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# We've been marooned!

Arran should have been busy with school half-term holidaymakers – instead the island was like a ghost town

by Hugh Boag  
[editor@arranbanner.co.uk](mailto:editor@arranbanner.co.uk)

In addition, there has been an enormous amount of cancellations for eateries – 102 in one case – and nearly all related to the ferry as they have been cancelled mostly by telephone.

Marooned islanders and visitors faced days of frustration this week as a breakdown to the MV Caledonian Isles – compounded by Storm Ciara – left the island cut off.

Other businesses have commented on the impact of getting deliveries themselves, and of operating an island business when restricted by reduced number of sailings, with businesses unable to make meetings to determine future stock supplies, marketing or promotion.

In the longest disruption in living memory, Arran was left without a ferry service for four days, at huge personal costs to islanders and an economic setback to businesses on the island already reeling from widespread January disruptions.

'All of which begs the question, what further reputational damage has this caused?' said VisitArran executive director Sheila Gilmore. 'And where do we go from here?'

Arran should have been busy with school half-term holidaymakers but instead the island was like a ghost town.

The Co-op stores on the island have been struggling to keep their shelves stocked, with panic buying rife. But Brodick stores manager Liz McLean said she was appreciative of the widespread customer support and thanked island staff who had

An urgent VisitArran survey has found a worrying 40 per cent drop in accommodation provision and a fall of 29 per cent in retail sales last month, compared to January 2019, as a result of 197 cancelled sailings on the main Ardrrossan to Brodick route.

Continued on page two

## Budding block builders



Children proudly show off their Lego creations at the inaugural Super Saturday Lego Challenge which was held last Saturday at the Arran library. Full story on pages six and seven. 01\_B07front01



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# Island was cut off for days

Continued from page one covered double shifts for their mainland colleagues who were unable to get over.

While it is accepted that much of the disruption was due to the nationwide Storm Ciara, there is growing anger that the MV Caledonian Isles developed an engine fault only days after returning from her annual refit, mean-

ing that many of the cancelled sailings were as a result of 'technical issues'.

## Compensation

This means, however, that both visitors stranded on Arran, and Arran residents stuck on the mainland, should be due compensation of 80 euros per person per night, up to a maximum of three nights. However, those

who pre-booked through online travel agents may not be able to claim their money back.

The long-suffering travelling public were finally able to make the short 12 nautical miles crossing to and from the mainland on Wednesday after the main port engine was repaired. They were also extra sailings on



The MV Caledonian Isles finally leaves Brodick pier for sea trials. 01\_B07isles02



The MV Caledonian Isles batters its way through the waves after successfully completing her sea trials on Tuesday. 01\_B07isles01

the Lochranza to Claonaig route. However, with the weather for the weekend and into next week also looking horrendous, we may not be out of the woods yet.

Long-time residents of Arran say that even in the more distant past the island would never have been cut off for four days as one ferry at least always went to Gourrock. And there were suggestions this week that CMAL (Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd) may finally be putting a plan together to repair the linkspan at Gourrock to allow the port to be used again, but that is still many months away.

The newly proactive Arran Ferry Committee at least tried to keep the public up

to date with what was going on with posts on its new Facebook page. On Monday it was revealed that the Caley Isles breakdown was due to a leaking exhaust valve as well as a score in the liner valve on the inlet side. The piston was removed and cleaned overnight the liner cleaned.

On Tuesday, the vessel undertook sea trials from late morning with the all-clear given that all had been resolved at 3.30pm. The first ferry left at 8.20am on Wednesday.

Shadow Conservative transport spokesman Jamie Greene MSP said: 'Whilst islanders accept a level of disruption and delay because of challenging weather conditions, they do not accept being let

down due to continuous technical errors with their lifeline vessels.

'This major route is once again out of service due to substantial problems with an ageing fleet that is well beyond its operational expectancy.

'None of this would be happening if the new Arran ferry, the Glen Sannox, had been delivered on time to provide a more reliable and resilient service as it was intended to do.

'It's a complete disgrace that once again it is our island communities who have been let down by the SNP's sheer incompetence and inability to run basic lifeline services; the anger being felt on Scotland's islands is palpable and increasing by the day.'

## ScotRail leave passengers stranded

Rail passengers were left furious after they missed what was to be the last ferry for four days – the 9.45am from Ardrossan on Saturday – after ScotRail failed to put on a direct replacement bus service to meet the vital sailing.

Before the storm it had been announced that there would be a replacement bus service on the route at the weekend due to engineering works. However, passengers turning up for the first train from Glasgow Central – the 8.33am – were advised they had to take a train to Paisley, then a bus to Kilwinning, and an onward train to Ardrossan from there for a ferry leaving at 9.45am. To make matters worse, some passengers at Kilwinning were directed onto a Largs train which only went to Ardrossan South Beach, a 20- to 25-minute walk from Ardrossan harbour, meaning they missed the ferry.

One passenger, who was forced to take a taxi from Kilwinning to catch the ferry by the skin of their teeth, said: 'It was obvious

to everyone that the 9.45am was going to be the only ferry of the day, if it went at all. We got ourselves from Edinburgh in plenty of time for what we thought was a replacement bus. It is ridiculous that a direct service was not provided to Ardrossan, especially in the circumstances.'

ScotRail say that prior to the storm arriving, they proactively encouraged customers to check their journey before they travelled, and advised that there would be disruption to services on the Glasgow-Ardrossan/Largs lines.

A ScotRail spokesperson said: 'As with all weather-related disruption, it's frustrating for customers whose services are cancelled or delayed, but safety has to be our priority. We have done all we can to keep our customers moving during some very challenging conditions.'

'Anyone who has been delayed by 30 minutes or more can claim money back through our Delay Repay Guarantee on our website or mobile app.'



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# Call for inquiry into ferries CalMac didn't want



Caledonian MacBrayne

The Scottish Government inquiry into the ferry fiasco which has left Arran without a new vessel heard more evidence last week.

The former director of Ferguson Marine told MSPs that the ferries would be sailing already if the company had been dealing with CalMac rather than CMAL (Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd), the government agency which ordered the ships.

## Evidence

Jim McColl was giving evidence to Holyrood's rural economy committee, which is investigating the failure of the yard to complete the MV Glen Sannox and Hull 802 on time and on budget.

He said claims the project was badly managed were grossly misleading and that CMAL had refused mediation.

The industrialist also called for a public inquiry, accusing

CMAL of being 'the elephant in the room'.

The two CalMac ferries are £100m over budget and likely to be three years overdue.

The committee also heard claims from Mr McColl, who took over Ferguson's in 2014, that First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced the details of the ferry contract, including the cost of the vessels, before it had been agreed.

The Ferguson shipyard won the £97m contract to build two new ferries in 2015 when the now disgraced former finance minister Derek Mackay was transport minister. He is still due to give evidence to the inquiry but, given the uncertainty surrounding his position, it is unclear if he will ever do so.

But Mr McColl said the problems were caused by CMAL 'chopping and changing' the ferry design, and said



Jim McColl giving evidence to the inquiry at Holyrood last week. Photo BBC Scotland

a public inquiry was needed to get to the truth.

He said Ferguson's was initially pushing for a price of £105m for both ships, but Ms Sturgeon made the award public before the final price was agreed - saying they would cost around £97m.

He added: 'Before we agreed the negotiation, the first min-

ister had announced that we had been selected as preferred bidders and the price was £97m.

'CMAL then came back to us and said, "It's been announced by the first minister, you'll just have to accept it".'

Calling for a public inquiry, he said: 'This needs a lot more investigation.'

'The reason that I would like it to go to a public inquiry is I would like there to be a judge and I would like people to be under oath.'

The yard collapsed last year, with debts of £49m to the Scottish Government, and was eventually taken into public ownership.

It also emerged at the inquiry that CalMac did not even want the two new Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) ferries which are being built.

The claim was made by maritime procurement expert Luke van Beek,

He said: 'CalMac had a huge interest in getting the ships operational as soon as possible - that is why I thought it was sensible to get them involved.'

'I was very surprised when I met with the CEO of CalMac to discover that really they weren't involved apart from right at the beginning of the

process. They made some observations and had said they didn't want LNG ships.'

Mr van Beek, who was brought in by the Scottish Government to advise on problems with the project, told the committee there had been a breakdown in communication between the various parties who were involved.

## Acrimony

He said the shipyard was well run, but there was acrimony between Ferguson Marine and CMAL because the basic design of the vessels had not been agreed and was too vague when the contract was first awarded.

Mr van Beek said there was blame on all sides for the project being delayed and over-budget.

The inquiry is due to hear evidence from CMAL representatives later this month, with Mr Mackay due to give evidence next month.

## Storm Ciara blows over Arran

Storm Ciara wreaked havoc in parts of Scotland and caused devastating flooding in England but left Arran relatively unscathed despite bringing hugely unsettled weather.

From Saturday and all the way through to Wednesday afternoon, most of the island experienced high winds, heavy hail and rain downpours, and even occasional snow but also periods of sunshine and blue skies.

Low-lying areas such as those at Fisherman's Walk

in Brodick, Sannox near the stepping stones and at Lochranza near the youth hostel, all experienced tidal flooding but they all subsided as quickly as they arose and were far less severe than anticipated.

## Less severe

While the weather was turbulent with some pessimistic meteorologists describing Storm Ciara to potentially be the most damaging since 2007, in actuality it was far less severe than predicted for Arran. Heavy hail showers

replaced the forecast snow and any light flurries that had fallen were quickly washed away by persistent and often heavy rain. And while high winds were experienced on Arran, they were also far less persistent and damaging than initially forecast.

The inclement weather, while remaining unsettled, improved slightly by mid-week but further heavy rain and gales are forecast for the weekend with the expected arrival of Storm Dennis today (Saturday).



Dog walkers brave the weather and venture outdoors on the submerged pathway at Fisherman's Walk in Brodick. 01\_B07Ciara01

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## Meeting date for Cunninghame WASPI group

The first meeting of the year for the Cunninghame WASPI campaigning group will be held on Saturday February 29 at 11am at the Celebrate Kilmarnock hub at 85-89 King Street.

The parliamentary health service ombudsman is presently reviewing test cases on the maladministration claims of thousands of 1950s-born women who await the outcome.

Women have had their state pension age increased from the age of 60 to 66 with little or, in most cases, no notice at all. This decision has forced many women back into seeking employment in their early sixties, often in low-paid jobs, or surviving with the help of family members or into poverty for the first time in their lives.

Women Against State Pension Inequality Ltd continue to fight for justice for the 3.8 million women affected.

For further information contact [cunninghamewaspi@outlook.com](mailto:cunninghamewaspi@outlook.com)

# New memorial garden is created at Clachan

by Hugh Boag  
[editor@arranbanner.co.uk](mailto:editor@arranbanner.co.uk)



A new memorial garden has been created within the walls of the restored Clachan Church.

The Trustees of the Clachan restoration project have devised a scheme that enables anyone who wishes to retain a connection with a place they hold dear to do so by means of a plaque of remembrance.

George Bannatyne is one of the people who has been involved in the project from the very start and is passionate about the new garden, which he describes as a multi-faith/no faith location and is available to anyone on or off the island.

A new website has been created to help people find out easily about the garden and it is on there that beautiful high quality 8in x 6in bronze plaques can be purchased

only from the Shiskine Valley Trust, at a cost of £299, which are attached to commemorative boards.

Besides allowing relatives and friends to be remembered, part of the proceeds from the cost of each plaque goes directly to the restoration fund, ensuring that the Arran Memorial Garden (Old Clachan Preaching House) will always be properly maintained for future generations to enjoy.

George, along with the late Jack Murchie, were the primary coordinators behind the project of restoring the Old Clachan Church near Shiskine, referred to as a preaching or a meeting house in documents from the time of its construction in 1805, as was its predecessor Duchess Anne's Chapel in 1708.

The Clachan Glen has been a place of Christian burial since medieval times and contin-



George Bannatyne and Robert Waine in the new Arran Memorial Garden. 01\_B06clachan01

ues to be the present-day local burying ground for the people of the surrounding district. Restoration began in 2009 and was completed four years later.

Chairman of Shiskine Valley Improvements Robert Waine, which oversees the work of the trust, said: 'The Clachan is also a regular place of pilgrimage for families tracing ancestors, who left these shores on emigra-

tion ships generations before. Alas nowadays, many choose to be cremated and so there is no headstone to visit, beside those of old friends and relatives who lie there amid its tranquillity.

'Many seeking their fortune overseas lie forever in distant lands, with no trace of them in the place of their birth and infant nurture. Besides this, many regular Arran visitors, some with connections to

the island going back generations, have no memorial in a place they loved and enjoyed. This has for some time been a cause for concern to many.

'However, it is now possible to place specially designed plaques within the walls of the old preaching house, which has been dedicated as the Arran Memorial Garden,' he added.

Visit [arranmemorialgarden.org.uk](http://arranmemorialgarden.org.uk) for more details.



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The Clachan Church as seen from the path leading to the new cemetery. 01\_B06clachan02

# COAST host coffee morning

Following a successful coffee morning in Lamlash, volunteers from the Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) hosted a second fundraising event, this time in Brodick Hall.



Alice Maxwell and Dave Simpkin played the violin and the guitar for guests.

01\_B07COAST02

The coffee mornings help support COAST's marine conservation efforts and they also provide like-minded individuals with an opportunity to meet and enjoy the social interaction, with an added attraction of delicious home baking.

Piping hot refreshments were appreciated on the blustery day and visitors enjoyed a wide selection of treats to go with their drinks. Visitors and supporters also enjoyed the musical talents of Alice Maxwell and Dave Simpkin, who played the violin and the guitar and who helped create a social and relaxing atmosphere.

COAST volunteers ensured that everyone was well fed and taken care of and the group plan to host a further coffee morning in the next few months for the residents of the north end at Lochranza and Catacol Village Hall.



COAST worker Nikki Harris dishes out a tasty treat for two young visitors. 01\_B07COAST03



Volunteers Cheryl and Nick Burgess welcomed the visitors and assisted with the coffee morning. 01\_B07COAST01



Visitors enjoy refreshments and home baking. 01\_B07COAST04

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# Library Lego challenge choc



Librarian Jane Greenstreet encourages the children to think creatively when playing 'Cram it in' where participants compete to hold the highest number of blocks in one hand. 01\_B07lego01



Jane Greenstreet shows the participants a Lego model that helps to inspire the children and give them ideas for their own creation. 01\_B07lego03

Words and photos  
by Colin Smeeton  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

The inaugural Lego challenge at the Arran library last Saturday was a huge success with event organisers having to restrict the numbers of participants owing to the overwhelming response.

Young children, comprising both boys and girls, were eager to take part in the event, which involved a number of fun games and a main challenge to complete.

Librarian Jane Greenstreet hosted the event and chal-

lenged the children to think creatively with a number of fun activities that involved the children individually and as small teams.

The non-competitive main challenge involved the children building a fantasy creature with thought given to where it lives, what it eats and how it could best be constructed.

The challenge stimulated lively conversation and the participants' imaginations ran wild as they chatted excitedly with one another while busying themselves with their creations.

Following an enjoyable and social hour spent playing with their peers, the children finished up by helping to clean up all of the scattered Lego that had been tossed aside in search for a required block, and the models were put on display at the entrance at the library.

Owing to the huge success of the event, and in addition to the regular Lego Club which meets every Saturday between 10.30am and 12.30pm, the library will host more Lego challenges for children aged from five years and older in the future.



Children race against the clock to complete a fun challenge. 01\_B07lego02

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**SCOTTISH FIELD**  
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# k-a-block

## Housing plans resubmitted for Glen Cloy site

A new bid for planning permission to build 18 private houses beside Montrose House in Brodick on what is presently farmland has been lodged with planning officials.

### Residential development

Planning permission in principle is being sought for a residential development of 16 houses, an access road and detailed planning permission for two houses in Glen Cloy.

The proposals by Charles Fforde of Arran Estates are almost identical to an application he submitted a year ago for the same site, but which was later withdrawn.

Detailed drawings have been submitted for two of the plots with a detailed design guide for the potential developers of the other plots.

Part of the design guidelines state: 'It is hoped that owners will create their

own individual houses to meet their personal requirements and tastes, creating an overall development of unique houses of a high design quality.

### Commonality

'Following this guidance will ensure an element of commonality which will avoid a piecemeal development as well as ensuring that the amenity of the overall development is enhanced with consequent benefit to all the owners.'



Heads down, a group of boys get to work on their models.

01\_B07lego04



Two girls work together during one of the warm-up games.

01\_B07lego05



Participants discuss their creations with each other and add their ideas to the project.

01\_B07lego06



Children sift through a huge assortment of blocks to find the correct piece for their projects.

01\_B07lego07

Column sponsored by the Scottish Government

## Put your qualities to good use with a rewarding career in adult social care.

If you're understanding, practical, responsible, respectful, calm, considerate, empathetic and patient, a career in adult social care could be rewarding and ideal for you.

A new national drive to boost the adult social care workforce is calling on people to consider how their personal qualities are a great fit for a move into the sector.

The Scottish Government's 'There's More to Care Than Caring' campaign highlights the wide range of roles on offer within the sector, from jobs supporting people in their own homes and living in care homes or providing housing support to assist people to live at home, facilitating access to important areas like work and health services.

And the message is clear - it's your qualities and behaviours that will set you apart in adult social care,

supporting older people, people with a physical disability, dementia, autism or mental health conditions. While the role as a care worker can be challenging and requires resilience, it offers the chance to have a hugely positive impact on others' lives, every day. For many it's not just a job, it's a calling.

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## LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to [editor@arranbanner.co.uk](mailto:editor@arranbanner.co.uk)  
or The Editor, Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran KA27 8AJ

## All at sea

Arran was left without any ferry connection to the mainland for 93 hours this week.

The lack of even a single ferry for four days is almost unprecedented as even in the relatively distant past a ferry would always go to Gourock – even in the worst of weather.

You have to go all the way back to 2001 to find the ferry being off for so long and that was the result of a strike by CalMac staff in the run up to Christmas which left the island without a ferry service for almost a week, but some other private boats did operate during that time.

What we have just gone through is a catastrophe for a tourist island during the half-term holidays with accommodation provision down 40 per cent and retail down 29 per cent from the same month last year, which is unsustainable.

Cancelled ferry sailings are at 197 since the start of the year – 38 per cent of all sailings, which is unacceptable.

Yes, there was Storm Ciara and we appreciate there would have been serious disruption last week, but for that to be compounded by a breakdown on the Caley Isles just days after coming out of refit is unbelievable.

More than half of the CalMac fleet is beyond its life expectancy, including the Caley Isles but with no new boat on the horizon, it is not surprising VisitArran has asked: 'Where do we go from here?'

## Thought for the week

'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.' Matt 5: 16

## Ferries and the future

Sir,  
Keen readers of the huge volume of Clyde steamer lore will have noticed how many examples there were of ships lasting safely into a ripe old age well beyond the assumed lifespan of the present CalMac fleet.

The Waverley, admittedly much smaller than the Caley Isles, is now 70 years old and its refit has taken a matter of months.

In view of current circumstances, only two ships being built and years late, is it not time for CMAL to make an assessment of what sort of renovation is required to give the the present fleet a safe, extended life of at least 20 years.

This could well be cheaper, quicker and result in improved reliability, with that taking precedence over modernity and updated comfort.

Yours,  
**John Inglis,  
High Corrie.**

## Pentland lessons

Sir,  
Further to my earlier letter, once again I've been following Pentland Ferries MV Alfred as it has managed to cross the Pentland Firth multiple times during Storm Ciara.

The Caledonian Isles has the excuse that its engine has broken down but it's doubtful if she would have made the crossing during Ciara anyway.

Meanwhile Pentland Ferries smaller boat, Pentalina, is tied up in Stromness. Why I do not know, but if she were available perhaps CalMac could charter her to provide at least some sort of life line back up.

Because it seems that both these Pentland Ferries boats have better seagoing qualities that only a few, if any, of the CalMac ships can match.

I believe both Alfred and Pentalina might have to operate to Troon but at least the new pier

at Brodick should be able to take them.

Perhaps we should cancel the Glen Sannox and Hull 802 and buy two new boats from the Philippines; at least until CMAL can get their act together.

Yours,  
**Eric Gilmour,  
Lochwinnoch.**

## Multi-culture celebrated

Sir,  
Arran is an island rich in its own heritage and traditions but there are many people living here whose origins are from further afield.

As part of this year's McLellan Arts Festival we are planning to have an event to celebrate all the different cultures represented on Arran through an evening of music, stories and food.

We would love to hear from anyone who would be interested in sharing a song, a dance, a story, a poem, a tune during the evening. It would be wonderful to have as many of the different cultures represented as we can. We are also hoping everyone will bring a traditional snack to share to make this a feast for all the senses.

The McLellan Festival 2020 runs from Thursday August 27 to Saturday September 12. We are still finalising the programme but expect the Multi-Cultural Evening to be either Monday August 31 or Tuesday September 1.

In addition, we are seeking some readers to help with our event celebrating the life and work of Scottish writer and poet, Nan Shepherd. This event will take place on Wednesday September 2.

If you would like to be a part of either evening or find out more then please contact me, Sarah Cook via email [sarahlccook@gmail.com](mailto:sarahlccook@gmail.com)

Or through our website [www.arrantheatreandarts.co.uk](http://www.arrantheatreandarts.co.uk)

Yours,  
**Sarah Cook,  
Whiting Bay.**



Neil's drawing of the multi-bridge system which includes Arran.

## Bridge too far

Sir,  
With Boris Johnson's idea of a bridge between Scotland and Ireland being in the news, I write to your beautiful island to explain how the forward thinking and dynamic business community of Arran can be part of this massive infrastructure project.

The plan mentioned in the mainstream media is for a bridge from near Bangor to Portpatrick, but a cursory glance at the map shows that the shortest crossing is between Torr and the Mull of Kintyre. This shorter option has been dismissed as the Kintyre peninsula has poor transport links.

This is where there is a fantastic opportunity for Arran. Build the bridge to Kintyre, a few miles of road to Carradale, then another bridge over to Balliekine, a tunnel under Goatfell, then a third majestic span from Corrie to West Kilbride.

As well as the many construction jobs, there would be long-term gains to the economy servicing the needs of truck drivers and tourists. The tunnel under Goatfell could have an elevator in a vertical air shaft to the summit, making the dream of a Michelin-starred restaurant with views to seven islands a reality.

The tunnel will also reveal the fascinating geology of the extinct volcano, drawing even more students to the island. The rock removed would be used to make the island bigger, or fill in an unnecessary valley or two.

My plan has three times as many

bridges as Boris's, therefore I am three times as good and clever.

Yours,  
**Neil McDonald,  
Glasgow.**

## School fundraiser

Sir,  
I would like to say a huge thank you, both personally and on behalf of the boys and girls of Brodick Primary School, for the fabulous fundraising dinner held at Little Rock on Friday January 31.

Laura Helliwell, chairperson, and the members of Brodick Parent Council organised the whole evening with fun, flair and style.

Thanks to all of the local businesses who donated their services and products. Little Rock, Parky and Ailie, for hosting, providing the bar and for the staff who kindly volunteered their services on the night, Steve Wood and the Ormidale Hotel, Craig Beedie and the Auchrannie Hotel, The Arran Butcher, Skipness Smokehouse, Brodick Co-op, Isle of Arran Cheese Shop, Wooley's of Arran, Mon's Thai Kitchen, James Chocolates, Arran Dairies, Mark Murphy Fruit and Veg, and Campbell's Prime Meats.

Thanks to Claire Gilmore, Nicol and Fiona for the quiz and also for all the generous kind donations for the raffle. It was a great night for all and we managed to raise just over £2,900 for school funds.

Yours,  
**Shirley MacLachlan,  
Head teacher.**

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hold it until all your goods have arrived and deliver it all together to your home. If you're needing special arrangements for your delivery we can help. Just let us know your requirements when you book in. Forklift on site for pallets and as well as our speedy parcel services, we offer a 2 man and tailift service throughout the Island.

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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 timely, 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.

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## Club faces closure as numbers decline

The long-running Whiting Bay Thursday Club faces closure next month if it fails to attract new active members who can help with the running of the club.

The club, which is a social club aimed at retirees and older people, has been running since the 1960s but numbers have dwindled over the years.

Members, of which there are approximately 20 at the moment, meet every second Thursday of the month for lunch during the winter from October to March.

### Events

Peter Randell, who has been the secretary for the last five years, and who has also been the acting treasurer, said: 'The club was formed in the 1960s for residents of Whiting Bay and the immediate area who were retired or semi retired, and the younger members (in their 50s and 60s) throughout the winter organised a series of lunches around the island on a monthly basis, as well as events in the village hall.

'Lifestyle changes means that the younger age group are now working longer and our membership, which has dwindled through age and health issues, consists of those who over the years have run the club in various



Peter Randell.

roles but who are now unable to give a commitment to the organisation of our club.

'Last year, in an attempt to keep going, we changed to a lunch club only. Despite advertising, we have been unable to attract younger members to form the basic committee and the decision will be made in the next couple of weeks to close down.'

The group would love to welcome

new members, whether they are from Whiting Bay or not, and are particularly keen on finding a treasurer, secretary and a chairperson to help run the club.

If you are interested in joining or would like to find out more about the club Carol Kane can be contacted at Arran CVS on 01770 600611 or by email at carol.kane@arrancvs.org.uk

## Register now for contests

Environmental charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful, is calling for community groups on Arran to register and take part in the 2020 Beautiful Scotland and It's Your Neighbourhood initiatives.

Run by the charity in partnership with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), the programmes provide the opportunity for local groups to gain recognition for their efforts to deliver environmental improvements and enhance their local places and spaces.

Beautiful Scotland and It's Your Neighbourhood both provide the opportunity for communities to access support, encouragement and national recognition for their hard work throughout the year and link in with a national network of other communities facing similar challenges.

This year's themes will see participants celebrating the Year of Coasts and Waters 2020 and Keep Scotland Beautiful's 20th birthday - bringing together people of all ages to clean up and green up their communities.

Further information can be found at: [www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org)



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# Tributes as Tory stalwart Richard Wilkinson dies

Tributes have been paid to long-time councillor and North Ayrshire and Arran Conservative Party chairman Richard Wilkinson who died at the weekend.

Richard, who was 72, was first elected as a Strathclyde regional councillor in the 1970s, representing North Ayrshire and Arran, before he joined Cunninghame District Council. On the national scene, Richard was a member of the Conservative management board and was the Scottish conference chairman.

He lived in West Kilbride but always had a soft spot for Arran.

West of Scotland Conservative MSP Jamie Greene said: 'My thoughts are with his family at this difficult time. Richard worked tirelessly in the community, not just in politics but in many other ways. He was well

respected by those of all political persuasions and those of none and will be missed by the local association. It's a sad loss, not least personally, as he supported me patiently and enthusiastically these past five years. We will continue his good work in North Ayrshire and be grateful for having known him.

#### Hard working

'Behind the theatre of politics, every party has hard working folk who work their whole lives for their beliefs. Rest in peace Richard.'

Councillor Tom Marshall, Conservative group leader on North Ayrshire Council, said: 'Richard was a real gentleman and his hard work was greatly appreciated by everyone who knew him.'

'I have known him for a number of years and enjoyed working together to support Conservative party policies in North Ayrshire.



The late Richard Wilkinson, right, with MSP Jamie Greene.

'One of his proudest moments was at the last local election when seven Conservative councillors

were elected. It was in no small part due to him.

'He will be greatly missed. We extend our deep-

est sympathy to Victoria and Miles and his family.' Dalry and West Kilbride councillor Todd Ferguson added: 'I

am deeply saddened by the news that our chairman, mentor and friend, Richard Wilkinson, has passed away.

'My family and I have known Richard since I was a child and he and Anne were regular visitors to our house during many hard fought campaigns. He will be sorely missed.'

#### Great debt

'Had it had not been for his support, belief and mentoring I would never have considered standing for council in the first instance.'

'I owe him a great debt of gratitude for his sound counsel and steadying influence.'

'I have absolutely no doubt the reason we have seven Scottish Conservative and Unionist councillors is entirely down to Richard's leadership.'

'My thoughts and prayers are with Victoria and Miles during this difficult time.'

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# Beaver talk is enjoyed at natural history society

Arran Natural History Society welcomed speaker Pete Creech on Thursday February 6.

Pete, environmental interpretation officer at the Argyll Beaver Centre, gave an excellent talk on the Eurasian beaver re-introduction programme in Knapdale which started with the arrival of four beaver families from Norway in 2009, a total of 14 beavers, including Bjorna, who is now approximately 14 years old.

Another 28 beavers have been introduced since 2017, including one named by schoolchildren as Justin Beaver! The beaver centre is open from Sunday March 22 until Friday October 30 and there are weekly guided walks starting at 6.30am to look for the beavers. This would make an excellent short trip from Arran or somewhere tourists visiting Arran can move on to.

At the meeting there was great interest in the project and the audience learned



Beaver footprints in the sand.

many interesting beaver facts. Beavers are nature's hard working engineers creating dams, canals and lodges, like the one created by Bjorna in the photograph below. Through flooding areas, they create new ecosystems and benefit many types of wildlife and natural vegetation.

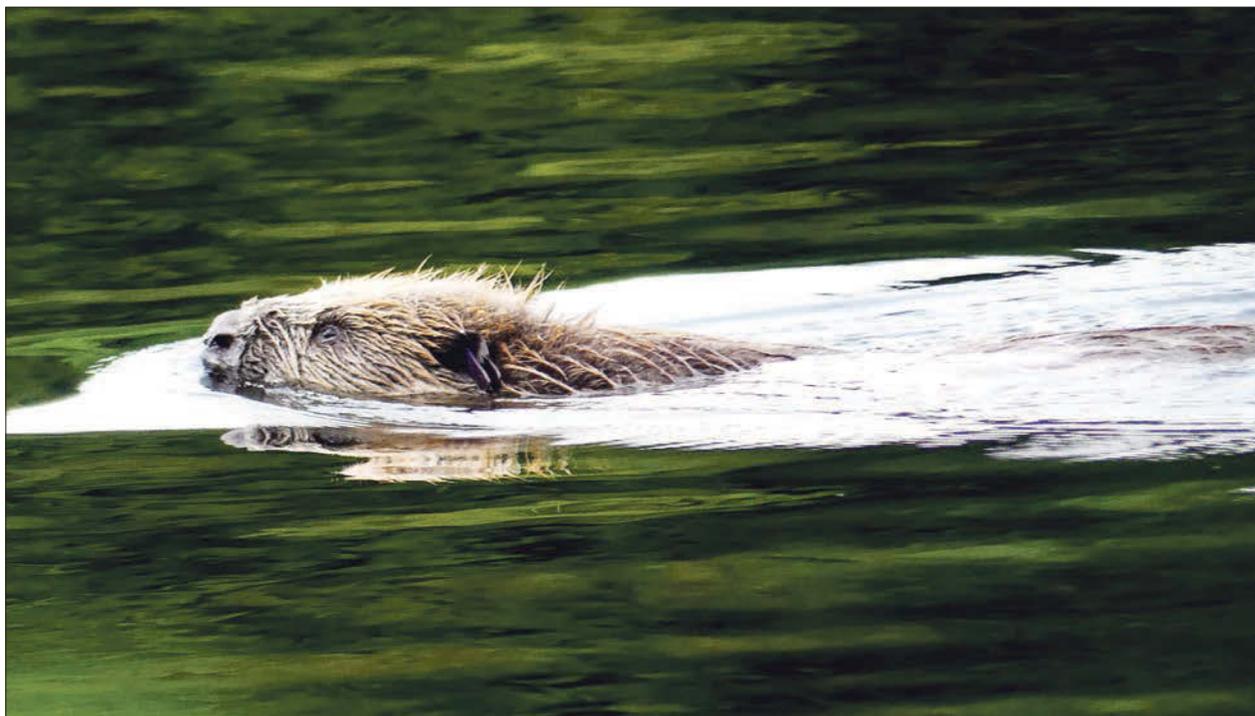
The lodge shown is 4-5m across and 2-3 metres high with an underwater entrance. A beaver family will move to a new loch and create a new lodge every two or three years.

They will only move a short distance away from water to collect food and their preference is for the leaves of aspen, willow, rowan and birch plus water lily leaves and roots, rushes, reeds and bracken. In the winter, they eat bark and they also like sweet potatoes as a boost to help them when first released.

Beavers are native to the UK and used to be widespread in England, Wales and Scotland but were wiped out here 400 years ago because of hunting for their pelts, used for coats and hats, their meat and 'castoreum', a secretion used in perfumes, food and medicine.

Beaver pairs produce one litter of around three kits each year. Although they are weaned at six weeks old, they stay with their family for around three years and do not survive if separated from the family group. Unlike otters, they cannot survive in sea water except for a short swim from one river mouth to the next.

In May 2019, the Scottish government declared them a native species and they are



Bjorna who originally came from Norway to breed in Argyll.

now protected. It is illegal to interfere with the animals, their lodges and their dams. I'm sure many people at the talk will be looking forward to making the trip to visit the beavers in 2020.

The next society meeting will on Thursday March 5 at the Brodick Castle rangers hut starting at 8pm.

The talk will be given by Lindsay MacKinlay and is entitled 'On the trail of Scotland's wild plants, the adventures of a Scottish botanist'. Everyone looks forward to welcoming Lindsay to Arran after his previous attempt last year to speak to the society was foiled by bad weather and no ferry.

*Charlotte Clough.*



Coille Bharr Lodge which was built by Bjorna.

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## Leap to Lagg for open day

Anyone interested in Arran's new distillery is being invited to Leap to Lagg for an open day.

Lagg Distillery is inviting everyone to join them on Saturday February 29 to discover more about how their peated whisky is made with free tours running throughout the day.

They will also have some very special guests and performances for all of the family to enjoy.

A distillery spokesman said: 'Come along and discover how Lagg Distillery is bringing the tradition of whisky distillation back to the southern end of our island home.'

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# Paper craft exhibition is a cut above the rest



Karen sets up her exhibition at Lagg Distillery, right. Photograph: Mairi S Christie. Above, A 10-layered picture which was made of single sheets of paper ranging from grey through to black to white. Below, another of Karen's designs, using nine layers of paper.

Music Arran presents  
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Thursday 27th, Friday 28th and Saturday 29th February  
Adjudicator: Mr Dave Bennet  
Arran Community Theatre  
Arran High School, Lamblash

**Thursday 27th Feb**  
**Bye Baby Bunting**  
Play by Mark Green  
Whiting Bay Youths Prats  
Comedy by Andy McNamara  
Whiting Bay Music & Drama

**Friday 28th Feb**  
**Murder Thricely**  
Comedy Drama by Colin MacDonald  
Whiting Bay Youth Group  
**Mirror Mirror**  
Comedy by Bruce Kane  
Shiskine Drama Club

**Saturday 29th Feb**  
**Jump Off**  
Comedy by John Waterhouse  
Shiskine Junior Drama  
**Curses, Foiled Again**  
Play by Evelyn Hood  
Whiting Bay Club of Drama & Music

Albert  
A Comedy by Richard Harris  
Shiskine Drama Club

The Baby Machine  
Comedy by Michael B Malone  
Lamlash Drama

by Hugh Boag  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Karen Bell of Karebell Designs held an exhibition at Lagg Distillery recently which showcased the intricacy and skill of her work to an appreciative audience.

Starting with a chosen design, Karen cuts layers of paper with a sharp fine tool, building up the picture layer by layer to create a complex 3D image. Using various coloured and textured papers, her pictures can be made up of 12 or more layers but the slightest mistake can mean a new start.



Karen, whose work won first place at the Arran Visual Arts exhibition, has been on the island for just over three years and has already made a name for herself with her

recognisable artwork. Mairi S Christie, who attended the exhibition, said: 'Karen covers a wide range of subjects and her wildlife is particularly exciting as the deer, hedgehogs and dogs seem so alive that they look as though they are about to jump out of the frame. The picture that she created of Lagg Distillery itself is outstanding.'

Karen's work is widely available at many of the islands craft fairs and shows and can also be found on her Facebook page by searching for @KarebellDesigns.

## Entry time for Mackenzie memorial darts contest

Entries are now open for the annual Donald and James Mackenzie memorial mixed doubles darts competition which will take place in Kilmory Hall on Saturday March 7 from 7.30pm for an 8pm start. It will be the 32nd staging of the contest in memory of Donald, who passed away on June 6, 1988, and James, who passed away in 2004.

All the money raised this year will be donated to the Arran War Memorial Hospital and any donations or raffle prizes would be most appreciated by organiser Margaret Mackenzie. The competition is open to over-16s only.

The social club will be open on the night and local transport can be arranged. The names of those wishing to play should be telephoned to Margaret on 870309 or Eddie on 870345 by Friday March 6 at the latest. To book the bus, please call 870263 and for raffle prize donations 870345.



A look back at the 30th event two years ago.

# Holistic health services flourish at Heather Lodge

Started in 2017 as a cooperative of holistic practitioners, Heather Lodge in Brodick has already assisted a sizeable number of clients with physical, mental and emotional conditions with the help of a talented team of competent, committed and experienced therapists.

Over the past three years the services and treatments that they offer have increased exponentially and now, with a number of new team members who have joined the organisation, there are more than 20 treatments available for the mind, body and soul.

Among the new practitioners are Alistair Mackie, osteopath, and Elaine Fisher, homeopath and mindfulness practitioner. While Elaine is just settling in, Alistair has had some months now at

Heather Lodge and is quickly building a loyal following. New to Heather Lodge, but well known for her foot care practice already, is Faye Anderson, a welcome addition to the team.

Kate Lucas, Carol Hayman, Maria Szwalec and Anne Curtis all offer massage: sports, remedial, deep tissue, lymphatic drainage, Ayurvedic hot stone or Indian head massage. Acupuncture for injuries, reflexology and reiki are also effective ways to support personal wellbeing. Jill McKillop offers sound therapy and reiki, an experience for all the senses! Sue Archer, while stepping back from some therapies, will continue to offer herbal medicine.

Chris Atkins, who is a stalwart of psychological



At your service, some of the practitioners and therapists at Heather Lodge.

support for residents and visitors on Arran for over 20 years, continues developing his techniques to bring about effective change in only one or two sessions.

Today, he offers the same rapid support to clients at Heather Lodge, where he sometimes uses hypnotherapy to help people out of depression, to overcome limiting fears and phobias, and to improve their rela-

tionships. He specialises in raising clients' self-esteem and clients referred by their GP may qualify for free therapy, paid for by the Mary Davies Trust.

To find out more about the therapists and what they offer, visit [www.heatherlodge.scot](http://www.heatherlodge.scot) to learn about how Heather Lodge can assist you with physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Be sure to also have a look at the

events section where a full list of bereavement support,

a wide variety of classes and groups are listed.



Heather Lodge has a number of treatment rooms and group spaces which promote healing and wellbeing.

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# LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARRAN

## Society learn history of Clyde steamers

The Arran Historical Society welcomed 52 members, including four new members, to its January meeting in the Brodick golf clubhouse for the AGM and a talk about Clyde steamers and Arran piers, writes Hugh Brown.

The official business included a number of relevant subjects for discussion, including the success of last year's syllabus – only one meeting was cancelled due to the ferry – and that 2020 has a full meeting schedule with nine speakers already secured to speak on a variety of subjects.

It was also noted that last year a founder member of their forerunner, The Arran Antiquarians, sadly passed away. Norval Murray served on the committee from 1994 to 2014, as treasurer for many years and finally as chairman. The death of Peter Emsley, another member of many years, was also announced.

After the official business, Ed O'Donnelly showed the members a film on the history of the Clyde steamers and many of Arran's piers from around 1933 up to the present day. The changes in the transportation of cars in the past and the situation today was most interesting and informative. Back in the 1930s, up to



A vehicle is seen driving onto Arran's first car ferry, Glen Sannox.

the '60s, cars went by cargo boat and were craned on to the boat. A few cars went onto the steamer by planks when the tide level suited.

The first car ferry in the 1960s was the Glen Sannox. This was side loading and cars were loaded onto a hydraulic ramp adjusted to suit the pier tide level. The ramp was lowered to the car deck level, turned to face the front of the boat and cars drove onto the car deck and round the semi-circular bow area to once again face the ramp.

Once loading was complete the last cars were left on the lowered ramp if the boat was full and they were driven off after the journey.

The accompanying stills from The National Library of Scotland Screen Archive illustrate these methods.

It was also noted that there are no films of Fairlie Pier and if anyone has any the historical society would be delighted to hear from you.

The next meeting of the society will be on Monday February 17, when local au-

thor Ian McMurdo will speak about his book *Arran: Travels, Treasures and Tales*, which has gone to re-print. He will discuss how he involved many local people in his research for the book and the contribution they made in providing tales for it.

The meeting concluded with Colin MacKenzie thanking the Little Rock staff for the buffet, the clubhouse for the use of their facilities and Ed O'Donnelly for his film.

*Photographs: The National Library of Scotland Screen Archive*



A car is driven along Brodick's old pier towards the ferry.



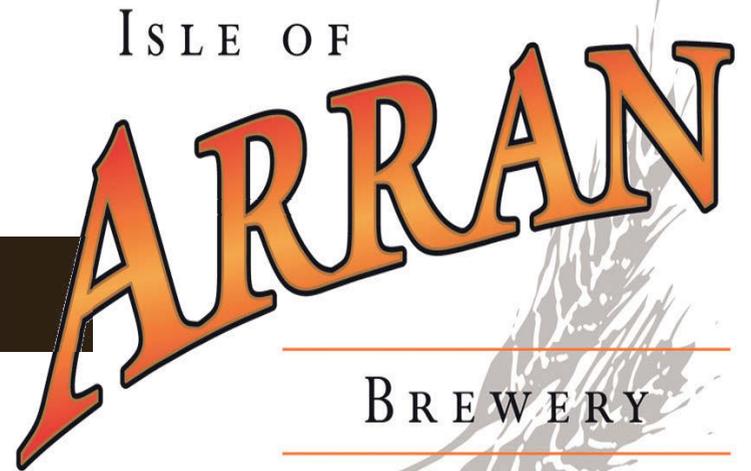
Taken in 1946, this still image shows a vehicle driving onto a steamer.

# What's on

in association with Isle of Arran Brewery

[www.arranbrewery.com](http://www.arranbrewery.com)

CRAFT BREWERY TOURS AVAILABLE DAILY



## Every day

Trout Fly Fishing Loch Garbad, bank fishing  
Arran Geopark Information & Activity Centre Lochranza, 9am - 5pm  
Brodict Castle and Gardens Open 10am - 5pm  
Octopus Centre Old Pavilion, Lamlash, centre open seven days, 11am - 3pm  
Octopus Centre – tennis Old Pavilion, Lamlash, open 7 days, any time  
Brodict Mini Golf Open seven days, 9am - 5pm-ish, ALL weather  
Public swimming Auchrannie Spa Pool, Brodict, 10am - 4pm (last entry 3pm)  
and 6pm-8pm (last entry 7pm)  
Swimming lessons Auchrannie Hotel Pool, Brodict, Monday - Thursday, 4pm - 6pm  
Arran Brewery Open Monday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 11.30am till 4pm  
Sunday, 2pm - 4pm. Closed Tuesday and Wednesday  
To arrange a tour please call 01770 302353  
Open Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 11am - 3.30pm

Arran Heritage Museum

## Saturday 15th February

Flow Yoga Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 9am  
Q30 Auchrannie Spa Resort, 10.30am - 11.15am  
Arran Gin Love Shack Weekend Cladach Beach House, Brodict, 12noon - 6pm  
Rink Bowls Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club, Blackwaterfoot, 1.30pm  
Live Music – Tim Pomeroy Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm  
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Corrie and Sannox Village Hall, Corrie, 9pm  
Live Music – Raising Bail, three-piece blues rock band The PHT, Lamlash,  
9pm  
Over-21's Disco Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 10pm

## Sunday 16th February

Q30 Auchrannie Spa Resort, 10.30am - 11.15am  
Sheep Dog Trial Glenkiln Farm., Lamlash, 11am  
Arran Gin Love Shack Weekend Cladach Beach House, Brodict, 12noon - 5pm  
Live Music – Mic Clark Crofters' Music Bar & Bistro, Brodict, 1pm  
Family games Auchrannie Games Hall, 2pm - 3pm  
Live Music – Raising Bail, three-piece blues rock band The PHT, Lamlash, 4pm  
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting Brodict Church Hall, 5pm - 6.30pm  
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Shiskine Hall, Shiskine, 9pm  
Folk Music Session Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

## Monday 17th February

Morning Fitness Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am-10.30am  
Arran Historical Society, Speaker – Ian McMurdo Brodict Village Hall, 2pm  
JogScotland mixed ability running group Whiting Bay, 5.30pm  
Arran Punch Out Arran High School, Lamlash, 6pm  
Circuit training Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm  
Junior Rugby (P3-P7) Ormidale Park, Brodict, 6pm - 7pm  
Rink Games Brodict Bowling Club, 6.15pm  
Arran Medical Group, Patient and Service User Group Meeting Whiting Bay Surgery, 7pm  
Junior Rugby (S1-S6) Ormidale Park, Brodict, 7pm - 8pm  
Winter Bridge, visitors welcome, www.arranbridgeweb Brodict Golf Club, 7pm for 7.15pm  
Live Music – Mike Bailey Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm  
Tae Kwon Do, Adults and over 10s Brodict Church Hall, 7pm - 8.30pm

## Tuesday 18th February

Body Blitz (booking essential) Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am - 10.30am  
Healthy Outdoors Team Brodict Country Park Ranger Centre, 10am - 1pm  
Eco Savvy Energy Surgeries Home Farm House, Brodict, 10am - 3pm  
Chess Club Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, 11am - 1pm  
Rink Bowls Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club, 1.30pm  
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting Brodict Church Hall, 2pm  
Bridge class (beginners/improvers) Brodict Golf Club, 2.30pm - 4.30pm  
Steak Night – two Ribeye steaks & bottle of wine Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, from 5pm  
Arran Pace Makers – Jog Scotland beginners' group Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 5.30pm  
Hatton Boxing Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm  
The 1st Shiskine Rainbows and Brownies Shiskine Hall, 5.30pm - 6.45pm  
Arran Hockey Club – juniors (5-14yrs) Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 6pm - 7pm  
Flow Yoga Corrie and Sannox Village Hall, Corrie, 6pm  
Mini Kickers 3-5yrs (preschool) KA Leisure, Lamlash, 6pm - 6.45pm  
Scottish Country Dancing Brodict Church Hall, 7.30pm  
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Whiting Bay Eco Savvy Hub Shop, 9pm  
Trev's Pop Music Quiz Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm  
Traditional Music Sessions Brodict Bar, 9pm

## Wednesday 19th February

Yoga Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am - 10.30am  
Hydrofit Auchrannie House Hotel, 9.30am - 10.30am  
Brodict Gardens Volunteers Brodict Castle and Country Park, 9.30am - 1pm  
Kilmory Toddlers Kilmory Hall, 10am - noon  
Chair Yoga & Exercise St Molios Church, Shiskine, 11am  
Arran Heritage Museum Rosaburn, Brodict Open, 11am - 3.30pm  
Arran Elderly Forum Ormidale Pavilion 10.30 for 11am  
Archives and Genealogy Service Arran Heritage Museum, 10.30am - 12.30pm & 1.30pm - 3.30pm  
Knit and Blether Bay Wool & Crafts, Whiting Bay 2pm - 4pm  
Arran Pace Makers Running Group Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 5.30pm  
Kettlercise Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6pm - 7pm  
Flow Yoga Shiskine Hall, Shiskine, 6pm  
Tae Kwondo kids 6.30-7.30pm, advanced juniors & adults, AHS, 7.30pm - 9pm  
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting Lamlash Church Hall, 7.30pm  
Live Music – Arran Dawn Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm  
Pub Quiz The PHT, Lamlash, 8.30pm  
Rock 'n' Pop Bingo Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

## Thursday 20th February

Chair Yoga and Exercise Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 10.30am  
Kettlercise Auchrannie Spa Resort, 11am - 11.45am  
Arran Heritage Museum Rosaburn, Brodict Open, 11am - 3.30pm  
Chess Club Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, 11am - 1pm  
CAIM Cancer Support Group Heather Lodge, Brodict, 2pm - 4pm  
Arran Youth Soul Choir Community Theatre, Arran High School, Lamlash, 6pm  
Body Blitz (booking essential) Auchrannie Spa Resort, 6.15pm - 7.15pm  
Arran Soul Choir Community Theatre, Arran High School, Lamlash, 6pm  
Winter Bridge, visitors welcome, www.arranbridgeweb Little Rock Cafe, 7pm for 7.15pm  
Arran Hockey Club – Seniors (12 yrs +) Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 7pm - 8.30pm  
Arran Punch Out Arran High School, Lamlash, 7.30pm  
Brodict Embroidery Group Brodict Library, 7.30pm - 9.30pm  
Open Session Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, 8pm  
Eco Savvy and Co-op Food Share Brodict Ormidale Pavilion, 8.15pm  
Tommy's General Knowledge Quiz Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 9pm

## Friday 21st February

Yoga Auchrannie Spa Resort, 9.30am - 10.30am  
Hydrofit Auchrannie House Hotel, 9.30am - 10.30am  
ACLI – Friday Garden Club Golf Course Road, Whiting Bay, 10am - 12.30pm  
Pop-Up Evening, BYOB (bookings only) The Shore, Whiting Bay from 6pm  
Alcoholics Anonymous meeting Whiting Bay Hall, 7pm  
Tae Kwondo advanced kids 6.30-7.30pm, advanced juniors & adults, AHS, 7.30pm - 9pm  
Live Music – Shindig Crofters' Music Bar & Bistro, 7.30pm  
Friday Night Quiz Whiting Bay Golf Club, Whiting Bay, 8pm  
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Octopus Centre, COAST, Lamlash, 9pm  
Tom's Open Mic Night The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm

## Saturday 22nd February

Flow Yoga Ormidale Pavilion, Brodict, 9am  
Q30 Auchrannie Spa Resort, 10.30am - 11.15am  
Rink Bowls Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club, Blackwaterfoot, 1.30pm  
Pop Up Evening, BYOB (bookings only) The Shore, Whiting Bay from 6pm  
Live Music – Tim Pomeroy Crofters' Music Bar and Bistro, Brodict, 7.30pm  
Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Lochranza & Catacol Village Hall, Lochranza, 9.15pm  
Live Music – The Best Bad Influence, rockabilly/rock'n'roll band The PHT, Lamlash, 9pm  
Over-21's Disco Ormidale Hotel, Brodict, 10pm



# Wintering flocks weather a wet January on Arran

In comparison to last January, January 2020 was milder and wetter. The first fortnight was marked by a prolonged spell of wet and windy weather culminating in Storm Brendan. A short spell of calm but very dull and damp weather followed on, before a few colder days brought snow on the mountains. The month finished with a return to unsettled wet and windy conditions. The weather was not conducive to being

out of doors. Nevertheless more than 100 species were reported.

Highlights included: a surf scoter, an American species first reported on November 24 in Catacol Bay, in same location on January 1, three little grebe in Loch Ranza also on 1st, two jack snipe on Slidery Shore on 4th, a dipper in Porta Buidhe also on 4th, a water rail on Mossend Pond on 7th, a kingfisher on Rosa Burn on

25th and a sub-adult white-tailed eagle off Machrie from 24th to 27th. In addition there was a hybrid gull, most likely a cross between a herring gull and a lesser black-backed gull, at Whitefarland between 1st and 3rd.

Wintering wildfowl included: 23 Canada geese on Pladda on 10th, three goldeneye at Claulchlands Point on 17th, two whooper swan over Newton on 19th, 53 wigeon at Machriewaterfoot also on 19th, 48 teal at Cosyden also on 19th and 350 greylag geese with two pink-footed geese in the Shiskine Valley on 25th.

Other wintering species included: a merlin and 100 fieldfare on Corriecravie Moor on 1st, 47 rook in Slidery also on 1st, 17 yellowhammer in Slidery on 5th, a greenshank in Loch Ranza on 24th and 50 Redwing in Lagg on 26th.

Wintering flocks included: six woodcock in Slidery on



The return of shelduck indicate that spring is on its way.

Photograph Angela Cassels.



**Bird notes**  
by Jim Cassels  
JANUARY

Waxwing, a stunning visitor to a garden in Shiskine.

Photograph Tony Gallagher.

1st, 15 bullfinch in Claulch Glen also on 1st, 200 jackdaw in Cosyden on 5th, eight goldcrest in Kildonan on 8th, 132 curlew at Claulchlands on 13th, 32 turnstone in Machrie Bay also on 13th, 18 lapwing in Kilpatrick Farm on 19th, 100 starling in Dippin also on 19th, 21 twite at Machriewaterfoot also on 19th, 20 linnet at Blackwaterfoot also on 19th, six black-throated diver off Pirnmill on 20th, 12 long-tailed tit in Torbeg also on 20th, 100 common gull in Brodick on 23rd, 15 skylark at Mossend Pond on 25th, 20 sis-



Greenshank, one of many wintering birds reported in January. Photograph Robert Lambie.

kin in Torbeg on 26th and 25 goldfinch in Shannochie on 27th. There was a feeling that some of these wintering flocks were smaller than flocks in recent colder Januaries. There were no January reports of brambling.

Interesting garden birds in January included: a waxwing in Shiskine on 3rd (last Arran record was January 2017), a snow bunting in Pirnmill on 17th, a blackcap in Alma Park on 21st and a great spotted woodpecker in Largymore on 27th. In addition there continue to be reports of a magpie in Kildonan and in Alma Park. In a future bird note there will be a report on the Arran RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch Weekend of January 25-27.

While there was no January records of returning gannet, shelduck were on numerous coastal territories including Auchenhew,

Carlo, Claulchlands, Cleats Shore, Fisherman's Walk, Kilpatrick, Lenimore, Porta Buidhe, Thunderguy and Whitefarland. Other signs of approaching spring included: 200 courting eider at Claulchlands Point on 13th, five displaying black guillemot at Thunderguy on 22nd and four fulmar visiting nest sites in Catacol on 25th. But the winter is not over yet.

Enjoy your birding. Please send any bird notes with 'what, when, where' to me at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot, KA27 8EY, or e mail me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk I look forward to hearing from you. For more information on birding on Arran purchase the Arran Bird Atlas 2007-2012 as well as the Arran Bird Report 2018 and visit this website [www.arranbirding.co.uk](http://www.arranbirding.co.uk)



White-tailed eagle were reported at several stretches of the west coast but mainly around Machrie. Photograph Brian Couper

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# THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday February 19, 2000

## Snow fun

Deep, crisp snow fell on Arran on Tuesday night and the whole island was covered by Wednesday morning. The schools were closed to allow the cheerful children to enjoy this rare event and because the buses could not get through the roads.

Two gritters were deployed and they made their way around the island while trying to avoid abandoned cars. Road salt had unfortunately run out but more arrived on Wednesday morning. More than 400 tonnes of salt and 1,000 tonnes of sand have been used on Arran's roads so far this winter.

Travel over the String was particularly hazardous and the only cars using the road, and helping stranded vehicles, were four wheeled drive vehicles. Police reported no accidents and by Friday all of the snow had melted with not a single flake to be seen. And while drivers and parents might not have enjoyed the snow the children certainly made the most of it while it lasted.

## Arran on film

Filming is to commence this weekend on the BBC programme Against the Odds which fea-

tures the lifeboat and helicopter rescue of four children off Torrylinn beach last summer.

The programme which is one of a series to be presented by Kate Sanderson will be broadcast nationwide during May and June. It arose from a BBC reporter Paddy Christie reading the story in the Banner and thinking that it would fit into this children's series about safety and rescue services.

The programme is to be made up of several parts with much of it focusing on the role of the RNLI. As for the children from Kilmory who were involved in the incident it now seems likely that there will be a re-enactment of the rescue but that will be filmed at a later date when the weather is better.

## Water quality

The water board is seeking temporary relaxation from its requirement to meet certain standards of water quality on Arran. In most cases it concerns the colour and an excess of iron over the permitted limits. These are expected to meet the acceptable standards within a year or two as the new water pipeline comes on stream. No health risk is deemed to be present.



Sean, Cameron and Ross Paul and Mark Haggart make the most of Wednesday morning's snow in Lamlash. 01\_B07tweY01



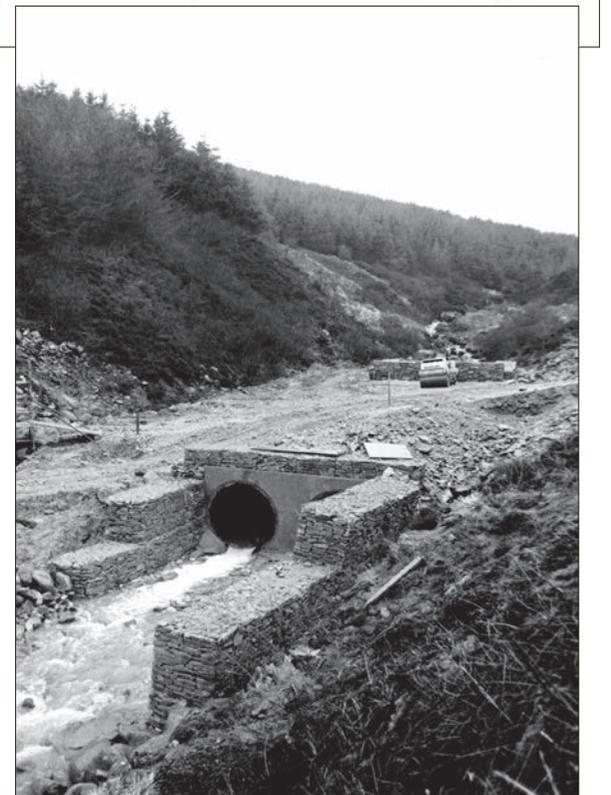
All of the young musicians who took part in the Young Musician of the Year competition at Brambles Bistro last Tuesday. 01\_B07tweY05



Robbie MacDonald and Donald Robertson turn their sledges into snowboards at Ormidale Park as Simon Ross Gill awaits his turn. 01\_B07tweY04



Farrier Andy Parry and his partner Ruth have moved from Norfolk to Arran and they have bought The Gallery in Whiting Bay. Andy is pictured in front of the 'house' which he has renamed St Columba's which was its name when it was a church. 01\_B07tweY03



Work continues on the Iron Bridge on the Ross Road and this picture shows the extent of the task and how the river has been channelled into two huge pipes with stones and gabiions around them. 01\_B07tweY02

# BANNER CLASSIFIEDS

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## RECRUITMENT



### Foreman Mechanic

We require an experienced diesel mechanic to take the lead role in our busy plant & transport workshop in Brodick, Isle of Arran.

Applicants should have a proven track record in maintaining a large fleet of heavy commercial vehicles and contractors plant, be highly motivated, hands on and capable of supervising others. Applicants should also be confident in liaising with suppliers and managing maintenance schedules and compliance records.

Welding and fabricating experience is also required and an LGV driving licence would be advantageous, but not essential.

The successful applicant will be expected to move to the island, if not already based on Arran. Assistance in finding suitable accommodation can be provided for mainland applicants.

Applications in writing please enclosing CV to:  
John Thomson Construction Ltd, Lamlash,  
Isle of Arran, KA27 8NB  
or email: [mail@thomsonconstruction.co.uk](mailto:mail@thomsonconstruction.co.uk)

Find us on  
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### ARRAN DAIRIES

Local supplier of all products  
to the Catering Trade

We are inviting applications for a part time Sales & Admin position within our team at Arran Dairies.

#### The Role

Working with our small team to deliver 1<sup>st</sup> class customer service, the role will include dealing with customer enquiries and orders, sales support and back office administration. Relevant training will be given, but as we are a small team, we look for versatility in our staff.

#### Role Requirements

- Excellent organisational and communication skills
- Ability to work under pressure and to deadlines
- Relevant IT skills
- Can do attitude

#### Conditions

- Company Pension Scheme
- The post will involve working Saturdays on a rota basis

Please indicate your interest by sending a CV to;  
[hannah@taste-of-arran.co.uk](mailto:hannah@taste-of-arran.co.uk)

Closing Date :- Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February

### Person sought for holiday home changeover service based in Brodick

Please contact David on  
07803 970148 if interested.



## AMES TAPING SPECIALIST / PAINTER AND DECORATOR

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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 at Planning Services, Cunninghame House, Irvine, between 09.00-16.45 weekdays (16.30 Fridays) or at [www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk) \*and at The Council Offices, Lamlash

Comments should be made online at [www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.eplanning.north-ayrshire.gov.uk) Written representations may also be made to the Head Of Service (Economic Development & Regeneration) at the above address by 06.03.20. Any representations received will be open to public view.

### TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 Regulation 20(1)

20/00062/PP; Site To South Of Lochside Guest House, Blackwaterfoot, Brodick, Isle Of Arran; Erection of detached self-catering accommodation as extension to existing tourist accommodation.

20/00085/PP; Site To North West Of New Montrose House, Glenclay Road, Brodick, Isle Of Arran; Planning permission in principle for residential development including sixteen plots and associated infrastructure, and detailed planning permission for roads, parking areas and two detached dwellinghouses.

Craig Hatton  
Chief Executive  
Cunninghame House  
IRVINE KA12 8EE



## Roots of Arran

Community Woodland

### AGM

Saturday 29th February

Ormidale Hotel at 7pm

All Welcome

## ARRAN BRASS BAND

### AGM

Wednesday 11th March 2020

7.15pm

St Bride's Church Hall, Brodick

ALL WELCOME

## Private sales

Free listings for items under £50

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ROUND BALE HAYLAGE, good quality. Free to Uplift. Tel: 01770 700371.

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## CHURCH NOTICES

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Parishes of North Arran, Brodick, Corrie, Lochranza, Pirnmill and Shiskine Independent but working together

Minister:

Rev Angus Adamson

Parish Assistant:

Mrs Jean Hunter:

**Sunday 16th February**

Pirnmill and Lochranza

Churches together, 10.15am.

Morning Worship at Pirnmill Church.

Shiskine Church, 12noon

Morning Worship.

Brodick Church, 10.30am

Morning Worship

Corrie Church, 11.30am

Prayer Meeting, 12noon

Morning Worship

There will also be a Service of

Worship in Montrose House

at 1.30pm.

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Whiting Bay and Kildonan

Church of Scotland

Charity Number: SC014005

**Sunday 16th February**

Worship will be conducted by

the minister, Rev Elizabeth

Watson, at 10.30am.

The service will involve

members of the Scripture

Union Mission Team.

Tea and Coffee will be served

in the Transept after the

service.

All welcome.

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Kilmory linked with Lamlash

"A faith to proclaim ~ a

fellowship to share"

**Sunday 16th February**

Rev Dr Ian MacLeod

Kilmory at 10am

Lamlash at 11.30am

Worship Team

All welcome, including

families: children's area

Scottish Charity SC015072

All welcome

### ARRAN FREE CHURCH

OF SCOTLAND

(continuing)

**Sunday 16th February**

Morning Service at 11am

Trust Housing Lounge, Glen

Estate, Brodick

Evening Service at 6.30pm

5 Glen Road, Brodick

All welcome.

### HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC

CHURCH

**Sunday 16th February**

Sunday Morning Mass at

11am

### ARRAN FREE CHURCH

OF SCOTLAND

**Sunday 16th February**

Morning Service at Shiskine

at 11am

Evening Service, Brodick

at 6pm

Service will be taken by Mr

James Blackwell

### SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL

CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide

Anglican Church)

St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.

**Sunday 16th February**

**Sixth Sunday after**

**Epiphany**

Holy Communion at 11am

Richard Trewby

Coffee after service

### RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF

FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

**Sunday 16th February**

Sunday Worship at 11am

'Heather Lodge', Brodick

Left of the Douglas Hotel,

opposite the ferry terminal.

Telephone 700346, 820223

Everyone Warmly Invited.

### ARRAN BAPTIST

CHURCH

Minister: Rev Vince Jennings

**Sunday 16th February**

Service at 11am

Ormidale Pavilion

Tea and coffee after the

service

**Wednesday 12th February**

at 7.30pm Home fellowship

group for bible study and

prayer.

Everyone warmly invited.

### ARRAN CHURCHES

TOGETHER PRAYER

GROUP

**Monday 17th February**

St Margaret's Scottish

Episcopal Church, Whiting

Bay, 2pm - 3pm.

BANNER ANNOUNCEMENTS  
BANNER ANNOUNCEMENTS

# Bowled over at Blackwaterfoot

Continued from page 20

member Keith Thompson, a new and satisfactory carpet was eventually fitted. The club is very grateful to the Weir Charitable Trust for a considerable donation at this time.

Of the original 50, Victor Lutz is the only remaining playing member (tempus fugit!), but he not only remains an active member, he is also club president.

The club currently have 18 members and play regularly on Saturdays and Tuesdays throughout the year. The club enjoys numerous social activities both at the club and elsewhere. Membership is good value at £40 per annum, considering that in 1980 membership was £15 per annum, equivalent to £55 today.

Club members also compete in the island-wide competitions, winning the Federation Laidler Gardner trophy in 2004 and again in 2018.



The tennis court at Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club where the bowls club is now located, dating from about 1930.

Bowls play is open to visitors – both local and holiday makers – and the club supply everything needed; bowls (adult and junior sizes), jacks and mats which are stored at the clubhouse. Prices are only £3 per person and accompanied children under 16 are free.



Club match 2011, pre new pavilion. Vic Lutz, president, is third from right.



Carpet laying, outdoor style!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ROSE: Mike

Liz and family would like to thank everyone involved in Mike's care over the past few years for their help, kindness, support & professionalism. To all the staff at Arran Medical Group, all doctors in attendance, especially Dr. Graeme Thomson, all the wonderful nurses and Michael the OT at AWMH.

Also huge thanks to ArCaS, their drivers, and the amazing Kate Jenks. To Clair and David for their excellent guidance. To Eleanor for the beautiful bright flowers. Thanks to Douglas Hamilton, organist.

Thanks to Rev. Elizabeth Watson for her support and the lovely uplifting service. Well done to the Drift Inn for a great purvey and finally thanks to everyone for the lovely cards, flowers, messages of sympathy and for attending the funeral. £760 was raised and will be shared between ArCaS and the Hospital Supporters League.



### Shiskine Golf Club

Thursday January 30, ladies' 18-hole medal in very wild conditions. 1 and scratch, Alice Anderson 89-17=72, 2 Jenni Turnbull 90-17=73, 3 Kema Genda 97-13=84.

Thursday February 6, ladies' 18-hole medal. 1 and scratch, Ann May 75-6=69, 2 Jenni Turnbull 93-17=76, 3 Esther Henderson 104-27=77.

### Lamlash Golf Club

Thursday February 6, yellow medal. 1 Ian Bremner 60-6=63, 2 Allan Colquhoun 71-7=64. Magic twos, Allan Colquhoun and Derek

Harrison at 5th, Martin Wallbank at 16th.

Fixtures: Sunday February 16, Winter Cup, 9.30am and 12noon starts. Thursday February 21, yellow medal, 11am ballot.

### Corrie Golf Club

Fixtures: Saturday February 15, 18-hole sweep, ballots at 9am and 1.30pm. Monday February 17, Monday Cup, ballot at noon. Wednesday February 19, AGM in the golf club tearoom at 7pm.

### Brodick Golf Club

Fixture: Sunday February

16, Brandon Qualifier (re-arranged) combined with Winter Cup Stableford. 9am/noon.

### Arran Golfers' Association

Saturday February 8, Winter League/Duncan Trophy at Corrie Golf Club, teams of four. Re-scheduled as Corrie was flooded after heavy rain last Sunday morning. Many thanks to Corrie for their fantastic hospitality. Result – round four, Corrie (2) won against Shiskine (0), Machrie Bay (0.5) lost to Lamlash (1.5), Whiting Bay (0) lost to Brodick (2). Table after round four, Lamlash, 7pts, Machrie Bay 6pts, Brodick 6pts, Whiting Bay 2pts, Corrie 2pts, Shiskine 1pt.

Fixture: Sunday March 1, Winter League/Duncan Trophy, round five at Whiting Bay Golf Club, shotgun start at 10am for everyone.

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Celebrating the 2018 Federation Cup win.

# Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club turns 40 this year



Blackwaterfoot Bowls Club reaches its 40th anniversary this year. And to mark the anniversary year, the club is holding some special events including bowls competitions and social events.

The club was founded in 1980 following a public meeting in Blackwaterfoot where location, sources of funding, governance and more were discussed. A committee of 10 was formed under the chairmanship of Mr N M Alexander. There were 50 'founding members' each contributing £100

**Both young and older players are always welcome.**

(equivalent to £370 today), £625 from debenture holders, plus generous donations from the British Sports Council, Cunninghame District Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise Development Council to provide a financial start.

**Original**

The club is situated adjacent to Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club on the site of one of the original club tennis courts.

The club initially used the golf clubhouse, but when this was knocked down in 2010, it erected some sheds for storage and used a bus shelter until they built a modern pavilion-style clubhouse in 2015.

This also serves as a useful venue for meetings and teas.

The club is unique to Arran in that the surface is an all-weather – snow excluded – all year outdoor carpet (36.6 x 18.5 metres) with four rinks. The original cost was £25,000. The playing surface comprises a concrete base, an underlay and then a weather-resistant carpet on top.

The carpet has been replaced twice, once in 1997, then again in 2016. This latter event was a very drawn out affair as the carpet was felt to be substandard with ripples forming on it in hot weather due to expansion. But, thanks to the persistent efforts of

**Continued on page 19**



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