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Big funding boost for new community hub

Transit marina could follow in future plans

Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

A bid to turn the present CalMac ticket office in Brodick into a community hub has taken a significant step forward.

The Arran Economic Group (AEG) has secured a £100,000 funding boost to convert the building into a hub which would be a showcase for the island's products as well as office space for existing and start-up businesses.

And it could be just the start of a major initiative, called the Arran Gateway Project, which may one day see a transit marina on the site of the present linkspan.

If the plans come to fruition, the project would lease the building from the owner, Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL), which is thought to be sympathetic, but it will have to put it in on the commercial market for let ahead of any community deal. The new facility would be run by the operating arm of the AEG, the Arran Development Trust.

In a major boost, the Scot-

tish Government this week announced that the project has been awarded the funding in 2018/19 as part of the £20 million Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), which supports projects that engage and involve local communities in disadvantaged areas, tackle inequality and support inclusive growth.

AEG chairman Tom Tracey said: 'The Arran Economic Group is absolutely delighted to hear from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund that we have been successful in our application for £100,000 towards the implementation of first phase of the Arran Gateway Project.'

'This first phase includes the redevelopment of the existing ferry terminal into a community hub showcasing the very best of Arran. The facility would include a shower block and toilets, office space for start-up or existing business with a need for super-fast broadband, 4G connectivity and easy ferry access. It will also have retail space for a local business or busi-



Chairman Tom Tracey and development director Sheena Borthwick outside the building they want to transform into a community hub.

nesses. These plans will be developed further in conjunction with the community.

'The AEG still has work to do to secure additional funding to bring this project to fruition but this is a very tangible, positive next step and demonstrates the confidence North Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Government has in Arran's ability to deliver.'

Local government minister Kevin Stewart said: 'I'm really pleased that this fantastic, locally-driven project will benefit from an injection of funding. It will

help regenerate local areas, stimulate inclusive growth and create new jobs.'

'The focus of the projects being funded this year range from tackling social isolation, mitigating welfare cuts, providing training opportunities, creating business space and increasing tourism – to name but a few. They are an excellent example of how national and local government are working together on shared priorities that benefit local communities.'

Councillor Alex Gallagher, cabinet member for the economy at North Ayrshire

Council, said: 'We welcome this funding towards the redevelopment of Brodick ferry terminal. This will allow us to build on the recent major investment in the harbour infrastructure and provide a positive gateway to Arran – widening its potential for business, tourism and community uses.'

'The investment is as a result of the council and our partners' support for the transformation of Brodick harbour over a number of years.'

A spokeswoman for CMAL said: 'CMAL has

Continued on page two

Probe after whelk creels are found

An investigation is under way after around 50 whelk creels were allegedly laid illegally in the Lamlash no-take zone (NTZ).

The creels were discovered by accident last Tuesday and, after an inspection, there were found to be no markings on the buoys. It is believed they had been laid some days before by a fishing boat which is not from this area. They have since been lifted.

The Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) has been given information and photographs of the boat's activity, which have been handed over to Marine Scotland compliance. The MV Minna from the Fisheries Protection Agency has been to the area to investigate.

COAST director Paul Chandler said: 'Thankfully, this is a rare occurrence in our NTZ but we need to be vigilant to protect our seas.'

'Thanks everyone for your support, especially to all those who regularly keep a look out in the NTZ and MPA for any irregular activity and inform us or Marine Scotland compliance. It really helps to have so many of you caring for our local seabeds and sea life.'

A Scottish Government spokesman said: 'I can confirm that Marine Scotland is investigating allegations of fishing operations taking place in a closed area near Arran. As this investigation is ongoing, it would be inappropriate to comment.'

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Mundell urged to 'get on' with Ayrshire Growth Deal

An MP has again called on Scottish secretary David Mundell to ensure UK government action on the Ayrshire Growth Deal, following an exchange in parliament last week.

North Ayrshire and Arran MP Patricia Gibson questioned the Secretary of State on the lack of progress on the proposed growth deal, which aims to secure £359 million of funding from the Scottish and UK governments to generate inclusive growth and help transform the economic prospects of Ayrshire.

The plan has already received support from the SNP government and all three Ayrshire local authorities. Mrs Gibson is keen to obtain a similar commitment from the UK government to help move the process forward. She has now written once again to the

Scottish Secretary, asking for a clear timetable for UK Government action.

Speaking after Scottish questions, Mrs Gibson said: 'I am pleased that Mr Mundell has agreed it is time to get on and kick-start work on the Ayrshire Growth Deal. It has the potential to transform Ayrshire in terms of sustainable and inclusive economic growth, jobs, skills and economic prosperity.'

Stalled

'However, whilst the UK government has committed funds alongside the SNP government for Glasgow, Edinburgh etc; it has stalled for 18 months on making a commitment to Ayrshire, putting it at a serious competitive disadvantage.'

'City and regional growth deals in Scotland need a tripartite agreement between local authorities, the SNP

government, and the UK government.

'The strategic business case for the Ayrshire Growth Deal was submitted for consideration back in 2016. All three Ayrshire councils back this deal. The SNP government backs this deal. Only the UK Tory Government is dragging its heels.'

'Ayrshire has the potential to lead the way when it comes to the regeneration of rural and coastal regions. Supporting the Ayrshire Growth Deal would signal a clear commitment to our post-industrial and rural communities which are crying out for investment'

'The time has now come for Mr Mundell to step up to the plate and to use what influence he has to press his government to back Ayrshire.'



The MV Isle of Lewis tied up at the new pier.

Terminal opening is 'imminent'

The opening of the new Brodick ferry terminal is imminent but there are still a couple of snagging issues to be resolved.

However, it will be a low key affair with bosses unwilling to make it a fanfare opening after two false starts and a lengthy delay.

Caledonian MacBrayne staff are now working in the building and clearance

of the passenger access system for use is almost complete. Further berthing trials at other side of the new pier from the linkspan were also carried out on Tuesday by the MV Isle of Lewis on her way to dry dock.

CalMac would only confirm that the opening of the new terminal was 'imminent'.

Funding boost for community hub

Continued from page one appointed property consultants, Graham & Sibbald to market the existing terminal building for let. The marketing process will consider both economic offers and community benefits for Arran from the future use of the building.

'In terms of timing, there will be a period of transition for CalMac between the old and new buildings and the existing building will not become surplus to

operational requirements until the CalMac staff are fully comfortable with the new operational processes as continuity of customer service is the main priority for both CMAL and CalMac.

Marketing board

'The intention was to erect a marketing board and advertise the existing building for let in January 2018, however, this has been delayed and marketing will not commence until Cal-

Mac Ferries Limited have vacated and moved into the new terminal building.

Following the marketing campaign, any notes of interest should be submitted to the letting agent, Graham & Sibbald who will then co-ordinate and assess whether a closing date and or formal submissions are required. Graham & Sibbald have been instructed to keep AEG fully informed of the marketing process.'

*See also centre spread

Good luck to Active Schools young leaders

The waiting is almost over ... and the winners of the Provost's Civic Pride Awards 2018 will be re-

vealed tonight (Friday). After months of searching, we are about to find out which of North Ayrshire's

unsung community heroes will find themselves in the awards' hall of fame.

Arran's Active Schools young leaders will be at the awards ceremony at the Portal in Irvine to find out if they have won the sports award.

Provost Ian Clarkson will present awards to the winners of each of the five categories – the citizen of the year, young citizen of the year, arts and culture award, community group award, and the sports award, all voted for by the public.

Then Provost Clarkson will present his own special award to one of the 15 amazing finalists.

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for the placement of exhibits

Focus on Fairtrade fortnight



The annual Fairtrade fortnight was recently marked on Arran with a series of events at the Co-op and at primary schools.

Fairtrade has seen an increase in both support and sales as more shoppers and businesses get behind the

organisation. This growth means many more farmers are getting a better deal with better incomes though Fairtrade, which is why the organisation spent Fairtrade Fortnight asking more people in the UK to come on in to Fairtrade and help

forge a fairer future for the farmers and workers whom are relied upon for so many of our favourite products.

The theme this year is 'Come on in to Fairtrade' and Arran Fairtrade, in collaboration with the Co-op in Brodick, helped spread the message to shoppers with a special stall and held a raffle for a Fairtrade hamper.

Since 2008, all the Co-op's own brand tea, coffee and hot chocolate, sugar and cotton wool are Fairtrade. Since 2010, all Co-op bananas have been Fairtrade and, in 2017, all their cocoa is sourced on Fairtrade terms.

All the Arran primary school pupils have also been learning about Fairtrade, and the difference it can make to people's lives in the developing world. They have also enjoyed sampling some Fairtrade chocolate and bananas.

Hosting an incredibly successful Fairtrade coffee morning, Shiskine Primary pupils and parents filled the school hall to sample Fairtrade coffee, tea, hot chocolate and home-baking, which the children helped to bake.

P7 pupils explained to the gathered audience what Fairtrade is, how it is implemented throughout the



Shiskine pupils and parents listen to a quick Fairtrade presentation from P7 pupils.



Shiskine primary school pupils enjoy Fairtrade hot chocolate and nibbles at their Fairtrade coffee morning.



Councillor Timothy Billings and Jan MacGregor of Arran Fairtrade spread the word at the Co-op stall.

world and its many benefits to farmers and producers.

Adults and children all made a donation in return

for the feast of scones, pan-cakes, tray bakes and nibbles, with all of the donations raising £181 for the

charity Maggie's which provides emotional and social support to people with cancer.



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Brodick pupils present case to reduce waste

Inspired by a visit from the Sunnyside Ocean Defenders of Easterhouse, who introduced them to their #NaeStrawAtAw campaign, Brodick primary school pupils have embarked on their own drive to eliminate and reduce plastic waste.

Inviting a group of local business people and community representatives, a group of P7 pupils gave the audience and fellow pupils a well-prepared presentation on the dangers of plastic and a remarkably in-depth method of identifying the various types of compounds found in plastic.



Megan Green, Charlie Adams, Kayleigh Easton, Izzi Buckby, Reece Ferguson, Isabella Reid, Alfie Robinson, Ben MacVicar and Hamish Campbell speak confidently about their objectives to reduce plastic pollution.

Using an audio visual projector, the pupils provided



Local business people and representatives introduce themselves to the children of Brodick Primary School.

insights into the marine and terrestrial damage that plastics can cause to the environment – while using the data from their Brodick beach clean-up which recovered various amounts of plastic from the beach – to illustrate their point.

The presentation will be repeated at various venues and with the co-operation of the environmental group, the Community

of Arran Seabed Trust and other local organisations, pupils hope to spread their message across the island.

The talk concluded with examples of ecologically friendly alternatives to straws and disposable coffee cups before the adult audience were treated to coffee and biscuits and the opportunity to discuss what they had learned from the pupils.

Think About Plastic (TAP) takes up Arran fight

A new group has been formed on Arran to work towards making it Scotland's first plastic-free island.

To be called Think About Plastic (TAP), a steering group has been set up from organisations and businesses across Arran to promote the idea of working towards a plastic-free island, in line with the Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) campaign for plastic-free coastlines.

TAP has many plans to help reduce the amount of single-use plastic thrown away on Arran. Chaired by Helen How, and with support from Eco Savvy, the Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST), the Co-op and NAC councillors Timothy Billings and Ellen McMaster, TAP will liaise with island businesses, shops and cafes, as well as community halls, schools and other groups.

Sue Weaver, of eXXpedition round Britain, said: 'We have been so impressed by Arran's children's campaign for #NaeStrawAtAw. It's time the adults got together to take this a whole lot further and TAP gives us this opportunity.'

TAP's website can be found at www.thinkaboutplastic-arran.co.uk and emailed at info@thinkaboutplastic-arran.co.uk

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Funding cuts shut all citizens advice services

A charity which provides vital advice services across North Ayrshire is to shut down.

The North Ayrshire Citizens Advice Service (NACAS), which closed its outreach service on Arran at the start of the year, has announced that all of its services will stop at the end of the month.

As previously reported in the *Banner*, a change in the way funding was provided to public advice serv-

ices by North Ayrshire Council, led to the closure of the Arran branch – and now the remainder of the services across the area.

NACAS chief executive officer Nina Smith said: 'The charity has explored every opportunity and engaged with key stakeholders regarding all viable options over recent months. However, despite considerable efforts, those discussions have been unsuccessful. NACAS has therefore

concluded that it has no choice but to take the decision to close.

'This is a very sad time for the charity, which has been proud to serve North Ayrshire for almost 20 years. Together we have helped and supported thousands of local citizens, provided advice, information, campaigned and fought to continue our important work.

'Our immediate concern is for the people of North Ayrshire and we will con-

tinue to support them during this final phase to provide the assistance they need.

'The charity would like to thank the many staff, volunteers, clients and organisations that have worked with the service over the years.'

A council spokesman said: 'We are deeply disappointed to learn that North Ayrshire Citizens Advice Service is to close, however, we are currently looking at options to ensure advice services remain available.

'We are committed to ensuring the people of North Ayrshire will continue to benefit from high quality, sustainable advice services

and are currently exploring ways in which we can do this most effectively.

'We will also discuss the



welfare and debt issues to contact our Money Matters Team by calling 01294 310456, emailing money-matters@north-ayrshire.gcsx.gov.uk or by calling at our offices in Bridgegate, Irvine.

'In addition, advice on benefits and money advice is available online at the BetterOff North Ayrshire website <https://northayrshire.betteroff.org.uk/>

During the council meeting last year, where the decision was taken to put the public advice services out to tender, it was noted that tenders for the service would be evaluated taking into account the provision of outreach services such as those provided on Arran.

future of advice services in North Ayrshire when our chief executive Elma Murray meets with the new chief executive of Citizens Advice Scotland later this month.

'In the meantime, we would ask people with

Music festival is in Whiting Bay

The organisers of this year's 89th Arran Music Festival – or really, the festival of country dance, verse speaking and music – look forward to welcoming everyone to Whiting Bay village hall next Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Programmes are in the usual retailers and just to keep everyone on their toes the organisers have added a deliberate mistake – or that's what they are saying!

Eagle eyes have already pointed out that the wrong venue is printed on the cover but organisers are at present hurrying around



Whiting Bay primary school choir are full of enthusiasm before their last choir practice.

the island, with Arran Event's big stapler to rectify this. Retailers have been kind enough to point the mistake out to programme buyers, but just to confirm it is Whiting Bay village hall, not Lam-lash community theatre.

All are welcome to be part of the audience for any classes, but we do ask that anyone performing or attending the Friday evening session remains for the full session as we will be running this as more of a concert.

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Day of prayer

More than 40 people from churches of all denominations across Arran joined in the World Day of Prayer service at St Molios Church in Shiskine.

Each year a different country takes responsibility for this event with millions of worshippers in more than 100 countries coming together to pray at the ecumenical service. This year the service was written by Christian women of Suriname in South America.

The theme of the service was: 'A heri grontapu di Gado meki bun doro doro' – 'All God's creation



Some of the worshippers of all denominations attended a special service for the World Day of Prayer at St Molios Church.

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"Post-War Brodick Pier"

is very good'. It focused on the multi-cultural communities of Suriname and their desire to preserve and protect their country's flora, fauna and environment.

At the service held at Shiskine, members of Arran Churches Together related the stories of several Surinamese women, and the congregation joined

in hymns and prayers of thanksgiving and worship. A meditation on creation linked the beauty of Scotland with that of Suriname and countries throughout the world, and the need to cultivate and protect rather than exploit and destroy.

After the service the congregation enjoyed home baking and fellowship in St Molios Church Hall.

Oban music and dance festival entries sought

Calling all budding musicians and dancers. The Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival will be held this year in Oban from Friday May 4 to Sunday May 6.

This year the festival celebrates its 35th anniversary and hopes to beat its recent participation numbers of 1,100 entries in the 125 competitions. Organisers are looking for budding Highland dancers, fiddlers, pipers, pianists, accordion and clarsach players, and not forgetting those proficient in woodwind and brass, to come along and show their talents.

Each year the festival has performers from all over Scotland and is hoping some of the terrific musical talent on Arran will take part.

The event even has its first entry from Germany.

The festival brings many venues in Oban alive with live music, and outdoor performers, in the heart of the town. The festi-

val promotes a long tradition in music and dance but also introduces innovation through group dancing competitions and novelty from the individual. Argyll is rich in musical and dance heritage and the festival provides a great outlet for this. Organised by volunteers, the committee has been proud to attract more than 3,000 visitors to the town, which is a welcome boost to the Oban economy through hotels, restaurants and travel.

Festival chairwoman Breege Smyth said: 'The festival has retained a unique family feel that is the hallmark of true Highland hospitality. This year's festival is supported by EventScotland.'

To enter, visit the website www.obanfestival.org but you'll have to be quick as entries close on Monday March 19. Please check the website for the grading required – certain masters events are for prize-winners only.

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It pays to advertise in the Arran Banner

Lisa holds jewellery design workshop

Jewellery designer and silversmith Lisa McDonald of Subterra Jewellery will be bringing her travelling workshop expertise to Arran when the Kilmarnock-based artist visits Lochranza next month.

The workshops have proven to be so popular that Dundonald Castle have secured her services for a seven-week residency in May, teaching students how to design and craft their own jewellery pieces.

Classes will take place on the weekend of April 28 and 29 at the Lochranza Centre and the silver workshops include making rings, earrings and bangles and start at £35.

For more information or to make a booking Lisa can be contacted through her website at <https://subterrajewellery1.wixsite.com/ayrshire> or through her Facebook page.



The QuiltArran stand at the show.

QuiltArran at Scottish show

This year QuiltArran was invited by the Quilters Guild in Scotland and the ICCF to take a stand at the Scottish Quilting Show in Glasgow at the SEC between March 8 and 11 to display members' work.

The group's Alison Thompson told the *Banner*: 'Our quilters made lots of quilts and other items, and several of us trans-

ported them by suitcases to the venue. It has been well received, with lots of lovely comments. It was great to see all of the other stands and the amazing quilts in the competitions.'

The exhibition, which is on every March, is fast becoming the best quilt show in Scotland.

Friends plan Easter fun at the castle

Last month the Friends of Brodick Castle had an interesting meeting when Charlie Sclater from the National Galleries of Scotland came to talk about how the galleries have increased their visitor numbers over the past few years.

The group's next talk is on Thursday March 22 at 2pm in the Rangers Centre when members will hopefully hear from the castle's new head gardener about his time at The Gardens on the Bay in Singapore.

Easter is the friends main fundraising event and a host of activities are

planned for the weekend. There will be the annual Easter egg trail, catching the duck, the duck derby and tombolas for both adults and children, and they are looking for donations for the tombola.

The rangers will have egg decorating, wacky races and Easter bonnet competition. There is also going to be a craft fayre.

The friends are also organising a trip to Dumfries House for members in May.

Anyone interested can contact Linda MacCallum on friendsofbrodickcastle@hotmail.com or 302875.

Win a year's free council tax

Residents across North Ayrshire can win a year's free council tax as part of the council's push to get more people to sign up to receive their bills online.

But the clock is ticking if you have not already signed up – you have until March 31 to register and be in the free draw, which will be made on April 3.



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Editorial

Exciting times

There are exciting plans for Brodick harbour – and we don't mean the new ferry terminal.

This week the focus is very much what we are going to do with the old facilities once they are finally freed up. Great to see the Scottish Government stepping in with a sizeable grant and, with some goodwill from CMAL, there could be a real community use of the old ticket office.

It would provide much-needed office space with 21st-century facilities, and it would also be used as a showcase for all the island's produce and merchandise – and we think that could be really successful.

The Arran Economic Group is to be commended for producing a business plan to get the project this far. If CMAL can see its way to handing over the building to the community for a peppercorn rent, there is no reason why the newly formed Arran Development Trust can't use it as a building block for future plans, which include a transit marina which could help put Arran on the pleasure boating map.

As we say, exciting times.

Thought for the Week

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4:6

Commendable CalMac

Sir,
Between 2004 and 2006, I had a fair old grumble about CalMac which ended up in front of the Transport Commissioner at the EU. We 'won' the matter but it was pyrrhic. The essence related to senior management and the manner in which they ran the state monopoly ferry service. Some 14 years later the old guard at the top of CalMac are pretty much all gone.

What has not gone are the officers, crew and shore-side team at CalMac who deal with customers day in, day out and year in, year out. The service these dedicated professionals give is exemplary.

Here is the enigma, at least for this sole traveller who first foot on the ferry as a youngster was aboard the MV Glen Sannox (1957 vintage).

On Thursday March 8, a family health emergency necessitated a fairly rapid transit via the MV Caledonian Isles across to the mainland. The staff at Brodick Pier were incredibly understanding and helpful. The ferry marshalls were very kind and thoughtful. On board, the ship's crew are a credit to the company. Every time I'm on that ship, all I see is the staff going above and beyond what they need to do.

Some days, I still wonder what it would be like to replace the current oversized ferry with two mid-sized ships in shuttle formation akin to Western Ferries at McInroy's Point to Hunter's Quay operating between Brodick and Ardrossan, with a third mid-sized ship to plug into the system when demand requires it. I wonder what it would

be like to have a service for Arran that runs from 6am to midnight without curfew. That is a matter for the new managing director once Martin Dorchester moves to pastures new.

But this week I also saw CalMac's best at work: ship and shoreside, crew and terminal staff. If anything, these guys at the sharp end will save the iconic ferry company from the management's dysfunctional and corporately risky choices. From the big-boat-syndrome, to the mind boggling amounts spent on infrastructure. One of our directors built the ferry ramp in Campbeltown Harbour in six weeks for £600 and it lasted for decades. How on earth £22,200,000 can be spent on a ferry terminal just makes my eyes water.

All in all – as one who has had Victor Meldrew moments moaning about CalMac management – I believe it very important to put pen to paper when things go right. Last week was CalMac at its best, due to sterling efforts and thorough decency of shoreside staff and the ship's crew. Well done, CalMac.

Thank you.

Yours,
Russ McLean,
Sannox.

'Wee Davie'

Sir,
Michael Smith of North Shies expresses the sentiments of many who travel through Brodick terminal (*Arran Banner* letters March 10).

'Wee Davie' is so faithful he never misses a shift, regardless of the weather. For his comfort, I knit him a new scarf every winter and in 2012 I was moved to compose a 'wee ode' to him, reprinted here.



'Wee Davie.'

Ode to the ramp rascal
Come rain or sleet, he's there to greet

The drivers as they board the boat

Young mascot of the CalMac crew

Red helmet on and yellow coat

The visitors in their campervans

On bikes, in Saabs or caravans

Salute him with a joyful smile

Arriving on this glorious isle

And tearful, as they leave again

Boarding the vessel in the rain

They see him still, without a care

And know, come summer, he'll be there.

Yours

Elma Stevenson,
Sannox.

Litter proliferation

Sir,
With reference to Carol Vells-Boyle's letter in the *Banner* of the amount of litter scattered in the verges on our island, I have also noticed this problem.

I have also noticed an increase in this after holiday weekends, holidays related to school breaks, anything which coincides with an in-

flux of visitors to the island, which seems to bring on the menace of fish and chip papers appearing in the verges. This is not a mere coincidence as I have regularly spotted this.

I wonder if CalMac could put up notices on the ferries asking people who visit Arran to respect our island and deposit their litter in the bins provided. It might be worth a try.

Yours,

Myra Young,
Whiting Bay.

No gin here

Sir,
It is somewhat erroneous yet serendipitous of your media outlet to divulge that our operations here in the northern aspects of the village are purveyors of botanically infused alcoholic beverages. While we strive to accommodate most of our clients' prerequisites, the only such libations here at our headquarters is the occasional bottle or three of vino that shum of our customers have popped in to shay thanks for whatever we done for them. Issha shame that we are not lissens ... lissenced ... that we're not allowed to shell stuff like gin. Anyway it's *hic* not er ... what was I shaying? Oh, there's the postman, Janis ... give him a glass.

Cheers, big man,
Graham Chappell,
Director,
Arran Graphics.

* Editor's note: Arran gin is available in Arran Active, but not Arran Graphics as stated last week.

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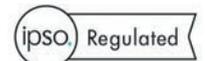
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ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



Specsavers' teams up-skill awareness in glaucoma - the silent thief of sight

In the build up to World Glaucoma Week this week, Specsavers teams have been up-skilling to better support patients with the condition.



his condition is now managed by using eye drops daily.

Often symptomless in its early stages, glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible sight loss. It is thought to affect 700,000 people in the UK today, but as many as 50% of cases are undiagnosed*.

Alan, now an advocate of regular eye tests and good eye health, believes early diagnosis and careful management has saved his sight. He says: 'I would strongly urge people to go for regular eye tests, and to make the most of the advice and support provided by their local optician.'

In conjunction with the International Glaucoma Association, Specsavers has developed training for its retail teams to assist sufferers with their treatment. Specifically, they will be advising on how to effectively administer eye drops, which are crucial for managing the condition.

Karen Osborn, chief executive of IGA, says: 'The majority of people who are diagnosed early with glaucoma will retain useful sight for life. Most will be treated with medical eye drops. Unfortunately we know from calls to our helpline that many people aren't told about how to put the drop in the eye correctly, or aren't advised about the aids that are available to help them. We are delighted to work with Specsavers on this often over-looked aspect of glaucoma management.'

This new training complements the skills held by Specsavers' optometrists, who have collectively completed almost 5,000 postgraduate glaucoma accreditations since 2017, through a variety of accrediting bodies including Cardiff University and the College of Optometrists.

*RNIB State of the Nation Eye Health Report 2017

Alan Murphy was just 37 when a trip to Specsavers found the early stages of glaucoma. Thanks to early detection,



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Transforming eye health

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New transit marina aims to breathe life into old harbour

The proposed creation of a transit marina on Arran could not have come at a better time, with marine and conservation tourism two of the biggest grow-

ing sectors in the industry. Arran Economic Group (AEG) says private finance would be needed to get the scheme off the ground, but public funds should

also be available. The facility, built from the existing breakwater, would be similar in appearance to the new £2.5million North Pier pontoons in Oban which were financed by Argyll and Bute Council, the Scottish Government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

The pontoons, which opened last August, are expected to boost the local economy by £25million over the next 20 years.

The coastline from Troon to Gourock, including Arran, Bute and Cumbrae, has the highest concentration of pleasure boats outside the south of Eng-

land, so the market for step ashore facilities is clear.

The 48-berth transit marina could only go ahead once Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) had removed the existing linkspan. It would be aimed at attracting visiting boats for short-term stays and not for local boats.

Consultation

A public consultation will be held in the next six to eight weeks to discuss the project and find out what the public thinks.

As well as the marina, the AEG has been looking at the Market Road area in general to determine how this area can be transformed into social, business and leisure opportunities for the benefit of the Arran community and visitors.

The Market Road Study, conducted by Ironside Farrar, identified three project phases:

*Acquisition and re-development of the existing ferry terminal and the provision of step ashore facilities (phase one)

*Marina/pontoons for visiting yachts (phase two)

*Investigate potential re-development of Market Road and identify new commercial area for relocation of businesses (phase three)

In the coming months it plans to develop an understanding of local demand/local space-growth and market interests to design a workable master plan for the Market Road area.

Initial discussions are under way with a potential investor around possibilities and options to include affordable housing, local employment and commercial expansion.

The annual report states: 'The redevelopment of Market Road is a project of significant scale and as



The site of the proposed marina at...

such must be considered over a longer timescale. In 2018 we will further target achieving a all-party agreement on how to



The North Pier Pontoons in Oban.

Important new information on Government support for Central Heating Systems:

UPDATE NOV 2017

FACT 1

If you have electric storage heaters, an oil, electric or LPG boiler the Government will pay you up to £11680* to change over to an air source heat pump system which is more efficient, can be less costly to run and is kinder to the environment.

FACT 2

The Scheme called The Renewable Heat Incentive is available for home owners, landlords and businesses.

FACT 3

The Scottish Government in their Climate Plan 2017 have identified air source heat pumps as one of their favoured ways to reduce our carbon footprint.

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Creating a truly sustainable

Chairman TOM TRACEY gives an overview of the work undertaken by the Arran Economic Group (AEG) during the past 12 months in the annual report.

'AEG was created to optimise planned infrastructure changes and initiate others as required, to support a sustainable island economy. Arran's wild island beauty, welcoming communities, shared values and access to peace or adventure and everything in between, makes Arran a special place. The AEG's guiding principle is to manage inevitable change without changing the fundamental nature of the island.

'Last year saw the near completion of two of the main infrastructure projects identified in 2014/15. Brodick harbour awaits CE certification on the passenger access system to become operational and 90 per cent of the island has access to superfast broadband with 43 per cent take-up to date.

'There are new infrastructure projects in process or on the drawing board. The Minister for Transport and the Islands received a proposal for the re-development of Ardrossan Harbour on December 22 2017 and work is expected to begin and end in time for the arrival of our new ferry, the MV Glen San-

nox. We have also completed plans for the Arran Gateway Project which at its simplest, involves taking on the 'old' CalMac ticket office and turning it into a community hub. At its most complex, it is a complete re-development of the existing area with the addition of a transit marina. Discussions with the owners, community, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) and North Ayrshire Council (NAC) are ongoing.

'A 4G signal is available in Brodick and work is ongoing in Lamlash and Kilmory. Our challenge is to complete the 4G roll out and use this increased connectivity to drive positive change in health, education, community and the economy. We are working with North Ayrshire Council, University of the West of Scotland and the Scottish Futures Trust to establish creative ways of doing this through practical pilot schemes.

'Based on recommendations from the housing study as well as other inputs, NAC has agreed to build 26 social houses in Brodick and support Trust Housing Association building another 20. This is a major step forward. In addition, working with the newly formed Arran Development Trust, we have identified four sites around the island which

Next week: Working with island neighbours, bringing

Plans to redevelop Ardrossan harbour



Brodick harbour.

...best proceed, based on community and economic need. To progress this, we have identified a potential investor and

await a formal presentation proposal based on the evidential study information provided and community requirements.'

Sustainable island economy

would allow us to build a further 150 affordable homes over the next five years

'Our island economy grew by around 10 per cent last year based on tourist data, business surveys and annual company reports. Arran is number three of 32 local authorities in Quality of Life as measured by responses to the RBS quality of life survey. On the downside, the population declined by eight per cent (2005 -2015). The rate of decline is the same as the last census (2011). Primary cause: the age demographic and our inability to attract/retain a working age population. Primary cause: a lack of affordable housing.

'So our strategy has not changed. What has changed is that the infrastructure we talked about is broadly in place or very close to it. As previously stated, improved physical and digital connectivity will encourage the development of creative industries and people who can take advantage of flexible working practices. New industries and additional residents will increase our overall population back to 2001 levels, supporting the continued improvement in our schools, creating a truly sustainable island economy.

'In conclusion, we have strong levels of economic growth and a high quality of life.

We have added, and are adding, significant public and private infrastructure which will help secure sustainable growth. However, our primary challenge is halting rapid population decline. This will not change until we translate house building plans into actions.

'Arran Development Trust will have this as its primary focus for 2018. We are one year closer to the digital and physical connectivity and we need to support our existing industries as well as attract new ones. Our challenge remains, to do all this while maintaining our overarching principle of keeping Arran a special place.'



Chairman Tom Tracey.

Decision soon on way forward for Ardrossan

A clear strategy on the way forward for the redevelopment of Ardrossan harbour should be in place by the end of the month, according to the Arran Economic Group annual report.

The Ardrossan harbour taskforce met several times in 2017, under the auspices of the Scottish transport ministers' office, to consider several options designed to improve the reliability of the Arran ferry service in adverse weather.

This was driven from early simulation results which indicated that the new vessel for the route, the *MV Glen Sannox*, may not provide the same reliability as the current vessel the *MV Caledonian Isles*.

Two variations

Following extensive discussions with CalMac, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited, Transport Scotland, Peel Ports and North Ayrshire Council these have been reduced to two variations of a proposal to re-align the berth to provide an improved turn in and extend the length to accommodate longer vessels if required in future.

These proposal variations are currently being examined further on the simulators to confirm which



A decision is expected after Easter on Ardrossan harbour works.

provides best service and value for money. The results of these are expected to be prepared for submission to the transport minister Humza Yousaf prior to Easter.

This work will also include a review, with attention to the requirement to retain the current timetable for the service.

It was confirmed all options being considered re-

quired a new linkspan. Timescales cannot be given currently because of the ongoing work, but it was felt a clear way forward should be evident by the end of March to allow a decision from the minister to be made following the Easter break. Until the decision is made on the berth, the final plans and layouts for the passenger access accommodation

and port side facilities cannot be completed. A project management team will be appointed to take the programme forward on conclusion of the review.

In another recent development, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport has committed £200,000 from its 2018-19 capital budget to the £15.5 million Ardrossan harbour interchange project.



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High school pupils enjoy a Great Green Day



High school pupils enjoyed a Great Green Day hosted recently by a collective of environmental and community groups.

Organised by Arran Community Land and Eco-Savvy, and funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, the event aimed to increase awareness of climate change and environmental damage.

After having viewed a screening of the climate change film, *Before the Flood* the previous week, the children were fore-armed with a great deal of information and background to the issue, which

they used to tackle the activities at the Green Show to look creatively at ways of reducing their own carbon footprints.

The Great Green Show included pledges on a plate to reduce carbon, a fashion activity #nowasteonmywaist to explore the carbon footprint of clothing and pallets being upcycled into vertical herb gardens.

Some of the other green organisation on Arran which joined in the fun and informative day included COAST, which delved into the marine implications of global warming. The Arran Bee Group exhibited

a demonstration hive and talked about the importance of bees. The Arran Theatre and Arts Trust helped with filming the event and well-known artist Marvin Elliot ran a wood carving group who created unique signs that will go up around Arran's coastal path.

Community land project manager Pippa Downing said: 'We had a great response from all the pupils and teachers at Arran High School and it was amazing to have nearly every pupil in the school involved so positively. All the Arran green groups working together produced a broad range of activities and themes for the pupils to explore – many thanks to all those who helped on the day and to the school for hosting the event.'

Eco-Savvy's project manager Judith King added: 'Through our current project, Eco-Savvy has found the way to kickstart action is to first of all educate on the seriousness of cli-



Pupils set about using recycled pallets to create vertical herb gardens.

mate change, often through films, facts and figures. Although the reality and implications of these may be shocking, it is important that we do not give up in making the necessary changes to protect ourselves and future generations from the catastrophic impact that climate change could have.

'This is what we sought to encourage with the young people and found that a lot of what was observed through the film was transferred to the fashion, art and film opportunities of the day. Some of these projects will be made visible to the wider Arran in coming weeks. A big thank you to our volunteers and all involved in making the day a success.'

The Great Green Day was the penultimate event for the Community Land and Eco-Savvy's year-long Climate Challenge Fund projects which has seen every school, and almost every school child on Arran, taking part in one of the events.



Children can be seen filling the hall and taking part in green activities.



Participants take part in carving wooden coastal way signs with Marvin Elliot.



Dressed for the part, children learned about the importance of bees.

OFFERS & competitions

To enter, send separate entries (in the same envelope) with your name, address, telephone number and email address to **Scottish Field Competitions, Fettes Park, 496 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH5 2DL** or enter at www.scottishfield.co.uk. Closing date, unless otherwise stated, is 31 March 2018. **Winners drawn from all competitions also enter a prize draw to win a bottle of Berry Bros. & Rudd Islay Reserve whisky.**

WIN

A ONE NIGHT EASTER STAY AT ARDANAISEIG WITH DINNER FOR TWO PEOPLE



One of Scotland's most sought after exclusive use weddings and events venues is opening its doors to the public for a memorable week over Easter. Located on the shores of Loch Awe near Taynult in Argyll, it's the perfect setting for a wedding or special occasion. Our winners will stay for one night in a beautiful Master Loch Suite in this remarkable manor house. A sumptuous three course dinner, breakfast and true Scottish Highland hospitality await.

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, just answer the following question: On which loch is Ardanaiseig situated?

NB: Competition closes on 19 March 2018
Prize is for one nights stay between 30 March - 2 April 2018

WIN

A TWO NIGHT STAY FOR TWO PEOPLE AT HIGHLAND APARTMENTS IN INVERNESS



Highland Apartments by Mansley provide luxury living in the heart of Inverness. These serviced apartments on the corner of the High Street, overlooking the River Ness, offer the flexibility of self-catering accommodation with the added benefit of a daily housekeeping service, discounted dining, secure parking and wi-fi. Many feature designer interiors with balconies and terraces. Shops, restaurants, cafes and bars are just a short stroll away.

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, just answer the following question: What river runs through the centre of Inverness?

The prize is a stay in a deluxe one bedroom apartment for two nights. Stay must be taken before end of June. Accommodation is for two persons sharing. Prize includes car parking.

Entrants must be 18 or over. Employees of Scottish Field, the competition promoters, and their direct families are ineligible to enter. No purchase necessary. The winner will be first correct entry drawn after closing date. No cash alternative is available. The winner will be informed by telephone. Promoter reserves the right to request post publicity. Indicate if you do not wish to receive further information from promoter. Usual Scottish Field rules apply. Information will be shared with promoters and sponsors.



Children hang their T-shirt creations up for display.

What's on

in association with Isle of Arran Brewery

www.arranbrewery.com



Everyday

Trout fly fishing
 Brodick Castle
 Soap making and candle dipping Arran Aromatics
 Arran Brewery

Loch Garbad, bank fishing
 Garden only open 9am-dusk
 Brodick, 10am - 4pm
 Open Mon - Thursday 11.30am - 4.30pm
 Friday & Saturday, 10am - 4.30pm, Sun - Closed

Saturday 17th March

Flow Yoga
 Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Army Cadets
 Blackwaterfoot bowls
 Family games
 Fun in the pool
 St Andrew's Chamber Orchestra
 Music Arran presents A Concert by Mary Reid
 Live music - Tim Pomeroy and Mike Bailey
 Blues Mama - blues songs from BB King, Etta James, Taj Mahal, etc
 Over-21s disco

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 9am
 9.30am - 11am
 9.30am - noon
 Auchrannie Road 11am - 1pm
 Bowling Club, 1.30pm
 Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm - 4pm
 Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm - 5pm
 Lochranza and Catacol Village Hall, 5pm
 Brodick Village Hall, 7.30pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 10pm

Sunday 18th March

Live music - Mike Edwards
 Family games
 Live music - Blues Mama
 AA meeting

Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 2pm
 Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm - 4pm
 The PHT, Lamlash, 4pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 5pm - 6.30pm

Monday 19th March

Morning fitness
 Arran Historical Society - speaker Sue Mills
 Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Over-50s badminton
 Arran Skinnymalinks
 Arran Skinnymalinks
 Arran Skinnymalinks
 Adult tennis
 Arran Junior Football Club
 Circuit training
 Lamlash Aerobix
 Badminton
 Badminton
 Arran Bridge Club
 Tae Kwon Do
 JogScotland Mixed Ability Runnin Group

Auchrannie Gym, 9.30am - 10.30am
 Brodick Hall, 2pm
 9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 Lochranza Village Hall, 2pm - 4pm
 Brèagha Holistic Beauty, Corrie, 5pm
 Shiskine Church Hall, 5.15pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 6pm
 Shiskine Golf & Tennis Club from 5.30pm
 Ormidale Park, 6pm - 7.30pm
 Auchrannie Gym, 6pm - 7pm
 Arran High School Dance Studio, 6.30pm
 Lochranza Hall, 6.30pm
 Auchrannie Sports Hall, 7pm - 9pm
 Lamlash Golf Clubhouse, 7.15pm
 Brodick Church Hall, Adults and over 10s, 7.00pm - 8.30pm
 Whiting Bay, 5.30pm

Tuesday 20th March

Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Healthy Outdoors
 Alcoholics Anonymous
 Blackwaterfoot bowls
 Bridge class (beginners/improvers)
 Metafit class
 Flow yoga,
 Lamlash Junior Drama Club
 Auchrannie winter bowls
 Youth club
 Fiona's FitSteps
 Scottish country dancing
 Live music - Arran Dawn
 Pop quiz

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 NTS Ranger Centre, 10am - 1pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 2pm
 Bowling Club, 1.30pm
 Brodick Golf Club, 2.30pm - 4.30pm
 Arran High School, 6pm
 Corrie Hall, 6pm
 Arran High School, 6.30pm - 9pm
 Brodick, 7pm
 Kildonan Hall, 7pm
 Arran High School, 7pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 7.30pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 9pm

Wednesday 21st March

Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 5pm

Yoga
 Hydrofit
 Elderly forum
 Chair yoga exercise class
 Bus Pass Club free soup
 Arran Heritage Museum archives and genealogy service
 Knittery and Natterry
 Zumba Gold
 Arran Skinnymalinks
 Just Jhoom (Bollywood dance fitness)
 JogScotland Mixed Ability Running Group
 Flow yoga
 Tae Kwon Do
 Yoga-Arran
 Mixed hockey
 Burger and quiz night
 Tae Kwon Do
 Alcoholics Anonymous
 Family friendly pub quiz
 Rock and pop bingo

Auchrannie Studio, 9.30am - 10.30am
 Auchrannie Hotel Leisure, 9.45am - 10.45am
 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 10.30am for 11am
 St Molios Hall, Shiskine, 11am
 The PHT, Lamlash, 12noon - 2.30pm
 10.30am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 3.30pm
 Kilmory Hall, 2pm - 4pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 4.30pm - 5.30pm
 Lamlash Church Hall, 5pm
 Brodick Church Hall, 5.45pm - 6.45pm
 Invercloy Co-op Car Park, 5.30pm
 Shiskine Hall, 6pm
 Arran High School, Kids-6.30-7.30pm, Adults, 7.30pm-8.30pm
 Kinneil, Lamlash, 7pm - 8.30pm
 Auchrannie Sports Hall, 7.30pm - 9pm
 Felicity's @ Eden Lodge, from 7.30pm
 Arran High School Kids-6.30-7.30pm, Adults, 7.30pm - 8.30pm
 Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm
 PHT, Lamlash, 8.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 9.30pm

Thursday 22nd March

Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Morning fitness, Auchrannie Gym
 Chair yoga exercise class
 Arran Skinnymalinks
 CND reading Group
 Music Matters
 Quilt Arran
 Adult tennis
 10th Ayrshire Shiskine Cub Scouts and Beavers
 Arran ladies' netball
 Ladies' hockey
 Badminton
 Arran Soul Choir
 Arran Bridge Club
 Brodick Embroidery Group
 General knowledge quiz

9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 9.30am - 10.30am
 Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 10.30am
 Brodick Church Hall, between 10.30am - 12noon
 Glenisle Hotel, 2pm
 Lamlash Church, 2pm
 Lamlash Fire Station, 2pm - 4.30pm
 Shiskine Golf & Tennis Club from 5.30pm
 Shiskine Hall, 6pm - 7.30pm
 Arran High School, 6 - 7pm
 Ormidale Pavilion, 6.30pm - 8.00pm
 Shiskine Hall, Shiskine, 7pm
 Arran High School, Lamlash, 7pm - 8.30pm
 Brodick Golf Clubhouse, 7.15pm
 Brodick Library, 7.30pm - 9.30pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 9pm

Friday 23rd March

Arran Vets
 Arran Vets
 Yoga
 Hydrofit
 Coffee morning, all welcome
 Smart Recovery meeting, all welcome
 Steak night - build your own steak from £9.99 for rump
 Lochranza children's badminton
 AA meeting
 Arran Youth Foundations
 Tae Kwon Do
 Live music - Fatman and the Angel
 Lochranza adults' badminton
 Friday night quiz
 Poker, pool and darts

Surgery 9am - 10.30am and 4pm - 6pm
 Reception 9am - 2pm and 4pm - 6pm
 Auchrannie Spa Leisure, 9.30am - 10.30am
 Auchrannie Hotel Leisure, 9.45am - 10.45am
 Corrie and Sannox Village Hall, 10.30am
 Lamlash High School, Lamlash, 6.00pm
 The PHT, Lamlash, from 5pm
 Lochranza Hall, 6pm - 8pm
 Whiting Bay Hall, 7pm
 Church Hall, Brodick 7pm - 9pm
 Arran High School, Lamlash, adults, 7pm - 9pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 Lochranza Hall, 8pm
 Whiting Bay Golf Club, Whiting Bay, 8pm
 The PHT, Lamlash

Saturday 24th March

Flow yoga
 Arran Vets surgery
 Arran Vets reception
 Army Cadets
 Blackwaterfoot bowls
 Family games
 Fun in the pool
 Live music - Michael Clark
 Smokey Valley Band - 'funky folk' with a huge selection of songs
 Over-21s disco
 Annual Spring Flower and Bulb Show

Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick, 9am
 9.30am - 11am
 9.30am - noon
 Auchrannie Road 11am - 1pm
 Bowling Club, 1.30pm
 Auchrannie Games Hall, 3pm - 4pm
 Auchrannie Spa Pool, 4pm - 5pm
 Fiddlers' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodick, 7.30pm
 The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm
 Ormidale Hotel, 10pm
 Brodick Hall, 2pm.



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Birds flock to snow-free fields

The wet and unsettled weather that dominated much of the winter came to an end in February with the wind coming latterly from the east. There was no measurable rain after February 19 and the temperature fell.

In comparison with January, February had 40 per cent of the rain of January and the mean temperature was a degree less. In comparison with last year, this February had 60 per cent of the rain of last February and the mean temperature was two degrees lower.

Gulls were a feature with reports of two species of uncommon white-winged gulls. A first winter glaucous gull was photographed in Catacol Bay on 3rd and a first winter Iceland gull was photographed among hundreds of common gulls in an unharvested crop field by the castle drive on 4th. The first returning lesser black-backed gull was reported from Machriewaterfoot on 22nd, an early sign of approaching spring.

Reports of winter visitors included: a brambling at the Dyemill on 4th, 17 rook in Slidery on 6th, 250 redwing in Shiskine on 8th, 200 fieldfare in Feorline on 9th and seven purple sandpiper at Silver Sands on 18th.

In February, wintering wildfowl were present in numbers including: 250 greylag geese in Feorline on 2nd, 52 pink-footed geese on Corriecravie Moor on 7th, a male goldeneye on Mossend Pond on 8th, 32 teal at Cosyden on 17th, two whooper swan

at Kilpatrick Farm on 19th and 75 wigeon at Cleiteadh Buidhe on 21st.

Other wintering flocks included: 16 common cross-bill in Clachan Glen on 2nd, 30 lesser redpoll at the Dyemill on 4th, 60 skylark in Slidery on 6th, 800 common gull with 400 woodpigeon plus 80 hooded/carrion crows in an unharvested crop field by the castle drive on 7th, 120 starling at Bennecarrigan on 17th, 60 curlew in South Feorline on 20th and 36 lapwing in Shiskine on 28th. Some of these flocks may have included birds beginning to migrate north.

The occasional calm days were ideal for sea watching. Reports included: a red-throated diver off Imachar on 2nd, five black-throated diver off Fairy Dell on 4th and two great northern diver at Dougarie on 9th. There were some signs of approaching spring; eight courting red-breasted merganser at Alltghobhlach on 7th, 18 displaying eider in Cosyden on 17th, seven black guillemot at their breeding colony in Corrie on 25th and three returning gannet off Clachlands Point on 26th.

With sources of food for some species of bird becoming scarce, gardens were havens for many species. Among the many garden highlights were: a great spotted woodpecker in Lamlash on 4th, a male blackcap in Strathwillan on 9th, 50 siskin in Shiskine on 10th, 22 collared dove in Blackwaterfoot on 19th and 10 bullfinch in Cordon



Black guillemot in breeding plumage by Dennis Morrison.

Bird notes

by Jim Cassels

FEBRUARY

on 21st. It was also encouraging to receive more reports of greenfinch. This once common species has been decimated in recent years by the parasitic disease trichomonas.

Other sightings included: two jack snipe at Hazelburn on 2nd, 15 reed bunting at Slidery on 6th, six yellowhammer also at Slidery on 8th, three goosander in Loch Ranza on 13th, a merlin at Torbeg on 17th, four little grebe in Loch Ranza on 25th and a kingfisher on Fisherman's Walk on 26th.

By the end of the month, with most of mainland Scotland covered with snow and biting, freezing winds from the east, the low lying snow-free fields of Arran and the shore itself were areas that seemed at times to be alive with many species of birds foraging for food including: blackbird, fieldfare, lapwing, mistle thrush, redwing, reed bunting, skylark and song thrush. With this severe weather stretch-

ing into March, the official start of spring looked to be on hold.

Having said that, March could see the arrival of some of our summer visitors such as wheatear, chiffchaff, willow warbler, sand martin, even swallow and house martin, but their arrival will be dependent on the weather. Keep an eye out for these migrants and let me know when you first see them.

Enjoy your birding.

Please send any bird notes with 'what, when, where' to me at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or e mail me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk I look forward to hearing from you. For more information on birding on Arran purchase the Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012 as well as the Arran Bird Report 2017 and visit this website www.arranbirding.co.uk.



A colourful wintering duck, the wigeon, by Dennis Morrison.



Glaucous gull, an uncommon winter visitor photographed by Stuart Smith in Catacol Bay.

THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday March 14, 1998

Lighting up time

Last Wednesday the Arran Sports Field, officially opened by the Queen last August, had another sort of opening.

This one was to formally switch on the floodlights on the astroturf to allow all interested parties to inspect the pavilion. Although raining, junior hockey training was postponed until the guests had assembled and then Councillor John Sillars turned on the lights by remote control from inside the pavilion. Guests watched from a distance, the high lights slowly coming to life to reveal the youngsters at practice and to signify final readiness of a project which has been almost nine years in coming to fruition.

Except for a few objections to the lights from those living nearby, there is a very real pride in the project and the opportunities it is now giving to Arran's youngsters.

On the green

The Brodick Bowling Club will know early next week if it is to be allowed to lease the bowling green. But, although having bid a modest sum for the lease, its members both want and do not want to get the lease.

This is the result of North Ayrshire deciding not to run the facility, or the ten-

nis courts, or the putting green this year, but it has decided to invite tenders for others to run them. The bowling club is one of four on Arran but the only one which does not own its green. It is comfortable with the present situation and, being mostly in their senior years, does not really fancy the additional burden of coping with the business side.

Charles Rundle, who is on the bowling club committee, said: 'As long as we are allowed to play bowls, I don't think anyone wants the responsibility. It's too legal, it's too bureaucratic.'

Treaty of Brodick

With Sinn Fein expected to rejoin the Northern Ireland peace talks next week, Arran has been mooted as the place where these talks might take place. This is only a proposal which has been put to the Prime Minister and the suggestion was not specifically for Arran, but on a Scottish island. Arran, however, is one of relatively few which could offer the facilities. It is also closest to Northern Ireland.

It is said that there is a hint of a promise of reaching an agreement and the Prime Minister is believed to be aiming at a deal by Easter. The idea of Arran or another island is to escape the 'hothouse' atmosphere of Belfast.



Jacks high at the start of the bowling season some years before the anxiety of facing running the green themselves. North Ayrshire Council will come to a decision next week while it contemplates whether it will run the bowling green, tennis courts and putting green this year. 01_B11tw02



Former pupil Alison Marr has provided an Arran High School photo from 1975/76 which she says contains one married couple, one professor, several local business people, a research scientist, an excellent country dancer, several bankers, a brother and a sister, and one set of twins. 01_B11tw03



Arran Youth Hockey all kitted out with their new Royal Bank sports bags and their new strips courtesy of Arran Ladies Hockey, Bank of Scotland, BP and the Arran Licensed Trade, with Liz Kerr, Ian Small and Alastair Dobson. 01_B11tw01



Winners of the Arran ladies darts doubles Morag Reid and Catherine Law pictured last Wednesday at the Lagg Hotel. 01_B11tw05



Stuart Gough is the new archivist at the Arran Heritage Museum. Having recently taken over from Fiona Gorman, he too encourages people to make use of the archives which contain a wealth of local history, genealogical knowledge and a list of every gravestone on Arran. 01_B11tw04

Wee Box appeal backed

People on Arran are being urged to join SCIAF's Wee Box, Big Change Lent appeal to raise money for some of the poorest people in the world. This year the UK government has committed to matching – pound for pound – all donations given to the appeal before May 8, meaning people's donations will go twice as far.

Each year people across Scotland give up a favourite treat such as coffee, chocolate, wine or crisps, and put the money they save into a SCIAF Wee Box, and then donate it at Easter to help the charity's life-changing work.

In 2017, the appeal raised more than £1 million for SCIAF's life-changing work, helping people in 15 of the world's poorest countries. Almost £80,000 was raised in Ayrshire and

Arran last year, with more than £800 raised on Arran alone.

SCIAF director Alistair Dutton said: 'We're incredibly grateful to the people of Ayrshire and Arran for supporting us over the years.'

'Everything given to SCIAF's Wee Box Lent appeal means poor families can get the help they need, like good seeds, farming tools, training and small loans, so they can grow food, earn an income, and have a better future.'

'Having the UK aid match again this year is a fantastic bonus too. It means everything you give to our Wee Box appeal will be doubled by the UK government. I urge everyone to take advantage of this amazing offer and make sure your money goes twice as far.'

The 2018 appeal tells the story of SCIAF's life-changing work with poor families affected by illegal fishing and poverty in one of the poorest provinces of rural Cambodia, Stung Treng.

Cambodian family headed by Phong and Toma Lang and their five children, feature on this year's Wee Box.

The Langs depend on fishing and farming to survive but they were badly affected by criminal gangs who used dynamite and electrocution to harvest huge numbers of fish in their local river. At the time, fish stocks dropped by a staggering 50 per cent, leaving the family struggling to feed themselves.

Working closely with its local Cambodian partner, Development and Partnership in Action (DPA), SCIAF helped the Lang



The Lang family are the face of the 2018 Wee Box appeal.

family and their neighbours to form a community fishing association, work closely with the police and

local authorities, and set up regular patrols of the river to prevent illegal fishing so fish stocks could return to levels which can support local families and future generations.

The Langs also received training in how to increase their rice harvests so they could support themselves all year round.

Money raised from the appeal will help SCIAF's work with poor communities around the world so they can grow more food and support themselves, overcome injustice and conflict, get an education and learn new skills, as well as get help when disasters strike.

To get your own SCIAF Wee Box, make a donation or to find out more about the campaign, please visit www.sciaf.org.uk or call 0141 354 5555.

shocking, urgent, thought-provoking, this movie is a must watch" -eco savvy member

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Eco Savvy's current CCF Project "Reuse and Reduce" is coming to an end as of the 31st of March. Over the course of the project we have accumulated a large amount of items that still have a use. Our project's aim is to reduce our carbon footprint as an island and we would rather these items were re-homed for free than end up in landfill. Everything will be FREE and any donations to help us grow our charity further will be most welcome. The cost of reducing our carbon footprint? PRICE LESS

SUNDAY 25TH MARCH

LAMLASH COMMUNITY THEATRE
10AM-2PM

everyone welcome

any questions please contact Jude: ecoprojectmanager@gmail.com



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Applications listed below together with the plans and other documents may be
examined at Planning Services, Cunninghame House, Irvine, between 9am-4.45pm
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*and at The Council Offices, Lamlash

Written representations may be made to the Executive Director (Economy & Communities)
at the above address or emailed to eplanning@north-ayrshire.gov.uk by 6 April 2018.
Any representations received will be open to public view.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013
REGULATION 20(1)**

18/00189/PP; Kenmara, Strathwillan Road, Brodick, Isle Of Arran; Erection of two
storey detached dwelling house and detached garage, including demolition
of existing bungalow and timber garage.

Elma Murray
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath

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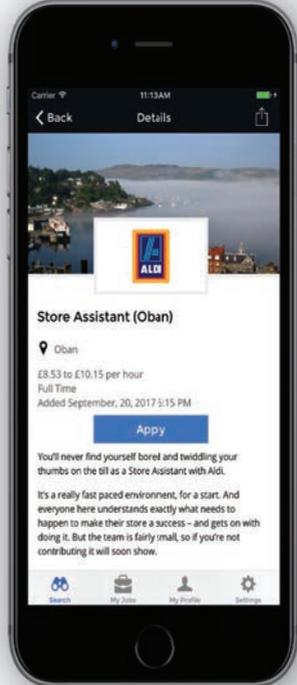
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Parish Assistant:
Mrs Jean Hunter:

Worship will be conducted in the above churches at the following times to which all are invited.

Sunday 18th March

Pirnmill and Lochranza Churches together, 10.15am
Morning Worship and Stated Annual Meeting at Lochranza Church.

Shiskine Church, 12noon
Morning Worship.

Brodick Church, 10.30am
Morning Worship.

Corrie Church, 11.30am
Prayer Meeting, 12noon
Morning Worship

There will also be a Service of Worship in Montrose House at 1.30pm.

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Telephone 700346
Everyone
Warmly Invited

ARRAN FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Shiskine 11am (church on road between Blackwaterfoot and Machrie)
Brodick 6pm

Rev Benjamin Van Rensburg

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Kilmory linked with Lamlash
"A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share"

Sunday 18th March

Rev Lily McKinnon
Kilmory - 10am
Lamlash - 11.30am

In Lamlash:
prayer time 10.45am.

All welcome, including families; children's area
Scottish Charity SC015072

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Whiting Bay and Kildonan
Church of Scotland, Charity
Number: SC014005

Sunday 18th March

Worship will be conducted by the minister
Rev Elizabeth Watson
at 10.30am.

The Stated Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place immediately after worship, followed by lunch.
All welcome.

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev Vince Jennings
Sunday 18th March

Service 11am
Ormidale Pavilion
Tea and coffee after the service

Wednesday at 7.30pm Home fellowship group for bible study and prayer.
Telephone 600222
Everyone warmly invited

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sunday 18th March
Sunday Mass 11am

DEATH

GARRAWAY: Stephen Grant. Passed away 28th February, aged 30, beloved son of Nancy and Stephen and brother to Greig and Janey, he will be greatly missed. Funeral service will be held in St Moli-os Church, Shiskine on Friday 23rd March at 11.30am and thereafter at Shiskine Cemetery. No flowers please, donations if so desired to 'Mind'. All welcome.

TAYLOR: - Harold (Spud) Peacefully at home on Sunday, 11th March 2018. Spud, aged 94 years, beloved husband of Jessie. Funeral service in Lamlash Church on Thursday, 22nd March at 11.30 am and thereafter to Lamlash Cemetery to which all are welcome.

Weather fails to dampen the spirits

Continued from page 20

at the goal, but were unlucky on several occasions.

At full-time the scoreline was 2-1 to the visitors. Team captain Annie Watts said: 'The girls gave 100 per cent today and, despite the weather, played their socks off. It was a tight game. Uddingston are league leaders having lost only one match this season, so a 2-1 scoreline is a very respectable result.'

Uddingston awarded Arran's Ali (Ninja) McKie dame of the game for her exceptional goalkeeping. Arran Ladies would like to thank Pauline Reid for enduring the foul weather and umpiring their match. They are hoping to get Pauline back on the pitch for the last game of the season.

They would also like to thank the staff at the Ormidale Hotel for their continued support and for providing the teams with post-match teas. To all the supporters who cheered the girls on from the sidelines in the rain, the team



Lorraine Hewie is pursued as she heads for goal.

would like to say 'thank you'.

Arran Ladies travel to the National Hockey Centre today (Saturday) to play Stepps Ladies 2s.

The match starts at noon. Team: captain Annie Watts, vice-captain Lorraine Hewie, Ali McKie, Cat Galbraith, Elyse Aitken, Freya McNicol, Ellie Wood, Mia

Walker, Jenny Stark, Hazel Malakoty, Judith Ross, Helen Thomson, Megan McNicol and Hannah McCartney. Umpire Pauline Reid (Arran Ladies).

**Whiting Bay Golf Club**

Sunday March 11, Winter Cup. The attraction of the Old Firm match on television, coupled with a few sore heads from 'celebrating' the rugby on Saturday, left the field clear for the seven diehards who played in the March round of the Winter Cup. Although wet after heavy rain on Saturday, the course was playing well and overhead conditions were good.

Result: 1 Jamie Macpherson (6) 67 ACB and lowest gross, 2 John Pennycott (13) 67, 3 Stan Rainey (10)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SCOTT: Davy, Isa, Betty, Jean and family would like to thank the doctors, nurses and carers who looked after Paul. A special thanks to Rev Jean Hunter for the lovely service and to David and Clair Hendry funeral directors. Also to Amy and Euan at the Drift Inn for the lovely spread and Tracy Flemming for all her support.

69. Perhaps surprisingly, CSS went out to 65. There were no magic twos.

The remaining round will be played on Sunday March 25. With one round to go, it's all to play for with John Pennycott leading by one shot from Graeme Crichton.

Fixture: Sunday March 18, friendly v Lamlash at Lamlash, 10.30am start. Just turn up to be paired up.

Shiskine Golf Club

Ladies section: Thursday March 8, 12 hole medal, 12 played, par 44, CSS 44. 1 Jenni Turnbull 52-8=44, 2 and scratch Ann May 50-4=46, 3 Sally Brookes 57-10=47.

Fixtures: ladies' match every Thursday - 10am tee-off. Gents: Saturday March 17, Lochranza match at Shiskine, 1.30pm tee-off. Sunday March 18, Ryder Cup (Stableford), all gents members welcome, 1pm tee-off.

Lamlash Golf Club

Sunday March 11, Glenburn Cup, winner Alan Smith 73-11=62. Overall winner of winter Glenburn Cup, John O'Sullivan total 297.

Fixture: Sunday March 18, winter friendly, Lamlash v Whiting Bay at Lamlash, 10.30am start. Thursday March 22, yellow medal, 11am start

Brodick Golf Club

Sunday March 11, Brandon qualifier, eight played, NC. 1 David Hendry 75-14=61, 2 Iain MacDonald 70-5=65, 3 Chris Pattenden 79-13=66. Scratch Iain MacDonald 70.

Winter Cup, Stableford. 1 David Hendry 40pts, 2 Chris Pattenden 36pts ACB, 3 Iain MacDonald 36pts.

Fixture: Sunday March 18, Winter Cup, 9am and 12noon.

Corrie Golf Club

Monday March 10, Monday Cup. 1 A Smith 63, 2 R McLean 64, 3 L Hartley 71.

Regrettably, the Eddie Rankin Memorial Trophy was cancelled last Saturday due to a very poor weather forecast, which proved to be correct. A new date will be arranged and notified via this section.

Fixture: Saturday March 17, sweep, ballots at 9am and 1pm. Monday March 19, noon.

Arran Bridge Club results

The results of the Arran Bridge Club aggregate competition at Brodick on Thursday March 8 were: N/S 1 John Dick and David Campbell, 2 Jean Barclay and Elizabeth McKellar, 3 John Baraclough and Jim Peacock. E/W 1 Jan and John Beattie, 2 Tricia Martin and Douglas Hamilton, 3 Jessmay Peacock and Margaret MacGill.

The results of the match points competition at Lamlash on Monday March 12 were: 1 Margaret MacGill and Elizabeth McKellar, 2 Doug Chase and Jennifer Wales, 3= John and Jan Beattie, 3= Tricia Martin and Douglas Hamilton.



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SPORT



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Golf round-up

Narrow victory for the league leaders

Arran Ladies 1
Uddingston Ladies 2s 2

Wet and wintry weather returned last Saturday as Arran Ladies faced Uddingston Clinetix Ladies 2s, league leaders in the West District women's hockey league division three, in their last home match of the season.

The Arran ladies knew this was going to be a tough match. In preparation, vice-captain and acting club

coach Lorraine Hewie had devised a series of drills to establish a new defensive formation which the team had practised at training.

During the match, this formation proved invaluable as the Uddingston forward line battled relentlessly, but without success, to gain access to the Arran shooting zone, their efforts thwarted by Arran's defensive line of Ellie Wood, Mia Walker, Jenny Stark, Cat Galbraith, Freya McNicol, Elyse Ait-

ken and Ninja McKie. Elyse Aitken's clearance from the 'D' saw the ball travel from the back line to the mid's, thus enabling Arran's Lorraine Hewie to begin her run into the opposition's 'D'. Despite immense pressure from Uddingston's defence, Lorraine was able to execute a stunning aerial shot on target, forcing the keeper to leap into the air to prevent it entering the goal. However, Helen Thomson was



Elyse Aitken on the attack for Arran.



Mia Walker tries to evade her opponent.

waiting in the wings for the rebound and her signature 'rocket shot' resulted in the first goal of the match, putting Arran ahead.

Arran Ladies knuckled down and, for the next 20 minutes, the midfield line of Hazel Malakoty, Judith Ross, Hannah McCartney and Megan McNicol held fast in the face of the opposition's determination to even the score. At the half-time whistle the score was Arran 1, Uddingston 0.

With the rain still lash-

ing down, the players had a short break for team talks and refreshments, but quickly returned to the pitch to continue the game.

A few minutes into play the ball was turned over by the Uddingston midfielder and it quickly found its way into the Arran 'D'. A foul inside the 'D' resulted in a short corner but the striker's shot was run down by sweeper Cat Galbraith. Unfortunately, during the ensuing kerfuffle, a second foul was incurred and an-

other short corner awarded. This time Arran were not so lucky, as Uddingston's centre forward managed to draw the ball back and with great skill lifted it into the goal. Five minutes later, they succeeded in scoring again from a superb shot from the edge of the 'D'. The Arran forward line of Helen Thomson, Annie Watts and Lorraine Hewie continued to put pressure on the Uddingston defence with some exceptional runs

Continued on page 19

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