

THE ARRAN BANNER

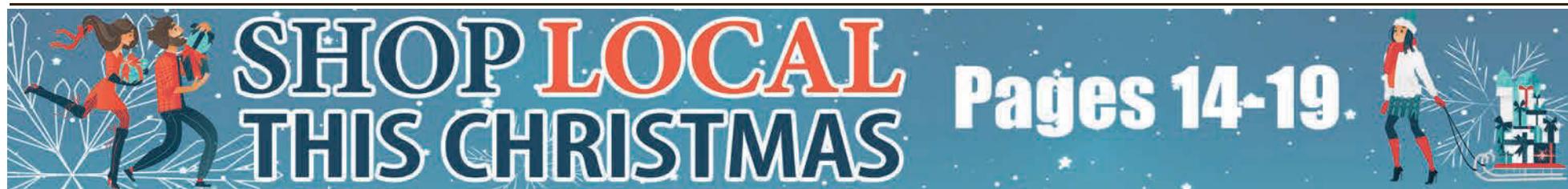
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Firms vow to fight to save freight service

Sailings cancelled as ferry can't berth

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



An Arran florist has warned that a proposal by CalMac to remove the loose freight service on the Ardrrossan to Brodick route could put her out of business.

Eleanor Winship, who has run Eleanor's Flowers in Brodick for 15 years, says the increased delivery charges, which would be incurred if the service is stopped, could be the last straw in what has already been a difficult year.

However, there was a glimmer of hope after CalMac announced on Wednesday it was defer implementing the change until the end of February 2021 to allow consultation with customers.

As reported in last week's Banner CalMac had announced proposals for the service to be withdrawn. The ferry operator says there are other commercial delivery companies available to do the



work and argues it is not a courier company.

However, there was widespread anger among businesses on the island over what was seen as a bid to stop the service without any consultation

with their regular customers. Even the Isle of Arran Ferry Committee found out about the proposals by chance.

Eleanor told the Banner: 'CalMac says it is not part of the lifeline service it provides,

Eleanor fears for the future of her business if the service is removed.

but I would say it is a big part of the lifeline for those who use it. My suppliers deliver to Ardrrossan and I pick the flowers up at Brodick. It has worked well for years. If another courier has to be involved that flexibility is gone. I can't have flowers sitting at a ferry terminal out of water for hours.'

She is in talks with another delivery company but is already concerned that the extra costs involved will put 15 to 20 per cent on to the cost of her flowers. 'I am working on such tight margins as it is, I could not afford to absorb that loss and it would have to be passed on to the customer. I am already struggling to complete with florists on the mainland and online.'

'It's just the latest move by CalMac to cut another service. It is supposed to be a public

company but it doesn't give a damn about the people who use it.'

As well as flowers, the service is used by businesses on the island to get car parts, electrical and plumbing parts and others parcels, allowing them to get jobs finished more quickly.

Arran's daily papers are also delivered by the service and it is used by the hospital and for the transfer of medical samples being sent to the mainland – however, it has been confirmed this will continue.

Arran Community Council discussed the proposed withdrawal at its monthly meeting, using Zoom on Tuesday night.

Shiskine representative Neil Arthur said CalMac had been bringing freight to the island since the 1960s and for many years before that. 'The companies now operating were set up to compete with CalMac,' he said.

South end councillor Richard

Continued on page three.

More than 20 sailings have been cancelled on the Ardrrossan to Brodick route because the ferry has been forced to berth at Brodick.

Demands have now been made for Peel Ports to step up to its responsibility and carry out urgent repairs needed at Ardrrossan harbour. This is thought to have been delayed because of the major redevelopment works still in the planning.

Damage to the fenders at the harbour means the MV Caledonian Isles cannot stay berthed at Ardrrossan overnight in certain weather conditions, meaning it has to berth overnight at Brodick.

This leads to the last sailing of the day to Ardrrossan at 7.20pm being cancelled as well as the first boat over from Ardrrossan the next morning at 7am, causing late delivery of supplies and goods.

The issue was discussed at the CalMac community board virtual meeting this week, where it was reported CalMac was pushing for Peel Ports to act.

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Arran survey finds mental health is biggest concern

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Mental health issues are presently the biggest concern to the people of Arran, a new community survey has found.

A total of 79 per cent of respondents to the survey were worried about the mental health of others or of their own. Financial worries, social isolation, job security and fear of the unknown were high among their concerns.

It may be the starkest warning yet of the long-term problems which could be mounting up and the hidden cost of the coronavirus pandemic. Asked 'what is concerning you at present?' the top answer was others' mental health at 44 per cent, with personal mental health not far behind on 35 per cent.

Chairman of the Arran Recovery Group Tom Tracey, who carried out the survey, said: 'From the survey, many of the concerns expressed are probably contributing factors to poor mental health and are all exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis. They will only start to recede as the crisis

The vast majority felt there had been some positive experiences...

recedes. In the meantime, folk need to be aware of the help that is already here as well as suggesting what help needs to be added.'

As a result, the survey recommends that there should be an urgent assessment of the effectiveness of current strate-

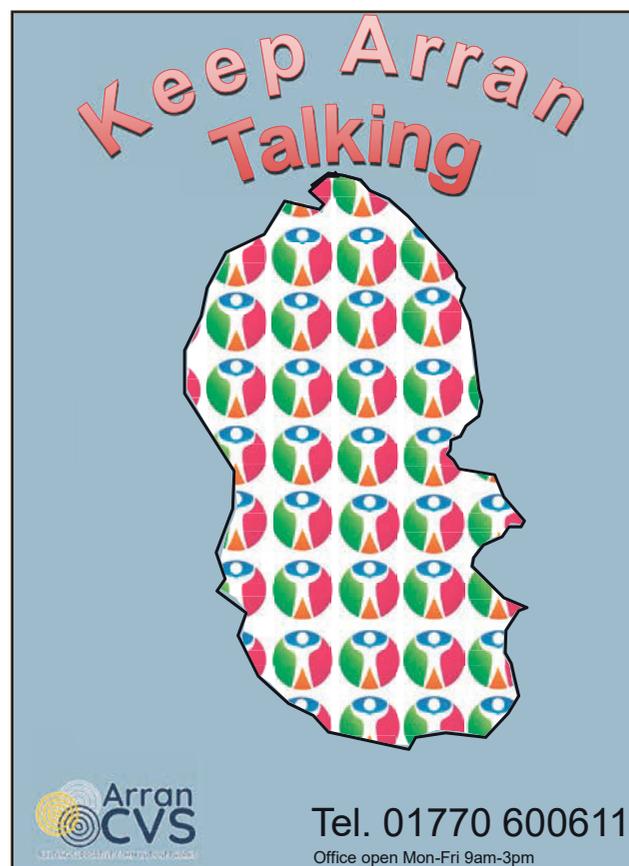
gies and consider if additional support is required.

Other recommendations are to maintain and re-enforce the current information flow and service provision in support of Covid-19 compliance.

There is general support for most of the programmes within the Arran Recovery Plan, however, more community discussion is required.

Increased focus on creating and implementing a joined-up travel and transport plan is seen as the major island priority, including a priority ferry booking process for the community.

The second community survey was carried out last month, online and with a paper copy in the Banner, and was a follow-up to the initial survey in May. It attracted 315 responses, well down on the



concerns regarding mental health. Environmentally, 70 per cent of participants believe Arran should use this time to mitigate against and adapt to climate change. Some of the ways islanders have been reducing their own carbon footprint included buying local, composting, travelling less. Car is still the predominant mode of travel, with public transport timings noted as being unsuitable by a quarter of respondents.

Concerns about Arran's economy appear to be slightly less than in May 2020, although 49 per cent of businesses responding also indicated their ability to operate had been reduced from 30 to 50 per cent due to the Covid-19 restrictions, which could offer long-term challenges.

However, while there appears to be increased optimism about the island's economy, it must be noted that this survey was undertaken before tier three restrictions were imposed and the recent increase in positive Covid cases on the island. A total of 96 per cent of respondents agreed that businesses on Arran had responded appropriately to all restrictions in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines. Although this could be expected, this is appreciated by the community and not taken for granted.

Asked what has been the most positive aspect of the Covid-19 restrictions and what would you like to preserve going forward, nearly 50 per cent said community spirit and support, with time spent outdoors and time with loved ones also scoring highly.

900 responses in May but still represented six per cent of the population.

In summary, there was a consensus that the public and businesses had complied with Covid-19 guidelines on Arran, with only three per cent advising that they disagreed, and the vast majority of the respondents felt there had been some positive experiences as a result of the crisis.

Half the respondents considered travel and transport a main priority for the island, followed by health and social care, tourism, quality of life, affordable housing and

governance. Responses were strongly in favour of retaining ferry capacity to be released on the day to support the community.

The process needs clarity and promotion to offer islanders priority and assist planning ahead.

Overall there is a strong sense of community cohesion on Arran. While residents generally felt they had enough information and support, 26 per cent felt there had not been enough financial support given. This could exacerbate, and may be reflected in, aforementioned

HELP IS AT HAND

One of the ways people on Arran can address Covid-induced isolation is by contacting the Keep Arran Talking initiative.

Launched in April by the Arran Community and Voluntary Service (ACVS) it has helped many who have endured social isolation during the pandemic and is available on 01770 600611, Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm. Other sources of help include:

The Arran Ear: Support

for people feeling anxious or distressed because of the current pandemic; Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Call 01770 649506.

Breathing Space: 0800 838 587. Provides support with low mood, depression or anxiety.

Age UK: 0800 678 1602

Samaritans: 116123 (Lines open 24 hours) Provides support for those who are suicidal or despairing.

Scotland's Citizen Advice helpline: 0800 028 1456

Money Matters: 01294 310456. Provides advice on Welfare Rights, assistance or representation in relation to benefits.

Citrus Energy: 0800 221 8089. Provides further assistance or advocacy for issues with energy suppliers.

CHAP: 01294 475636.

Provides free and confidential advice, information and advocacy support on housing, welfare rights and debt related issues for all residents in North Ayrshire and Arran.

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The Auchrannie Resort is closing its doors until January in a bid to preserve the long-term viability of the business.

Arran top hotels close until 2021

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Two of Arran's leading hotels are closing their doors until next year as ever-changing guidelines and uncertain times ahead make it impossible for the businesses to trade viably.

It means they are missing out on the lucrative Christmas trade which, in normal times, would be among the busiest time of the year for the hospitality industry.

Other hotels on the island, presently closed except for takeaways, are expected to decide in the coming days if they plan to reopen next month or follow suit.

But both Auchrannie Resort in Brodick and the Kinloch Hotel in Blackwaterfoot have taken the decision to close until January.

The news comes as the rest of the island opens up, due to the recent Covid-19 clusters decline, ahead of what shops and businesses hope will be a bumper pre-Christmas rush and are urging everyone to shop local.

Kinloch owner Robbie Crawford said they took the decision to close after New Year was effectively cancelled by the decision of the four UK governments that the Covid restrictions on meeting would be lifted from December 23 to 27.

He said: 'When that was announced guests with New Year bookings started to cancel so we took the decision to close to get on with work to allow us to fully reopen at the end of January.'

I have every confidence that the island will come back stronger.'

Linda Johnston, co-founder and managing director at Auchrannie Resort, said: 'The hospitality industry has spent vast sums on implementing safe systems to make sure we

could open safely following the national lockdown.

'Arran businesses implemented coronavirus precautions responsibly and effectively and this was demonstrated during the four months from July when the island was able to trade effectively and welcomed large numbers of visitors without a single case of Covid-19.

'It is therefore with great sadness and regret that we announce the closure of the resort until the end of January 2021.

'The travel and other restrictions in place since the introduction of the tier system, ever changing guidelines and

'Sadly, we have no choice as the cost of opening is not sustainable...'

uncertain times ahead make it impossible for the business to trade viably and on Arran this is made even harder by ongoing issues with ferry resilience and cancellations.

'We understand the effect that this decision will have on guests, team members, the community, the supply chain and businesses on Arran who rely on tourism over the winter.

'We are also sorry that we are unable to open the leisure facilities to the community and are acutely aware that (with the closure of Kinloch) this leaves the island with no indoor swimming or gym facility.

'Sadly, we have no choice as the cost of opening is not sustainable for the business.

'Our first priority must be to make sure that Auchrannie emerges from the pandemic in good shape to welcome guests back and continue to support the island and community as we have for the last 32 years.

'During the closure, a small

team will be retained to keep the resort safe and in tip-top condition.

'Our reservations department will remain available to answer any queries while we continue to take bookings online and by phone for next year.

'Co-ownership lodges will also remain available to the few owners who are able to travel within the regulations.

'We'd like to thank our team members for doing such an amazing job and for their understanding and flexibility during the pandemic.

'We are grateful that furlough is in place to protect jobs as our team is critical to our future.

'Thanks also to our guests, the community and our suppliers for your understanding and support during this challenging time.

'With a vaccine on the horizon, there is now light at the end of the tunnel and we know that Arran will emerge from this difficult, worrying and stressful period, as a better place to live, work and visit.

'In the meantime, stay safe everyone and we look forward to welcoming you back in February.'

In a statement on Facebook the Kinloch Hotel added: 'We regret to inform you that due to ever changing guidelines and uncertain times ahead we have taken the very hard decision to remain closed until the end of January 2021.

'Thank you to all our staff for their effort and dedication throughout this very challenging year and to all our lovely guests and local community for their continued understanding, support, kind words and good wishes.

'It really has been very much needed and appreciated.

'Take care of each other, stay safe and we look forward to welcoming each and everyone of you back to Kinloch in 2021.'

Businesses vow to fight to save freight service run by CalMac

Continued from page one.
McMaster said any removal of the service was a 'big concern' as he said it was used by a lot of island businesses. 'This is not acceptable,' he said.

Chairman Bill Calderwood said the move had seen Arran and Bute working together to fight the proposal and that support had come from other islands including the Small Islands and Mull. He said he hoped 'common sense would prevail'.

Robert Morrison, operations director for CalMac, told the Banner: 'We are keen to hear from local communities about the loose freight service operated by CalMac. A consultation into proposals to alter the service is now underway and feedback from customers is a vital part of this process.'

'We fully understand the concerns that the potential changes to this service may cause and will work with communities to ensure that these are addressed properly. The Small Isles pricing sys-

A freight van at the Brodick ferry terminal this week.

01_B48freight02



tem is only proposed until engagement with communities and Transport Scotland has taken place. A number of commercial operators already exist throughout the network and we are working to make sure suitable alternatives are in place. We are also working with local NHS providers to ensure that critical services are maintained.'

The ferry committee discussed the issue at its meeting on Wednesday night.

A spokesman said: 'Arran Ferry Committee has directly engaged with CalMac senior management at all levels to register its strong objection to

both the intent and process to announce these intended changes. We anticipate confirmation that the service will not be changed until a full impact assessment can be carried out and full and proper engagement has been concluded with all users to establish what services will continue.

'It has been confirmed that "NHS services are managed under a contract and this will of course continue", but other services still need to be assured.'

CalMac says any feedback should be passed to the ferry committee with which it will be liaising throughout the process.

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Forestry grown trees will be on sale at Cladach Garden Centre. Larger trees are also available for sale to businesses and villages on the island.



Island grown trees on sale

Forestry and Land Scotland's (FLS) team on Arran has teamed up with a local garden centre to make sure residents can still buy their locally-grown Christmas trees.

With FLS's Brodick office closed and staff still working from home, it looked as though the team would not be able to invite local residents to come along and buy a Christmas tree this year. But the Cladach Garden Centre has stepped forward and will be offering members of the public FLS trees as well as bought-in trees.

Andy Walker, for the FLS team on Arran, said: 'For about 30 years now we've planted a small number of trees specifically with Christmas in

mind. It's not a big thing – just something nice to do for local residents – so it doesn't take a lot of time or space and we just let the trees get on with it.

'We don't trim or shape them as they grow so they look a bit more 'rugged' but folks don't seem to mind.

'I think they quite like the fact that they can lop off the odd branch or two to get exactly the sort of shape they want – and they really like that they're locally grown and that little bit cheaper too.

'It's become a bit of a local tradition over the years so it's great we're able to keep it going this year.'

The trees will be on sale from tomorrow (Saturday).

Consultation opens on council regeneration plan

by Hugh Boag

editor@arranbanner.co.uk



North Ayrshire Council is asking local communities to have their say about which physical regeneration projects are priorities within their area.

Local opinions will form the development of a Regeneration Delivery Plan which sets out the actions for regeneration activity over the next five years (2021- 2026).

The North Ayrshire economy has enormous potential and the Regeneration Delivery Plan is about helping to deliver on that. There is an ambition to accelerate and support economic activity, helping support both the short-term recovery from the adverse impacts of Covid-19 and, in the longer-term, improvements to the appeal of our towns and places.

Local communities are



'This gives our local communities the opportunity to shape our regeneration priorities'

being asked to take a few minutes to answer eight questions on the council's website (www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/rdp). Each question relates to the four themes identified in the Delivery Plan and

comments are welcomed in relation to both the area as a whole and your local town.

The plan will be approved by the council's cabinet in late 2020 and it will set out priorities and the allocation of regeneration funding for future projects.

The council recently launched its Community Wealth Building Strategy, which sets out a bold new economic model to help create a fairer local economy. The regeneration of land and assets is one of five pillars within the new strategy and this delivery plan sets out our priorities for delivering on those ambitions.

Council leader Joe Cullinane said: 'The Regeneration Delivery Plan will be key to meeting our Community Wealth Building objective of maximising our land and assets to support the regeneration of our com-

munities. Regeneration is a process that seeks to reverse economic, social and physical decline.

'Our physical regeneration activity will be focused on areas where local issues, problems and challenges require us to step-in and address an issue through physical regeneration.

'This consultation gives local communities the opportunity to have their say to help shape our regeneration priorities. Regeneration is about working together and I would encourage everyone to take the time to answer the questions in our survey. We want to work with our communities to bring forward projects that help to re-build places where people feel more supported, more confident and want to live, work and invest.'

The consultation runs until Friday December 11.

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UK Government offering extra support to staff and firms during winter months

THE UK Government has pledged billions of pounds more to help workers and businesses throughout winter.

The furlough scheme, extended across the UK until the end of March, pays 80 per cent of wages up to £2,500 a month.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme subsidises the wages of people who cannot do their jobs because their workplace is closed or there is no longer enough work.

■ This article is part of a paid-for Partnership with the UK Government

UK Government Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced extra measures to support workers and businesses throughout winter, including a furlough scheme extension paying 80 per cent of staff wages.

As part of the revised scheme – lasting until March 31, to be reviewed at the end of January – anyone made redundant on or after September 23 2020 may be able to be rehired and returned to furlough.

The Chancellor also announced billions of pounds of further support, including more money for self-employed workers.

The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme support will be increased, with the third grant covering November to January calculated at 80 per cent of average trading profits, up to a maximum of £7,500. Guaranteed funding for the UK's devolved administrations has been raised by £2 billion to £16 billion.

■ More details at www.gov.uk

The UK Government also announced:

- VAT deferral payments spread until March
- Bounce Back Loans top-ups
- Extension to home-owners' mortgage payment holiday
- Cash grants of up to £3,000 per month for closed businesses
- Up to £500 million council funding to support local public health response
- Extending government-backed loan schemes and Future Fund to January



EXTRA MEASURES: UK Government Chancellor Rishi Sunak.

HELP PACKAGE 'IS A LIFELINE'



The UK Government's new help package provides a "lifeline" according to an English recruitment firm's MD.

"It will certainly ease pressure as we head towards Christmas and into the new year," said KD Recruitment's Kelly Dunn, continuing to use Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

"These lifelines are vital to help businesses. Knowing a company's biggest outgoing (payroll) is paid by the government will allow businesses to focus on their plans for 2021 and how to bounce back better. These extensions will mean the difference between businesses closing for good or now being able to look to the future and surviving this pandemic."

EXTENSION 'TO PROTECT JOBS'

Owners of a Northern Ireland baby product manufacturer, already benefitting from the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and grants, hailed the latest measures as "positive".

"More security for many until March," said Sinead Murphy, who owns Newtownards-based Shnuggle with husband Adam.

The firm furloughed five staff from a 16-strong team. "We took everything we could get our hands on really," continued Sinead.

"For those who have the means to survive until spring, this extension will give some peace of mind, meaning they can protect jobs and hopefully begin to rebuild their businesses in the near future."



SINEAD AND ADAM MURPHY

'RATES BREAK HUGE FOR US'



Scottish trampoline park bosses are jumping for joy at the UK Government's announcement of continued Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme support.

"The furlough scheme has been great," confirmed Julie Mackenzie, owner of Skyline Trampoline Park, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire, "and the business rates break was huge for us."

She explained: "That is a £7,400 a month bill for us, which we won't pay till the end of January."

Also welcomed is VAT deferral payment plan spread until March. "I feel optimistic," added Julie, whose business reopened to enjoy an October half-term boost, and is now able to furlough six of 25 workers while offering other staff more work.

'WE WON'T LET ANYONE GO'

The continued Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme support has put a spring in the step of a Welsh sock manufacturers boasting VIP clientele.

"It will make a big difference because we are traditionally quieter in the spring.

"Getting this furlough money means we don't have to let anyone go," said Chris Jones, owner of Corgi luxury sock store, in Ammanford, South Wales.

"Otherwise we'd lose skills. We can't afford to lose anybody," continued the business boss whose skilled workforce numbers 60, and whose customers include Prince Charles and actor Daniel Radcliffe. Also applying for a Business Resilience Grant, he added: "I feel really positive."



CHRIS JONES

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LETTERS

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or The Editor, Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran KA27 8AJ

CalMac freight talks are better late than never

The fact that CalMac has, somewhat belatedly, agreed to talk about the future of the loose freight service is to be welcomed.

However, we fear it may never have got to this stage had the service been cancelled before hardly anyone knew it was happening.

Certainly the customers were caught on the hop and the Isle of Arran Ferry Committee only found about the proposed withdrawal of the service by chance.

Only the intervention, it seems, of managing director Robbie Drummond has brought about an 11th-hour reprieve after he was given a mauling at the CalMac community board virtual meeting this week.

And it seems Arran is not the only island community up in arms at the proposed withdrawal of the loose freight service.

It seems CalMac's stance is that it is not a courier service and that private delivery firms are available to do the work. But as was stated at the community council this week, CalMac has for generations brought freight to Arran and the other islands. The firms now operating were set up in competition to them - now it seems happy to hand them all - or the majority of - its freight business.

We hope the consultation, now promised, will be open and sincere, and that all options will now be considered for the future of the vital service.

Thought for the week

'Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.' **Matthew 24: 44**

YOURSTORY

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Follow the salmon money

Sir,
I have objected to the planning application for the new salmon farm on Arran. I agree with the many eloquent objections of others on the grounds of its negative impact on the environment, on tourism, the tons of effluent, the damage to the wild salmon population and the animal cruelty that is common in fish farms of the type proposed.

However, one aspect of this application that seems to attract less attention is the legal structure of the Scottish Salmon Company. It is a Scottish company registered at Companies House in Edinburgh. It only has three directors, two of whom live in the Faroe Islands (linked to Denmark) and one in Scotland. It may be a Scottish company but it is managed by a board with the majority of its directors based in the Faroe Islands, a long way away. The board of directors will not feel or see the daily impact of the salmon farm, and the majority of its members will not be directly affected by the damage it does.

Companies House also explains that the majority shareholder (75 per cent or more) of the Scottish company is a company based offshore in Jersey, called Scottish Salmon Company PLC. It has been reported that the ultimate owner of the Jersey company is Bakkafrøst, a large Faroe Islands salmon farming company.

One thing is clear; the legal structure is likely designed to extract profits for the shareholders in the most 'tax efficient' way they can.

Inward investment from abroad, whether from Denmark, or from Jersey or elsewhere, is to be encouraged if it is for environmentally sensitive projects that are beneficial to the local community and economy. International investment in Scotland is positive and something the government is keen to encourage.

However, in this case, it seems that the profits from the farm will not benefit Arran or North Ayrshire. They can be extracted via the offshore company structure and end up in Jersey or the Faroes or beyond. It doesn't seem fair to leave the environmental and tourism damage in Arran, and take the profits away.

Increasing numbers of people in Scotland advocate independence in an effort to exert local control of the resources and assets of the nation. It seems strange to allow a company based in Jersey, with shareholders based elsewhere, to have control over the fish farm, when it is capable of such damage to the environment, and with little or no benefit to the local population.

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE WEEK



Weather conditions saw Arran bathed in some splendid rainbows last weekend with several seen arched over Brodick Bay during sunshine breaks from the rain. The Banner's own Hugh Boag captured this image of a double rainbow over the bay as the MV Caledonian Isles came into berth last Sunday morning. 01_B48rainbow01

Arran and North Ayrshire will pay a heavy price and, judging by the way the companies are organised, the profits will be enjoyed many miles from Scotland. It is difficult to see how the councillors of North Ayrshire can support such a one-sided arrangement.

Yours,
David Freeman,
Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk.

Ardrossan car parking

Last week's Arran Banner carried a letter which suggested it was CalMac which operated the car park at Ardrossan harbour. Here we give the company the right of reply.

Sir,
CalMac does not own or operate the car park at the Ardrossan ferry terminal. While it is used by our passengers, the car park is owned by Peel Ports and is managed by contractors on their behalf. We are happy to alert customers through the CalMac website to any changes to the way

that sites such as this are being run in case their journeys are affected in any way.

Thank you for allowing me to clarify this matter.

Yours,
Tommy Gore,
Area Operations Manager (Clyde),
CalMac.

Pet support service

Sir,
We know many people may have lost a pet this year and, for some, their four-legged companion may have been their only companion.

We want to remind people that our pet bereavement support service can help those grieving the loss of a pet. Contact our free and confidential support line on 0800 096 6606 or email pbssmail@bluecross.org.uk

Yours,
Diane James,
Pet Bereavement Support Service manager,
Blue Cross.

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However, we realise 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@arranbanner.co.uk; telephoning the chief reporter on 01770 302142 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 timeous, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter, by emailing: inquiries@ipso.co.uk.

The Editor welcomes letters for publication on this page. The Editor reserves the right to shorten, amend or to refuse to print them. Names and addresses MUST be supplied to indicate good faith, although these details can be withheld from publication. Telephone numbers, if available, should also be included. Anonymous letters will not be considered. Please write to: Letters, The Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran, KA27 8AJ. Fax: (01770) 302021. Email editor@arranbanner.co.uk Emailed letters can only be considered if they have a name, full address and phone number.

Eager buyers flood Arran housing market

Arran is undergoing a period of unprecedented activity in the residential property market, an enthusiasm which shows no current signs of waning, according to an Ayrshire-based property expert.

John McHugh, a partner in the Irvine office of DM Hall Chartered Surveyors, says the market was already moving very positively up till March, after a sluggish 2019, but as soon as the nation was released from its first experience of general incarceration, a firestorm of activity broke out, every bit as frenzied as what ensued through the 2005 to 2007 period in the run-up to the financial crash and outfall from 2008 onwards.

He said: 'Very quickly in the summer a significant volume of properties came to the market and as soon as they arrived, they sold, many at closing dates and achieving some of the best prices paid for at least 10 years.'

'The main complaint from agents was that they were constantly short of stock.

'Its [Arran's] property market could not be more different to that of the mainland which surrounds it on three sides. There is an entirely different dynamic.

'The market is much more cosmopolitan, attracting a great deal of English and, indeed, foreign money.

'It is likely that at least 25 per cent to 30 per cent of properties on the island are English-owned and the number of second homes/holiday homes generally is likely to be well in excess of 50 per cent of the island's property stock.

'It is not a new phenomenon, but this year has accelerated what many people see as a major difficulty of rural and island life – that local people are priced out of the market by people coming from areas where house prices are higher by a serious order of magnitude.

'Even at the lower end of the market, an ex-local authority house on the island can fetch a hefty £125,000 to £160,000, easily a half to two-thirds more than a similar

property would manage on the mainland directly to the east.

'Island homes are also very lettable. Rental for the 20-to-30 weeks of the season can be much more lucrative than a year's lease to a sitting tenant, meaning that locals are priced out of this option as well.

'The island premium means that while the average house price in Scotland is around £160,000, the most active sector of the Arran market ranges from £200,000 to £400,000.

'The past 18 months to two years have also seen an increase in sales activity at £500,000 to £700,000, including a number of impressive red sandstone Victorian mansions and bespoke individual properties.'

And he said isolation appeared to be no disincentive to a successful sale.

'A three-bedroom property is about to be marketed in Machrie, in the middle of the thinly-populated west coast, in a remote location, up a farm track and over 100 metres above sea level. There is

not a shop for miles. But the asking price is around £400,000, and I would be surprised if it does not attract considerable interest.

'One of the peculiarities of house-hunting in Arran is that many people arrive on the pier at Brodick with a very fixed idea of exactly where they want to buy. Someone with their heart set on Blackwaterfoot would not countenance purchasing in Lamlash.

'I suspect it is to do with memories of childhood holidays or blissful times spent on the island.

'All being well though, as the world continues to battle the many health and economic challenges it faces, I strongly suspect that, in its own unique way, Arran will continue to thrive and offer a welcoming hand and opportunity to the many visitors and aspirational buyers who will no doubt continue to crowd the boats next year.'

■ **Is there a holiday homes crisis in Corrie and elsewhere? Turn to centre spread pages 12 and 13.**

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Firth of Clyde a 'key source' of juvenile whiting, says joint study

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Scientists have discovered the Firth of Clyde is an important source of juvenile whiting to the wider Scottish west coast waters in new research likely to be important for fisheries management.

In a new joint study, between the University of Glasgow and Marine Scotland Science, published in Communications Biology, researchers found that as juvenile whiting grow to become adults some cross the fish stock boundary between the Irish Sea and waters to the west of Scotland.

The Firth of Clyde and eastern Irish Sea was shown to be the main source of juvenile whiting for both the Irish Sea and the wider west of Scotland waters. Whiting from the

Firth of Clyde were previously thought to self-recruit, but in this recent analysis using otolith microchemistry – the study of the concentration of certain elements in the structure in the inner ear of fish and other vertebrates – they have discovered that this area is a source of whiting across the west of Scotland and Irish Sea. Whiting is a small member of the cod family and commonly caught for UK consumption.

The research may be important for fisheries' management, as the Irish Sea and the Firth of Clyde are currently assessed as different fish stocks.

Researchers also highlight that with so many juvenile whiting originating in the Firth of Clyde nursery before moving to other areas as adults, the juveniles and adults are also likely to face pressures



A fishing boat seen fishing in Brodick Bay this week.
01_B48fishing01

from different fishing fleets. Dr Neil Burns, who carried out the work at the University of Glasgow and is now a Challenge Research Fellow at

Scotland's Rural College, said: 'To properly manage natural resources like fish stocks, it is essential we understand animal movements and the ways

they use different parts of the environment. The statistical method we developed here is an exciting leap forward in the study of otolith microchem-

istry and will help us better understand fish movements.'

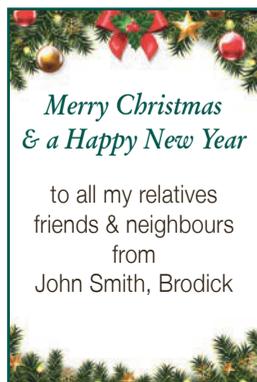
Dr David Bailey, University of Glasgow, said: 'This new way to link adult fish to specific nursery areas demonstrates how important coastal habitats are and how the key nursery areas affect adult fish abundances across the whole West Coast.'

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

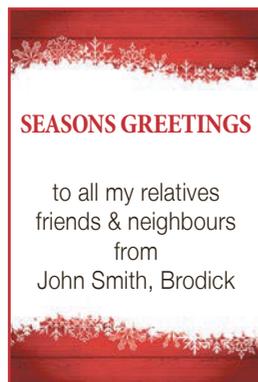
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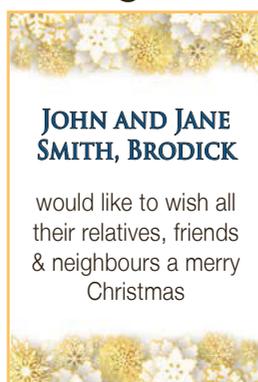
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Christmas gift appeal launched by council

Kind-hearted residents, businesses and organisations on Arran are being asked to help make this Christmas a special one for families less fortunate.

The message comes as North Ayrshire Council launches its Christmas gift appeal to support local families struggling this festive season.

The appeal will run from now until Tuesday December 15 and its aim is to give gifts to families who, for a range of reasons, are not able to give their children a Christmas that most of us take for granted.

North Ayrshire's Health and Social Care Partnership will identify those in greatest need of support.

Items are being sought for all ages, include: toys (children), books (all ages), high street vouchers (teenagers), Christmas treats including selection boxes/sweets (all ages), supermarket vouchers (parents/carers).

Donations can be dropped off at Arran library on Tuesdays, between 2pm and 4pm or Thursdays, between 10am and noon at the red drop-off box at



'We know many families across the communities struggle financially' - Provost Ian Clarkson

the library front door. Items will be stored for 72 hours, as per quarantine arrangements. All gifts will be redistributed in the local area.

All donations should be dropped off unwrapped, so that council staff can determine the most suitable age group to receive the gift.

Provost Ian Clarkson said: 'We know that many families across our communities are struggling financially, now more than ever, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. And with Christmas just around the corner, this can turn what should be a joyous occasion in to a stressful one for those parents and carers trying to

make ends meet. That's why we have launched our Christmas Gift Appeal. We are calling on our residents and businesses to spare a thought for those less fortunate and, where possible, donate to the appeal.

'Each contribution will go a long way in making a real difference to someone's Christmas who otherwise may receive very little.'

Club draw winners

The winners of the Lochranza and Catacol 200 club October draw were: first prize Stuart Logan, second prize Oana Iosef.



Two of David's photographs which feature on the charity calendar.

Farming charity calendar is ideal Christmas gift

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



A charity calendar for 2021 has been launched by RHET Ayrshire and Arran Countryside Initiative, with all monies raised to help continue their work educating young

people about farming in the region.

The calendar features farming and rural images taken by Arran committee member, and amateur photographer, David Henderson of Kilpatrick Farm.

There are only 150 copies

available and they cost £10 plus £2 postage and packaging, or are available from David at the farm.

Orders can be made by emailing Fiona Drummond at fionadrummond17@gmail.com or by calling Christine Cuthbertson on 07775 838926.



Arran households face £20 benefit cut

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Some households on Arran are facing financial hardship as the UK government ends vital coronavirus support to people receiving benefits such as Universal Credit, an MP has claimed.

Currently 8,614 households receive Universal Credit in North Ayrshire and Arran constituency. All are set to lose out on the £20-a-week uplift brought in to provide a lifeline during the pandemic.

The government will reinstate the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) by April 2021, but a Scottish Government report calculates that the decision will cost households in Scotland up to £476 million.

Commenting, Arran's MP Patricia Gibson said: 'The Tories' proposals to withdraw this £20 uplift in April would

pull the rug out from 8,614 households - 22 per cent of all households in my constituency alone - at a time when they need support the most. While the Department of Work and Pensions cannot say how many Arran households will be impacted it is likely to be in the low hundreds.

'The pandemic is not over yet, so the UK Government needs to reverse these plans or it will impact those who are unemployed, low paid or self-employed people whose incomes have been slashed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

'The Scottish Government is doing all it can to support struggling families by introducing game-changing benefits like the Scottish Child Payment and will continue to build a benefits system that is kind, caring and compassionate with the limited powers it currently has. However, 85

per cent of the social security system remains under Westminster, Tory, control.

'An independent Scotland would have full social security powers to build a fair social security system that gives families the support they need.'

The MIF is a base amount used to calculate how much Universal Credit should be awarded to self-employed people. Anyone earning below the MIF is considered as though they earn that amount, while those earning more have their actual earnings taken into account.

When the UK Government removed the MIF, everyone who was self-employed received benefits based on their actual earnings.

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Arran ferry fiasco 'absolutely tragic' for island community

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Arran residents have been 'let down very, very badly' by the Ferguson Marine fiasco, the boss of Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) has said.

But he blamed the three-year delay on completion of the MV Glen Sannox, which will serve the Ardrrossan to Brodick route, squarely on 'complete and utter contractor failure'.

The Port Glasgow shipyard of Ferguson Marine had to be rescued from collapse last year and taken into Scottish Government ownership.

An inquiry by the Scottish parliament's rural economy and connectivity committee is due to report in the next few weeks.

In an interview with The Scotsman last weekend, CMAL chief executive Kevin

Hobbs said he expects the MSPs to criticise everyone involved. He said the delays had been 'absolutely tragic' for the island communities involved, which had been 'let down very, very badly'. He revealed that a total of 19 new ships are due to be ordered in a project which Mr Hobbs described as a 'mountain to climb'.

The £550 million order book comprised six major ferries, 10 smaller vessels and three replacements for chartered ferries on Clyde routes from Gourock. However, Mr Hobbs said the much-needed programme had been set back by two years because of major delays and cost over-runs to two other CalMac ferries being built at Ferguson Marine.

'We should have been well on with building more ships at this stage but the resources involved in sorting out the

problems which we've been subjected to have been, to be frank, enormous and crushing in many respects.

'We have been under some pressure to work our way through this. We are a very small professional team but there are only so many hours in a day,' he said.

Glen Sannox is now expected to start operating on the main Arran route in summer 2022 – more than three years late – after being delivered to CalMac between April and June that year. Her unnamed sister vessel is due to enter service early in 2023 on the Skye-Harris-North Uist routes following delivery between December 2022 and February 2023.

A Transport Scotland spokesman said CMAL's plans would be considered by ministers in due course.

Island communities have been 'let down very, very badly'



CMAL chief executive
Kevin Hobbs.



The MV Glen Sannox leaving dry dock in September. Photograph: Mark Gibson Digital.

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Last push for CalMac fund applications

Time is running out for groups, which are helping the most vulnerable in their communities, to apply for the latest round of the CalMac Community Fund.

Monday November 30 is the final day for applications to be received and the fund organisers want to hear from non-profit groups which have been tackling social isolation, poor mental health, loneliness and/or poverty.

Groups operating across the CalMac network can apply for an award from the fund of between £500

and £2,000. In 2019, the community fund supported 76 groups across the west coast, benefitting the lives of children and young people. Projects included access to swimming, Highland dancing, sailing and video skills.

Gordon McKillop, corporate social responsibility manager for CalMac, said: 'The CalMac Community Fund was created to make a difference to those most in need across our west coast communities. It is also a fantastic way for us to connect with our communities.'

'The Covid-19 pandemic placed a huge strain on people's lives and there has been a lot of great community work going on to help those affected. We would love to hear more about these projects and would encourage those eligible to apply for an award.'

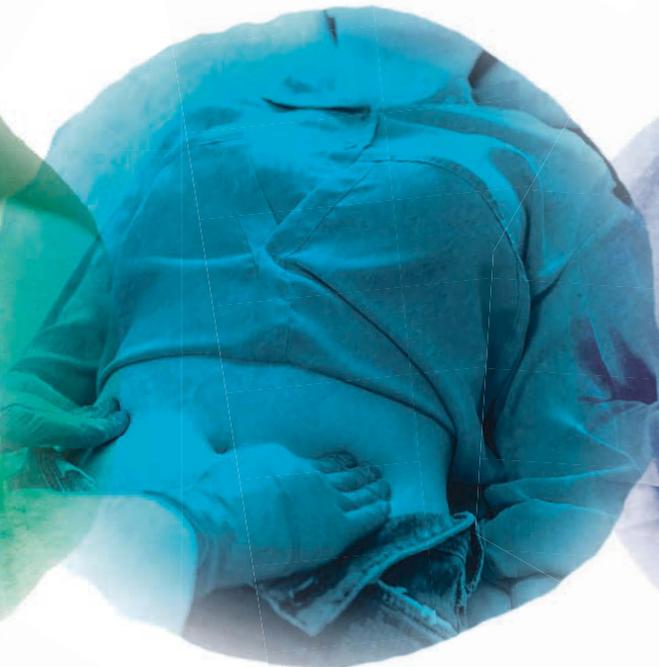
'The community fund was really well received when it was originally launched and we were able to help 76 groups. I am looking forward to hearing more about the great work that is taking place to help those in need.'

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Is there a holiday homes crisis?



The 'hidden' houses in Red Quarry Road. 01_B45corrie08



The former council houses of Corrie Terrace. 01_B45corrie07



The most picturesque part of the village with the largely whitewash houses on one side of the road and the gardens on the other. 01_B45corrie04

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Nearly half of all the houses in Corrie are holiday homes, a new study by Arran Civic Trust has revealed.

Of the 94 houses in Corrie, 44 are now holiday homes and with demand for houses on Arran at an all-time high, as a result of the pandemic, it is helping keep house prices out of reach of local people looking to get on the property ladder.

The situation in nearby villages is the same, with three of nine houses in the picturesque High Corrie being holiday homes – and one has lain empty for more than two years.

In Sannox, there are 10 holiday homes out of the 26 in the village.

According to the trust report: 'Holiday homes present a problem for all rural and island communities, not so much

'Whatever happens, we should be discussing this issue and looking for solutions'

because they exist, but because the number and proportion is increasing and is in danger of devastating local society when villages empty of locals and lose their sense of community.

'Corrie certainly has not lost that but it is worrying that, from Corrie Hotel to Blackrock, which constitutes the centre of the old village, there are 33 houses, 25 of which are holiday homes.

'Most of the hillside houses above the hotel are also holiday homes.

'About four of the total are holiday lets and therefore part

of the tourism trade. It should be said that some holiday home owners have an Arran history and are frequent and active participants in local life, but the trend is ominous and the pace quickening with an increasing rush to the countryside by the well-off.'

Other Arran villages will be in a similar position but the situation in Corrie highlights what is an island-wide problem.

The report goes on: 'The main Corrie village life has moved to the quarry where all 24 houses are occupied in Red



Corrie looking south from the harbour with some of the higher houses just visible. 01_B45corrie06

'One possible answer to this would be for North Ayrshire Council and the Trust Housing Association to take an interest in buying village houses when they come up for sale and letting them to local people, since the island does have full employment with many able to afford a rent, though not a mortgage deposit.'

is in Corrie – and elsewhere?

Quarry Road but they are out of sight of the main village, which is regrettable, since it produces a marked separation between them and the rest of the village as it does also in Lamlash. Pirnmill successfully avoided this.

'One possible answer to this would be for North Ayrshire Council and the Trust Housing Association to take an interest in buying village houses when they come up for sale and letting them to local people, since the island does have full employment with many able to afford a rent, though not a mortgage deposit.

'It would require some local relaxation of the strict rules over fittings and fixtures in social housing and the authority would have valuable assets maintained by fair rents and be able to exercise choice in favour of locals.

'Whatever happens, we should be discussing this issue and looking for solutions,' the trust report concludes.

Corrie and Sannox have a long history as holiday destinations.

As steamer services improved in the late 19th and into the 20th century, the villages shared in the popularity of the island as a holiday resort, but with only one hotel in each village, most visitors took houses for a month – or even for the whole summer.

Almost all of the villagers let their homes, moving into smaller 'summer houses' built at the back.

Some provided 'attendance', cooking the food provided by visitors, others provided 'full

board'.

Steamers anchored off Corrie and the visitors were ferried ashore in small boats to the Ferry Rock.

Those with hampers, bicycles or large pieces of luggage, had to disembark at Brodick Pier and arrange transport with Ribbeck's wagonette.

Such was the attraction of Corrie and Sannox that the same families came back year after year and generation after generation still came, so that holiday time became almost a family reunion between visitors and residents, according to the History of the Villages of Arran produced by the Arran Federation of the SWRI to commemorate its Golden Jubilee in 1975.

After the Second World War, the first council houses were built in Corrie – just four at the southern end of the village at Hillfoot.

Twenty years later Corrie Terrace, which had been built for the sandstone quarry workers at the beginning of the century, was demolished and more council houses were built on the site – five family houses and four smaller ones.

'Over the years, planning permission has been granted for some private bungalows in Corrie and Sannox, but the character of the villages has remained essentially unchanged,' the 1975 book stated.

That may have been true at the time but clearly the situation has changed in the 45 years since and, as the trust says, it has now become an issue which needs to be properly addressed.



Corrie looking south showing the first council houses built with High Corrie somewhere in the trees. 01_B45corrie02



A view of Corrie looking south from Sandstone Quay. 01_B45corrie01



The row of mainly holiday houses near the hotel. 01_B45corrie03



Corrie looking south from the north end of the village. 01_B45corrie05



The countdown has truly begun with the big day rapidly approaching. In no time at all, we will all be eating mince pies, tucking into great festive fayre, spending time with loved ones, we hope, and sharing gifts and Christmas cheer.

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And if the weather has not yet started to make you feel like Christmas is nearing then a visit to any store will certainly put you in the festive mood with decorations, well adorned trees and tinsel starting to appearing everywhere.

As we look forward to hopefully sharing the festive time with loved ones, it can also be a very busy time for many, with food preparation, house decorating, and purchasing special gifts and surprises - there can be so much to organise in the run up to the big day.

In the spirit of saving precious time and helping you to prepare for this Christmas period,

the Arran Banner has compiled a compilation of people, places and stores to visit that are all offering festive deals and bargains galore to help you to care of all of your festive needs. While many will resort to going online there is a surprisingly near-complete set of stores and producers right on your doorstep that can cater for your every need, from food to gifts to decorations and activities and pamper sessions, it is all right here, and shopping locally also means that that you support the communities and organisations that abound on Arran. Shopping locally supports your neighbours the local micro-economy and encourages



local commerce who in turn support other local enterprise and causes. It all makes perfect sense, and of course you get to take advantage of a wide choice of good quality, often unique, and all well-regarded products from sellers and purveyors of Arran inspired merchandise and services. Browse, from the comfort of your own armchair,

our selection of top festive fayre over the following few pages. And all of them within close driving distance without having to travel to far-flung destinations and all with typical Arran hospitality and a warm welcome.

ARRAN GIN COMPANY
Starting in Brodick some might tempt you with a refreshing glass of Prosecco or mulled wine. At Cladach you will find the Arran Gin Company - What an exciting year at Cladach Beach House! - making Cassis; serving-up beach cocktails.... and now they aim to make people feel as Christmassy as possible in their beach front shop. Why not try the limited edition Arran

ARRAN CHRISTMAS MARKET

The Arran Christmas Market is a facebook event happening this weekend, Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th November, from 11am until 9pm each day. For full details of the island businesses who are taking part, and at what times, please see attached schedule. The market was conceived and set up by Priscilla Helie, of Priscilla's Hair in Lamlash. Since there have been no craft fairs this year due to the current pandemic, this is an opportunity to share local festive offerings online. Each business will have a 30 minute slot on either of the two days, to advertise their wares through photos, videos and other content, and purchases can be made by commenting on their posts. If you are unable to watch businesses live, content can be viewed at any convenient time by logging into the page and scrolling through posts at leisure. While all slots are now taken for crafters and businesses, to take part as a participant, just search for Arran Christmas Market on Facebook, and click on 'Join'. Everything is covered, from Alpacas to gin cocktails, through local food producers, cosmetics, craftspeople, therapists, gifting, photography and brewing. Arran Christmas Market on Facebook has your Christmas covered, from the comfort of your own mobile device!

Arran Christmas Market
ONLINE EVENT
28th + 29th November

SATURDAY EVENT SCHEDULE

11am - 11:30am Bella Boo Cards		4.30pm - 5pm Made by Frankie & Ross	
11:30am - 12pm My Artistic Me		5.00pm - 5.30pm Body Shop at Brèagha	
12pm - 1pm Crofters Larder		5.30pm - 6pm Natures SoapBox	
1pm - 1:30pm Arran Alpacas		6pm - 6.30pm Janelle's	
1:30pm - 2pm Elie's Delight Cakes		6.30pm - 7pm Red Door	
2pm - 2:30pm Avon		7pm - 7.30pm Ladies Corner	
2:30pm - 3pm Arran Wish Bracelets		7.30pm - 8pm Priscilla's Salon	
3pm - 3:30pm The Aloe Vera Company		8pm - 8.30pm The Arran Gift Box Company	
3pm - 3:30pm Bay Wool & Crafts		8.30pm - 9pm Island Scents	
4pm - 4:30pm Arran Glass Studio			

Arran Christmas Market
ONLINE EVENT
28th + 29th November

SUNDAY EVENT SCHEDULE

11am - 11:30am Ad Astra Jewellery & Gifts		5pm - 5.30pm Fee's Photography	
11:30 am - 12pm Juice Plus		5.30pm - 6pm Corra Sea Glass & Crafts	
12pm - 1pm Chameleon Ladies Boutique		6pm - 6.30pm Driftwood Gift Shop	
1pm - 1.30pm Arran Gin		6:30pm - 7pm Island Porcelain	
1.30pm - 2pm The Old Byre Showroom		7pm - 7.30pm Ballarie Designs	
2pm - 2.30pm Highland Gifts		8pm - 8.30pm Seagate Brewery	
2.30pm - 3pm Lisa's Balloons		8.30pm - 9pm Karebell Designs	
3pm - 4pm Orka Krafts			
4pm - 4.30pm Bewitching Beauty			
4.30pm - 5pm Blueberry Village			

16 SHOP LOCAL



Cassis, made from this year's local blackcurrants -squished and delightfully fermented on Arran, large & small bottles of gin NEW - denim bags, aprons and branded facemasks. Hand-selected Corney & Barrow wines, champagne and port, lets you create your own perfect Christmas drink. With roaring fire and Christmas spirit – they promise to make it fun this year at Cladach! www.isleofarrangin.com

CLADACH SAWMILL AND GARDEN CENTRE

If you are looking for a shed, garden furniture, plants or a real Christmas tree then pay a visit to Cladach Sawmill and Garden Centre who have Norway spruce, or Noble/Nordmann, fir trees for sale. They offer a full landscaping and fencing service, or supply only with delivery available. The Garden Centre stocks carries a comprehensive range of seasonal plants, many produced on site, along with pots, composts, seeds, tools and sundries all at a very competitive price. Gift vouchers also available. Call 01770 302622 or email: cladachsawmill@btinternet.com

RED DOOR

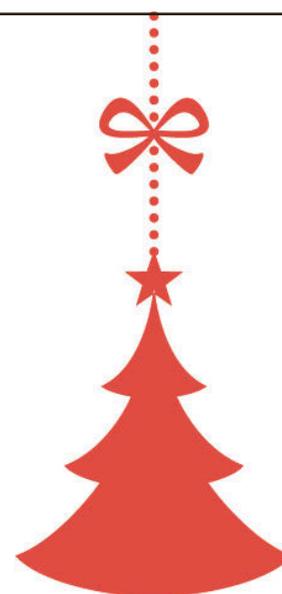
Christmas shopping is going to be a bit different this year, and the girls at Red Door have tried to do the hard work for you! They have a great selection of gift ideas for the whole family, all behind one little Red Door! There are stunning new cashmere blend scarves, with matching gloves for a touch of luxury! Gents scarves, wallets and gloves for those hard to buy for men of the family! There is a HUGE selection of beautiful kiddies goodies, from a Wooden Doctors Kit, Milk Bottle Baking Kits, and a vast array of Activity Books! Not to mention all the exquisite jewellery, handbags, Christmas decorations, candles and more. Contact 01770 303549.

JAMES OF ARRAN

Within walking distance, Arran's only chocolate factory has been producing the finest hand crafted chocolate delights for over 18 years. And at their shop, James of Arran, their years of experience is plain to see, and taste. Offering a tempting array of sweet treats including their Brandy Christmas pudding truffles, fresh cream truffles and mint truffles, Christmas gifts, chocolate bars, gift boxes and what woman doesn't love her shoes, they are amazing! Mail order service available. www.jamesofarran.com or call 01770302873

ARRAN ACTIVE

No visit to Arran is complete without



making a visit to Arran Active, which is so much more than just an outdoor store, with great gifts for all the family. Arran's specialist outdoor shop has a huge amount of space and an equally large range of outdoor clothing, footwear, rucksacks and equipment. With a great deal of

new stock having just arrived it may be worth your while to pay them a visit. In addition to the expected range of active items they extend further than just that and also stock ladies fashion wear, pet supplies, toys, Arran gifts and an impressive collection of whiskies and gins, perfect for Christmas. Tel: 01770 302113, Email: info@arranactive.co.uk

DRIFTWOOD

Next to that, Driftwood strives to capture the essence of Christmas, and you are certain to find a wide selection of tempting gifts for friends and family. With a knack for stocking items that are all carefully selected to match the style of the charming shop,

ARRAN BOTANICAL DRINKS

ARRAN GIN & CASSIS XMAS SHOP

Let's shop local for a special Arran Christmas

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RED DOOR

10% OFF ENDING SAT 5TH DEC

Red Door, Brodick, Isle of Arran. 01770 303549
Gift Vouchers Available

Driftwood is full of Christmas goodies, presents and stocking fillers and lots of gorgeous decorations to make your Christmas sparkle more than ever this year. A fabulous selection of jewellery by Ailsa McNicol as well as a mouthwatering selection of lamps, mirrors, throws and accessories. Driftwood offers something for everyone. Call 01770 303970

JANELLE'S

Round in Lamlash, a particular highlight for many is Janelle's, the interior design gift shop which stocks a wide range of unique giftware and home décor, and which always manages to stock tastefully selected and ultra-desirable items.

It's all about Christmas this year at Janelle's even more so this year as everyone needs a bit of cheering up and they are happy to deliver to Lamlash, Brodick & Whiting Bay (all other villages would post) Very happy also to post to mainland also, just message them on Facebook.

ISLAND PORCELAIN

Next door, at Island Porcelain, if their wonderfully cute celebration mouse, which can be personalised for that special occasion, be it birth, wedding or engagement doesn't get you, the charming porcelain sheep, seals, birds and sea animals certainly will. These elegant and collectable porcelain designs are uniquely charming,

will enhance any home and make ideal gifts. With no two the same, each piece is individually hand crafted and hand painted, ensuring that every single piece is a unique and collectable keepsake. Well worth a visit to pick your favourite or buy online at www.islandporcelain.com

CHAMELEON

Further along the road is Chameleon Ladies Boutique with a range of seasonal collections from leading European brands, as well as a great range of basics. Don't forget they also stock winter boots & cosy lined leggings.

For Christmas, they have a selection of great gift ideas including snoods, scarves, costume jewellery and



ISLAND PORCELAIN

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Janelle's
Lamlash

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driftwood
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Open 7 days
10.00am - 4.00pm
01770 303970

bags. Open Wednesday to Saturday 10:30am – 5pm and can also offer personal appointments outwith those times, just get in touch. Chameleon are also online 24/7 at www.chameleonarran.com!

ARRAN BUTCHER

Further around the island at Blackwaterfoot is the Arran Butcher who have

turkeys with all of the trimmings. But be sure to order yours by Friday 11th December! Along with their famous haggis and black pudding they also have gammon, steak pies and a selection of fish along with their usual quality selection of beef, pork and lamb.

Please phone 860354, E-mail

arranbutcher.com or Facebook [@thearranbutcher](https://www.facebook.com/thearranbutcher) for more information or to place your order.

OLD BYRE VISITOR

Another unmissable stop is the Old Byre Visitor Centre in Machrie where there is the Old Byre Showroom stocking sustainable clothing, stocking fillers, beautiful knitwear, handbags, throws and accessories.

This is mirrored in the sister shop The Byre at Brodick. The extensive new addition Shoe Bothy offers an exciting range of shoes, boots and sheepskin slippers for all the family with the team trained in feet measuring. Some ranges are rarely seen elsewhere in the UK and are that little bit different, there are also well known brands such as Dubarry of Ireland, Hunter and Start-Rite. This year why not join their loyalty scheme to enjoy 10% off your shopping until Christmas Eve and gain points throughout the year for vouchers. While there why not enjoy a delicious lunch at Café Thyme and let the kids let off steam in the play area. Tel: 01770 840227

OLD BYRE VISITOR

If you fancy a bit of pampering, or treating that special person in your life then why not get a voucher from Taylor Made Beauty. Taylor offers a range of professional beauty treatments in the relaxing setting of a small salon based in Machrie. Whether it's nails, facials, make up or eyebrows and lashes there is something to suit everyone! Contact Taylor on 07789043108 or email: contact@taylormadebeauty.info

WHINS CRAFT SHOP

Whins Craft shop is the home of the Arran Stonemen, a collection of painted stones which have been collected from around the shoreline of Arran. The stones are

wonderfully sculpted into little stonemen, all with their own

unique appearance and character. Situated up the North Newton track on the north side of the loch at Lochranza it is well worth a visit even if just for the stunning views. Tel: 01770 830650

LOCHRANZA DISTILLERY GIFT SHOP

The Lochranza Distillery gift shop is still open this month with lots of beautiful Christmas gift ideas and of course plenty of our delicious local Arran Single Malt. The Visitor Centre shop is open every day 10am – 4pm and the team is on hand to help make sure that you get what you need in a safe and socially distant way.



You can also place your order over the phone for collection if this suits you better. Call 01770 830 264 where one of the team will be delighted to take your order.

BAY WOOL & CRAFTS!

If you're looking for that special gift, unique and handmade, look no further than Bay Wool

Our Lochranza Distillery shop is open 10am-4pm every day and is full of great gift ideas and your favourite local whiskies!

Unfortunately due to changing circumstances around COVID-19 on the island, our Lagg Distillery is temporarily closed until further notice.



Should you prefer, we are happy to take your order over the phone for you to collect safely.



For any enquiry please call 01770830264 or email bookings@arranwhisky.com



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& Crafts! They have work from 30 crafts-people, in a wide range of disciplines and also offer gift vouchers in your choice of denomination; a great Secret Santa present! You can also gift a new skill in the form of embroidery and cross-stitch kits and there is always their wide range of wool, plus knitting and crochet supplies.

Bay Wool and Crafts offer free island delivery. Call 01770 700481, visit the website: www.baywoolcrafts.co.uk, or visit in person Tuesday - Saturday 11am-3pm.

VISITARRAN

A great idea from VisitArran, the ArranCard is a pre-paid gift card that offers an easy way to get someone an Arran

present when you don't know exactly what they might want! The ArranCard is accepted in over 50 businesses, including accommodation, food & drink, activity and retail. You can order online at www.arrancard.com and balance on the card, and where to spend it, can be easily checked this way too.

So if you're looking for an Arran gift, why not consider an ArranCard? This is a sure-fire way of supporting island businesses whilst also offering a choice to the recipient!



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Island time in no time

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The Arran Card, helping to support local business by keeping spend local

www.arrancard.com

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A little lateral thinking sees Lamlash SWI thriving on Zoom

Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention and perhaps even more so in the current unusual circumstances. But with the Scottish Women's Institutes only charging half its headquarters' levy this year and providing free Zoom for all federations, things are picking up.

By adapting to change Lamlash institute has already started its usual monthly evening meetings but now also include a monthly afternoon meeting and a weekly committee meeting to get the year planned. Now the schedule for the year ahead has been completed, 'goodie bags' have been distributed to help get the most out of online demonstrations and to share competition. Included in them are:

■ Bulb fibre and bulbs to go along with Susanna's planting demonstration plus a colourful instruction sheet.

■ Colouring pencils and envelope for colouring competition of outline picture of Lamlash. Picture courtesy of Angela Elliot Walker.

■ Newsletter giving updates of any current business, reports from previous meetings and details of a short story competition.

■ There is also the winter schedule, a quiz sheet, and a short story by Morag.

Members are encouraged to have their coffee or other refreshment to hand during meetings as even Zoom can't provide the usual delicious supper we all enjoy.

Luckily, if we fancy making our own sweet treat, the current newsletter contains

many of the recipes for both sweet and savoury short-breads which were shown by various members but sadly not tasted at the last meeting.

Later in the year, straw will be distributed in time for the corn dolly workshop so we can work along with the demonstrator.

Also lotion and potion samples delivered nearer the time can be enjoyed from the comfort of your fireside during a Neal's Yard remedy night.

Maybe have a mince pie and glass of something festive to hand for our Christmas night which includes live performance. For those shy of joining in with the professionals put your microphone to mute and sing along with gusto. Technology has its advantages!

There are plenty more topics and ideas on the schedule for the year so Lamlash 'rural' is definitely in full swing.

On a bitterly cold or wet and windy night we'll enjoy our armchair meetings and look forward to spring days and nearer, we hope, to normality.

The committee looks forward to seeing all current and future members who are able to join present meetings courtesy of modern technology or if you cannot access Zoom hopefully, all being well, we'll have an extra special get together when restrictions allow.

Janet Mair



The Lamlash SWI goodie bags.

The Ideal Gift
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www.scottishcalendars.co.uk

* additional P&P charges will apply to EU/ROW

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Warning over patient test waiting times

Long waiting times for key diagnostic tests could signal 'a tidal wave' of health problems ahead for patients in Ayrshire and Arran, according to South Scotland MSP Colin Smyth.

According to new data from Public Health Scotland, in September 2020, there were 10,440 people on the waiting list for key diagnostic tests with NHS Ayrshire and Arran, with 7,534 (72 per cent) waiting more than four weeks and 6,282 (60 per cent) waiting more than six.

This is compared to 3,631 (51 per cent) waiting more than four weeks in the same period in 2019 and 2,394 (33 per cent) waiting more than six.

A standard waiting time of six weeks was set by the Scottish Government in 2009 for diagnostic tests such as CT and MRI scans to aid early detection of conditions like cancer or brain tumours.

Mr Smyth said: 'Scotland is facing a tidal wave of health problems and the Scottish Government must urgently start giving our NHS the support it needs in order to prevent unnecessary deaths and chronic illness.'

Council to pay new living wage rate early

North Ayrshire Council has committed to paying its staff the new living wage five months early.

Although the new living wage rate is not due to be adopted by businesses and organisations until April 2021, the council has committed to applying the new rate of £9.50 per hour from pay from this month.

The announcement will affect 737 council employees in predominantly front line roles.

Council Leader Joe Cullinane said: 'I am proud to lead a council which has a long-standing commitment to fair work and pay.'

'In doing so, we acknowledge that earning the real living wage can make a huge difference to people's lives.'

'Normally, the new rate doesn't kick in for quite a few months but here at North Ayrshire Council we have ensured our staff get paid the new rate as soon as possible – a commitment we have delivered on since I became leader.'

'Not only is paying employees a wage that supports a decent standard of living an ethical and responsible



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

thing to do, but there are also clear business and economic benefits in doing so.

'That's why fair work is one of the key pillars in our community wealth building approach.'

'As North Ayrshire's largest employer, we have to lead by example and hopefully inspire other businesses and organisations to consider committing to paying the real living wage.'

The council has paid the living wage since 2011 and is one of a number of local authorities from across Scotland to be officially accredited by the Scottish living wage accreditation initiative.

SUBSCRIBE
www.arranbanner.co.uk/subscriptions

THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday November 25, 2000



Left: The third Arran winter exhibition of contemporary art was held at Brodick Castle. The 'hanging committee' with one of the works on show are: Clare Galloway, Tim Pomeroy, Marvin Elliott, Robert McCrone, Lesley Sim and Jim Gorman. 01_B48tweY01



This magnificent quilt, made by members of Arran's two quilting groups, was raffled at the Save the Children Christmas Fayre last Saturday. Our photograph shows Margaret Shaw and grandson James Todd making the draw which raised £1,288 for the charity. Holding the double quilt are: Judy McAllister, Maureen Oakes, Audrey Hadley and Jean Chappell. 01_B48tweY03



Above: A longship takes shape at a Quonset Hut at Monyquil. The three workers are Neil Bulgar, Frank Halliwell and Mark Brown. The longship now has twarts and maststep in place. Arran's Viking Longship Society hopes to sail her at next year's Corrie Capers. 01_B48tweY02

01_B48tweY02

Right: Helen MacDonald and Celia Sillars set off on foot last Friday round the north of Arran in support of Children in Need. So far they have raised £360 but more has still to be collected. 01_B48tweY04

Far right: Last Saturday saw the sixth annual childcare seminar, hosted by NAC's Arran Dial-a-Creche. Forty delegates attended the event at Lamlash Community Centre which included workshops on making quiz boxes and this free standing catapult. 01_B48tweY06

01_B48tweY06



Above: Whiting Bay Bowling Club winners at their annual prizegiving last weekend. They are: Peter McKenzie, Mr T Browell, Neil Pringle, Chris Stone, Marette Pringle, Mrs B Hamilton, Fiona McGovern and John McGovern. 01_B48tweY05



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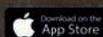
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PUBLIC NOTICES

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Applications listed below together with the plans and other documents may be examined online at www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk
Comments should be made online at www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk by 18.12.20.
Any representations received will be open to public view.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 Regulation 20(1)
20/01039/PPP; Site To The South West Of, Braeag, Glencloy Road, Brodick; Erection of detached dwellinghouse.

20/01032/PP; Breadalbane Hotel, Kildonan, Brodick, Isle of Arran; Residential development comprising of 15 dwellinghouses

Craig Hatton
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE



North Ayrshire Council
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RECRUITMENT



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Location

Lochranza / Lagg Distillery

Salary

Dependent on experience

We are currently looking for someone to work within our warehouse team and has the following skills

- A good communicator
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- Basic numeracy and literacy skills
- Computer literate
- Physically able
- Aware of the importance of health and safety
- Flexibility to cope with change in a rapidly growing business
- The ability to work alone and to work within a small team
- Problem solving skills
- Full, clean driving licence
- All applicants must be eligible to work in the UK.
- Forklift truck & LGV Class 1 experience is desirable but not essential

Please e-mail CV application to david.livingstone@arranwhisky.com
Closing date for applications is: Friday the 11th of December

SCOTTISH FIELD December issue



Christmas Gift Guide

Christmas edition...
Best drams of 2020... Amy Macdonald's credo... Scots empress of Morocco... Our verdict on the new Land Rover Defender... The Twelve Days of Christmas recipes... Festive interiors... A stunning Mull garden...



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CHURCH NOTICES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Parishes of North Arran, Brodick, Corrie, Lochranza, Pirnmill and Shiskine

Independent but working
together
Parish Assistant: Mrs Jean
Hunter:

As numbers will be limited at
all services places will need to
be booked by the Friday.
Congregations will be advised
who to contact for each Church
to book a place. For Shiskine
please contact John Kerr on
01770 860498. For Brodick
please contact Liz Lawrie 01770
302782.

There will be a streamed service
weekly, this can be found on
the three Church websites,
www.stmoliosshiskine.org.uk,
www.brodickchurch.org, www.
lochranzchurch.org.uk

Sunday 29th November

Lochranza & Pirnmill
Churches – NO service
Shiskine Church at 12 noon.
Morning worship.
Brodick Church at 10.30am
Morning worship.
Corrie Church at 12 noon.
Morning worship.
Please note that Brodick
Church is still accessible for the
Food bank

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Whiting Bay and Kildonan Church of Scotland Charity Number: SC014005

Sunday 29th November

Worship will be conducted by
the Minister, Rev Elizabeth
Watson at 10.30am.
Our capacity will be greatly
reduced due to the two metre
social distancing. You are
asked to please phone Mrs Enid
Halliwell on 600010 by the
Friday lunchtime if you want to
attend Sunday worship.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Kilmory linked with Lamlash

“A faith to proclaim ~ a
fellowship to share”

Sunday 29th November

Kilmory Parish Church at 10.00
a.m.
All Welcome
We will be observing all socially
distancing procedures
Kilmory (SC023602)

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide
Anglican Church)
St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.
Sunday 29th November
1st Sunday of Advent
Holy Communion at 11 a.m.
Revd Adrian Fallows
ALL WELCOME
We will observe strict SEC
guidelines

ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

A reminder that our mini-
service is still available every
week on our website: www.
arranbaptistchurch.btck.co.uk
If you go to the homepage and
look below the map picture you
will find the link to pick up the
service. To access click on the
first letter of the link.
We would love you to join us.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

First Sunday in Advent

There will be a Vigil Mass on
Saturday 28th November and a
Morning Mass on **Sunday 29th**
November.

Please note that capacity is
restricted and attendance is by
booking only. Social Distancing
and Hygiene measures apply,
including the wearing of your
own face covering.

Please email peterdwilko@
gmail.com or telephone 600595
to reserve a place.

BLESS O LORD THIS ISLE OF ARRAN

ST ROCH, PATRON OF THE
SICK, PRAY FOR US
OUR LADY OF THE ISLES,
PRAY FOR US
ST COLUMBA, PRAY FOR US.

DEATHS

HERBERT, CHARLES -
Died peacefully on the 19th
November with his wife Jan and
daughter Julie by his side.

Jan and Julie wish to extend
their heartfelt thanks to all
the doctors and nurses in the
hospital and the Arran Medical
Group for their professionalism,
care and compassion. A small
family funeral will be held on
the 7th December at Blantyre
crematorium.



Heather, centre,
and Ann, far left,
with the 11 other
local swimmers
who took part in
the 2019 splash.

01_B39splash02

Open water swimming is in the twins' genes

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Last week the Banner featured
birthday twins Ann Hart and
Heather Raeside who cele-
brated their 70th birthday last
Friday and are still regularly
open water swimming - but we
were sworn to secrecy ahead of
the event.

Our story was followed up
last weekend by the Herald,
with a huge splash on page
three, where the Brodick sis-
ters told assistant news editor
Deborah Anderson of their
love and devotion to the sport.

Ann told the Herald that
despite learning to swim at
the age of seven in the Dundee
pool it was not until their 60th
birthday they decided to take
the plunge into open water
swimming and have kept it up
since.

And on Friday as they woke
to celebrate their birthday
they kicked the day off in style

with a dip off the slipway at
Brodick despite rather chilly
temperatures.

They are a familiar sight most
mornings throughout the year
with their wetsuits and swim
hats on and are not put off by
the inclement weather.

Ann said: 'It is just such a
great feeling to swim in the
open water as well as knowing
there are some added health
benefits as we very rarely get
colds. We made the decision to
do it 10 years ago and laughed
at whether we would be able to
keep it up until we were 70, but
now we hope to keep going for
another 10 years as we head to
our 80s. We'll keep doing it as
long as we can.

'It is something you have to
let your body get used to as
you do have to adjust as it can
be quite a shock, but I seemed
to take to it. We swim all year
round, but make sure we have
a few layers on in the winter
months and don't spend much

more than 15 minutes in the
water.'

The twins remember
learning to swim with their
older sister Alison, 72. They
also have a younger sister
Fiona MacMillan, 60, and
while they are originally from
Nottinghamshire were brought
up in Dundee, Aberdeen and
Glasgow. And it seems they
weren't the only ones in the
family to have an interest in it.

While looking into their
family history, Mrs Hart dis-
covered that their love for open
swimming could well be in the
genes.

'I found some old press
cuttings from 1910 which
talked about our maternal
grandmother, Vera Usher,'
added Ann.

'It seems she was quite well
known as an open swimmer
and at one point took part
in a demonstration at an
indoor event in 1910 in front
of Princess Louise and other

members of the royal family. It
must be where we get it from.'

The former PE teacher, who
is 20 minutes older than her
sister added: 'I think it is
something which has become
more popular, especially with
lockdown and people not able
to use the swimming pools. I
would urge anyone thinking
about it to find out more and
give it ago. It is so much more
than just swimming up and
down as you are taking in
everything around you, from
the surroundings to the views.
I would certainly recommend
it.'

Sadly coronavirus restric-
tions curtailed one of the
sisters' highlights as they are
heavily involved in organising
the annual Lamlash Splash,
which they are hopeful can go
ahead next September.

'We are really hoping that we
will be able to come together
again next year as it is a lovely
event,' Ann said.

ARRAN BANNER GOLF

Lamlash Golf Club

Thursday November 19,
yellow medal: 1 Alan Smith
74-14=60; 2 Graeme Andrew
75-10=65 BIH, over Derek
Harrison. Magic twos Serge
El Adm @ 4th and Alan Smith
at 16th.

Sunday November 22,
Glenburn Cup: 1 Andy Smith
75-17=58; 2 Serge Ela Adm
78-11=67. Best scratch Andy
Smith 75. Magic twos Serge
El Adm @15, Stewart McLaren
and Derek Harrison @5th.

Fixtures: Sunday November
29, Winter Stableford, 9.30am
and noon starts.

Brodick Golf Club

Wednesday November 8,
Winter Cup, Stableford, 27
played: 1 Kenny McMillan
(15) 39pts; 2 Tam McNab (13)
38pts; 3 Matt Dobson (10)
36pts.

Saturday November 21,
Saturday Cup, Stableford, 19
played: 1 Bill Donaldson (14)
38pts acb; 2 Kenny McMillan
(15) 38 pts acb; 3 Alistair
Hume (12) 38 pts acb.

Fixture: Sunday November
29, Brandon qualifier.

Corrie Golf Club

Fixtures: Saturday November

28, 18-hole sweep, compet-
itors arrange own matches
and register as per normal.
Monday November 30,
Winter Cup, draw takes place
at noon.

Shiskine Golf Club

Saturday November 21, Alan
Bannatyne Quaich: 1 Colin
Rutterford 30pts; 2 Quintin
Oliver 28pts; 3 Alan Stewart
24pts. Magic twos Alan
Stewart, Jimmy Morrison and
Brian Sherwood.

Sunday November 22,
gents 12-hole medal, 17
played: 1st class: 1 and

scratch R Weir, 50-7=43; 2 D
Logan 52-7=45; 3 W Paton 52-
4=48. 2nd class. 1 D Davidge
54-14=40; 2 A Leek 56-15=41,
3 A Hart 54-12=42.

Magic twos W Paton and
A Leek. Congratulations
to Dougie on winning the
medal.

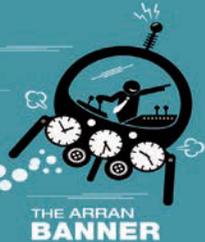
Machrie Bay Golf Club

Fixtures: Tuesday December
1, Winter Cup, tee-off noon.
Saturday December 5,
Lochranza Hotel Cup, tee-off
noon.

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Tree planting resumes in Glen Rosa habitat revival

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Winter tree planting in Glen Rosa has started up again with several local volunteers helping to plant more than 600 trees last week.

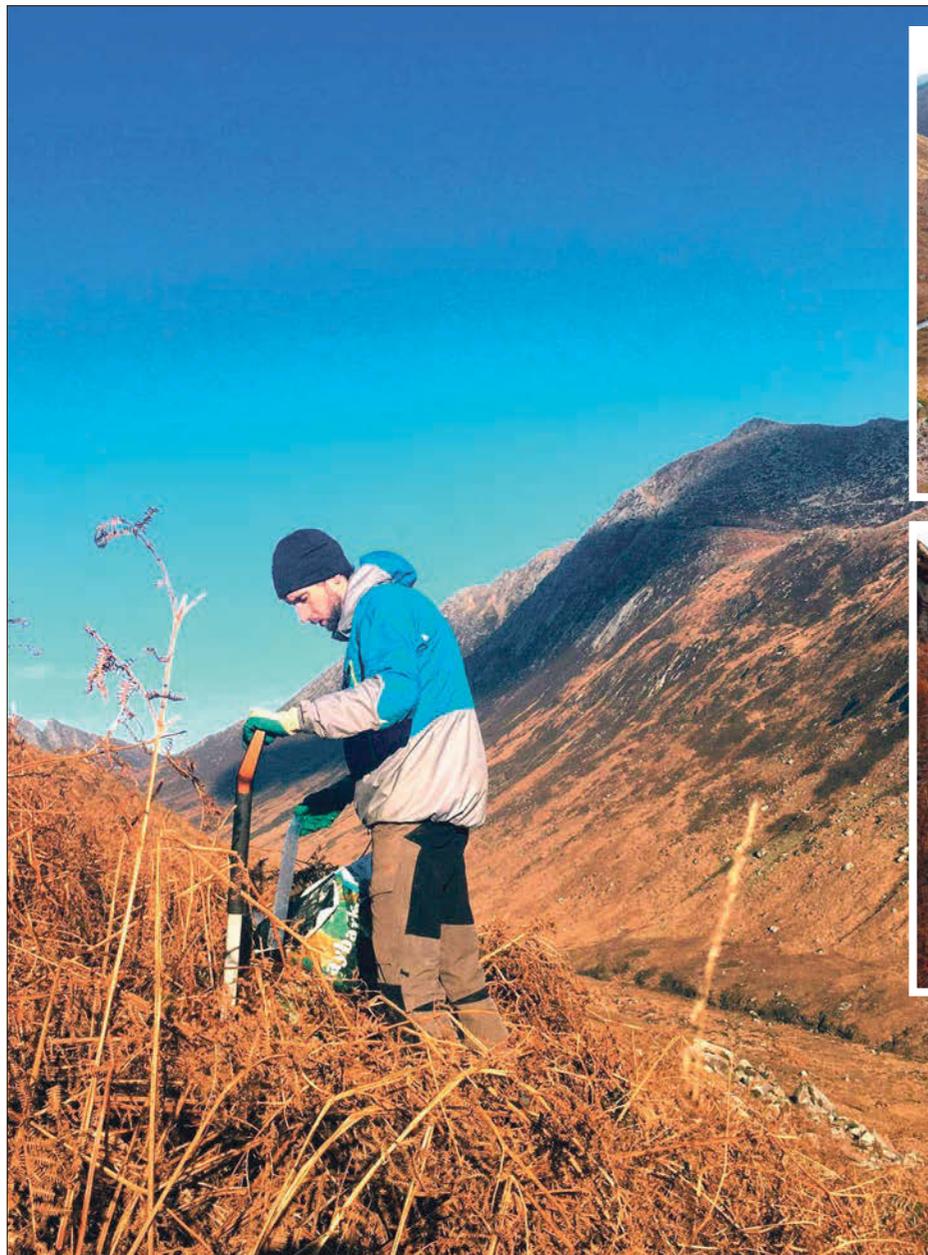
The Arran Ranger Service will be planting another 3,000 trees for the National Trust for Scotland in the coming months, and the last section of fence is now being erected which, once complete, will see 400 hectares of glen enclosed in a split-level electric fence.

It is hoped this will see a revival of habitats lost through overgrazing over many years by deer and sheep.

Head ranger Kate Sampson, who is in charge of the project, said: 'The trees have been planted in a way to mimic a natural woodland – oaks, hazel, birch and aspen planted in clumps around the hill side. It will take many, many years before the trees are mature, but slowly we should see an increase in biodiversity in the area. We've already seen insect life increase in our small enclosures and more small birds and mammals, which in turn provide food for the predators at the top of the food chain.'

If anyone would like to help out by coming along to plant trees, then get in touch through the Arran Ranger Service Facebook page or by email goatfell@nts.org.uk

The service is keeping the groups small to reduce the risks of spreading Covid-19, but there is plenty of space for social distancing.



Left: a volunteer tree planting in Glen Rosa last week. Above, there is plenty room for volunteers to social distance while planting; and top, tree planting on the hillside with Glen Rosa burn winding away in the distance.



LAMLASH GARAGE

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Lamlash Garage