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No. 2213 Arran's Weekly Newspaper

Friday 1 January 2021

www.arranbanner.co.uk

85p

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# First community renewable energy project gains support

by Hugh Boag  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



## Auchrannie solar panel proposal can be pursued

The first community-owned renewable energy project on Arran has secured the necessary funding to proceed, bringing some cheer for the start of the new year.

It has the potential to be a template for other high-energy buildings on Arran to reduce their carbon emissions and help build a community benefit fund that can progress other environmental work.

And the new Arran Community Renewables (ACR), a not-for-profit benefit society, hopes it will be the first of many and will shortly launch a community share offer to help fund the work.

The first project will see solar PV panels erected on the Auchrannie sports hall roof.

It comes after the group was successful in securing a £24,000 enablement grant from the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme

(CARES) to proceed. This also came with the offer of a 60 per cent capital grant if the project became viable. The intention is to raise the remaining funds through launching a community share offer.

Using the development grant ACR has engaged technical, legal and commercial support, negotiated a grid connection and used the resources to set up the new community benefit society.

Director Esther Brown said: 'Community-owned renewable energy can be a part of the green recovery that is happening across the globe. Building local resilience and energy independence brings community wealth building benefits.'

'If Arran can start to move towards innovative, proven and inspiring ways to work

together then the benefit will be for everyone in our community.'

'Green tourism is also an important consideration, helping to keep jobs and improving Arran's general green credentials. Green recovery is our best way forward in these uncertain times and every project counts in our ability to balance the environment and economy.'

Arran Community Renewables started when a volunteer steering group for Arran Eco Savvy formed the organisation and made applications earlier this year for funding to investigate the possibilities and develop potential schemes, bringing the island one step closer to the first community-owned energy.

Continued on page two.

## Mrs Todd receives rousing send-off



Mrs Lindsay Todd is surrounded by her class at Corrie Primary School as she is given a rousing send-off on her retiral from teaching. More photographs on page three.

01\_B53corrie02



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# All vulnerable islanders will get vaccine, says minister

by Hugh Boag  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Arran faces a bleak start to 2021 under level four lockdown until at least the middle of January, with the island effectively closed for business.

But while the island is still largely free of the virus, it remains a worry that in North Ayrshire, across the water, it remains among the highest infection rates in Scotland, as the new wave of the virus continues to steadily rise.

The latest figures of positive tests by local authority put North Ayrshire at the top with 197.4 per 100,000, with NHS Ayrshire and Arran having the fourth highest number of confirmed cases in Scotland with 8,609.

But First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has made it clear that there will be no easing of restrictions on Arran, after she ruled out allowing travel to and from the island on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day.

As it turned out the weather did the job for her when the single Boxing Day sailing was cancelled because of the weather.

In a written answer to Arran MSP Kenneth Gibson the first minister said: 'I know that it

## No easing of Covid-19 restrictions despite plea

is unfair; the virus is unfair to everybody. That is the point; it is not fair.

'We are having to take decisions that are extremely difficult for people.

'We cannot make exemptions to the rules, because any small exemptions that we made, other than really necessary ones for people who need to care for people, would all add up to greater risk of the virus spreading.

'I cannot take away that impact for everybody, though I dearly wish that I could. However, I want people to know that I understand it and that we will do everything that we can, within the bounds of what we need to do to keep the virus suppressed, to mitigate the impact of it. None of this is fair on anybody right now.'

Meanwhile, the first doses of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine are expected on the island in the New Year but most patients will have to wait for the just approved Oxford - AstraZeneca vaccine.

But Mr Gibson has expressed his concern to health secretary



Kenneth Gibson MSP.

Jeane Freeman that the most vulnerable islanders may be being left behind because of the delay in distributing the vaccine to remote and island communities, although these have now been resolved.

Mr Gibson asked the health secretary: 'Such communities, including those in Arran and Cumbrae in my constituency, often have a high percentage of older people.

'Is a catch-up programme being implemented to ensure that vulnerable islanders, who would have already been vaccinated if they lived on the



The MV Caledonian Isles underwent repairs at Brodick pier last week, compounding travel disruption. 01\_B53broken01

mainland, will now receive the vaccine?' Ms Freeman replied: 'Yes, there is a catch-up programme for precisely the situation that Mr Gibson referred to and a catch-up programme for not getting everyone at the one time, as we inevitably have with flu vaccines.

'It might be that every resident in a care home cannot be vaccinated. Someone might be unwell and vaccinating them

might not be appropriate.

'That simply demonstrates the complexity of the exercise. If people go out to vaccinate 100 people who are over 80, only 75 of them might be able to be vaccinated, so the 25 need to be remembered, and those people need to get back round to do them the second time.

'The programme is complex, but there will always be catch-

up programmes and mop-ups that are part of the process.' Meanwhile, Christmas travel disruption was compounded after the MV Caledonian Isles had to be taken out of service last Wednesday due to an engine failure but was able to resume service on Christmas Eve. The vessel will leave for its annual refit on Tuesday, which will take a week longer than originally planned.

## Community renewables project receives support

Continued from page one.

Challenges of an island location, the end of feed-in tariffs and the limitations on exporting energy to the grid have not made the journey an easy one.

Since 2013 Arran Eco Savvy has been talking about and working towards a renewable energy project.

It has held public meetings and consultations on various proposals which have not progressed for a variety of reasons. In 2018 a steering group began to focus on renewables and was active in 2019, working with a development officer at CARES.

These included an energy-from-waste proposal which involved a collaboration with Strathclyde University for circular economy modelling.

It became clear that this ambitious project was not going to be possible when grid connection constraints were highlighted, preventing large generation on Arran from connecting via the undersea cable to the substation in Carradale.

The second application and project proposal was for an island-wide assessment to look at



what was technically feasible but it was not successful in attracting funding as the scope was assessed by CARES to be too wide.

By February 2020 the group had carried out its own assessment as volunteers and began to work on a proposal for funding with a model that used the energy on the island and avoided the need to export to the grid.

There were three possible projects – district heating for the new affordable housing with Arran Development Trust; heating and electrical generation for Montrose House care home with NAC; and electrical generation for the Auchrannie Hotel – with the latter being chosen. To follow the progress and find out more see [arranrenewables.com](http://arranrenewables.com).

Esther Brown and Donald McNicol, both trustees of Arran Eco Savvy and directors of Arran Community Renewables, visiting the Auchrannie Hotel.

# Parents and pupils all bid Corrie teacher fond farewell



Parents had a surprise in store for teacher Mrs Lindsay Todd when she retired on the last day of term last Wednesday.

They were lined up outside Corrie primary school when piper Malcolm Wheeler played as Mrs Todd led her class out of school for the very last time to cheers from those gathered, socially distanced, outside the school gates.

She was presented with a gifts by the parent council as well as by her colleagues at the school and she thanked everyone for what she said was a day to remember.

'I love the bagpipes,' she beamed.



Malcolm Wheeler playing the pipes. 01\_B53corrie03

Mrs Todd sees the children out of the school gates for the last time. 01\_B53corrie05



A smiling Mrs Todd emerges from the school to cheers from the parents outside. 01\_B53corrie01

Mrs Todd and the children watch the performance by Malcolm Wheeler. 01\_B53corrie04

# Digital high street fund for crafters and makers

Lamlash Events has secured a grant of £4,500 from the Scotland Loves Local fund, to create a 'digital high street' for makers and crafters on the island.

Covid-19 has severely impacted on people and communities, preventing many of the usual opportunities for people to gather and sell the goods of Arran's talented crafters and makers.

Chairman Michael Gettins told the Banner: 'With the cancellation of the Lamlash Events' Santa's Sparkle, we piloted a successful online event to help address this challenge and wanted to create a more

lasting facility that helps to bring new opportunities and support for local people and charities.

'In discussions with the local authority and others we aim to create a 'digital high street' for makers and crafters on the island with the training and support needed. We will also develop a regular open air market to help provide access to the market place for both locals and visitors, as well as fundraising opportunities for local charities and groups.

'The grant from Scotland Loves Local will enable Lamlash Events to take these ideas forward in the months

ahead and we hope the ideas of creating new opportunities to support makers and crafters to build new capacity will help underpin the values of Stay Local, Make Local and Shop Local.

'Thanks to the Scotland Loves Local grant of £4,500 we are now looking forward to 2021 and hope we can work alongside the people and businesses in our communities to make the year ahead even more special. Look out for more news about this in the coming weeks,' Michael added.

Last week the Banner revealed that VisitArran and its regional food group

Arran's Food Journey had received £5,000 from the same fund, which is administered by Scotland's Towns Partnerships.

Lamlash Events hopes to repeat the success of Santa's Sparkle, seen here from 2018, but online.



# Call for council workers to get £500 bonus

Politicians want North Ayrshire Council key workers and Covid-19 responders to get £500 to recognise their efforts during the pandemic.

A number of councillors voted to lobby the Scottish government to hand out that amount to local government staff.

It came after First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced all NHS staff would get the bonus.

Irvine Labour councillor Robert Foster lodged a motion at a full council meeting before Christmas asking for every council staff member to get the payment.

It would cost about £2.7 million if every council employee received the payment.

But not all politicians wanted every council employee to benefit.

Stevenson Labour councillor Jimmy Miller was not happy about senior officers potentially pocketing the sum.

He said: 'I am one of these sort of people that are adverse to giving someone who is earning £150,000 a year £500.'

'I don't care how hard they work.'

Councillor Foster replied: 'It is not a huge amount of money we are asking for. It's not a huge amount of money we are giving people. It is £500. It is a thank you.'

Dalry and West Kilbride councillor Joy Brahim put forward an amendment to

the motion calling for the NHS payment to be 'extended to all Covid-19 responders and key workers across local government and that they are rewarded equally'. The SNP politician's amendment was carried.

It said the council would support a call from local government organisation COSLA to pay out the reward to council workers involved in the Covid response and key workers.

Local SNP leader Irvine councillor Marie Burns said: 'Our concern with Councillor Foster's motion is it would give the £500 payment to every employee of North Ayrshire Council, which we don't support.'

## Payment

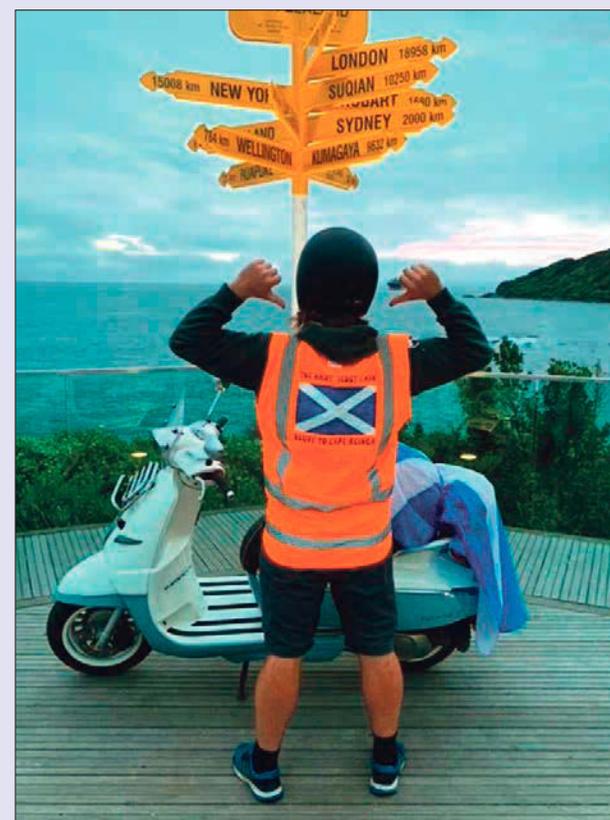
Conservative councillors abstained in the vote at the full council meeting. Conservative local leader Councillor Tom Marshall said: 'The Conservatives believe that only certain employees went above and beyond the call of duty and so deserve extra payment.'

'Most council employees did not lose their job and were paid every week by the public purse - the taxpayer - and were financially secure.'

'This is in contrast to others people who have attempted to run their own private businesses and struggled to stay afloat, others who lost their jobs and others their homes,' he added.



Murray and his moped at the start of his epic journey in Bluff.



Murray is letting everyone know he is a Scot during his ride.

# Murray makes epic moped trip

Murray Picken of Kilmory is undertaking an epic tour by moped in New Zealand over the festive season.

After meeting up with John Bannatyne

of Shiskine and Ross Marshall of Lamlash in Invercargill, Murray set off to travel the 2,050 kilometres from Bluff, in the very south of South Island,

to Cape Reinga at the north tip of North Island. Since he cannot travel on the motorways on his moped, he is undertaking the journey on B roads.

# Santa's helpers in Shiskine door-to-door delivery

For the first time anyone could remember, the annual Shiskine children's Christmas Party was cancelled this year due to Covid restrictions.

Santa always puts in an appearance at the party and was disappointed that he

could not come along to hand out presents to the children.

So the ladies of the Shiskine SWI decided to help him out with door-to-door deliveries on the Saturday before Christmas.

As well as a gift for every child, the

Shiskine ladies prepared cake boxes full of delicious home baking to be enjoyed by their families.

Santa was saddened children missed out on their party this year but hopes everything will be back to normal in 2021.

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# Urgent work starts in bid to save Fisherman's Walk

Urgent work has started to try and save the Fisherman's Walk from being lost to the sea.

As reported in the Banner last month, serious erosion of the banks of the Glenclay Water is putting the footbridge at the north end of Brodick beach in danger of being washed away.

Now, thanks to pressure by Brodick Improvements Committee, Murchie Sand and Gravel was hired by North Ayrshire Council to

bring in rock armour. Work began on the worst affected area in the days before Christmas and will resume again next week.

#### Rock armour

The work will see rock armour installed all along the side of the Glenclay Water to the bridge, where there is none at present.

As well as protecting the bridge, the rock will prevent leaching from the historical coup under the Brodick green.



Above: A digger at work in Glenclay Water. 01\_B53digger01



The rock armour which will shore up the banks of the burn.

01\_B53digger05



Right: The bank has been filled with sand during preparation works.

01\_B53digger02



The bridge in danger at the start of the Fisherman's Walk. 01\_B53digger03



Left: The work which has been carried out so far.

01\_B53digger04

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## LETTERS

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

### Community needs to back renewable energy scheme

Arran is one step closer to having a community-owned renewable energy scheme and, at a time of such uncertainty, that is, at least, something positive to take into the new year.

Sure, there is a great deal of work still to be done, but the small team from Arran Eco Savvy who have got us this far are to be congratulated, having done so in the midst of a pandemic.

While the £24,000 enablement grant is a huge step forward, money will have to be found to fund construction of solar PV panels at Auchrannie – and that is where you come in.

Arran Community Renewables will launch the community shares offer in early spring and if they raise sufficient local capital, will look to start construction soon after.

But if there is insufficient local interest and therefore insufficient community investment, the project will not go ahead.

The benefits of all types of community-owned renewable schemes are for residents, shareholders and Arran as a whole.

We can't all have solar panels on our roofs, but some of us may have savings that are not acquiring much interest in the bank. Investing in community renewables can give better returns while supporting community projects continue their work towards stopping climate change.

Setting up a Community Benefit Society will keep all investment in the community, allowing the benefits to flow back to a community green fund for important environmental island projects.

### Thought for the week

In his Christmas message, the Right Reverend Brian McGee, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, reflected on the return of 'The Star of Bethlehem' to our skies this Christmas. 'Was it really the same star?' he asks. 'Does it really matter? After all, the Star of Bethlehem was never the real light but rather pointed towards the true Light, the new-born Christ. He is our Light because he dispels our darkness. He is our Saviour for he redeems us from all that oppresses, especially sin and death.'

### Shiskine lights delight

Sir,  
Hearty congratulations to the homeowners in Shiskine Valley and Blackwaterfoot for the most remarkable oases of light they have provided in an otherwise 'bleak midwinter'.

I remember as a child, shortly after the war ended, being taken to visit an aunt who lived in the then lovely Stanley Park area of Blackpool. One night, my siblings and I were bussed into town to see the Blackpool illuminations and I will never forget the wonder of it as compared to the drab unlit streets of Glasgow in the war years.

I felt the same 'magic' while driving through Shiskine just before Christmas. Thanks must go to everyone concerned, especially to those at the Bridge who included in their display a beautiful scene of the holy Nativity, reminding us all of the true meaning of Christmas which, sadly, even most of the churches failed to deliver this year on Christmas Eve.

For any who have not seen it, a drive in the dark through the Shiskine 'illuminations' is an experience not to be missed.

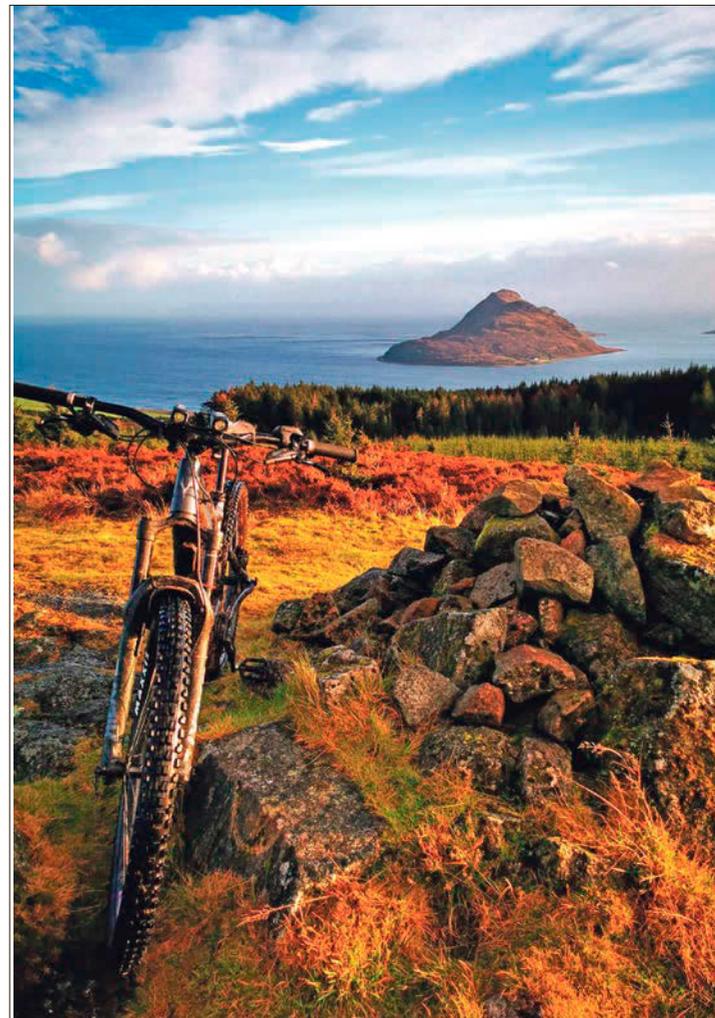
Yours,  
Reverend Ian MacLeod,  
Brodick.

### Church disappointment

Sir,  
I am saddened, disappointed and shocked to learn that there were no Church of Scotland services of worship on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day anywhere on the island. Any virus assembly problems, of which I have been told, could surely have been overcome.

Yours,  
Reverend John G Webster,  
Kings Cross.

### PHOTOGRAPH OF THE WEEK



This week's photograph of the week was sent to us by Paul McDowall of Paisley. He said: 'Thought I'd send a wee photo to remind everyone how blessed we are to have such a great island for cycling around. Although Arran's road circuits are not the greatest, it seems that some off road trails can offer views that are worthy of a lifetime of memories. 'There was no editing on my picture whatsoever, which was taken on November 21 in a three-hour window of dry weather.'

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## Top scams in Scotland revealed

Criminals exploiting the Covid-19 pandemic by targeting people and businesses in Scotland are among the most common scams recorded in 2020.

Scammers adopted unscrupulous new tactics such as telling people they had been in contact with someone with coronavirus and demanding their bank details to pay for a test.

Scams around illegal puppy farms were also reported during the year with an increase in people seeking to buy pets during lockdown, resulting in heart-breaking cases where puppies bought online were found to have serious illnesses.

Cold calls and texts purportedly from banks continued to be prevalent in 2020, with the most frequently reported scams claiming there had been a problem with a consumer's account and requesting a transfer of money to a 'safe' account.

The Trading Standards Scotland 'scam share' reporting bulletin has listed the top ten scams of the year as: Covid scams; bank scams; HMRC scams; 'phishing' messages supposedly from companies such as Amazon; cloned and fake websites; business scams such as fake grants; cold callers; counterfeit goods; misleading energy marketing and the illegal puppy trade.

Advice Direct Scotland, which runs Scotland's national consumer advice service [consumeradvice.scot](http://consumeradvice.scot), recently launched a 'ScamWatch' tool to collect data on scams, which can be passed to Trading Standards teams and other authorities for investigation.

Marjorie Gibson, head of operations with Advice Direct Scotland, which runs [consumeradvice.scot](http://consumeradvice.scot), said: 'Over the past year, scammers have adapted to the coronavirus pandemic to prey on Scots. In what has been a tough year for everyone, it's sickening unscrupulous fraudsters have made life even tougher for many Scots by exploiting a public health crisis.'

'It's increasingly difficult to spot scams and there is absolutely no shame in being caught out, as the scammers' tactics are very persuasive. As we enter 2021, we urge all Scots to remain scam aware and report any instances to us at Advice Direct Scotland so that we can help the authorities take action.'

# Council consultation on regeneration extended

North Ayrshire Council has extended the length of its regeneration delivery plan consultation.

Communities now have until Friday January 15 to have their say about which regeneration projects are priorities within their area.

Local opinions will form the development of regeneration activity over the next five years - 2021 to 2026.

The North Ayrshire economy has enormous potential and the regeneration delivery plan aims to see it achieved. There

is an ambition to accelerate and support economic activity, helping support both the short-term recovery from the adverse impacts of Covid-19 and in the longer-term improvements to the appeal of the council area.

Communities are being asked to take a few minutes to answer eight questions on the website [www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/rdp](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/rdp). Each question relates to the four themes identified in the delivery plan and comments are welcomed in relation to both the area as a whole and local communities.

After consultation, the plan will be approved by the council which will set out priorities and the allocation of regeneration funding for future projects.

The council recently launched its Community Wealth Building Strategy, which sets out a bold new economic model to help create a fairer local economy.

The regeneration of land and assets is one of five pillars within the new strategy and this delivery plan sets out our priorities for delivering on those ambitions.

Council leader Joe Cullinane said: 'The regeneration delivery plan will be key to meeting our Community Wealth Building objective of maximising our land and assets to support the regeneration of our communities.'

'Regeneration is a process that seeks to reverse economic, social and physical decline. Our physical regeneration activity will be focussed on areas where local issues, problems and challenges require us to step in and address an issue through physical regeneration.'

'This consultation gives our communities the opportunity to have their say to help shape our regeneration priorities. Thank you to everyone who has already shared their views.'

'Regeneration is about working together and I would encourage everyone to take the time to answer the questions in our survey.'

'We want to work with our communities to bring forward projects that help to re-build places where people feel more supported, more confident and want to live, work and invest.'

## Perfect retirement gift for Rev Adamson



The Reverend Angus Adamson receives a fitting gift from the congregations of Arran North Parish from Sylvia Alison, treasurer of St Brides Church in Brodick.

Mr Adamson, who retired in September, after 15 years as a Church of Scotland minister on Arran, received a pipe tune composed for him by renowned Scots piper and composer Fred Morrison.

Mr Adamson said: 'I have been deeply touched by all the lovely sentiments expressed in cards and emails received since my retirement from ministry in September. The generosity and kindness shown towards me since then has been overwhelming, summed up in quite simply the most perfect gift of being presented with a pipe tune composed for me by Fred Morrison to mark the occasion. To everyone who contributed to that in any way, please accept my deepest heart-felt thanks.'

## Parents get Child Benefit reminder

Parents in Scotland are being urged to register the birth of their newborns so HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) can verify their Child Benefit claims.

Normally, a birth must be registered before claiming Child Benefit. However, with some local authorities operating registration offices differently to usual, and some parents unable to travel to them because of Covid-19, HMRC announced in April that claims could be made without having to register the child's birth first.

More than 100,000 parents across the UK have been able to take advantage of this temporary change, ensuring they receive this vital form of financial support. But to ensure they continue to receive the benefit they should register the birth as soon as they can, if they have not done so already.

Registration offices in Scotland are operating at the capacity needed to ensure parents of newborns can register their child's birth.

Child Benefit claims can only be backdated by up to three months so it is important new parents claim as soon as they can so that they receive the maximum financial support available. They should then make an appointment to register the birth at the earliest opportunity so that HMRC can verify the claim.

## Help beat winter blues by walking

Scots are being encouraged to use walking to socialise safely, beat loneliness and boost mental wellbeing as the new year dawns.

While winter can be a tough time for older people in particular, regular walks can help keep Scots safe while allowing us to meet up and spend time with family and friends helping to reduce stress, isolation and anxiety, says walking charity Paths for All. Research shows half a million older people regularly suffer periods of isolation during winter, with some people not seeing or speaking with others for up

to five or six days per week and even longer over the festive period.

A local daily walk over the New Year holidays allows for all important interaction with loved ones, neighbours and others in the community, creating a sense of connection and community belonging even while social distancing.

Dr Gregor Smith, Scotland's chief medical officer, said: 'Regular walking is a powerful tonic. It helps to boost our immune system and those of us able to should strive to get the benefit this winter. 'A 30-minute daily walk is one of the best

ways to look after yourself and it's something we can do from our own front door.'

'During periods of physical distancing, isolation and uncertainty, many have expressed increased feelings of anxiety, stress or worry. Daily outdoor exercise, while adhering to guidelines, is an important way to improve physical and mental wellbeing.'

The plea comes as the charity launched its Walk Once a Day this Winter campaign and online content hub which highlights the importance of daily walks to maintain physical and mental wellbeing.

# 2020 – a year to remember, a year to



As we look forward to 2021 with renewed hope and optimism, without a doubt 2020 will be remembered for a long time as being particularly challenging and the most unusual year we have ever faced.

Despite this upheaval and the challenges faced, Arran residents have once again taken on life's obstacles

with stoicism, courage and an indomitable spirit. And it is with this same resolve we can all look forward to a prosperous, happy and healthy 2021.

In part two of our customary look at the year in review, we highlight some of the stories that made the headlines from July to December last year.



AUGUST: Co-op bosses and staff, above, celebrate in the shadow of Goatfell after the Big Co in Brodick was named as the best team in Britain at the 2020 Succeed Together Awards. 01\_B34coop02



AUGUST: After almost five months, pupils at Lamlash primary, right, returned to school where they were welcomed by acting head Mrs Susan Foster. 01\_B33school09

**CONTACTUS**  
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01770 302142

JULY: While the official Bay Queen ceremony had to be cancelled this year, Whiting Bay's Bay Queen, Rosie McNamara, still enjoyed a small ceremony during which last year's Queen, Annie West, played the pipes. 01\_B29Rosie09



JULY: Alice Anderson, along with husband William and daughters Dawn Johnstone and Faye Anderson, celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Brae Salon in Blackwaterfoot.

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SEPTEMBER: The new prefects at Arran High School for the 2020/2021 session with acting head teacher Mrs Susan Foster.



SEPTEMBER: The world's last seagoing passenger-carrying paddle steamer PS Waverley crashed into the pier at Brodick, injuring 24 passengers and resulting in a full scale emergency response on the island. 01\_B37waverley05

OCTO  
Brodic  
recogn  
servic

# Year to forget – July to December



DECEMBER: Liz Mclean, popular store manager at the Co-op's...  
...received the British Empire Medal (BEM) in...  
...recognition of her work as a front line food retail worker for...  
...response. 01\_B42coop01



OCTOBER: While large scale Hallowe'en events did not go ahead in 2020, many small groups, including Kilmory early years pupils, above, celebrated by dressing up for the occasion.



NOVEMBER: With no organised events permitted for Armistice Day, individuals attended cenotaphs privately to pay their respects to the fallen. Left: Former submariner Alan Milligan, left, placed a wreath of poppies on behalf of the Brodick community at the War Memorial in Brodick. Photograph: Norma Davidson.

OCTOBER: Award winners at Arran High School, left – Naomi Provan, with the John S Scott Award for Dux medal, and Milo Godwin, who won the Margaret Wright Award for Attainment in S4 exams.



SEPTEMBER: Accomplished actor, 12-year-old Harry Gilmore was delighted to accept the offer of a scholarship at the prestigious Glasgow Academy of Music, Theatre and Arts.



DECEMBER: Lamlash Primary School pupils celebrate after a remarkable performance in the North Ayrshire 'Sumdog' maths contest.



DECEMBER: It would not have been Christmas without a mention of Bernie Jackson's Christmas lights in Whiting Bay, right. They are a regular feature in Montrose Terrace every year and help to raise charity cash. 01\_B50lights01

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# 2021

# Special Lagg Distillery casks selling out fast

## Huge demand for first batches of island single malt

by Hugh Boag  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



Isle of Arran Distillers is nearing the end of its newest distillery's cask sales programme, with increasing demand for casks of Lagg single malt meaning there is only a small selection left to buy.

Since opening its second site on Arran last year, Lagg Distillery, the distillers have been offering whisky fans the chance to be part of their uniquely exciting whisky story by buying the first casks of the single malt whisky produced there.

The programme has driven exceptional growth in the independently-owned company, with total sales across the company increasing by 62 per cent, in part due to the fact more than 600 casks of Lagg Single Malt have been sold from the original allocation of 700. The island distillers have also seen online mail order sales of whisky double during this turbulent year.

Owning a cask of Lagg whisky, which will mature into Lagg single malt and eventually be available to bottle, means the owner will become part of the exclusive Lagg Cask Society.

This comes with unique additional benefits, including



Distillery manager Graham Omand checks on the whisky production.

**'It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to get involved with a distillery right at the start of its story.'**

a golf pass which entitles the owner to play all of Arran's courses and the gift of a bottle of whisky from Cask Number One when it is bottled at

10-years-old, which is being specially held aside for cask owners.

The spirit produced there, and available to purchase in casks, is expected to mature into the rich, earthy, smokey Lagg Single Malt which will be completely different in character to what the distillers currently produce at its original distillery in Lochranza.

Director of operations and production at the distillery

James MacTaggart said: 'Since we opened Lagg Distillery in 2019, we've been delighted to see how many whisky fans have supported our journey by buying a cask and becoming part of our unique Lagg Cask Society.'

'It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to get involved with a distillery right at the start of its story and to share in a new island adventure with our pioneering whisky company.'

'Purchasing a cask goes much deeper than just the financial benefits and represents an emotional investment, buying into the passionate people on Arran that make our whisky and forming a lasting connection. It's hard to put a price tag on that.'

When purchasing any cask of whisky, it is not a finished product but instead a work in progress that will mature over the coming years with plenty of patience required. The nature of Scotch whisky means that it takes a long-term view, with spirit having to mature for at least three years and often aging much longer than that.

For further information on how to purchase the last remaining casks to be filled at the Lagg Distillery and becoming a member of the Lagg Cask Society, visit [www.laggwhisky.com](http://www.laggwhisky.com)



Fundraiser Aleks with family dog Luna.

## Aleks raises Arran cat rescue cash

An Arran youngster has raised nearly £500 for the new Arran Cat Rescue service.

Animal lover Aleksander Klaczowska, 15, from Lamlash, who attends Arran High School, initiated the fundraiser because he was shocked by how many cats are abandoned and need help on the island.

As the weather is getting colder and lots of places are still closed, Aleks thought it would be fun for islanders to dress up their dogs and share images on social media so the dogs could raise money for their feline friends.

And his fundraising initiative has been so successful that he has more than doubled his original target of £200 with donations still coming in.

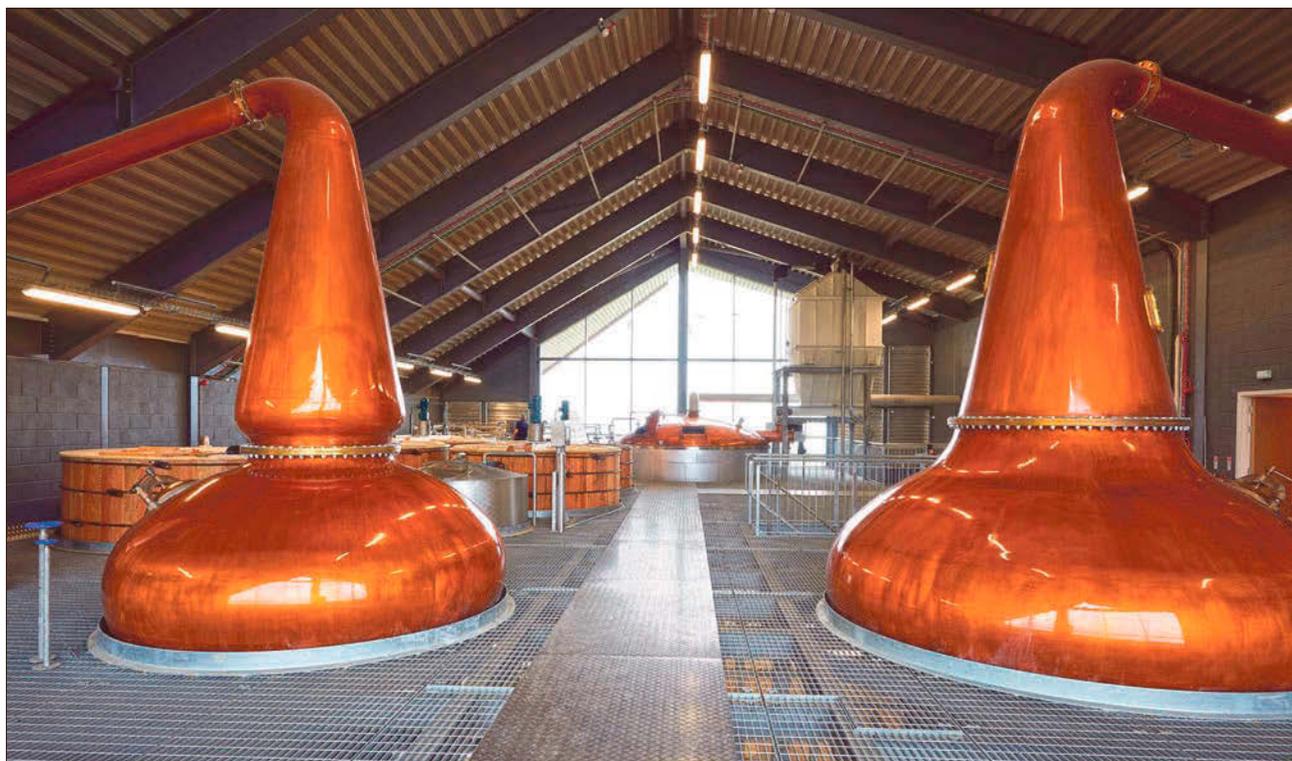
An Arran Cat Rescue spokeswoman said: 'When

Cats Protection closed its Arran branch a few months ago I didn't think a rescue could be run on Arran but how wrong I have been proved, much to my relief and joy.

'A small group agreed we should try to run something and we have grown from three to 11 people, including fosterers. The support from people on and off island has been amazing and encouraging.'

'On behalf of Arran Cat Rescue, we thank you all for your donations and support. It has meant we can now purchase some of much-needed equipment to help catch and transport cats to the vets and new homes.'

'Thank you for this Aleks. You have a truly compassionate soul and we are most grateful for you reaching out to help cats on Arran.'



The two huge pot stills in Lagg Distillery.

# New group helps to develop agritourism

by Hugh Boag  
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



The potential of agritourism was in the spotlight at the second virtual meeting of Arran's Food Journey, when representatives from the island's food and drink sector were joined by the three Ayrshire councils food sector development officer.

At the December meeting, a presentation was given by Caroline Millar of Agritourism Scotland which is behind the Go Rural Scotland initiative with its iconic logo, which sits under the umbrella of the Scottish Tourism alliance.

Caroline, a farmer from

Angus, described agritourism as the meeting of agriculture, rural tourism and leisure and food and drink tourism. Although agritourism is not new here, it has the potential to deliver £250m of income across Scotland, with Arran perfectly placed to have a share of this.

The meeting heard how several farms across Scotland had become agritourism monitor farms. This is a three-year programme, established in 2019, to provide expert and peer group support, knowledge exchange, skills development and confidence building to a wide range of agritourism and rural businesses across Scotland.

Set up alongside traditional farming activities, agritourism businesses in the monitor programme include farm shops and cafes, a wedding venue and a pottery as well as more traditional holiday accommodation and farm tours. A key stipulation of using the Go Rural brand is that businesses must be part of a real farm.

Scottish agritourism is receiving significant support from VisitScotland, including the collection of agritourism statistics and increasing farming and food content on their website. It would welcome the opportunity to work with Arran's Food Journey and VisitArran to develop the opportunity for Arran to

showcase its unique farming, food and cultural experiences.

Capturing and telling food and farming stories is a key ambition that matches one of Arran's Food Journey's own goals. It's especially relevant with 2022 being VisitScotland's themed Year of Scotland's Stories.

Scottish agritourism is looking to support farmers are at the heart of the community and have a key role in managing the environment and supporting wildlife and nature as custodians of the countryside.

It will work with them to exploit the growth area of trails that link different farms. These would allow visitors to experience Arran's rural culture



A selection of food and drink produced on Arran.

01\_B53rural01

and food and drink with their day starting and ending at the farm they are staying on.

Go Rural has been running virtual farm tours this year that have been seen by more than 200,000 people.

Arran's Ailsa Currie has presented a couple of these, showcasing Bellevue Farm and food and drink from across Arran. Audiences like hearing farming stories and finding out more about Scottish food. This leads to future visits and a demand for local food especially if it can be tasted on the farm where they are staying.

Caroline rounded off by telling the group Arran is ahead of the game with its iconic food products and tourism offering.

Agritourism Scotland would be keen to help others on Arran develop a diverse and complementary agritourism offering to create a journey that could be signposted from a central hub.

VisitArran's Sheila Gilmore said Arran businesses had a good track record of offering complementary products. Taste of Arran's Alastair Dobson reflected that Arran's Food Journey's name perfectly describes the idea of an emotional exploration of Arran's food and drink story by visitors.

Others identified that it describes a chance for residents to reconnect with Arran food and farming.

# Glen Rosa fenced off to protect habitats



Another section of the new fence.

The Glen Rosa fence is finished. Encompassing 400 hectares of the glen it is hoped there will be a revival of habitats lost through many years of overgrazing by deer and sheep.

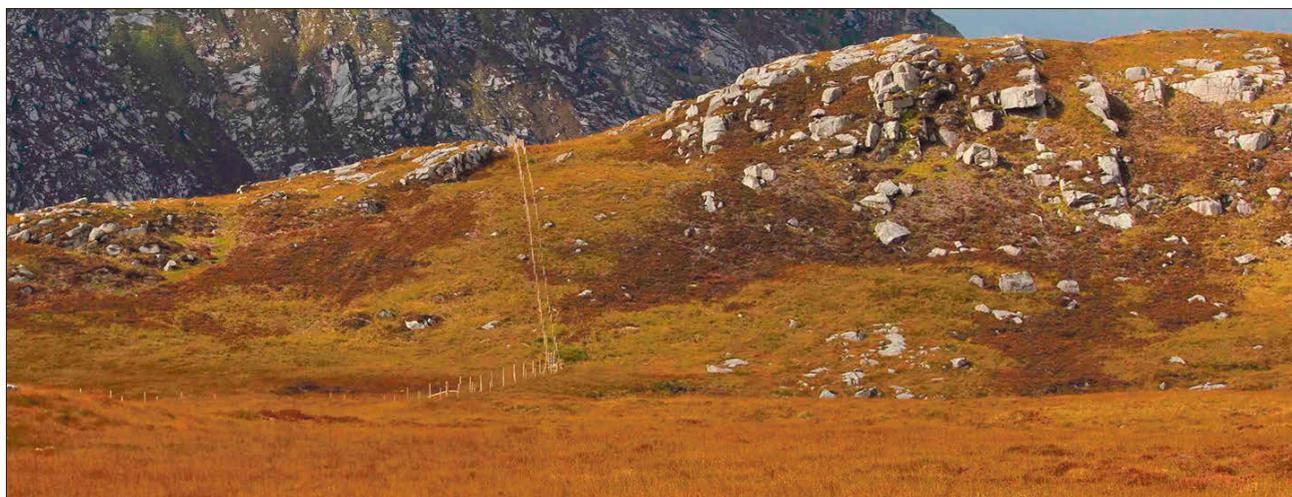
Head ranger at the Arran Ranger

Service Kate Sampson said: 'At last our Glen Rosa fence is finished thanks to Jamie McKinnon and his team. This is a great milestone in our Glen Rosa woodland revival project which has only been possible through the support

of People's Postcode Lottery and Leslie Wheeldon Bequest. We also planted another 500 trees with the help of new, eager local volunteers. Great help, thanks. And we nearly got back before the rain started. Just another 4,500 trees to plant!'



Hard at work tree planting on the hillside.



The new fence stretching across the hills.



A smile for the camera from a tree-planting volunteer.



Velvet crab on maerl. Photograph: Howard Wood.



Pipefish on maerl. Photograph: Howard Wood.



Flame shell habitat. Photograph: Paul Kay.

# Our underwater living reefs

If the word 'reef' conjures up a vision of warm, tropical seas full of colourful corals and fish, you could be forgiven as this is the sort of reef we more commonly see on TV and in news stories.

It may therefore come as a surprise to learn we have equally wonderful underwater seabed habitats in the cooler waters around Arran and other parts of Scotland.

The recent discovery of an extensive flame shell reef off south Arran, reported in the Arran

Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters has officially been extended to 2021, given many events and promotions couldn't happen this year as a result of the pandemic. To recognise this, and to raise the profile of many exciting habitats and species we find in Arran's seas, many protected by the South Arran MPA, the Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) is running a year-long media campaign to raise awareness.

Each month they will focus a particular habitat or collective group of inter-linked species and here for January is the first of the articles. There is more information on COAST social media or visit [www.arrancoast.com](http://www.arrancoast.com).

Banner last month, brought an example of Scotland's amazing

living reefs into the limelight. But flame shells are just one

of a number of different living reefs around our coasts.

These living reefs, or beds, are only made by a few marine animals and plants and are specialised marine habitats. As with coral reefs, the living organism creates the reef structure, sometimes secreting tubes that combine to form the reef or by binding seabed material together to form a raised structure. In the case of the organ-pipe or serpulid worm reefs that are found at less than a handful of locations in Scotland, the reef structures can grow up to 75cm high and 1m across.

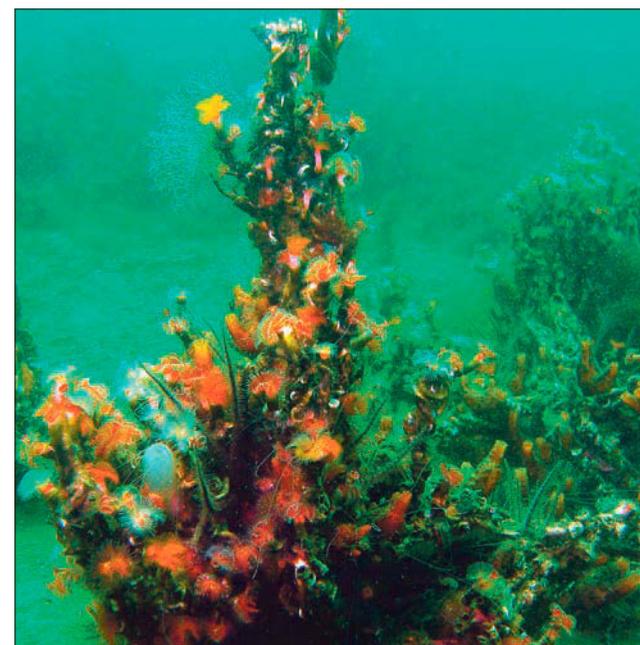
Maerl beds are probably the best-known of the living reefs around Arran, being one of the particularly important habitats in the Lamlash Bay No Take Zone and the South Arran Marine Protected Area (MPA). They are formed by species of free-living red seaweed that have a hard calcium carbonate skeleton and look like small twiglets. Where many of these maerl nodules occur together, they form a bed – a complex three-dimensional structure, with the live maerl providing visually stunning pink colouration to the seabed.

#### Contribution

A complex, multi-dimensional structure is one of the characteristics of living reefs and is why they provide such an important contribution to biodiversity.

The reefs form a multi-story home for many other plants and animals that can live on and amongst the reef, ultimately meaning these habitats support a greater diversity of life than would be found if they were not present.

The cacophony of life living on these reefs is spectacular: seaweeds, sponges, anemones, sea squirts, marine slugs and snails, sea urchins, starfish, octopus, crabs and fish are just some of the more visible species that can be found, with many more cryptic species living within the reef.



Serpulid Reef. Photograph: Howard Wood.

It's not just the variety of species that is important. Reefs function as an essential habitat for different life stages of many species, providing ideal spaces for them to live, feed and reproduce. Many living reefs are important nursery grounds for commercially important fish and shellfish species. The young of some species, such as queen scallops, are actively attracted to live maerl, and horse mussel beds can act as a nursery for juvenile common whelk.

The abundance of life on the reef also provides food for mobile predators such as fish, making these habitats an important food outlet for some species in our seas.

#### Trial project

The recently discovered flame shell reef is the only other living reef that we currently know of in Arran's MPA but there are other living reefs within the Clyde area. Horse mussel and blue mussel reefs are present in a few locations in this region and there is a new trial project to re-instate oyster beds in the Firth.

In the past, native oyster beds

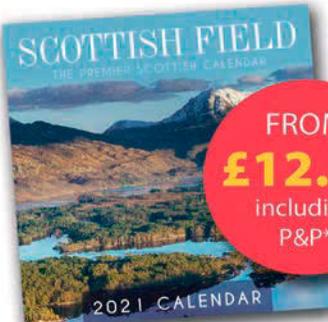
were really important fisheries in Scotland, however, overfishing and an infestation of oyster parasite devastated these beds. There are now a number of projects across Scotland looking at actively restoring oyster beds so we can once again benefit from their ecosystem and biodiversity value, as well as their potential to support sustainable local fisheries.

Scotland's living reefs encompass the weird and the wonderful. Sadly, many of them are far less extensive than they used to be. They are highly sensitive to physical damage from bottom towed fisheries and many of the reef builders are slow growing and long-lived – maerl grows only a few millimetres a year and horse mussels can live for up to 50 years – so reef structures can take a long time to develop.

We need to protect our living reefs. They play an extremely valuable role in the wellbeing of our marine ecosystems and as part of the marine food web, in turn supporting businesses such as fisheries and wildlife tourism that rely on productive seas.

## The Ideal Gift

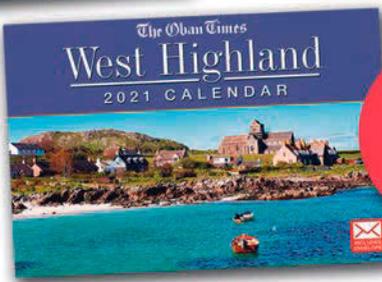
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# THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday December 30, 2000



Arran awoke to a winter wonderland on Thursday, just three days late to make it a white Christmas. However, it was not too late for youngsters to have fun in the snow and Erin, Beth and Anna Hamilton, with cousin Laura, had a snowball fight in Shiskine. 01\_B53tweY01



Santa is surrounded by happy and excited children at the Lamlash WRI Christmas party in the community centre last Saturday. 01\_B53tweY06



The 1970s returned to Brodick Hall on Saturday night when group Wig Wam Bam played to enthusiastic revellers who joined in the fun by digging out some appropriate clothing. 01\_B53tweY03



Happy children with their presents at the Kilmory Hall Christmas party. 01\_B53tweY04



Donna Hemmings of Blairvoyach, West Bannan, and her eight-year-old daughter Jennifer show off their new foal Jasper, who was born three days before Christmas. Also in the picture is Jasper's sire, Arab stallion Jakhiri, and dam Tootsie, a six-year-old Welsh pony. 01\_B53tweY02



Santa popped in to the Brodick Brownies Christmas party last week. 01\_B53tweY05



Left: Santa popped in to Corriedoon nursing home on Christmas Day where Celia Butler and staff introduced him to residents, from left, Margaret Irving, Ella Tyndal, Adam McNeice, Elizabeth Murchie and Betty Crawford. 01\_B53tweY07

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# PUBLIC NOTICES

**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL  
THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS)  
(SCOTLAND) ACT 1997  
NOTICE OF CANCELLATION AND RE-DESIGNATION OF THE  
LAMLASH CONSERVATION AREA**

NOTICE is hereby given that in accordance with Section 61 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the Council has cancelled the existing Lamlash Conservation Area and simultaneously re-designated the Lamlash Conservation Area with altered boundaries.

A plan of the Conservation Area showing the boundary can be viewed online at <https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-standards/conservation-historic-environment/conservation-areas-and-consent.aspx>.

The extent of the Conservation Area may be seen by inspecting the plan, but as general guidance the following streets and accesses are included in whole or in part within the Conservation Area:

Access from A841 to Kilbride Parish Kirk, Access from The Brae – Laurel Bank to Heather Park, Hamilton Terrace, Main Street, Park Terrace, Tennis Court Road, The Brae. It is the duty of the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area when dealing with planning applications. Conservation Area designation brings certain types of development under planning control including house extensions, satellite dishes, painting external walls, boundary enclosures and alterations to windows and doors. Subject to the provisions of Section 67 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 no building in a Conservation Area may be demolished without the consent (known as Conservation Area Consent) of the Planning Authority. Subject to the provisions of Sections 172 and 173 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, the Council must be given six weeks notice of proposals to carry out work on trees in the Conservation Area.

Craig Hatton  
Chief Executive  
Cunninghame House  
IRVINE KA12 8EE



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath

**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL  
COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE  
CHILDREN ENTITLED TO START P1 – SESSION 2021/2022**

Children who attain the age of 5 years between 1 March 2021 and 28 February 2022 should be registered to start primary education from August 2021.

Registration for August 2021 is an online process and will take place during the period Monday 11 January 2021 and Friday 29 January 2021.

Information on how to register your child can be found on the Council's website: [www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01294 310000.

You have the choice to submit a placing request to a primary school outwith your catchment area but you must first register with your catchment primary school.

If you decide to make a placing request, then you should complete an online placing request application via the Council website: [www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk), before 15 March 2021.

More information on placing request applications and how we process these can also be found on our website.

Registration at your catchment area primary school does not guarantee entry to that school.

Andrew McClelland, Head of Service (Education)



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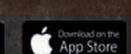


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for the facts  
[drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk)

## CHURCH NOTICES

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

*Independent but working together*  
Parish Assistant: Mrs Jean Hunter:

As numbers will be limited at all services places will need to be booked by the Friday. Congregations will be advised who to contact for each Church to book a place. For Shiskine please contact John Kerr on 01770 860498. For Brodict please contact Liz Lawrie 01770 302782. There will be a streamed service weekly, this can be found on the three Church websites, www.stmolioshiskine.org.uk, www.brodictchurch.org, www.lochranzachurch.org.uk

#### Sunday 3rd January

Lochranza & Pirnmill Churches- Service at Lochranza Church 10:15am Morning worship. Shiskine Church 12noon. Morning worship. Brodict Church – NO service Corrie Church at 12noon. Morning worship.

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Whiting Bay and Kildonan Church of Scotland

Charity Number: SC014005  
Regretfully due to restrictions there will be **no Christmas Day service**

#### Sunday 3rd January

Worship will be conducted by the Minister Rev Elizabeth Watson at 10.30am.

Our capacity will be greatly reduced due to the two metre social distancing. We have introduced a booking system. You are asked to please phone Mrs Enid Halliwell on 600010 by the Friday lunchtime if you want to attend Sunday worship.

### CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Kilmory linked with Lamlash

“A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share”

Sadly there will **no Christmas Services** this Year in either church

#### Sunday 3rd January

Kilmory 10 am  
Lamlash Church Hall 11.30 am  
Due to our reduced capacity, if you wish to attend Sunday Worship in Lamlash, please phone Mrs Vivienne Haigh on 600092 by midday on Friday. All welcome

We will be observing all socially distancing procedures  
Scottish Charity SC015072

### SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church)

St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.  
Sunday 3rd January  
Epiphany

Holy Communion at 11 am  
Revd Adrian Fallows  
ALL WELCOME

We will observe strict SEC guidelines

### ARRAN BAPTIST CHURCH

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

We would love you to join us.

### HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Due to Tier 4 Covid 19 restrictions capacity in Church is further restricted. Booking of seats for Mass is essential. Please email peterdwilko@gmail.com or telephone 600595 to check availability and reserve your place.

Mass for New Year  
Friday 1st January 11am

#### Feast of the Epiphany

There will be a Vigil Mass on Saturday 2nd January and a Morning Mass on Sunday 3rd January.

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

## IN MEMORIUM

**MACFARLANE, David**  
In loving memory of David. Beloved husband, father, father-in-law, grandpa, & great grandpa. Passed away 29/12/2016 “Always in our thoughts.”

**BANNER**  
ANNOUNCEMENTS  
**BANNER**  
ANNOUNCEMENTS

# Sporting review of the year – July-December

## A look back at some of the sporting events that took place from July to December in 2020



**AUGUST:** Andrew Bunting and his support bike rider Lee Girbow covered a total of 18.14km (55.39 miles) to raise £1,500 for Macmillan Cancer Support. 01\_B32run01



**NOVEMBER:** Arran twins, Anne Hart and Heather Raeside are still enjoying open water swimming – and even their 70th birthday could not stop them from taking to the water to enjoy their favourite pastime.



**SEPTEMBER:** Brodict Golf Club's 2020 Club Champions Ross Duncan and Ann May flanked by runners-up Ewan McKinnon and Fiona Henderson.



**SEPTEMBER:** John Pennycott of Whiting Bay with the Phoenix Cup which he won as part of the European team.



**JULY:** Whiting Bay teenagers Jesse and Sid Townsend cycled 100kms around Arran to raise cash for a cancer charity.



**DECEMBER:** Ian McMillan beat the odds and scored a hole in one at the first hole at Corrie golf course.



**OCTOBER:** Members of the jogscotlandarran running group enjoyed a welcome return to their Monday night running at Whiting Bay after a six-month break owing to restrictions.

## FUNERAL DIRECTORS

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# Alice celebrates ladies tour trophy success at Shiskine



## Shiskine Golf Club

The Shiskine Ladies Away Golfing Society Tour is an annual event when the golfers play in open days around the island, on Kintyre and in Ayrshire.

Points are awarded at each outing and the trophy is presented at the end of the season. This year they did have away days at Brodick, Corrie and Machrie Bay, with most of the competitions held at Shiskine.

Twenty two ladies took part and the winner this year was Alice Anderson with 33 points. Second was Clare Buchanan on 25 points and third Jenni Turnbull with 23 points.

Elizabeth Kelso won the trophy for best attendance. Thank you to Alice for organising the venues, collecting names and doing the draw. Hopefully next year golf clubs will be able to hold open days again.

Thursday December 17, ladies 3 club competition and Christmas jumpers: Silver: 1 Ann May 45 BIH; 2 Alice Anderson 50; 3 Liz Kerr 51. Scratch Ann May 49. Bronze: 1 Isobel MacDonald 45; 2 Fiona Scott 47; 3 Clare Buchanan 51.

Thursday December 24, ladies fun Tri-am: 1 Yvonne



Alice Anderson with The Shiskine Ladies Away Golfing Society Tour trophy.

Brothers, Alice Anderson and Julia Salton, 36 points; 2 Jenni Turnbull, Piet Johnston and Elizabeth Kelso 42 points.

Sunday December 20, gents 12 hole medal 1st class: 1 and scratch R Trail 45-6=39; 2 W

Paton 47-4=43 BIH; 3 S Black 49-6=43. 2nd class: 1 D Logan 49-9=40; 2 T Ellis 56-12=44; 3 B Sherwood 57-11=46. Magic two: Sandy Kerr.

Monday December 28, Boxing Day Texas Scramble.

Five teams played. 1 F and D Henderson and S and A Gray 41-3.9=37.1; 2 Wm and E Kelso, T Ellis and C Rutterford 42-4.6=37.4; 3 C and I Currie and J and J Salton 43-4.8=38.2.

Sunday December 27, Gents

Stableford: 1 S Kerr, 29 points; 2 J Morrison, 25 points BIH; 3 A Bannatyne, 25 points BIH. Magic twos: S Kerr, J Morrison, G Andrew and A Ingham.

## Lamlash Golf Club

Thursday December 24, Yellow Medal: 1 Ian Bremner 73-3=64; 2 Hugh McLelland 86-20=66. Magic twos: Graeme Andrew @2nd and Ian Bremner @16th.

Fixtures: Saturday January 2, course backwards, 10.30am for 11am start. Sunday January 3, Glenburn Cup 9.30am and noon starts. Thursday January 7, Yellow Medal, draw at 11am. We wish all members and friends a Happy New Year and hope it will be better than 2020.

## Corrie Golf Club

Fixtures: Friday January 1, Ne-erday Trophy, 18 hole medal. Members please arrange their own matches and register in the usual fashion. Due to Covid-19, regrettably there will be no prizegiving celebrations. Saturday January 2, 18 hole sweep. Again, arrange own matches. Monday January 4, Monday Cup. Noon shotgun start.

## Machrie Bay Golf Club

Tuesday December 22, Winter Cup: 1 John Pennycott 62; 2 Alex Morrison-Cowan 63; 3 Brian Sherwood 64.

Fixtures: Saturday January 2, Lochranza Hotel Cup, tee off noon. Tuesday January 5, Winter Cup, tee off noon.



Fiona Henderson at the Shiskine ladies Christmas jumper day.



Liz Kerr at the Shiskine ladies Christmas jumper day.



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all of our customers!

Garage re-opening on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021

ALL VEHICLES MAKES SERVICED & REPAIRED. CAR & MOTORCYCLE MOT TESTING.



For fast, efficient, friendly service - contact our reception on: 01770 600328  
Strict COVID-19 operating rules apply. Garage office closed to the public. Card payments by phone only

