A real star turn!

Aladdin wows audiences at the Webster Theatre

A place to play
Kirriemuir celebrates 150 years since the birth of JM Barrie

Our heroes
The volunteers giving their time to help others

ALSO INSIDE>> CARBON REDUCTION  FESTIVE RECYCLING DATES  WINTER MAINTENANCE
Welcome

’TIS the season to be jolly and, as panto season gets into full swing, we hope our eye-catching front cover featuring Widow Twankie has brought a smile to our readers’ faces.

Widow Twankie is just one of the colourful characters from the cast of Aladdin, which is currently packing them in at the Webster Theatre in Arbroath.

There are lots of people taking centre stage in this edition of Angus Life, including those stars of the county who have had their efforts to promote this beautiful area recognised in the Angus Ambassador Awards.

At this time of the year it’s all about giving, but there are volunteers in our community who give all-year round and we reveal some of their inspiring stories.

We look at the fantastic work being done in Angus schools to nurture pupils’ musical abilities, and we reveal how a little piece of Neverland magic is planned for Kirriemuir, thanks to investment by Angus Council.

Now is a good time to think about how to keep warm while saving energy and cash. Like any responsible householder, Angus Council is also looking at ways to reduce its energy consumption and we reveal some of the innovative work being done to achieve this.

The gift of cash is allowing many community groups in Angus to realise their ambitions and we reveal how a boost from the community grants scheme can help them fulfil their dreams in 2010.

Contents

Congratulations to Angus Ambassador Award winners 04
Meet some of the county’s unsung volunteer heroes 06
How music tuition is shaping the lives of our young people 08
They’ve got talent! The budding stars of panto Aladdin 09
Kirriemuir plans a Pan’s playground to honour JM Barrie 10
Keeping roads and pavements clear of ice this winter 12
Cutting carbon emissions across the council 13
From judo mats to marquees, grants help local groups 14

Performance is online

The details of how Angus Council has performed against each of the 2008/09 Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs), are now available online.

SPIs are the means by which the performance of all local authorities is measured for services as diverse as corporate management and adult social work.

The annual publication of the figures provides an opportunity for people to see how their council has performed during the past year and whether it is above or below the national average.

Angus Council has published how it performed against each of the national indicators on Angus Council Performs, the dedicated performance section of the council’s website at www.angus.gov.uk/performance.
Dates for festive recycling

CHRISTMAS and New Year mean there will be different dates for collection of household waste bins and recycling boxes.

Households on kerbside recycling scheme:
- **Grey bins** – all households will receive an alternate week collection as normal with the only change being Friday collection as normal with the receive an alternate week collection.
- **Green bins** – no collection for four weeks from Monday 21 December to Friday 15 January.
- **Green boxes** – most households will receive a weekly collection. Those that don’t will receive two collections over the three weeks affected by the festive season public holidays.

**Towns and villages not on kerbside recycling scheme:**
- **Grey bins** – most collections will be unaffected, however one Monday and one Friday collection will be missed.
- **Over the two-week holiday period, recycling centres will be closed on Friday 25 and Saturday 26 December 2009 and Friday 1 and Saturday 2 January 2010.**
- The centres will be open all other days for recycling and disposal of bulky items.
- **Requests for the special collection service of bulky items during the two-week period Thursday 24 December 2009 to Thursday 7 January 2010 will be rescheduled to start on Friday 8 January 2010.**
- Over the two-week holiday period, there will be no Friday commercial waste collections.
- There will be no special uplift of bulky items between Thursday 24 December and Thursday 7 January. The service will start again on Friday 8 January.

**Love food, hate waste? Read on**

ARE you making a list and checking it twice? With the festive season just around the corner, a common theme on the list of every good boy and girl is organising the food and drink for this magical holiday.

The easiest way to deal with this mammoth task and to reduce waste is to plan, plan, plan.

Think of how many people you are catering for and then decide what meals you want to prepare to satisfy your hungry crowd.

Planning your meals and writing a list is a great way to ensure you buy exactly what you need and don’t waste anything.

Remember to incorporate a few leftover meals to use up that turkey – the Love Food Hate Waste website has a delicious collection of recipes that will ensure turkey sandwiches are not the only option on the menu!

Over the Christmas season you will probably buy a lot more of your food in advance, but before you get carried away, remember to check your fridge and freezer to see what space is left and if you really do need that extra tub of brandy cream!

When shopping, check date labels to ensure you can use products before they expire and remember to follow all storage instructions on packaging so that you can enjoy your product at its best.

We all worry about unexpected guests, and if you do want to buy extra this Christmas make sure what you buy can be frozen – that way if it’s not used over the festive period it can still be enjoyed at a later date.

As much as we’ll all enjoy our Christmas dinner, leftovers are inevitable. However, rest assured this good food does not have to go to waste.

Cool any leftovers as quickly as possible and store them in an airtight container for up to two days. Leftover turkey and other meats are great eaten hot or cold, but remember if you do decide to reheat meals, make sure that they are piping hot all the way through before you eat them.

For more hints, tips and inspiration visit www.wasteawarelovefood.org.uk to ensure your Christmas is a wasteless winter wonderland.

Citizens’ survey

THE results of a survey carried out in Angus to gauge local people’s views on a variety of topics from council services to community safety will be unveiled early in the New Year.

The survey, which was commissioned by Angus Council, started in August and involved door-to-door based interviews with 1,250 households in the county.

The findings of the survey will assist the Angus Community Planning Partnership in determining the most important priorities for the people and communities of Angus, and how to best deliver these in the future.

Montrose pool

As Angus Life went to press, consideration was pending on the planning proposals for the new £10m pool swimming pool at Montrose.

If planning permission is granted, work is expected to start on the new pool, which will be built next to Montrose Academy, in January 2011, with completion by October 2012.
Local teams deliver local priorities

Angus Council and the Angus Community Planning Partnership have set up four local community planning teams. The teams will deliver local community planning aims for an initial two-year period.

Staff from community planning, community learning and development, and community participation assistants from housing will work together in the teams. The teams will be located in the Montrose/Brechin area at Brechin ACCESS Office; Forfar/Kirriemuir at Kirriemuir ACCESS Office; Arbroath at Noran Avenue; and Carnoustie/Monifieth at Carnoustie ACCESS Office.

They have been set up to:
- help communities define and achieve their objectives, manage projects and engage with the wider community
- support local community planning
- act as an area service team
- liaise with and support elected members
- provide opportunities for tenants to get involved in decisions about their own housing
- develop opportunities for tenants to review the council's housing division performance highlighting their priorities for improvement.

Communities can expect:
- training for those active in the community
- organisational development support
- building community assets and resources
- identification of community needs and aspirations
- help to design and implement community engagement activities
- an effective flow of information between partners in relation to local priorities and aspirations
- encouragement to work together to achieve local outcomes.

These awards are now in their 11th year and were created by the Angus Ahead Campaign to showcase and celebrate the best of Angus people, Angus community and Angus business.

Merpro was set up in 1979 and, with Bert at the helm, it grew from its early roots as a consultancy operation with a team of five to an international company with bases across four continents. It is now recognised as a major player in the oil and gas sector, with an annual turnover of £26.61 million and 220 employees.

Since the company was established in Montrose, Bert has maintained his focus on enhancing existing products and developing new technologies. As managing director, he quickly recognised the value of adopting and adapting the very latest technology and uses his

The Angus Ambassador of the Year 2009 is Bert Smith, chairman and managing director of Merpro Group Ltd – a company that this year celebrates three decades of success and is a global market leader in the oil and gas sector.

Bert’s entrepreneurial abilities and pioneering way of thinking resulted in Merpro becoming one of the largest employers in the area and further enhanced the reputation of Angus as a place where enterprise and innovation can thrive.

Phil Mulholland, managing director of Piperdam Golf & Leisure Resort and sponsor of this award, paid tribute to Bert’s success. “It’s a challenging time for those of us in business and I am delighted to see this award going to the head of a company that was launched 30 years ago and is still contributing strongly to the economy and status of the county.

“Bert demonstrated entrepreneurship at the start of the company, but it was his outstanding leadership that brought Merpro to its current global success. It is those qualities and achievements that are recognised with this ultimate Ambassador accolade.”

Bert was honoured at the glittering Angus Ambassador Awards on Friday 27 November, with guest presenter Andrea Brymer of STV’s North Tonight news programme and over 200 of the county’s business, tourism, youth and community leaders.

These awards are now in their 11th year and were created by the Angus Ahead Campaign to showcase and celebrate the best of Angus people, Angus community and Angus business.
highly skilled workforce to ensure that Merpro maintains its competitive advantage.

He used that approach when the company developed technology to remove the sand and water that can accumulate when drilling for oil – technology which led to Merpro becoming a world leader in Topsides Process Technologies. Its hubs in Houston, Cairo, Singapore and Nigeria ensures that Merpro’s innovative products and reputation continue to be promoted on a world stage.

As well as Bert’s key role in transforming Merpro into a global organisation, he has also made a major contribution to the development of the wider Angus economy. He actively participated in a number of organisations aimed at supporting businesses, including the original Angus Enterprise Trust North Angus Partnership; was a former board member of Scottish Enterprise Tayside; and sits on the Angus Economic Development Partnership.

Bert joins six other Angus stars who were recognised with Ambassador Awards. •

For more information visit www.angusahead.com
Community team joins forces with local groups

THE new local community planning team, covering the Carnoustie, Monifieth and Sidlaw areas, is working on a number of projects in these areas.

The team is supporting local residents/tenants groups and producing community profiles for each area.

In Carnoustie, the team is supporting the development of the new Carnoustie Forward group as well as maintaining supportive links to the Carnoustie Centre Action Group.

In Monifieth, the team recently hosted an evening entitled Monifieth the Missing Factor where representatives of various groups in the Monifieth and surrounding area were invited along to discuss needs and aspirations for the area.

The team also continues to support the work of the Monifieth Landward Partnership and the Monifieth in Bloom group.

In future months, the team will be reaching out to the surrounding Sidlaw areas and working with local groups.

For further information on local community planning, contact the team on 01241 803111, email cpofficer@angus.gov.uk or visit www.angus.org.uk

Top marks for sports development team

SPORTS development in Angus has been recognised as one of the best in the country.

An assessment score of 82 per cent has seen Angus Council’s sports development team become highly commended by Quest – the UK quality scheme for sport and leisure. Quest is a continuous improvement tool designed for managing teams involved in development activities which encourage increased participation in physical activity, sport, recreation, play and other cultural activities.

The scheme assesses a number of management areas including strategy and planning, operations and delivery, customer relations and staff management.

Brechin bid for Fairtrade

LOCAL community planning activity in Brechin has recently included the establishment of a group to take forward a fair trade initiative and achieve Fairtrade status for the city.

A steering group has been set up which is led by the Episcopal Church and supported by local schools and business.

Brechin High School has been working with local environmental campaigners, police and community safety wardens to tackle litter issues, particularly around the high school and at lunchtime.

The school has obtained a community grant from the council to fund three new bins strategically placed to encourage use by young people. It is hoped young people from the high school will take ownership of the project with some involved in designing a logo for the new bins.

For further information, visit www.angus.org.uk

MEET GRAEME GORDON

ALTHOUGH in full-time work, Graeme Gordon finds the time to support service users from The Gables – a residential care home for adults – by taking them out on trips to Forfar for coffee and a breakfast roll or a snack.

He also assists a service user who has an interest in photography.

Graeme has been a volunteer since December 2008 and, as his time for volunteering is dependent on his working week, he often volunteers on a weekday morning when his son is at playgroup.

Graeme said: "I work shifts for a bus company in Dundee, so available time varies from week to week. But I always enjoy my voluntary time and always come away with a great feeling from helping some great people."
Throughout
Angus, a band of unsung heroes give up their time to support others in their communities – providing a lifeline to some of our most vulnerable citizens.

The largest single volunteer force in Angus is in the council’s Social Work and Health Department, with more than 100 people at any one time carrying out a variety of roles, ranging from driving to befriending.

Last year, volunteer drivers in Angus clocked up an amazing 815,000 miles helping take children to school and to contact meetings with their families, as well as helping older people from rural areas to travel to day care facilities and helping people with disabilities to access activities in the community.

Other volunteers are befrienders who work directly with children or adults, taking them out for a coffee, a walk in the park or a visit to the cinema, or who help out in various ways in day centres, residential units or resource centres.

The council works in partnership with the Volunteer Centre Angus to get people involved in a range of voluntary activity associated with social work services.

Joan Hawksworth has been a volunteer at Rosehill Resource Centre since her retirement eight years ago. As a volunteer at Rosehill, Joan’s support means that people from the centre can take part in a variety of activities. This includes trips to take part in sport and leisure activities. She also runs a drama group at the centre, which has put on shows in Angus – helping to promote understanding towards people with learning disabilities through contact with others in their community.

Joan said: “I get a great deal of satisfaction from my volunteer work at Rosehill, knowing that a trip to the sports centre means so much to the service users.” She added: “Volunteers can play a part in lots of ways, from helping make scenery for the drama group, to befriending someone and taking them to the cinema. There are lots of opportunities to become involved and I would recommend volunteering to anyone.”

If you are interested in becoming a social work volunteer, please call Volunteer Centre Angus on: 01241 875525 or drop into their offices at 32-34 Guthrie Port, Arbroath

www.angus.gov.uk 07 ANGUSlife
Music can make a world of difference to young people’s lives – helping to build lasting friendships, teach discipline and develop vital skills for the future.

From lullabies to the wedding march, rock concerts to requiems; music provides the soundtrack to our journey through life. The chance to participate in music brings enormous benefits, particularly for young people, helping develop skills such as teamwork, communication, confidence, creativity and self-discipline, bringing success in education and in life.

In Angus, school pupils benefit from the support of a highly motivated team of music tutors. Music support officer Jerry Randalls explained the many ways in which music can enrich pupils’ lives. “Through music young people meet from all over Angus – lifelong friendships are forged in orchestras, bands and choirs and in turn young people can then go on to make friends at national and international level,” he said.

“Music builds confidence through performance and a musician has to be an individual as well as a team player. Pupils learn the responsibility of attending rehearsals, and the disciplines of practising and taking exams. They learn self-expression, taking ownership of a piece of music and performing it their way. They learn to deal with the moments when things didn’t go so well.

“Lastly, they learn humility – there is always something more to learn.”

“We are lucky in Angus to have such a gifted, dedicated instrumental team. There is amazing work going on and we have many youngsters hungry to take up music as a career, having been inspired by their teacher. The tutors give up their evenings to work with the children and go the extra mile at exam and audition time. It’s a pride thing. We so want them to do well.”

In Angus, all children from P4 are offered music tuition with the first year free of charge. As pupils progress, they have the chance to take part in a number of activities, including playing in bands and orchestras at all levels.

To improve the service offered to pupils, a root and branch review of instrumental tuition, how it is paid for and how it is delivered, is currently being carried out in Angus. This will include the launch of a new website next year giving details about the service, rehearsal times and application forms.

Jerry added: “As part of the review, we are consulting with parents regarding lesson contracts. The system needs to be fairer and more transparent. I have had a number of discussions with parents regarding their child’s music experience and their input is valuable in getting it right.”

CASE STUDY

Ross Knight

Since picking up a tuba aged nine, music has become a huge part of Carnoustie High School pupil Ross Knight’s life. And now thanks to years of hard work and dedication, along with the support of Angus music staff, Ross (17) stands on the brink of an exciting new career studying in London with the aim of gaining a place playing professionally in a top orchestra.

Ross said: “Without the fantastic musical tuition that I receive I know for sure I wouldn’t be at the stage I am at now in my career.”

Mike Rollo:

“Ross is a very talented tuba player and is very lucky to have such a wonderful support system behind him. Ross is the type of pupil you just want to see do well.”
DECEMBER sees the curtain go up on the Webster Theatre’s first ever professional panto. There are a limited amount of tickets left for the star-studded production of Aladdin which runs at the Arbroath venue until 2 January, but hurry as tickets are going fast.

The cast of Aladdin features some well-known faces from stage and screen. David Van Day is playing the evil Abanazer, while River City heart-throb Gary Lamont is the hero of the hour – Aladdin himself. Rodney Ward, taking his annual break from a successful career as a classical singer, plays Widow Twankie.

Supporting the cast are the dancers from the Angus Centre for the Performing Arts in Carnoustie and our picture shows Gary dropping into the centre in October to tell them that their audition had been successful.

To book tickets, call the box office on 01241 435800. For more information on some of the great shows already lined up at the Webster for 2010, visit www.webstertheatre.co.uk

MUSIC UPDATES

AS part of the government-funded Youth Music Initiative (YMI), jazz education is being offered at Monifieth High School.

In Kirriemuir, a Celtic music project at Webster High School will encourage fledgling traditional music players.

Rock College, based at Brechin High School, aims to have a concert next summer featuring a band from each of the eight secondary schools with the best band winning studio time to make a demo.

The council is working with music therapy services firm Nordoff-Robbins to give children with additional and special needs at primary schools access to music.

YMI is also supporting choral activities.

Ross has also played National Youth Brass Scotland, the European Brass Band, and the National Children’s Orchestra of Scotland.

Music teaching in Angus is based on the idea that music education is best started early and everyone is capable of musical literacy.
Playtime for Pan

The 150th anniversary of JM Barrie’s birth is marked with the creation of a place for children to play.

Plans are progressing for an exciting new development in Kirriemuir which will take its inspiration from the magical tale of JM Barrie’s Peter Pan. As the little red town gears up to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of its most famous son, the council and the local community have been working in partnership to create a fitting project to mark the event.

In 2010, it will be 150 years since James Matthew Barrie was born in a weaver’s cottage in Kirriemuir and, following input from the local community, plans have been unveiled to redevelop a local beauty spot to celebrate.

The proposals for the first phase of the development of Kirrie Hill will include a new play area with a Peter Pan/Neverland motif, a heritage and nature trail, new picnic tables, improvements to the access road and improvement works to JM Barrie’s grave.

Local historian and member of the Kirriemuir Heritage Trust Sandra Affleck welcomed the proposals for Kirrie Hill. She said: “I am delighted by the care, attention and sensitivity that the design team has given to this project, and by their strenuous efforts to raise the necessary funding.”

The project is also being supported by Kirriemuir Community Council, whose chair Roland Proctor said: “Kirrie Hill is a fine place to walk and reflect. As long as the work enhances the natural attraction of the hill and are a benefit to not only Kirriemuir children but also those from further afield, myself and members of the community council are in support of the project.”

A detailed planning application for the project will be submitted by the end of the year, and there will be the opportunity to view displays in the local library and access office showing the proposed development during the planning process.

The aim is to complete the initial phase of the project by autumn 2010. The plans for Kirrie Hill sit within a local community planning pilot project focusing specifically on tourism in the area.

In partnership with the local community, the pilot project group is focusing on sustainable developments that will boost tourism in the area, including plans for the 150th celebration in 2010 of JM Barrie’s birth and also the possibility of other longer-term projects.

The regeneration of Kirrie Hill will be partly funded from the council’s parks and cemeteries fund, first introduced by the authority in 2008, and a further report on the financial package for the project will be prepared following the completion of the council’s 2010/11 budget process.
A NEW local community planning team for the Kirriemuir and Dean and Forfar and District wards has recently been established.

This team brings together three streams of community support in order to better support community development and community engagement in the service planning process.

The team is also responsible for supporting registered Angus Council tenant’s groups and undertaking community appraisals which help to identify community priorities.

For further information, visit www.angus.org.uk

**Montrose gives it a go**

THE new local community planning team is running events to encourage tenant participation in Montrose.

This has included a Give it a Go event, showing what is available to people in the area.

A partnership has also been formed to regenerate Montrose town centre and improve economic opportunities for employment and education.

This initiative has included a bid to the Scottish Government’s Town Centre Regeneration fund.

For further information, visit www.angus.org.uk

**Carnoustie award joy**

THE £980,000 revamp of Carnoustie seafront has won a Nancy Ovens Award for Play.

The award for Best Design for a Play Space was presented at a ceremony in Aberfeldy recently.

The project, officially opened by Angus Council in June, includes new play equipment and surfaces, shelters, landscaping, a refurbished paddling pool and crazy golf course. The Trust was set up in memory of child campaigner Nancy Ovens MBE.

**Angus Shorts**

**KIRRIEMUIR** is just one part of the county to benefit from the £400,000 which has been allocated by the council in each of the past two years to bring parks and cemeteries up to standard – benefiting residents and visitors alike. Projects already carried out include new play equipment at the Saltire Leisure Centre, a new fence and new pedestrian access at the Carnoustie House grounds, and repairs to walls at Fowlis and Lunan burial grounds.

Play areas in Montrose, landscaping and environmental projects in Kirriemuir and Forfar and various essential works to cemeteries across the county are also in the pipeline.

In Arbroath, £35,000 is to be invested in repairs and paintwork to ornamental railings and gates at both the Western and Eastern Cemeteries. At the Western cemetery a further £35,000 will be used to reinstate the boundary wall.

In Montrose, £88,000 has been allocated for the first phase of the replacement of the play area at Scott Park, and its relocation to Green Park, while in Monifieth £28,000 will be used to resurface a section of road to Riverview Park.

Other funding projects include an allocation towards a wheeled-sports facility in Forfar, and environmental improvements at churchyards and cemeteries throughout the county including work at Kinnell, Cortachy, Arbirlot, Guthrie, Dun, Inverkeilor and Monikie.

The council’s head of Neighbourhood Services Ron Ashton said that under this financial package far more projects are eligible for funding than had been previously possible.

"Instead of being limited to just the repair and replacement of equipment, it’s possible to plan and deliver entirely new projects such as the exciting new Peter Pan play area,” he said.
According to the Met Office, early indications are that this winter is likely to be milder than last year.

However, as everyone knows weather forecasting isn’t an exact science and it’s best to be prepared for whatever the cold months bring.

In 2008-09, Angus Council had to pull out all the stops as the county was gripped by severe and prolonged winter weather – with a record number of gritting treatments of the county’s roads network.

This year’s winter maintenance budget has been increased by £220,000 and is based on anticipated needs, although predicting the demands of winter weather is a difficult task.

The council’s priority will be to follow its tried and tested winter maintenance regime to keep the county moving in the event of severe winter weather, which is vital for communities and businesses.

With 1,100 miles of road in Angus, it would be impossible to treat all roads and footpaths at all times, and priority is given to covering an agreed network of routes.

These include bus and commuter routes, roads serving hospitals, ambulance and fire stations, schools and major industrial centres.

**Priority routes are:**
- given extended winter maintenance coverage and treated before non-priority routes
- kept open or opened in preference to non-priority routes during prolonged snow conditions

**Non-priority routes are:**
- treated after priority routes are completed
- only dealt with after priority/auxiliary routes have been satisfactorily cleared during prolonged snow conditions

**Auxiliary routes are:**
- generally at a higher altitude than the rest of the network
- more prone to icing
- more lightly used by traffic than priority routes

The council only attends to listed public roads and footways – unadopted roads and footways are the owners’ responsibility.

Trunk roads are the responsibility of the Scottish Government and the A90 in Angus is managed by BEAR Scotland Ltd, on its behalf.

The A92 between Dundee and Arbroath is also looked after by BEAR on behalf of Angus Council and Dundee City Council. Both routes receive 24-hour coverage.

**Footways**

Adopted footways are categorised into priority and non-priority routes. Priority footways are main thoroughfares in towns and larger villages. Other footways are treated on completion of priority routes. Priority footway routes vary between weekdays and weekends due to different patterns of usage.

The council has produced a leaflet which is available from council offices, libraries, police offices, and some filling stations. It lists full information on the winter maintenance programme in Angus, including a map outlining the status of Angus roads under the winter maintenance programme, and detailing the hours of cover. It also includes advice to the public on how to prepare for travel during the winter.

The leaflet with full information on winter maintenance is available online at www.angus.gov.uk/wintermaintenance and by calling ACCESSLine on 08452 777 778.
AS world governments meet in Copenhagen to thrash out a treaty on climate change, the UK has been warned of floods, droughts and killer heat waves if leaders fail to agree a solution.

In the face of such dire predictions, it is easy to feel powerless to do anything significant, but individuals and organisations can play a part in reducing the impact of climate change on the planet.

While householders are urged to conserve energy, recycle their waste and think green, Angus Council is practising what it preaches by introducing measures designed to cut harmful carbon dioxide emissions and energy bills.

The council has signed up to the Scottish Climate Change Declaration and innovative projects are taking place across the council to reduce its carbon footprint.

This has included the installation of voltage reduction technology at Brechin High School to improve the efficiency of electrical equipment and reduce energy bills.

Duncan McLaren of the council’s energy management unit said: “The technology is so tried and tested that major supermarkets, the National Railway Museum and even the Tower of London have now installed the same equipment.”

An identical unit has now been installed in Monifieth High School and plans are well advanced for further units in Forfar Academy, Arbroath Academy, Angus House, Bruce House, Saltire Leisure Centre and Seaton Grove which are predicted to save an additional 200 tonnes of CO₂.

Swimming pools and leisure centres consume lots of energy. In the last financial year, the overall energy costs for all of the facilities was approximately £470,000, with 2500 tonnes of carbon being emitted into the atmosphere.

To tackle this, the council is carrying out a number of initiatives including fitting movement sensors to switch off lights in unused areas and fitting thermostatic radiator valves to control temperatures.

The council has also made substantial improvements to the energy efficiency of its 7800 council houses, to make them among the highest quality council housing in the country. Measures include insulating cavities and lofts, double glazing windows and doors, and installing energy efficient central heating in every council house.

The council has also installed 36 solar water heating systems in Arbroath. More than 83% of council housing stock already meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. The remainder will comply by 2015.

HOME INSULATION SCHEME

THE council’s housing division has been successful in bidding for a large portion of the budget for a national home insulation scheme. The scheme offers households free energy audits and advice on becoming more energy efficient. They can also get loft and cavity wall insulation at a special price or free if eligible.

Those with existing loft insulation will also be offered free top-up loft insulation.

The scheme is specifically for households in the Brechin and Montrose area, but efficiency help and advice is available to all Angus residents by contacting the Energy Saving Trust on 0800 512012 or visiting www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

THE council’s Green Travel Plan was a finalist in the Best Green Transport/Travel provider category at the Scottish Green Awards.

The council was recognised for the range of activities to raise awareness of the environmental and health issues surrounding everyday work and business travel.

Meffan Winter Exhibition

THERE’S still time to snap up a unique Christmas gift at the Winter Exhibition at The Meffan in Forfar.

This annual event runs until 31 December, and features original work including painting, drawing, sculpture and jewellery, by artists from all over the country.

The event also features substantial prize money for the artists on show, with prize money of £1,000 for the professional category; and for the first time a prize of £250 for the amateur category.

The Meffan, 20 West High Street, Forfar, is open Monday to Saturday, from 10am to 5pm and admission is free.
Help is at hand

COMMUNITY groups across Angus are tapping into a new funding pot which is buying them everything from floodlighting to television advertising.

The Angus Community Grant Scheme was relaunched earlier this year, following a decision by the council to streamline its funding schemes to make it easier for groups to access cash.

The scheme helps community and voluntary groups across Angus with a grant towards the cost of a project in the fields of arts, heritage, sport or the environment.

Under the scheme, grants up to a maximum of £5000 are available in recognition of the contribution local organisations make to the life of their communities.

The scheme is administered by the council’s external funding team which can also help with funding from a variety of other sources, including European funds, lottery distributors and trusts.

For further information on funding visit www.angus4community.com, contact the senior external funding officer on 01307 473222 or email externalfunding@angus.gov.uk.

Easier access to grants for Angus communities

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Help is at hand

An Angus Council grant scheme is breathing new life into a number of community groups

Funding from the community grants scheme has enabled a number of organisations to access funding for a diverse range of activities.

These have included £2000 to Arbroath and Area Partnership for television advertising to promote summer events; £5000 to Strathmore Rugby Club towards floodlighting; £500 to Carnoustie Recorded Music Society for new speakers; and £2000 to Montrose YM towards setting up a youth café.

Brechin and District Round Table received £5000 towards the purchase of a marquee, trailer and public address system, which as well as being used for events in the burgh, will also be available to other groups in the county.

John Pearse, secretary of the Brechin and District Round Table, said: “The round table identified a need to improve the facilities available for Brechin’s pageant by providing covered areas for people to shelter in from any adverse weather and a public address facility.

“We agreed the best way to achieve this was to source marquees and a public address system along with a trailer to house and transport the equipment around. The community grant scheme and the financial figures available, up to £5000, was ideal for what we needed. The help and support given to our application was excellent. Council staff went out of their way to help us, and were extremely approachable and supportive throughout the whole process.

“The Round Table in Brechin works with other community-focused groups and we decided to reinforce our application by approaching these groups to seek support from them for our application and, in return, giving them access to the marquees and PA.

We sought support from Rotary, Edzell Village Improvement Society, Brechin City Rugby Club and Angus Round Tables and we thank those groups for providing written support for our application.

“I would urge other groups who can demonstrate a need for support to apply to this scheme and if they have any concerns about applying to discuss them with the council.”

From small beginnings in 2003, Monifieth Amateur Dramatics is now looking forward to a bright new future with ambitious plans to create a 135-seater theatre in the town.

To help progress the plans, the group has received £2320 from the community grants scheme towards a feasibility study to transform the former British Legion premises in the town into a modern arts venue and theatre.

John Barton of Monifieth Amateur Dramatics said: “We are delighted with all the help we have received from Angus Council’s external funding team.

“We now desperately need premises to allow us to cater for our growing audiences and for rehearsals, training and storage of scenery, lighting, sound, props and costumes. This funding will assist us in achieving the first step of this ambition.”

**CASE STUDY**

BRECHIN Judo Club successfully applied to the community grants scheme for money to buy new mats.

It received £2140, and Mark Arbuthnott of the club explained how this will ensure the club’s future. “The condition of Brechin Judo Club’s mats had become a real cause for concern and we feared that the club may have to stop if we didn’t find funding for new mats,” he said.

“We learned about the community grant scheme after enquiring with the council’s external funding team. The process couldn’t have been simpler and our application was dealt with very swiftly. We now have a brand new set of mats which guarantees the club’s future for at least another ten years.”
Angus Council Community Grant Scheme feedback

97% of responses said the application form and guidance was easy to understand and complete.
44% found the easiness of the application form to be excellent while 53% found it to be good.
47% found the length of time to get a decision to be excellent while 43% found it to be good.
57% of those replying had accessed information on the scheme via www.angus.gov.uk/externalfunding/communitygrant and 94% of these found the information to be very useful or useful.

IN May 2009, the external funding team started customer feedback on the community grant scheme with the aim of helping the council improve the scheme and its processes to ensure it is meeting the needs of applicants.

Thanks to a grant, the future of Brechin Judo Club is guaranteed for another ten years.

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