

**FREE**

Summer issue 2026  
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North Carrick

# Community News

Crosshill . Dunure . Fisherton . Kirkmichael . Kirkoswald . Maidens . Maybole . Minishant . Straiton . Turnberry



*Summer has arrived*

Published by



Produced with funding provided by **ScottishPower Renewables**

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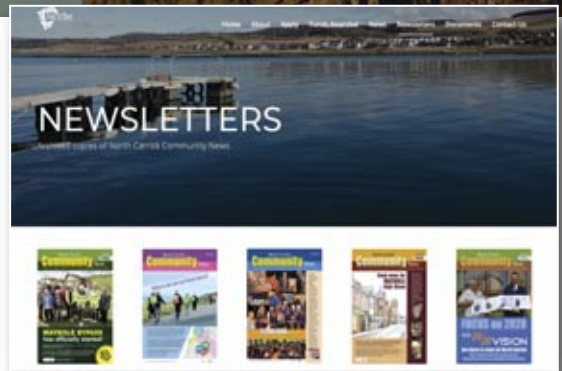
# NCCBC

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The '**Documents**' section is where you will find copies of all of the North Carrick Community Newsletters (past and present). This will be useful for people who prefer to read online or for those who want to send electronic copies to friends.

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## Your voice matters...

We would like all communities and individuals in North Carrick to get involved with the production of this publication. This is **YOUR** newsletter, so please use it to your benefit.



The North Carrick Community Newsletter is produced with funding provided by **ScottishPower Renewables**

We want to encourage everyone to contribute. We also welcome your comments and thoughts on the newsletter as well as any ideas on what you would like to see more of (or less). We want to ensure the newsletter grows from strength to strength but we cannot achieve this without the participation of our readers and advertisers.

Please email all articles, stories, photos and comments to [newsletter@nccbc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@nccbc.org.uk)

Design and advertising: **Shona McMahon** @ **Evolution Designs Ltd.** Email: [evolutiondesigns@sky.com](mailto:evolutiondesigns@sky.com)

Project development and funding: **Stuart Lindsay** on **07977 115974** or email: [stuart@nccbc.org.uk](mailto:stuart@nccbc.org.uk)

## North Carrick Community Benefit Company

Funding is available for a wide range of projects.

To find out more, please visit <https://nccbc.org.uk/apply/> or email [admin@nccbc.org.uk](mailto:admin@nccbc.org.uk).

Please note: all applications must be complete with accompanying documentation for review, they may be deferred if not completed.

Copies of the newsletter are delivered to homes in Maybole and the North Carrick villages. If, for any reason, you don't receive a copy please let us know. Extra copies are in various outlets in each community.

Next copy deadline: **9th September 2026**

North Carrick  
Community Newsletter



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# BRUCE DAY AT DUNURE: A Journey Into Carrick's Past

Long before Robert Burns penned his unforgettable poetry and Robert Adam raised the walls of Culzean Castle, another Robert left his mark on Carrick: Robert the Bruce. His exact birthplace is still debated, but the strongest evidence points to Turnberry, his mother's castle. What is beyond doubt is that Carrick shaped the young Robert profoundly, and in turn, he shaped Carrick. As Earl of Carrick and later as King of Scots, Bruce travelled and campaigned across this landscape, leaving traces of his life woven through our region's history. Though little remains of Turnberry Castle today (likely destroyed on Bruce's own orders to prevent it from falling into English hands) his legacy is still very much alive. From the Bruce's Web linking places across North Carrick to the well attended celebrations of his 750th birthday (Bruce 750), his influence continues to resonate centuries later. It is this enduring connection that inspired us to celebrate Bruce's life and heritage, and to invite you to explore the story of one of Carrick's most iconic figures.

Join us in Dunure's Kennedy Park and Kennedy Hall on 11 July for a day of entertainment with historical re-enactors, shield and banner painting, and a squire school in the very shadow of Dunure Castle. A perfect opportunity for anyone who wants to step, even briefly, into the shoes of Robert the Bruce.

*Elija Maus Carrick History Society*

**KENNEDY HALL**  
(shield and banner painting)  
**KENNEDY PARK** in front of Dunure  
Castle (squire school)

**Saturday 11th July**  
**11pm-4pm**



# Kirkmichael Karate Club

**Kugatsu Karate-Do Ayrshire continues to grow in the McCosh hall in Kirkmichael, where the children's class has been running now for two years.**

**Held on Fridays from 5-5.45pm, the club provides children and young people with the opportunity to learn karate, build confidence, develop fundamental movement skills and improve fitness in a supportive and fun environment.**



Last year, the club secured funding through Kirkmichael Village Renaissance from the North Carrick Community Benefit Fund for the purchase of new training mats. This investment was warmly welcomed by 4th Dan instructor Justine Lennon, "The mats have made a huge difference to students in Kirkmichael. The floor covering is now safer and more suited to karate, and we have seen an increase in participation from members of the local community across Kirkmichael, Crosshill and Maybole. The mats help recreate the same environment students experience in competition, which is really important for building familiarity and consistency. In March, one of our Kirkmichael students, Nora, won a bronze medal at the Central Scotland Open, so it's fantastic to see that training paying off."

The class is open to children of all ages, and the club is pleased to see the continued support of the local community in Kirkmichael and across North Carrick. If you'd like more information or are interested in coming along, "Kugatsu Karate-Do Ayrshire" can be found on Facebook.





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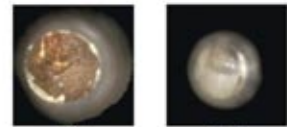
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# A Busy Start for the MAYBOLE MAKERS



The Maybole Makers have had an incredibly busy start to the year! In January, we officially became a constituted group, and in March, we returned to take over The Gatherings in Maybole for a full week of creative workshops. Thanks to support from the Maybole Regeneration Project, all of these sessions were completely free to attend.

We ran 18 workshops in total, offering a fantastic variety to choose from. Participants could learn to make macramé or block-printed bags, try their hand at leathercraft with a 'Make a Simple Leather Keyring' class, or discover creative ways to mend and upcycle garments. While willow-weaving bird feeders and needle felting proved to be among the most popular sessions, every workshop was very well-attended.

More recently, we partnered with CRAG Community Arts to take part in the Girvan Arts Festival on the 30th and 31st of May, where we loved hosting more creative workshops for everyone who came along. It is clear that the demand for community-led arts and crafts activities in Maybole is strong, and we are already planning to run more events like this.



Next up, you can catch up with us at the Maybole Gala on the 6th of June - be sure to look out for our stall!



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## Selling your home

When you decide to sell your property you should instruct a solicitor from the outset. This will make for a smooth transaction, allowing your solicitor to ensure all the relevant documentation is in place. For example, if you have added an extension to your property, you should ensure that you have the proper planning permissions as buyers will expect to see this. You should also speak to your solicitor about the legal fees, outlays and tax payable to allow you to budget appropriately.

## Buying your home

If you are looking to buy a property, you will need to instruct a solicitor to submit an offer formally to an Estate Agent. Once you and the seller agree on the terms, a contract will be formed - called missives. Your solicitor will liaise with your mortgage provider, ensure all the relevant documentation is completed,

and ultimately obtain the loan funds. At the end of the transaction, your title deeds will be registered in the Land Register of Scotland.

We work closely with financial advisers, estate agents, surveyors and others to ensure the best possible results for every client. Our clients know that our team will deliver a high quality, cost-effective service, every time.

Partner Kirsty Leitch can help guide you through the process. To speak to Kirsty call 01292 281711 or email [kirsty@mckinstry.co.uk](mailto:kirsty@mckinstry.co.uk) or visit [mckinstry.co.uk](http://mckinstry.co.uk)



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In addition the hall hosts private events, film nights and travelling theatre productions. This has all been made possible by the work of Kirkmichael Village Renaissance over the past 5 years who paved the way and who will continue to run the shop and cafe.

Jan Torrance, Trustee said “After a long and challenging journey we are delighted that our 125 year old hall is now back in community ownership. There is a lot to do to restore this much needed and treasured community asset to its former glory and we cannot wait to get started with essential repairs to our clocktower, roof and windows. Meantime we will be drawing up plans in consultation with the community to add new storage and develop the hall so it can attract new groups and events in the years to come.”

“We are grateful for the support we received from the Scottish Land Fund and NCCBC during the long process and to the people who gave freely of their time and expertise to make this happen. We would also like

## McCosh Hall Now Back in Community Ownership

Kirkmichael Ayrshire Development Trust has announced that the McCosh Hall is now in community ownership after a community asset transfer from South Ayrshire Council (SAC). With funding from the Scottish Land Fund (National Lottery Community Fund) and North Carrick Community Benefit Company (NCCBC), the Trust purchased the hall from SAC for £70,000.

In addition to providing funding for the purchase, the Scottish Land Fund provided legal, professional and project management fees plus building and liability insurance. NCCBC funded 10% of the purchase cost plus funding to help renovate and improve the hall’s efficiency and a new hall floor. As part of the Community Asset Transfer, SAC will also provide £115k to cover much needed repair costs to the 125 year old C Listed building.

The Trust will also need to raise further funding to add additional storage and improve the facilities in the highly popular cafe and shop in the years to come. The McCosh Hall plays an important role in the community addressing issues such as social isolation and health and wellbeing. Currently 20 community organisations offering sporting activities, kids groups and activities for the elderly use the hall on a regular basis.



to thank our MP Elaine Stewart, our Local Councillor Brian Connolly and our lawyers, Holmes McKillop who have been instrumental in getting us across the line. Without their efforts and those of our Development Officer, Trustees, advisors and the Kirkmichael community, our dream would not have become a reality.”





**Come along to our regular film nights run by a dedicated team of volunteers - Kirkmichael Stage & Screen.**

**We show a film on the last Saturday of the month at the McCosh Hall, Kirkmichael - check our posters on social media or join our mailing list.**

**We offer a free welcome drink and free prize draw - BYOB and nibbles - and enjoy a relaxed evening in good company showing a great variety of films - you can even suggest one you'd like to see!!**

**Tickets available at the community shop, or at the door on the night.**

**Hope to see you here soon.**

**Admission is only £5!!**


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# CARRICK ROUND TABLE NEWS

## First Annual Haggis Hunters Ball

Following our AGM in March and knowing that we had three members who were going to age out of Table, we arranged a very special event at the Brig O' Doon Hotel.

This was our very first Haggis Hunters Ball to celebrate and give thanks to our friends Andrew Thorne, Rab Moffat and Nick Wood. It was a fantastic night that was nothing short of unforgettable and included a wonderful performance from Maybole Pipe Band. Glenpark Ceilidh Band carried the entertainment and dancing into the night.

The Brig O' Doon Hotel provided an atmospheric venue and made the night very special. We would like to thank all the companies who sponsored the evening.

The level of support we received was incredible and helped us to raise a great amount of money for our community support fund. We would also like to thank Wendy McCrindle who gave up her time to take some great photographs of the night for no charge.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who attended the night and celebrated with us. From all at Carrick Round Table, see you next year! (Hint hint!).

## Carrick Rugby Presidents Youth Day

Carrick Round Table were at The Glebe on Sunday 10th May running the Barbeque at the Rugby Youth Day. We also had a Cash Prize Raffle that helped to generate money for our Community Fund. A big thank you to everyone who came down and bought burgers and took part in the raffle! Your support means we can keep doing good work in our community!

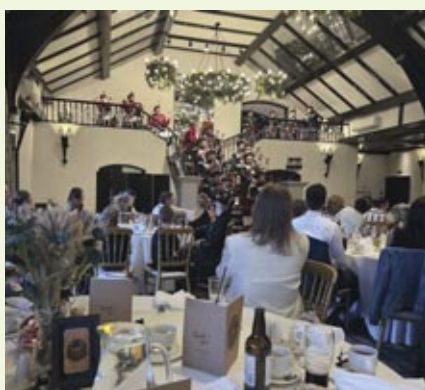
## Community Funding

Since our successful Santa Sleigh Fundraising activity in December 2025, we have been able to help some local people and groups including -

- Straiton Primary - Contribution to Titanic Belfast Trip
- Contribution to Maybole Christmas Lights
- Contribution to Sponsor Angus Hamilton
- Contribution to a Member's Son learning the Bagpipes
- Carrick Academy Empathy Warriors - Contribution to their Boswell Book Festival Trip
- Maybole Halloween Party - Contribution to Town Hall Hire
- MND Sponsorship to Member's Son playing Rugby
- Carrick Ladies Race Night Contribution

## What is Carrick Round Table?

Carrick Round Table are a group of guys who meet on the 1st and 3rd weeks of each month to try something different, have a good time and enjoy great company. If you would like to get involved, find us on facebook or email [carrick@roundtable.org](mailto:carrick@roundtable.org)



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# Maidens Primary Mini London Marathon

Maidens Primary took part in the TCS Mini London Marathon. The entire school took part where children ran, walked or skipped for 2 miles. A route was planned out by Rachel Sweeney and markers put in place. At the end each child received a medal, activity pack and then enjoyed some snacks! The weather was glorious and the children were thrilled to have completed this. The school will receive a trophy for participating. Tom Caldwell was the overall winner! The children cheered for each other encouraging each child who crossed the finish line.



## Dance along the path in Maidens

Maidens are delighted to have two funded projects thanks to CPF funding through KMT Development fund. A beautiful new stretch of path repaired after storm damage last year and a larger area created at the side of the Carrick Coastal Rowing Club, that can store trailers and add revenue to the club. Both projects completed by local company John Marshall and Sons. Hopeful to continue to upgrade the shore path with South Ayrshire Council and if future funding may be secured.



## Stone painting in Maidens for Easter

Primary school children from Maidens put their crafting skills together, to paint beach stones and hide them for visitor children in Maidens at Easter. Who would think that stones can create so much interest! They have all hopefully been re homed to other parts of Scotland/UK and give pleasure to other children.



## New Book Group at Maybole Library

Maybole Library has a new book group that held its first meeting on Monday 11th May. This first session was an opportunity for the



group to chat about their favourite genres, books and the books that meant something to them. The first book the group are reading is "All The Light We Cannot See" by Anthony Doerr. The group will meet on the first Monday of each month at Maybole Library 5pm-7pm. If this clashes with a public holiday, the session will take place the week after. Discussions will be open and every viewpoint will be most welcome. If you didn't enjoy the book, feel free to say why! There are limited spaces due to the number of copies of books available, but everyone is welcome to attend. Book Groups are a fantastic way to be inspired to read something new and try a genre you might not think would appeal to you! **Pop into Maybole Library to find out more.**

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New Address:  
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Opening from  
August

In the meantime, we are very proud to continue working closely with our customers from our **Kirkoswald** studio and showroom, where we remain dedicated to transforming your ideas and dreams into beautifully finished spaces.

We are also excited to announce that we have just taken delivery of **new furniture** to begin work on our **bathroom display** at **Kirklands Steading, Kirkoswald** another step in bringing fresh inspiration to our visitors.

*Why not pop in...*  
have a look around, enjoy a chat, and stay for a cuppa? We'd love to see you.

We look forward to welcoming you soon in **Kirkoswald** or, very soon, in **Prestwick!**

Kirklands Steading, Kirkoswald,  
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# The Great Doug Allan – His visits to Maidens World Ocean Day

We were very sad to learn of the passing of Doug Allan, Scottish Wildlife Cameraman in early April whilst trekking in Nepal. Maidens World Ocean Day hosted Doug for 3 years and P5/P6 pupils from North Carrick primary schools were able to benefit from his knowledge of work in the polar regions and how to look after our seas and beaches. It was an honour to meet with him and have him in our village.



## South Ayrshire Council Customer Services

You can contact our Customer Services Team:

- 🌐 By logging on to the Council's website at [south-ayrshire.gov.uk/contact-us](http://south-ayrshire.gov.uk/contact-us)
- ✉ By e-mailing [CustomerServices@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:CustomerServices@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)
- ☎ By phone 0300 123 0900 (our contact centre is open 09.00 - 16.45 Monday to Thursday and 09.00 - 16.00 on Fridays)

If you can't manage your enquiry online or by phone, you can arrange a face-to-face appointment.

Face to face appointments are available at:

Where	When
Ayr Carnegie Library, 12 Main Street	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays
Troon Troon Library, South Beach	Tuesdays
Prestwick 2-6 The Cross, Prestwick	Wednesdays
Girvan Carrick Opportunities Centre, Henrietta Street	Thursdays
Maybole Maybole Library, 1 High Street	Fridays

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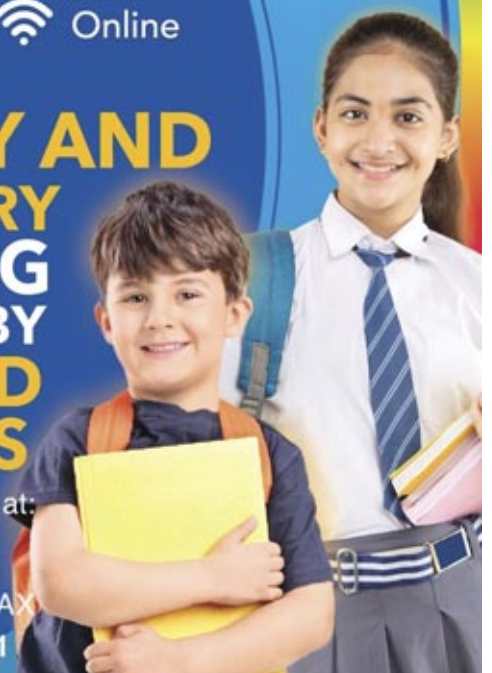


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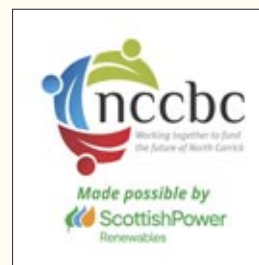
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## NORTH CARRICK COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Please submit all articles, events, news updates to: [newsletter@nccbc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@nccbc.org.uk)

# NCCBC Community-led Projects Fund for 2026



Now into its 7th Round, this fund provides £10,000 to each of the 8 villages and £20,000 to Maybole. Local Panels in each community are responsible for publicising the fund, assessing applications and then putting proposals forward for approval by NCCBC.

The following is a summary of how the funds will be used during 2026.

## DUNURE

CPF Panel - expenses	£59.50
Fisherton PS - ACE activity days	£1,300.00
Rrejuvenating Harbour garden	£249.48
Heritage Enterprise banners	£1,680.00
Dunure Coastal Rowing - RIB cover	£998.00
Inclusive audio for Community Council meetings	£999.50
Youth Group - Labyrinth regeneration	£1,000.00
CHS - Bruce medieval fun day	£1,000.00
Kennedy Hall & Park - storage	£2,713.52

## MINISHANT

Minishant Development Team - purchase and instal Christmas lights	£1,024.00
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Minishant Development Team – Project Development and Planning Application costs for Community Building and Eco-Walks.....£8,976.00

## KIRKMICHAEL

KADT - 12 wks Development Officer salary	£3,576.00
KVR - replacement screens	
McCosh Hall	£2,154.00
KVR - School trip to Science centre	£664.00
Table Tennis - start up costs	£1,337.00
Provisional expenses	£269.00
Contingency	£2,000.00

## MAYBOLE

New benches in town	£5,018.60
Planters at Town Hall	£1,463.96
MEC - Gala contribution	£5,000.00
Music Nights	£6,065.00
Additional trees for Orchard	£2,000.00
Spring bulbs	£352.44
Expenses	£100.00

## CROSSHILL

Fence around play park and purchase and installation of trim trail at school	£10,000.00
--	------------

## STRAITON

CPF Panel - expenses	£40.00
Pétanque Group - equipment	£1,250.00
Village Co-Operative - Shop Manager 3 months salary, new fridge Straiton Stores, part cost	
First Aid courses	£5,645.50
McCandlish Hall - refurbishment	£2,464.50
Environment Group - Plants and gardening costs	£600.00

## KIRKOSWALD, MAIDENS AND TURNBERRY

Hall Hire scheme	£4,000.00
Picnic benches and tables	£6,000.00
Primary school resources	£4,000.00
Beach changing resource, Maidens	£4,000.00
Ash Pad Upgrades	£10,000.00
Kirkoswald Planter	£2,000.00

### FIND OUT MORE!

Hopefully, you will see these projects in action and can benefit from them. Keep an eye out for details of how you can get involved in making decisions about how to use the next round of CPF in your area. Contact your local NCCBC Director or [admin@nccbc.org.uk](mailto:admin@nccbc.org.uk) to learn more about this Fund and how you can be involved.



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# Elaine Stewart MP

Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock 

If you have something you would like to bring to my attention, you can contact me by email or phone:

[elaine.stewart.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:elaine.stewart.mp@parliament.uk)  
**01292 502 058**

You can also keep up to date with me on social media

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## Carraig Connections - Discovering Carrick Project

We have recently completed a small project that was funded by South Ayrshire Council's Coastal Communities Fund. This allowed us to purchase an amplifier microphone for outdoor talks. We have also designed a special card game that features 30 historical figures from Carrick's past that will not only be fun, but educational! The cards will feature real digital artwork and not Ai generated images.

Simon Glendenning of Carraig Connections said - "This project has been a great way to test a bigger idea we have in terms of entertainment. I was determined to make sure we used real artwork and not have to resort to Ai generated images which would have looked cheap and lazy. I am excited about the final result!"

The Discovering Carrick card game will be available to purchase in June and details about their availability will be on our website and social media pages.



# Community Engagement Update



## Getting Started and Learning More

I began by reviewing previous documents to understand the work already carried out, the people involved, and the vision and aims of NCCBC. This helped me build a clearer picture of North Carrick—its geography, communities, and social and economic context—and highlighted how important it is to understand the differing needs across all our villages and towns.

## Listening and Learning from Others

I have attended and arranged a wide range of meetings with professionals, volunteers, and people with local knowledge to strengthen my skills in gathering community views. I also completed online training with VOiCE, a free tool that supports planning, recording, and evaluating community engagement. I plan to begin using VOiCE to help capture community voice and turn this into learning and action.

VOiCE is software designed to support effective community engagement by helping individuals and organisations plan, monitor, and evaluate their work.

## Sharing Information

I now manage several NCCBC social media accounts and will continue to use these to share relevant local

information. I've also created a professional Facebook account—Helen North Carrick—to help ensure posts reach the right audiences and reflect community priorities.

While social media is useful, feedback shows that posters, leaflets, and public notices remain very important, and their use may need to increase. The NCCBC Community News is highly valued, but residents have asked for:

- A wider mix of articles
- More promotion of upcoming events, not just reports after they happen

Several people have suggested creating a “North Carrick Diary”—a shared events listing to help reduce clashes, double-booking, and meeting overload.

## Walks, Talks, and Everyday Conversations

Walks and Talks continue across the villages and in Maybole, and I always make time to listen to anyone who wants to share their views. Having business cards has been a simple but effective way for people to get in touch by phone, email, or by arranging a meeting. The response to this has been very positive and shows how valuable informal chats are alongside more structured meetings.



## Pop-Up Community Visits

I have completed my first planned round of visits to every community and aim to repeat these on a three-monthly cycle. These visits act as pop-up offices or drop-in sessions and respond directly to feedback that NCCBC has not always felt visible in villages.

To support this:

- A gazebo has been ordered so sessions can run outdoors
- Visit days and times will vary across the year
- Sessions will be better advertised, with editable local posters shared well in advance

## Working with Schools

I have now met with all head teachers and senior leadership teams, and school links are improving. Engagement has been very positive, with teachers welcoming the chance to learn more about NCCBC's work. Many schools are now gathering pupil voice through classroom discussions, and we look forward to hearing their feedback. There is also growing interest in fundraising and community projects, with conversations ongoing.

## What Communities Are Telling Us

Residents have shared important feedback, including:

- A need for clear, up-to-date information
- More guidance on joining boards and committees
- Transport and childcare as major barriers to involvement
- Requests for online or hybrid meeting options
- Experiences of feeling unwelcome when joining local groups
- Lack of confidence speaking in public meetings

All of this feedback is being listened to carefully and will help shape future work



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# Culzean Primary

## New Playground Equipment

We were really lucky to get some funding from the NCCBC and Ward Funding to help us improve our playground, and what a difference it's made. The children are absolutely loving the new trim trail, the outdoor classroom, the playground marking games and all the new outdoor play bits and pieces. It's been brilliant watching them race around, try new challenges, make up games and just enjoy having so much more to do. The whole space feels brighter, more fun and much more inviting, and you can really see how much happier and more active the children are because of it. We're sure you'll agree the playground is looking fantastic and full of life.



 @improvingnc
  @improvingNC



**NCCBC** is a membership organisation that has around £300,000 available to spend on improvements in North Carrick each year

NCCBC is always looking for new members!

Join now, visit our website  
[www.NCCBC.org.uk](http://www.NCCBC.org.uk)



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**Copies of the North Carrick Community Newsletter are available throughout many North Carrick venues, if you need to pick one up, your main outlets are:**

**Crosshill:** Village Shop. **Kirkmichael:** Village Shop.  
**Straiton:** Village Shop. **Minishant:** Minishant Stores.  
**Maidens:** Little K's Kitchen, Ropes Bistro.  
**Maybole:** The Carrick Centre, Library, Co-op, Spar.  
**Kirkoswald:** Souters.  
**Turnberry:** Balkenna Tearoom, Dowhill Farm Shop.  
**Dunure/Fisherton:** The Anchorage, Harbourside Coffee Shop, Aruna Arts & Gifts.



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## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY

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# COLOURING Burst into Spring



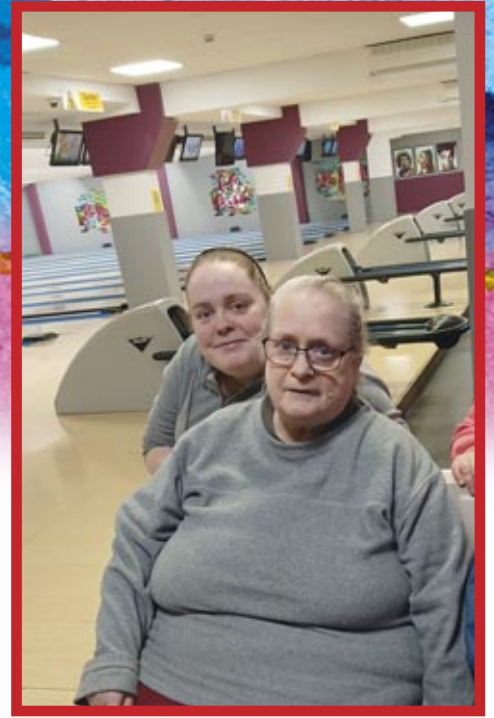
Colouring Communities have had a busy winter and are excited about having an even busier spring! They have been working with Recycle Ayr to create some beautiful handmade crafts to sell in the Gatherings. All items are upcycled, recycled or preloved, offering our community guilt free shopping opportunities. They are looking forward to hosting workshops in partnership with Recycle Ayr, to showcase how we can repurpose materials that would otherwise be going to landfill. As well as being busy, they have taken time to have had a lot of fun along the way with trips to 10 Pin Bowling, The Kitty Cat Cafe, Pick Me Up Paints and many other days of fun and companionship!



The group celebrated their five-year birthday and celebrated with a party and cake (of course). Colouring Communities is a volunteer led group for Adults with Additional Support Needs who meet weekly and work within the Community to make it a more vibrant and colourful place. Colouring Communities would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has supported them.

They are very grateful to the community for their warmth, inclusiveness and support.

**For more information about the group please contact [coral.mcmillan@outlook.com](mailto:coral.mcmillan@outlook.com)**



# COMMUNITIES



# Development Manager REPORT



Stuart Lindsay  
NCCBC Development Manager

**A Busy Spring for North Carrick Projects**  
It's been another busy few months across North Carrick, with progress on a number of key projects and some important developments behind the scenes. *Here's a look at what's been happening:*

### **Bruce Arts & AR Trail**

Work is continuing to strengthen the Bruce Arts and AR Trail. NCCBC is supporting Carraig Connections with a funding application to install interpretation panels at each site and carry out some targeted marketing. If successful, this will help bring the Trail to life for both locals and visitors.

### **Carraig Connections Development Trust & HEV Project**

So far, the formation of the new Trust has been supported by NCCBC's Scottish Government-funded 'Heritage Enterprise Village' project. That project has now come to an end, with final reports submitted. Although funding is currently tight, work hasn't stopped. Carraig Connections, with support from NCCBC, is actively pursuing new funding opportunities to keep momentum going.

There has been positive progress in discussions with Cassillis Estate over a

potential lease of Maybole Castle. Draft terms are now in place and, subject to funding, there is a shared ambition for Carraig Connections to take up occupancy from August 2026 — a major step forward for community-led tourism in the area.

Building on last year's 'Press Pause' sessions, a follow-up meeting has taken place to review the North Carrick Tourism Strategy. This is expected to lead to the creation of a local Tourism Steering Group to help drive activity forward.

### **Minishant Development Team**

Good progress continues towards a planning application for the Community Ecology Centre. NCCBC is supporting the group with funding bids, community engagement and access to additional support through the Ayrshire Climate Hub.

### **The Gatherings**

Looking ahead, discussions are underway about new and creative uses for the shop space, working with the Colouring Communities group.

## NCCBC HQ

Our Stage II Community Asset Transfer application has now been submitted. Due to the nature of the application, a decision could be made as early as June.

## Strengthening NCCBC

- ◆ The strong Impact Assessment from last year continues to be shared across our communities.
- ◆ Helen Murray-Hamilton, our new Community Engagement Specialist, has been out meeting residents across North Carrick.
- ◆ Over the summer, we'll be working with local panels to improve how Community-led Projects Funding (CPF) operates.

- ◆ We've also been working closely with funding partners to better coordinate support across the area and maximise opportunities for local projects.

There are also early discussions about bringing back the Grass Roots Support Scheme, which previously helped local sports teams with facility costs - something that could be particularly valuable given current financial pressures.

## Behind the Scenes

Alongside these key projects, a wide range of day-to-day work has been taking place - from supporting local groups with funding applications, to working with partners on energy efficiency, community assets, and future funding opportunities.

Overall, it's been a productive and forward-looking few months, with strong foundations being laid for the next phase of development across North Carrick.

## AT A GLANCE (FEB-APR 2026):

- ◆ **Bruce Trail** - Funding bid submitted to add interpretation panels and boost promotion
- ◆ **Maybole Castle** - Positive progress on lease discussions; potential move-in from August
- ◆ **HEV Project** - Now complete, with new funding bids underway to keep momentum going
- ◆ **Minishant** - Moving towards planning application stage for Community Ecology Centre
- ◆ **The Gatherings** - New ideas emerging for the use of the shop space
- ◆ **NCCBC HQ** - Community Asset Transfer application submitted; decision expected soon
- ◆ **New Team Member** - Helen Murray-Hamilton is out and about engaging with communities

# North Carrick Parish Church

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

Watch **Worship Services** on YouTube – North Carrick Parish Church

Follow us on **Facebook & Instagram** – North Carrick Parish Church

We have **Worship Services** every Sunday at Maybole 10:30, Kirkoswald 11:15 & Crosshill 12:00. All welcome!!

We will have **Maidens Summer Breakfast Worship Services** at 9:00 on the 4 Sundays in July and first 4 Sundays in August.

Come and sing along at our **Praise & Worship** on the 19th of June 19:00 at the Carrick Centre.

We have an **Ecumenical Prayer Meeting** the last Friday of every month. 10:00 in Maidens Hall and 15:00 in the Carrick Centre. Come and pray for our community.

There is a **Men's Group** coming together in Maidens on the 1st Friday of the month at 10:00.

## **Kirkoswald Community lunches - £5**

Come and enjoy homemade soup, a filled roll and pudding with tea or coffee, on the 1st Wednesday of the month – 1 July, 2 September, 7 October, 4 November and 2 December.

## **Crosshill Community lunches - £4**

The last Friday of the month there is homemade soup,

pudding and tea or coffee at Crosshill. 25 September, 30 October, 27 November.

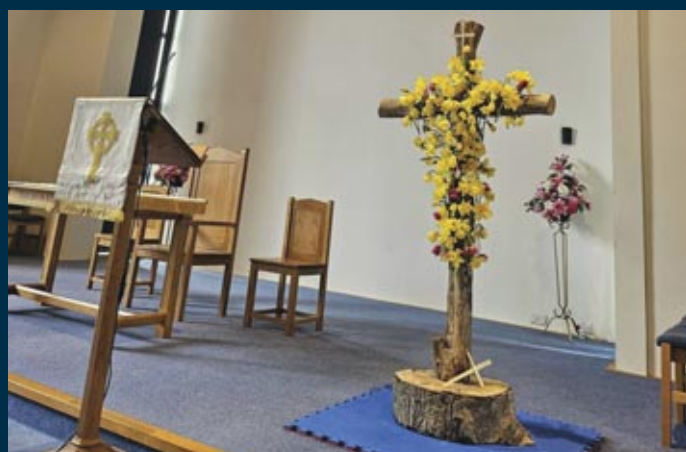
The Guild had a lovely **Daffodil tea** in March with wonderful entertainment from the Maybole Concert Party.

The **Crossraguel Community Choir** held a concert on Friday the 8th of May in Kirkoswald church hall to finish off the session for the summer holidays. There was a great turnout of family and friends who generously donated £335 for MND charity My Name's Doddie Foundation.



After ten years at the helm this was the last concert with Liz Kelly conducting the choir and we all wish her well in her retirement. We start back again on Wednesday 19 August at 7pm in Kirkoswald church hall with our very good friend Carol McMillan taking the choir. All welcome.

We had a wonderful **Easter Time** with services on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Photos are from the Maidens Breakfast Service and of the Cross decorated with Daffodils in Maybole.



The **Kirkoswald volunteers** are taking the Gatherings in Maybole as a charity shop for a week from Saturday 22 August. Sheila Dunlop is the contact if you want to send your items for sale in our shop. All money raised is for church funds.

## Summer Message

*With the sun shining brighter, the days getting longer and the trees becoming greener, everyone gets a smile and wants to go for a walk. In these times I remember God who made the sun, the bluebells, the green leaves, and the ocean and I'm grateful for eyes that can see it and enjoy it, for my legs and feet that can walk, for my ears that can hear the birds and the wind and I want to sing and praise the Lord, because as Psalm 8 declares: Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! Let us enjoy Summer and remember our Creator.*

Rev Karlien Becker



# CARRICK COMMUNITY FOOD GARDEN pays tribute to ...



## Jim McDermott

For the Carrick Community Food Garden (CCFGI), the most important event of 2026 so far was the planting of a memorial tree for Jim McDermott who died last autumn. Jim was a founder member of CCFG and involved in other Maybole initiatives, a 'weel-kent' man. We chose a Kilmarnock Willow for this, a local variety of goat willow with a weeping form.

There was a big attendance at the tree-planting ceremony on 11 March 2026: Fr Benjamin and other members of St Cuthbert's – Jim's church; family, friends and colleagues; as well as CCFG volunteers; about 30 folk in all. The willow was planted by Denise, Jim's widow, with her daughter alongside. A plaque was installed below the tree.

Everyone went on for refreshments in the church hall afterwards where teas and delicious home baking were laid on by CCFG volunteers. The church hall was full.

Since then, we have added to the woodland planting below the Kilmarnock Willow: so far daffodils, primroses, bluebells, red campions, violets and forget-

me-nots. It is in the quiet corner of the garden beside the ponds. Jim's family, friends and anyone who, like us, miss him, are very welcome to come and sit here at any time.

We have been busy since February sowing, transplanting, weeding and watering, and can now see vegetables and fruits growing well and some starting to flower. Soon we will have produce to share.

Since early March we have been visited by pupils from St Cuthbert's and Culzean Primary schools, on alternate weeks, who enthusiastically help with tasks such as sowing and weeding. Recently they have been hunting ladybird beetles in the greenery! Chris Jones's team from Recovery Ayr had their first visit of the year during which they repaired Jim's shed, replaced the decking behind the polytunnel, howked out docks – particularly difficult weeds – and other maintenance tasks.

**Carrick Community Food Garden volunteers meet every Wednesday morning to attend to the garden and other visitors are always welcome.**





# The Gatherings

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**The Galloway & Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere is the location for exciting new community-led conservation work with opportunities for North Carrick residents to get involved – no expertise required!**

The GSA Biosphere Partnership, the charitable organisation working across the UNESCO region, is part of the Red Squirrel Recovery Network active in South Scotland and northern England. The network is currently recruiting and training volunteers for squirrel monitoring and data recording and further down the line these citizen scientists will help establish interventions that support red squirrel populations, which are in drastic decline through habitat loss and competition from non-native greys. Over recent months the GSA Biosphere Partnership's Nature Recovery team has been running woodland workshops and Who Goes There?! track-and-sign walks, introducing potential volunteers to the ecosystems in which red squirrels thrive, as well as the clues that signal the presence of these elusive mammals, such as tooth marks on hazelnut shells or pine cones chewed in a particular way.

The first feeding stations and trail cams are now being set up, aiming to identify previously unrecorded squirrel populations. The Red Squirrel Recovery Network is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund but a self-driven volunteer network will be essential for the project's

longevity and usefulness. Anyone interested in getting involved is warmly encouraged to contact the Biosphere team via the details below; it is a perfect excuse to spend more time outdoors in the ancient native woodlands of the UNESCO Biosphere while learning more about nature and making an important contribution to wildlife conservation.



Those who prefer birding to 'squirrelling' also have the chance to participate by becoming a local swift observer and recorder with the D&G Swift Network, a new Scottish charity which is expanding its work to cover Ayrshire as well as Dumfries and Galloway.

With the GSA Biosphere Partnership's support the network is gathering volunteers to map swift colonies and identify good locations for installation of swift boxes, which are also being made by volunteers via Ayrshire Men's Sheds.

Swifts are a Red List species (of highest conservation concern) in the UK and their numbers continue to drop due to loss of old buildings where the birds nest in holes in the stonework. The Save Our Swifts campaign is another important conservation initiative for the UNESCO Biosphere being led by citizen science. Anyone can participate in data recording by downloading the Swift Mapper app; many existing records are years or decades old and more up-to-date information will help target conservation efforts.



More information about all the projects are available at [www.gsabiosphere.org.uk](http://www.gsabiosphere.org.uk) or by email request to [info@gsabiosphere.org.uk](mailto:info@gsabiosphere.org.uk)

Upcoming events including Red Squirrel Training Days and Swift Walks are advertised on the charity's Eventbrite page.

Follow [#gsabiosphere](https://twitter.com/gsabiosphere) on social media to keep up to date with news from the UNESCO region.

Nature Recovery officers are taking note of where swift colonies are reported within the UNESCO Biosphere and can connect you with other local volunteers and swift network members. You can also join the D&G Swift Network as a hands-on volunteer or just to stay in touch through newsletter updates.

The bigger picture is that the GSA Biosphere Partnership is striving to raise awareness among bodies involved in building development and architectural regeneration so that the needs of swifts (and other precious animal and plant species) are factored into plans from the very start. This approach of embedding knowledge, balance and sustainability creates a more hopeful outlook for nature as villages and towns develop over time.



# Kirkmichael House

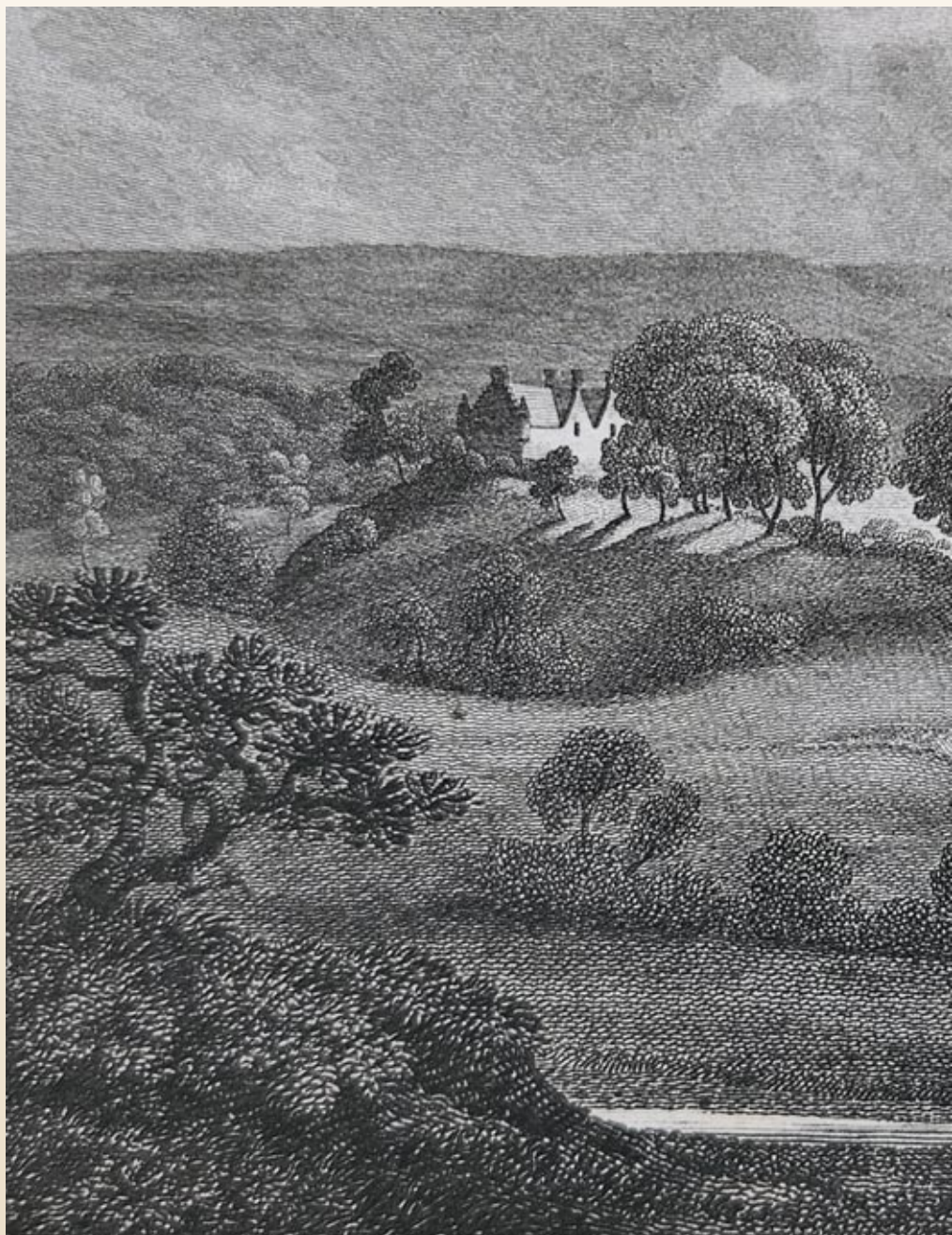
Earlier this year, local historian James Brown came to the McCosh Hall to speak about the history of Kirkmichael House, as well as his extensive research on another Kennedy residence: Baltersan, just outside Maybole, built in 1583 and owned by James for 30 years. He has painstakingly transcribed hundreds of documents dealing with the Kennedys and with life in Carrick from the 16th to the late 18th centuries and beyond – not an easy task.

A big audience of Women's Group members and guests were spellbound, while James regaled us with tales bringing the past to life. Like all the Kennedy Houses in the area, Kirkmichael House is an ancient dwelling, with successive layers and a central building that, as we can see from old maps, would always have been an important house. When the house was advertised for sale in the 1920s, the description points out that 'some portions of it, built on stone arches, date back 500 years.'

One impecunious and debt ridden Kennedy laird proved disastrous for the house, although later on, a helpful marriage remedied matters for a time. In the 20th century, it became a convalescent home for miners, as well as one of the ill-conceived 'List D' schools, before its current owners undertook an extensive and loving restoration. I'm convinced old houses, or their previous inhabitants, don't like to be messed with, so renovations can be challenging but the house is back to its beautiful self.

All kinds of information about life in Kirkmichael enlivened James Brown's talk, as well as a fascinating connection with – of all things – rhubarb.

Thomas Garvine (1690 to 1766) was a physician at the court of Peter the Great in Russia. From there, in



1715, he was sent on a medical mission to China. (The Chinese emperor allegedly wanted to know about aphrodisiacs!) There is a portrait of Garvine wearing what looks very like oriental dress, with a coat that may have been given to him by the Chinese emperor. It took the travellers many dangerous months to journey from St Petersburg to Peking, but Thomas eventually made it home to Scotland, where he practised as a doctor in Ayr, and where he was elected provost of the town.

# and its History



He would certainly have studied the early method of inoculation against smallpox invented by the Chinese. But did he bring precious rhubarb seeds with him when he returned to Scotland? Back then the rhubarb plant was deemed to be a panacea for many ills (albeit not smallpox) and the seed, worth its weight in gold, was jealously guarded by Russia and China alike.

Intriguingly, James Brown has uncovered an account

paid by then Laird of Kirkmichael to Thomas Garvine in January 1738. Garvine's total bill for 25 pounds (Scots) and 10 shillings, in January of 1738, includes 12 shillings for rhubarb.

The accepted wisdom is that rhubarb seeds were first brought to Scotland by James Mounsey, a Dumfries physician, in 1762. However, Garvine could well have brought them back much earlier, given that the Kennedy bill is dated some 20 years after he came home from Russia. By then, he was living on a small estate at Camsiscan in the parish of Craigie, where there was a fine garden.

Was Garvine, as James Brown suspects, growing his own rhubarb seeds, dangerously smuggled out of Russia, or were they perhaps even given to him by a grateful Chinese Emperor? Hard to prove any of this, but the sales records would suggest that Garvine was certainly growing rhubarb in Ayrshire and supplying it to Kirkmichael House as well.

James Brown is available as a public speaker and you can contact him through his website: <https://jamesbrown.scot/>

You can find **Kirkmichael History Group** on Facebook.

*Catherine Czerkawska*

# BEACHCOMBER

Beachcomber loves to hug the county shoreline as he moves north. Keep the wet stuff on the left, keep the dry stuff on the right. Keep that prevailing southwest wind on your back hurrying you along. That's what Grandpa Beachcomber grumbled as he cut another twist of tobacco and cranked up the Austin A90.

The best route is via the Ayrshire Coastal Path. It's a 106 mile trail that's been carved out of the curving and rolling landscape overlooking the Clyde. It'd been created by hard work, millions of days of negotiation and successfully engineering a way to relish this fine old marriage of land and sea.

One of the most glorious stretches is from Turnberry to Dunure, an eight mile trek that can be shortened at any point. It takes in the famous hotel's lighthouse, Maidens beach, the wonders of Culzean, Croy shore (strangely nicknamed Maybole shore) and this beauty, which happens to be Beachcomber's favourite spot for lunch:



It's an old crumbling military watchtower, just south of Dunure, once used to track naval exercise bombing runs during the war. It's plunked down at a perfect elbow of headland where wide views take in Ailsa Craig, Kintyre, Arran, the Cowal peninsula and the long curve of the Ayrshire coast.

The whole of the path is nursed along by the selfless effort from volunteer Ayrshire Coastal Path squads that endure all kinds of weather to keep it in shape. Below, a team repairing the steep Fisherton Gully steps just north of Dunure:

It has to be done. If not, the route would crumble through wind, rain and the unending onslaught of boots and wellies.



In the summer, the work concentrates on relentlessly strimming back tall grass and bracken that overwhelm the trails. Winter work includes replacing stiles, gates and rotting steps. Urgent work always takes top priority if safety is an issue- whatever the season.

The overseer of this work is Jimmy Begg, a retired Ayrshire GP, who tirelessly ensures that his dream of a shoreline path remains a reality. He's the trail manager, the originator of the path, the guidebook author, the crew boss of the volunteer work crews and the living spirit of this long distance route.

In a recent website interview, he explains the route survives '...on trust, goodwill and working with landowners, the farmers and councils.'

And crucially he adds '...there wouldn't be a coastal path without the volunteers.'

Dr Begg, or Jimmy to one and all, came up with the notion of the trail in 2004 as part of a Rotary campaign. It was initially going to be a hook-up between Ayr and Culzean. But Jimmy saw the Big Picture and eventually battled to connect Glen App, south of Ballantrae, to Skelmorlie in the north- 106 miles of guaranteed pleasure.

The goals, Jimmy says, are to both improve the Ayrshire economy and the health of those who enjoy a trek. In addition, there's muscles to be stretched and loads of fresh air to maintain the route, whether it be fixing fences, erecting signs, cutting back bracken or doing heavy lifting such as bridge building or erecting gates.

All to connect beaches, promontories, headlands, coves, farm tracks, promenades, estate roads, stalking paths, cliffs, villages, harbours and isolated country lanes....

*'You name it.' says the good doctor, 'we walk it.'*

*Photo credit of Dr Begg/ Martin McKerrell*



**“Nothing is so beautiful as Spring – when weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush.”**

*Gerard Manley Hopkins.*

After the seemingly never-ending rain of the winter we have, at last had a dry spell with days of sunshine even if the wind has felt like an Arctic blast. It doesn't take much to bring out the smiles when all around nature is painting the countryside again with colour. As well as the glorious yellows, reds and blues there are, what a friend always refers to as, the fifty shades of green; the colours of Spring.



At the end of February, we had a performance by the Gaiety on Tour. This time it took the form of a murder mystery with audience participation. Great fun was had by the teams trying to solve the crime and being led astray by red herrings.

The Guild had its penultimate meeting of the session in February when Hamish Husband regaled the members with tales of the Tartan Army. Then, in March, we were taken to St Kilda by Trisha and Jeanette, who had visited the archipelago last summer.

The next session of the guild will commence in October, and we look forward to welcoming more speakers with interesting topics. We also welcome new members. Come along and join us on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.30 in the McCandlish Hall for learning about new things in good company.

Easter is, of course, one of the highlights of the church year. This year the Good Friday service was at Kirkmichael followed by Easter Sunday services at both Kirkmichael and Straiton.



Easter also brought the Easter bunnies to Straiton Stores window, as well as one very enterprising bunny selling hot cross buns on the post box! Many thanks to our friends who provide these wonderful displays. They are so much appreciated by the community as well as visitors.

Straiton Farmers had an afternoon tea in the McCandlish Hall at the beginning of May and there is also a raffle with tickets available in Straiton Stores. We look forward now to Straiton Show on the second Saturday of June, when the agricultural side with judging takes place in the show field and the teas, with scrumptious goodies, will be served by the hall committee in the McCandlish Hall. A great day out for the family and a chance to learn about the various breeds.

The usual activities go on in the hall with badminton, both junior and senior, on Mondays and the ever popular Jam Sessions on Thursdays. Sunday morning quizzes continue in The Buck with the Black Bull quiz on the first Saturday of the month.

Now, with the completion of the pétanque terrain (thanks to SAC) and the provision of equipment (thanks to NCCBC through the community funding), pétanque is scheduled for 5pm on Wednesdays and 2pm on Sundays.



And finally. Did you know that the full moon at the beginning of May was the flower moon, so named because of the profusion of flowers in the Spring?

Also, there was a blue moon at the end of May. The blue moon only occurs every two or three years when there is a second full moon in the month, hence the saying “once in a blue moon”.



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