a number of people from vastly differing backgrounds.

"As well as allowing them to continue with this work and ensuring the facilities can be heated correctly and efficiently, the organisation will also deliver a new education programme.

"This will focus on renewable energy and sustainability and will be delivered to youth and adult groups from nearby communities.

"I am delighted that a project like this has received support from the committee.

"We do, of course, have to thank SSE as the money comes from them and we simply administer the funds on their behalf."

Put your community ideas into practice with a grant

DOES your community group have a great idea but need funding to carry it out?

An extra £10.3million is being made available by the Scottish Government to extend the Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) until March 2016.

The Climate Challenge Fund is a Scottish Government programme managed by independent charity Keep Scotland Beautiful.

Projects have included energy efficiency improvements in community-owned halls, provision of energy efficiency advice, lower carbon transport schemes, community growing projects and initiatives to reduce, reuse and recycle.

All applicants receive help and support from Development Officers at Keep Scotland Beautiful. For more information visit the Climate Challenge Fund website.





NEWS AND INFORMATION ON A PROGRAMME AIMED AT MAKING INDEPENDENT LIVING AS SAFE AND EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR THE ELDERLY CAN NOW BE READILY ACCESSED ONLINE. EUAN DUGUID REPORTS

WHAT does a tradesman who used to decorate for Royalty have in common with an inspirational nurse and a football team with a combined age of around 800?

The answer ...

Well, they're all part of a drive to help make Lanarkshire a great place for older people to live today and in the future.

A new website has been launched to chart the extraordinary efforts carried out by everyday people, like these, under the nationwide Reshaping Care for Older People (RCOP) programme.

The site – www.rcop.org.uk – also provides an easy-to-follow guide on the background of the Lanarkshire RCOP programme.

There's comprehensive details on the supports and services available, forthcoming events and award-winning projects that are all combining to meet the needs of an ageing population.

RCOP aims to make independent living a reality to growing numbers of older people by providing more support and care in the community, homes and homely settings by combining the expertise of a diverse partnership.

Partners in Lanarkshire include NHS Lanarkshire, North and South Lanarkshire Councils, the voluntary sector (charitable groups) and the independent sector, which includes care homes and care-at-home services.

Older adults themselves and unpaid carers are also valued partners.

Since RCOP's launch in 2011, the North and South Lanarkshire partnerships have been attracting national – and international – attention for their sterling work.

The website's news section, for example, tells the story of Matt Muircroft, an unpaid carer whose tale of devotion touched hearts across the world.

Matt, a former decorator for Royalty, painstakingly recreated his former home to help his wife, Julie, cope with dementia.

There's also the tale of the twinkle-toed over-65 walking football team. Steel Game FC, with a combined age of around 800, have courted national interest after a star turn on network television news.

They were set up as one of many projects to help older people stay connected to their community.

Sandra Mackay, North Lanarkshire RCOP Programme Manager, explains: "The unifying aim of the many programmes and schemes showcased on the website is to make positive and independent living a reality for people in Lanarkshire.

"Many of the partnership projects are also proving to be a national beacon of best practice."

In South Lanarkshire, for example, there's the Integrated Community Support Team (ICST), who recently won the Integrated Care for Older People Award at The Scottish Health Awards, one of the most prestigious and recognised accolades



The new website is packed with news and features on real people such as Matt and his wife, Julie, and nurse Patricia Ann Murphy

New website clicks with silver surfers



of its kind in Scotland. The ICST pilot scheme aims to prevent unnecessary hospital or care home admissions, and to reduce the length of stay in hospital by combining the expertise of NHS Lanarkshire staff and social care professionals from South Lanarkshire Council.

Similarly, in North Lanarkshire, the Age Specialist Service Emergency Team (ASSET), have also picked up various awards, including, most recently, a gong at

The Herald Society Awards. The team, who include NHS consultants, nurses and a trained psychiatric nurse, work with social work staff to allow older people in the region to remain in their own home rather than being taken to hospital.

Other success stories documented on the website include the many supports available to people living with dementia.

These include the work ongoing in Motherwell that has become Scotland's

first dementia-friendly town and the Hamilton-based musical memories choir – who use the power of music to help people live with the condition.

There's also the moving story of Patricia Anne Murphy, a nurse from Hairmyres, who overcame a brain tumour in the very same ward where she now cares for older people in their final days and weeks.

Patricia Anne's experience demonstrates that, as the partnerships move to provide more services at home and homely settings, caring and compassionate services will still be available for those that need them in a hospital setting.

There are many more details on projects ranging from befriending schemes to national documents laying down detailed plans for the future.

Marjorie McGinty, South Lanarkshire RCOP Programme Manager, added: "We believe our partnerships, here and in North Lanarkshire, have set down a strong foundation stone for the future of community-based care and support.

"We are committed to building on that through continued hard work and innovation.

"The website is designed to be a strong resource where members of the public, older people, staff and key stakeholders can keep up-to-date with progress, events and the latest news as we drive forward together."



Partners join forces to promote pedal power

A NEW partnership is to be set up in South Lanarkshire to promote cycling.

The Cycling Partnership will be made up of elected members, council officials, partner agencies and local community groups with links to the activity.

Cycling Scotland praised the council for "greatly improving" its approach to cycle use.

The authority has made "significant progress" since 2008, according to the national cycle promotion organisation for Scotland.

They assess cycling policy every five years and say South Lanarkshire deserves credit for "showing improvement in leadership and commitment, co-ordination, cycle skills development and monitoring".

The newly created partnership will build on this success and be chaired by Councillor Graham Simpson, depute chair of the Enterprise Services Committee.

Two other elected members will also be part of the group, along with council officers, and invitations will be extended to representatives from Sustrans, SPT, Cycling Scotland, Police Scotland and community groups with an interest in cycling.

Councillor Simpson said: "We are already actively encouraging South Lanarkshire residents to take up cycling and last summer we ran a large advertising campaign to demonstrate the benefits of pedal power.

"We are presently creating a number of short promotional films to show different types of journeys and activities that are convenient by bicycle, including commuting, cycling to school, family cycling for leisure and mountain biking and sports cycling.

"These will be placed on the council's website and on YouTube in the coming months. We also actively promote cycling in schools and offer Cycling Scotland's "Bikeability" scheme to all South Lanarkshire primary schools.

"The council's new website will also provide a more comprehensive guide to cycling in South Lanarkshire.

"I am delighted this partnership has been set up and look forward to doing everything we can to increase the number of people cycling across South Lanarkshire.

"As a council, we have certainly been doing a lot for cyclists in our area in recent years but we are always aware of the need to do more."

Why not get together for ...

the big lunch

.. and help to feed community spirit



Big Lunches have been held all over the UK, bringing communities, generations and cultures together, making people feel better connected

By Emma Smith

SOUTH Lanarkshire residents are being urged to get together for a big lunch date in June and help feed community spirit.

The Big Lunch is a very simple idea from the Eden Project. The aim is to get as many people as possible across the UK to have lunch with their neighbours every year on the first Sunday in June in a simple act of community, friendship and fun.

Big Lunches have taken place in all types of communities across the UK and can be anything from a few neighbours getting together in the garden or on the street, to a full-blown street party with food, music and decoration that quite literally stops the traffic.

Scottish communities, including South Lanarkshire, have been taking part since 2011, getting together across the country from Stranraer to Shettleton.

Last year, more than 3.5m people took to their streets, gardens and community spaces and it's hoped even more people will take part in this year's Big Lunch on Sunday, June 1.

Getting together with neighbours can be great fun but can also have big impacts on how people feel about where they live.

Taking part can feed community spirit,

helping to forge local ties and encourage friendlier, safer neighbourhoods where those who may be isolated feel better connected.

Enjoying a Big Lunch is just the start – it's what can happen after that really makes the difference.

There has been appetite to take part in The Big Lunch across South Lanarkshire since the beginnings of the campaign.

The Hindu Temple of Scotland, based in Rutherglen, got involved in 2012 when The Big Lunch was an official part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations.

They organised a successful Big Jubilee Lunch and welcomed the wider community in on the day to mark the occasion through sharing lunch and a cultural programme that celebrated both South Indian and Scottish traditions.

The Big Lunch has since become part of the temple's annual calendar and they have continued to carry on activity in the local community, speaking to local schools about

Hindu culture and putting on other open days and events. In the run-up to last year's Big Lunch day, organisers held The Big Lunch Community Awards to celebrate five years of the campaign, which has been running since 2009 in England and Wales.

The Hindu Temple was the winner from Scotland out of five winning communities across the UK due to their continued work in the community. Temple member Srihari Vallabhajousula was a key organiser of their 2012 event and attended an awards ceremony held by Big Lunch patron, The Duchess of Cornwall, to accept the award.

Srihari said: "The South Indian Cultural Centre was very proud to move into Rutherglen – an area with vast diversity. Our neighbours have welcomed us and made us feel an important part of the community. We wanted to thank them by making Rutherglen part of the worldwide celebration. And getting involved in The Big Jubilee Lunch gave us the perfect opportunity to open our doors. People from various backgrounds joined us, made friends and strengthened ties."

● For further info visit www.thebiglunch.com/partners/star-councils-scotland.php



Michelle McManus presents the Big Lunch award to Dr Srihari Vallabhajousula



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