

2014

# Annual Report



Ayrshire Independent  
Living Network







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# Contact us



Our accessible offices are located in Ardrossan with excellent transport links and plenty parking behind the building. You'll find us at:

*Ayrshire Independent Living Network  
The Michael Lynch Centre for Enterprise  
71 Princes Street  
Ardrossan  
KA22 8DG*



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Call us on the following numbers:

<i>SDS Support services</i>	<i>01294 475685/6</i>
<i>General enquiries</i>	<i>01294 475685/6</i>
<i>Payroll and budget management</i>	<i>01294 475684/8</i>
<i>Accounts</i>	<i>01294 475683</i>
<i>Fax</i>	<i>01294 475687</i>



[www.ailn.org](http://www.ailn.org)



[mail@ailn.org](mailto:mail@ailn.org)





# Management board



Alex Blair	Chairperson (from Feb 2013 till Nov 2014)
Mary Ballantyne	Vice Chairperson
John McGovern	Board Member
Gordon Bell	Board Member
Graham Hart	Board Member
Margaret Geddes	Board Member

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Mary, Alex, Margaret, John, Graham and Gordon.



# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who has provided services and worked with us this year. Thanks to:

## North Ayrshire Council

Alan Brown  
Pam Crosthwaite  
Anne Harrison  
Janet Taggart  
Alison Corbett

Personalisation Manager  
Community Capacity Team Manager  
Finance  
Contracts & Commissioning  
Business Unit

## East Ayrshire Council

Claire Mills  
Wendy McGeachie  
Lynn Kyle  
Susan Corrigan/  
Michael McNair

Independent Living Team Manager  
Contracts & Commissioning  
SDS Coordinator  
Finance

## South Ayrshire Council

Liz Roy  
John Deans  
Steven Kelly  
Anne-Marie Burgess/  
Karen Cloy/Lisa McKeown/  
Tracey McBlain

Manager – Community Care  
Contracts & Commissioning Officer  
Programme Manager  
Direct Payments Finance Team

## The Scottish Government

Elaine Black

Support in the Right Direction



## Other organisations

Jess, Rachel, Gemma & James  
Gill Joy  
John Moss  
Eddie Graham  
Andy Murdoch

Self-directed Support Scotland  
Intend Business Development  
Business Management Services  
IBP Strategy & Research  
Deaf Connections

## The Michael Lynch Centre for Enterprise

John Bruce  
Ann Scott  
Hugh McGhee  
& Colin McKee  
Reception Staff  
Candice, Alex, Shelbi & Chloe

IT Support  
Cleaning Services  
SESNA (Social Enterprise Support North Ayrshire)  
  
Community Housing Advocacy Project (CHAP)

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## **'Keeping it local' - Thanks to our suppliers in Ayrshire**

Ken McCracken Accountant  
Gale & Melissa IT Support  
Kris, Taylor & Lyianne Website  
John Caldwell Video Production

JRD Partnership Kilmarnock  
Active Office Kilmarnock  
Big Blue Dog Design Ayr  
Black Pepper Studios West Kilbride

## Catering, Hospitality & Events

The Park Hotel  
Happyhills Cakes  
North Ayrshire Catering  
Cassandra's  
Lunch to Go Catering  
Lunch Box Catering

Kilmarnock  
West Kilbride  
Ardrossan  
Ardrossan  
Stevenston  
Saltcoats

## Other suppliers:

Local Post Office – Glasgow St  
Local Ayrshire Taxis  
Ardrossan Print Company  
Clyde Studios

Ardrossan  
Ayrshire  
Ardrossan  
Ardrossan



# AiLN Staff



Evelyn Gilchrist

Manager of Services (temporary)

Bet Dempster

Finance Officer p/t

## SDS Support Service

Jennifer Lee

Self-directed Support Advisor p/t

Vacant post (temp)

Self-directed Support Advisor p/t

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## SDS Payroll & budget management service

Carol Robson

Senior Payroll Officer p/t

Ann Bell

Finance/Payroll Officer p/t

Cheryl Muir

Payroll Officer p/t  
Admin & Information (SG) p/t

## Capacity Building & Development

Maria Smith

Capacity Building & Development p/t

Emma Anderson

Admin to the Board p/t

Gillian McBain

Communications Officer p/t





# Board of Directors Report



*2014 has been another busy and eventful year for the Board members and staff of AILN.*

*Our year began on a sad note as we heard of the death of our Board member Elizabeth Garland. Elizabeth was a strong supporter of AILN and a good friend and colleague and is sadly missed by us all.*

*In February we were pleased to welcome Margaret Geddes as a new member to our board. Margaret brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to AILN. She has been a family carer, worked as an Occupational Therapist in Social Services, and has experience of management in a voluntary organisation within the care sector.*

*We are delighted to be able to tell you that Gerry Lindsay will shortly be joining us. Gerry has a strong background in financial management and we are looking forward to working with him over the coming months.*

*We would like to thank Alex Blair, our former chairperson, for his hard work over the last 2 years. Alex had to stand down on health grounds in November this year, and we wish him well in the future.*

*The Board recently appointed Evelyn Gilchrist to the post of Acting Manager. Evelyn was previously our SDS Team Leader and has extensive knowledge in this area of work. She will assist the Board to deliver the service improvement plan and will provide valuable support to both SDS and Payroll staff.*

*In June this year we welcomed Gillian McBain to the post of Communications Officer. Gillian has been assisting us to develop our communication formats and materials, and more recently has been working with our Focus Group to produce our 'Ayrshire stories about SDS' video. The video highlights the stories of people's positive experiences of SDS.*

*Earlier in the year we undertook an independent customer satisfaction survey. We were very pleased with just how many of our customers took the time to take part. Your comments and suggestions were very positive and encouraging and we are now using them to continue to improve the services we provide.*

*This has been a challenging year due to the continuing number of people using our services. We couldn't have done it without our hardworking and loyal team of SDS, Payroll and Development staff.*

*We hope that you will enjoy reading more about our achievements in this report.*

*We will conclude by saying 'thank you' to all our customers and staff.*

Board of Directors

# Background & structure

AILN have been providing a high quality 'one stop' SDS Advice & Support and an SDS Payroll & Budget Management service for people in Ayrshire for the last 13 years.

AILN initially grew from a group of disabled people getting together as they wanted to see a change in the way that community care services were offered. The group were keen to promote direct payments as an option for independent living.

The group knew that people would need assistance to set up and manage direct payments. In December 2001 they were successful in getting lottery funding for 3 years, to fund the growth of the organisation and to employ staff.

When the lottery funding ran out the group approached the three Ayrshire local authorities - North, East & South asking them to fund a Direct Payments Support Worker.

Since 2005, the three authorities have jointly funded the SDS Support & Advice part of AILN's service.

The SDS Payroll & Budget Management Support Service is self-funding with each person paying for this service from their Self-directed Support funding.

AILN is a user-led, not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

It is managed by a Board of Directors who are volunteers. Our Board members either have direct experience in managing their own support or have been family carers or experience working within Social Care services.





# Aims & objectives

(taken from our Constitution)

To support people in Ayrshire, who have Self-directed Support (SDS) care packages by providing information and a service that will give more freedom of choice in how people run their lives.

This will be done with the aim of improving the conditions of life of people by helping each person to live a fully inclusive life within the wider community.

To advance the education of the public concerning the needs of people receiving SDS whether disabled or not, and those who may have a caring role.

To associate with statutory, voluntary and other organisations to improve the service that AiLN provides and to achieve the objectives of AiLN

# Our services

We continue to offer 'one to one' support services to people throughout Ayrshire who decide to take up SDS Option 1 by getting direct payments and arranging their own support.

We provide information and advice so that people can make the decision that suits best. We then support with the option and the choices made, which in turn allows people to manage their own support and play an active part in their community

## SDS Support service

We provide person-centred support which covers everything a person wants and needs to know about SDS. This includes practical support on how to employ personal assistant/s, assistance to write a job description, advice about safe recruitment and help to carry out PVG checks (Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme). We also give advice on employment law and health and safety.

We help people with checks when they use an agency to provide support, including how to access The Care Inspectorate reports on the services they may wish to consider using.

We are a peer-led service this means that the people who manage AiLN have first-hand experience of services and SDS and the best people to assist others. Our staff offer a friendly, quality service and take time to get to know what people want and how they can help best.

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Jen & Evelyn



## SDS Payroll & Budget Management support service

We are a friendly professional service that takes the strain away by giving people the peace of mind of knowing that all their payroll/budget management needs are being met to a high standard.

Our service differs from some other Payroll providers in that we offer a personalised supportive service managed by a peer-led organisation. This means that the people managing our service understand what kind of service people with SDS funding need.

We are a not-for-profit Payroll & Budget Management Service. This means that any profit is put back into the service for the benefit of the people who use it.

There is a charge for the SDS Payroll & Budget Management service but funding will be in each person's SDS budget to pay for this if it's required.

We provide a full range of options so that people can manage their budget whether employing personal assistants and/or having support provided by an agency.

The most important thing is that people can live independently without having to worry about the financial bits of SDS.

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Bet

Finance Officer



Carol



Ann



Cheryl

Payroll team

# Service reports



**We've had another busy year in both services. The SDS Act came into force in April 2014 so we've been very busy making sure our board, staff and services are in line with this.**

**We continue to work in partnership with our colleagues in social services & health as well as the voluntary and private sector.**

## SDS Support Service Report

Another year of new developments in the SDS Support Service due to the changes brought in by the new SDS Act in April.

We continue to receive referrals from the Ayrshire councils and work together with social services staff to assist people with the options that the new SDS Act gives.

We visit people in their own homes, or can meet at our office base in Ardrossan or at a place of choice in Ayrshire.

We will discuss everything that people need to know about SDS in a way that can be easily understood.

We help people understand the 4 options by explaining each of them so that people can make the choice that suits best.

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- Option 1    **You choose to take direct payments to buy and arrange the support you need.**
- Option 2    **You can ask the council to arrange the care provider you want and they pay this from your individual service fund.**
- Option 3    **Your council has a duty of care if you need support. If you don't choose any of the other options, the council will arrange the appropriate support for you.**
- Option 4    **A mix of the options**

**"Whatever option you choose should help you get the desired result of your support plan"**

To date we support **487** people who have taken Option 1, or the mix in Option 1 and Option 4 and want to be in charge of their own support . Figures taken October 14.

*Evelyn Gilchrist* SDS Support Service



## SDS Payroll Service & Budget Management Report

### **It's been another busy year as 25% more people are using our SDS Payroll & Budget Management Services since last year**

We reported last year that 'Real Time Information' (RTI) recording of tax & national insurance information would be coming into force this year. Instead of yearly, this information is now collected and sent by us to HMRC (Her Majesty Revenue & Customs) on a four weekly basis.

It was very difficult to anticipate how this would affect our work in payroll as this time last year no one knew how this would roll out. We have since had training on RTI to prepare us for this new system. We are pleased to say that we are finding RTI a better system. Information relating to each employer and PA is shared with HMRC in a timely way and HMRC respond quickly to any changes in circumstances i.e. tax code changes, late payments etc.

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We continue to provide a variety of services tailored to a person's needs either paying personal assistants and/or agency/suppliers invoices.

During the last year we have attended several workshops and meetings to improve our services, and have tried to modernise our service delivery to suit our customer's needs.

We have met with our bankers, 'The Co-op Bank' to make sure we are getting the best service for our customers.

In 2015/16 Auto-enrolment for pensions will be introduced. We are at present finding out more about how this will affect our customers, and working with other user-led groups to investigate this further.

We look forward to continuing to offer a full supportive payroll & budget management service to our existing and new customers in the forthcoming year.

255 employers use our SDS Payroll & Budget Management Service and we run a four weekly payroll for 468 personal assistants. Figures taken October 14.

*SDS Payroll & Budget Management Service*

# Service reports ctd

## Capacity Building & Development Report

**We were delighted to have been successful in getting funding from The Scottish Government through the 'Support in the Right Direction' initiative to build the capacity of our services.**

**The aim of the funding is to make sure that people get the information and advice needed to make the choices about SDS that suit best. Through this funding we have been able to employ 4 part-time staff.**

### 2014 Developments

It's been another hectic year for us as we have been involved in a number of service developments. We had a 'Service Planning Day' with the Board and staff in March 2104. We discussed:

The new Self-directed Support Act that was coming into force on the 1st April 2014

SDS Case Studies

The Importance of Independent Support

Our capacity to deliver services as the SDS Act rolls out.

A number of initiatives came out of this day and are explained more fully throughout the report.

### Time & Motion Study

This allowed us to determine 'hot spots' in our operations and investigate actions/ resources needed to put in place and tackle these.

### Office Costing Survey

We conducted a survey to investigate whether our current office base is 'best value' in terms of cost. The survey showed that the office premises we have in the Michael Lynch Centre cannot be matched at this time.



### 'Business Ready' Report

We were successful in receiving funding from NAC Business Unit to help in the making of a 'Business Ready' Report. John Moss from John T.M. Moss & Co Business Management Services was commissioned to do this work. This involved helping us look at our strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in order that we are 'business ready' for the future.

### Policy & Procedure Review

This year we have carried out a [policy review](#). We have looked at 30 policies with the involvement of staff, board members and our legal advisor. We have updated and reviewed this in line with current legislation and best practice.

### Focus Group

We asked people who use our services in the three Council areas, to come along and get involved in our Focus Group.

We asked people to tell us what they thought about the Information we give the new website we are developing and the design of our new logo.

We had a very successful day on the 28th August with people joining in and having their say.

'We thank everyone who has been involved in the focus group for their valuable input'.

Our Focus Group asked if there could be a Peer forum to speak with others about SDS. We hope to identify opportunities to secure additional funding to do this in 2015.





Maria



Cheryl



Emma



Gillian

## **'Independent Customer Satisfaction' Survey**

IBS Strategy & Research were commissioned to undertake the survey in February 2014. AILN received funding from SESNA (Social Enterprise Support North Ayrshire) to conduct the survey.

**238 people were sent out the questionnaire, 116 people responded giving a 49% return which is considered a good rate for postal surveys.**

**91% of our customers said they were treated with respect by AILN staff and 90% of people felt at ease when contacting AILN.**

**The majority of our customers rated AILN positively in the questions asked.**

**88% of our customers said they valued the work of AILN and 88% said they would recommend AILN to others.**

### **Here are some of the the comments you made:**

'Without the support of AILN, taking SDS wouldn't have been so easy or stress free.'

'Without this I wouldn't be able to live independently in my own home'

'AILN Staff are very supportive, it is a knowledgeable organisation'

'It's important to know that AILN are only a phone call away to get the help and the information you need'

'AILN is a vital support, the information and help we receive is excellent'

From the survey we have developed a **'Service Improvement Plan'** here are some of the points people made that we are now acting on:

'If we could make things simpler to understand'

'Could make clearer the services AILN provides'

'Providing training on completing timesheets would be helpful'

'Giving the opportunity to network and meet with other people who use AILN services would be a benefit'

### **To respond to these suggestions and comments we have:**

Developed a focus group of people who use our services and have taken feedback and ideas about the way we give out information.

In early 2015 we will be changing all our leaflets and material to 'easy read'.

In 2015 we will be introducing a 'Payroll Workshop' that could be offered to new and existing AILN customers who want more information. This will include completing timesheets.

In 2015 we will be including a 'Frequently Asked Questions' Factsheet in our information packs.

Next year, we will pilot 'Drop in Surgeries' across Ayrshire where people can come along and get additional 'face to face' support from both SDS and Payroll staff.

In addition to our AGM, at the end of each year we will introduce quarterly 'get together' days when representatives from our peer-led board will be present to get to know customers. Staff will be on hand to answer any questions and get your feedback and suggestions.

# Service reports ctd



## Website Design & Development

We commissioned The Big Blue Dog, a website Design Company from Ayr, to help us redesign our website. We have been working closely with them taking forward the points and comments made by our Focus Group.

Thanks to Gillian, Emma & Cheryl who have been involved with the developments this year.

*Maria Smith*  
Capacity Building & Development

## Video Filming

On the 7<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> October we filmed the footage for our AILN video . Seven people who use our services got together with local producer John Caldwell, from Black Pepper Studios to film it.

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Thanks to everyone who took part in the film, it was a great experience and we look forward to giving everyone a preview at our AGM in December. We'll be adding the video to our new website.



**'It is important to AILN to know that we are supporting local employment and businesses'**



## People employed as Personal Assistants

At present we have supported the creation of employment of **468** personal assistants. **68** of these are young people employed as PAs aged 25 or under

As well as being in control, AILN customers are contributing to the local economy by bringing employment to local people.

Our customers who are choosing agencies to provide part or all of their support are also supporting growth in jobs within the private and voluntary sector in Ayrshire.

Figures taken at October 2014

## Board & Staff Learning and Development

We are committed to making sure that our Board & staff are fully supported to maintain their knowledge and skills.

The following is a summary of topics covered through attendance at courses during the last year.

Social Media Awareness

Procurement – Supplier Development & Just Enterprise

Stroke Awareness

Getting in right for Every Child

Child Protection

Disability Equality

Customer Care

Statutory Sick Pay run by HMRC





# Calendar of events & publicity



**As the dedicated support service for Ayrshire we have been involved in a variety of events throughout the year, to help publicise our services.**

## February

Launch of the East Ayrshire Community portal

Neighborhood Planning Meeting – North Ayrshire

The Alliance Carers Conference South Ayrshire

## March

Input into South Ayrshire Council's SDS training to staff. 100 staff attended over 6 sessions and feedback from staff was that the training was 'extremely beneficial'.

Partners for Inclusion, Kilmarnock 'Community Connecting'.

Outside the Box – 'Making SDS work for people with mental health issues'.

'More on Sharing & Learning' Evaluation Scotland.

## April

Third Sector Interface/North Ayrshire conference for all community organisations operating North Ayrshire.

South Ayrshire Council consultation: on 'Housing need for Disabled People'. We sent out 40 questionnaires to people using our services in the South Ayrshire.

'Working together to make things happen' Co-production with NHS.

North Ayrshire Council – 'Housing for Older People' Event.

Chap (Community Housing Advocacy Project) Publicity Day.

Funding Roadshow.

Volunteer Practice Forum – VASA (Voluntary Action South Ayrshire)

## May

Meeting with Adult & Child Protection in North Ayrshire to discuss training for Personal Assistants.

Input into North Ayrshire Council's SDS training to staff - 45 staff attended the sessions.

South Ayrshire Strictly Senior's Roadshows: Troon, Prestwick & Ayr throughout this year.

## June

Meeting with Unison Representative to discuss setting up a helpline for personal assistants.

WEA (Workers Educational Association) leaflet – 'Let's get personal – handling difficult employment relationships' sent out to everyone who uses our payroll service.

South Ayrshire 'Carers Conference'.

Our information brochure distributed to all the GP surgeries in Ayrshire.

Talk given to parents at the East Ayrshire Carers Centre.

# Calendar of events & publicity ctd

## July

SDS for Residential Care 'Scottish Care Forum'.

## August

Our information brochures delivered to head libraries for distribution to all North & East Ayrshire council libraries within the 'Health & Wellbeing' packs.

## September

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'Getting it right for every Child' Conference

Talk to the 'Memory Clinic in Largs

## October

North Ayrshire 'Community Showcase' Exhibition.

Older People's Event, North Ayrshire.

Bringing information into the 21st Century' facilitated by Scottish Accessible Information Forum.

'Charitable Trading for Voluntary Organisations' – Community Enterprise in Scotland.

Integration of Health & Social Care Event.



We will continue to promote our services with the recent addition of Gillian McBain, Communications Officer.

We are continuing to develop new ways to reach people who want to more about SDS.

We have designed new pop-up banners that we can take with us and use when participating in future promotional events.

## Monitoring Meetings with Ayrshire Councils

**We've met with North, South and East Ayrshire councils twice this year - 10<sup>th</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> April and we have a further meeting planned for 27th November.**

**These meetings are for the purpose of monitoring the SDS Support Service AILN provides, which is funded jointly by North, East & South Ayrshire councils. Quarterly monitoring reports are prepared by AILN for the councils.**

## Partnership working

North, East, and South Ayrshire councils.

Social Care & Health Providers Forums

Community Engagement Forums

The Ayrshire Community Trust

Health Inequalities

Re-shaping Care for older people

Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA)

Community Care Group (mirror thematic group)

Council for Voluntary Organisations (CVO)

Third Sector Forum

# Achievements, finance & funding

## Raffle

Every year at the AGM/Xmas Party in December our staff and customers donate raffle prizes and a local charity is chosen. Last year the MS Ayrshire & Arran Branch were successful.



Bet Dempster our Finance Officer is seen in the photograph above giving the cheque for £250.00 to Mary Smalley from the group.

## Finance & Funding

The SDS Support Service is funded by a part share from North, East and South Ayrshire Councils.

The SDS Payroll & Budget Management Service is self-funding. Each person who gets direct payments pays for this service.

Capacity Building & Development is funded by the Scottish Government from the 'Support in the Right Direction' initiative until June 2015.

**Full accounts with income and expenditure are available separately**

**Prepared by Bet Dempster - Senior Finance Officer**

**Audited by Ken McCracken - JRD Partnership Accountants**

## Achievements

We recruited a new member to our board. Margaret Geddes who brings to us a wealth of experience as a carer and as an Occupational Therapist in Social Services. Margaret also brings lengthy experience of management in a voluntary organisation within the care sector.

A new member of staff Gillian M'Bain joined us as Communications Officer in June. Gillian brings to AILN experience of working within the voluntary sector and as a freelance photographer.

The feedback and suggestions of our focus group.

Promotion of AILN through events and awareness raising .

Redesign of our website and logo which is nearing completion.

Production of our AILN video "Ayrshire stories about SDS"

The increase in the number of people using our support services .

A full review of our policies and procedures.

The temporary appointment of Evelyn Gilchrist as Manager of AILN Services which will support the Board and staff team in taking forward our plans for 2015.



**This report is available in other languages and accessible formats on request.**



# Our staff



Bet



Carol



Evelyn



Jen



Maria



Cheryl



Ann



Gillian



Emma





Our accesible offices are located in Ardrossan with excellent transport links and plenty parking behind the building. You'll find us at:

*Ayrshire Independent Living Network  
The Micahel Lynch Centre for Enterprise  
71 Princes Street  
Ardrossan  
KA22 8DG*



Call us on the following numbers:

<i>SDS Support services</i>	<i>01294 475685/6</i>
<i>General enquiries</i>	<i>01294 475685/6</i>
<i>Payroll and budget management</i>	<i>01294 475684/8</i>
<i>Accounts</i>	<i>01294 475683</i>
<i>Fax</i>	<i>01294 475687</i>



[www.ailn.org](http://www.ailn.org)



[mail@ailn.org](mailto:mail@ailn.org)



Ayrshire Independent  
Living Network