



## Knapdale Ward set for closure



## Reasons to be cheerful



**REMEMBER**  
to put your clocks  
**forward 1 hour**  
this weekend

# Argyll comes to terms with life in lockdown

by Colin Cameron  
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

As coronavirus continues to spread in Scotland, stringent new curbs were introduced earlier this week on life across the country.

In a fast-moving crisis situation, questions remained as the Advertiser went to press about specific aspects of the overall lockdown – more on this on page three.

Many cafes, shops and other services across Argyll had already closed or announced their intention to suspend operation ahead of the announcement by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon on the evening of Monday March 23.

The extreme measures, which include a requirement to distance ourselves from others, are all part of a national effort to slow the spread of the virus so that the UK's health services can cope during the outbreak.

Ms Sturgeon called for an immediate stop to public

gatherings of more than two people in Scotland. All non-essential shops should now be closed as well as public spaces including libraries, communal parks and playgrounds, and places of worship. The ban extends to ceremonial social events including weddings and christenings, with the exception of funerals which will be restricted to immediate family.

The only permissible reasons to leave your home are:

- To shop for basic necessities and that should be limited to once a day.

- To take exercise once a day – but alone or with your own household, not in groups.

- For medical reasons or to care for a vulnerable person.

- To travel to essential work if that cannot be done at home. Further guidance to employers is pending.

Police Scotland officers applied 'soft enforcement' of these measures prior to the Scottish Government

taking legal powers from yesterday (Thursday March 26). Ms Sturgeon said: 'Let me be blunt: these stringent restrictions on our normal day to day lives are difficult and unprecedented but they are essential for the protection of all of us. What I am telling people across Scotland that they now must do to help us fight this virus is stay at home.'

Following the announcement, Argyll and Bute Council commented via Twitter this was 'a very clear message from both the UK and Scottish governments tonight'.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell said: 'The rules and the need are very clear. The consequences for ignoring the rules and denying the need are also very clear. Stay at home. Leave for exercise and essential supplies once a day maximum if you really have to. No gatherings. Only essential work that cannot be done remotely.'



## Pupils impress before coronavirus

Before the coronavirus crisis hit, Lochgilphead High School pupils gained valuable skills at Mid Argyll MS Centre in a fun and imaginative way as part of an innovative course being run for the first time in the region. More on this story on page 13.

51\_a10MScentreCourse10

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POLICE FILES

Drunk driver

At 6.15pm on Friday March 20, on Bank Park, Lochgilphead, a man, aged 53, was arrested for allegedly driving a car while under the influence of alcohol.

He subsequently provided a urine sample for analysis.

No MOT

Police stopped a vehicle on the A816 at Cairnbaan on Saturday March 21, at 2.30pm. Checks revealed the vehicle's MOT had expired. The 28-year-old male driver was charged and issued with a £100 fixed penalty.

**Anyone with information in relation to the above, or to any incident, should contact their local police station on telephone number 101 or, anonymously, through Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.**

CONTACTUS

email editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk  
telephone 01546 602345

# Virus guidelines lead to health service changes

by Rachel Carruthers  
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

As stricter government guidelines are introduced, medical centres and pharmacies are implementing new protocols – including emergency care only for non-Argyll residents. Lochgilphead Medical Centre and the surgery in Inveraray are offering telephone-only consultations unless a visit to the surgery is absolutely necessary, while Furnace surgery has closed for now.

Dr Andrew Strain said: 'We would like to thank our patients for their consideration at this time and advise that all the advice on our practice website home page is relevant to patients in Lochgilphead and Inveraray and Furnace.'

'A new NHS24 service for coronavirus/COVID-19 related illnesses started on

Monday March 23 and all patients with a new fever or cough or shortness of breath should call 111 in the first instance. If a face-to-face assessment is required, NHS24 will arrange this through the Coronavirus Assessment Centre based at Mid Argyll Community Hospital. This service is equipped to ensure the safety of staff and patients in a way that is not possible in the Inveraray surgery building. If you have the symptoms above, please do not attend the surgery and please follow the advice given on the NHS Inform website.

'At this time, we emphasise to individuals staying temporarily in our practice area we will provide urgent and emergency care only. Those normally resident in other areas are requested to contact their registered GP to arrange prescriptions or routine care.'

'Finally, due to heightened demand on practice staff at this exceptional time and to limit essential cleaning and maintenance required to maintain safety, we have taken the decision to close Furnace surgery for the foreseeable future.'

'All patients will be asked to attend Inveraray surgery if required, though wherever possible we will attempt to manage problems over the telephone to limit the need for any face-to-face

contact as per national public health guidance on social distancing.'

Meanwhile, Argyll Pharmacy has put new policies in place to help it to remain open. Customers are asked to only order what they need when they need it and to phone ahead to check prescriptions are ready for collection before going to the pharmacy. To order your prescriptions and for pharmacy advice, call 01546 603217.

Susan Paterson, owner of

Argyll Pharmacy, said: 'Our work practices are changing daily as we do our best to protect our staff and vulnerable patients. Community pharmacies have a higher footfall than any other healthcare setting and right now we need to minimise this.'

'This goes against everything we believe is good customer service. However, we will be here to support you in the best way we can under these exceptional circumstances.'



Divers inspect the current state of the lock gates.

## Crinan Canal to be upgraded

by Rachel Carruthers  
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

The initial stages of a waterway upgrade are under way, as Scottish Canals looks at replacing lock gates along 'Scotland's most beautiful shortcut'.

A Scottish Canals spokesperson said: 'We are currently surveying lock gates on the east stretch of the Crinan Canal to enable the design and fabrication of gate replacements.'

Working at lock four in Ardrishaig on Tuesday March 17, divers from Marine and Civil Solutions prepared to inspect the current condition of the gates underwater, while engineers from ECS Engineering Services and principal contractors AmcoGiffen photographed and measured up the site and lock gates.

Scottish Canals added: 'We are currently anticipating a full closure of the canal to allow the installation in our next programme of winter works, which will be at some point between November 2020 and March 2021. Until we finalise the 2020/21 works programme, we are unable to determine exact dates for this.'



Getting suited up.



### Davaar Island Safe Walking Times

	Morning Safe Walking Times			Afternoon Safe Walking Times		
	Low Tide	From	Til	Low Tide	From	Til
Sun, 1 Mar 2020	09:05	06:05	11:35			
Mon, 2 Mar 2020	09:51	06:51	12:21			
Tue, 3 Mar 2020	10:47	07:47	13:17			
Wed, 4 Mar 2020	11:55	08:55	14:25			
Thu, 5 Mar 2020				13:17	10:17	15:47
Fri, 6 Mar 2020				14:36	11:36	17:06
Sat, 7 Mar 2020				15:33	12:33	18:03
Sun, 8 Mar 2020				16:20	13:20	18:50
Mon, 9 Mar 2020				17:03	14:03	19:33
Tue, 10 Mar 2020				17:45	14:45	20:15
Wed, 11 Mar 2020				18:28	15:28	20:58
Thu, 12 Mar 2020						
Fri, 13 Mar 2020	07:41	04:41	10:11			
Sat, 14 Mar 2020	08:28	05:28	10:58			
Sun, 15 Mar 2020	09:19	06:19	11:49			
Mon, 16 Mar 2020	10:18	07:18	12:48			
Tue, 17 Mar 2020	11:36	08:36	14:06			
Wed, 18 Mar 2020				13:01	10:01	15:31
Thu, 19 Mar 2020				14:11	11:11	16:41
Fri, 20 Mar 2020				15:07	12:07	17:37
Sat, 21 Mar 2020				15:54	12:54	18:24
Sun, 22 Mar 2020				16:34	13:34	19:04
Mon, 23 Mar 2020				17:09	14:09	19:39
Tue, 24 Mar 2020				17:40	14:40	20:10
Wed, 25 Mar 2020				18:08	15:08	20:38
Thu, 26 Mar 2020				18:36	15:36	21:06
Fri, 27 Mar 2020	06:43	03:43	09:13	19:06	16:06	21:36
Sat, 28 Mar 2020	07:16	04:16	09:46			
Sun, 29 Mar 2020	08:52	05:52	11:22			
Mon, 30 Mar 2020	09:34	06:34	12:04			
Tue, 31 Mar 2020	10:21	07:21	12:51			

Stay safe: Check weather conditions and hours of daylight as well as tide times before you go.



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# 'Start of a process' as board agrees to close Knapdale Ward

by Colin Cameron  
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

The only specialist inpatient dementia ward in the region is to be closed to patients – but only after a sustainable community care alternative is in place.

The controversial move to close Knapdale Ward in Mid Argyll Hospital has been bitterly opposed by unions, nursing and medical staff, patients' relatives and coun-

cillors, among others, with health managers accused of failing to properly consult on the community care model.

Under the new plans, dementia patients requiring inpatient care will be placed within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS area.

## Consultation

Argyll and Bute Integration Joint Board (IJB), which oversees health and social care in the region, was presented with a report based on a

recent public consultation. Prepared by Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), the consultation report in front of board members concluded a majority of those consulted across Argyll approved the ward's closure and a move towards enhanced community care. All, that is, except Mid Argyll, which was not only opposed to the closure plan but critical of the decision-making process.

Opponents of the ward's closure favour an alternative which would see an enhanced community care model introduced, but with Knapdale Ward upgraded to include dementia inpatient beds, day care and respite facilities and a base for community care staff.

## Decision

At the IJB meeting on Wednesday March 25, the only dissenting voice among voting members was chairman Keiron Green, who voiced his opinion that the time for this kind of decision was not in the midst of the coronavirus public health emergency.

But his board colleagues agreed with the motion, proposed by Councillor Gary Mulvaney, that the HSCP should proceed with its plans, noting a steering group would



Protesters make their views heard at the last IJB meeting on January 29. 51\_a05KnapdaleWardProtest01

## Dementia patients to be moved for coronavirus beds

A Lochgilphead dementia ward earmarked for closure by health bosses is to be cleared of patients to make way for potential coronavirus COVID-19 cases.

The move came after NHS Scotland instructed health boards and integration joint boards to reduce delayed discharges and increase bed capacity with immediate effect.

A spokesperson for NHS Highland said: 'This has been discussed at the Gold Command across the health

board, which co-ordinates the response to COVID-19 and supports the need for immediate capacity and to delay the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

'As a result, the Knapdale Ward within Mid Argyll hospital in Lochgilphead has been designated for potential COVID-19 patients. This ward is currently a dementia assessment ward and the patients who are being cared for within Knapdale will be provided with alternative care arrangements. This deci-

sion has been taken in light of the demand for bed capacity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and we have been working with the families of the patients about the change to their care arrangements.'

In due course, Knapdale Ward, opened with the new hospital just 14 years ago, is to be closed as part of a move to enhanced dementia care in the community after a decision by Argyll and Bute Integration Joint Board at a meeting on Wednesday March 25.

## Support for seafood sector, but what about other industries?

Announced on Wednesday March 25, Scotland's seafood sector is to receive an initial package of more than £5 million in financial support during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Funding will be offered to more than 650 seafood fishing companies, many of whom have lost their livelihoods with the collapse of export and hospitality markets for Scottish delicacies like langoustine, prawns and crab.

An initial payment of 50 per cent of two months' average earnings will be made to owners of all full-time Scottish registered fishing vessels of 12 metres length and under – the vast majority of which are in the creel and dive sectors, many of whom operate in remote and island communities. Support is also being developed for the onshore processing industry and others in the shellfish growing sector which is being affected by the loss of trade and markets.

Fisheries Secretary Fergus Ewing said: 'The economic impact of COVID-19 is global and

is reaching into the heart of our fragile coastal communities. I have spent the past week listening to and liaising with our fishing industry and there are many who have lost their livelihoods with little prospect of an early recovery. The need for action is immediate.'

But other industries were still waiting for government help. In the tourism industry, like seafood another vital business sector in Argyll, Scottish Tourism Alliance chief executive officer Marc Crothall was this week pressing for greater support for self-employed people as well as staff working in the sector.

And First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced that unless construction projects are for 'essential' buildings such as hospitals, then sites should be closed. She added this may be reviewed if safe rules can be put in place but in the meantime they should shut as a precaution.

How is your business affected by the lockdown? Contact the Advertiser using the editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk email address.

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# Reasons to be cheerful

In these uncertain times it is important to focus from time to time on the more positive and light-hearted sides of life.

We asked our readers for their reasons to be cheerful

amid the ongoing coronavirus crisis. Many thanks to everyone who replied.

Sophia Milton got in touch to say: 'What makes me happy is seeing my daughter [below] checking on the

new-born lambs. It lets her see new life entering the world.'

John Williamson Shank, who is also happy to have started his own business, said: 'A happy story is me and my wife are expecting our tenth baby very soon just after Christmas.'

Alka Foster told the Advertiser: 'I am cheerful as my daughter, who is with Project Trust and volunteering in India, has managed to come home. Thanks to everyone concerned: Project Trust, which is based on Coll, airport staff and the kindness shown in India from the citizens and various authorities who helped my daughter get home safely just in time for Mother's Day. The best present.'

Minard's Lesley Goodwin and Martine Craig from Campbeltown have come up with a bright idea to cheer people up – dig out those Christmas lights and switch them on every night, above right.



## Tarbert – the first CovidArt village?

In Tarbert, the Loch Fyne Gallery gift shop has appealed to anyone busy with home schooling and looking for a project to make a poster which will be displayed in the gallery window.

Sarah Weir from the gallery says it could be something specific about how to follow social distancing advice.

But it could also be a cheery message to anyone getting some fresh air – at a safe distance of course.

### Posters

Would-be artists can push their posters – up to size A3 – under the big blue doors

at the Gallery in Harbour Street, bearing in mind the current movement rules.

Sarah suggests if it proves popular it is something that could be extended throughout the village – the first CovidArt village?

**Send us your reasons to be cheerful in the current lockdown. Email your reasons with any photographs to [editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk](mailto:editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk)**

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## Big Daddy burger



When only the biggest burger will do, bite down on the Big Daddy burger! Two juicy beef burgers and loads of salad in a toasted bun – and we've thrown in a fried egg for good measure. Make the whole family happy and put the Big Daddy burger on the menu!

**Ingredients**

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1kg lean beef mince (5% fat or less)
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- Low-calorie cooking spray
- 4 x 60g wholemeal rolls
- 4 eggs
- Sliced tomato, lettuce leaves and sliced red onion, to serve
- 4 level tbsp reduced-salt-and-sugar tomato ketchup

**Method:**

1. Preheat your grill to high.
2. Put the onion, garlic, beef and Worcestershire sauce in a bowl, season lightly and combine using your fingers. Divide the mixture into 8 equal portions and shape them into burgers.
3. Spray the burgers with low-calorie cooking spray and grill for 10-12 minutes or until cooked through, turning halfway.
4. Meanwhile, spray a non-stick frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium heat. Add the eggs and fry to your liking.
5. Split and toast the rolls, then fill with the tomato, lettuce, red onion, burgers and ketchup. Top with the eggs, season lightly and hold it all in place with a cocktail stick if needed.
6. Serve hot with Slimming World chips and salad.

6½ Syns per serving | 25 minutes | Serves 4  
NB: Deduct 6 Syns if using Bread rolls wholemeal as a Healthy Extra 'b' choice

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Write to us: send your letters to [editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk](mailto:editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk)  
or The Editor, 44 Argyll Street, Lochgilphead PA31 8NB

## Stay indoors

There can only be one subject for this week's leader column.

The impact of coronavirus is being felt far beyond those who have contracted the virus.

The COVID-19 emergency has led to governments taking drastic action.

But stories last weekend about people travelling to Argyll and the rest of the west Highlands to 'escape' the virus have been beyond belief. Hillwalkers squeezed in close proximity in car parks; sailors arriving in west coast harbours; campervans visiting in big numbers from the south, and second and holiday home-owners deciding to come from cities. All these actions are thoughtless at best and potentially lethal in their selfishness at worst.

But before we get too self-righteous, have you noticed your shops or streets surprisingly busy since Monday?

The advice is simple and straightforward. Stay indoors unless it is absolutely essential – going for a picnic or walking the hills is not essential – to go out.

To do otherwise, whether young or old, is unacceptable.

As for visitors from other areas – haste ye back, but only when it is safe and responsible to return.

Don't worry, we'll get round to Knapdale Ward in next week's edition...

## Argyll is not a bolthole

Like so many residents of Islay and Jura, I was shocked to read that the Daily Mail has published an article siting areas that are the 'best boltholes' for escape from the coronavirus. Included in this is the Isle of Jura.

This is as shockingly reckless as it is offensive.

The Isle of Jura is not a 'bolthole', as the Daily Mail has chosen to state, but a very beautiful island steeped in culture and rich history.

On both Jura and Islay we, like so many rural areas, are struggling to deal with all of the challenges related to the coronavirus outbreak. Our local health services have very limited resources as it is, alongside a population that has many elderly residents who are more at risk of the virus.

We have seen a local uptake in people travelling to Islay in campervans and this is happening at a time when the UK government is advising against non-essential travel.

Those who are choosing to travel to Islay, Jura and the many other islands in Argyll and Bute in order to avoid the coronavirus may end up inadvertently spreading it to islands who are (so far as we know) not as much affected in the same way as so many built-up urban areas are. Such actions are as reckless as they are selfish and I would implore people who do not need to travel to our rural constituency to avoid doing so until this global pandemic has passed.

Jura, Islay and the rest of Argyll are some of the most beautiful places you will ever visit and you won't find an area where the people are more hospitable and friendly but while this crisis is ongoing I would ask everyone who is

not currently living here to avoid travelling here for the time being.

I would also hope that the Daily Mail will retract its article advising people to travel here and to issue an apology to the people of Jura for referring to their island as a 'bolthole' and also apologise to the wider Argyll area including Islay for any potential health risks they may have inadvertently created with the reckless travel advise for those who wish to avoid the coronavirus.

**Councillor Alastair Redman,  
Kintyre and Islands ward.**

## An open letter to the Scottish public

During this time of unprecedented uncertainty, we are all concerned about the safety and wellbeing of our families, friends and colleagues.

Our hearts go out to those who have been affected personally by the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), as well as the many communities around the world that are facing extreme measures in an attempt to slow its spread.

We appreciate and are mindful of the challenges individuals are currently facing as well as the impact this pandemic has had on our vital emergency services as well as the grocery retail sector, supply chain and producers.

Like our retail partners, we want to take this opportunity to assure you that Scottish farmers, auctioneers, hauliers, processors

and butchers are doing everything they can to maintain the ongoing availability of fresh, locally sourced Scotch Beef PGI, Scotch Lamb PGI and Specially Selected Pork.

We would like to thank all those who work in the Scottish red meat industry and their families for their ongoing and unwavering efforts to keep our supermarket shelves and butcher shops stocked, fuelling Scotland with top-quality red meat during this challenging time.

As bodies supporting the Scottish agricultural and red meat industry, we are constantly reviewing the developing situation and are doing all we can to support everyone involved in putting nutritious food on your plates.

**Alan Clarke, chief executive, Quality Meat Scotland (QMS);  
Martin Morgan, executive manager,  
Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers;  
Duncan Todd, secretary, Scottish Beef Association;  
Jen Craig, president, National Sheep Association Scotland;  
Penny Montgomerie, chief executive,  
Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs;  
and Gordon King, executive manager, Scottish Craft Butchers.**

## The answer lies in the soil

What on earth is going on? It was banal enough when Ben Goldsmith – English financier and environmentalist – tweeted that 'overgrazing' by upland sheep farmers, was responsible for the devastating floods

## Press policy

At The Argyllshire Advertiser, we endeavour to ensure all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If you think we have made a significant mistake and you wish to discuss this with us, please let us know as soon as possible by any of the three methods: emailing [editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk](mailto:editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk); telephoning the chief reporter on 01586 554646 or write to the Group Editor at Wyvex Media, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB. We will try to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter. You can call IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email [inquiries@ipso.co.uk](mailto:inquiries@ipso.co.uk). IPSO is an independent body that deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers. We will abide by its decision.



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in South Wales, rather than record-breaking torrential rainfall.

Unbelievably, we now have a government official, Dr Tim Leunig, suggesting the whole of the UK does not need farming, and his comparison of the UK to Singapore in this context is absolutely ludicrous.

You truly have to wonder if there is something in the water that he is drinking – could it be flood contamination?

Surely, every person having a full and functioning set of neurons and synapses, the complete opposite is the truth, as we dearly need our hard-working farming community.

The UK Government should be fully supporting the farming industry and indeed, good land management.

The Welsh Assembly has totally lost its way with its mindless policy of devastating Welsh forests with thousands and thousands – an understatement – of trees being felled for wind farms, and compounding the felony by covering acres of land with very limited electricity generating solar parks.

Wales is not the Sahara and the sun disappears at night! Solar panels will generate about 12 per cent of their maximum capacity in the UK.

Returning to farming, perhaps some kind person should tell Dr Tim Leunig that the answer lies in the soil and then lead him to a darkened and quiet room so he can lie down and contemplate the truth – wise men recognise that truth is the daughter of time, not of authority.

Dave Haskell, Cardigan.

## YOUR PICTURES



Reader Aileen Gillies of Lochgilphead sent us this striking photograph, following a beautifully sunny day in Mid Argyll. Out and about on Friday March 20 Aileen captured this golden sunset over towards Crinan and Duntrune.

Send your favourite photographs for publication to [editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk](mailto:editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk)

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# The voyages of the Fulmar



The Fulmar. 51\_a06Fulmar04\_AnchorCranan

The serialisation of a log book from the yacht Fulmar, recording her 1956 voyages and the adventures of her crew. The Fulmar, a 41ft gaff cutter built in 1901, was owned by Commander Ralph G Mowat, RN (Rtd). The yacht won her class in the 1956 Tobermory Race from Bute to Tobermory, via the Crinan Canal, before setting off on a cruise from Crinan up the west coast, around Mull and back home. Crew of the Fulmar and their nicknames: RG Mowat, 'Skipper'; Mary R Mowat, 'Mate'; G Paterson, 'Pilot'; S Stanger, 'Doctor'; JM Mowat, 'Bosun'; Chris Paterson, 'Tanky'; Robin G Mowat, 'Tar'; Shena R Mowat, 'Purser' and dachshund Ruddiger von Stoer, 'Major of Marines'.

## Friday August 3

What a night! All of us were agreed that never had we experienced anywhere a worse one and we were glad we had been in Loch Aline on Sunday night not in Tobermory as intended as, from what we heard, that night had been similar but twice as bad.

It was a wild night lashing with rain and a big swell was rolling in from the north-east causing us to pitch and roll horribly. Everything banged and rattled and the ropes, despite their lashings, slapped on the mast, the chain tugged continuously on the bobstay, and there was one most annoying thump that kept everyone awake (except of course the Bosun and Tar

who could sleep happily on even if the ship blew up).

We could not trace its origin until in desperation the Pilot donned oilskins, sou'wester and seaboots, and went on deck and found it was the tiller end bumping on the bulwarks. The Pilot had a very justifiable grouse about this as he had suggested lashing the tiller, but the Skipper had said that he did not think it necessary and that we would lie easier if it was allowed to go free.

About six we heard Murdoch in Venture hailing us and the Skipper and Pilot hurried on deck. The yachts in the harbour were all lying higgledy-piggledy owing to the swell, to there being little or no wind, to the strong sur-

face current from the swollen river, and to it being about the turn of the tide.

Venture and Fulmar were lying stern to stern and what had aroused Murdoch was that the Venture had got her mizzen boom over our main boom and as we pitched we had lifted it up crutch and all – how nothing was broken was a miracle. She had then swung round and her now free boom had knocked the cap off our jackstay. As the Skipper came on deck Venture again surged towards us and started pitching and her counter came down with a terrific slam not six inches from our bulwarks. We put our helm over and swung clear.

Murdoch and Barclay were





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# - part 10

both in their dog-house and the Pilot and Skipper stayed in ours until the new tide took charge and the boats began to swing in normal fashion and all were able to retire once more to their bunks. Luckily, the rain had cleared off shortly before this episode took place.

At a quarter to eight we

**Murdoch and Barclay were in their dog-house and Pilot and Skipper stayed in ours until the new tide took charge and the boats began to swing in normal fashion**

heard the usual poor forecast but for the first time since the cruise began there was not a gale warning for any area. The glass had risen well during the night. What wind there was was from the north-west.

The Skipper went ashore for the milk and rolls. The dinghy

had a lot of water in it and owing to the rolling it was impossible to get into it and balance on the thwarts till it was baled so the Skipper got his feet thoroughly soaked – the simple remedy of wearing seaboots had never occurred to him. Again the rolls were sold out and again he had to take porter biscuits.

On board, the Pilot lit the fire then started in to get our breakfast of bacon and egg. After our meal the sky cleared and it became a beautiful sunny day, and everything we had was up on deck drying off or airing. The owner of Rose came alongside and for a good time tried to get us to persuade him to go north against his better judgement, but when we heard he had the lady member of his crew of three sick in her bunk our advice was that he go south and that immediately and reluctantly he was forced to agree and half an hour later he sailed. Hervor also went out about the same time and she turned north and we were to meet her later in Iona.



'Tanky on the main hatch'. 51\_a13Fulmar01\_Tanky

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# LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

WHAT'S ON IN MID ARGYLL



## Kindness and coronavirus...

This week our regular artistic contributor Ann Thomas has her cartoon family socially-distancing in the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

It is, of course, particularly important to show kindness in these trying times. But for some reason our family is being extra thoughtful towards gran...

Stay safe and look after each other.

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## Science matters

DOROTHY H CRAWFORD



# Eyam in isolation

As a retired virologist and a science writer, perhaps I should write a column about the current coronavirus pandemic. But in my opinion there is quite enough in the press already, with media hype causing panic buying and flouting of government-imposed precautions designed to prevent virus spread.

Many of us are currently self-isolating in our own homes, either to prevent catching COVID-19 or, as case contacts, to prevent spreading the virus to others. The concept of individuals, towns, cities and even whole states being under lockdown sounds positively medieval and was probably unthinkable to most of us just a few months ago.

In fact, quarantine (from the Italian quaranta giorni meaning 40 days) was first introduced during the Black

Death in the 14th century. And here is an interesting example of self-imposed quarantine that took place in the village of Eyam (pronounced Eem), Derbyshire, which was struck by the plague in September 1665.

The plague, caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* and spread by rat fleas, is thought to have arrived in Eyam in a box of cloth carried by an itinerant tailor from London where the disease was raging.

The tailor was the first victim of an epidemic that spread throughout the village. And although it virtually disappeared in the winter it reappeared with greater ferocity in spring 1666 and raged on until December.

In May 1666, the village rector, William Mompesson, persuaded his parishioners to isolate the village from the outside world. By allowing

no-one to enter or leave he hoped to contain the plague, so preventing its spread to surrounding villages. So while grateful neighbours left food and medical supplies at boundary stones positioned around Eyam, the altruistic villagers watched and waited, helpless as the ghastly disease decimated their community. And although the strategy was apparently successful in protecting surrounding villages, the eventual death toll in Eyam was 259, including the rector's wife, out of the 350 villagers. The rector kept meticulous notes of events so that the whole sad episode could be reconstructed in today's fascinating History Trail through the village.

**William Mompesson convinced the villagers to isolate.** Photo: Museums Sheffield.



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# Pioneering pupils 'a credit' to Lochgilphead

Back in the mists of time before coronavirus shut down schools – early March to be precise – senior Lochgilphead High School pupils were completing a ground-breaking course at the MS Centre.

As part of a Skills for Work health sector course, sixth-year pupils visited the Lochgilphead centre, but this was no out-of-school jolly. On top of training, the young people went through an application and mock interview process to become volunteers at the MS Centre Mid Argyll.

It was all part of a pioneering course entitled Digesting Science, teaching them about Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

The project was run for the first time as a three-way partnership between Argyll College, Lochgilphead High School and the MS Centre Mid Argyll.

Digesting Science was designed by Barts MS Research team at Queen Mary University of London to teach

children about a parent's MS in an ingenious, fun and hands-on way.

The young Lochgilphead students learned the science behind MS to increase their understanding of the more invisible aspects of the condition.

Treatments were also explained, as was the influence of vitamin D on the condition.

## Symptoms

There was the opportunity to discover more about the science behind why MS symptoms occur and experience what symptoms actually feel like.

Four pupils – Luke Mulholland, Amy Owen, Lily Young and Yasmine Bowden – attended the centre each Monday since November last year.

After passing their interviews with flying colours, they were trained by Argyll College tutor Linda Brown using practical methods to demonstrate the science

behind, and physical impact of, MS on the body.

Armed with their newly-gained knowledge, the quartet then offered training to members of the Brain Fog MS peer support group.

Amy Owen said: 'This has given us the chance to talk to folk with MS and to find out what it's like for them.'

'We learn about it at college but here we can talk to people about their own experiences.'

Linda Brown explained: 'It brings the world of work into the classroom and essentially they are volunteers within the centre.'

'These students are a credit to Lochgilphead.'

MS Centre manager Karen McCurry added: 'I'm so proud of these young people and want everyone to know how well they have done.'

The Digesting Science course was funded by Argyll and Bute Health and Wellbeing Network and Islay Energy Community Benefit Fund.



Above: Having a go at the vitamin D game, from left, MS Centre outreach worker Claire Cameron, Linda Brown of Argyll College, MS Centre volunteer Morag MacDonald and students Yasmine Bowden and Amy Owen. 51\_a10MScentreCourse09



Natalie MacEachern tries on sponge shoes, designed to mimic the impact of MS on mobility. 51\_a10MScentreCourse02



Amy demonstrates a DIY brain and specs aimed at showing how multiple sclerosis can affect vision. 51\_a10MScentreCourse08

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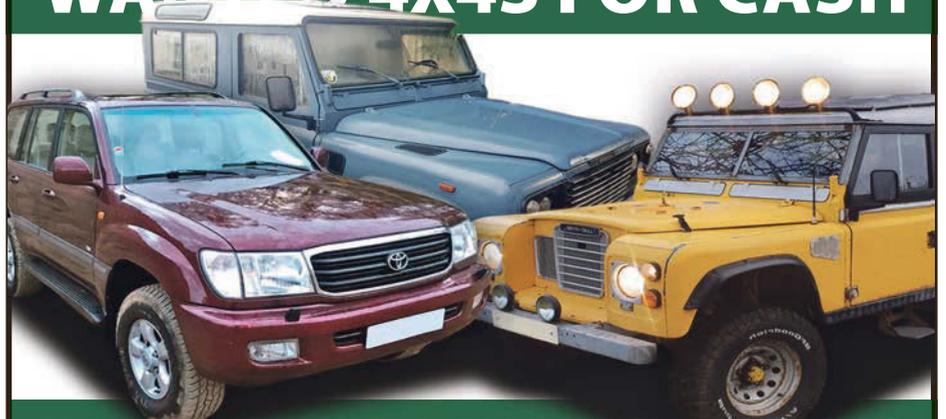
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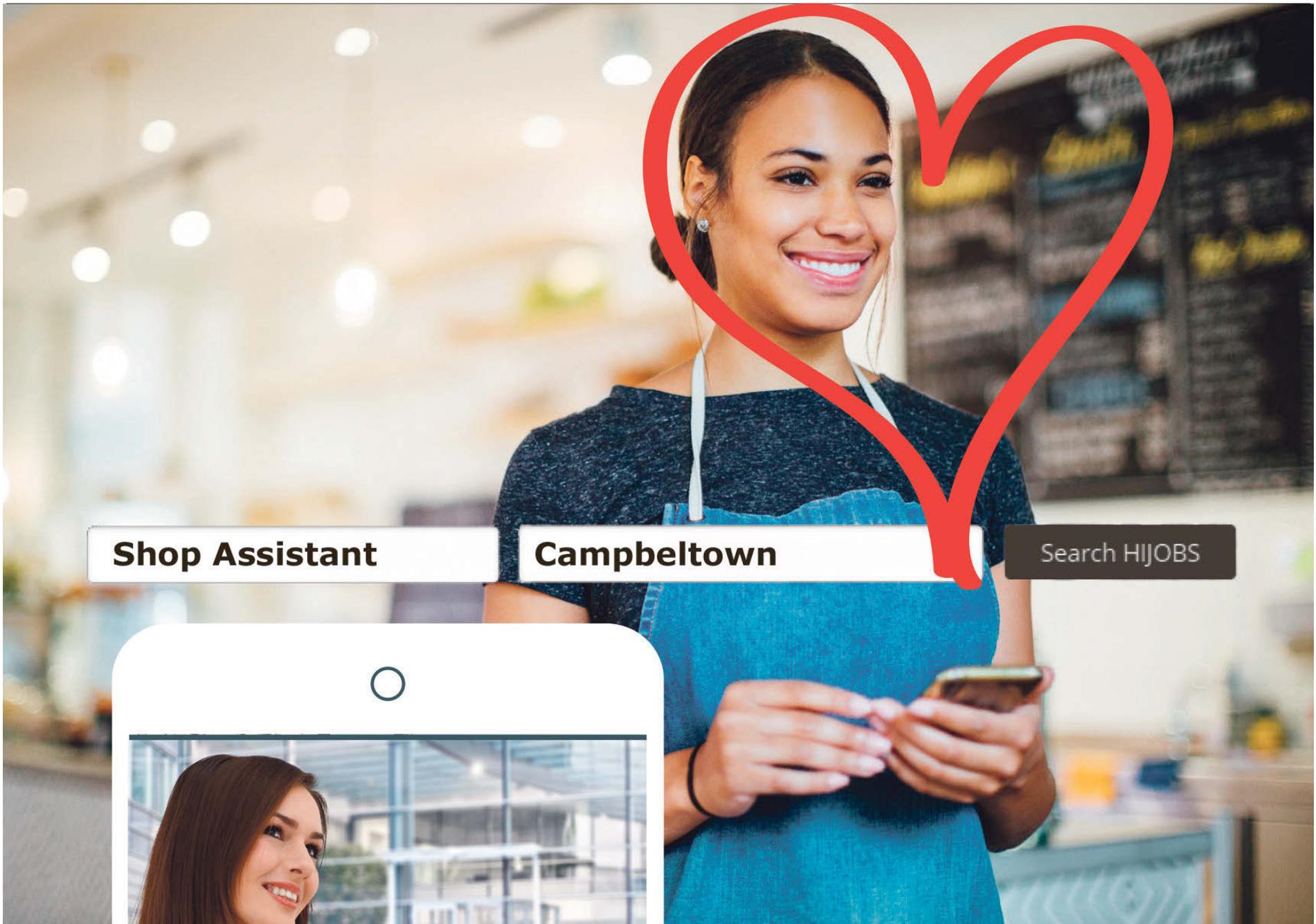
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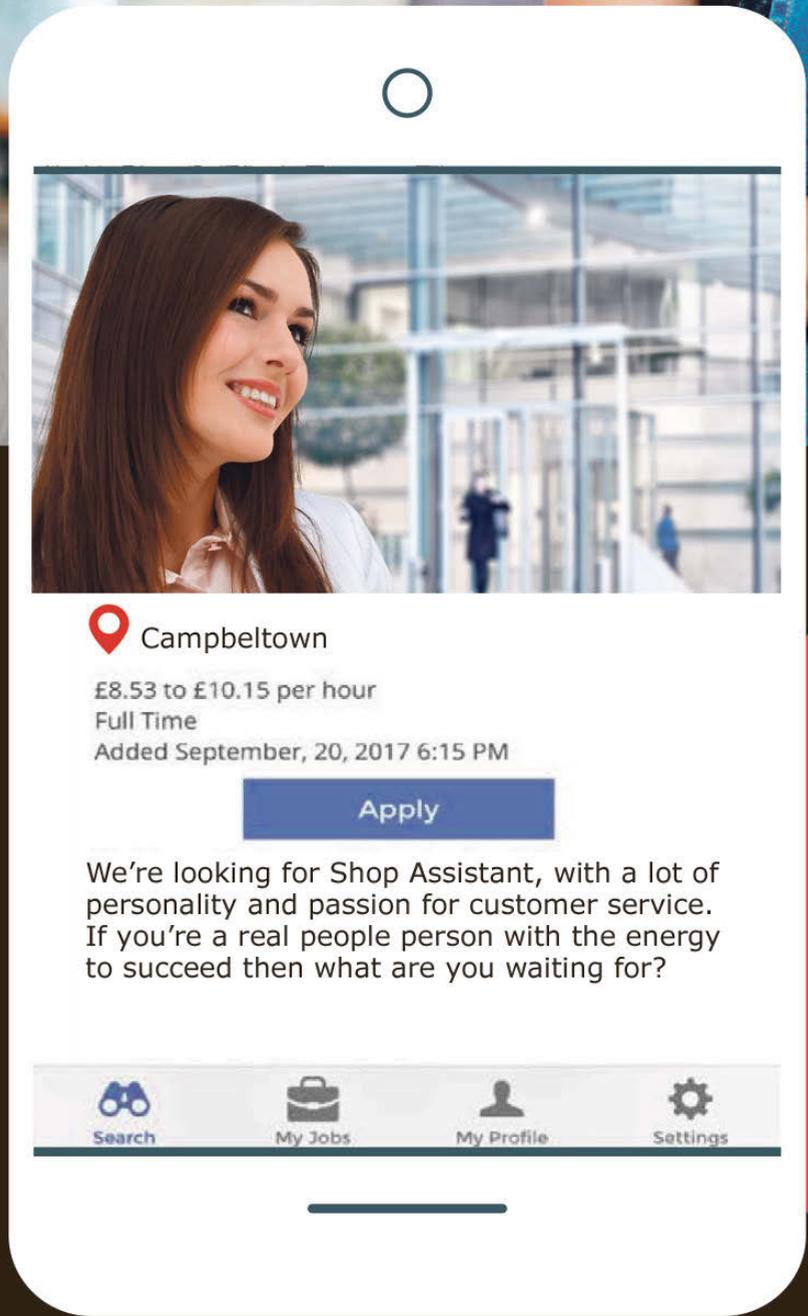
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### THE MACHRIHANISH GOLF CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of The Machrihanish Golf that was due to take place on Friday 3rd April in the Argyll Arms Hotel, Campbeltown at 7.30pm

Club has been cancelled.

A Martin, Secretary

### Argyll and Bute Council

**Councillor Jim Lynch (E.W.4 Oban South and the Isles)**  
Councillor Lynch will be holding surgeries during the month of APRIL 2020 as follows:

DATE	VENUE	TIME
Friday 10th April	Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban	2.00pm - 4.00pm
Tuesday 21st April	Soroba Community Centre, 8A Scalpay Terrace, Soroba	6.00pm - 8.00pm

He can be contacted by email - [Jim.Lynch@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Jim.Lynch@argyll-bute.gov.uk) and by telephone 01631 567893

### **Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor (E.W.4 Oban South and the Isles)**

Councillor Sir McGrigor will be holding a surgery on Friday 24th April 2020 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 10.00am - 12 Noon.

He can be contacted by email - [Jamie.McGrigor@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.McGrigor@argyll-bute.gov.uk) and by telephone 01631 567853

### **Councillor Kieron Green (E.W.5 Oban North and Lorn)**

Councillor Green will be holding a surgery on Tuesday 7th April 2020 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 10.00am - 12 noon.

He can be contacted by email - [Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk) and by telephone 01631 562 444

### **Councillor Elaine Robertson (E.W.5 Oban North and Lorn)**

Councillor Robertson will be holding a surgery on Friday 24th April 2020 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 2.00pm - 4.00pm.

Councillor Robertson can also be contacted by email - [Elaine.Robertson@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:Elaine.Robertson@argyll-bute.gov.uk)



The Cour Windfarm Community Benefit Fund has been established to support community groups, social enterprises and charitable organisations in the community council areas of East Kintyre, West Kintyre and Tarbert & Skipness.

The second funding round is now open for applications until the 30th April 2020.

Details of the application process and fund criteria can be found at

<https://ferncommunityfunds.com/cour-community-fund/>

If you wish any further information about the fund please get in contact via [contactus@ferncommunityfunds.com](mailto:contactus@ferncommunityfunds.com) or call 07871 785583

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Grace & Olivia xxx

# West Coast PROPERTY

✓ SALES ✓ LETS ✓ COMMERCIAL ✓ ESTATE AGENTS ✓ NEWS

## Property industry to provide buildings for key workers

Organisations representing thousands of professionals across the surveying, architectural and planning specialisms have written to the Prime Minister to offer their help in fighting back against the growing coronavirus epidemic.

Led by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), both the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) have signed a letter to the government also calling on ministers to extend emergency measures to include property professionals as businesses strain to deal with the impact of the virus.

With RICS members representing hundreds of clients across the built environment, many with vacant rooms and buildings, the move could see hundreds of empty hotel rooms, flats or commercial space repurposed to temporarily house key workers such as NHS staff so they can be located closer to hospitals and workplaces.

The letter also makes clear that the property sector, a key part of the British economy, is straining under the pressure of the coronavirus – with effects not seen since the financial crash in 2008. To help firms cope in these tough times, the letter asks the Prime Minister to act now to ensure thousands of surveyors, architects and planners can continue to work, including:

- Seeking the introduction of emergency loan funding for all firms in the built environment sector.
- ‘Fiscal support’ to aid in consultancy firms to invest in work from home technology, allowing people to stay at home and reduce the burden on transport services.
- Support for lost wages of employees now on reduced time or who face being made temporarily redundant.

Matthew Howell (RICS UK Managing Director) said: ‘Whether you’re a chartered



surveyor, architect or town planner, the growing coronavirus pandemic is one of the biggest threats to the property industry

since the financial crash, and we need serious action now to prevent job losses and businesses shutting down.

‘RICS has been supporting its members, including keeping them updated on the changing advice from government, but we are hearing more support is needed. That’s why we’re joining with RTPI and RIBA to call on the Prime Minister to open up a range of emergency measures to help property professionals deal with the effects of this virus, including support for firms to allow staff to work from home and wage relief for individuals on reduced hours or facing temporary redundancy.

‘We also stand ready as a profession to do our part to aid the UK in getting through this together. Our professionals and firms working across the built environment sector have access to a wide range of buildings that could be utilised by the NHS or other key workers for various purposes. We would be keen to

meet with government to discuss this and ensure the space and any vacant beds are put to good use.’

Alan Vallance (RIBA CEO) said: ‘This is a critical time for the built environment.

‘Without financial measures to help preserve cash flow and clarity on how the planning system and development control systems will continue to operate, our sector remains at risk. We also need assurance that the government will do everything it can to make sure construction projects are able to progress safely.

‘We appreciate the close engagement with civil servants and ministers to ensure the voice of the built environment is heard and that the right actions are taken.’

Victoria Hills (CEO at RTPI) said: ‘Town planners stand ready with all built environment professionals to do what we can to help mitigate this pandemic, and help our country get back to social normality and economic productivity afterwards.’



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# 'We want to keep all those shelves stocked,' say NFUS

Scotland's farmers and crofters will play part in nation's response to coronavirus

Andrew McCornick, president of the National Farmers' Union Scotland (NFUS), has issued a statement on behalf of the country's farmers and crofters on the role they will play in helping to feed the nation.

'Scotland's farmers and crofters will strive to ensure Scottish plates and glasses remain full of fresh, tasty food and drink throughout this crisis,' he said.

'We thank the Scottish public for their continued

support and reassure them that NFUS will play a full part in the nation's response.

'These are unprecedented times and the sight of empty shelves in some stores, both large and small, clearly illustrates the uncertainty and worry that many in our society are facing.

'We want to keep those shelves stocked. Farmers and crofters, and the wider food and drink sector across Scotland, will deliver on food security and will work



Andrew McCornick, NFUS president.

conferencing, email, social media, mobile phones, laptops and more, meaning daily contact with government, key industry stakeholders, internal contacts and our members is as seamless as possible.

'With difficult decisions being made on an hourly basis, technology provides us with the platforms to remain fully informed and engaged on all the key issues that are currently being discussed with urgency and at the highest level.

'The technology and goodwill exists to make this work, and the desire is there from everyone at NFUS to be pushing on, ensuring the best support and representation of the industry at all levels on all issues continues unabated.

'We also urge our community to look out for one another at this time, especially those who may be vulnerable or isolated, without access to internet, phone or mobile signal that many take for granted.'

For those who need emotional, practical or financial support in times of need, rural charity RSABI is there to support people in Scottish agriculture and can be contacted on 0300 111 4166.

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tirelessly to maintain all necessary supply chains to keep shelves full. Discussions with the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders are already drilling down on key areas.

'The ability to get crucial supplies like animal feed, fuel, fertiliser and seed onto farms; the need for livestock, milk, eggs, cereals, veg to get

to market; keeping livestock markets, abattoirs and food manufacturing sites open and working; getting those goods processed and delivered onto a shelf, whether it be a farm shop, a local store or a supermarket.

'Local businesses, both on farm and in the villages and towns, will undoubtedly value consumers' support at this time.

'Huge problems around labour are looming large, particularly for our soft fruit and vegetable growers with novel ways of seeking staff for farms being considered. Those who have lost their jobs or are on unpaid leave in the hospitality sector are being sought to allow planting and

harvesting to be undertaken.

'In times of crisis, Scottish farmers and crofters have always proved themselves to be innovative, adaptable and resilient. This time is no different. The way we will play our part in keeping food and drink flowing has changed in this current crisis, and we have the systems in place.

'We have already taken the responsible decision that NFUS head office staff will work from home and any meetings or gatherings are suspended so all the work will be getting done in a different way.

'Modern technology now gives all our professional staff the ability to work effectively using teleconferencing, video

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### LUING

Pupils at Luing Primary School have been learning about how to create a sustainable future through the United Nations Global Goals.

The Global Goals address the global challenges everyone faces, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

To coincide with this project, Dave Alsop from Seeds for Life went along to the school to talk to the children about the vital work the charity does to help people in Malawi.

The pupils were so inspired by the work that Seeds for Life does, they decided to donate £375 to the charity. This was money that had previously been raised by pupils at a community event in the school, and will enable at least one child in Malawi to attend high school for four years.

### TIGHNABRUAICH

RNLI Tighnabruaich had its first rescue launch of 2020.

The inshore lifeboat responded to a call from the UK Coastguard at 8.26pm on Thursday March 19 to assist a vessel in difficulty by Burnt Islands, near Colintraive.

The RNLI's four volunteer crew aboard the James and Helen Mason were on hand to help the vessel back to safe waters while local Coastguard crews, including volunteers from the neighbouring Kames station, supported from the shore ensuring the wellbeing of the stricken vessels crew.

The vessel itself was checked for

### LOCHGILPHEAD



Rothesay Joint Campus pupils are top of the class.

Pupils at Rothesay Joint Campus are top of the class when it comes to numbers, with the school's primary four and five pupils being crowned Argyll and Bute's Sumdog champions.

Sumdog is Britain's largest series of maths competitions and sees children battle it out

against pupils in other schools to answer a series of questions over five days.

The youngsters at Rothesay Joint Campus competed against almost 1,200 other pupils from across Argyll and Bute to answer a total of 1,000 questions each, with one pupil finishing in the top 10 and 14

children in the top 50.

The competition is held every three months and this is not the first time that Rothesay has celebrated success. The school's primary four class won the competition earlier this year, while primary four to five and primary two to three classes both won in 2019.

damage and tests were carried out to ensure it was able to continue and, accompanied by the lifeboat, proceeded on its journey toward Tarbert.

Lifeboat helm Garry Coyle advised: 'Anyone experiencing difficulties at sea should contact the Coastguard in the first instance.'

## CONTACTUS

email us at [editor@campbeltowncourer.co.uk](mailto:editor@campbeltowncourer.co.uk)  
telephone 01586 554646

## Thought for the Week

with Marilyn Shedden

In the late 1340s, the plague outbreak that we know as the Black Death descended upon Asia, Europe and Africa, causing widespread disruption and death.

Medieval responses to the pandemic varied. In many European cities, social chaos, fear and mistrust were widespread. In Syria, by contrast, we find the example of a community that united in its response to the pandemic.

Although medieval people lacked the medical knowledge to help them avoid infection and the plague was far more lethal than COVID-19 virus, their reactions to the pandemic can still teach us today.

An Italian scholar, Boccaccio, detailed not only the physical symptoms of the Black Death as it arrived in Florence in 1348, but also its influence on Italian society. Boccaccio describes people who, whether through indifference, bravado or fear of social isolation, continued to go out to bars and public events even when the evidence indicated that seclusion was the best option.

While some medieval communities succumbed to fear and distrust, others found ways to support one another.

Meanwhile, quarantined people entertained themselves by telling stories and singing songs to one another.

Today, people are also singing from balconies to lift each other's spirits.

Many European cities persecuted minority groups at the time of the plague, but there was one country that was different: Syria.

At the arrival of the plague in Syria in 1348, the citizens of Damascus did not abandon one another or persecute the minority populations living within the city. Instead, the Damascenes set aside their differences.

How sad that war has virtually destroyed Damascus, but maybe we can still hear their voices telling us to care for each other, combine our resources, share our knowledge, be responsible and remember our common humanity.

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## BIRTHS



### MCPHEE - TAYLOR

Alasdair and Suzanne are delighted to announce the birth of their baby daughter, Isla Taylor McPhee, on March 9, 2020, at the Princess Royal Maternity Hospital, Glasgow. Grandparents Alasdair and Fiona, and Logan and Frances (Cambuslang) are thrilled. A welcome cousin for Calum and Abigail.

## GOLDEN WEDDINGS



### MACPHERSON

Margaret to Tommy, by Rev J I Williamson, on March 25, 1970, at Caulfield Church, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

## DEATHS

**JAMES** - Peacefully, at the Cherwood House Care Centre, Bicester, on March 25, 2020, Elizabeth (Betty) Campbell Bannatyne, in her 90th year, dearly beloved wife of the late Ernest James, much loved mum of Campbell and his wife Lee, and loving nan and great nan.

**JOHNSON** - Gordon Archibald, formerly of Tarbert, in his 57th year, suddenly in Inverness, on March 19, 2020, son of Jean and the late Ronald Johnson, brother to Irene, Jane and James, father to Brogan and grumpa to Cassidy.

**KERR** - Suddenly at home, 64 Davaar Avenue, Campbeltown, on March 5, 2020, Ian Kerr, in his 61st year, beloved son of the late John and Isobel Kerr and a loving nephew and friend to many. Funeral private.

**PEDEN** - Alexander, at Erskine Hospital, on March 14, 2020, beloved husband of Jen, loving father of Mandy, Andrew and Angus, proud granddad of Aonghas and Matthew, and father-in-law of dear Emma. Cremated at Dalnottar Crematorium, Clydebank, on March 26, 2020.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**MCKAY** - The family of the late Mary Jane Anderson McVicar would like to thank everyone for the many cards, flowers and hampers they received following their recent sad loss of Mary. We would like to thank the staff at 4D, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital and Campbeltown Hospital, especially the staff at the Dialysis Unit for their care over the years. Thanks also to Rev William Crossan for his personal and uplifting service, to David McEwan for his great musical accompaniment, to T A Blair Funeral Directors for their professional care and attention, and to all who paid their last respects to Mary at the church and graveyard. The collection raised £882.16 and will be split between the Red Cross Rural Transport Fund and Kintyre Dialysis Group. The family would like to thank you all very much.

## IN MEMORIAM

**DOTT** - In loving memory of Charlie, who died March 28, 2017. Loving husband, dad, grandad and great grandad.

Love and miss you lots.  
- Your loving wife Isobel and family xx.

**MCEACHRAN** - March 30, 2017.

Gary, you are loved and missed more with every passing day.

- Mum, Dad, Ross, Beth, Christopher and Alyssa xx.

**MCLAUGHLIN** - In loving memory of Maureen McLaughlin, née Kennedy, who passed away on March 25, 2018. A dear wife, mother, granny and great granny. Forever in our hearts.

- Andrew and all the family.

**ROBERTSON** - In loving memory of a much loved daughter, Mhairi, who died March 26, 2019. Missed and remembered every day.

- Davie and family.  
**ROBERTSON** - In loving memory of my granddaughter, Mhairi, who passed away March 26, 2019.

Loved and remembered every day.

- Love, Granny x.  
**ROBERTSON** - In loving memory of our beautiful cousin, Mhairi, who passed away March 26, 2019.

We're sending a dove to Heaven, With a parcel on its wings, Be careful when you open it, It's full of beautiful things. Inside are a million kisses, Wrapped up in a million hugs,

To show how much we miss you, And to send you all our love. We hold you close within our hearts, And there you will remain, To walk with us throughout our lives, Until we meet again.

- Love, Barbara, Isobel and families.  
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SC002493

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George Street, Campbeltown



**There will be no services in the church building until further notice**

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If you would like someone to talk to or pray with you on the phone, please contact Rodger and Joan on 01586 554589 or Calum and Liz on 01586 301016  
'God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble.'  
Psalm 46

www.campbeltownfreechurch.co.uk  
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### CAMPBELTOWN COMMUNITY CHURCH



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### ARDRISHAIG AND SOUTH KNAPDALE PARISHES

**During these uncertain times there can be no services in Ardrishaig or Achahoish churches until further notice**

However you can contact our minister on 01546 603269 or at DCarruthers@churchofscotland.org.uk  
In testing times Asaph wrote: "My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; He is mine forever." (Psalm 73 v26)

### SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Live Online Services open to all on Facebook  
Sunday

11.00am Holy Eucharist Daily  
8.30am Morning Prayer  
6.30pm Evening Prayer  
follow on Facebook @ChristChurchLochgilphead  
Father Simon Mackenzie  
01546 602315

### ST MARGARET'S RC CHURCH

Please find the most up to date information at:  
www.lochgilphead-catholic.com  
'St. Margaret's Parish, Lochgilphead' Facebook page  
lochgilphead@rcdai.org.uk  
Fr Ronald Campbell  
01546 602380  
(SC0002876)

### NORTH KNAPDALE PARISH CHURCH

Charity number SC001002  
**We regret services are now cancelled due to guidance on Covid 19**  
Please keep up to date with the church on our website  
www.northknapdale.org

### SKIPNESS LINKED WITH TARBERT LOCHFYNE AND KILBERRY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

**All church buildings are now closed**  
For further information contact Session Clerk:  
Janne - Tarbert and Kilberry - 01880 820481  
Josephine - Skipness - 01880 760277  
SC002622 and SC004280

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WEST LOCHFYNESIDE

Church of Scotland  
Cumlodden, Inveraray and Lochgair  
All of our church buildings are now closed



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# Some words of comfort

from Reverend David Carruthers of Ardrishaig and South Knapdale Parishes

"Trust and obey; for there's no other way" - words from a hymn that encourages us to live in a way that obeys God's ways for humanity, and to trust Him to take care of us as we do. In light of recent announcements from governments about self-isolating and social-distancing we all have to accept that trust is what is required of us - trusting those who are directing us for our own collective good, and simply obeying what we are told.

The exceptional closure of meeting places, businesses and shops is affecting our daily lives, as we attempt to reduce and delay the spread of Coronavirus and so I was asked to write something about what this means from a local minister's perspective.

Locally, churches have already cancelled their services and meetings, and I know I

have also conducted my last funeral service within a church building, for the foreseeable future. From now on, and in agreement with our local undertakers, funerals will be held at the graveside or crematorium with only immediate family present. The compassion and sincerity with which our First Minister made that instruction was heard, and no one can fail to appreciate that difficult and costly decisions are being taken daily to maintain the health of the nation.

So how might we cope? How can we encourage each other, keep in good heart and still keep our distance? What I offer is based on something being delivered to households within my parishes.

The words, "do not be afraid," come to mind. They are spoken more than 60 times

in the Bible. Fear can paralyse us and lead us into foolish ways of thinking and behaving. We all have fears from time to time - there's no shame in admitting it. The unknown is often what triggers our fears, and so much is unknown at present.

But let me encourage you to place that worry and fear with God - and trust. Trust that God is all-powerful and capable of handling every situation. He may not change things the way we think they should be changed, but He will lift those burdens and enable us to move forward without the fear that so easily can paralyse and confuse us. Don't let fear dominate your life.

I had hoped that the ringing of our church bell would continue on Sundays. Traditionally this is done to "call the people to worship" - to

let them know the service is about to begin. Now, I hope it will be rung so that our communities might know that someone is praying for us. For the moment, though, even this is put on hold. Hopefully it will be rung again soon and maybe you'll hear it as calling you to prayer too?

For centuries people have read from the Book of Psalms, especially in difficult times. So I conclude with these words from Psalm 73: "My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God is the strength of my heart; He is mine forever!" (verse 26).

During the coming weeks and months should you require any form of help please do not hesitate to contact any of the local ministers. We want to help as best we can.

# Hill-walkers urged to stay home

Walkers and climbers have been asked to avoid unnecessary mountain activities and to consider their social responsibilities.

Mountaineering Scotland and Scottish Mountain Rescue have joined forces to urge people to abide by government advice and avoid unnecessary travel – which includes journeys to the hills.

Mountain rescue teams have already warned that they are working below normal capacity and have no adequate protective equipment for dealing with people with suspected COVID-19. Yet the past weekend saw a number of rescue call-outs.

The Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team has issued a stark statement to tell hill-goers that only seriously injured people, or those unable to walk will be rescued – and even that will be carried out with a bare minimum of team members.

Team leader Andy Nelson said bluntly: 'My first priority is Glencoe rescue team members' safety. My second priority is to help stricken mountaineers.'

He said anyone uninjured, lost, or benighted will be asked to wait until morning, and/or better visibility, to

extricate themselves. Even 'walking wounded' will be asked to consider extricating themselves from the mountain.

Mr Nelson added: 'This is contradictory to everything we believe in, but I must look after team members in order for them to help casualties who really need it.'

That message was backed up by Damon Powell, chair of Scottish Mountain Rescue, who said: 'We do not have PPE within teams for COVID19 – quite rightly the NHS staff and others must be prioritised – and this is putting many team members in a genuine dilemma. They are all volunteers.'

'Should they do what they always do and respond, putting loved ones at home at greater risk? Many team members will have people they live with who are classified as vulnerable, so is it fair to take that risk? Also, many members of teams are self-employed and already facing hardship.'

'Our NHS services in the mountain regions are already stretched; don't add to their load. The mountains will be there next year and the year after, let's make sure we all are.'



The Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team will currently only be rescuing seriously injured people or those unable to walk.

Mountaineering Scotland has already urged its members to take their exercise locally as long as the government recommends that.

Stuart Younie, chief executive officer, said: 'It's not just our own health we are risk-

ing, it's the health of others, many of whom may be much more vulnerable.'

'As responsible members of the outdoor community we should avoid travel and recreational mountain activities and consider our social

responsibilities to ourselves, friends, families and those rural communities who are rightly concerned about the impact of visitors to their areas. It's such a hard thing to say, to urge people not to go to the hills, but now really is

the time to avoid unnecessary activities in the mountains.

'Remember, this is temporary, and we do ask that people put their own wishes aside for now and avoid unnecessary travel and contact with others.'

# Loch Fyne anglers hook season trophies



Andrew Jamieson, heaviest shore and boat fish. Not a bandit, but just keeping safe.

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turbot and has great future potential. Fort William and Erskine were also first time marks but neither fished well on the day.

Closer to home, Portavadie and Cairndow were slightly better with cod, dogfish

and a club record mackerel recorded.

Ardrihaig angler and accountant Steven MacBrayne was presented with a surprise gift from the club as he looks ahead to a new chapter in Glasgow. Steven has been a member of Loch Fyne Sea

Angling Club and intends to take part in club competitions when he can.

Prize-winners: Club Champion: Nikki Thompson. Runner-Up: Robert MacBrayne. Shore Champion: Robert MacBrayne. Heaviest Boat Fish : Andrew Jamieson.

Heaviest Shore Fish : Andrew Jamieson. Nominated Species: Nick Friel. Specimen Fish: Nikki Thompson. Pairs: Gary Sinclair, Jim Smith. Triples: Robert MacBrayne, Gary Sinclair, Steven MacBrayne. Xmas Shield: Gordon Law



Shore champion, Robert MacBrayne.



Christmas Shield winner Gordon Law.



Steven MacBrayne is off to Glasgow.



Steven MacBrayne with his farewell gift from the club.

**INSIDE THIS WEEK:**

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trophies

Hill-walkers  
urged to  
stay home

## Tarbert charity shoot takes off for ambulance service



Charity shooters assemble at Barmore.

Shooters turned out in numbers to test their skills at a charity event hosted by Tarbert Gun Club.

The successful shoot on Saturday March 14, organised by Craig Samborek, was well supported by friends and col-

leagues, with some travelling a distance just for the occasion.

The total collected on the day was boosted during the following week by further donations. A total of £900 has been donated to the Scottish Air Ambulance.

All those who attended were aware and respectful of the advice on Covid-19 that was in place at the time. The rapidly changing situation means it is unlikely there will be another event like this for some time to come.

# Anglers hook season trophies

When the fishing season comes to an end, Loch Fyne Sea Angling Club members are usually looking forward to their AGM and award ceremony.

But, like so many other events, this was cancelled due to the present Covid-19 situation. This has already affected competition plans for the coming season with various boat venues on hold until the all-clear comes.

The club has had a reason-

ably good season with only one boat trip cancelled due to stormy weather, which is better than previous years. Top venue was Stornoway which produced a good range of species and one or two new club records. Over two days, members caught 144 fish made up of 15 different species including ling, spotted rays and turbot. There was just one day at Portpatrick due to heavy seas but they still managed to capture a few pollack, bull

huss and tub gurnard. A trip to Oban, on the other hand, was pretty dire, with only five fish recorded. Most of the late season competitions were held at Loch Etive which is always pretty consistent for spurdogs, although they were mainly juvenile fish, a case of quantity over quality. The annual tally of qualifying fish recorded was in excess of 500, which were all returned safely, and three new club records: plaice, turbot and

tub gurnard were set, so all in all not too bad a boat season.

The shore section didn't fare so well this year with a few pretty scratchy first time venues. Corran was undoubtedly the most prolific shore meeting with nine scoring fish, mainly thornback ray, dogfish and a lone scorpion. Arbroath was a new venue for the group and although it wasn't as productive as hoped, it did turn up a club record

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Club champion and specimen winner, Nikki Thompson.



## What we are doing to help

- We are continuing to bring you accurate and trustworthy news in-paper and online
- We are working with our wholesale and retail partners to make sure that your newspaper is still in the shops

Keeping our community informed  
**All the information on our website is available free - you don't have to log in**

If you want to get the "page turner" version of the newspaper and can't get to the shops we have halved the price of our digital edition for the next 3 months. We will review this on an ongoing basis.

Stay safe, we're in this together

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