

## Team Effort for Operation Unicorn

**New Team Leader**

**Alloa Police Office  
Opens**

**Living Alloa Project**



# Chief Executive Perspective



## Dear Colleagues

As the weather and season are clearly turning, I know that many of us are thinking both professionally and personally about the Cost of Living impacts currently being experienced by our residents, service users and communities as well as by us at home.

Watching the news and viewing social media is likely heightening the concerns that many are feeling right now. I wanted to mention two significant corporate activities that are in hand and that will hopefully provide some reassurance.

Last week I participated in a cross service Incident Management Team (IMT) which had been convened to help us maximise the access to, and awareness of, the extensive range of supports we provide across a range of Council services. The discussion underlined the commitment of our teams to do the best we can to support those who need information and assistance through this crisis.

This IMT discussion was followed up by a discussion with our Community Planning partners to ensure that we can develop joined up solutions for our residents and communities. A paper is being prepared for the Council meeting on the 30th November which will present information on the range of supports available. In undertaking this work, we are also mindful that staff may also require information and support and, importantly, this is also being integrated as part of this work.

Secondly, officers are undertaking significant work to prepare options in support of the Council's budget. Clearly the Council is exposed to the same cost pressures as our residents and communities and those we are experiencing at home. This will undoubtedly mean an extremely challenging settlement for Local Government within the current fiscal context. This context is relevant across all Scottish councils and we are participating in a range of local, regional and national discussions to sustain the resilience of our service delivery approaches within this challenging context. At the same time, locally, across all service areas we

are looking to identify ways in which we can reduce spending and stay within the funds we will have available, ensuring service and financial sustainability for the future. There will also be a Budget Strategy Update report provided to Council on 30th November.

Whilst this is the challenging context against which we are all currently delivering services, and have been for some time, we continue to deliver great results for Clackmannanshire and some of these are evident in this edition of Connected. I am bowled over by how we so regularly punch above our weight in the Wee County.

Across Council services the response to deliver a dignified and well-run series of events to mark the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth was exemplary. So many officers went the extra mile to ensure that Clackmannanshire delivered a respectful response. There were so many involved across all services I cannot name everyone here but I have sent a note of thanks to those who I know were involved. I sincerely hope I didn't miss anyone!

We are also making great progress on other really important initiatives: our continued focus on improving our approach to Health and Safety and embedding a robust Health and Safety culture is evident in the recently approved Health and Safety Strategy. Our commitment to delivering the Living Wage is now also embedded in an enhanced framework to support our Modern Apprentices and is another extremely positive development, recently approved by Council.

And finally, but by no means least, we have received not one but two nominations for our Partnership project Living Alloa!

I hope that you enjoy reading about these really positive developments and thank you for continued commitment to deliver the best services we can for Clackmannanshire.

Best wishes

**Nikki Bridle** Chief Executive

# Staff Help Operation Unicorn Run Smoothly



**Staff from across the Council came together to ensure that arrangements after the death of HM Queen Elizabeth ran smoothly, both in Clackmannanshire and further afield.**

Operation Unicorn was the name given to the plan following the death of Queen Elizabeth in Scotland, which guided arrangements throughout the country.

Colleagues came together immediately following the announcement of the death to review the arrangements and the actions required. This included ensuring that books of condolence could open almost immediately in Alloa and Tillicoultry, ensuring that staff were on hand and buildings could be opened safely. The flags flying at Kilncraigs and Alloa Town Hall were also adjusted.

The Council's website and social media accounts were also changed to reflect the period of national mourning, and non essential communications postponed.

Staff worked quickly to make all the arrangements to ensure that the Proclamation of Accession announcement could take place on the steps of Alloa Town Hall on the Sunday following the death. This was read out by Nikki Bridle, and proclaimed the accession to the throne of King Charles III.

The City of Edinburgh Council asked for staff volunteers to help marshal the route of Queen Elizabeth's coffin from St Giles' Cathedral to the airport, and we were overwhelmed with colleagues who wanted to help. A number of staff took part in this operation to make sure the public were kept safe.

Staff members also helped to plan and make arrangements for Clackmannanshire's Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Queen Elizabeth. This ecumenical service was attended by community representatives and members of the public from throughout the county.

During this exceptional period for the whole of the UK, colleagues worked hard in a very pressurised environment, ensuring that Clackmannanshire played its part in marking this historical time. Their contributions are very much appreciated.



The staff volunteers who helped marshal the route of Queen Elizabeth's coffin from St Giles' Cathedral to the airport were Dana Scjalokaite, Seonaid Scott, Karen Nelson, Lynn Gardner, Holly Brember, Jennifer Brady, Graeme Henderson, Kenneth Blyth, Jack Copland, Vince Heaver, Darroch Hogg, Jordan Miller and Colin Paterson.

# Welcome – Chris Hargrove

Chris Hargrove joined us in August as Land Services Team Leader.

Lands Services is responsible for grounds maintenance, capital projects, forestry, street care and litter, parks and play areas as well as providing a burial grounds service and maintaining the areas around our war memorials.

Chris previously worked for BSI, where he supported a range of public and private sector organisations to improve. He said: "I'd worked for BSI for 12 years so felt ready for a change and I'm enjoying being in an operational role again."

Chris, who lives in Dunfermline, was quite familiar with Clackmannanshire before accepting the role, but has made sure he's been out and about as much as possible getting to know his patch. And is also getting to know his new team.

With a background in quality and safety improvement he is already looking at new ways of working. "I'm always



Chris (right) is pictured with members of land services staff Daniel McGregor (left) and Mark Graham

looking at how we can help people, whether that is my staff, colleagues in other services or the residents of Clackmannanshire", he said. "I feel there are lots of areas where we can make small changes and improvements which will make a big difference. I know things are full on, but I think if we can get the little things right it has been a good day."

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## Sophie is Young Official of the Year

Former member of staff Sophie Allan was named Young Official of the Year in sportscotland's Coaching, Officiating & Volunteering Awards 2022.

Sophie was a pupil at Lornhill Academy where she was a Young Ambassador, Sports Leader and volunteer in both the school and in our wider sports programmes. Sophie joined our Sports Development team as a Modern Apprentice in 2018 and then completed two levels of the award over three years whilst being a coach in a variety of sports. During her apprenticeship she had the opportunity to attend athletics officials training and it was here that she started her journey into athletics officiating and coaching.

From 2018 Sophie worked for Active Schools as an assistant and a coach and also worked part time as a Club Together Officer for two athletics clubs in Fife.



She also continued her development as an athletics official working her way through the various levels and officiating at national and international events across the country.

Sophie left the Council in December 2021 but has continued to support events and classes within Clackmannanshire and still stays in the area.

# Official Opening of New Alloa Police Office at Kilncraigs



Chief Constable Sir Iain Livingstone QPM recently visited the co-located police office at Kilncraigs for the official opening ceremony. He was welcomed by Chief Executive Nikki Bridle and Council Leader Ellen Forson.

The Council is leasing part of the ground and first floors at Kilncraigs to Police Scotland.

A public facing office has been created with a separate and self contained police reception, secure police offices and a shared area for partnership working.

The new arrangement aims to strengthen our existing collaborative work and means that our opportunities to increase partnership initiatives are significantly enhanced.



*Alloa Academy S6 pupils Kaitlyn Alcock, Abby Patterson and Peter Gardner created a piece of art for Alloa Police Office. Their brief was to create a piece to represent Clackmannanshire Council and Police Scotland coming together at a shared facility.*

## Language Award for Menstrie Teacher

Menstrie Primary School class teacher Caroline Bryden has gained GTCS professional recognition from the Languages Leadership Programme (LLP) placing her at the forefront of languages education in Scotland.

The LLP is a national professional learning programme offered in partnership by SCILT, Scotland's National Centre for Languages and Education Scotland. It is designed to build leadership capacity for the 1+2 languages policy nationwide.

Caroline is Menstrie's 1+2 lead with modern languages and is part of the Council's working group.

Taking part in the leadership program further develops Caroline's skills to lead and develop 1+2 at school and authority level.

Headteacher Lianne Henderson said: "Caroline's passion for modern languages and ensuring all children access modern languages is exemplary."



# Health and Safety Strategy

We have a new Health & Safety Strategy 2022-2025 which was agreed at the October Council meeting.

This is the first time the Council has had a formal Health & Safety Strategy. The strategy builds on work which has been undertaken over the last few years to ensure that the Council has a suite of Health & Safety policies and tools in place to give our Health & Safety Management System a strong foundation.

The strategy aims to change people’s behaviour and culture so that health and safety is not seen as an added extra or something to deal with when things go wrong, but rather becomes part of the way we do things.

Robust and comprehensive health and safety management underpins all the work of the Council. All the Council’s corporate objectives are more effectively realised in an environment that is both healthy and safe, where a positive safety culture is encouraged, legislative compliance is achieved and all staff and stakeholders are fully and meaningfully engaged.

The key themes identified in the 2022-2025 strategy are:

- Leadership and Management
- Competence
- Risk Management
- Health and Wellbeing
- Collaborative/Partnership working



As well as improving the health and safety of staff there is a growing bank of evidence which highlights that this can also have financial and efficiency benefits.

The strategy is available for staff on Connect. A series of events are being planned over the coming months for you to find out more about the strategy, but if you have any questions or suggestions in the meantime, please contact the H&S team on [hands@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:hands@clacks.gov.uk) or x2225.

## New Pregnancy Loss Policy

At its most recent meeting, the Council endorsed and approved our pregnancy loss policy. This policy was developed jointly with our trade unions as we recognises the sensitive and often very distressing nature of pregnancy loss and how important it is that bereaved parents are given the time to grieve properly.

Pregnancy loss is sadly more common than many people think, with an estimated one in four pregnancies ending in miscarriage and one in every 200 births in the UK each year classed as stillborn.

As an employer we are committed to supporting all employees who suffer the loss of a pregnancy, whether it happens directly

to them, their partner or their baby’s surrogate mother, regardless of the nature of the loss and the employee’s length of service.

Chris Alliston, Senior Manager - HR and Workforce Development, said: “The pregnancy loss policy and procedure is designed to provide guidance and a compassionate response to employees who experience pregnancy loss. This policy recognises that pregnancy loss is a bereavement, and one not isolated to women or heterosexual couples.”

**Staff can find the new policy on Connect.**

## Our Values



# New Rates of Pay for Modern Apprentices



The hourly rates paid to our Modern Apprentices have been revised to increase the attractiveness of our Apprenticeship programme in line with the Community Wealth Building agenda.

A Modern Apprenticeship (MA) helps employers to develop their workforce by training new staff, and upskilling existing employees. For individuals, an MA is a job which lets them earn a wage and gain an industry-recognised qualification.

Clackmannanshire Works has traditionally supported Council services to recruit and train Modern Apprentices, mainly in the areas of Business & Administration, Early Years (Childcare) and Construction Crafts (ie Joinery, Painting & Decorating, Plumbing, and Electrical). However, there are more than 80 MA frameworks – from Healthcare and Sport to Procurement and IT – so there is lots of potential for Council services to consider Apprenticeships as a good way to recruit and train new staff or upskill existing staff.

The number of Modern Apprentices in the Council fluctuates and, up until 2020, was between 30 and 40 at any one time. Up to March 2022, the number had reduced to 21, with two new Apprentice starts since April 2022. The number of Apprentices will reduce further during 2022 as 13 are due to complete over the next six months, leaving only eight Apprentices by September 2022.

The new rates of pay, agreed at the October Council meeting, are:

Year 1	Living Wage	£ 9.90*
Year 2	Spinal point 22 (Grade 2)	£10.34
Year 3	Spinal point 24 (Grade 3)	£10.63
Year 4	Spinal point 26 (Grade 4)	£10.93*

These rates are as at 01/04/21; should the current pay award negotiations be settled the Scottish Local Government Living Wage rate will rise to £10.85 and other spinal points adjusted in line with agreement.

Adopting this new model elevates Clackmannanshire to being the second highest paying authority for Craft Apprentices and the third highest paying authority for Non Craft Apprenticeships.

To find out more about Modern Apprenticeships, contact Audrey Munro by email on [amunro@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:amunro@clacks.gov.uk) or by phone on 07970 175602.

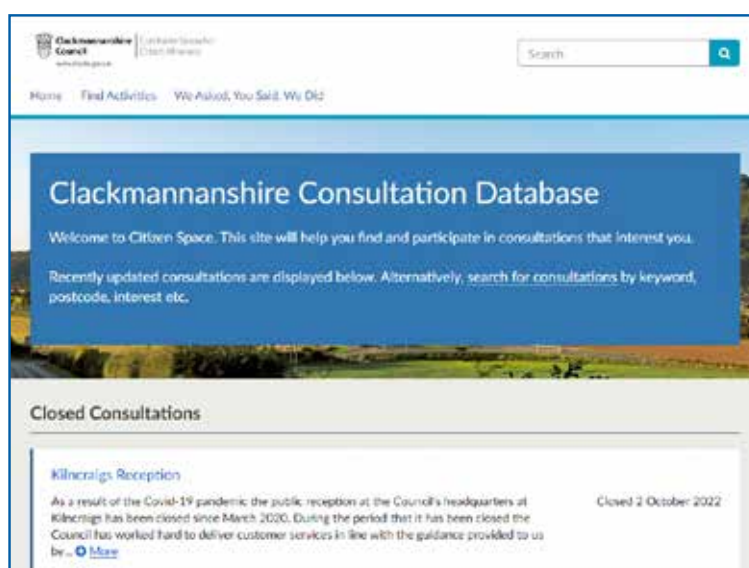
## Citizen Space – our Consultation Management System

The Council has used Citizen Space as our online consultation management system since 2013.

It was introduced so that we manage, publicise, report and archive surveys and consultations more effectively.

The system is accessed via the Council's website and customers can use it to participate in surveys, find out about public events, feedback on consultation documents, search for information on past consultations and see an overview of forthcoming consultations.

The system has a built-in online survey tool which we use to design surveys and securely collect consultation responses from users. In addition, the system has a 'We asked, You said, We did' function. This allows us to let people know what we have done with the information received from the consultations and how their views shaped decision making.



Citizen Space is overseen by the Communications Team who manage the contract with Delib, who provide the platform. Please get in touch by emailing [press@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:press@clacks.gov.uk) if you wish to conduct a survey.

# Partnership Working for Education Leaders

A focus group of heads of establishments and senior education leaders from across the Council have embraced a new way of working in partnership with Education Scotland and Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative. These cross sector partnerships have formed 'Empowerment Leadership Teams'.

The teams have been tailored to focus on improving specific areas within Early Learning Centres and Schools including Curriculum, Quality Improvement, Pedagogy, Performance, Wellbeing and Inclusion.

Lorraine Sanda, the Council's Strategic Director, People outlined the importance of leaders working collaboratively: "We have an outstanding group of talented head teachers in Clackmannanshire and I am pleased that we are empowering them to shape the direction of travel and best meet the needs of our communities"

"In recent years the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was appointed to make recommendations to Scottish



Government on the Scottish Education system. It is pleasing to see that Clackmannanshire Council is proactively using the recommendations to bring about improvements."

The future plans and success will be reviewed closely by local councillors, social work and education staff who have formed the new Children and Young Persons Board. This board offers a layer of scrutiny and governance to the work. This board is chaired by Cllr Graham

Lindsay, Education Spokesperson and Deputy Council Leader.

Colin Bruce, Clackmannanshire Chief Education Officer said: "This is an important step that empowers head teachers and enables the Children and Young Persons Board to review the progress. It gives us a strong foundation to ensure that we can best meet the community's needs. I am very proud of our early learning centres and school leaders, and it is great to see my colleagues step up to lead the way."

## Take Your Money Guidance Help Further

**Staff on the frontline will frequently get asked by people about money issues, particularly now during the cost-of-living crisis.**

You might give some form of money guidance, even if it is only pointing people in the right direction, or you might do much more.

But did you know that there is a network to help you develop your knowledge and skills in this area?

The Money Guiders Scotland network runs regular events, has an online community of practice, and gives you access to skills development tools and relevant elearning courses designed to meet your needs.

### How to get involved

You can join the network's Knowledge Hub group to:

- stay tuned for events (two or three every month)
- learn from others in the group (there's a conversation space)
- watch recordings of previous events (around 30)
- access relevant skills and learning resources
- connect with others in the group

Follow the network on social media: Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn



### Further information

Find out more at Money Guiders Scotland network <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/money-guiders-network>

The network is supported by the Improvement Service, in partnership with the Money and Pensions Service. It is part of the UK Money Guiders programme which also includes the Money Guidance Competency Framework and associated online learning courses on the Money Guiders Learning Hub.



# Living Alloa Project Shortlisted for Award

SURF, Scotland's Regeneration Forum, has announced the 2022 shortlist for the SURF national awards scheme, which showcases success in responding to regeneration challenges in communities across Scotland.

The awards are delivered each year by SURF, a regeneration forum with over 300 cross-sector member organisations across Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Government.

Having assessed applications from Shetland to Dumfries and Galloway, across five categories, SURF's independent panel of 20 judges, drawn from national bodies and community groups, have agreed upon 15 shortlisted projects for 2022.

Clackmannanshire Council, in partnership with Alloa First Business Improvement District (BID) and Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface, submitted an application under the banner of 'Living Alloa' and are delighted to have made the shortlist in the Improving Scotland's Places category.



*The vibrant Look about ye til mural includes the county's motto and links this to a painting of a Goldcrest; the smallest bird in Scotland, drawing parallels with Clackmannanshire's status as the 'Wee County'. The Goldcrest's Latin name is Regulus Regulus, meaning King, and linking it back to the County's motto which is attributed to King Robert the Bruce.*



A panel of judges visited Alloa in early October to see Living Alloa for themselves and were shown the dementia friendly flats at Primrose Street, the active travel hub at Maple Court and the mural in the lane between King Street carpark and Drysdale Street.

The winners will be announced in December by Scottish Government Minister for Public Finance, Planning and Community Wealth, Tom Arthur MSP.

To view the Living Alloa application video go to <https://youtu.be/CGp9y5f-58A>

## Nicola Completes 19 Sports Challenge

Nicola Moriarty, our Active Schools Inclusion Officer, has completed an amazing 19 sports challenge while fundraising for disability sport.

Her #19sports4birmingham linked with this summer's Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and saw her achieve her aim of raising £1200 which will buy adaptive ski equipment for Firpark Ski Centre.



The sports she completed were the 19 Commonwealth Games sports:

- Aquatics ✓
- Athletics ✓
- Badminton ✓
- Basketball ✓
- Beach Volleyball ✓
- Boxing ✓
- Cricket ✓
- Cycling ✓
- Gymnastics ✓
- Hockey ✓
- Judo ✓
- Lawn Bowls ✓
- Netball ✓
- Rugby ✓
- Squash ✓
- Table Tennis ✓
- Triathlon ✓
- Weightlifting ✓
- Wrestling ✓

# Partnership Pays Off

The Transformation Team work closely with the University of Stirling on the City Region Deal work, as the University is one of the key partners in this multi million pound project.

And this partnership paid off recently when the roof leak happened at Kilncraigs.

The Transformation Team is based on the 5th floor of Kilncraigs, which was the area most affected by the leak and had to be evacuated

The University of Stirling offered the team office space on their campus twice a week, allowing the team to continue to meet face to face.

Service Manager Fi Grinly said: "This is a great example of partnership working and is much appreciated by me and



the whole team. While the team works from home most of the time, it's been great to be able to meet up in person at the Stirling campus a couple of times a week for certain pieces of work."

## Future Ways of Working – Kilncraigs Reception

Thank you to everyone who filled in the Citizen Space survey on the future of face to face customer services at Kilncraigs. We received 90 responses to the staff survey.

A public survey ran alongside – over 400 people responded to that survey.

All the feedback is currently being collated and will be reported to SLG in the near future.



## New Lunchtime Staff Drop-in Sessions

The Workforce Development Team has set up Council wide lunchtime drop-in sessions where staff can find out more about a project or team elsewhere in the organisation.

Similar sessions have already been a success within the People Directorate and are a chance for individuals or teams to showcase their work, share information and connect with colleagues.

Hosted on MS Teams at lunchtimes once a month, the sessions last 20 minutes.

Ali Hair is organising this new initiative and he already has a number of speakers lined up. Keep an eye on Keeping Staff Connected for more details.

# Don't Let Your Protection Fade

## Vaccines are our best protection against flu and Covid-19.

The flu virus is always changing and research shows that Covid-19 vaccine protection can fade over time, so it's important to keep protection levels topped up. That's why vaccines are now being offered to those most at risk.

The following groups will be offered both the flu and Covid-19 vaccines:

- Residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults
- Frontline health and social care workers
- All adults aged 50 years and over
- Those aged 5 to 49 years in a clinical risk group, including pregnant people
- Those aged 5 to 49 years who are household contacts of people with a weakened immune system
- Carers aged 16 years and over



The following groups will be offered the flu vaccine only:

- Children aged 2 to 5 years (and not yet in school).
- All primary and secondary school pupils
- Primary, secondary and nursery teachers and pupil-facing support staff
- Prison population and prison officers who deliver direct front-facing detention services and support staff
- Non-frontline NHS workers

To find out if you are eligible for the flu and/or Covid-19 vaccines visit [nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines](http://nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines)

## CFSLA Can Help With Cost Of Living Crisis

Council employees across the Forth Valley donated £3000 over the course of the pandemic to help foodbanks and these donations to good causes have continued in 2022 as household budgets of low income families are squeezed as a result of inflation.

The Clackmannanshire Falkirk and Stirling Local Authorities (CFSLA) Lottery has put aside a pot of £7000 in proceeds from the lottery for initiatives which aim to help mitigate the effects on communities of the rise in the cost of living and in energy prices. The CFSLA Committee hopes local groups will use this new 'Hardship Fund' to get creative about how people might collectively help each other ease the burden of rising prices.

Helen McNaught, Chairperson of CFSLA Lottery Committee, said: "Although our funds can't turn the economic situation around, we hope that by contributing to grass-roots community-led action such as Holiday Lunch Clubs they can go some way to alleviating the strain on people being hit hardest."



The CFSLA is run by a committee of volunteers from the workforces of the three local authorities plus retired employees. Both employees and pensioners can join the lottery scheme and the committee would welcome new volunteers who can represent the three geographic areas and retired workers.

Application forms and guidance on criteria are available on the Lottery's website. <http://www.cfslalottery.org.uk/>

# Love in a Box Celebrates 10 Years of Giving

Love in a Box Clackmannanshire is gearing up for another festive season providing the gift of Christmas to those children who otherwise wouldn't receive anything.

The voluntary group, which includes a number of Council staff, started in 2012 when they supported 100 children. Last year the group supported 750 children and young people.

To celebrate the group's 10th anniversary and to kick-start their annual fundraising, volunteers did a 10 mile sponsored walk in September from Dollar, along the Hillfoots to Alloa raising over £900.

Local schools and nurseries are already submitting names of

recipients to Love in a Box and gift bags will be put together in late October.

Anyone wishing to donate can do so via the link [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/liab2022](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/liab2022)

Or any of the following items would be gratefully received

## Primary School ages

- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Toiletries
- Chocolate or sweet or selection box
- Age appropriate game/toy
- Book or arts and craft
- Cosy socks or hat/gloves

**Please contact Margaret Ure ext 5014 or email [mure@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:mure@clacks.gov.uk) to arrange a collection or drop off.**



## Teenagers

- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Toiletries or aftershave/perfume
- Chocolate or sweet or selection box
- For girls – make up, cosy socks, gloves
- For boys – football, sport socks

# Clackmannanshire Council Golf Society Annual Autumn Outing



The autumn outing took place at Tulliallan Golf Club and the format was a two-man scramble with one team supplemented by the extra man.

## Highlight

A couple of Closest the Pin prizes were successfully scooped up by Sam Lawrie and Chris Horne.

## Results

The results were as predicted very close and a splendid left-handed putt sunk by Francis Robertson on the 18th confirmed the inseparable draw.

So congratulations go to the joint winners of the 2022 Autumn Scramble Team 3 and Team 8

**Team 3 Jason Ross, Charlie Norman and Keith Hunter**

**Team 8 - Chris Horne and Francis Robertson**

## Next Outing

The Clackmannanshire Council Golf Society Singles Trophy will take place in late April/early May. This match will be a singles stableford event, with full slope adjusted handicap hosted again by Tulliallan Golf Club.

If you want to be included in the mailing list for invitation to the event please contact Paul Fair or Lesley Baillie.

The Trophy Competition is only open to current or former Council employees who hold a WHI handicap index at the time of the event.

Of course, all social golfers will be welcome to attend the day and play a round for a non-handicap holders sweep and prize.