

THE ARRAN BANNER

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Arran rallies as we're all in this together

by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk 

A huge community effort has swung into action on Arran as islanders face up to the harsh reality of lockdown.

The new measures to control the coronavirus pandemic have seen a big increase in the number of at-risk residents self-isolating for 12 weeks and every non-essential worker has been told to work from home.

As the Banner went to press there were still no confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Arran and there is no one in the Arran War Memorial Hospital awaiting test results. However, no one should let their guard down, as the large older population makes the island particularly vulnerable.

To deal with the crisis, a whole new support structure is being put in place to help those needing help and local people and community groups are working hard to support their neighbours and the wider population.

To streamline their approach and ensure community help is delivered safely during the pandemic, North Ayrshire Council's Connected Communities teams have launched a series of community hubs, including one on Arran.

Their purpose is to be a local point of contact for community needs arising from COVID-19, responding with advice, signposting, referral and tasking of local volunteers.

The Arran hub, based at the Arran Outdoor Education Centre in Lamlash, is not open for the public to visit but is the base for a small core team to operate from.

Co-ordinators have now been set up in every village and more than 70 volunteers have already signed up to play their part to help with any non-medical support required.

Locality leader is outdoor centre manager Ian Staples. He said: "The centre is now the contact hub for anyone

Continued on page two and three



The mood went from celebration to isolation for the staff of The Douglas Hotel. They had just celebrated being named Scottish boutique hotel of the year when they were forced to close their doors last Friday. The photograph of the staff and the new Douglas arch were taken before the new social spacing rules applied. Full story, page five.

01_B13douglas01 Inset: the sign notifying the closure of the hotel. 01_B13douglas02



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A beautiful, stylish & newly constructed three bedroom detached villa in Brodick Bay

Arran rallies as we're all in

Continued from page one

needing support, whether it be delivering shopping/prescriptions or dog walking etc. We are sending out

support packs to each village which contain information and support documents and some PPE equipment for our volunteers – gloves, hand sanitisers, aprons etc. We're

also sending out information packs to those in the community who need our support.

'We would like to highlight the huge support we've had from the Health and Social

Care Partnership, the Care at Home team and ACVS. Also a thank you to Councillor Ellen McMaster, for the support and engaging with community members to identify particular roles, and Fiona Laing, for keeping communications open between the hub and our village coordinators.

'A huge thank you from the hub to our local community and to everyone who has offered their help as we move through this difficult time. We are still looking for volunteers from Machrie and Kildonan areas – if you are not at risk and are able to support us, please get in touch.'

This approach is working alongside specific community initiatives already under way. Much of the early co-ordination was carried out by the ACVS. Chief executive officer Vicki Yuill said: 'This week has seen some amazing partnership working; we are all working together so well, the council, Health and Social Care Partnership, the emergency services, volunteer organisations and committed volunteers.'

Meanwhile, shops around Arran have been praised by customers this week for going out of their way to help residents who cannot get out for such normally simple requirements as a newspaper or a pint of milk, by hand delivering newspapers and even collecting prescriptions. See page four for a full list of what is available.

At the main Co-op in Brodick, and the two other Co-op stores, stringent self-distancing measures are

now in place to keep both staff and customers safe with queues being seen at busy times outside the shops.

As well as 2m markers on the floor, there are also fewer checkout operations and there are reductions on the number of people allowed in the store at the same time.

Manager Liz McLean said she could not be more pleased with the reaction of customers to the new measures which she said most were more than willing to comply with.

Respect

She said: 'Both the customers and my staff have been amazing. So I would just ask everyone to please respect the additional measures as we try our hardest to try to serve the community while keeping our staff and colleagues safe in this worrying time.'

Liz told the Banner that supplies to the Co-op were holding up well. She also said she had been able to take additional supplies of local produce from, among others, Wooleys, The Arran Butcher, Arran Dairies and Creelers.

Her sterling efforts, along with deputy manager Carol Harwood and the rest of the staff, have received widespread thanks both in the shop and on social media.

Councillor Louise McPhater, cabinet member for communities, said: 'Whether you are a driver who can assist with drop-off runs and food parcels or someone looking to help run errands such as collecting prescriptions, doing doorstep drops or helping with dog walking or daily check-in phone calls,

our locality hubs want to hear from you.

'And, if you are part of an established community group already, please let your locality hub know what you are doing to help others and tell us what support your group needs or any local issues you identify but can't tackle without our help.'

'If you are not currently volunteering yet and want to get involved, please complete and submit the application form: <https://tinyurl.com/v6rkjwn> and we will be in touch to advise the next steps.'

'If you are currently already coordinating your own community volunteering, the hubs don't want to do anything to stop this, though it is important that your volunteering efforts are delivered safely.'

None of the volunteers will be authorised or asked to go into houses. They will do 'doorstep drops' only and the public should be alert and remember to check for genuine callers as all approved locality hub volunteers will be issued with an ID badge before going out into the community.

Councillor McPhater added: 'On behalf of the Connected Communities team, I would like to thank everyone involved in volunteering for their help and support at a time of great need as we work hard to make the lives of others safer and better.'

To get involved, you can email communityplanning@north-ayrshire.gov.uk or call the Arran community support hub on: 01770 600532 or 07496 658760.



Staff member Stewart Dunsmuir shows the new 2m restrictions outside the main Co-op in Brodick. 01_B13corona02

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this together



Rush hour in Brodick. This was Shore Road in Brodick at 9am on Wednesday which is normally bustling with people going to work and about their business at this time. 01_B13corona01



The support packs being sent to each village from the new hub.

Other coronavirus news in brief

Save the number
NHS Ayrshire and Arran is asking residents to save the number 0800 678 3393 in their phones so that if clinical and administrative staff call, residents can immediately recognise who is calling and to take the call.

Calls generated from NHS Ayrshire and Arran come from the telephone number 0800 678 3393.

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, NHS clinical and administrative staff are making an increasing number of telephone calls to patients in order to deliver clinical care.

Cancel ferries online

Ferry operator CalMac is urging customers looking to cancel trips to go online after its contact centres were swamped with almost 5,000 phone calls in a single day.

The impact of coronavirus means the company's contact centres are operating a reduced service, coinciding with unprecedented call volumes.

CalMac has cancelled all bookings up until July 16, and all travel prior to this date is for essential lifeline services only, operating as a 'turn-up and go' service. Only island residents and those with essential business on an island are currently permitted to travel.

Local business grants

These are: £10,000 grant to ratepayers of businesses in receipt of the Small Business Bonus Scheme or Rural Relief. Businesses with a rateable value up to £18,000 are eligible. You can also get this grant if you applied for Nursery Relief or Disabled Relief but are eligible for the Small Business Bonus Scheme.

Retail, hospitality and leisure business ratepayers with a rateable value between £18,001-£50,999 can apply for a one-off grant of £25,000.

North Ayrshire Council is processing application forms on behalf of the Scottish Government and businesses should apply if they meet the criteria.

Open spaces and public areas

North Ayrshire Council has closed all playparks to prevent parents and children touching the same play equipment, as part of the effort to reduce the possibility of transmission of coronavirus.

A spokesman said: 'While we would encourage people to continue to exercise and go outside, this should be done in a safe manner which restricts the possibility of close contact with others.'

Shut out scammers

Police Scotland is advising the public to be cautious of strangers offering bogus services during the coronavirus

pandemic. Social distancing and self-isolation mean more people than usual are in their homes at the moment. This presents an ideal opportunity for criminals to take advantage of elderly and vulnerable people, in particular.

Vehicle testing

Vehicle owners will be given a six-month exemption from needing MOT testing for their vehicles the Scottish Government has announced. From Monday March 30, vehicles which are due for their annual MOT will be allowed to forgo the testing but will still be required to keep their vehicle in roadworthy condition.

The Department for Transport is also working with insurers and the police to ensure people are not unfairly penalised for things out of their control.

Free food

Young people eligible for free school meals and/or in receipt of a school clothing grant can apply to receive a weekly food package for both them and their families. The North Ayrshire Council Food Initiative will supply food packs for families of four with food that can be delivered straight to your door. Food packs are available right now and are available locally.

To take part in the scheme, eligible families must opt-in by signing up at <https://forms.gle/14Z1dpbcissPL3qt8>. Deliveries of the food packages will begin in the very near future and will be delivered to your home with lunch recipes and related ingredients.

Employment

Scottish Tourism Alliance has launched a new free to use portal to help colleagues from across the tourism and hospitality sectors who have found themselves displaced as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

This new portal is supported by the Scottish Tourism Alliance and UK Hospitality, and is designed to help tourism and hospitality staff find at least temporary employment in other sectors such as food retail and supply, health care and delivery that now require high volumes of staff to get through the crisis.

Businesses can refer staff to the portal registration email HospitalityUnite@harri.com where they will get through to the Harri team who are fielding enquiries.

News and information

The Arran Banner will continue to provide updates and information on developments relevant here on Arran and further afield.

Free access has also been provided on our website at www.arranbanner.co.uk for all the important updates and information on the pandemic.

Call for medical stand-by help

A statement from Ruth Betley, senior manager, Arran Services, North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

'We are making every effort to prepare for COVID 19 on Arran and want to ask for help from our community.'

'We very much hope all the efforts made by people on Arran to follow the government advice will slow the spread of the virus and pressures on our services.'

'However, the predictions regards numbers affected and the care they may need are worrying.'

'We want to make sure that we are doing all we can to ensure we maintain all the usual essential services on Arran.'

'We want to rapidly build a bank of people, across a wide range of skills, who could help keep our services running to the most vulnerable in our community.'

'We may need their help if we are using the expanded capacity we are now putting in place, if usual staff cannot come to work and we have exhausted all efforts to reallocate staff across the

island. There are processes being put in place to rapidly employ people and to quickly re-employ those who have retired in the past three years or who need professional registration to work. We know everyone has different circumstances and many may not be able to help.'

'If you have been previously employed in the following areas please get in touch: health care assistant, care at home, residential care, administration, catering, cleaning, portering, nursing, doctor.'

'Please contact us with your CV and send to Clinical_ArranWarMemorialHospital_AA@aapct.scot.nhs.uk We will then be in touch about recruitment into our Arran Bank/Relief register. If you do not have an email account, please call on 01770 601033. This number will not always be answered but please leave your contact details and we will be in touch as soon as we can.'

Meanwhile, in change

to previous guidelines, everyone needing further advice about COVID-19 symptoms should phone 111 (NHS 24) - not the GP practice.

This is the advice across Scotland. NHS 24 links to a hub based in Ayrshire and Arran with a wide range of staff to give the most up to date advice.

If you need a telephone appointment or need to be seen, this team will then liaise directly with the GP practice or hospital on Arran.

Only essential visits are being allowed at Arran War Memorial Hospital. Please consider carefully the need to visit as reducing footfall will help reduce the spread of viral infections.

You can find up to date information on COVID-19 on the NHS Inform website:

www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19

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These are unprecedented times and we have no idea when things will settle, so we would ask you, our friends, to take care of yourselves; we thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you in the future. #WeAreArran



We're here to help on Arran

This list of business services has been compiled by the Arran Community and Voluntary Service (ACVS) to assist everyone who is self-isolating or unwell.

There are a range of food delivery services and other resources to keep you busy whilst staying at home. Please bear in mind that although most of the deliveries are free the businesses are doing this by goodwill and if you are placing an order be considerate of volume vs cost.

Thanks to all concerned for providing information and adapting what they do in these challenging times. Shop local, support your community!

FOOD:

Lochranza Centre

Hot meal orders delivered between the hours of 5pm and 7pm on Tue, Wed and Sun (please do not go to the centre, phone on 01770 830637). These are in a 'disposable' takeaway form. Kitchen is fully compliant with Food Safety regulations and we have sufficient stocks of sanitiser etc. Payment should be made through their Justgiving page. Phone for details. Lochranza Centre can be contacted on 01770 830637. They can pick up shopping for people from Pirnmill Stores or the Co-op if you phone the stores direct and place the order. For any other assistance, anyone in Pirnmill/Lochranza/Catcol can phone the Centre and they will try and help.

Pirnmill Shop

Grocery provision orders to be picked up or delivered they can do so via the following means: Order via telephone: 850235 or email: pirnmillpo@gmail.com – Facebook message: <https://www.facebook.com/pirnmillvillagestore/> Payments by card over the phone or by bank transfer, the bank details for this are as follows Name: Pirnmill Village Store sort code: 83-23-13 – account no: 00601644

Hooked & Cooked, Brodick

Hot meals order brought out to car when open noon – 8pm daily. Deliveries from 4pm-8pm free for £15+ spend. Order via telephone: 302656

Wooleys of Arran bakery shop, Brodick

Shops are now closed to public. Fresh bread, rolls, potato scones and frozen pies and quiche can be ordered and delivered to Brodick and Lamlash. Order via telephone: 302280 by 11am for next day delivery or contact via facebook messenger.

Shanghai Takeaway, Brodick

Hot meals delivered island wide as usual – order via telephone: 303777.

Co-op, Brodick

Groceries for home delivery call the store to order. Order via telephone – 302515 or email elizabeth.mclean@coop.co.uk

Foodshare at the Co-op, Brodick

Short-life orange label food will be available for the public to collect for free every evening at 6.15pm from the foodshare table within the big Co-op in Brodick. This scheme is open to all, help yourself to stop food from going to landfill. Please adhere to the 'touch it and take it' policy.

Bay Kitchen and Stores, Whiting Bay

Drive thru groceries – call ahead – we will bag and bring your shopping (even if just your paper) out to you. Delivery service, suggested spend no less than £10 for Whiting Bay and £20 if further away please, free contactless payment. Order via telephone 700229 Mon-Sat 8am-5pm – Sunday 12pm-5pm deliveries and kerb side pickups. The seating area is now closed, however takeaway coffees/teas and pastries still available. Free hot drinks to any NHS and Coastguard/helicoptering staff/any front line staff ... and their spouses who all deserve medals too. Deliveries are not only for self-isolators but for any front line staff who need a break.

The Shore, Whiting Bay

Frozen meals available for collection and will come complete with easy to follow instructions for heating in your oven at home. Order via telephone 700161 – visit www.theshorearran.co.uk – seven days a week, 3pm - 6pm

Burlington takeaway, Whiting Bay

Hot meals for collection, can bring out to car, card payment, contactless. Order via telephone 700255. Available Thurs/Fri/Sat 5-9pm



A & C Cameron, Blackwaterfoot

Will continue to offer our home delivery from the shop as normal for those distancing, or lambing! Home deliveries cover the whole Shiskine Valley, Machrie and as far as Lochranza and Kildonnann on specific days! Order via telephone 01770 860 220 or email blackwaterfoot-po@live.co.uk

Kilmory Hall and Community Centre

Groceries available as previously at the little community shop for those who need to use it. A review will be made at the end of April. Contact us please email kilmory.hall@btinternet.com

The Arran Butcher Ltd

The shop is now closed but groceries and butcher meat deliveries island wide. Order via telephone on 860354.

Arran Cheese Shop

Still trading, shop closed to public. Your order can be collected at our shop where we will bring it to your car. You can order by phone 302788 or email gordon@arrancheese.com If emailing please leave a phone number and don't include card details. If ordering on Arran you will get a free piece of Arran Brie, Arran Camembert or Arran Blue as our Easter stock of these will eventually go to waste. Our products can be viewed on our website.

CLOTHING:

Bells Boutique Brodick

Most of the clothing stock can be viewed with prices on Facebook and Instagram, some photos of stock is also available on Google page Bell's of Arran. Contact Elizabeth via email bellofarran@gmail.com Call 01770 860597 (Bridgend Campsite) – whatsapp 07881 400064 (no phone signal at home) / via facebook [bellofarran](https://www.facebook.com/bellofarran).

Arran Active

Any kind of stock requirements can be delivered for free or can be picked up from outside the store. Payment taken over the phone. Order via telephone – call Andrew on 700508 to arrange.

Chameleon Arran

Basics (T-shirts, underwear etc) and spring fashion all now on the island. See our facebook page or website at www.chameleonarran.com for photos and price of many of our stock. Payment over the phone. Full e-commerce store coming soon on the website. Free delivery island-wide. Email lynn@chameleonarran.com. Phone messages may be left on 600 201

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS:

Homestyles, Brodick

Household items or essentials can be delivered free by arrangement or left outside for collection. Order via telephone – 302648 – card payment via phone contact.

Arran Haulage Service/Armitage, Brodick

Continue to deliver all items as usual adhering strictly to all preventative measures and national guidelines. Armitage is providing regular services and Arran Haulage are still delivering goods, animal feed, coal and gas as normal, island wide. Order via telephone – 302777. Can be paid online.

MBS Building and Timber Supplies

Restricted opening hours, 8-12pm Monday to Saturday however Monday-Friday delivery service will still be running as normal. There will be no entry to the shop anymore, staff will shop for you. Collection service available. Order and pay using your card over the phone (collection time is only between 8-12pm). We will create a designated area for collection and give each individual designated collection time slots. Please be patient and follow instructions

on the signs at entrance. Order by phone on 01770 700202 or email mbsbuild@yahoo.co.uk

Albion Gas

Free delivery on bottled gas, 01770 600113/07884258837

Arran Heat Pumps

Quality heat pumps supplied and installed. Service and repair, 24 hours. Call our island wide please call for a free estimate 07385 215 140 01770 601214 or email arranheatpumps@btinternet.com.

Sliderry Supplies

Deliveries on Tuesday and Friday. Phone or email your orders as early as possible to allow us to collate orders and plan delivery times. Order via telephone 870225/348 or email sliderrysupplies@yahoo.com

LEGAL ASSISTANCE:

Jas. Campbell & Co. Brodick

Solicitors, financial advisers, estate agents. Normal services but appointments will be by phone rather than face to face. Telephone: 302027.

CRAFT SUPPLIES AND OTHER ITEMS:

Book and Card Centre/Brodick Post Office

Newspaper delivery. Books, puzzles, batteries, stationary etc can be delivered too. (in Brodick only at moment). Payment over the phone. Order via telephone – call Tom on 302288

Bay Wool & Crafts

Wool, haberdashery and craft supplies. If you'd like to purchase anything from any of our makers and crafters, please contact them direct first – these can also be delivered from the shop. Also operating a delivery service. Orders via telephone: call Kat and Steve Sparshott on 600110 or Linda MacCallum on 302875 with requirements.

Bay Pet Care

Dog walking, veterinary transportation, waits with dog and returns. Cover from Brodick to Kildonnann. Uses own leads. An element of paperwork will be required, possibly online. Julie is police checked and insured and hasn't been off the island since Christmas. To arrange dog walking, call 700541.

Bogarie Kennels

We have lots of customers that purchase dog food from us and at this time we can still possibly deliver. We are asking for email communication and bank transfers to ensure safety. Bogarienkennels@mail.com – we are on the Ross Road.

Claddach Sawmill

Garden Centre and Sawmill closed to public but taking orders and delivering island wide. They plan to continue with site work, building sheds, landscaping and fencing but only where it is safe for both staff and customers. Call us on 302622, email cladachsawmill@btinternet.com, or message on Facebook.

The Harbour Shop, Blackwaterfoot

Delivering newspapers and any other items required. Phone 860215.

Arran Foodbank

If in crisis, Brodick Church building remains open and the foodbank is still operating just inside the front doors for anyone who needs this service. If deliveries are required due to self isolation or otherwise please contact Susan Dobson 01770 302365. Food and other donations for the foodbank would be greatly appreciated, especially during this difficult time, and can be dropped off at the church or big Co-op or can be collected by contacting Susan.

Arran CVS Office – hearing aid batteries

Hearing aid batteries can be ordered via telephone on 600611 or via email info@arrancvs.org.uk and will be posted out.

Hear to Help

To order hearing aid batteries or get support for your hearing aid telephone 07391 017781 or email heartohelp.ayrshire@hearingloss.org.uk

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The Douglas is named best boutique hotel



by Hugh Boag
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



There was a bitter sweet mood at The Douglas Hotel this week. When there should have been joy at being named the best boutique hotel in Scotland, the award sadly came just days before they were forced to close their doors as a result of the coronavirus situation.

They also missed their big night out as they chose not to attend the awards ceremony in Glasgow because of their reluctance to travel. But it went ahead on Sunday March 15, when more than 200 guests converged at the Crowne Plaza in Glasgow to celebrate as the winners and highly recommended were announced in this year's competition.

The Douglas was named best boutique hotel from a huge 16 finalists and beat the The Auldgirth Inn, Eglinton Arms Hotel, Best Western Garfield House and Pierhouse

at Port Appin who were all highly recommended.

The Douglas itself was also highly recommended as the best hotel team.

The Auchrannie, which attended the ceremony, was named the best couples experience and was highly recommended in the best family hotel category.

Now celebrating its fourth year, and supported by the Allied Irish Bank, the Prestige Hotel Awards are a celebration of outstanding achievements within the Scottish hotel industry.

This year the awards are pleased to have received thousands of votes from the public, with hotels taking part from Arran as well as the isles of Skye, Islay and Raasay. The awards ceremony was hosted by comedian Des Clark.

The awards were created to showcase and reward outstanding service within the hotel industry. They are voted for by the public who are invited to vote for their favourite venue and the ex-

emplary staff who have left a lasting impression on Scottish holidaymakers. The awards are an independent, non-political platform and free to take part in and there is no membership fee.

Warren Paul, founder and CEO of the Prestige Hotel Awards, said: 'The 2020 Prestige Hotel Awards has been an outstanding success with over 350 businesses across Scotland attending our gala final. It was phenomenal to see so many top quality establishments celebrating the best in their industry. Prestige Hotel Awards 2021 will continue to grow.'

Meanwhile, many will have spotted that The Douglas Hotel has a splendid new entrance arch. It was commissioned last year by the late owner Sean Henry who sadly never got to see it come to fruition. The hotel very thankful to local designer Dave Nelson for including Sean's initials in the final piece of art and it was unveiled in time for his birthday on March 7.



The winning Douglas Hotel team pictured before the hotel was forced to close. 01_B13douglas01



Comedian Des Clark hosted the awards night.



The initials SJH spell out Sean's full name Sean Joseph Henry. 01_B13douglas03

Provost's Recognition Awards postponed until further notice

The nominations for the Provost's Recognition Awards are now closed, and North Ayrshire Council would like to thank everyone who nominated.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation the decision has been made to postpone the awards ceremonies scheduled to take place in May until further notice.

The council received a fantastic response from all six North Ayrshire localities, including Arran, highlighting the passion, hard work and commitment of the community groups and individuals you feel deserve to be recognised most.

Of the 89 nominations received so far, each nomination will now be reviewed to be shortlisted at a later date and the council will share information on the rescheduled events as soon as possible.

Provost Ian Clarkson added: 'Thank you to everyone who has taken the time out to recognise the great work and achievements of our community stars and outstanding citizens.'

'During this time of uncertainty, it is more important than ever for us all to pull together to play our part in helping our communities.'

'Later in the year, we will reopen the nominations to give you the chance to also nominate the community heroes who helped get us through these challenging times.'

Lorry slips from road at tight bend

The state of Arran's crumbling roads claimed another victim last week when a lorry slid off the road and caused traffic disruption on the A841 between Lamlash and Whiting Bay.

Taking place on a particularly sharp bend at Dyemill, the John Thomson lorry's rear wheels and cargo area slid off the road and into the soft sand of the embankment, while the cab of the vehicle remained on the road.

Police cordoned off the area and workers, using a heavy duty forklift, re-



A heavy duty forklift removed the cargo which fortuitously was well secured to the lorry. 01_B13lorry02

The rear wheels of the John Thomson lorry can be seen embedded in the soft sand on the sharp corner of the road. 01_B13lorry01

moved the cargo of fertiliser from the back of the lorry, one 600kg bag at a time.

Disruption to vehicular traffic was short-lived although buses, which were unable to turn around on the narrow road, had to wait until the load was removed and the lorry returned to the hard surface before they could continue.

Deadline extended for participatory budgeting event

Community groups and organisations thinking about applying for a share of £60,000 as part of North Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership's participatory budgeting scheme will now have more time to submit their applications.

Projects which could help to aid recovery from substance misuse disorders and prevent drug-related deaths across North Ayrshire are being offered the chance to bid for grants of between £8k and £10k as part of the scheme, with communities having the final say on who will receive the funding.

The application period has now been extended, with submissions being accepted until Sunday April 12.

Due to the current coronavirus situation, the decision day event planned for Saturday April 18 has been cancelled. Details of online voting will be announced in due course.

The event was announced at the North Ayrshire Summit on Drugs Related Deaths at Saltcoats Town Hall earlier this year, which was organised after a motion by Councillor Louise McPhater to declare a drugs death emergency, was passed by North Ayrshire Council in September 2019.

North Ayrshire has experienced an unprecedented rise in drugs deaths, in line with the trend across Scotland, with 38 drug related deaths recorded in 2018 and it is expected to be higher still for 2019.

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We just wanted to reassure our customers that we will have a continuous supply of fresh milk from Tigheanfraoch throughout this period.

Milk (and glass bottles) will be available to buy from Arran Dairies, BWPO and Bay Stores.

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THE ARRAN BANNER

U3A goes online to help combat social isolation

University of the Third Age (U3A), which started on Arran in January before the pandemic, is continuing on the island through online interactions, Skype and phone.

U3A, which has the motto learn, laugh, live, is a worldwide organisation which provides opportunities for people who are retired or semi-retired from full-time work to meet others and follow new interests, or revisit old ones.

The umbrella organisation received overwhelming support at its inaugural event

where members signed up to take part in a number of groups which aligned with their interest.

Secretary Mairi S Christie said: 'I am sure you will not be surprised to hear that all meetings of the U3A have been cancelled. This has been very upsetting for many, not only for those who wanted to learn a new skill, but for those who felt isolation and loneliness.

'We were very surprised by the extent of the need when more than 100 people turned up at the launch, but even

more so when as many people, a lot of them new, attended the first monthly meeting. When we had to cancel the next monthly meeting there were 125 members and 27 active groups.

'However, this is not the end of the story and leaders are finding ways of carrying on, many online and when that is not possible, by telephone or Skype, etc. The enthusiasm for keeping things going, following the relationships already made and the bonding of the groups already established is amazing.

'Genealogy, languages, book reviews, philosophy, chess, creative writing and photography are already ongoing and many more are in the pipeline. The most important of all is the conversation which will continue between U3A friends for the future, however long it is before they can meet face to face again.

'Enthusiasm shows that this young Isle of Arran U3A is not going to sink easily. People have taken the current problem as a challenge, not a disaster,' Mairi added.



New members sign up for classes some of which are still being held online.



No more tea and cake gatherings for U3A for now.



Photography is just one of the many groups which have started under the U3A umbrella.



U3A members share a laugh during a dance class held earlier in the year.



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Rallying call

It will come to no surprise to anyone that Arran has responded with vigour to the rallying call to help in a crisis.

Coronavirus is not just any crisis but a situation in Scotland which seemed unthinkable when news first broke of a virus outbreak in the far off Chinese province of Wuhan all those weeks ago.

Now it is on our doorstep and this week, maybe for the first time, things are getting very real and very dire, although, the small glimmer of hope is that there are still no virus cases on Arran, though it may yet be a matter of time.

Everyone has their view as to whether the UK and Scottish governments acted quickly enough to the looming virus threat but only time will tell.

On Arran we think there can be few complaints. The medical centres seemed to be on the ball pretty quickly ordering the equipment they needed and training up staff – before many surgeries on the mainland. The Arran War Memorial Hospital is on standby with health professional accommodation already arranged at the new hub at the outdoor centre.

Coordinators and an army of volunteers have already been recruited and shops and business around the island are making sure that everything from newspapers to essentials, and even takeaways, are readily at hand to most who need them most.

We face difficult days and weeks ahead but an enduring community spirit will get us all through this.

Thought for the week

Jesus said to Martha: 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.' John 11: 25

HMS Dasher answers

Sir,
Anyone who has grown up in Arran will know that HMS Dasher, a fleet aircraft carrier, was lost in a spectacular explosion between Brodick and Ardrossan on March 27, 1943. We are now approaching the anniversary of the disaster, hence my reason for writing.

Your readers will know that HMS Dasher exploded and sank in mysterious circumstances. Those mysteries continue to this day as we approach the 77th anniversary of the ship's sinking. Most importantly, families of the sailors still seek answers as to the last resting place of their loved ones. Of the 379 fatalities, only 13 lie together in marked graves in Ardrossan Cemetery. Of this number, one, John Melville, is almost certainly the 'Man Who Never Was' immortalised in the classic war film of Operation Mincemeat and who therefore cannot be buried in Ardrossan.

Despite contemporary eyewitness accounts that many more bodies were recovered and further rumours of mass graves somewhere in Ayrshire, the families of the lost sailors are still no nearer finding the whereabouts of their loved ones. Successive governments have refused, and continue to refuse, to answer questions. Shamefully, some of the first and greatest clarity has come from the German Navy which authoritatively stated the sinking was not due to its action.

The full, tragic story is told in John and Noreen Steele's excellent book 'The American connection to the winking of HMS Dasher'. It is to be hoped that in these days of the government's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, and as we approach this anniversary and the commemorations associated with VE Day, that at last the families, whose grief is still fresh after all these years, will be provided with answers. Surely, this is the very least of their entitlement.

Yours,
Graham Short,
Kilmarnock.

Wildlife support

Sir,
Recently my wife and I were visiting your beautiful isle and chanced upon a copy of your very informative Arran Banner. The article in the edition Saturday February 29 that caught our eyes was: 'Pupils raise cash to aid Australian wildlife' by reporter Colin Smeeton.

Their amazing efforts raised over £215 or the equivalent of about \$430 Australian to assist with the rescue and care of Australian native animals that have been affected by the devastating bushfires.

I have worked in the management of Australian wildlife for the past 47 years and fully understand the plight facing these populations of animals from such devastating circumstances.

I would like, through your newspaper, to give a heartfelt thank you to Whiting Bay Primary School for not only caring for what the Australian wildlife have suffered but also then setting about doing something so very worthwhile about the dire situation.

The house captains put together a series of incentives that involved the students and the community to raise a significant amount of money to help Australian animals.

Please be very proud of your efforts and thank you again on behalf of so many wildlife volunteers, rescue workers and professional wildlife officers that will continue to work tirelessly because of your wonderful efforts.

Yours,
Ross McKinney
Former regional director,
New South Wales National Parks
and Wildlife Service, Australia.

Essential humour

Sir,
Our lives have just been turned upside down, albeit on a temporary basis. Across the island people are working to ensure that those in need are getting help and support. Community hubs have been established to help coordinate a network

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE WEEK



The photograph of the week is this atmospheric shot of Arran taken from the mainland just last Saturday. Reader Susan Gray from Kilwinning took the photo from the old boating pond in Saltcoats.

of island-wide volunteers. North Ayrshire Council is putting in place all sorts of emergency measures to prioritise the essential services such as waste, care, and protection of the vulnerable. There is lots of information on the NAC website.

We may think we are an island just because we live on one, but we rely heavily on the work of people who don't have an option to stay at home. We can all see that visitor numbers are down, and will go down further with the ferry travel restrictions. Even so, every day people will be coming and going from Arran to provide us with the supplies and services that we could not exist without.

We all have our part to play in following the guidelines: isolating, staying home, minimising contact with others, helping those who need to keep isolated and, above all, keeping a sense of humour.

Yours,
Councillor
Timothy Billings,
Lamlash.

Online support

Sir,
Being a great fan of all things Arran, I was saddened to read of the impact the current situation is having on the island in my online edition of the Banner.

I have visited regularly for many years but it appears I will be not be able to do so in the coming months, and suspect that this will be the case for many others.

I always enjoy buying gifts and treats while visiting and am sure many other people do the same.

I would encourage those who may not be visiting to continue to 'buy local' virtually and support the Arran businesses they enjoy visiting online.

I can certainly think of a few of my friends and relatives who would particularly enjoy a surprise parcel from Arran being delivered to their door at the moment.

Yours,
Sarah Pearce,
Doncaster.

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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.

Facing the challenge of COVID-19

A personal message from North Ayrshire and Arran MP Patricia Gibson to all her constituents on Arran.

There can be little doubt that we face an extremely challenging time.

The coronavirus COVID-19 has spread across the globe and governments worldwide must take difficult decisions and reluctantly impose stringent measures on people. This is undoubtedly the biggest health challenge of our lives and it's important we do all we can to protect ourselves and others both in urban and rural settings.

This is obviously a concerning time for people. Life as we know it will have to change but we all have a role to play in helping contain this outbreak and in supporting our key services. Not least by following the latest health advice and basic hygiene precautions.

Our thanks

Importantly, we must reduce contact with others to minimise risk. Those who work in front-line services who continue to serve the NHS, in local government and who operate our pharmacies, utilities, and maintain the food and fuel supply deserve our thanks for their hard work on our behalf.

We will miss out on important events and celebrations and worry about the vulnerabilities of loved ones, particularly if we are unable to visit them. I take comfort in trusting our community spirit, ingenuity and determination. Already we have seen businesses adapt, with local

restaurants offering home delivery services and car makers producing parts for ventilators, and I have been heartened to see the creation of new volunteer groups and social networks across the constituency. It is both humbling and uplifting to know that those who can are stepping up to meet this challenge.

But while adversity can bring out the best in us, it often exposes the worst of human nature too. While the supply of goods to our supermarkets is buoyant, shelves empty as panic buying spreads throughout our communities as quickly as any virus.

People should shop sensibly and with consideration. Everyone needs to access key goods and products, including those who rely on foodbank donations, the staff who keep shops open and so many others working on the front line of this health crisis.

The SNP government is working closely with supermarkets and suppliers to help ensure all areas of the country, including rural and island communities such as Arran, are catered for. Councils have lifted restrictions on delivery hours to help shops remain stocked.

The First Minister has made clear her determination to protect the vulnerable and assist workers and businesses in sectors hit hard by the crisis; tourism being the most ob-

vious. Both the UK and SNP governments are determined to keep people informed about this fast-moving situation and their response to it.

If you need general health advice, a freephone helpline has been set up on 0800 028 2816. If you are unwell and your condition worsens, please contact the NHS 111 helpline. The latest health advice can be found at nhs.inform.scot.

Hotline

The SNP government has announced £2.2 billion to keep businesses trading and retain workers. An advice hotline for businesses 0300 303 0660 is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm. There is heavy demand and businesses are encouraged to access the website first at: www.find-businesssupport.gov.scot

An additional £350 million will also go to people and most affected.

It is up to us to help ourselves and each other by following advice. We will get through this. In the meantime, we can be good neighbours.

At the time of writing this, my office remains open - with distancing measures in place - but may have had to close by the time you read this. However, I will still be contactable on 01294 603774 or patricia.gibson.mp@parliament.uk to help with any queries constituents may have. We are all in this together and I will do all I can to help constituents access any support and information they need.



North Ayrshire and Arran MP Patricia Gibson.

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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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Alcoholics Anonymous is online

The success over the past 70-plus years for alcoholics finding sobriety, and long-term contented sobriety, in Alcoholics Anonymous has been due to the caring sense of fellowship, mutual aid and peer support people find there.

AA meetings, often in church halls and so on, sometimes sat in a circle like you see in TV dramas, face-to-face honest sharing of experiences, has been the backbone of recovery for many.

The current need for self-isolation and social distancing has a potentially disastrous impact for alcoholics, particularly newcomers, as the government recommends cancelling any gatherings of people, and meetings in groups.

As a result, many AA meetings in the UK, as indeed around the world, have had to be cancelled.

These decisions for meetings to be suspended come for the first time in the history of AA in the UK.

However, all is not lost, thanks to the technology of online meeting software that businesses have been using for years. Individual AA groups have grasped the opportunity to keep their fellowship groups going - online.

Online AA meetings are being set up every day, details are kept up to date on the national AA website as more get set up and are added. Meetings listed online are open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking, or to find out more about AA, just as an open physical AA meeting would be.

Members can choose to join a meeting showing voice only or with video.

To find a meeting visit www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/AA-Meetings/Find-a-Meeting/Online



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TK Murray Announcement: Stay At Home Policy

We are aware of the genuine fears island folk have of COVID 19 being brought to Arran by visitors. As we can have up to ten engineers on an installation we took the hard decision to suspend all island installations for the time being. We will be contacting all our customers awaiting installation dates and surveys directly. We would like to thank them for patience and understanding.

The Chancellor in his budget has extended the Renewable Heat Incentive for a further year until 31st March 2022 and the Energy Saving Trust will adopt a more flexible approach to funding claim timescales. These measures will ease pressure once we are able to safely return to installing.

If anyone needs help or advice during this period I am still working from home and can be reached on 079 1234 6360 or norman.paterson@tkmurray.co.uk

In these challenging and worrying times, we must all do what we can to try and stop the spread of this virus. I hope everyone stays safe and well.

Graham crosses Canada



Graham at a frozen Lake Louise, Alberta.



The boardwalk to the Chateau Frontenac – the most photographed hotel in the world, in Quebec City.



The magnificent Mount Rundle, Alberta.

In May 2018, Graham Chappell from Brodick drove the entire length of the Trans-Canada Highway from St John's Newfoundland to Victoria, British Columbia – and back – in just 25 days.

Now the story of his remarkable journey has now been told in a new book he has just published recounting his 10,000-mile road trip on the Trans-Canada Highway.

The Trans-Canada is one of the longest roads in the world, crossing nine provinces, six time zones and with ferries at either end. This marathon journey was undertaken as a promise to his parents and their ashes were in the car during the trip. They met and married in Canada.

Driving 450 miles a day for 25 days in the UK would be arduous. But in Canada, with long stretches of forest roads and prairies, it's much easier to tick off the miles. And it wasn't all driving. Every day, Graham was out of the car, exploring waterfalls, city centres, scenic attractions as well as meeting some of the local residents – and animals!

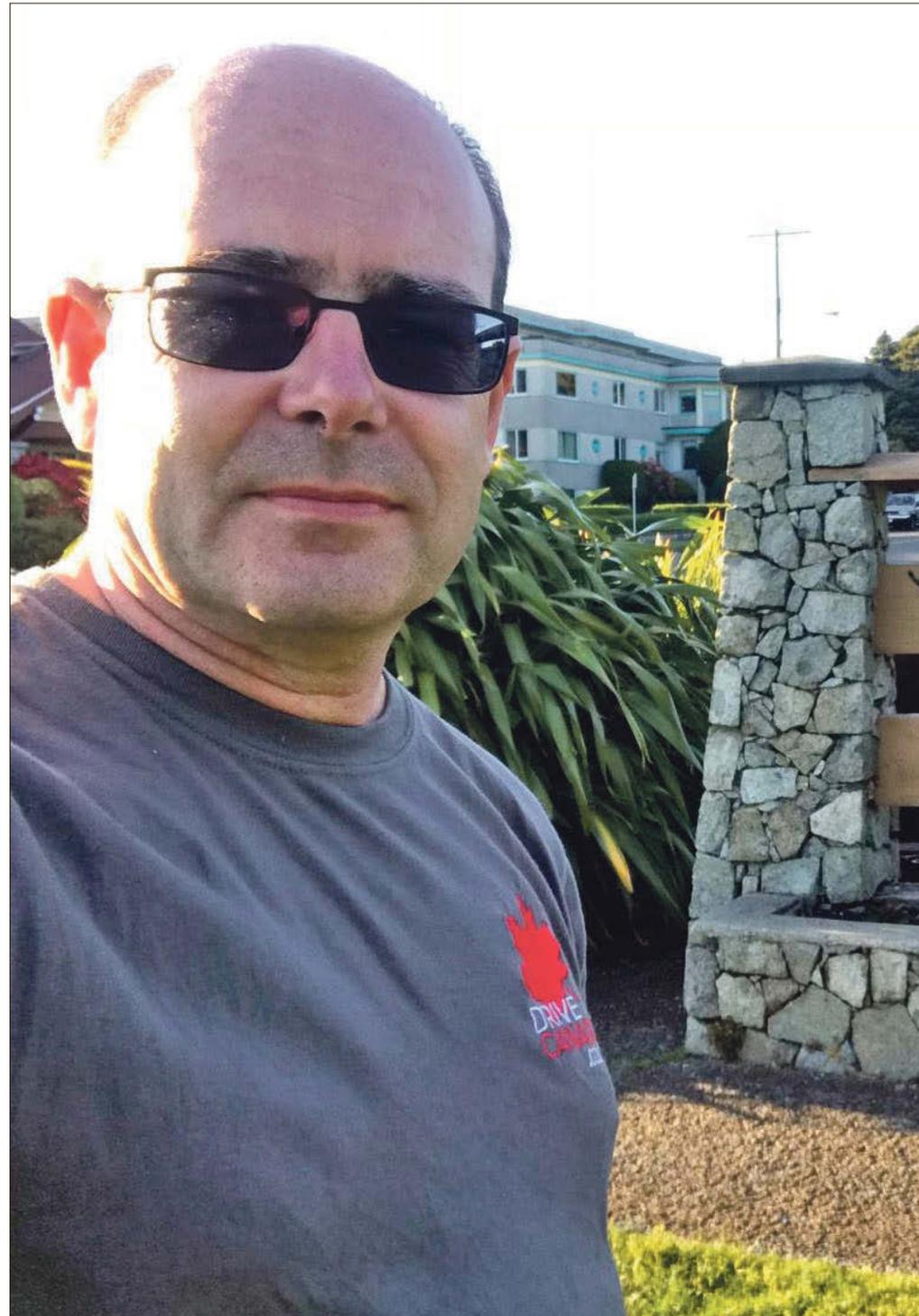
He was tracked using a very accurate GPS by children from Arran schools, including the high school; the updates of the trip being recorded by pupils almost daily who also benefited from information about the trip afterwards.

Such a trip has not, Graham believes, been done in this timespan. Plenty of Canadians

drive the Trans-Canada but through research, none has driven it fully in both directions is such a short time. Needless to say, the book covers the 10,000-mile trip in colour photographs, a mileage log and some interesting information on the sights – and the people – that this journey provided access to.

The 140-page A5 landscape book costs £16 and is available from Arran Graphics and The Book and Card Centre.

The cover of *Maple Leaf Road*.

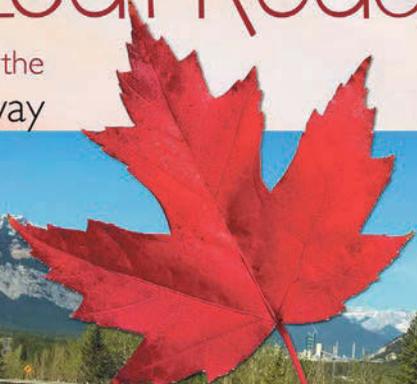


At the end of the road in Victoria, BC.

on the Maple Leaf Road

Maple Leaf Road

A 10,000 mile road trip on the
Trans Canada Highway



GRAHAM CHAPPELL



Everett Larmouth who tends the graveyard in Inverness, Quebec, where Arran settlers were sent.



Open road near Regina, Saskatchewan.



The top deck and helipad on the MV Highlanders. Newfoundland.

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YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARRAN

VegFest creativity contest winners

As part of the Arran VegFest, a children's creativity contest was held.

While the event itself had to be postponed, judging went ahead for the contest. Organisers asked the young people of Arran to send in either a piece of artwork or writing on the themes of Caring for All Animals or Eat Your Fruit and Veg, and they

sent in some amazing entries.

Picking the winners was a very difficult decision by after much deliberation they were chosen as follows: Iga Kasprzycka, 7-11 artwork, winner; Jay Pearcey, 7-11 artwork, runner-up; Izzy Brand, under-7s artwork, winner; Hailey Glister, under-7s artwork, runner-up. Anne Kabela, poetry, winner.



Some of the other entries.

The winning entries were on display at Brodick library, which is now closed.

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Mum and dad outside beach hut No 15 on Brodick beach.

Memories childhood

Colin Bowes has fond memories of his childhood holidays on Arran. Although he now lives in Lytham in Lancashire, he has compiled them into an essay which over the next three weeks will be serialised in the Banner. We hope our readers enjoy this trip down memory lane in these dark times.

Part one

Twas on the December 16, 1945, that I, Colin James Dow Bowes, first breathed air. Born of Scottish parents (Perth and Paisley respectively) in Marple, Cheshire, the family living in the area because of my father's work in accountancy.

The love affair with the Isle of Arran goes back a long way and rumour has it that I may have been on Arran before I was born in mum's tummy.

Dad and mum, George and Elsie (nee Dow), were regular visitors to Arran and spent their honeymoon in a farmhouse where accommodation was available near to the golf course in Lamlash. This followed their wedding at Denniston Parish Church in Glasgow on the August 25, 1939. I am the third of four children the others being Alice, John and Helen, and we all love Arran.

The first evidence of little me on Arran is in August 1947 in the form of photographs. The family, three children at that stage, Helen being born in 1953, were holidaying in Lamlash at the time and there I am on the beach clutching my bucket and spade! We would have been renting a house on Hamilton Terrace which we did for some years before we started holidaying in Brodick whose information guide book declared: 'The holiday guest who is out for the best is assured of a welcome at - Brodick.'

'Back House'

My main Arran holiday childhood memories are of the 'Brodick Days' where for several years from 1957 to 1963 we rented Mr and Mrs Todd's house, Hillcrest on Springbank Terrace, for the month of August. The Todds owned a 'back house' in their garden where they lived whilst the main house was occupied by self-catering guests.

Mum would pack a large hamper containing our holiday clothing and other bits and bobs and send it ahead

of us via British Railways PLA (Passenger Luggage Advance) service. The bits and bobs included the John Waddington Limited board games Monopoly (be a property tycoon), Cluedo (be a super sleuth), Scoop! (be a Fleet Street newspaper magnate) for those 'occasional' rainy August days. The remainder of our holiday goods and chattels were packed into the boot of mum's black Ford Anglia 100E registration number HRJ 186.

The splendid car ferry MV Glen Sannox, which could carry 1,100 passengers and 55 motor cars, came into service on July 5, 1957. She was thus brand new and exciting when we travelled over in the August of that year following our car journey from Rochdale in Lancashire where dad now had his work as company secretary to John Bright and Brothers Limited,

cotton spinners. Dad only stayed for two weeks, that being his work holiday entitlement, but the rest of us were lucky enough to enjoy the whole month.

Laborious

The ferry incorporated hydraulic vehicle side loading ramps toward the stern. One vehicle at a time would be driven across the ramp onto a turntable which was then lowered by way of a lift mechanism down to the car deck. Deck hands would then spin the vehicle 90 degrees so that it could then enter the car deck. The lift would then be sent up for the next vehicle. Looking back, it was a laborious process but at the time it was bang up to date and there was no risk of seawater entering the vessel as might be the case with the roll on, roll off system.

Confession time. On one ferry crossing, I found that



The Ford Anglia outside Hillcrest in 1958.

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of Arran holidays

one of the bolts to a blue deck window frame was 'loose' so I took it as a souvenir and still have it as a prized possession. I hope that this act of vandalism/piracy didn't contribute to her eventual demise in the warm waters of the Red Sea where I understand she lies at rest.

Bikes were hired for my brother John and I from Mr Milroy Anderson and beach hut number '15 brown' secured each August for several seasons by payment to Mr John 'Johnny' Henderson. The beach huts, I suppose there would be about 50 in all, were in colour coded blocks, ours, as you will gather, being in the brown painted section.

The beach hut was great and was the centrepiece of the holiday. It housed all our beachy stuff, deck chairs, buckets and spades, a Lilo inflatable mattress, swimming gear, towels and a canvas windbreak supported by wooden poles. We often spent the day on the beach and at lunchtime dad would light his Primus stove, the paraffin for

which he would have bought locally. This was later to be upgraded to a much cleaner and less smelly blue coloured Campingaz stove.

He or mum would warm through Baxter's Royal Game or oxtail soup to accompany Wooley's buttered breakfast rolls filled with sliced ham with a wee bit of Branston pickle. We were each given a packet of Smith's crisps, the pack containing its own blue paper salt sachet. Drinks would be cups of tea for the adults and squash or lemonade for the children, all purchased from Cooper's or Currie's shops.

'Elsie! Can you round up the children. The soup's ready.'

Licensed grocers

Cooper's 'For good things to eat!' (now occupied by Arran Inspirations) also had branches in Corrie and Whiting Bay and were general and licensed grocers.

M and J Currie Ltd or Currie's as the shop was known (now the smaller of the two Co-ops) described themselves as 'high class gro-

cers' and general merchants plying this aspect of the business on the ground floor with a splendid luncheon and tearooms at first floor level.

The latter was frequented by the parents, the men in jacket and tie and the ladies in smart clothes no matter what the temperature. The air would be filled with cigarette, cigar and pipe smoke! How things have changed. It was Arran's answer to Nardini's and The Moorings across the water in Largs.

The beach was great in those days and nothing like it is now. Many families spent all day there. Each year on a low tide the dads would either roll up their trousers or don shorts and form a 'gang' to clear stones and rocks to leave a sandy path into the sea for the convenience of the paddlers and swimmers.

We hired rowing boats from the beach hut man, Mr Henderson, either during the day or in the evening for a bit of fishing/larking about. An example of the larking about would be in the evening when we tried to row up the Rosa burn as far as we possibly could to discover its source. Most boys have the urge to become explorers.

Perhaps we watched too many films the like of King Solomon's Mines. This activity inevitably ended with us running aground in the shallows and having to take off our shoes and socks in order for us to push the boat into deeper water.

Pastime

Another beachy pastime at low tide involved the building of large circular sand defences against the incoming tide. The idea was to stay within the structure until it was overwhelmed by the tide with frantic running repairs being carried out as the water got deeper and deeper.

Eventually the sandy structure would start to yield to the pressure of the seawater and any further running repairs became futile. No one drowned but we did get very sandy and wet. The parable of the foolish man who built his house on sand springs to mind ...

See next week for part two.



The MV Glen Sannox.



The bolt which Colin has kept from the MV Glen Sannox.



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THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday March 25, 2000

Counselling for kids

Help is at hand for Arran schoolchildren who find themselves suffering from stress and anxiety. North Ayrshire has identified a unique set of problems facing young people on the island. Having faced dangerous roads, disruption to their journey to school, picketing bus drivers and, the last straw, picketing janitors, the council has at last decided to take action.

Now, with the help of European funding, they are to set up a team of counsellors to deal with the anxieties facing young people on the island. The council is acting in accordance with a new EU directive concerning the welfare of young people. This directive, which is part of a raft of guidelines, covers events which are likely to cause trauma.

North Ayrshire has recognised that Arran children with their long journey to school and the constant upsets they have had to face with industrial action have been uniquely exposed to a plethora of upsets within the past two months. Thus the first £150,000 from the fund has been ring-fenced towards counselling.

Ale for export

The first casks of the new Arran Ale have gone off to mainland pubs this week. Richard Roberts loaded it on to the ferry and, as the head brewer and director of the Arran Brewery Company, he is delighted to report that demand for his new beer is very strong and already production plans have had to be changed. The Arran Ale has been on sale on the island for the past couple of weeks and it has already been very well received with demand far outstripping supply.

Pretty potholes

An ingenious development in North Ayrshire Council's garden tidy scheme has been witnessed in Whiting Bay. A pothole at Sandbraes has been carefully planted with an immaculate lawn and a delightful display of daffodils. Brodick Nursery Gardens have also announced that they will soon be offering a range of bedding plants for your own favourite pothole. If we have to put up with them at least they can look pleasing to the eye.



Pirrmill primary school's Scottish country dance team who won the challenge shield for primary school children at the 71st Arran Music Festival on Wednesday. 01_B13tweY01



Ann McLean with her five cut daffodils which won the Royal Bank of Scotland Cup for best exhibit of the show is pictured with judge Tom Armstrong. Hazel Wood holds Malcolm Wheeler's prizewinning tub of daffodils. 01_B13tweY02



Naughty Dog played their first official gig last Saturday at Whiting Bay Hall. Made up entirely of Arran High School pupils they are, l to r, Hannah McLellan, guitar; Jenna Thomson, fiddle; Shiona Murchie, drums; Jenna Mulholland, vocals and Hannah Taylor on guitar. 01_B13tweY05

Celebrating her 100th birthday in Cooriedoon Nursing Home on Tuesday was Mrs Jenny Currie. Surrounded by family and friends she received a card from the Queen which was presented by Lady Jean Fforde. 01_B13tweY04



CalMac directors met with Arran businesses at Brambles restaurant at the Auchrannie. Among those who attended were, l to r, chief executive Captain John Simpkins, chairman Harold Mills, Brodick port manager Robbie Brown, director Jan Nicolson, former director Evelyn Sillars, commercial director Ken Duerden, Donald Bannatyne of Arran Haulage, skipper Andy McCrindle and Geoffrey Botterill of the Kilmichael Country House Hotel. 01_B13tweY03

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The Arran Historical Society

Monday Meetings and trips
The committee are sorry to
announce that they are all
cancelled until further notice

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL – GRASS CUTTING SCHEME 2020

North Ayrshire Council is now accepting applications to the Council's Grass Cutting Scheme, which is limited to grass and hedge cutting.

The scheme covers cutting grass of an area no bigger than 150 square metres and hedges where they border a path. No weeding or planting is provided for. However, we will maintain gardens to an acceptable standard up to a maximum of seven grass cuts and one hedge cut. Due to the limited number of gardens to be included on the scheme, applications will be accepted on a 'first come first served basis'.

To be eligible, the applicants must permanently reside at the property and meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be aged 75 or over
- Or aged 65 and over and in receipt of Attendance Allowance (higher rate) or free personal care
- Or aged under 65 and in receipt of DLA mobility (higher rate) or care (highest rate)
- Or aged under 65 and in receipt of PIP mobility (enhanced rate) or daily living component (enhanced rate)

To apply contact the Council online at www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/grasscuttingscheme or by telephone from Monday 16 March 2020 on 01294 310000. An assessment of eligibility will be made during the application process and payment for the scheme will be taken. The charge for the scheme is £84.00 including vat.

Applications will close on Friday 3 April 2020. Applicants from previous years are not automatically re-enrolled on the scheme and are required to re-apply. The grass cutting scheme will commence on Tuesday 14 April 2020 and terminate on Friday 9 October 2020.

Craig Hutton
Chief Executive
Cunninghame House
IRVINE KA12 8EE



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10 Adverts under the value of £75 must be paid on acceptance of order by the Publisher. All advertising on a credit basis must be agreed with the Publisher in advance.

11 Payment of any invoice raised by the Publisher will be due 15 days from the date of invoice or as otherwise directed on the invoice. In the event of non-payment the Publisher may charge late payment interest at a rate of 2% and this is chargeable on a daily basis from the due date until the bill is paid. In addition the Publisher may charge a late payment levy of £10 as an administration fee. In the event of late payment the Publisher reserves the right to disallow any discounts given and to raise an additional invoice for the discount which will be treated as though it has been raised with the original invoice.

12 A request to insert an advertisement assumes acceptance of our conditions.



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jamie Greene MSP

Member of Scottish Parliament for West Scotland Region

Jamie Greene MSP – Coronavirus Update
Whilst I've had to take the difficult decision to temporarily close the regional office and suspend surgeries, my team and I are still available to help.

If you want to get in touch or have any questions, please email: jamie.greene.msp@parliament.scot or call 0131 348 6137.

Many people will have concerns during these difficult times, please go to

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

or

<https://north-ayrshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/Coronavirus.aspx>

for official guidance on COVID-19

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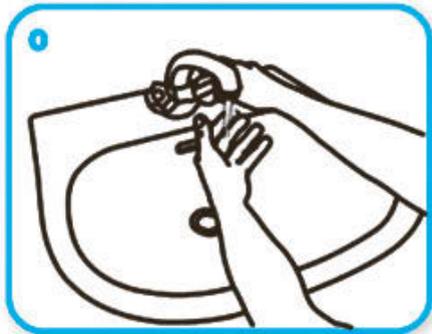
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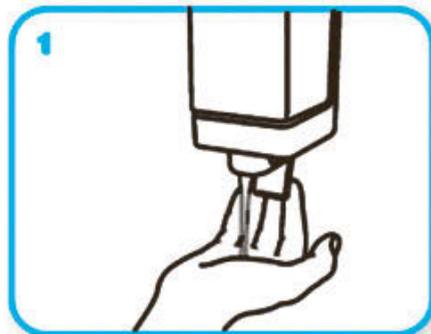
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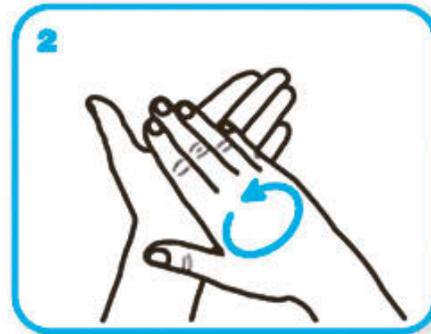
THOROUGH HAND WASHING INSTRUCTIONS



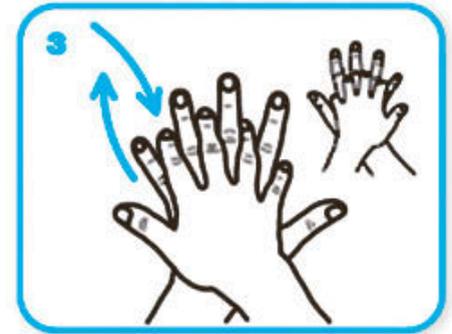
Wet hands with water



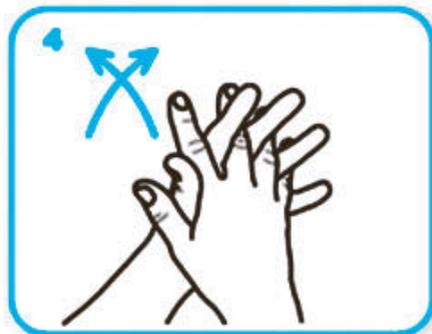
apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces.



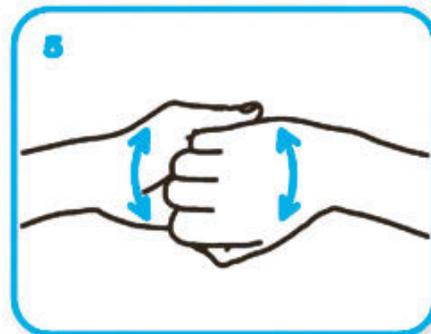
Rub hands palm to palm



right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa



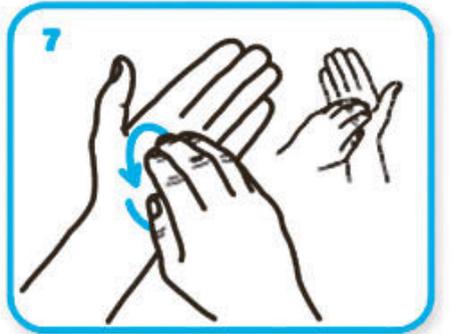
palm to palm with fingers interlaced



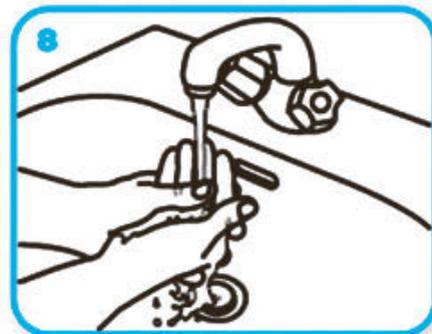
backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa



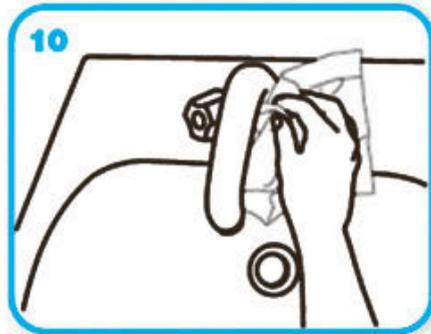
rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.



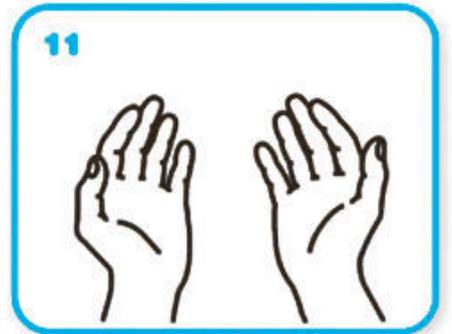
Rinse hands with water



dry thoroughly with a single use towel



use towel to turn off faucet



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CHURCH NOTICES

With regret, due to the threat of Covid-19,
**ALL CHURCH SERVICES ARE CANCELLED
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Parishes of North Arran, Brodick, Corrie, Lochranza,
Pirnmill and Shiskine

Although the Church is still closed an internet
service at 11am Sunday morning and over the
rest of the week can be received at
www.brodickchurch.com or www.stmoliosshiskine.org.uk

Please note that Brodick Church
is still accessible for the Food bank.

WHAT'S ON

28th March - 4th April 2020

EVERY DAY

Eco Savvy & Co-op Food
Share Big Co, Brodick. 6.15pm
Brodick Castle and Gardens
Open 10am - 5pm

TUESDAYS

Savvy Film Club | Online--
through Eco Savvy Facebook
Events | 7pm

Buddhist retreat closes its doors

The Buddhist retreat centre on Holy Isle has closed its doors to visitors wanting to take a course or stay on the island in order to protect the wellbeing, safety, and happiness of their visiting guests and community during the coronavirus pandemic.

All courses and accommodation booked at the Centre for World Peace and health between now and Monday May 11 have been cancelled following NHS advice to socially isolate.

The centre provides accommodation for around 60 people in single rooms and dormitories. During the summer season, from April to October, they usually host a retreat and course programme as well as a 10 week retreat in winter.

A spokesperson from the centre said: 'We recognise that, as a spiritual communi-

ty and a place of refuge, our centre has a social responsibility to protect the wellbeing, safety, and happiness of our visiting guests and residential community.

'In order to reduce the risk of infection further, we have decided to close for the foreseeable future.'

In a joint message from The Holy Isle Community on social media, a message said: 'We hope you are keeping well and safe amidst these challenging times.

'We are thinking of each of you and are sending a little invitation for us all to connect - in our hearts and minds - and dedicate our practice to the benefit of all beings.

'If you feel moved to do so, please feel free to join in any of the Holy Isle meditation and prayer sessions, which are as follows (UK time zone): 6am - 7am Green Tara, 7.30am - 8.15am Meditation, 5pm - 6pm Meditation, 7pm - 8pm Chenrezi prayers.

'This is not an online event - just a way of sharing practice and connecting throughout time and space. May all beings be well and free.'

GET INVOLVED
email us at editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Arran run events are called off

Two of Arran's biggest running events, the Ormidale 10k and the Shiskine Half Marathon, have been cancelled owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Isle of Arran Ormidale 10k, due to take place next month on Sunday April 26 and the Shiskine Half Marathon, which was scheduled to take place on Sunday June 28 are both now off.

Both of these annual events are extremely popular with runners of all abilities and they have grown in popularity in more recent years with the increasing number of local runners, while also attracting runners from all over Scotland.

Organised by Shiskine Valley Improvements, the Shiskine Half Marathon takes place on the relatively flat roads around Blackwaterfoot and attracted a healthy entry of 130 runners last year.

Among them was first place local runner Michal Bochenek who was also the first Arran runner home in the Ormidale 10k earlier in the year.

Last year's Ormidale 10k



A record entry of 105 runners set off at the start of the Ormidale 10k last year.

01_B13marathons01

attracted a record entry of 105 runners setting off from the start line under the watchful eye of long-time organiser Tommy Gilmore of Arran Runners.

Tommy said: 'Sadly, the race has had to be cancelled this year. All entrants should have been already notified and should have their entry fees refunded to their debit/

credit card accounts by, at the latest, April 12. The entry platform, Sientries, have been particularly helpful in communicating with and refunding entrants and have waived their usual administration fees and refund charges.

'The 10k was started over 30 years ago at the instigation of Colin Turbett, the Shiskine social worker and political ac-

tivist, when he was chairman of Arran Runners. Ormidale Hotel have sponsored the race since it started, helped in more recent years by Arran Shand Business Development.

'In recent years, with a growing awareness of health and safety aspects, the race could not have taken place without the help of Brodick Improvement Association, who organise stewarding for the race. We were able to donate £250 to the Brodick Improvement Association, from last year's race.

'The race, for many years, struggled along with 30 to 40 to 50 entrants, and was nearly removed from the calendar by Arran Runners. However, the race was given a boost by the Arran Banner about five or six years ago and since then the online entry system has helped to grow the number of entrants which last year amounted to 105 runners.'

Shiskine Half Marathon event organiser Sheila Gilmore said: 'Shiskine Valley Improvements look forward to inviting runners back to this popular event next year.'

Further information on both of these events can be found on the online entries portal at <https://www.sientries.co.uk> where the future event dates will also be announced.



Runners at last year's Shiskine Half Marathon start the race through Blackwaterfoot.

01_B13marathons02



Lamlash Golf Club

Thursday March 19, Yellow Medal. 1st Alan Smith 77-13=64 BIH, 2 Hugh McLelland 84-20=64.

Sunday March 22, Glenburn Cup final round. 1 Alastair Crawford 78-12=66, Derek Harrison 90-23=67. Magic

5th, Ian Bremner and Serge El Adm at 16th. Best scratch, Ian Bremner 77.

Corrie Golf Club

Monday March 22, Winter Cup. 1 R McLean 74-13=61, 2 R Burke 74-11=63. Overall winner of the Winter Cup is John McGovern with 355

(best 6 rounds). Runner-up was Len Hartley with 358, not far behind!

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Courses closed as golfers are asked to stop playing

Scottish Golf asks that all players in Scotland refrain from the sport until further notice

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Golf courses on Arran have been shutting down this week as they become the latest victims of tighter restrictions surrounding the coronavirus.

Scottish Golf, the governing body for amateur golf in the country, has asked that all golfers in Scotland refrain from playing until further notice.

The organisation, which is based at the home of golf in St Andrews, has also recommended that all affiliated golf clubs with locker room and changing facilities on site now close these at the earliest possible time.

At the time of going to press, the situation with golf clubs on Arran was as follows: Brodick – closed until further notice; Lamblash – course open but all facilities closed; Corrie – closed and Fran's Tea Room also closed; Shiskine – course open but strict guidelines imposed for players, social distancing and equipment.

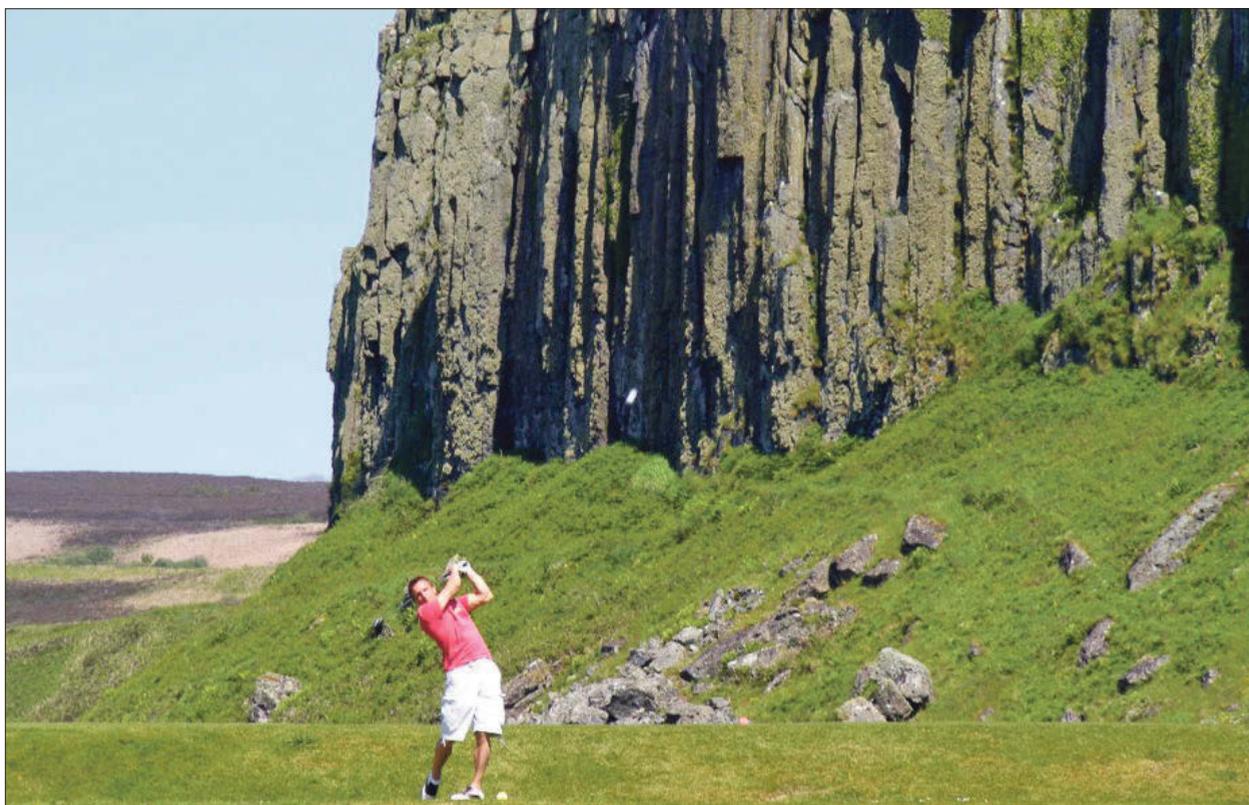
Meanwhile, Lochranza golf course is also closed.

A statement posted said: 'We're sorry to inform you that, due to government and local direction, we will not be opening Lochranza Golf and Campsite. This is in order to protect Arran and the wider community from Covid-19.'

So is Whiting Bay. A spokesman said: 'After considering the recent advice on the response to the outbreak of the coronavirus, the committee has suspended all trophy competitions at least until the end of April. The Friday night quizzes and bingo nights have been suspended. These decisions will be kept under review taking into account the ongoing advice.'

'The golf course will remain open as it will be important for all to be able to access leisure facilities especially those out in the fresh air. The clubhouse, however, will not be open to the general public until further notice.'

Machrie Bay golf course was open at the time of going to press with the following caveat: 'The cups are raised, so if the ball hits it then it is deemed as holed out. Flags



Happier times: Scottish Golf has requested that golfers refrain from golfing until further notice. Photograph: Shiskine Golf Club.

removed as are rakes. Enjoy getting out for a game but do respect your playing partners' space, keep two metres away at all times, and no shaking of hands.'

A statement issued by Scottish Golf earlier this week said: 'Scottish Golf is taking the spread of coronavirus extremely seriously. Our number one priority remains the safety and wellbeing of our community of golfers,

clubs, volunteers and staff, ensuring that everyone is able to enjoy our great sport in a safe environment.'

'While golf is an outdoor sport that allows players to exercise in the fresh air, the message to all of us is clear, we must stay home and play our part in containing the spread of Covid-19.'

'With this in mind, Scottish Golf asks that all golfers in Scotland refrain from golfing

until further notice.

'We understand that this advice will have a significant impact on golf clubs across the country and we will continue to consult with industry partners to provide clubs with all information and support possible during this time of deep uncertainty.'

'We know that these decisions are difficult ones to make, but right now, it is our shared responsibility

to prioritise the health of our local communities by working together to follow the government guidelines. In doing so, this will ensure that we get the opportunity to play the game that we all love as soon as it is safe to do so.'

Scottish Golf will continue to provide updates regarding golfing in Scotland on their website at <https://scottish-golf.org/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/>

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