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# Complacency warning as island opens to visitors

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

Concern is growing that Arran could be hit by a second outbreak of coronavirus as the island opens up to the outside world.

There has not been a new case of Covid-19 on the island for 10 weeks and health chiefs are concerned that the islanders have become complacent in sticking to the current rules and guidelines of the Scottish government's route map.

This is particularly worrying given the relaxation in ferry travel on Wednesday which has seen many residents travelling to the mainland for the first time in months, and the arrival of the first tourists and second home owners this weekend.

As a result an urgent public health message is being produced to re-emphasise compliance with the rules and guidance. And a visitor message is also being compiled by the Arran Recovery Group conveying that Arran is

Covid-19 free and that the island is depending on everyone, visitors and residents, to keep it that way.

Chairman Tom Tracey told the Banner: 'If we are expecting a high degree of compliance from visitors, we need to start demonstrating it ourselves.'

**There was a scramble for ferry tickets when the new timetable opened for bookings.**

Talks are also ongoing with a view to expanding Arran's new Covid-19 testing centre at Brodick Health Centre to accommodate visitors, if needed.

Meanwhile, there was a scramble for ferry tickets when the new relaxed timetable opened for bookings on Tuesday. Queuing started at Brodick Ferry Terminal half an hour before it opened at 9am and the, socially distanced, queue was soon half-way round the

terminal building. Other customers said they spent hours online or made many calls or faced long holds on the telephone to get a precious booking. The first visitors were also trying to book on the mainland with the Auchrannie Resort lodges and retreats reopening today (Friday) along with other self-catering accommodation.

The numbers seem fairly limited on the first weekend but it is expected to be much busier from next weekend, ahead of hotels, restaurants, bars and the rest of the tourism sector opening from July 15. Beer gardens can open from Monday.

There has been widespread condemnation of CalMac's 14-day rolling window booking system which extends daily, but is frustrating holidaymakers who can only book the outward leg of their trip and not the return at the same time.

However, the Banner understands this procedure was agreed to allow residents an

Turn to page two.

## Heading for the big school



These Shiskine pupils attend their socially distanced P7 assembly on their last day at primary school. In the school awards, the Lilian Tod Endeavor Award was presented to Sophie Turner and the Irene Markham Performance Award went to Andrew Currie. The other pupils leaving are Olivia McNeice, Rhea Webster, Emma Henderson and Ben McCarthy. Teachers and staff wish this year's P7s all the very best for moving on to Arran High School in August. The school are also saying goodbye to Mrs Nelson who was covering Mrs Adamson's maternity leave.

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# Mandatory face covering for ferry and hospital visits

by Hugh Boag  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk

Prevent the spread of coronavirus by wearing a face covering, is the simple message coming from ferry operator CalMac.

The Scottish Government issued new guidelines last week that face coverings are mandatory when travelling on an enclosed area of a ferry. Such face coverings, according to the World Health Organisation, offer protection to other people from the Covid-19 virus.

CalMac's director of operations, Robert Morrison, said: 'Wearing a face covering on an enclosed area of a ferry is now mandatory with a few exceptions for medical or physical conditions.'

'By covering your nose and mouth you are showing that you care for other passengers and our staff, providing you with a service. I'd strongly urge



Face covering is mandatory for those travelling on the ferry.

passengers to abide by the new guideline and help keep our island communities safe.'

'Health experts say the evidence is now clear that face coverings can help prevent the spread of Covid-19 and that the more people wearing them, the better.'

Meanwhile, anyone visiting hospitals will now be asked to wear a face covering throughout their visit. This includes when attending hospital appointments. Professor Hazel Borland, nurse director, explained: 'Anyone visiting our hospitals

will notice that staff in clinical areas - for example, wards or outpatient departments - will be wearing face masks. However, we now need to expand on this to include anyone visiting a clinical area.'

'So, if you are visiting the hospital or have an outpatient

appointment, be prepared, and wear a face covering. This doesn't need to be a surgical mask, but a fabric face covering of the type recommended by the Scottish Government

for use on public transport.

If you come to the hospital without a face covering, we will be able to provide you with one. However, it is better if you bring your own.'

## Dealing with medical appointments

Following concern from residents that they are unable to attend medical appointments on the mainland, a new procedure has been drawn up to help.

Patients had complained they had been unable to go to urgent appointments as, while they could get there, there was no guarantee of a return ferry on the same day, leaving them stranded on the mainland.

Now the Arran Recovery Group are advising patients to follow the process below after they receive notification for a mainland medical appointment.

- Patient goes online to book ferry for appointment including return journey.
- If patient is unable to book outward and return journey they contact local CalMac office to sort out.
- If unable to do this, contact Arran Medical Group about it, the reception team will pass the message to the Practice Manager who will contact the Port Manager.

## Bored and Stuck at Home?

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## Don't be complacent warning as Arran opens for visitors

Continued from page one.

an opportunity to book short-term travel and ensure essential services and supplies are being assured. All foot passengers are also strongly advised to book.

The biggest challenge to CalMac is capacity, given the government's continued insistence of the two metre social distancing rule, but they say they are ready to move quickly if this changed yesterday.

Talks are also continuing with groups, including the Arran Ferry Committee, on extending the use of outdoor space to extend capacity. And that remains key if Arran is to have any viable tourism in 2020 with businesses arguing that they need 50 per cent of 2019 passenger levels to survive.

As recovery group plan states: 'We are currently 55 per cent behind last year's tourist revenue with the balance depending on achieving the requested capacity and a booking/ticketing system, both at best, uncertain. We will continue to work on this and, in parallel, we need the government, at all levels, to urgently establish



A long queue snaked half way round the Brodick terminal building after bookings open on Tuesday. 01\_B27booking02

an Island Survival Plan.' The next phase of the extended timetable was due to have been published yesterday (Thursday), after the Banner went to press. This will run from July 15 and cover the rest of the summer season till October. It will see the arrival of the second ferry, the MV Isle of Arran on the Ardrossan to Brodick route giving nine return sailings a day. The Claonaig to Lochranza service also resumes on that day but will not be bookable at present, although car passengers will remain in their cars to allow additional foot passenger capacity.

Ironically, as a result, the much smaller MV Catriona may have more capacity than the MV Caledonian Isles.

A CalMac spokesman said: 'We are managing our bookings on a rolling two-week window because this allows us to carry the optimal number of passengers while implementing official social distancing guidelines. They're designed to keep customers and crew safe, and they dictate the number of passengers we can carry. Our capacity per vessel is limited because of these safety measures. Should they change, our capacity per vessel will also change.'

# Arran shoppers offered a whole new retail experience

As Arran continues to emerge from the shadow of lockdown it was great to see the reopening this week of many non-essential retail shops.

But customers are finding it is a whole new experience, with hand sanitiser and plastic screens the norm and all staff wearing facemasks. More and more customers, too, appear to be following Scottish Government advice about wearing face coverings in shops, but it is not mandatory. Many reported brisk trade

after opening their doors on Monday, although this steadied as the week progressed.

However, as Andrew Walsh said at Arran's biggest independent store, Arran Active: 'I am just pleased to have the doors open at all as business is one per cent of what it was at this time last year.'

#### Popular

'Some people are coming into browse but a lot are coming in for something specific with the new shoe department upstairs proving particularly popular.'

Next door at Driftwood, Lynn Raeburn has also had a steady turnover of customers. She said: 'I cannot thank the local people enough for coming out and supporting the island's small retailers this week. Hopefully this is just the start of some better times.'

With the first self-catering visitors and second home owners arriving this weekend and tourism opening fully from July 15, the retailers certainly hope they can salvage some of the summer trade.



Lynn Raeburn welcomes back shoppers outside Driftwood. 01\_B27shops03

Trying on walking shoes at the new shoe department at Arran Active. 01\_B27shops02

## Island furlough should be extended

Arran's MP Patricia Gibson has urged the UK Government to prolong furlough for island businesses as we work to ease lockdown restrictions and rebuild our island economies.

Mrs Gibson made her call in a parliamentary petition to the House of Commons highlighting the precarious position islands are in as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, not least because of the higher proportion of older people who live there and the dependency of islands on tourism.

She said: 'For Arran, this has been a particularly challenging time. Quite rightly, lockdown saw visits to Arran cease. Understandably, this had a devastating impact on the tourism and hospitality sectors, which provide the bulk of employment available to working-age residents.'

'Exiting lockdown will be slower for Arran than on the mainland, as ferry capacity will

be restricted to ensure social distancing in order to protect public health. This presents an unprecedented economic threat and clearly leaves the island at a disadvantage.'

'Many hitherto profitable businesses are at risk. The planned reduction in UK government support for businesses furloughed workers from August 1, along with businesses being once more responsible for pension and National Insurance contributions is unsustainable and will inevitably lead to an increase in unemployment in sectors reliant on the summer trade.'

'In order to sustain businesses and save jobs, the UK government must act to support our island economies at this critical time. As all islands in the UK are likely to suffer to a similar degree, my petition calls on an extension of furlough to include them all, until our island economies are back on their feet.'



A very different welcome for shoppers at Arran Active as a masked Abbie McKelvie offers hand sanitiser and advice on browsing.

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# Top marks for Arran High in new inspection report

Arran High School provides a 'positive, caring and respectful' environment for its learners, according to a new report, writes Hugh Boag.

The school has been praised following a visit by inspectors from Education Scotland in February, who have rated the school 'good' across its quality indicators.

Acting head teacher Susan Foster said: 'This report reflects extremely well on the work of everyone here at Arran high.'

'As we finalise our plans for the safe reopening in August, we hope our young people, their parents/carers, our staff and the wider school community takes comfort in this report by Education Scotland who has evaluated our school as "good" in key quality indicators.'

'I am also pleased to see that, with regards to areas of improvement, we have been asked to continue with the work already under way. This shows our priorities are appropriate and will lead to further improvements in the months and years ahead.'

'I am grateful to all members



Arran High School gets a good report card.

of our school community not only for their ongoing work which has contributed to Arran high being recognised in this way, but for their support and understanding during these difficult times.'

'We can't wait to celebrate with everyone when the time is right. But for now, we want to assure all in our school community that we are doing everything we can to prepare for the safe return of our young people next term.'

The team of inspectors praised the strong leadership within the school and were

impressed with how well the staff work together and use research to improve learning and teaching.

As a result, the young people at Arran High were found to engage well in their learning and a consistently high proportion of them move on to higher education or employment upon leaving.

Only two areas for improvement were identified in the report – both of which recognised that the school was already addressing these areas. One recommendation was that the school 'continue to develop

and embed refocused approaches to improve learning and teaching.'

Inspectors also suggest that the school continues to raise the attainment and achievement of young people at all stages.

Based on these findings, Education Scotland confirmed they are 'confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve' and will not be making any further visits in connection with the inspection.

North Ayrshire councillor John Bell, cabinet member

for education, said: 'We are delighted with the report and would like to congratulate everyone at Arran High School on achieving such a positive result.'

'To achieve "good" ratings shows both the dedication of staff and the commitment of pupils and is to be commended.'

Last month Arran High received national praise when they were shortlisted for a prestigious Scottish Education Award, as previously reported in Banner. The award recognises the creation of their three-year strategy covering all areas of health and wellbeing, ensuring the island community has consistent local access to support in these areas without having to rely solely on mainland services.

## Council is praised for innovation

A major new report shows that North Ayrshire Council is delivering value-for-money services to its local communities.

The best value assurance report investigates whether the council is meeting the highest standards of governance and financial stewardship, as well as providing value in using its resources and providing services.

Audit Scotland visited the council over several weeks last year before drawing up their newly-published report, which has now been approved by the Accounts Commission.

As part of their considerations, auditors described the report as one of the best delivered on a council in recent years.

It says the council has made continuous improvement since the last Best Value report in 2011 and it continues to be innovative in providing value-for-money services to the residents of North Ayrshire.

Council chief executive Craig Hatton said: 'We're delighted with the report – it's a reflection of the effort and hard work put in by staff across the council over a number of years.'

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# All the fun of the Fèis from your front room



The Fèis Arainn committee are delighted to announce that their annual Fèis is going ahead this July.

All the tutorials will be online and will go up on their YouTube page on Monday July 27 and will remain there for two weeks.



There will be no stage setting for the concert finale this year. 01\_B27feis01

This means you can access them at a time which suits you and do them again if you feel like it.

There is something for everyone, from beginners to more advanced players. There will also be a concert with tutors and participants.

Organiser Maggie Frame told the Banner: 'There is no charge or need to register but there will be a donate button on our website [www.feisarainn.com](http://www.feisarainn.com) and on our YouTube page.'

We still need to pay our wonderful tutors a decent fee for all their hard work in preparing the tutorials and recording them.

'We hope you all get online on Monday July 27 and enjoy all the fun of the Fèis.'

Keep up to date by looking on the Fèis Arainn Facebook page where there is also a Gaelic place names quiz running – with a prize to be awarded at the end of the Fèis.

Also for all the information on subjects and tutorials check out the website, [www.feisarainn.com](http://www.feisarainn.com)

Meanwhile, are you trying to learn some Gaelic? Here's a chance to try it out with some simple phrases and fun activi-



The group art class at last year's Feis will be held online this year. 01\_B27feis02

ties from Artair Donald. He's produced an online tutorial for beginners and it will go up on Fèis Arainn's YouTube channel on Saturday July 11 and will

remain there for a week so plenty of time to have fun and practise.

Resources you might want to have handy are: paper and

pens, a glove, two ping pong balls and some string or elasticated material and a black marker but, don't worry, for puppets all you need is hands.

## Patients asked views on GP video consultations

People across Ayrshire and Arran are being asked for their views on how health and care services might be delivered remotely in the future.

The use of video consultations in Scotland has rapidly escalated since the Covid-19 pandemic started. Prior to March, there were around 300 video consultations using the Near Me system; by June, there were almost 17,000 every week, with around 150,000 in total.

In Ayrshire and Arran, the numbers have risen in this period from 12 to 592 per week, with 4,816 in total.

Now, the Scottish Government team behind Near Me has launched a major engagement exercise to find out what people think about how the system might be improved for the future.

The Government's vision is that all health and care consultations in Scotland are provided by Near Me whenever it is appropriate – and it is seeking views on that vision.

The Near Me team – part of a national programme known as technology enabled care – is looking for feedback through



A cartoon of a virtual consultation with a GP.

a survey which can be completed online. There is also the option to feedback by email or by phone.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran's nurse director, Professor Hazel Borland, said: 'It is important that we plan now for the future post-Covid 19 – and residents in Ayrshire and Arran can help shape that by getting involved with this public survey.

This is a chance for local people to consider the Scottish Government's Near Me vision and give their feedback on it.'

The survey, which can be accessed at [www.nearme.scot/views](http://www.nearme.scot/views), asks a range of

questions relating to Near Me. For example, it asks if people are comfortable with the idea of using more video consulting for health and care appointments; if there are any barriers to them using Near Me and if they have been using video technology to stay socially connected with friends and family.

It is intended to publish the survey's findings alongside other feed-back, which will then influence the future use of Near Me. The Near Me public engagement exercise is now underway and will run until Friday July 24.

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# LETTERS

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

## Welcome back

Well the time has arrived, which we knew it must, when visitors will this weekend be welcomed back on to the island.

At least for the time being it will be a trickle rather than a flood due to ferry capacity still seriously restricted. It will also only be those self-catering ... but it is a start.

The real test will come in less than two weeks time with Wednesday July 15 – the date which all of the islands tourist trade will be open for business. For them it cannot come soon enough and the fight goes on for increased ferry capacity to make it viable.

All the better then that islanders are being reminded now that they cannot be complacent despite the relatively easy ride Arran has had during this rollercoaster of a coronavirus pandemic.

And if anyone was in any doubt that we are out of the woods look at Leicester and nearer to home the cross-border cluster of cases which has been identified this week in Dumfries and Galloway.

And the Arran Recovery Group are right – how can we expect visitors to comply with the rules and guidelines, if they are being ignored, or at least not being given the respect they deserve to keep us all safe, on the island.

There is no doubt challenges lie ahead in the weeks and months for all of us, but to get the island economy back up and running safely is in everyone's interests.

And to the visitors we say thank you for coming back.

## Thought for the week

'The Lord watches over the stranger in the land; he upholds the orphan and widow; but the way of the wicked he turns upside down.' Psalm 146:9

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## Education fears

Sir,

The Scottish Government would have us believe that it is being very cautious in its approach to relaxing lockdown. The opposite is the case. It is being very reckless with the future of the Scottish people, the Scottish economy, and perhaps most of all, Scottish schoolchildren.

In seeking to restrict risk from the virus, the SNP government is risking the health and welfare of Scots who cannot go about their business affairs, make medical and dental visits, or socialise. Yes, all these things would lead to slightly higher virus risk, but there are many other risks (including poverty) to mental and physical health which accelerated lockdown would reduce or eliminate. Note, incidentally, that there has been no spike in infections after the demonstrations in parts of England totally ignored social distancing.

All this is true even without the Scottish Government, trading as CalMac, strangling Arran's economy and causing total confusion among us as to what can and cannot be arranged.

The first minister has claimed more than once that education is her first priority. Her actions tell a different story. It is a disgrace that schools are closed, and will remain so until mid-August.

It is clear from experience in this country and all over the world that the risks from The virus to schoolchildren are trivially low. Not, admittedly, zero – but certainly lower than the risks involved in travelling to and from school, which we accept without question. By comparison, the risks to schoolchildren of denying them a large chunk of schooling are alarming.

Research by the UCL Institute of Education regarding behaviour during lockdown shows that children qualifying for free school meals are only half as likely to spend four or more hours a day on schoolwork as those who do not qualify. In all 31 per cent of private schools are offering four or more hours per day of live on-line lessons, against only six per cent of state schools. Within England, 28 per cent of children in the prosperous SE are doing four or more hours of schoolwork per day, against nine per cent in the more deprived NE.

Those who need the most help to gain some sort of social mobility are actually getting the least. And all this, of course, is in addition to the fact that Scotland's educational record by international (OECD) comparison has been poor and declining for years, and is now worse than that in England.

Almost five years ago the first minister

demanded that she be judged by her record on education, and in particular in closing the educational attainment gap. Yes, please.

Yours,

**Richard S Henderson,  
Lochranza.**

## Waverley trips

Sir,

Although, rightly, much has been discussed about the ferry connections, I'm curious to know the thoughts on Waverley sailings, if they will happen later in the summer and her calls at Brodick and Lochranza.

As almost all passengers on the ship are day trippers and may get off at Brodick for a couple of hours or Lochranza for an hour and having read previously that only people staying on the island for a couple of nights or more would be allowed, has this idea been dropped?

Yours,

**James McIntosh,  
Ayr.**

## Best option

Sir,

My family and I have been visiting Arran for many years, now my grandchild comes too. Many years ago we considered buying a small property on Arran as we come three to four times a year. However, this did not sit happily with us, not wishing to deprive young families of local accommodation.

We now co-own eight weeks on Arran, at the Auchrannie, having bought weeks over the years, since 1993. We have the great advantage of our 'holiday home' being used by us only when we want to. We pay maintenance for each week we own and it is looked after and cleaned for our arrival. Thank you to Iain and Linda Johnston for their vision and hard work over the years.

This year we have missed three weeks of our allocation, but obviously still contribute to the costs, and hopefully we'll be back again soon, when it is safe for everyone.

I believe we have the best option for our holidays on Arran.

**Julie and David Laxton,  
Ilkley,  
West Yorkshire.**

## A delightful sweet treat

The Banner had a delightful treat this week when, on leaving the office, I found a bag of



**The bag of sweets left on The Banner windowsill. 01\_B27sweets01**

sweets on the office windowsill with a note urging 'open me please'.

Inside was a handwritten note which read:

*Young or old, big or small, if you find this bag of goodies, please enjoy them all.*

*And always remember how awesome you are, for staying strong and getting this far.*

*Lockdown has been hard that is surely true, but I want to let you know I am proud of you.*

*Life is different now, this I definitely know, but I believe that you can use this time to grow.*

*Hopefully it won't be long until things feel normal again, when we can finally come together to make memories with our friends.*

*Keep you head held high and keep on pushing through, you're an inspiration and I believe in you.*

**Love and hugs  
Sian xxx**

It certainly made my day and the sweets are all eaten!

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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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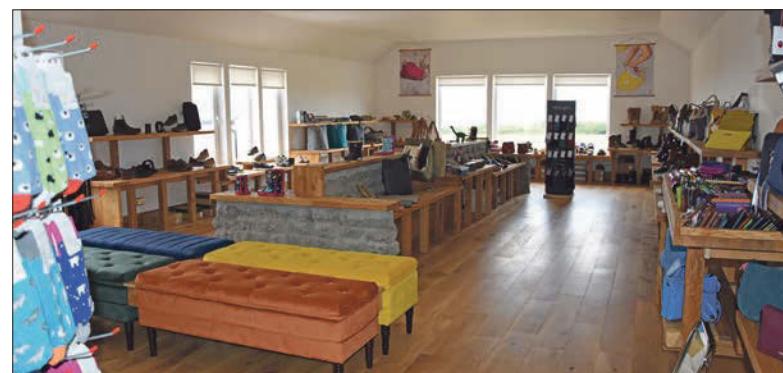
# The Shoe Bothy opens at the Old Byre

An exciting new shoe shop is the latest attraction at The Old Byre Visitor Centre which already hosts the Old Byre Showroom, Café Thyme and a large children's play area at Machrie.

Lorna and Hamza Gunaydi decided to expand the business in order to improve the visitor experience and offer more to see and do on the west side of the island. Why shoes? Well it seemed like the natural progression from the clothing side of the business. It can be a hassle going to the mainland for shoes, especially with children, and let's face it everyone needs shoes.

The Shoe Bothy is a completely new building, sitting where there once was a house and byre but which had been ruins for years. Hamza set to work in 2018 and did the majority of the build himself, getting builders in to help with foundations and roofing.

Inside is large and spacious and offers ladies, gents and children's shoes and boots. They have brought brands in from Turkey, all ethically



The spacious interior of The Shoe Bothy.  
01\_B27shoes01

sourced with good working practises. There are also Start-Rite school shoes in different widths and Dubarry shoes and boots, together with some other British brands.

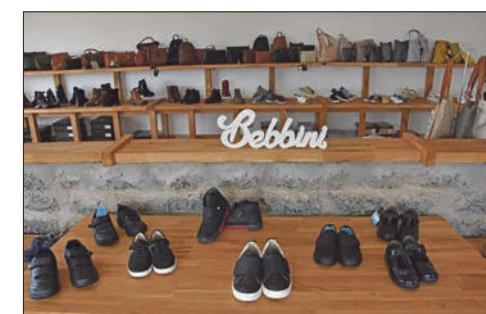
Covid-19 hit at the worst time preventing the opening of the Shoe Bothy at Easter. Lorna and Hamza were relying on Easter trade to move the business on and many of the shoe factories closed down. They managed to come through this, however, and have many more shoes and sandals on their way.

They have also used this time to revamp the Old Byre Showroom which now has a new look. Back in 2013 Snowmageddon prevented Café Thyme from opening at Easter, so it shows that no obstacle will stop this family business – their drive, passion and hard work shows.

A visit to the Old Byre Visitor Centre is a must both for locals and visitors, there's a wide range of clothing, homeware, handbags, shoes and slippers, good food from Café Thyme, a place for the kids to let off steam and amazing views.



Social distancing and hand sanitising measures are in place. 01\_B27shoes03



The school shoe display in the new shop  
01\_B27shoes02

## A spirit of Arran for these unique times

Isle of Arran Distillers Ltd has laid the groundwork to create a unique blended malt by filling casks with new spirit from both their Lagg and Lochranza distilleries.

The independent Scotch whisky company owns and operates two distilleries on Arran; Lochranza Distillery in the north and Lagg Distillery in the south. In March this year both distilleries underwent a period of closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

When the distilleries began production again on May 11 following this short period of closure, the first runs of new

spirit from each distillery were vatted together. This precious mix, combining both heavily-peated and un-peated spirit, was filled into bourbon barrels, sherry hogsheads and sherry butts at their Lochranza Distillery. These unusual casks will now slumber on the island until the time is right for bottling as a future blended malt.

This is a particularly interesting project to mark this unique moment in time. As an island whisky producer, Isle of Arran Distillers is in the rare position of owning a lowland and a highland distillery both based on one island off the west coast

of Scotland. The DNA of the two distilleries is inextricably linked through their island connection and the flavour profile of the future blended malt whisky is bound to create something very special with which to remember this period in history.

Director of operations and production for Lagg and Lochranza distilleries, James MacTaggart said: "This is a first for Arran. We are aware of blended malts where the whisky from one distillery is married with that of another, or blended whiskies created by mixing grain with malt whisky, however this is the first time that we know of malt whisky from two sister distilleries being blended at the spirit stage."

"As the owners of these two wonderful distilleries, we felt it was right to join the two sides of our island together and produce a whisky that would always be a marker for this unique period in time."

Sales manager, Andy Bell added: "I am proud to have played a part in creating this truly unique blend, and will follow with interest as these casks mature. The experimentation at the heart of this process speaks to the truly independent nature of our company."



Andy Bell and James MacTaggart pictured with Cask No 1 when the Lagg distillery first opened.

**Old Byre Visitor Centre, Machrie**  
Tel: 01770 840227 [www.oldbyre.co.uk](http://www.oldbyre.co.uk)

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**We look forward to welcoming you back**

All together &gt;

# Veterans on frontline

Veterans are providing vital skills across a range of projects to help the country tackle the current coronavirus outbreak.

From helping to build Nightingale Hospitals to delivering essential supplies to those who are shielding, they have helped thousands of people across the country. We take a look at how one such veteran is helping out.

THIS IS not the first time former soldier Joshua Ryder has seen a pandemic close up, having volunteered to visit Sierra Leone during the West African Ebola virus outbreak.

The 30-year-old worked in what was known as a "red zone" in Kerry Town, 19 miles from capital Freetown.

As a member of Royal Army Medical Core, he worked as a combat medical technician, receiving awards for Top Trainee and Adult Learner of the Year.

Joshua said: "We treated patients with confirmed or suspected Ebola. The symptoms are similar to those of malaria and gastroenteritis.

"We triaged and tested patients to determine whether they had these or Ebola."

The West African outbreak began in 2014, ending in Sierra Leone in 2016.

Two-and-a-half years after the first case was discovered, the outbreak resulted in more than 28,600 cases with 11,325 deaths.

Such was the volatility of the strain – most widespread outbreak of the disease in history – Joshua was only allowed to work in the area for 30 days.

He said: "I loved the country. It has some beautiful sights and the people are really friendly."

"It was sad to see the

devastation caused by the pandemic. We didn't only focus on the pandemic. We visited orphanages and helped build something for the country.

"It was moving to see the children who lost their parents to the virus."

During the coronavirus outbreak he is again working, but the environment could not be more different.

Having left the army in 2018, he is now a trainee nursing associate on a Midlands Partnership NHS Trust acute mental health ward in Stafford.

Joshua, who is father to Tia, aged 12, and her 10-year-old sister Lola, said: "Day to day I am more involved with the physical well-being of the patients – calming them, making physical observations, doing ECGs and bloods.

"I go to Keele University one day a week and am due to start my second year in September."

It was Joshua's experiences and expertise in the army that led him to the NHS in general, and mental health in particular.

He said: "I have worked in demanding conditions in various locations around the world. I am adaptable to suit many environments and job roles."

In the military he saw firsthand soldiers suffering poor mental health. One of



his friends, also serving in the army, committed suicide.

He said: "I entered the NHS through the Step into Health programme, which has been brilliant.

"I was able to show them what I had done and my

experiences counted. There was a lot of competition for the Trainee Nursing Associate place.

"I have been able to prove myself and have had really positive feedback.

"I won an award for

Outstanding Impact Since Joining the NHS at the programme's first ceremony."

Joshua is helping to treat patients through more difficult times than usual.

"We are doing absolutely brilliantly," he said. "It would

be abnormal, with all the constant changes, if we did not experience stress and anxiety.

"We have adapted and made changes.

"Here our patients have been brilliant.

"We have got a good team



**TESTING TIME:** A member of the armed services carries out a swab to detect Covid-19.

## How military knowledge

FORMER SERVICE personnel have helped different communities deal with all manner of problems, making urgent deliveries of food and medicines to vulnerable people while also helping those who are shielding receive what they need.

Many others have helped ensure those who need a test for the virus have been

able to get one by setting up mobile testing sites, allowing them to run smoothly and safely to daily test thousands of people with symptoms.

A lot of this work has required specific skills our veterans have learnt throughout years of military service.

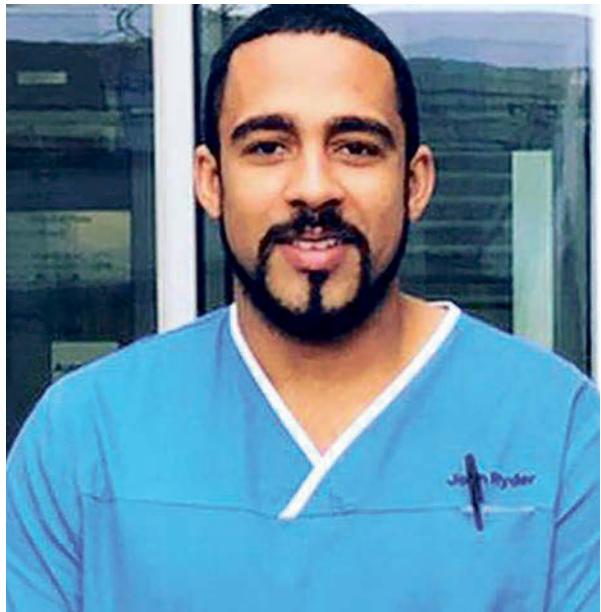
The work of these veterans goes to show the military gives you key skills, transferable to

civilian life – be it healthcare, business or organisation.

Veterans form an important part of our NHS workforce and, throughout COVID-19, many more have come forward to support the continued fight against this pandemic.

Working across a variety of roles, both on and off the frontline, the NHS has benefitted from their military

# tackling coronavirus



**WELL DONE:** Joshua Ryder receives Outstanding Impact Since Joining The NHS award from Career Transition Partnership Head of Employment Lorraine Cadle and NHS Employers Chief Executive Danny Mortimer at March's Step into Health Awards, attended by Prince William. (photo: NHS Employers)

here, a good mix of people with different skills. We all support each other and do everything we can for our patients."

Joshua has also been a volunteer with men's mental health charity Men Unite, supporting males in crisis.

He ran a half marathon last year to raise £500 for Mental Health UK.

"And this month I am running 100 miles, having so far raised £795 for the same charity through JustGiving," he said.

## helps the public

expertise and experiences, invaluable at this challenging time.

From redesigning hospital departments to safely supporting virus and non-virus patients, to providing care for those in Nightingale Hospitals and supporting nurses using military mental health resilience techniques, vets have once again served our country with pride. This

is in addition to many who have continued to work in dedicated NHS services for ex-service personnel, such as Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service and Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service to ensure care and treatment remains available throughout this period, virtually or via phone.

## Fantastic skills of armed forces

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer, pictured right, said: "Those who've served in the armed forces have developed a vast array of skills during their

career, meaning they can play a huge part now in our national effort to tackle coronavirus.

"We have seen many veterans making a fantastic contribution during the

pandemic, through helping out the vulnerable in their local communities, to running mobile testing sites nationally. We cannot thank them enough for their efforts."



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# Third age university is thriving



Angie Wright delivers a mask to Tom who is shielding.

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When all U3A – University of the Third Age – meetings were cancelled shortly before only their second monthly meeting on Arran, many of the 125 members were concerned that nothing could be done.

There had been so much activity and excitement and people had just started their new activities. Some people were very worried that they would lose touch with new and old friends. Many found themselves living at home on their own miles from family and friends. Already U3A was helping some deal with loneliness and all learn new skills through the 27 active groups that had been formed in the three months since the organisation was founded in Arran.

#### Flurry

Shortly before lockdown started, the leaders, all voluntary, decided that as many topics as possible would continue. The Isle of Arran U3A was not going to give up in its infancy.

There was a flurry of committee meetings which continued on email when lockdown became mandatory. Now leaders were encouraged to find ways

to carry on the work. They were enthusiastic and anxious to keep going following the relationships already made.

However, the work of the U3A has gone much further than that, as they have supported the wider community, particular those who are shielding as a number of the leaders are. Even before the Hub was set up members were given training in the use of PPE equipment and in keeping themselves as well as every one else safe. They made food deliveries, shopping trips, medicine collections and even collected and delivered seedlings and cuttings to other members. Some U3A members also signed up for the Hub when it began and simply did whatever was needed with either U3A or the Hub.

When Barb Taub decided to make masks we discovered she had a need for material. U3A members donated masses of suitable material and their volunteers collected it from all round the island and delivered it to Barb. The mask kits would be cut and then volunteers would help deliver them to the communi-

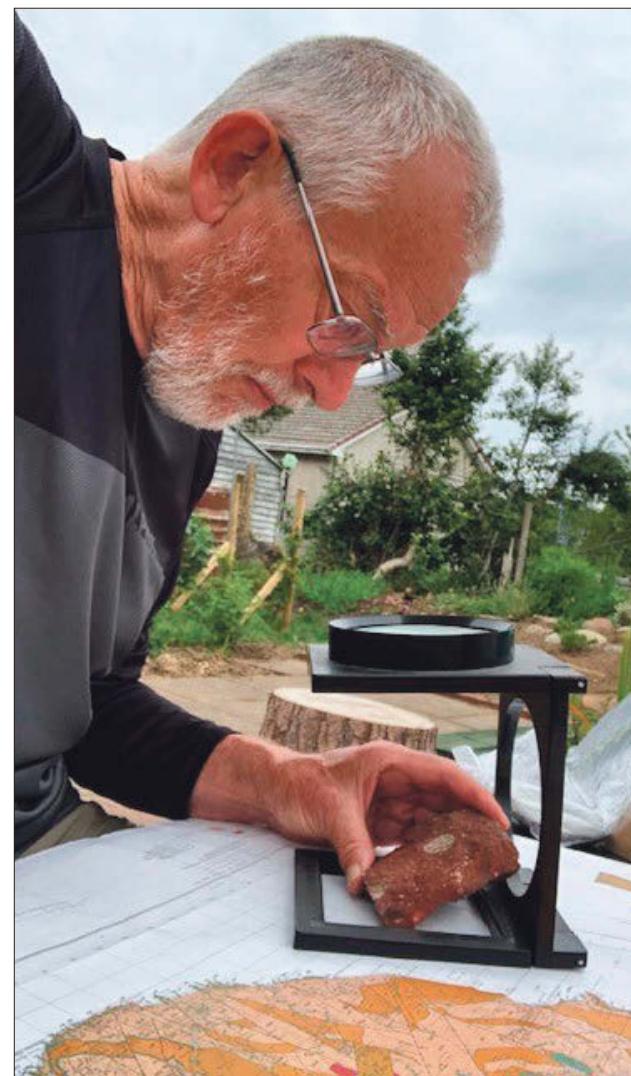
ty volunteers who were sewing them. Many members helped with the sewing and then delivered masks to the hospital, medical group, care homes, Co-op, other shops and essential workers and eventually to the wider community.

#### Updates

Amanda Grindall, one of the mask makers, also prints out updates and distributes them through the Blackwaterfoot shop which delivers them with the shopping to members who do not have internet access. She also set up the gardening Facebook page and drives her tractor in the NHS thank you parade each Thursday in Shiskine.

Shielding members have been checking and chatting with members who live alone, as well as running groups where possible. Isle of Arran U3A is very proud of all the volunteers who, like those from the Hub and other community members, use their own cars and fuel to help even at short notice.

During lockdown we were asked by the UK National U3A to take part in a film which was commissioned to form a record



Robin Barden, geology leader, examines a rock.



George Christie takes a picture with a macro lens.



George Christie on the phone to one of the genealogy group.

# g in lockdown

of what U3A members did during the lockdown. The national office was very surprised to find the Arran U3A doing so much and keeping so many groups going. Videos and still photographs were taken and forwarded to the professional filmmaker on line.

The Isle of Arran U3A website has a constant stream of visitors and has actually added membership during lockdown. Joan Martin, U3A treasurer set up and maintains the website as well as a Facebook page. She has a lot of interesting information and pictures about this young U3A as well as forms for joining etc.

#### Comments

More than 50 photographs have already been posted on the website from the photovisions group. The 12 members email photographs to the leader, Mairi Christie, and each other and comments are discussed on email. They have a different subject each month. If you see people wandering around gazing at the skies, they are probably from the photovisions group, who are taking pictures of clouds this month!

It is planned to get all the groups going normally as soon as possible and safe. Indications are that people are really keen to meet up again. The smaller groups will not find it so difficult but the monthly meetings will have to wait. We don't have a hall on the island which could take everyone with social distancing. In all 12 groups have managed to continue working during lockdown due to the ingenuity and dedication of their leaders and the enthusiasm and commitment of members.

#### Dancing group

They have met online, communicated through email, conferencing and other social media, and kept in touch with their members through regular telephone conversations. Indeed most members of the 27 groups are still in touch with each other.

Ongoing groups, in addition to photovisions, include the ukulele group which is led by Tim Howarth through telephone conferencing and email; Robin Barnden has arranged online workshops with Stuart Blake for his group of six doing geology; Paul Fletcher supports his internet

Mairi S Christie



Paul Fletcher, left, who leads Italian, and Mairi Christie who teaches fiddle.



Amanda Grindall on her tractor thanking the NHS in Shiskine.



Amanda Grindall in her garden.



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# Saving water on Arran? Really? Encouraging householders to save water

Did you know that Scottish Water has teamed up with Home Energy Scotland and Arran Eco Savvy to offer householders on Arran free water saving packs? Whatever the weather, these packs will help you to save water, energy and money – as well as protect your local water resources.

The free packs include gadgets like shower timers, eco-showerheads, toilet cistern devices and tap aerators, depending on the suitability for each home. With heating water in the home making up a fifth of the average household heating bill, saving water can help save energy and money too!

Elaine Hutchison, Water Resource Planning Team Leader at Scottish Water explains: "Each person in Scotland uses

about 165 litres of water every day. With a population of around 4,500, households on Arran collectively use about 270 million litres of water a year, all of which is taken from local rivers and groundwater sources."

"It's important to save water all year round. Even if it looks like a 'dreich' day outside, it doesn't mean it is raining somewhere we have access to, or at a time that we actually need it. During prolonged dry spells, water levels can drop quickly and at the same time demand for water often increases. During the hot, dry summer of 2018 we saw a 30% increase in the demand for water on Arran."

Reducing water use will help to reduce Arran's carbon footprint. Did you know that 6% of UK greenhouse gas emissions come from water use? This includes:

- 1% from the treatment and transport of water to homes and businesses; and
- 5% from heating water in the home!

Charlotte Mann, Arran Eco Savvy Energy & Water Advisor says, "Energy efficiency in households, alongside food, travel, and transport sustainability, are at the heart of our aims to reduce carbon on the island. Water efficiency is intrinsically linked to these, and from experience we understand that Arran residents are eager to adapt, on a personal and wider scale, to the challenges faced by climate change. After a water themed Savvy Film Club screening and discussion, it was clear that the same passion for the environment was there for the world's water crisis. Our goal is for water conservation behaviours and solutions to be implemented here on Arran, for the benefit of the community, before the water shortages that we have experienced in recent summer seasons become more prevalent."

You can request a pack by calling  
**Home Energy Scotland on 0808 808 2282 or**  
**visiting [scottishwater.co.uk/savewaterarran](http://scottishwater.co.uk/savewaterarran)**

Why not get involved - you might be surprised by how much you could save!



# All together >

# The GREAT and good of

The UK Government has launched a campaign to shine a light on businesses and employees across the country who have responded to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in remarkable ways and are now going back to business. The GREAT Inspirations campaign will recognise companies that have gone above and beyond to continue to operate for their employees, serve their customers and contribute to their local communities. Here are some examples of the many thousands of companies that have proved to be an inspiration.

## CASE STUDY QUEEN'S HOTEL

ROOMS and pamper packages for NHS workers away from their families, prepping more than 600 meals a week for vulnerable people in the community and projecting light shows every week for Clap for Carers are just some of the things one hotel team has done during the coronavirus outbreak.

The team at the Queens Hotel in Southsea have been working hard since lockdown began in March to support everyone in the community across Portsmouth.

Duty manager Megan Lockyer has been working with the small team who have welcomed more than 30 NHS workers to the hotel, which during the Second World War served as a hospital for recovering servicemen, for a place to rest away from their jobs.

Megan put a post on the Portsmouth Coronavirus Support Group on Facebook asking members to support her idea and it has since taken off with donations pouring in from individuals and businesses.

She said: "I watched the NHS workers come back to the hotel

after a challenging day and I really wanted to let them know how much we appreciate what they are doing.

"I came up with the idea of making hampers for the NHS workers who are currently with us at the hotel.

"I shared my idea with the Facebook group and it was amazing how the community responded.

"The NHS staff had told us how sore their hands were due to constant washing and we were able to include aloe vera hand cream along with items such as face masks, relaxing bath gels, slippers and Easter eggs."

Staff also worked with Medusa Hairdressing in Southsea to create more hampers which were distributed to key workers in local nursing homes.

The hotel's managing director Farid Yeganeh said: "I am delighted with the small team we have working at the hotel who have ensured it is clean and safe for our NHS guests."

More than 7,200 meals have been sent out in lockdown to vulnerable people around the city thanks to a collaboration between the hotel, a collective of voluntary organisations called



THERE FOR YOU: Queen's Hotel lit up for the NHS and (inset) preparing food in the kitchen. PICTURE: QUEENS HOTEL SOUTHSEA

Portsmouth Hive, Portsmouth City Council, NHS Portsmouth CCG, the charity arm of Portsmouth Football Club called Pompey in the Community, as well as Anghel Niko Nedelcu, head chef from Portsmouth's Brasserie Blanc and Royal Beach Hotel head chef Paul Playford. The initiative received two £3,000 anonymous donations, as well

as food donations from local businesses including butchers Buckwells. Farid said: "We got an email from the council at the start of lockdown about whether any businesses had any stock that was going out of date. It just snowballed from there really and we teamed up with the Hive to get meals distributed and it means so much that we could help our community."



Each week for Clap For Carers, projections showing support for the NHS were displayed on the Edwardian era hotel as part of the team's commitment to supporting local health workers. Farid added: "I have always been aware that we have a really special team working at the hotel and this just underlines it. I look forward to being able to welcome back the whole Queens Hotel team once the lockdown is over."

## Read about more inspiring GREAT stories at



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# inspirational businesses

## CASE STUDY

### HIGHLAND AUTO CAMPERS

WHEN coronavirus started appearing in Inverness, care home manager Victoria Connolly was determined no one who worked or lived there would fall ill.

So she asked the staff of the Isobel Fraser home in Inverness if they'd be prepared to live onsite and was thrilled when 14 said they would.

But then came the problem of where to put them.

The 38-year-old said: "There are a couple of rooms upstairs I could fit six people into. But then I thought, 'Where am I going to put everyone else?'"

"I have a friend with a campervan so I phoned her and asked if we could use it. She agreed but I needed more so she suggested I hire one."

Victoria got in touch with Highland Auto Campers whose owner Mark Jarratt, 44, immediately agreed to hire her three vehicles for cost.

While they'd normally charge £130 a night for their practically-new fleet, the care home got them for just £250 each a week.

Mark says: "We've only been going two years but earlier this year, things were going well – March was picking up and April and May were fully booked.

"But we only get an eight-month window to make our money because of the tourist season so lockdown came at the worst time for us, the start of our season and was a complete disaster.

"Then around April 14, we got a call from the Isobel Fraser home.



Stories were, by then, beginning to emerge that some care homes had been really badly hit by coronavirus.

"They said that while the home was free of coronavirus, they knew they needed to take steps to keep both staff and residents virus free and by providing accommodation for their staff on site. They wanted to rent three of our vans to do this.

"We were surprised to get the phone call – there are a lot of similar companies in the area – but quite pleased and we immediately agreed to assist in any way that we could. We just wanted to help.

"It was also a win-win situation for us. The campervans hadn't been used for a few weeks, they were just sitting quarantined and this was income – not a great deal of income but better than nothing.

"Even though they hadn't been used for weeks, and one was so new it had never been used, we gave them a thorough clean before driving them over and setting them up.

"The staff and some of the residents were quite excited when we arrived and were looking out of the windows. Six care home staff slept in the vans for between three and five weeks.

Manager Victoria said: "They really enjoyed it – they were warm and comfortable. Most have said they'd take them out on holiday!"

The care home, which has 27 residents, hasn't had a single case of coronavirus. Mark said: "We were really proud to have been able to help. It's good to do something for the community.

**TEAMING UP:** Highland Auto Campers owner Mark Jarratt with girlfriend Alicia.



**DREAM TEAM:** The Shnuffle staff.

## CASE STUDY

### SHNUGGLE

NEWTOWNARDS-BASED company Shnuffle diversified into making PPE when the coronavirus pandemic hit the firm's core business.

Sinead and Adam Murphy were building the company into a leading name among parents with products such as an air bedside crib, air flow mattress, rocking stand, toddler baths, bath stands and many other creations.

But the growth was interrupted when Covid-19 arrived in the UK, and the country went into lockdown.

Although UK sales remained strong, imports were hit and Shnuffle's owners turned their attention to designing and creating a face covering that would help save lives.

Adam and Sinead quickly realised that they could help make a difference in the national effort to provide Personal Protective Equipment items. After taking measures needed to sustain the business, including taking advantage of UK Government furlough and business loan schemes, they set

about creating and growing not-for-profit business Hero Shield.

Adam said: "We had seen a few initiatives that had popped up all around the world.

"A lot were printing 3D face shields so we kind of sat down with our head of design who was on furlough and said, can we come up with a design here that we could start producing at rock bottom price and we'd prefer it to be a reusable one rather than a disposable one?"

"We came up with designs over the course of a weekend, by Monday we had done 20 different designs and 3D printed them on our prototyping printer and we'd put out a call on LinkedIn to local companies who wanted to get involved and within a very short space of time we had about 20 different businesses all saying, 'Yep, we can do that bit and we'll do it free of charge or we'll do it at cost'.

"We said that we weren't doing it to make money. We were trying to help the NHS and other care workers so we founded another company which was Hero Shield Ltd and we set it up as not for profit so nobody could take any money

out of it. Alongside that we did a crowdfunder to cover the costs so we raised £35,000 in the end.

"We managed to produce and ship out about 100,000 face shields in about six weeks."

Adam and Sinead are working to secure charitable status for Hero Shield Ltd, which is still running on a non-profit basis, and is now focussing more on charities and care services that don't have the funds for whatever PPE they might need to get back up and running.

Sinead said: "The businesses that were actually producing the face shields, we passed the orders to them and they have turned it into more of a commercial venture because we got a massive order from the NHS.

"It was worth shy of £1m and we needed to focus back on Shnuffles, so we passed it over to them and they pay a royalty into the Hero Shield charity for every one that they make."

So having helped the NHS in Northern Ireland, Adam and Sinead are now focused again on their core business – creating and marketing clever products for babies and children.

**greatbritaincampaign.com/inspirations**

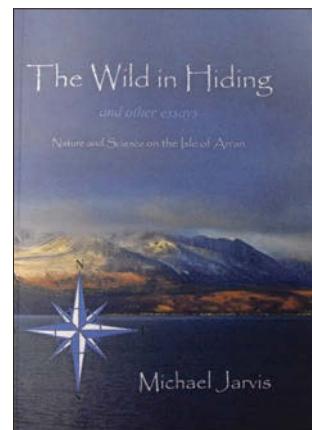
All together ➤

# The hidden wilderness of Arran

In more normal times Arran is popular with tourists looking for mountains, beaches and good food. But it also has many wild and hidden places which are the subject of a new book looking at Arran's landscapes and wildlife through the eyes of a scientist.

Michael Jarvis is a retired environmental scientist living in Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire who dabbles in nature writing and occasional very short stories and is a regular visitor to Arran.

However his new book *The Wild in Hiding and other essays* is a more extensive tome running to 130 pages which has just been published in paperback.



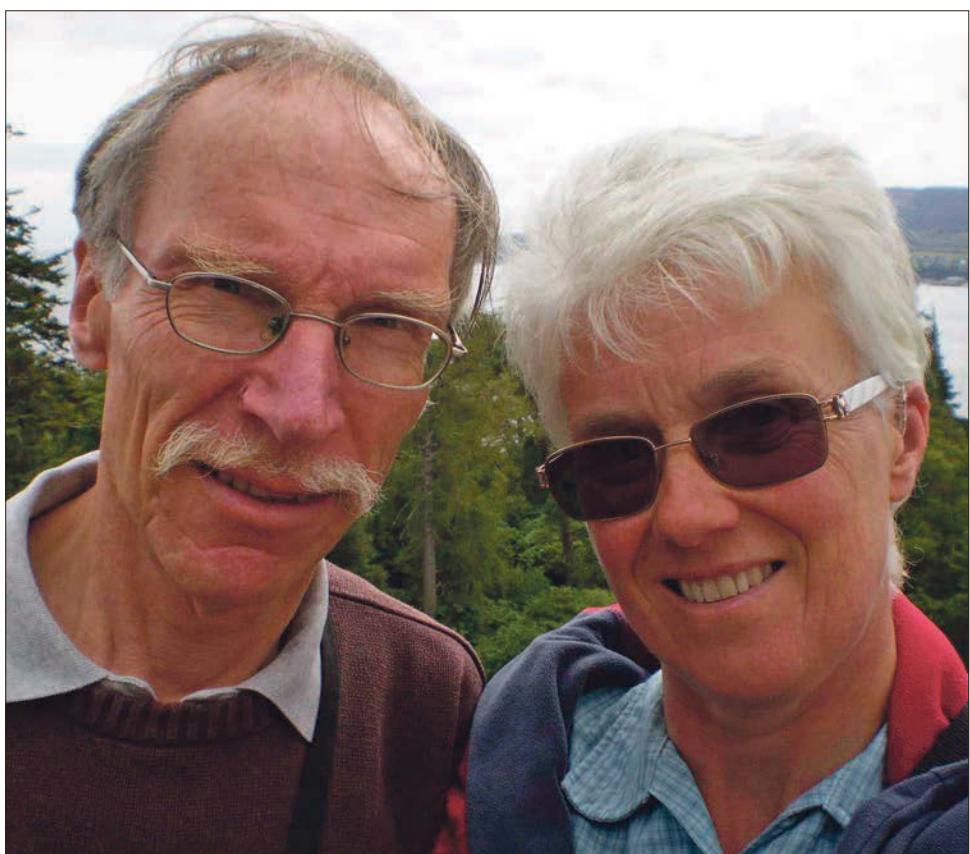
The cover of *The Wild in Hiding*.

Arran is a microcosm of Scotland and Michael looks at its landscapes and its wildlife

through a scientist's eyes. But *The Wild in Hiding* is nature writing, not a science textbook. It's about how we and wild creatures perceive Arran's landscapes in different ways.

It looks at how its wildlife arrived or, like foxes, stoats and roe deer, never did arrive; how its weather takes shape; how the island just missed out on being the birthplace of glacial geology in the 1840s; what we can do to conserve its future; and what it can contribute to all our futures in an uncertain world.

One extract from the book reads: "...I'm drinking breakfast coffee by the window as the sounds of the island morning come drifting in.



The author Michael Jarvis pictured with his wife Margaret on Arran.

'The window opens onto a mile of shaggy farmland. Grass wind-rippled in the sunlight, ready for cutting.

Thorn hedges running wild, a scrap of tousled wood, ditches

choked with meadowsweet and brambles...' And another: 'Where does the wind's power come from? Where does it go? From the sea's silent warmth to the

silence of the cold sky.'

The book is available at the Book and Card Centre in Brodick or visit the author's website: [mjarvisbooks.com](http://mjarvisbooks.com) for more information.

## Growing a business in the roots of Arran

### Advertorial

A new business is taking all the natural ingredients found and grown on Arran and turning them into an island larder – Crofters Larder.

Evolving out of their family business, Crofters Music Bar Bistro in Brodick, managing director Ealána Boyle has taken the lockdown of 2020 to develop a new food production company, showing innovation, entrepreneurship and vision at a trying time for the hospitality industry.

Complimenting the existing businesses on Arran, Crofters Larder takes ingredients grown, foraged and sourced, and through fermentations and preservations create 'artisan larder staples' such as tomato ketchup, brown sauce, piccalilli, sauerkraut, marinades and spices, salad dressings, dried herbs and spices, seasonal pesto, and pickled vegetables.

Their initial products of condiments and larder staples are already available through mail order UK wide, but their list of ambitions is endless.

The products are designed and produced to bring creative combinations and condiments replicating flavour profiles from around the world using locally grown ingredients.

With a strong affinity to the smallholding lifestyle and the



Ealána nurturing the crop.

permaculture ethics of earth care, people care and fair share, Crofters Larder embodies the commitment to securing local food sources, supporting rural lifestyles and economies and minimising food waste.

They work with commercial and hobbyist producers, the Arran Community Land Initiative, farmers and contractors from the area local to Arran, Kintyre and the Ayrshire coast and pledge to purchase any glut from home growers at wholesale cost.

To kick-start the business product sample guinea pigs were invited to 'pay forward' and in return receive samples of the product developments and be integral in the development of the business from a consumers' perspective. First rounds of the kick-starter boxes have been sent out now:

watch the website or social for more information on how to get involved.

While the team hopes to have their products available in local retail outlets in the coming months, the business aims to be ready for the Christmas hamper market.

As the product development takes off, they are offering a takeaway service Thursday – Sunday. The menu is varied and changes regularly with dietary requirements and locally sourced ingredients at the forefront of their choices. It is restaurant food to eat at home and is available to order online and through their social media channels.

Follow Crofters Larder online through your preferred social channel to be kept up to date with everything they are doing.

# THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday July 8, 2000



A selection of the main prize winners at the end of term awards ceremony held at Arran High School last Friday. 01\_B27tweY01



The sports prize winners at the Arran High School awards ceremony. 01\_B27tweY02



These pre-primary pupils dressed as witches were among the 19 youngsters from Arran Dancers who travelled to take part in a youth theatre event at the Magnum Theatre in Irvine last Saturday. 01\_B26tweY04



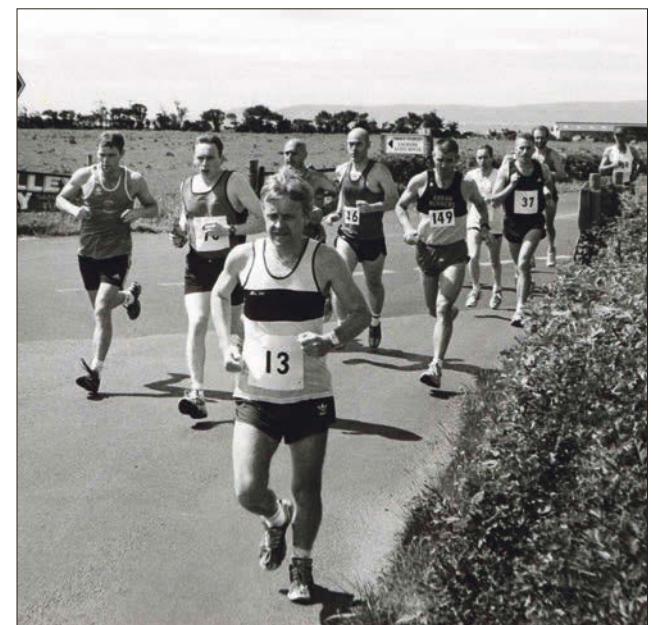
An exhibition of quilting and needlework was held at Brodick Castle last weekend. Here we see quilters Grace Dickson, Judy McAllister, Pat Nicholls and Jean Chappell at work on a quilt which will be raffled to raise money for the Save the Children Fund. 01\_B27tweY03



Corrie and Sannox village hall has benefited from a £150,000 upgrade under the 21st Century Halls for Scotland scheme. The official reopening was conducted by Mrs May Aitkenhead, seen here with hall committee chairman Jim Lees. Mrs Aitkenhead is the wife of the late Rev Sam Aitkenhead who came to Corrie every year. 01\_B27tweY06



Brodick were the winners of the B league at the 25th annual Irn Bru football festival which took place at the new playing field at Blackwaterfoot. The winning team were: Sam McCalla, Euan Smith, Archie McNicol, Kyle Barbour, Matthew Dobson, Gavin Dunn and Chris, from the mainland. 01\_B27tweY05



A long way to go for the field of just under 150 runners who took part in the Shiskine Valley half marathon last Sunday. 01\_B27tweY07

# Plants to look out for in the Castle walled garden this July



Grevillea 'Canberra gem'.

**With Brodick Castle gardens and country park reopening on Monday here Tim Keyworth, gardens and designed landscapes manager, Ayrshire and Arran, takes a look at five plants that will be at their best in the walled garden this month.**

Over the past few months, during the lockdown period, the gardening team at Brodick have been working hard on the walled garden, to ensure that it is ready for the return of visitors.

A large amount of renovation work has been carried out in the upper walled garden over recent years and this continues to develop and settle in.

To celebrate our reopening and whet your appetite, I've picked five plants that will be looking really good in the walled garden this July.

## Lilium regale

The regal lily is a native of China. It took the renowned plant hunter Ernest Henry Wilson several attempts to introduce this magnificent lily into cultivation in the UK. Unfortunately, on the successful expedition Wilson badly broke his leg, which left him with a permanent limp.

One of the easiest lilies to

grow, all this perennial bulb asks for is well-drained, rich soil and a sunny site in which to flourish. The trumpet flowers are white with yellow throats. The outside of the trumpet boasts purple markings and, perhaps best of all, the scent is heavenly!

Look out for this plant near to the main gate in the walled garden.

## Grevillea 'Canberra gem'

Native to Australia and commonly known as the spider flower, this vigorous shrub produces unusual red flowers that cover its rosemary-type foliage. It will flower for the majority of the year if the planting conditions are right, but it's at its best from late winter through into summer. It prefers well-drained soil and a sheltered position. Hardy down to -10°, it may suffer in a severe frost but flourishes

in the micro-climate enjoyed here in the walled garden.

This is one of the newly planted shrubs in the border at the very top of the walled garden, which can be clearly seen from the heather house above.

## Eccremocarpus scaber (red form)

The Chilean glory flower is a great plant for adding an exotic look to any garden. It boasts many clusters of red or orange tubular flowers from late spring all the way through to autumn.

Being a climber, it may need support but it works well climbing through other trees and shrubs and is great for hiding any bare stems.

Vigorous and quick to flower, this plant is often grown as an annual but it's actually a perennial and, if grown in a frost-free sheltered position, may survive for several years. It sets seeds freely and is easy to germinate.

Here in the walled garden it can be seen climbing up the recently installed plant supports, which were hand-crafted by

Simon Horne – a local Arran blacksmith. The plant supports add much-needed height to the garden.

## Amicia zygomeris

Native to Mexico, the yoke-leaved amicia is a showy plant to grow, giving interest to the garden over different seasons. It's a member of the pea family (Fabaceae) and yellow flowers are produced throughout the autumn.

However, it is perhaps the heart-shaped leaflets and purple bracts that are the standout feature of this plant.

It is hardy down to -10° but will reshoot from the base if damaged by a cold winter.

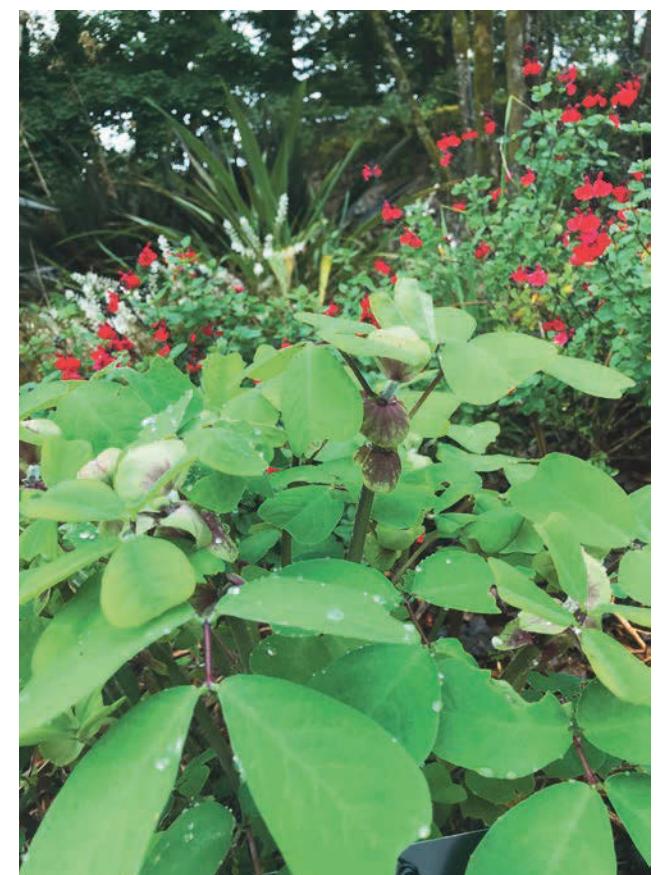
The amicia is located further down the same border as the regal lily, on the way down to the newly renovated sundial space. This border is not far from the main gates to the walled garden.

## Astroemeria 'ligtu hybrids'

There are several varieties of astroemeria currently flow-



Astroemeria 'ligtu hybrids'.



Amicia zygomeris.



Eccremocarpus scaber.

# Brodick



Brodick Castle Gardens.

ering in the gardens ... and it is difficult to pick a favourite! Native to South America and commonly known as the Peruvian lily, this tuberous perennial is easy to grow. It flowers from late spring up until the first frost and it adds a substantial amount of colour to many a border.

At Brodick Castle, this plant is perhaps best seen in the

borders that surround the sundial space. The National Trust for Scotland look forward to welcoming you back – please remember to check opening times on the website before you visit.

The garden and country park will be opening Thursday-Monday (closed Tuesday and Wednesday) from July 6 onwards.



Lilium regale.

## Scotland faces garden 'tax'

Experts are warning of an increase in prices of properties with gardens in Scotland as buyers clamour for homes with outside space after being cooped up for three months.

With lockdown coming to an end, a garden has been voted top of the property wish list, with over half – 55 per cent – in Scotland saying the garden is the most important thing to consider when buying

a home, according to new research by mortgage broker firstmortgage.co.uk

Outside space has long been a desired commodity at our homes, but since lockdown was imposed it seems it has taken on a new importance for homeowners.

A whopping 81 per cent of Scots say they want to live somewhere with a garden, and over three quarters in a poll of 134 people say they value somewhere private so they

can avoid other people and stay safe, while a quarter want somewhere they can have a barbecue.

David McGrail, compliance director at firstmortgage.co.uk said: 'We could see buyers having to pay a premium to get homes with outside space in Scotland. A garden can go a long way to helping people feel relaxed in their property, especially during a prolonged period spent at home.'

## MORE SHOPS ARE REOPENING

Support businesses in your local area by enjoying shopping safely.

Phase 2



We are now in Phase 2 of changing coronavirus restrictions, which means more retailers near you will be open. You can enjoy shopping again, but please do so in a safe way by following the FACTS guidelines. Make sure you pay attention to signage and guidance as provided, and try going outside of peak hours. If a store is busy, come back another time.

You should not go shopping if you are in the shielding group or if you have any coronavirus symptoms.



Remember  
**FACTS**  
for a safer Scotland



Face coverings



Avoid crowded places



Clean hands regularly



Two metre distance



Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms

CORONAVIRUS  
STAY SAFE  
PROTECT OTHERS  
SAVE LIVES

[gov.scot/coronavirus](http://gov.scot/coronavirus)

Healthier  
Scotland  
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NHS  
SCOTLAND

# A message to all local businesses...

Advertising in the Arran Banner, in print and online, is the most effective way to reach out and speak to the people of Arran.

## Did you know?

- The Arran Banner's average issue total readership is over 8'000 (there are just over 4000 adults on Arran!)
- The Arran Banner appeared in the Guinness Book of Records in 1984 for its 97% household penetration.
- In 2018, The Arran Banner was named as one of only three newspapers in Scotland with a rise in circulation.
- The Arran Banner is 46 years old!
- The Arran Banner has over 5,000 Facebook followers
- The Arran Banner website had 102% more page views in May 2020 than May 2019.
- Local media – in print and online – is the most effective combination for driving consumer action.
- Local press is globally regarded as the most trusted source for local news and information.

\*Source: Jicreg/ABC

When you are ready to rebuild and re-address your local target market, we will be there with low-cost advertising packages that include print advertising, website and social media marketing. We have devised advertising, advertorial and digital packages that make it very affordable – we will work to every budget. We will also fulfil all your design needs - for free.

**Get in touch with Nicky Murphy on 01631 568014 or email [nmurphy@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:nmurphy@obantimes.co.uk) to find out what we can do to help your business's message be heard loud and clear.**



# We know just how tough it is to be in business right now.

When your doors reopen and you are ready to start building on the promotion of your shops, restaurants, products and services, we will be right behind you.

# THE ARRAN BANNER

**Head Chef**      **Arran**      **Search HIJOBS**



### **Head Chef**

Isle of Arran

£8.53 to £10.15 per hour  
Full Time  
Added September, 20 2017 6:15 PM

**Apply**

We're looking for an experienced sous or head chef, with a lot of personality and passion for leading and developing teams. If you're familiar with creating rotas, managing stock and all of those business financials, then what are you waiting for?



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# HIJOBS

# BANNER CLASSIFIEDS

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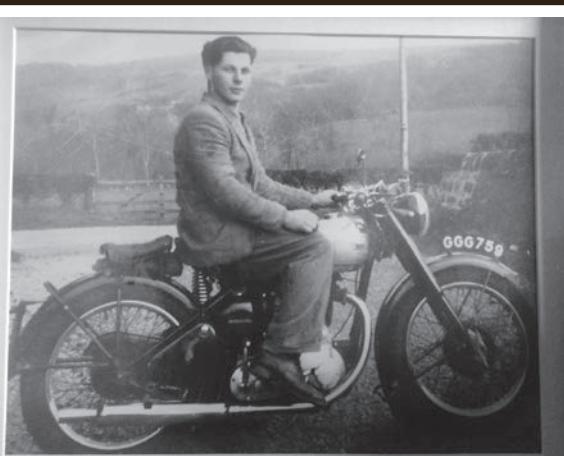
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## Personal notice



This young man is 90 today 3rd July,  
Many Happy Returns,  
love from all the family.xxx

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**BANNER CLASSIFIEDS**

## RECRUITMENT

### Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club

#### CLUB MANAGER



This is a unique and exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic and highly motivated individual to manage the day-to-day running of Shiskine Golf and Tennis Club on the Isle of Arran, one of Scotland's Hidden Golfing Gems with a worldwide reputation.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate the following attributes:

- Sound knowledge of finance and budgetary control, IT literate
- Good inter-personal and communication abilities

Knowledge and experience of golf club administration and committee procedures would be an advantage

The salary offered will be competitive and commensurate with experience

To apply, candidates should email their up-to-date CV with a covering letter highlighting their motivation for seeking this role.

A detailed job description is available on request.

Apply to Mrs Fiona Henderson [fionahenderson270@gmail.com](mailto:fionahenderson270@gmail.com) by 10th July

**Ayrshire College**



## Recruitment to Membership of the Board of Management

In March 2020, Ayrshire College suspended its procedures for the recruitment of new members to its Board of Management following the restrictions imposed in response to the Covid19 pandemic.

The College is now restarting the Board recruitment process. As an individual you may never have considered a Board position before, **but your experience may be invaluable!** Ayrshire College Board of Management is very keen to increase the diversity of its non-executive Board Membership. Many of us don't realise how much we have to offer, so even if you are really not sure the Boardroom is for you, please contact us and discuss the role of the Board Member and what contribution you could make.

Scotland's Colleges will play a crucial role in meeting the needs of employers, communities and the Scottish Government as the country emerges from the Covid19 restrictions. The vision of Ayrshire College is to raise aspirations and inspire achievement in our communities by delivering creative and innovative solutions to support the educational, economic and social needs of Ayrshire.

It is a critical part of this vision that the Board of Management provides leadership and strategic direction for the College and delivers excellence in corporate governance, inspiring staff to deliver the highest standards of learning and teaching. The Board also has a crucial role in engaging with key stakeholders, businesses and employers in Ayrshire and beyond.

**Board of Management Opportunities:** The Board is now seeking at least two talented individuals to become Members of the Board of Management and support the College on its journey. If you submitted an application prior to suspension of the process, you do not need to re-apply as we will have retained your application.

Applications are particularly invited from individuals with experience of key local economy sectors including STEM, Commerce, Hospitality, Tourism and the Third Sector. In addition, applications from individuals with specific skills in Health & Social Care, Human Resource Management/Strategy, Academia, Accounting, Audit, Financial Management and Construction are also welcomed.

Given our commitment to diversity, the board particularly welcomes applications from individuals with small business experience and groups currently under-represented on our board, including people with disabilities and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

### Application Procedure

For further information on the appointment outlined above and the application process, please visit [www.ayrshire.ac.uk](http://www.ayrshire.ac.uk). If invited for interview and you have a disability which requires adjustments to be made (physical access and/or sign language interpretation etc.), the Board Office will provide support as required.

### CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

YOUR attention is drawn to the following terms and conditions which relate to the placing of advertisements in all publications owned by Wyvex Media Limited.

Parties to this agreement are the Publisher, Wyvex Media Limited Limited on the one part and the Advertiser on the other part. The Publisher publishes newspapers, magazines, books and provides advertising space therein or provides for the delivery of advertising materials to the public within these publications.

1. Advertising copy shall be legal, decent, honest and truthful and comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice and all other codes.
2. The Publisher does not guarantee the insertion of any particular advertisement.
3. The Publisher reserves the right to cancel or alter the advertisement by giving reasonable notice.
4. An order for an advertisement shall be deemed to be made on acceptance of the advertisers' order by the Publisher whether placed by telephone, mail, fax or in person.
5. Cancellation of display advertising must be received by the Publisher before the publishing deadline, failing which the advertiser agrees to pay to the Publisher in full for the whole cost of the advertisement.
6. The parties submit to the jurisdiction of the Scottish Courts and Scots Law. In the event of any dispute or action by the Publisher to recover payment from an advertiser, it is agreed that matters will be settled in the Oban, Argyll Sheriff Court or such other Court as the Publisher may choose.
7. The Publisher shall not be liable for any loss or damage occasioned by any total or partial failure (however caused) of publication or distribution of any newspaper or edition in which any advertisement is scheduled to appear. In the event of any error, misprint or omission in the printing of an advertisement or part of an advertisement, the Publisher

will either re-insert the advertisement or relevant part of the advertisement, as the case may be, or make reasonable refund or adjustment to the cost. No re-insertion, refund or adjustment will be made where the error, misprint or omission does not materially detract from the advertisement.

8. Errors must be notified to the Publisher in writing within fourteen days of publication. In no circumstances shall the total liability of the Publisher for any error, misprint or omission exceed the amount of a full refund of any price paid to the Publisher for the particular advertisement in connection with which liability arose or the cost of a further or corrective advertisement of a type and standard reasonably comparable to that in connection with which liability arose.

9. The Advertiser/Advertising Agency agrees to indemnify the Publisher in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the publication as the result of legal actions or threatened legal actions arising from the publication of the advertisement in any one or more of a series of advertisements published in accordance with copy instructions supplied to the publication in pursuance of the Advertiser/Advertising Agency order.

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 accepted by the Publisher and a deposit paid.

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.

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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 11 a.m. Sunday morning and over the rest of the week can be received at  
[www.brodickchurch.org](http://www.brodickchurch.org) or  
[www.stmoliesshiskine.org.uk](http://www.stmoliesshiskine.org.uk)  
Please note that Brodick Church is still accessible for the Food bank.

**HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Bishop Brian McGee, of the Catholic Diocese of Argyll and the Isles, will celebrate Mass daily at 10am from his Oratory at Bishop's House, Oban.  
You can access these Masses and other services, live or recorded, via the diocesan website [www.rcdai.org.uk](http://www.rcdai.org.uk).  
If you are not receiving a weekly Parish Bulletin but would like to do so please email peterdwilko@gmail.com.  
*Bless O Lord this Isle of Arran  
St Roch, patron of the sick, Pray for us  
Our Lady of the Isles, Pray for us  
St Columba, Pray for us*

## DEATHS

**MCNISH** - William Kirkpatrick (Willie) of Seafield, Kildonnan passed away peacefully with family at home on 25th of June 2020. Beloved husband of Anne (nee Struthers) and much loved dad of Jenny, Ann, Willie and Peter, Loving grandpa of Peter, Finlay, Grace, Gavin, Rachael and Lewis. Private family cremation.

**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church)  
St. Margaret's, Whiting Bay  
During the shutdown  
Revd Canon Simon Mackenzie will conduct Sunday Eucharist at 11 a.m. online @ ChristchurchLochgilphead All are welcome to join

# Latest lockdown birthdays



Oliver, who turned three, on his tractor.



Fiona with her cake and balloon.

We may be easing out of lockdown but for children their birthdays this year are still not the same as usual, but they are still finding them fun.

Oliver Martin had a fantastic 3rd

birthday on June 29. He went to visit the park - the first day it was open since lockdown!, he saw grandma and grandad, then played on his big tractor for the rest of the day. 'Thanks for all the

kind messages,' mum Charlotte said.

While Fiona Dick turned six on June 28 and had good fun playing on her new bike, wearing her new princess dress and running about the Dyemill.

# Listen out for a rare nightjar

**Bird notes**  
by Jim Cassels

## FOR SALE

LOG BURNING ELECTRIC STOVE, still in box - 07769 816402



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## WHAT'S ON

### EVERY DAY

Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Big Co, Brodick. 8.15pm Eco Savvy & Co-op Food Share Big Co, Lamlash. 7.30pm

### TUESDAYS

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



A nightjar camouflaged on the branch of a tree.

Photograph: Dennis Morrison

Hearing a nightjar used to be a fairly common experience in Arran, but in the latter part of the 20th century there was a decline.

In 1980, nine churring nightjar were reported from Merkland. In 1984, eight pairs were reported, but the rest of the 1980s show a decline with four or five pairs in 1985 and three or four pairs in 1987 and one calling male in 1988. Single birds continued to be reported mainly in the Merkland area until 1995. In 1996 there no reports from Merkland but two from elsewhere. The last report in 1990s was one in 1998 at Maol Donn. There was then a gap with no records until 2013 when one was calling at Merkland from 17 June to 26 June. Since then there has been one record in 2017.

With the extensive clear-felling being done throughout Scotland by Forestry and Land Scotland it is hoped that the increase in more suitable open heath type habitat adjacent to woodland may result in resurgence of this species. The increase of these areas in Arran may encourage the

re-establishment of the nightjar. These new areas provide good nesting cover, plenty of perches and an abundant food supply.

This is the time of year to get out and listen for them. Nightjars are birds of legend, including the widely held belief that nightjars sucked the milk of grazing animals. Thus its other name 'goatsucker'.

surrounded by 'whiskers' they are well adapted for catching their prey. Nightjars are rarely seen during daylight but there is remarkable piece of video on YouTube which captures nightjar churring in daylight. Normally during the day they remain motionless on the ground, relying on their amazing camouflage – feather patterns that look like dead leaves and old tree bark – to avoid detection. But at night when they are 'churring', they usually perch on the branch of a prominent tree and can be picked out against the night sky, which can also be found on YouTube.

It is this distinctive sound that you should listen out for in the coming weeks. Males perform this prolonged churring call ('nightjar' means night-churr) that may go on for several minutes, varying in pitch and volume. When the birds stop churring, they are often in flight and two other sounds are frequently heard. The first is a rather soft 'coohwick' given as a single note and thought to be a contact call. The second

is a slapping or hand-clapping sound caused as the birds clap their wings in flight. When flying, nightjar swoop and flap around their territories, often coming very close to any observers. Males have prominent white markings on the wings and tail, and females have brown markings that are much less prominent. These stand out even at night, so it is often possible to identify the bird's sex. Encountering nightjar in the gloaming is a magic birding moment, if you can thole the inevitable midges.

If you hear a nightjar calling

on Arran, I would appreciate it

if you would take a moment to let me know where and when.

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](mailto:jim@arranbirding.co.uk)

I look forward to hearing from you. For more information on birding on Arran purchase the Arran Bird Report, the first 40 years, which includes the annual report for 2019, and visit this website [www.arranbirding.co.uk](http://www.arranbirding.co.uk)

# THE ARRAN BANNER

## Funding to help Arran's hidden drug problem

An Arran youth group is one of six projects in North Ayrshire to have been awarded funding grants to tackle drug abuse in a public vote, writes Hugh Boag.

Arran Youth Foundations has been given the joint highest award of £10,000 to fund the initiative by the North Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership.

A number of community groups and organisations submitted applications for funding after the launch of 'the substance of our communities' participatory budgeting scheme in late February.

An online poll last month saw members of the public vote for the shortlisted projects they would most like to see funded in their communities, and the applications that received the most votes were awarded the funding.

Arran Youth Foundations will use the funding to provide

drug and alcohol services for young people on Arran. They will do this through working with young people and partners to achieve the best outcome for affected young people. As the only youth work organisation on the island, AYF work with the majority of young people of high school age. Through



these relationships, they are well placed to support young people with substance misuse problems.

Youth work project manager Graeme Johnston said: 'Arran Youth Foundations were delighted to receive this funding.'

'Drugs and alcohol use among young people can be a hidden issue on Arran and as



The AYF base at Arran High School.  
01\_B12youth01

an island we haven't always been able to access the whole range of services that would be

available on the mainland. As ever, AYF are keen to help our young people in any way we can. This funding will allow us to confidentially provide individuals with solutions that meet their needs, whatever that might be; counselling, addiction services, therapy.

'We can also be proactive and preventative in hosting drugs and alcohol workshops – for instance, inviting relevant speakers to come and speak to young people about the risks of drugs and alcohol.'

'We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone in the community who voted for us. Our project topped the vote by quite some way, which goes to demonstrate once again what a



Graeme Johnston

fantastic community we have on Arran,' Graeme added.

Councillor Louise McPhater, cabinet member for participatory democracy, said: 'It is so important to us that members of the public are able to have their say on how funding is allocated within our communities.'

## Rotary Club is wound up

The Isle of Arran Rotary Club has been wound up due to lack of members and the inability to find a regular meeting place.

There have only been three members in the last couple of years, founder member and chairman Kenneth Bone, president, Jim Lees and treasurer Penny Brass.

The wishing well near Brodick ferry terminal and its proceeds are being passed to the Arran Trust.

Kenneth told the Banner: 'The Rotary Club has not met since earlier this year and with

the current restrictions in place it has made it impossible to meet up and attract new members in person. As a founder member of the club it is indeed sad to see the club being dissolved.'

I have informed CMAL that as outgoing president of the Rotary Club and currently chairman of the trustees of the Arran Trust that the funds from the well would still be helping, exclusively, Arran organisations.

CMAL has agreed to the transfer of the wishing well to the Arran Trust.

## Summer golf trophy at Whiting Bay

Wednesday June 24, summer trophy. The first summer trophy round following easing of the lockdown rules attracted a field of 17 who found the course in fantastic condition upon the resumption of competition golf. By any standards Stewart has done a fantastic job, rendered even more creditable by the fact he is working unassisted at present.

Scoring on the day was impressive with CSS dropping to 62 and 13 of the field returning scores in the net 60s. Clearly the layoff has benefited players as well as the course but none more so than Nicol Auld who carded a storming gross 61, yet won by only two shots.

1 Nicol Auld (6)-55 and lowest gross, 2 David Blair (15)-57, 3 Kevin McAleney (10)-59, 4 John Pennycott (14)-60 ab. Nicol Auld and Kevin McAleney bagged magic twos @4th. Nicol repeated the feat at the 7th.

Fixtures: Sunday July 5, Whiting Bay Improvements Stableford. Wednesday July 8, dummer trophy.

For the duration of the current pandemic there will be no draws. Players are to make up their own groupings and the maximum grouping allowed is three balls. Scores are to be submitted electronically to WBGCClubhouse@gmail.com. See the club website for further details.



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