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WE ARE OPEN A guide to available business services on Arran during lockdown - Page 11

Rallying call to help clear island of non-native mink

Isle of Arran Mink Eradication Project launched online by islander Sam

A long-term initiative to eradicate non-native mink from Arran has begun as reports of mink sightings and attacks on poultry increase.

The Isle of Arran Mink Eradication Project is being spearheaded by Kilmory resident Sam McAulay, the daughter of a farmer, who breeds rare chicken and geese.

Her grandfather was a gamekeeper.

Sam, originally from Yorkshire but latterly from Islay, started researching island predators when she moved to Arran in June 2019 and was astonished to learn of the mink population on Arran.

Realising the prevalence of the species here, she took preventative measures to protect her flock.

Since then she has learned of more frequent mink attacks and has decided to do something about it.

Sam said: "This is a nature lover's endeavour. I love animals

'We can all help to make a difference to protect Arran's native wildlife'

and the thought of killing any animal is abhorrent, however, mink are doing untold damage to our fragile ecosystem and if we wish to see the survival of native species such as squirrels and voles we have to take action now as mink can decimate local wildlife rather quickly.'

American mink, which were introduced to Arran in the 1970s, are dark coloured, semiaquatic, carnivorous mammals which escaped from mink farms and have once again established a significant population on Arran.

There have been reports of mink sightings in every village on Arran with the exception of Pirnmill and Lochranza but it is thought that might be due to



Sam MacAulay, who has started the The Isle of Arran Mink Eradication Project, with one of her flock, a rare breed Sebastopol goose.

keeping poultry, rabbits or guinea pigs having to take preventative measures. They are also known to be devastating to ground nesting and migratory bird populations.

Sam approached the Scottish Invasive Species initiative and various other trusts to seek funding for her idea but because no funding is available she has embarked on a community-orientated initiative.

She has set up a Facebook group called the Isle of Arran Mink Eradication Project to provide advice and resources on eradicating the non-native species and is encouraging people to report sightings.

The group now has 76 volunteers who have expressed an interest in buying traps or who can provide a limited number of traps.

It also has people with air-rifle licences who will dispatch animals humanely.

Continued on page three.

a lack of reporting rather than actual numbers.

Mink are indiscriminate killers and are fearless. If cornered they will attack a human, which demonstrates their ferocious nature.

When encountering poultry

or other animals they - unlike badgers which will just kill what they wish to eat - will decimate all animals until the entire flock is killed.

Following a population explosion in the 1980s, efforts were made to cull the animals

on Arran but a seal pandemic in the early 1990s brought the population under control.

Since then there has been a steady increase in the population again and attacks on chickens and pets are becoming more frequent with anyone

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Burns night celebrations to

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



The birthday of Robert Burns, Scotland's national bard, will not go unrecognised this year as a number of virtual events have been planned to celebrate the occasion.

Celebrated by people around the world, Burns Night takes place on Monday January 25. It is traditionally enjoyed with music and entertainment, a meal of haggis, neeps and tatties and a wee dram of whisky.

This year, despite restrictions, those with a love for Scotland and the bard can still mark the big night by enjoying a host of virtual Burns celebrations and suppers including: Dumfries' famous Big Burns Supper – with comedy, music and entertainment – going digital for the first time; the National Trust for Scotland's Big Burns Night In, streaming live from Robert Burns' Cottage in Alloway, as well as haggis producer Macsween's plans for the largest virtual



Supper. Arran's Lamlash Burns Club, which is affiliated with the Robert Burns World Federation, has confirmed it will be unable to host any event this year for obvious reasons but chairman Douglas Auld encouraged

members and everyone else to celebrate in their own houses.

He also confirmed that 2022 would be a special anniversary dinner that would more than make up for the 2021 absence.

VisitScotland has compiled a list of events and if anyone is

Top table attendees at last year's Lamlash Burns Club dinner, Alastair Crawford, chairman Douglas Auld, retiring chairman Gordon Kinniburgh, Kenneth Robertson and Jock Kelso.

planning a celebration in their home a number of Burns Night resources can be downloaded from visitscotland.com/burns and scotland.org/burns

Celtic Connections
January 15 - February 2:

The world-famous Celtic Connections is going digital for the first time.

Across 19 days, including Burns Night, performances are available to view online with some of the biggest names on the Scottish music scene and beyond appearing on screens across the world as part of the winter festival.

Ticket prices vary across the dates.

A full programme of events and details of how to book can be found at www.celticconnections.com

Burns Big Night In
with National Trust for Scotland

January 23, 7pm – 8.30pm:

This special virtual event will present music from Scottish folk band Talisk, a cocktail masterclass courtesy of The Glenlivet, exclusive insights into the life of Robert Burns from the experts plus special guests who'll bring the traditional Burns supper to life with recitation, including the

world-famous Address To A Haggis. Ticket prices from £18 per person.

Further information and bookings can be made at www.nts.org.uk/stories/burns-big-night-in

Big Burns Supper

January 25, 7pm:

Scotland's largest contemporary Burns celebration Big Burns Supper goes digital for the first time in 2021.

Marking the festival's tenth anniversary, Janey Godley's Big Burns Supper dishes up a special broadcast connecting Scotland to the world with contributions from local, national and international artists to help celebrate Burns Night in a way that helps give everyone a much-needed lift and a laugh.

Broadcast free of charge across the Big Burns Supper Facebook page and YouTube channel, the 75-minute digital broadcast welcomes a cracking selection of artists including KT Tunstall,

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for the facts
drinkaware.co.uk

Patricia Gibson MP backs end to puppy smuggling

Patricia Gibson, MP for North Ayrshire and Arran, has joined forces with the UK's largest dog welfare charity to call on the Government to stop the illegal importation of puppies into the UK.

As part of its wider campaign, urging government to introduce tougher legislation to end puppy smuggling, Dogs Trust is also calling on the government to raise the minimum age for puppies to be imported into the UK to six months to help make them less desirable and to bring in tougher penalties for smuggling puppies to deter dishonest sellers.

Dogs Trust's Veterinary Director Paula Boyden said: 'Sadly, we continue to see more and more heart-breaking examples of puppies being illegally imported into the country.'

'Puppy smugglers are making vast profits by exploiting innocent puppies, breeding and transporting them in appalling conditions to sell on to dog lovers here in the UK.'

'There has never been a more urgent need to end the appalling puppy smuggling trade.'

Patricia Gibson MP has joined the Puppy Smuggling Taskforce which seeks to end puppy smuggling.



'Enough is enough. Government must take immediate action as too many puppies are suffering at the hands of cruel traders and too many dog lovers are being left to pick up the pieces.'

'We are grateful to Patricia Gibson for her support in joining the parliamentary Puppy Smuggling Taskforce to stop this cruel trade.'

Mrs Gibson said: 'I am delighted to join the Puppy Smuggling Taskforce and support Dogs Trust in its efforts to raise awareness of and tackle the abhorrent puppy smug-

gling trade. At a time when demand for dogs in the UK has never been higher, I want to urge my constituents to really do their research before buying a puppy advertised for sale online as it's all too easy to be duped into buying a dog that's been illegally smuggled into the country.'

'Dogs Trust has been campaigning on this issue for many years now and I'm proud to to say I'm part of the Puppy Smuggling Taskforce to help put a stop to puppies needlessly suffering at the hands of criminals.'

go ahead, albeit all online

Dougie Maclean, Donovan, Tide Lines and Skerryvore, who have performed at the festival over the last 10 years.

Scots comic Janey Godley will host from her own living room as she prepares a Burns supper while introducing guests and festival friends throughout the evening.

Festival favourites Le Haggis will also be making an appearance providing burlesque, comedy and mayhem.

The event is free and further information can be found at www.bigburnsupper.com

Macswen Burns Supper

January 25, 7pm: Edinburgh-based haggis brand Macswen is aiming to bring (possibly) the largest virtual Burns Supper to homes across the globe.

Teaming up with Scottish comedy actor Karen Dunbar and Dr Rachel Barrie, master blender for Benriach distillery described as the first lady

of Scotch whisky, the event will be aired on Macswen's Facebook page at 7pm.

The event will be broadcast on www.facebook.com/MacswenHaggis and anyone can join in the fun for free.

Burns&Beyond

January 23-25:

Burns&Beyond with Johnnie Walker returns in 2021, celebrating the life and legacy of Robert Burns through traditional and contemporary art and culture from across Scotland and Beyond.

Set against a theme of love, hope and kindness, Burns&Beyond 2021 presents a free online programme of live music and poetry from Lucky Middlemass's Tavern, curated by Aidan O'Rourke, Lau, and arts collective Neu! Reekie!, a series of online performances to help everyone celebrate their own Burns Night at home and an online celebration of the Burns Collection at the National Museum of Scotland.

Following a sell-out appearance at last year's festival, which helped to raise more than £10,000 for charity, KT Tunstall returns with a special online Burns&Beyond performance of Ae Fond Kiss.

For the full programme visit www.burnsandbeyond.com

Burns Night Ceilidh

with the Nest Collective

January 25, 8pm - 9:30pm, live on YouTube:

Dust off those dancing shoes with a free live ceilidh from the Nest Collective. Join in for a night bedecked in tartan and Tam o' Shanters, with whisky flowing and floorboards shaking, all in celebration of Burns. Host Sam Lee will guide viewers through the evening. Dance along at home to a live ceilidh band with Covid-safe demonstration dancers, listen to contributions from special guest musicians and enjoy the Burns ceremony.

The event is free and

registration is at www.thenestcollective.co.uk/events/burns-night-2021

SBH Scotland

- World's Biggest Burns

January 25, 7pm:

Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus (SBH) Scotland has joined forces with Grant's Haggis and Endura to bring the world together for one special hour of big Burns and entertainment.

The event will be broadcast on the organisation's YouTube and Facebook channels. The celebration of Burns includes performances from comedians Janey Godley and Fred MacAulay as well as the world's leading Robert Burns performer Christ Tait and Travis front man, Fran Healy.

This is a free event and registration is at www.sbhscotland.org.uk/content/burns

Burns Feast

January 25, 28, 7pm - 8.30pm:

Celebrate Burns Night with Glasgow Distillery and Once



Burns cottage in Alloway will be streaming a live event on Saturday January 23.

Upon a Whisky. Guests who buy tickets for the online tastings can try five premium whiskies from the Glasgow Distillery Company which are home delivered and discover all the secrets behind the first whisky distillery in Glasgow in more than 100 years.

Tickets are £35 and can be booked at www.ouceponawhisky.co.uk/guided-tours/online-whisky-tasting/



Rallying call to help clear island of mink

Continued from page one:

All work and advice is done in accordance with Scottish Invasive Species Initiative guidelines (SISI).

Sam has done exhaustive research, taking into account other projects, such as the Hebridean Mink Project, which began in 2001, and others on the mainland, and understands this is a long-term project, the success of which will rely on the numbers who

get involved.

Sam said: 'With funding from SISI, the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust or Scottish Wildlife Trust we could buy traps in bulk and build rafts or purchase wildlife cameras to monitor more remote locations.

'Costly testing can also help to establish population numbers but the funding is not available at the moment.

'The way I look at it, we can

do nothing and continue setting the odd individual trap watching the wildlife on the island slowly decline, or we can actually do our best to try and address it as a community.

'If you wish to be involved with the project please consider joining the group because as a community we can all help to make a difference to protect Arran's native wildlife.'

Humane culling projects are already prevalent across Europe, Canada and the United States where large populations of American and European mink are devastating native wildlife populations.

Recently 17 million mink were culled in Denmark after a mutated strain of Covid-19 was found in mink farms.

Club draw

The winners of the Lochranza 200 Club draw for December were: 1 Margaret McGivern, 2 Jenny Baboolal, 3 Carol Haddington.



Cute to look at, but mink are ferocious creatures that display little fear for animals, humans and even large pets.

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Montrose House care home in Brodick. 01_B04montrose01

Montrose House in testing pilot success

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



A visitor testing scheme trialled at Montrose House care home in Brodick has been successful and will now be rolled out nationwide.

The testing pilot, which involved three care homes in North Ayrshire, Dreghorn's Shalom care home, Moorburn Manor in Largs and Montrose House in Arran, allowed families visiting their loved ones to receive covid test results ahead of visits last month.

The news was welcomed by

families of residents, particularly after a number of Covid outbreaks have resulted in devastating consequences for a number of care homes across Scotland since the start of the pandemic.

The trial, starting on Monday December 7, was in 14 care homes across North Ayrshire, Fife, Argyll and Bute, Inverclyde and Aberdeenshire and involved lateral flow testing of designated visitors.

A North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership spokesperson said: 'We can confirm three North Ayrshire

care homes took part in the Scottish Government's lateral flow Covid-19 testing pilot programme for visitors in December 2020. These were Montrose House on Arran, Moorburn Manor in Largs and Shalom in Dreghorn.

'Being able to confirm negative results on the day of visiting and respond to any positive results enhances safe practice and offers a degree of assurance to everyone involved. It is emphasised that testing regimes are in addition to all other infection prevention and control behaviours

that continue, such as the use of PPE, social distancing and hand hygiene. Whilst safety of care home residents, staff and visitors is paramount, and indoor care home visits are currently limited nationally in line with Scottish Government guidelines, we recognise the emotional demands this places on residents and families.

'Being at the fore of the pilot on visitor testing has helped inform the wider care home community in delivering their visitor testing regimes which are now in place across North Ayrshire.'

Local authority performance 70 per cent on track

Public performance targets for North Ayrshire Council, outlining how the local authority performed, have been presented to the North Ayrshire Council Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

A total of 34 council duties were rated for levels of public performance, however, seven categories were not available for the compilation of the report.

The report was mostly favourable with 70 per cent of performance goals on target for the period between April 2019 to April 2020.

But 22 per cent of targets were judged as 'significantly adrift' while another seven per cent were described as 'slightly adrift.'

The missed targets include not enough council money being spent with local businesses.

About 20 per cent of council procurement cash went to local enterprises in the financial year 2019 to 2020. The goal was 23 per cent.

The percentage of households facing fuel poverty (28 per cent) was also too high that year.

The target was 25 per cent.

The amount of recycled



rubbish from homes stood at 56 per cent while the goal was 59 per cent.

Meanwhile the council was reported to be over achieving in many other areas.

The percentage of customers reported to be 'delighted with overall customer service' stands at 81 per cent. The goal was 77 per cent.

The number of empty homes brought back into use again was 594 during 2019 to 2020.

The target was 500.

Committee chairwoman Councillor Marie Burns said: 'This is an annual public performance report. It has been a really tough year for everybody and I know Covid will have had some impact on some of this.'

The Irvine SNP councillor passed on thanks to the staff 'for the work they have done in what has been a tremendously difficult year'.

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There's light at the end of the tunnel... but, for now, embrace lockdown life

Once again the UK is living under tough but necessary restrictions as we battle COVID-19. Vaccines offer us hope and a way out but, until then, we must all play our part in together beating the virus. We look at the many ways we can continue to stay at home and enjoy life

AS COVID-19 tightens its grip, lockdown restrictions have again been put in place, and are likely to remain for some time to come.

Schools to shops, work to pubs, restaurants, cinemas and gyms – all aspects of our lives are affected amid the UK Government and Devolved Administrations' clear, clarion calls to stay at home.

Those on the NHS frontline continue to bear the brunt of the pandemic while other key workers are keeping operating essential services such as supermarkets, pharmacies, waste collection and deliveries.

We can all play our part on the path to freedom. All we have to do is obey the rules.

Life in lockdown is undoubtedly different. But, embrace it, and it can offer new opportunities.

Take up a hobby, learn a skill, exercise, read, bake, take up a craft and complete jobs around the

Mental wellbeing

There are things we can all do to look after our mental wellbeing at this time.

The Clear Your Head website has some great tips to help you feel calmer, create a routine, keep active, look after yourself and support each other.

■ Visit clearyourhead.scot

For more information go to gov.scot/coronavirus

house you have been putting off. New technologies allow us to keep in touch with family and friends as well as connecting on virtual pub quizzes and classes.

There is light at the end of the tunnel with rules regularly reviewed and the vaccination programme being rolled out apace.

But for now we are in this together, all having a vital part to play.



LOTS TO DO: Home improvements and more reading are just two things that can help you get through lockdown.



More exercise, DIY and daily routine have helped couple cope

Husband and wife Tim and Angela Hoe (right) have embraced life in lockdown.

The Yorkshire couple has exercised more, completed DIY jobs around the house and garden and become well-read.

"Like everyone else, our world has completely changed," said Angela. "Work has stopped, usual places we

visited closed, and we are not allowed to visit friends and family.

"All our shopping is supermarket click-and-collect or from our local independents and farm shop."

They have two adult children. Daughter Charlotte lives with her



partner nearby while son Lewis lives with his wife Lucy and two children Harry, aged six, and Lily, 18 months, in Bournemouth. Angela has not seen them or her parents, who also live in Yorkshire, for ten months. The couple love to exercise

and have continued to do so within updated rules. "With gyms closing, it was a case of keeping ourselves fit with running, biking and YouTube yoga and fitness classes online. Reading and crosswords have also filled our days," confirmed Angela. "The mobile library has provided a fantastic service allowing us to choose and order books online and

collect locally. Danielle Steel has been a particular favourite for me while my husband has continued with his love of Dickens, Steinbeck and Hemingway." Despite not visiting family, they have kept in touch. "FaceTime calling has become a regular occurrence with calls to our grandchildren and listening to our grandson read stories from his school book."

Stay @

It is essential that you stay at home and follow the rules. Find out more at gov.uk/coronavirus

All together >

LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@arranbanner.co.uk
or The Editor, Arran Banner, Brodick, Isle of Arran KA27 8AJ**Lingering lockdown but hope on the horizon**

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's announcement in the Scottish Parliament during her Covid-19 update on Tuesday will hardly come as a surprise to anyone.

With infections rates in North Ayrshire skyrocketing to the second highest in Scotland, Clackmannanshire having the highest rate, it was almost inevitable that lockdown would be extended into February, if not further.

If there is any consolation for Arran residents, other than the fact that we are geographically separated from the rest of North Ayrshire and that we live with semi-rural wilderness right on our doorsteps, it is that approximately 100,000 people are being vaccinated per week and that health teams are on track to increase that to 400,000 per week by the end of February.

Vaccinations on Arran have also picked up pace since the initial offering late last year and the approval of two other vaccines that do not require special transportation requirements will further boost the vaccination programme that starts this weekend at Arran High School.

And while precise vaccine supply figures from the government are difficult to come by, as are infection figures for Arran specifically, at least we can all take solace in the fact that hope in the form of vaccines is now visible on the horizon.

There are tentative signs of infection rates dropping and, just as we have learned to continually adapt to constant change, we need to endure for just that little bit longer.

Thought for the week

'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.' John 15:4

YOURSTORY

email us at editor@arranbanner.co.uk
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Ferry fiasco across the board

Sir,
It's a few weeks now since the RECC published its damning report into the procurement process for the two ferries. By any judgment, this report was highly critical of all involved. So, where are we now?

Derek McKay, now discredited, but responsible for transport at the time, remains a fully paid, pensioned and presumably expense-claiming MSP. As far as I am aware, he has avoided any responsibility for his involvement in the contract. His department, however, had overall charge of the whole contract.

Similarly, CMAL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Scottish Government, in charge under the government of assessing the various tenders, overseeing the building delivery, very heavily criticised in the report, remains intact as far as I am aware under the same management presumably still overseeing vessel procurement contracts.

The result of this procurement process is dual-fuel ships of extremely doubtful overall green credentials given the distance and diesel needed to get the gas fuel to the ferry terminals in Ardrossan and Skye from South England.

Three-plus weekly diesel tanker return journeys to each port, not including bringing the fuel from source in the Middle East.

In fairness, that could be as a result of political input, rather than CMAL choice. And designed too big to fit their planned ports.

Ardrossan apparently needs a further £60m spent with a three-year delay, never mind the associated costs on the Uig triangle ports. What about the £30m spent on the new Brodick terminal where the pier is not fit for purpose? How could that happen?

I haven't read or heard of any sackings, re-

dundancies or terminations, so I would assume the RECC report didn't impact much, if at all, on CMAL. Caledonian MacBrayne, the fleet operator, claimed it would work with the ships that were being built for it, but reading between the lines it seems it would not have gone for the dual-fuel option as its preference but felt it had no choice.

Ferguson Marine is also criticised; it was placed into administration and all the management have gone, so at least there have been some consequences.

I was one of the Arran people who went to the launch. The first minister and the replacement transport minister Hamza Youssaf were in attendance, taking credit for resurrecting Clyde shipbuilding, and then posing for lots of selfies.

I haven't heard a squeak from either about the contract since or any detail regarding the cost of saving the yard.

I did, however, see that Hamza Youssaf was promoted to his new position as justice secretary, quote, 'because he had done such a good job at transport'.
So, £200m-plus lost, no ships completed, no one to blame, or accepting responsibility, and compliant, long-suffering taxpayers used as a money tree to keep fully supporting these failed institutions.

I may be wrong, but I think things would have gone differently if the contract had been awarded in the private sector to a company experienced in designing and building dual-fuelled vessels. And with the financial strength to complete the contract.

At least there would have been financial contract delivery penalties and presumably employment consequences for any incompetence. We might even already have ships that sail and fit their designated ports and all at the cost quoted.

Yours,
Archie Cumming
Lochranza

Appeal for fox cub food

Sir,
The Scottish SPCA is preparing for fox cub season by appealing to animal lovers in Scotland to donate much-needed food to its National Wildlife Rescue Centre in Fishcross.

Scotland's animal welfare charity had its busiest ever year in 2019 with more than 11,000 wildlife casualties admitted.

The pandemic caused quite a significant drop in the number of animals arriving at the wildlife hospital. More than 7,000 wild animals were brought to the centre in 2020.

As we are entering fox cub season, we are appealing for Pedigree puppy food and puppy milk. Last year, we cared for 76 foxes and 39 of those were fox cubs. It can be a struggle to keep up with so many hungry mouths to feed.

We expect to be even busier with admissions this year so we need help from members of the public. If anyone can help with food for these young mammals, we would appreciate anything that people can spare. Puppy meat can be purchased from the wildlife centre's Amazon wishlist: <http://amzn.to/39xkU3e>.

Yours,
Kirsty Morrison
Senior Communications Officer, Scottish SPCA

Scot's tongue is richt trate

Sir,
Whit a richt trate it wis tae read the article by Marion McRorie scrieved in oor ain guid Scot's tongue. Wud there be oony chance o' a few mair owre the next year? It wid fair help keep the leed alive. Unless yer ower-thrang wi' reporting CalMac's activities.

PS. Ma spell checker is guan doolally wi' this!
Yours,
John Connell
Kildonan

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Find out more at gov.scot/coronavirus

STAY HOME ▶ PROTECT THE NHS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Samaritans aim to turn Blue Monday into Brew Monday

Samaritans charity is urging people on Arran to connect with others by reaching out to someone they care about for a virtual cuppa this winter as part of the charity's Brew Monday campaign.

The Brew Monday campaign started earlier this week and is an adaptation of Blue Monday, the third Monday of January, which traditionally is known as the most depressing day of the year.

The campaign is aimed at encouraging people to have a virtual chat and a cuppa with family, friends and co-workers in a bid to make sure no one is lonely over the long winter months as restrictions continue.

Laura Adlington, a popular contestant in last year's Great British Bake Off competition has been a Samaritans volunteer for two years and has lent

her support to the campaign. Samaritans provides emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide,

Laura said: 'I've felt very isolated and there have been days where I didn't want to get out of bed, let alone talk to anyone. But I found that the more I talked and reached out to people, the better I felt.'

'Keeping in touch with people throughout the pandemic has been the only way I've got through it.'

'Being away from home for six weeks during Bake Off was challenging but I always managed to find time for a chat with my husband every day to share how I was feeling. He probably didn't realise it but those conversations, however short, helped me find the inner strength I needed to keep going.'

'If 2020 has taught us anything it's to be kind. If you think someone is struggling, ask them if they're ok. You're not going to make them feel worse. A phone call is such a small thing, but it can mean the world to someone.'

As part of the campaign people are encouraged to make use of audio/video calling software such as Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp and Facebook messenger but a normal telephone call can work just as well for connecting with people, especially for those not comfortable with technology.

Rachel Cackett, executive director for Samaritans Scotland, said: 'Even in normal circumstances, we know that winter can be a difficult time of year for people and the pandemic restrictions will heighten these challenges for

many. So it's never been more important that we all take steps to look after our wellbeing and stay connected.'

'As we kick-off our Brew Monday campaign, we're encouraging people to make time for a virtual cuppa and a chat with family, friends or co-workers this winter.'

Even if we can't be together in person, we can still check in with one another and take time to listen. It doesn't have to be on a Monday or over a cup of tea – what matters is to stay connected and remind ourselves and one another that we don't have to face difficult times alone.'

More information about the campaign and how you can support the Samaritans can be found online at www.samaritans.org/brewmonday where a digital toolkit is also available for those that wish to take part.



Great British Bake Off finalist and Samaritans volunteer, Laura Adlington, is urging people to get involved with the Brew Monday campaign. Photograph: Kate Peters.

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EVEN when it's cold outside and the nights draw in, Wiltshire Farm Foods continue to deliver their delicious frozen meals, packed with goodness and brought to you with a smile.



We would like to introduce you to Scott Weir – our new delivery driver for Arran. We welcomed Scott to our friendly Ayrshire team at the end of 2020. Many of you will know Scott, who recently retired from the Arran police force. He is very much looking forward to being able to deliver great customer service to all our Arran customers. We hope you get the opportunity to meet him soon if you have not already!

Wiltshire Farm Foods offer you maximum convenience - there's no contract, you can simply order what you like, when you like. They're not trying to replace your usual shopping and cooking routines, they just understand that sometimes it isn't always convenient to get out to the shops or cook a big meal.

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The expert chefs at Wiltshire Farm Foods take great pleasure in crafting their menu of over 300 dishes - their brochure is filled with traditional favourites, plus most main meals come complete with vegetables too, and of course there's plenty of delicious puddings for afters!

"It's just good old-fashioned service with a smile."

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Government triples support for struggling taxi drivers

More than 491 taxi drivers and private hire drivers working in Arran and across North Ayrshire will be granted three times the amount of Scottish Government support they had last year.

Eligible drivers will now be able to claim a £1,500 grant to cover fixed costs as part of a funding package worth £739,500 to help support the drivers and the industry.

North Ayrshire Council (NAC) will begin contacting eligible drivers to brief them on their entitlement and ask them to provide supporting information and bank account details. They do not need to apply or contact the local authority.

Arran's MSP Kenneth Gibson said: 'I am delighted the Scottish Government has increased the funding available to taxi and private hire drivers. Many have gone

above and beyond the call of duty by providing transport for key workers and taking people safely to hospital appointments.

'We have 491 taxi drivers and two private hire drivers and each will receive the full £1,500 grant, amounting to £739,500 across North Ayrshire and Arran.

'This increase in support recognises what has been a tough time for taxi drivers due to lockdown restrictions.

Fixed costs

'Many fixed costs have still remained for drivers, such as general maintenance, licence plate fees, rental fees and insurance payments.

'I'm sure NAC will contact firms quickly to ensure that drivers receive their grants as soon as possible.'

South Scotland MSP Colin Smyth also welcomed the announcement saying it was



Arran's MSP Kenneth Gibson.
Photograph: Andrew Cowan/Scottish Parliament.

'welcome but long overdue'. Mr Smyth said: 'The news of this £1,500 grant will be very welcome for the hundreds of taxi drivers across the area who have really been suffering because of the ongoing pandemic.'

'Taxi drivers have seen a massive drop in passenger



South Scotland MSP Colin Smyth welcomed the 'long overdue' news.

numbers since March 2020 and I know this cash will be a big help.

'I was the first to raise this matter with the First Minister in the Scottish Parliament back in November. At the time I asked her to urgently consider specific support for our forgotten taxi drivers

before thousands became unemployed, yet it has taken until January for this fund to be announced.

'For many, it will be long overdue and there will be disappointment that Scotland's taxi drivers are being short changed by the Scottish Government, given that the grants will be just £1,500 compared to up to £4,000 in Wales from the Welsh Government.'

'Our taxi drivers have been there for us throughout the pandemic, including during the first lockdown and this latest one too.'

'It is only right they receive support.'

'This pandemic has hit a lot of sectors very hard and many of our hard-working taxi drivers have been facing financial ruin as business has plummeted.'

'My constituency is predominantly rural and a lot of people rely on their local taxi service

to get around, from going to the shops to attending vital medical appointments.'

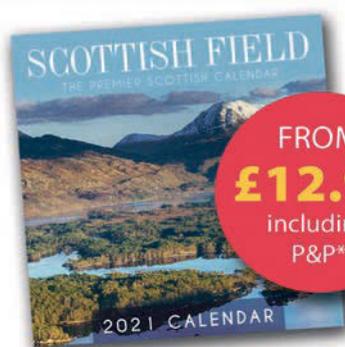
'However, as the Covid-19 pandemic drags on, many drivers face going out of business which would be a huge disaster, both for them and the people who rely on their services.'

'This grant is administered through local authorities and taxi drivers will be contacted directly and invited to claim the cash, which I hope they will do without delay.'

Information on eligibility can be found at www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-taxi-and-private-hire-driver-support-fund

To date the Scottish Government has allocated £3 billion in business support to various industries since the start of the pandemic on top of support available through the UK Government.

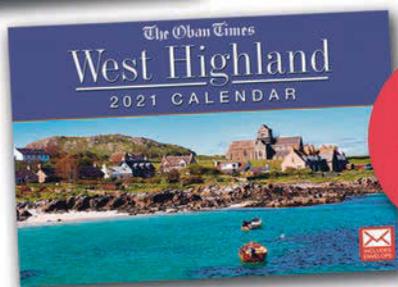
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Schools pipe band contest goes online

The world's largest school pipe band event has gone online this year with schools in Scotland being urged to take part in the online music competition, which has prizes totalling more than £2,500.

The event is being organised by the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust which originally cancelled the 'live' championship but decided to host a virtual event to beat Covid and to offer children the opportunity to compete.

Convener David Johnston said: 'We had cancelled the event for 2021 but then a number of school tutors contacted us asking for the event to go online to help keep young players focused and give them some fun in lockdown.'

'So we have slimmed the event down to just one class – the innovative Freestyle class where pipes and drums combine with other instruments and singers to give a modern twist to traditional music.'

Schools wishing to take part are being asked to express an interest by Sunday February 7 and eight have already signed up. The competition will be broadcast online during the weekend starting Friday March 26 and the public will have the chance to cast their vote in a live people's choice event on Sunday March 28.

Some of Scotland's top musicians will judge the event, including Gary Innes, box player with Manran and presenter of BBC Scotland's Take the Floor, and Craig Munro of the Red Hot Chili Pipers.

Craig said: 'Amazing music can be created and orchestrated online now using apps and this competition opens up a world-wide audience for the youngsters. All bands have to do is film their entries using music apps and submit them for judging by Sunday March 14.'

Musicianship, harmony, originality, innovation, musical interpretation, presentation, rhythm, musical ensemble, vitality, technical proficiency and enjoyment will be important factors in the judging.



Musicians compete in the Scottish Schools Pipe Band Championships in 2018.

WE ARE OPEN

A guide to available business services on Arran during lockdown

A&C Cameron Shop & Post Office 8.30am – 5.30pm Monday – Saturday 12.30pm – 5pm Sunday	Open	Bay Wool and Crafts Orders can be made by: Tel: Kat and Stevie Sparshott, 01770 600110 Facebook message through the shop page: Search Bay Wool & Crafts Email query through the shop website: www.baywoolcrafts.co.uk Direct email to the shop: shop@baywoolcrafts.co.uk Payment can be made through credit card (they will need to call you back from the shop), BACS transfer, or Paypal. They will even accept cash on delivery (though exact change is preferred)! They are happy to deliver for anywhere on the island.	Online etc / Closed	Lamlash Co-op Open 7am – 10pm everyday	Open
Armitage Groundworks Open for business but there is no access to the yard or office for either business. Orders or enquiries can be placed over the phone 01770 303971 or through our website: armitagegroundworks.co.uk	Open	Blackwaterfoot Garage Open as normal for fuel 08:30-17:30 Monday – Friday, 09:00-17:00 Saturday and still providing MOT's and repairs.	Open	Lamlash Garage Re-opened (under COVID restrictions) on Monday 11th January	Open
Arran Active Shop closed but they may be contacted via Facebook or their website www.arranactive.co.uk	Orders taken / Closed	Bogarie Pet Food Supplies Will be offering FREE delivery of Dog, Cat and Wild Bird Food every Thursday as normal. Email bogarielkennels@mail.com or call 870339 to place your order.	Delivery Service	Mackenzie Logs Delivering as normal. Tel: 01770 700348	Open
Arran Art Gallery The gallery is closed under the Government restrictions but our website is fully open for online sales and enquiries. www.arranartgallery.com/artwork	Online/Closed	Book and Card Centre/Post office Open 9am – 3pm – Monday to Friday. 9am – 12.30pm Saturday. Closed Sundays	Open	MBS Open Monday – Saturday 8am – 12noon	Open
Arran Brewery Shop Open during lockdown we will be running service at the door rather than allowing customers into the shop itself. Customers are also able to order direct from us at www.arranbrewery.co.uk .	Open	Brodick Co-op Open from 6am-10pm 7 days, also home delivery service via online and also click and collect via online. You can also do shopping instore and we will deliver.	Open	Old Byre Visitor Centre Fully operational online: www.oldbyre.co.uk – worldwide shipping, collect from outside shop at an allocated time or local delivery can be arranged. Please phone: 01770 860227 e-mail: enquiries@oldbyre.co.uk or message any queries or requirements. They are not doing take away from the café.	Online / Closed
Arran Butcher The shop will remain open with all the correct guidelines in place. Open 8am – 3pm except Tuesday and Sunday. Saturday open 9am – 1pm. Delivery for anywhere on the island.	Open	Chameleon Ladies Boutique Online shop open at www.chameleonarran.com/shop Shop in Lamlash closed except for 'click and collect' of online orders.	Online / Closed	Orca Krafts Online - online art and craft supplies, art packs and bespoke gifts. www.orcakrafts.com	Online / Closed
Arran Chocolate Shop Online - www.jamesofarran.com or call the shop 01770 302873	Online / Closed	Cladach Sawmill Garden Centre and timber yard closed to the public but orders taken via email: cladachsawmill@btinternet.com . Garden buildings and contract fencing are unaffected.	Orders via email/Closed	Royal Bank of Scotland Open 10am – 2.30pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.	Open
Arran Energy Ltd Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm 01770 870 207.	Open	Faye's Foot Clinic Available for emergency appointments only. Faye will be contacting everyone to reschedule appointments.	Emergency only / Closed	Saltwater Studio Senja will be working there and is happy to post out items or do Covid safe deliveries on the island. Many items can be viewed through the windows. For help with gifts or commissions, please call me on 07946537824 or 700 153 and she'll do what she can. Also online at www.senja-art.com	Online / Closed
Arran Estate Agents Open for business from 9am – 5pm each weekday. Valuations and pre-sale meetings can be arranged to suit clients, with viewings available depending on the property being marketed	Open	Gordon Bros. Lamlash Open Monday – Saturday 8am – 5pm	Open	Sandy Kerr Tech Working as normal	Open
Arran Gift Box Shop in Brodick is closed to customers until April when we open properly our doors again, but we are online and operating as normal. The Arran gift box website www.thearrangiftbox.com has every one of our products available and we can post out to anywhere in the UK with Royal Mail and Parcelforce tracked delivery.	Online / Closed	Heather Lodge, Brodick While many of the therapists are unable to work at the moment, some of us continue to offer a service via zoom. Services classed as medical may also proceed with the necessary precautions. Information to be found at www.heatherlodge.scot	Zoom	SKK Private Hire Operating as normal with usual 24hr availability 7 days a week. The vehicle interior is cleaned before each hire and bookings can be made day or night on 07570 914342.	Open
Arran Graphics They will maintain web sales and also wholesale of their souvenirs and stuff. Print and design work etc will continue as before. Email: graham@arrangraphics.com Tel: 01770 303698	Online/Closed	Home and Gardens Open 9am – 5pm Monday - Saturday	Open	Slidery Supplies Open and also do deliveries - these will be island-wide (£1.20 anywhere). They can be contacted by email: sliderysupplies@yahoo.com or tel: 01770 870 225 or via Facebook page message tab.	Open
Arran Haulage Open for business but there is no access to the yard or office for either business. Orders or enquiries can be placed over the phone 01770 302777 or through our website: arranhaulage.co.uk	Open	Hooked and Cooked The chip shop will remain open Monday – Sunday 4pm – 8pm, as long as they can get stock over and will be doing deliveries from next week.	Open	The Burlington Takeaway Re-opened 15th January, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 5pm – 9pm. Check out Facebook for menus.	Open
Arran Heat Pumps Servicing and trouble shooting all makes and types of heat pumps. Call 01770601214 and for quotes on installation	Open	Island Cheese Company Shop will be open 9 am until 2pm Monday to Saturday. We can deliver to those isolating – Brodick, Lamlash and Shiskine most days and the rest of the island once per week. We can also take orders on the phone for safe collection at the shop door any day. Shop number is 302788	Open	The French Fox Taking orders with reheated at home menu posted on a Tuesday for doorstep deliveries island wide on a Saturday. Menus can be found on Facebook, Instagram and from next week also on our website www.thefrenchfox.co.uk . Orders can be placed by messaging Facebook/Instagram @thefrenchfoxfood, telephone 01770 830374 and email: thefrenchfoxfood@gmail.com	Takeaway
Arran Meals 2 Go Takeaways available Friday and Saturday. Deliveries to Brodick, Lamlash (Fridays only) and Shiskine. Tel: 07470266309 or Facebook	Open	Isle of Arran Distillers Lagg Distillery is closed and Lochranza Gift Shop will also be closed for the foreseeable future. They are still offering our mail order online service: W:laggwhisky.com	Closed	The Harbour Shop The shop will be open Monday to Saturday 10am to 2pm. Sundays 12 noon to 2.30pm. These hours will be until the end of January at the moment.	Open
Arran On A Roll Open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 1.30pm	Open	Jet the Dog Graphic designer – will be operating as usual throughout this latest lockdown. She can have zoom meetings for anyone who needs a "face-to-face" meeting, and readily available via email or phone.	Open	The Lighthouse Takeaway on a Friday every 2 weeks from this Friday, 5pm till 7pm until the summer Tel: 01770 850240	Takeaway / Closed
Arran Woodfuels Will remain open during the lockdown, providing an ESSENTIAL SERVICE to supply Wood Heating Fuels to householders in lockdown. The delivery driver will maintain social distancing measures, so be prepared for orders to be delivered to door-step only. Orders for Wood Briquettes and Pellets will be taken by Tel: 07943 256248 E-mail: arranwoodfuels@outlook.com	Open	Kilmory Workshop The workshop will have to be closed to the public, but we will be able to take telephone or email orders from previous customers or from those who have seen the website. www.kilmoryworkshop.co.uk	Online/Closed	The Parlour Open Wednesday – Sunday 12-8pm for takeaways only. Times may change to 4pm – 8pm from next week so checkout their Facebook page.	Takeaways
Bay Kitchen and Stores Open Monday – Saturday 8.30am – 5pm, Sunday 11am – 2pm	Open			Thomson Construction Re-opened (under COVID restrictions) on Monday 11th January	Open
				Wooleys of Arran Monday – Saturday 8am - 2pm	Open

Wintering wildfowl were to the fore in chilly December

The mild weather of November did not continue into December.

The mean temperature in December was three degrees colder than the mean temperature in November. December also had around 25 per cent less rain than November.

Highlights from November continued throughout December with further reports of little egret from around Lamlash Bay, a single nuthatch at garden feeders in Pirnmill throughout the month and a pair of white-tailed eagle on the west coast. This species will feature in the next bird note in the Banner.

Bird notes by Jim Cassels DECEMBER

Other visitors in December included: 40 twite on Cleats Shore on 6th, 20 fieldfare at Strathwillan on 11th, 50 rook in Kildonan on 17th, five purple sandpiper on Silver Sands on 29th and five redwing at Clachaig on 30th.

Wintering wildfowl were to the fore including: two whoop-

er swan on Silver Sands on 2nd, 24 wigeon at Cleiteadh Buidhe on 6th, a male goldeneye on Mossend Pond also on 6th, 50 teal at Carlo on 14th, 300 greylag geese on the Rodden on 24th and 63 pink-footed geese in Sliderry on 30th.

In addition, there were reports of shelduck returning after their autumn moult from Auchenheugh Bay, Cleats Shore, Sannox Bay, Silver Sands and Whiting Bay.

Groups of wintering birds included: 100 common gull at Porta Buidhe on 1st, nine snipe and two Jack snipe in Sliderry on 5th, 23 woodcock in Bennan on 15th, 30 curlew at Clauchlands on 24th, 40 turnstone in Catacol Bay on 30th and eight black-throated diver in Whiting Bay on 31st.

Gardens provide a safe refuge for some birds in winter. Among the more unusual records received were: 20 long-tailed tit in Lamlash on 4th, five yellowhammer in Sliderry on 11th, four goldcrest in Brodick on 16th, a great spot-

ted woodpecker in Lagg on 27th, a treecreeper in Pirnmill also on 27th and a male blackcap in Whiting Bay on 31st.

Finally, here is a date for the diary: the weekend of Friday 29 to Sunday 31 January.

That weekend stock up your bird feeders, spend one hour of your weekend watching your garden birds, and note down the highest number you see of each bird species.

This is the weekend of the Big Garden Birdwatch. Last year nearly half a million people throughout the UK and over 30 on Arran took part in this valuable exercise. For more information and to get the free starter pack, visit the RSPB website Big Garden Birdwatch <http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch/>. If you do decide to take part, please share your records with me.

Enjoy your birding and keep safe.

Please send any bird notes with 'what, when, where' to me at Kilpatrick Kennels, Kilpatrick, Blackwaterfoot,



A blackcap attracted into the garden by fruit. Photo Walter

Vanderveken

KA27 8EY, or e mail me at jim@arranbirding.co.uk I look forward to hearing from you. For more information on birding on Arran purchase the

Arran Bird Report, the first 40 years, which includes the annual report for 2019 and visit this website www.arran-birding.co.uk



06/09/2015

Increased numbers of woodcock on Arran at the moment, as Arran is milder than the continent. Photo Sonia Harding.

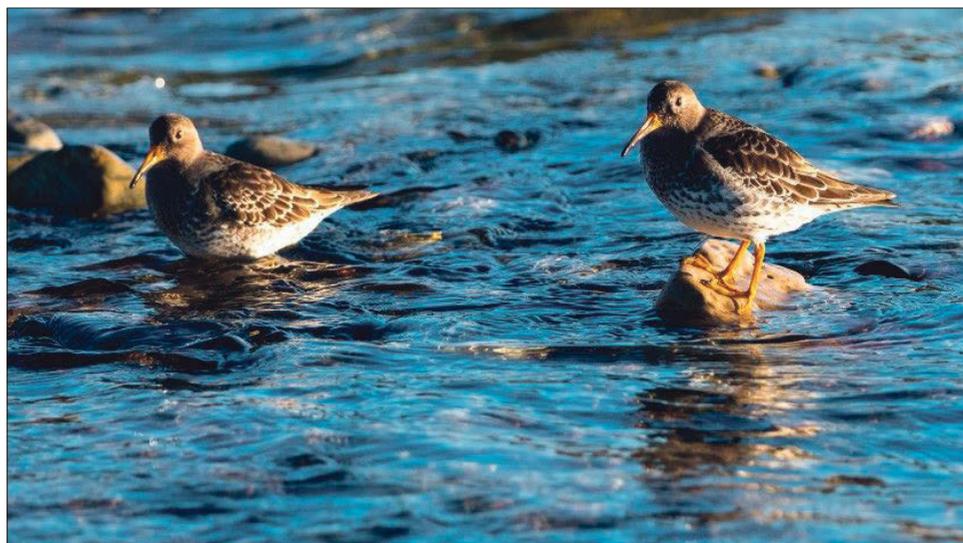


Little egret bred for the first time in Scotland in 2020 and are spreading north. One to look out for. Photo Nick Giles



Above: Nuthatch, a bird that may colonise Arran in the near future, with a great tit on bottom of the feeder. Photo Michael Burke.

Above right: There is a long staying pair of white-tailed eagle on the west coast. Photo Helen Logan.



Right: Purple sandpiper a regular winter visitor.

Photo Nick Giles.

THE ARRAN BANNER 20 YEARS AGO

Saturday January 20, 2001

A Chookie Show special

Last Saturday was the day of the Chookie Show with many people turning up at Brodick Hall to exhibit and to look.

There were hens, ducks, cage birds, Guinea pigs, geese and even a large turkey in the middle of the floor.

Members of Brodick Poultry and Pigeon Club were upbeat at the exhibits, perhaps

not quite as many entries, but from more people, which is a move in the right direction, we were told.

Winner

Overall winner was a fantail pigeon of Clair Hendry's, a snow white bird which spends its life, when not attending chookie shows, flying around naturally.

Reserve was a two-year-old east Indian duck, entered by Veronica Walker. Called Jade, she supplies Veronica with tasty eggs.

Lady Jean Fforde presented the trophies at the end of the show amid a cacophony of crowing and quacking and other poultry sounds. But at least the Guinea pigs were quiet.



All the Chookie Show trophy winners with the Lady Jean Fforde. 01_B04tweY01



Lewis Brannan and his cockatiel, which won best cage bird exhibited by a child. 01_B04tweY02



Reserve Veronica Walker with her duck Jade. 01_B04tweY04



A judge fixes a winner's ticket to one of the cages. 01_B04tweY06



Champion Clair Hendry with her winning fantail pigeon. 01_B04tweY03



Some of the hens on display at the Brodick Poultry and Pigeon Club Show held in Brodick Hall. 01_B04tweY05

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ARRAN FARMERS' SOCIETY A.G.M.

Wed 24 February 2021 - 7.30pm
via Online Video Meeting

All Welcome

Joining details will be sent to Directors and Members by email. Joining details available from the Secretary for others who wish to join.

Secretary: J Cook, secretary.afs@gmail.com, 07944 790 095

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for the facts
drinkaware.co.uk

CHURCH NOTICES

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

Independent but working together

CHURCHES IN NORTH ARRAN PARISHES WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL END OF JANUARY WHEN SITUATION WILL BE REVIEWED. THERE WILL STILL BE ON-LINES SERVICES AND FOOD BANK WILL STILL BE AVAILABLE.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Whiting Bay and Kildonan Church of Scotland

Charity Number: SC014005
DUE TO THE NEW SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION ON CORONAVIRUS, THE CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED FOR WORSHIP UNTIL THE END OF JANUARY.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND Kilmory linked with Lamlash

"A faith to proclaim ~ a fellowship to share"
Scottish Charity SC015072
DUE TO THE NEW SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION ON CORONAVIRUS, THE CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED FOR WORSHIP UNTIL AT LEAST THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY.

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(Part of the Worldwide Anglican Church)

St Margaret's, Whiting Bay.
ALL SERVICES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
Services from Christchurch, Lochgilphead will be available on Facebook and ZOOM.
Please contact Richard Trewby on 01770-600236 for further information

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

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT OUR CHURCH WILL BE CLOSED FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP AND MASS FROM FRIDAY 8TH JANUARY TO SUNDAY 31ST JANUARY INCLUSIVE. REOPENING AFTER 31ST JANUARY WILL BE SUBJECT TO SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT REVIEW.

THE RT REV BRIAN MCGEE, BISHOP OF ARGYLL AND THE ISLES WILL CELEBRATE MASS FROM HIS ORATORY IN OBAN AT 10AM DAILY. LIVESTREAM ACCESS IS AVAILABLE AT www.rcdai.org.uk

A WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN IS AVAILABLE BY EMAIL. PLEASE EMAIL. peterdwilko@gmail.com IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE A REGULAR BULLETIN

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

DEATH

PETERS - Elizabeth Anne, passed away peacefully on 15th January, aged 63 years.
Beloved wife of John and a dearly loved mum to Megan and Gavin. A much-loved nanny to Isla, Leila and Theo and a loved sister to Duncan, Karine and Stewart.
Due to the current circumstances a small Funeral service will be held for her family. Family flowers only please. Donations in memory of Anne, would be gratefully received by St Teresa's Hospice online at <https://www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk/donation/> or by post at St Teresa's Hospice, The Woodlands, 91 Woodlands Road, Darlington, DL3 7UA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WHITE - Elise (Elsie). Dorothy, Angus and family would like to thank the staff who cared for mum in Arran War Memorial Hospital, Clair and David Hendry for funeral arrangements, everyone who sent sympathy cards and all those who came out to pay their respects on a very wet day.

Eco Savvy expands ebike offering to key workers

Environmental group Eco Savvy has added an extra boost to its ebike fleet that is currently being used to assist key workers with environmentally-friendly transportation, writes Colin Smeeton

The new bikes, supplied by Dales in Glasgow and funded by the Energy Saving Trust (EST) – three compacts and one all-terrain bike – increases the fleet of electric bicycles to 15.

Usually borrowed out to members of the public and organisations on Arran for experiencing the technology and for creating awareness of less polluting vehicles, the bicycles have now been put to a new use by key workers and volunteers, who have used them for delivering medicines and providing other vital services during the pandemic. A spokesperson from Eco

'The bikes will be available for around four weeks at a time and are suitable for work or leisure'

Savvy said: 'We are delighted to be expanding the fleet and hope to get the bikes out to key workers as soon as possible.

'We would like to encourage any key worker, whether you are working in health care, energy, transport, teaching, food provision or any other key job to get in contact and to see how ebikes work for you as an alternative, low-carbon way of getting about.

'The bikes will be available for around four weeks at a time and are suitable for work or for leisure in accordance



The four new bicycles which will be used by key workers during the pandemic.

with Covid guidance. We appreciate that cycling is a brilliant way to relax for those in difficult jobs at this time as well as the perfect socially-dis-

tanced way to get to work'. To register an interest in using an ebike details can be found on the Eco Savvy website at arranecosavvy.org.uk

ARRAN BANNER GOLF

Whiting Bay Golf Club

Sunday January 17, Winter Cup round four. A total of 16 played in the latest round of the Winter Cup allowing for eight Covid-compliant two-ball pairings.

On a morning with occasional heavy showers, the faster than otherwise pace of play was a welcome positive.

David Blair won by four shots with a fine net 61. 1. David Blair 12, 61, 2. Dave Hackett 14, 65, 3. Neil McKechnie 14, 66, 4. John Pennycott 12, 67. Magic twos, Douglas Auld, Dave Hackett and Neil McKechnie, all at the 17th.

Fixtures: Casual play only until further notice. No draws for partners and all games to be socially distant and Covid compliant.

Lamlash Golf Club

Thursday January 14, Yellow Medal, back nine twice. 1. Derek Harrison 74-20=54, 2. Graeme Andrew 70-10=60. No magic twos recorded.

Sunday January 17, Glenburn Cup. 1. Derek Harrison 79-21=58, 2. Billy Skinner 86-20=66. Best scratch, Derek Harrison 79. No magic twos recorded.

Fixtures: Sunday January 24, Glenburn Cup, 9.30am and noon draws. Thursday January



Scott Weir scored a hole in one at the 18th hole in Broddick, a rare achievement, as it is a long and very difficult par 3. Photograph: Jim Reid.

28, Yellow Medal, 11am draw.

Broddick Golf Club

Sunday January 17, Brandon Qualifier, 26 played. John Beattie 88-31=57, Ian Shand 75-16=59, Frazer Barr 69-9=60, ACB.

Congratulations to Scott Weir on scoring a hole in one

at the 18th. Fixture: Sunday January 24, Winter Cup Stableford.

Shiskine Golf Club

Thursday January 14, Ladies 18-hole medal. 1. Alice Anderson 90-18=72, 2. Jenni Turnbull 92-19=73. Scratch, Ann May 80.

Machrie Bay Golf Club

Tuesday January 19, Lochranza Hotel Cup. 1. Phil Betley 37pts, 2. Alex Morrison-Cowan 31pt, BL6, 3. Brian Sherwood 31pts. Fixtures: Tuesday January 26, Winter Cup, tee-off noon.



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All eyes on Arran sailor competing in Prada Cup

by Colin Smeeton
editor@arranbanner.co.uk



America's Cup beckons for Neil Hunter

Sailing enthusiasts on Arran have been keeping a keen eye on the action taking place in Auckland, New Zealand, as the Prada Cup yacht race got under way last week.

The interest is not only that one of the competing teams is British, Ineos Team UK, but that one of the crew is Neil Hunter from Lamlash.

Neil Hunter spends what little downtime he has on Arran and is a familiar face to most.

His racing career began at

the age of 13, firstly in the RS Fevas, then progressing into the International 420 youth class, the Scottish RYA's 420 Squad then onto the 29er class sailing with his younger brother Rory.

In early 2016, Neil was invited to sail with the team at the first Extreme Sailing Series (ESS) event in Oman and has acted as skipper for the ESS this season.

The first stage of the Prada Cup started on Friday January

15 and will finish on Sunday January 24. The winner will challenge the defender, Emirates Team New Zealand, in the America's Cup.

The first stage consists of four round robins of three races each.

The challenger with the highest score at the end of the round robins will automatically access the Prada Cup final. The remaining two teams will race again in a seven-race semi-final and the winner will

be the first team that scores four points.

The 13-race final between the two leading teams will start on Saturday February 13 and the first team to score seven points will win the Prada Cup to face the defender, Emirates Team New Zealand.

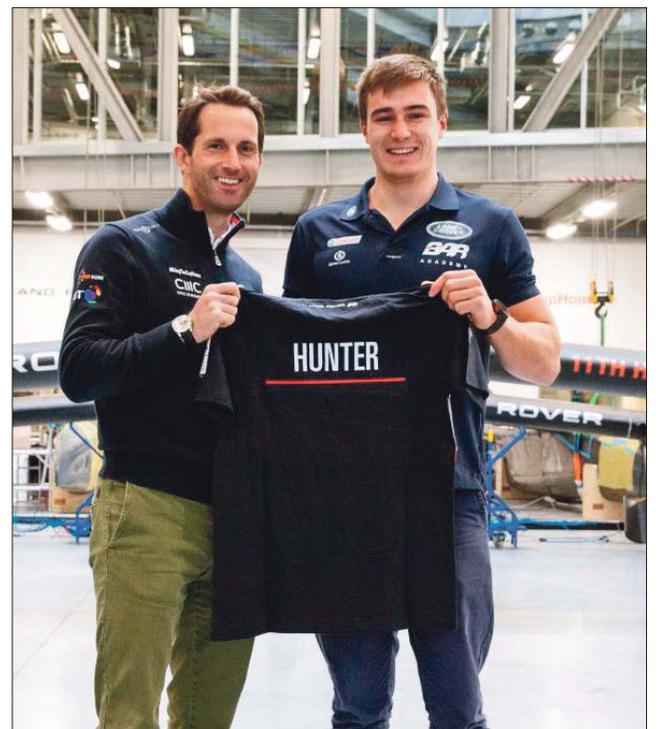
The America's Cup, which dates back 170 years, will take place from Saturday March 6 to Monday March 15 and is one of the most prestigious sailing events in the sport.

Both the America's Cup and the Prada Cup are available on free-to-air and pay networks all around the world and live streaming and highlights are available on the official event website at www.americascup.com

At the time of going to press, Ineos Team UK were sitting in first place with four wins ahead of Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli Team with two points and New York Yacht Club American Magic who have four losses and no wins.

Teams Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli and Ineos Team UK battle it out in Auckland during the Prada Cup round

Robins. Photograph: www.facebook.com/AmericasCup



Neil Hunter, right, with skipper and principal Sir Ben Ainslie of Ineos Team UK.



PRADA CUP																
RACE PAIRINGS																
ROUND ROBIN 1	<table border="1"> <tr><td>RACE 1</td><td>NYC AMERICAN MAGIC</td><td>VS</td><td>INEOS TEAM UK</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>RACE 2</td><td>INEOS TEAM UK</td><td>VS</td><td>LUNA ROSSA PRADA PIRELLI</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>RACE 3</td><td>LUNA ROSSA PRADA PIRELLI</td><td>VS</td><td>NYC AMERICAN MAGIC</td><td>16</td></tr> </table>	RACE 1	NYC AMERICAN MAGIC	VS	INEOS TEAM UK	15	RACE 2	INEOS TEAM UK	VS	LUNA ROSSA PRADA PIRELLI	16	RACE 3	LUNA ROSSA PRADA PIRELLI	VS	NYC AMERICAN MAGIC	16
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The race pairings and format for the Prada Cup.

Graphic: www.americascup.com



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