

Volunteer of the Year Award

Dumfries & Galloway Life
AWARDS 2023

New Galloway's Brian Edgar has been recognised as the Volunteer of the Year at this year's prestigious Dumfries & Galloway Life Awards.

The award celebrates Brian's outstanding and unwavering commitment to the communities of the Glenkens over many years.

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Brian at the D&G Life awards ceremony in Dumfries



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Glenkens Halloween spooky spread

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Local environmental trust breaks new ground

The Upper Urr Environmental Trust (UUET) has signed a first-of-its-

kind public benefit agreement with a commercial planting scheme.

In September the trust put pen to paper on a groundbreaking lease agreement, looking to add community and biodiversity value to a commercial planting scheme near Corsock.

The Upper Barr site was planted up earlier in the year by owners Foresight Sustainable Forestry Company (FSF). The agreement refers to

the unplanted sections of the site, including a designated community lease area and the wider partnership area.

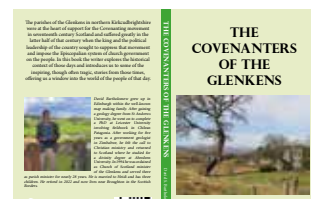
The agreement gives UUET a 20-year lease of land for public amenity and environmental purposes, including plans for a dedicated community woodland area, footpath creation, riparian broadleaf tree planting, habitat improvements and peatland restoration work.

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Tough times ahead for the CatStrand

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Book launch: Covenanters of the Glenkens

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Spalding bowling awards

Spalding bowling club had an excellent presentation ceremony after another great season, with prizes presented by Mabel Young.

Pictured are club president John Peacock, ladies' champion Elizabeth Peacock, gents' champion Garry Priddy, Mabel Young, Kate Bone, Duncan Jordon, Ian Murray, Colin Jounland, Gordon McAdam, Sandra Dempster, Colin Ramsay and Bill Ramsay.

Thanks go to the Clachan Inn, Dalry, for an excellent celebratory meal.

Val Russell



Fundraising for Alzheimer Scotland



A fundraising event held by Jayne Grimwood, of Hair by Jayne, and her tireless team of helpers in Dalry Town Hall raised an incredible £1,270 for the local branch of Alzheimer Scotland.

Jayne said: "A big thank you to you everyone who came, and everyone who helped organise, and especially to our fabulous bakers - we make a great team! What a great turnout we had!"

"And it wouldn't have been a success either without the generosity of the community; every bit of money raised went to Dumfries & Galloway to help with the care of this illness to support



people across the region. Without all the support from our communities this would not be possible.

"We already we have had more folk saying they want to be put on the baking list to help with future events, which is fabulous, and we're going to introduce more savoury baking too next year - put Thursday 3 October 2024 into your diary for an event not to be missed!"




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Greener travel across the Glenkens with the new GCT eBus

Galloway Community Transport (GCT) has received a massive boost in its ongoing aim of decarbonising its fleet, in the shape of a 16-seater electric bus.

This vehicle is brand new and has been funded by the Energy Savings Trust's 'Plugged in Communities' fund, which supports community transport initiatives in adding carbon neutral vehicles to their fleet.

GCT are currently training drivers in the use of this new bus (the controls are more space age!) and will have the vehicle available for regular hire in the New Year via the GCT Membership scheme (www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org/hire).

Once registered as a community group member, you can hire any of our buses or the eCar for very competitive rates, either with a paid driver or your own MIDAS-trained driver.



GCT are always **looking for new volunteers**, either to drive their own cars (for patient transport) or the GCT minibuses (for local hires), so if you fancy getting behind the wheel of any of

the fleet and doing a good deed for the community, contact Jon and Sue to find out more at gct@catstrand.com or 07841 512 449.

Funding secured for supporting Local Place Plans

Thanks to funding from NatureScot and South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), a new project has been created by Dalry Community Council and the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) supporting Local Place Planning and land use in the Glenkens.

Building on work already carried out within communities to create the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan and recent Glenkens Land Use Vision addendum, as well as extensive work this summer by Dalry CC on Local Place Planning, the

project will generate three complementary feasibility studies by March 2024:

1. Place Planning and Land Use in the Glenkens
2. Participatory Monitoring of Land Use in the Glenkens
3. A Land Use Forum in the Glenkens

Local Place Plans were introduced in the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, and provide a new opportunity for communities to contribute to the Local Development Plan at a truly local level. To achieve the first outcome above, the scope of the Glenkens Community Spaces Network has been extended to work with Dalry Community Council to develop a toolkit for Local Place Planning in the Glenkens, with the aim of making it easier for the Community



Councils of the Glenkens to carry out the Local Place Planning process in their own communities.

At a joint meeting of the Community Councils in August, representatives indicated that they would appreciate the joint coordination of Local Place Planning, and so GCAT and Dalry CC have sourced this funding to support that.

The second and third reports will build on the work on Land Use in the Glenkens to date, to see what further steps are required to allow effective

monitoring of landscape change over time from a community perspective, and to create a Glenkens Land Use Forum. This last one will explore what challenges which are faced in trying to set such a Forum up, what it will do, who will be involved and how to make it effective.

Updates on the project and reports and resources created will be shared on the Glenkens Hub, www.glenkens.scot, or for further information Becca Nelson at becca.glenkens.anf@gmail.com

Celebrate under a star filled night with the SongWave Choir



Get ready to immerse yourself in the magic of the holiday season with the SongWave Choir's enchanting concert series, *Under a Star Filled Night*.

This joyful celebration of the turning of the year features a splendid repertoire of songs from diverse cultures and lands, promising an unforgettable musical experience for all ages.

Led by musical director Kate Howard, SongWave is renowned for its spirited performances. The choir's mission is to share the gift of music and bring festive cheer to the community.

The concert series kicks off on Friday 15 December at 7pm in New Galloway Town Hall. This performance is followed on Saturday 16 December at 4pm at



Dalbeattie Parish Church Hall and concludes on Sunday 17 December at 4pm at Twynholm Village Hall.

Tickets are available from www.songwavechoir.org.uk or phone 07747 623 036.

This holiday season, join SongWave in embracing

the enchantment and celebration of diverse cultures and traditions under a star filled night. Don't miss the opportunity to be a part of this heart-warming musical experience that promises to bring light and joy during the darkest part of the year.

Violin students impress at local events



Pupils at the Galloway Violin Studio, based at Parton and run by violinist and violist Cate Howard, have performed at a host of local events.

They attended the Kirkcudbright Fringe and the Gatehouse Music Society Young Musicians'

Concert with a repertoire ranging from Classical to Contemporary World Music.

Students are aged from 6-17 and receive individual and group lessons. If you are interested to find out more about the Galloway Violin Studio and having violin lessons, please contact Cate at chowardsasc@gmail.com



A name changer for the Glenkens Food Hub



The Glenkens Food Hub are excited to announce our new name - the Galloway Food Hub!

As we expand, we wanted to update our name to better reflect the area we serve. Here's a little bit about how we have evolved.

The Glenkens Food Hub was born from the Glenkens Community Action Plan and Propagate's further work to investigate what the community wanted in terms of local food. One of the things the community said they would like was better access to good, local food, especially vegetables. So, a hyper-local, online food hub was trialled in Dalry, and funding to run a larger pilot project was received from Blackcraig Wind Farm, via Foundation Scotland, on behalf of the Glenkens and District Trust.

Initially, our intention was to stay hyper-local, as we wanted to reduce food miles, sell lower carbon emitting produce, and increase market access for local food producers. However, we wanted others across Dumfries and Galloway to benefit from similar Food Hubs, and we soon realised that multiple hubs were unlikely to be a viable answer in very large and vast region. Food hubs take a lot of administration behind the scenes, and replicating this many times over would require regular funding, with the likelihood that they would never be financially viable.

It soon emerged that a hub and spoke model, with one central packing point and multiple collection points run by wonderful volunteers, was the most feasible option. The locations of these points were driven by volunteers appearing from these locations wanting to take produce back for themselves and their friends. This turned out to be a workable scenario, enabling us to serve more people in the wider community.

At the start, we had collections available in Dalry only, and delivery within the

Glenkens. Our next two first collection points of Gatehouse of Fleet and Low Auldgrith were trialled successfully. Recently, we have reached ten locations outside the Glenkens. Whilst we do have 4 - 5 very local producers in the Glenkens, most are based within the wider community of D&G, within a 30-mile radius of Dalry.



To keep our customers interested, and through asking them what they would like to see for sale on the hub, we continue to expand our range a little outside this 30-mile area and supplement with other ethical and sustainable produce which fits our 'Good Food' criteria, such as coffee, chocolate, and staple vegetables. We continue to speak with and listen to our customers, and explore ways to expand our product range, in alignment with their needs.

Now seems like the right time to change our name from the Glenkens Food Hub to the Galloway Food Hub. Whilst our heart, our packing place at the Glenkens Community Centre and half of our customers are still within the Glenkens, we have a valued and growing customer base and producer network across Dumfries and Galloway. The Glenkens is situated at the heart of Galloway, and we find this

location to suit us right now with the links we have established.

We hope that becoming the Galloway Food Hub allows more people and producers to access and benefit from Galloway's local climate and nature-friendly, online good food marketplace. We are extremely grateful to our fabulous customers who offer kind words of encouragement that they love what we do, and value the produce that we offer. Our local producers are fantastic, often growing, farming, and making unique food under difficult circumstances, to make a difference to the health of our community and our planet and are the foundation on which the Food Hub is built. A very big thank you goes to all who have volunteered with us since we began. We couldn't do this without you.

Please spread the word if you value this access to local resources in our beautiful part of the world.

If you'd like to be a volunteer or supply produce to the Hub, please get in touch at lesley@propagate.org.uk or tamsin@propagate.co.uk

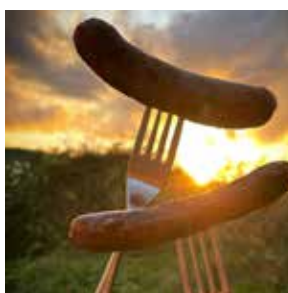
The Galloway Food Hub Team

SHOP LOCAL THIS CHRISTMAS WITH THE GALLOWAY FOOD HUB

The Galloway Food Hub will open three weeks in a row in December, with collections on Friday 8, 15 and 22, ensuring you can stock up on all your festive fare.

And don't forget there are some great gift ideas too!

<https://gallowayfoodhub.org.uk>



New Galloway Town Hall grand reopening: A Time and a Place

Residents of New Galloway, with guests from across the Glenkens and beyond, celebrated the grand reopening of the Town Hall in October with a once-in-a-generation concert titled *A Time and a Place*.

Aiming to capture past and present in a space that is a source of real pride to the local community, the centrepiece of the event was the Town Hall Time Capsule, which is to be sealed behind a false wall under the stairs. It contains writings, photographs, mementos, special edition memorabilia and historic artefacts, which together create a picture of 21st century life in Scotland's smallest Royal Burgh.

The programme for *A Time and a Place* featured the CatStrand Singers with selections from *Singing the Galloway Glens*, the song cycle put together by the late Nicola Black, who is still so sadly missed. This included the haunting *Moorbrock Memories* and *Galloway Lullaby* and, for a bit of light relief, *A Conversation of Geese*. The CD of *Singing the Galloway Glens* together with its beautifully illustrated companion publication was placed in the time capsule by Carol Salsbury to the accompaniment of a drum roll and cymbal crash – provided for every item by the inimitable Ian Wemyss.

The contributions from the Cubs pack and primary school were particularly interesting, with children wondering how life might be different in 50 years' time. 'Will toilets still be

same?' was one stand-out question. Rose Ardron placed the Writedown anthology of local writings from Covid lockdown days, while Barbara Barker and Avril Bridgeman provided an excellent canter through New Galloway's past 50 years up to and including the latest local news – submitting several copies of the *Glenkens Gazette*.

Additions to the Time Capsule were interspersed with songs, often with no small degree of audience participation.

Additions to the Time Capsule were interspersed with songs, often with no small degree of audience participation. The concert ended with everyone joining in an unforgettable rendition of *E Malala* – a Hawaiian Earth Blessing – the words translating as "Earth and Sky, Sea and Stone, Hold this land in sacredness". Joyous, but also heartbreakingly apt.

A Just-in-Time Renovation

The asset transfer of the 19th century B-Listed Town Hall

from Dumfries & Galloway Council to Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING), who now hold it in trust for the benefit of the community, took place in August 2022. It was just in time; money to keep the building in good repair had dwindled and the neglect was very clear. Had it not been taken on by LING, the Town Hall had been

has had a thorough MOT. The building has been brought into the modern age with the installation of the lift and accessible toilets, alongside carbon and energy saving measures that include secondary glazing and an air source heat pump.

The building's reopening marked the relaunch of the Town Hall's programme of classes, activities and social events. Martial arts, Tai Chi, indoor bowling and the popular LING Lunches are already in train as the building returns to its historic position as New Galloway's community hub. LING Trustees are keen to spread the word that the Town Hall is a venue that belongs to the community, with potential to reduce isolation, improve wellbeing, and build on the connectedness of rural life.

So many to thank

Volunteers were the backbone of what New Galloway has achieved, in particular those who help with LING Lunches, the Town Hall's flagship offering. They create the atmosphere of welcome that infuses and permeates the building. Others run the weekly sports evening year in year out, quietly making all comers feel at home and able to enjoy a friendly game of carpet bowls or table tennis.

Many in the community made themselves available at the drop of a hat to help. Vicky of Dynamic Domestic brought her team to help with cleaning up as renovation work was drawing to an end. Jim Ranyard set up lights and an excellent sound system for *A Time and a Place*.

Continued over the page...



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Heather Mackintosh put an incredible amount of work into helping the Cubs to compile their contribution for the Time Capsule, as did Margaret Heuchan with the school children from Kells. LING had superb support from Ronnie Bradford as Project Officer overseeing the renovations. Jackie Wells, New Galloway's brilliant Community Inclusion Worker, adeptly juggled balls and spun plates. And LING's newest recruit, Bianca Leder, hit the ground running by setting up and running popular Thursday Hubbub sessions. The LING team have been lucky also to recruit an excellent new cleaner in Susan Howarth.

Of course without a roster of encouraging funders none of the renovations would have happened at all. Glenkens and District Trust were the first to launch the project on its way with a promise of £25K from Blackcraig Windfarm towards installation of the lift. D&G Council were generous in supporting interior repairs, and October 2021 saw the

offer of £175K from the Community Ownership Fund, a game changer that required match funding, which LING managed to achieve. With significant last-minute help from South of Scotland Enterprise and a major uplift from Scotland's Lets Do Net Zero Fund, LING can account for having raised £450K.

Chair of LING, Barbara Barker, said: "From start to finish New Galloway's

Town Hall project has been community-led and supported by an incredible diversity of partners and funders. Starting with LING's membership, 133 people - about 40% of the local community - are members of LING, and 65 are 'Friends of the Town Hall' who pay a monthly small subscription to support the work. Over 40 people came to our February AGM and when we held a fundraiser for

the renovations, £5,000 was raised. The support from so many who enthuse, attend, and help in so many ways to build a network of friendships is quite phenomenal."

The last item to be placed in the Time Capsule, before Ros Hill was called upon to close it for posterity, was a report of the renovation process itself - the whole story of the asset transfer and the fundraising success.

THE TRUSTEES of LING

offer grateful thanks to the funders of the Town Hall renovation:

Community Ownership Fund
HM Government Department Of Levelling Up
Community & Renewable Energy Scheme
The Scottish Government's Let's Do Net Zero Fund
Glenkens And District Trust
administered by Foundation Scotland
South Of Scotland Enterprise
Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership
supported by National Lottery Heritage Fund
Dumfries & Galloway Council
The National Lottery Community Fund

Architectural Heritage Fund
The Galloway Association of Glasgow
The Garfield Weston Foundation
The Robertson Trust
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The Hugh Fraser Trust
The Winnifred Ann Kennedy Trust
The Pilgrim Trust
Robert Barr's Charitable Trust
The Howat Trust
New Galloway & Kells Community Council

...and last, but by no means least, the local community!

Local historian Paul Goodwin features on ITV Border Life

Local military historian Paul Goodwin has highlighted the importance of war memorials in an episode of ITV's *Border Life*.

As a founding member of the charity The Scottish Military Research Group, Paul's research has shown there are over 550 war memorials in the region, most of which were not on record when he began his research in 2006.

Paul believes war memorials are vital not only for education and family history researchers but in order to ensure younger generations remember this vital part

of our history. Paul said: "It should be remembered, and commemorated, if for no other reason than to remember that war is a bad thing and we need to do all we can to avoid it.

"All these lives cut short, all these people who never married, never had children,

the people who were never born, the generations that were never born, so it continues to have an impact.

"In this area, people went away to war and never came back...the whole community changed as a direct result of the first world war."

Paul has created a list of people commemorated on the main war memorials of the Glenkens, and the list itself is now a registered war memorial. His other work includes the recent Galloway Glens *Last Flights* booklet, as well as many *Glenkens Gazette* articles over the years.

To watch Paul's episode on war memorials visit www.itv.com/news/border/2023-11-15/remembering-the-fallen-as-significance-of-war-memorials-examined



Join the board

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust

The board of any voluntary organisation is its backbone and its guide; nothing can be done without them and their commitment.

As ever, therefore, I remain most grateful to the GCAT Directors for their sterling efforts this year on behalf of GCAT and all its work. A particular milestone has been refreshing our strategy, which now runs from 2023

to 2028 and clarifies our position as a key anchor organisation for the area, with a vision of making the Glenkens an excellent place to live for people of all ages. We do this by:

- Interweaving Arts, Community and Heritage to enrich the life of the area.
- Delivering our Artistic Vision with passion and creativity.
- Supporting many activities core to the quality of life of people and environment of the Glenkens.
- Driving economic and social regeneration of the area

through championing the delivery of the Glenkens & District Community Action Plan.

You can see the full strategy at www.gcat.scot/about-gcat and it's exciting to have a clear vision of our work as we look forward into what are undoubtedly very challenging times, with the squeeze on public funding, high inflation and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

At our AGM on 29 January (7.30pm in the CatStrand - all welcome), we will be seeking nominations for new GCAT directors. Jackie Wells and Richard Middleton will be leaving by then and will be much missed.

Jackie's enthusiasm for GCAT and all of our projects was, and is, much appreciated and it is a shame (although quite understandable) that pressure of work caused her to step down in October 2023.

Richard has been on the Board since 2018 and over many years has provided a depth of thought and sense of direction that I have very much appreciated. He works tirelessly on behalf of our community in many aspects and has made a huge impact on the Glenkens communities in doing so.

We are now seeking nominations to join the remaining Board in January. We are particularly interested in people who represent the farther reaches of the Glenkens, younger people, people new to the area and people with a demonstrated interest in the arts or community, but would love to hear from anyone with an interest in supporting what we do at the CatStrand and beyond.

If you are interested in this voluntary role, please get in touch with Helen@catstrand.com in the first instance, and she will arrange no-commitment chats with myself and other Board members to find out more.

Deadline for nomination is 19 January, but it would be excellent to hear from interested parties before the end of the year.

*Peter Fryer,
Chair of the GCAT Board*



Supporting Wellbeing through welcoming activities

Together in the Glenkens WINTER 23/24 Activity Programme

TAI CHI in New Galloway- £5 4 week block - £18 MONDAYS 7.00 - 8pm weekly New Galloway Town Hall ART FOR WELLBEING - £12.50 4 week block - £48 including all materials & tea/coffee/cake • Beginners Oil Painting Class WEDNESDAYS 10am-12pm weekly term-time only The Smiddy, Balmacellan • Themed Art Class THURSDAYS 6.30 - 8.30pm twice a month Corsock Village Hall GYM & SWIM PACKAGE incl. Transport Merrick Leisure Centre £9.00 £4.50 Spa, Sauna, Gym & Swim £5.00 £2.50 Swim : £7.00 £3.50 Gym Second WEDNESDAY of the month 5.00pm Fourth TUESDAY of the month 9.00am Depart from CatStrand Pick up locations - Dalry, Balmacellan,	PATCHWORK WORKSHOP - £6.50 4 week block £24 THURSDAYS 1.00-3.00pm weekly Crossmichael Church Hall GENTLE EXERCISE FOR ALL - £5 Wednesdays 4 - 5pm Every first & third Wednesday in the month The Smiddy, Balmacellan DANCE CLASSES - £8 4 week block - £28 MONDAYS 7 - 8.30pm weekly 4 week block - new dance every block Each block in new location • From 27th Nov Mossdale Hall • From 15th Jan Parton Hall • From 19th Feb Kirkpatrick Durham Hall PIE, PINT n' PATTY £- cost of a pint n' a pie Last FRIDAY of the month 6.00 - 10.00pm CatStrand, New Galloway 24th Nov 23rd Feb TITG PUB QUIZ - £1 per person Last SUNDAY of the month 26th Nov - Lochinvar Hotel 17th Dec - Clachan Inn 28th Jan - Ken Bridge Hotel 25th Feb - Lochinvar Hotel
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Glenkens Community & Arts Trust
A GCAT Project

Photo of the Issue



**...Sponsored by
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This issue's winner is Colin Edgar with his striking shot of a rainbow at Stroangassel.

Colin wins two portions of mac and cheese from our competition sponsors, the Balmacellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co.

Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said: "What a great photo - the rainbow seems to shine directly onto the blackface tup, who looks like he's posing for the picture; perhaps this tup is worth his weight in gold!"

To enter you can send in any photograph taken in the Glenkens to glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

FINLAY CARSON MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Galloway and West Dumfries



If you would like an appointment,
please get in touch

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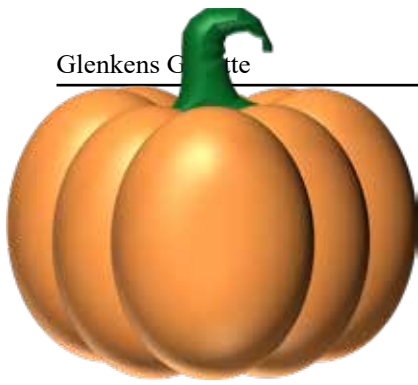
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All legal advice

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Halloween in

Spooky fun with Bairn Banter

Children from all across the Glenkens joined Bairn Banter for a haunting halloween party in Carsphairn's Lagwyne Hall.

The Carsphairn-based stay-and-play children's group welcomed youngsters of all ages to this fun-filled event.

Alongside the usual party games of musical statues, pass-the-parcel and a pinata, the children participated in a range of halloween-themed activities such as gruesome sensory play (resembling worms), a spooky soft play area,

dookin' for apples, wrap the mummy and the doughnuts-on-a-string game.

A creative area was also available for children to take a moment away from the bustle of the party, to enjoy a quiet colouring activity or themed playdough, and there was a buffet-style feast for children and adults as part of the annual celebration.

Bairn Banter's founder, Melissa Ade, commented: "It was wonderful to see so many children and adults come



together to celebrate with us here at Bairn Banter. I want to say a special thank you to everyone who came along to enjoy the party and to the very helpful parents whose support made the party such a spook-tacular event!"

Money raised at September's Carsphairn Community Market funded this event, enabling it to be a free, inclusive event for local families.



October was a busy month for the Glenkens Youth Group.

We saw the arrival of the new youth group assistant, 21-year-old Ben Wells, to the team. Ben and his mum Jackie have helped out before with the youth group, so we are thrilled to have him back on a more permanent basis.

Early in October the group participated

Glenkens Youth Group

in a fantastic water safety activity organised by the Loch Ken Trust in collaboration with the Galloway Activity Centre (GAC). Despite the temperature dropping, our young people hopped on the paddleboards on a gloriously sunny day to learn some invaluable water safety skills. A big 'thank you' goes to the Loch Ken Trust and GAC for this incredible opportunity.

The group also enjoyed our 'Friends Around the Fire' session where there was an opportunity to use a flint-and-steel for firelighting, developed fire safety skills and savour some tasty toasted marshmallows. The group are grateful to the Glenkens Community Centre for supporting this activity and we hope to do this again in the future.

Many of the young people chose to dress up for our halloween-themed meet-up and a kind donation of pumpkins by Tesco in Castle Douglas resulted in some creative pumpkin carving.

Lastly, the Glenkens Youth Group relished our 'Make Your Own Pizza' night.

They worked together to make pizza dough and prepared all the toppings. Once again, thank you to Tesco for the large contribution of vegetables. We were also very lucky to have some special ingredients through generous donations from local producers. Thank you to Deer Manor Mushrooms for the beautiful organic mushrooms, and to Hidden Veg for gorgeous fresh herbs and greens. Not only were these donations extremely delicious, but a great step towards sustainability for the Glenkens Youth Group.

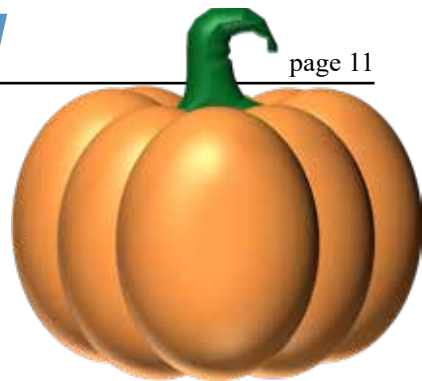
Sessions will continue during term-time on Monday evenings from 7-8.30pm at the Glenkens Community Centre. The group is open to young people from P7 up to S3. We are also preparing for some trips during the holidays and are in talks with other organisations to provide more opportunities for the young people of the Glenkens, so watch this space!

If you would like to find out more, please get in touch on glenkensyouth@gmail.com

Beata, Youth Group Lead

the Glenkens

Cub Scouts party-time



The Glenkens Cub Scouts celebrated with a halloween party with all the games and fun associated with it.

We are now looking forward to visiting the CatStrand Panto.

The Cub Scouts and Leaders wish everyone in the Glenkens a merry Christmas and a



happy New Year and thank everyone for their continued support to the Scout movement.

*Yours in scouting,
Heather, Hannah & parent helpers*

Freaky fun with Friends of Dalry School

Friends of Dalry School (FoDS) volunteers once again hosted a fun-filled halloween party for Glenkens children.

Over 80 people came through the doors of the Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry on halloween night, with children participating in all kinds of halloween games, as well as enjoying hotdogs and snacks and music by Dalry's own DJ Owen.

Thanks go to everyone who gave a donation on the door, and to parents and members

of the community who helped out, especially Dalry Good Neighbours Club and the Glenkens Youth Group for helping with the decorating.

If anyone would like to make a donation to FoDS please message the group on Facebook or call in to the school - donations are gratefully received and go towards organising events such as halloween, Christmas and summer splash parties for the children, as well as contributing towards the costs of extras at school such as school trips, bags, books and other items that help out.

Friends of Dalry School



Community spirit

Thanks once again go to the dedicated members of New Galloway community who truly make guising in the village something to remember.

As parents of some wonderfully terrified children who had the best halloween ever being chased by scary local characters (among others we think we spotted Freddy Kruger from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and Jason from *Friday the 13th*), we would like to say a big 'thank you' for the effort put in every year to offer something spookily special - halloween in the Glenkens wouldn't be the same without you!



Local governance and our communities... ...how it works and how to get involved

How do community councils work?

Community Councils were first established in Scotland following the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Thereafter, the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act, 1994, which produced the current system of unitary Local Authorities, made provision for the continuation of community councils.

Under the legislation, every local community in Scotland is entitled to petition their local authority to establish a community council in their area. Although they are elected bodies, Community Councils do not have the status of local authorities, nor are they part of local authorities. Community Councils are a separate legal entity with their own rights and responsibilities created and sustained by the said Acts of 1973 and 1994 to be run in accordance with the approved Scheme. In Dumfries and Galloway there are currently 88 Community Councils across the region.

The Amended 2018 Scheme for Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway ('The Scheme') was agreed by Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) on 25 September 2018. Its purpose is to enable the establishment of community councils within Dumfries and Galloway and to provide a common minimum basic framework governing their creation and operation. All Community Councils within

Dumfries and Galloway are required to adhere to its terms. The Scheme supports the operation of Community Councils and is viewed by DGC as the Community Council's Constitution to encourage and maintain consistency across for all Community Councils. It sets out the basic role and purpose of Community Councils and the basic rules that are expected to be complied with, including in relation to complaints and the conduct of members.

The statutory purposes of Community Councils established under the Scheme are set out in Section 51(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as follows: "In addition to any other purpose which a Community Council may pursue, the general purpose of a Community

This will involve Community Councils articulating the views and concerns of local people in their area on a wide range of issues of public concern and make representations to DGC, other public sector bodies and private agencies on matters within their area of interest. Community Councils have a statutory right to be consulted on planning applications and may from time to time be consulted on issues such as licensing, matters affecting the local community and interface with the Scottish Government.

Members of a Community Council are required to be aged 16 years or over; reside within the Community Council area; and be named on the current

register of electors for that area on the date of being proposed for membership. Dumfries and Galloway Council provide a consistent level of support to Community

Councils across the region and arrange elections, including ordinary elections held every five years, by-elections and casual vacancy elections.

Further information on Community Councils in Dumfries and Galloway can be found at <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/communitycouncils>

*Hazel Kerr,
Community & Democratic Services Officer,
Dumfries & Galloway Council*

Community Councils must be inclusive organisations whose general purpose is to act as a voice for their local areas.

Council shall be to ascertain, co-ordinate and express to the local authorities for its area, and to public authorities, the views of the community which it represents, in relation to matters for which those authorities are responsible, and to take such action in the interests of that community as appears to it to be expedient and practicable".

Community Councils must be inclusive organisations whose general purpose is to act as a voice for their local area.

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'Tis the season to be jolly!

Advent and Christmas look set to be busy this year at St Margaret's Church in New Galloway.

The St Margaret's Guild is once again holding a Christmas Coffee Morning with the Glenkens Churches Guild, this year in the newly refurbished New Galloway Town Hall on 6 December, 10.30am-12noon. We hope to donate our share of monies raised to the Christian charity, Adopt a Child, that provides food and education for children living in poverty in Guatemala and Albania.

On each of the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, a new candle on the Advent wreath in church will be lit as we explore the themes of hope, peace, love and joy. On Sunday 17 December we will be holding a special Advent carol service (10.30am) with favourite carols such as 'O Come O Come Emmanuel'. Also, on Thursday 21 December at 9.30am Dawn Matthew, our priest, will be hosting Kells School at St Margaret's for their Christmas service - we hope that parents and friends will also be able to join us.

We are delighted to welcome Geoff Davidson's Glenkens Choir on Friday 22 December at 4pm for their popular 'Carols by

Candlelight'. Beautiful traditional carols will take centre stage with a mix of readings from various sources. Mulled wine, spiced apple ale (non-alcoholic) and festive nibbles will be served by the St Margaret's Guild following the service.

Then on Christmas Eve, we are holding a special family nativity service. Having four children herself, Dawn is aware that children's attention span on Christmas Eve is not long so this will be a short informal service, 3.00 to 3.30pm. We would encourage children to bring a sheep or angel that they have made or drawn to be pinned on the special tree.

Christmas Day itself will see a traditional Holy Communion at 10.30am with familiar readings and carols. Amongst all the excitement and jollity, St Margaret's has for many years also thought of those in need and dedicated their Christmas collection to a charity chosen by the congregation at their AGM in late November. Last year, we were able to raise £1,175 for Médecins sans Frontières in this way.

We look forward to welcoming friends, old and new, to any or all of our special events. Please see Glenkens Church Times on page 31 for details of our regular services.

Nicolette Wise



Corsock Crafts



***Sunday 3 December Corsock Village Hall*
11am Til 3pm - £1 entry includes tea & cake!**



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Award recognises Brian's community commitment

Continued from front page...

Amidst intense competition, Brian emerged as the well-deserved winner due to his diligent efforts within the community. His involvement in various local committees and groups reflects a lifetime commitment to community service, showcasing his leadership and dedication to the betterment of the Glenkens area.

Brian's extensive community engagement includes roles in committees such as the New Galloway & Kells Community Council, where he served for almost 30 years, six of them as Provost. He has also been a key figure on the Scottish Alternative Games Committee since 2001, contributing to the organisation and providing commentary at the ever-popular event.

Brian joined the board of New Galloway Community Enterprises Ltd in 2021, bringing his wealth of experience to help promote sustainable community development. This was first apparent in his role as one of the founding Trustees of the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust, for whom he has volunteered and worked tirelessly for 22 years now, presently as the CatStrand Enterprise and Facilities Manager.

His contributions to education have been notable too, having been a member of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Board at Kells School at various times between 1991 and 2002. Brian's commitment to youth development also extends to football, where he earned the Scottish Football Association Youth Coaching Certificate in 1996 and coached the Kells School Football Team for 12 years. He also assisted with coaching the youth teams at Fleet Star FC for several years.

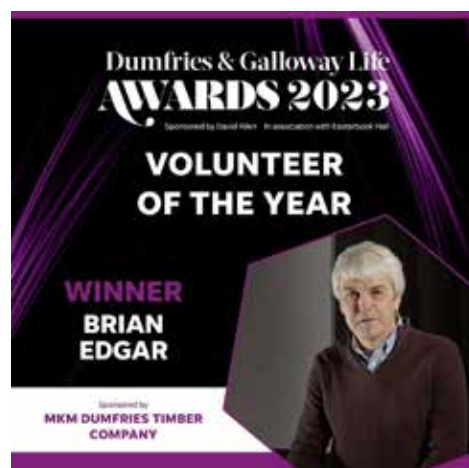
In the realm of amateur drama Brian was a steadfast member of Glenkens '73 Club, making his acting debut in the pantomime Cinderella in 1974. Over the years, he has

participated in numerous one-act plays and pantomimes, eventually taking over as the panto dame from his father, Tommy Edgar. Brian then went on to found CatStrand Youth Players in 2008 and now enjoys directing the annual pantomime and one-act plays.

The D&G Life award put a particular spotlight on his exceptional work with the Youth Players group, highlighting Brian's pivotal role in creating a haven for young individuals in a rural area, providing them with unique opportunities to immerse themselves in the world of drama. In a community where access to cultural and artistic activities would otherwise be limited, Brian's commitment to CatStrand as a whole and the CatStrand Youth Players in particular stands out as a beacon of creativity and inclusivity. Through his leadership, the group has become a transformative space for young talents in the Glenkens area.

Since its formation in 2008, more than 200 young people aged 10 to 18 have benefited from the CatStrand Youth Players, with some going on to pursue drama at the college level and even achieving professional acting careers. The group, consisting of approximately 18 members, stages an annual pantomime that has become a local favourite and has also achieved considerable success in Scottish Community Drama Association Festivals over the years, regularly representing Stewartry District at West of Scotland Finals and also going on to finish in second place at the Scottish Final last year.

Away from his commitment to his work and community volunteering, Brian enjoys spending quality time with his family, including his beloved dog Roxy and enjoys socialising with friends, sometimes with a pint of Best! He has been a dedicated supporter of Queen of the South FC for



over 50 years, rarely missing a home game in that time.

Accompanied by his wife Eileen and some of the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust team members, Brian accepted the Volunteer of the Year award at the Dumfries & Galloway Life Awards Ceremony in November. His humility was evident as he acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the entire community, emphasising that all of his achievements are part of a team effort.

CatStrand Young Creatives, another GCAT project, were also finalists at the Awards in the Culture Champion category, recognising the work of Cat Campbell the Project Lead and all the Young Creatives team. They didn't win on this occasion but surely their time will come soon!

The Dumfries and Galloway Life Awards celebrate outstanding contributions to the community, and Brian Edgar's recognition as Volunteer of the Year is a testament to his exceptional dedication and positive impact on the Glenkens communities. Congratulations to Brian and of course Eileen (as these things can never be done alone) on this well-deserved honour.

Helen and Hayley

Pictured below, left to right, are: Brian commentating at the Scottish Alternative Games; Brian, Eileen and their grandchildren; Brian showing how it's done at a Youth players rehearsal



Vika's Ukrainian extravaganza

In October Vika Jouja, who moved to the Glenkens from Ukraine as a refugee in 2022, hosted her first Ukrainian Buffet at Dalry Town Hall.

Vika and her family have really thrown themselves into life in the Glenkens, with Vika baking and selling Ukrainian bread in the local shops pretty much from day one!

"Our buffet went amazingly," said Vika. "I am very happy and thank the community for all

their help and support. It was so successful I am planning the next one before Christmas."

The spread of food was incredible, with all kinds of savoury and sweet options laid out for the hungry horde who had booked a seat at the event.

Vika said: "I was born and raised in the west of Ukraine. I cook exclusively traditional Ukrainian food and bread. My beloved husband is from Syria, and we often prepare international Ukrainian-Syrian food. I want more people to know about our cuisine and if people like it, I plan to open a cafe with traditional Ukrainian food and sweets. Cook-confectioner is my main profession, and I really like to cook. In Ukraine I organised weddings, birthdays, buffets and I bake about 20 different types of bread, buns, pies, cakes and many different sweets. My

Vika's next Ukrainian Buffet will be held on Saturday 16 December at 6pm in Dalry Town Hall, with a cost of £15 per head



grandmother taught me to bake bread when I was a child, and these are ancient traditional recipes that were passed down from generation to generation that I use. I am very proud that I can work in this field and I enjoy when I bake bread, I make it with love from all my heart."

Talking about life in Scotland, and the Glenkens, Vika said: "My family and I enjoy living in Scotland. We love this part of Scotland and the people here for their kindness, openness, sincerity and support."

If you would like to buy some of Vika's bread, it is sold in shops in Dalry, Castle Douglas and Colvend, as well as at farmers markets. Vika also bakes cakes to order and is happy to cater for events. To get in touch you can message her on Facebook or email vikafiras@gmail.com

Pictured are: below left - Vika's incredible buffet spread; left - one of Vika's amazing cakes; above - Vika speaking to guests at the event alongside her family



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Affordable housing for people living or working in the Glenkens whose circumstances would benefit from the provision of reduced rent.

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For more information or to download an application form, please go to www.pamelayoungtrust.co.uk, or telephone Peter Matthews of A B & A Matthews on 01671 404100.

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Glenkens Youth Correspondent

Joshua Wells is our *Gazette* youth correspondent and will be writing each issue about things which interest him.

In this edition he looks at his family's move from England to the Glenkens and what that experience has been like.



Moving to Scotland

In March 2022, I moved up to Scotland, from a county in England called Kent.

The reason for the move was due to us feeling as if we were losing all the fields and farms, which were turning into buildings. We moved after just starting secondary school, which I missed the start of due to COVID-19.

This made me nervous, as I'd be starting over again, with new friends, a new school, and a whole new life.

Initially, we stayed in Powfoot, we went up and down the beach with the dog, we had a great view of the lake district, and I got my first look at Criffel.

As soon as I passed the English-Scottish border, I felt a whole new community, one that doesn't just look out for themselves but also their village/town. When speaking to new people, it seemed like we had known them for years.

We took over Balmaclellan village store, and we quickly met most people in the village. I started at my new school, where I also met a lot of new friends.

One great thing about living here is I can get the bus, which stops right outside my house and I can get off right outside my school, unlike the journey to my old school, a 30-minute walk to the train station, a 10-minute train journey and

As soon as I passed the English-Scottish border, I felt a whole new community, one that doesn't just look out for themselves but also their village/town.

another long walk to the school. I can also get the bus to New Galloway, where a lot of activities are held.

In Dumfries and Galloway, there are also a lot of activities for me and many other people, for example, I have found that the CatStrand have a lot of activities that I can participate in, such as their CatStrand panto rehearsals, behind-the-scenes and music and art lessons.

The New Galloway Town Hall also has a multitude of activities for me, and I can also do a lot of volunteering which adds to my Saltire award. My school has a lot of activities for me and other students to enjoy such as trip days, where I got to climb Criffel, and longer school trips where you may be able to stay abroad, such as an Italy ski trip.

I found you don't just have to use local businesses for activities, you can also go out into the amazing landscape.

Not only Dumfries and Galloway, but the whole of Scotland has amazing

landscapes and countryside. I have gone out for a drive with my family, to look around and found I have discovered places I have never been before, this may be because I am still fairly new to Scotland.

However it could also be because Dumfries

and Galloway's brilliant maze-like countryside, where there are no two places that are the same.

In conclusion, I'm very pleased I have moved up to Scotland not only because of the amazing community, astonishing activities and even the extraordinary landscape but having brilliant friends and family I can feel safe around.

MATTHEW PAJO

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Rob Wade

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Eco Feature

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Benchmark community benefit agreement for Upper Urr Environmental Trust

"We encourage land owners, investors and communities across Scotland to think about using shared ownership and decision-making, leases or other negotiated agreements to open up opportunities."

Continued from front page...

The management plan for the site is currently being drafted, with any input or suggestions welcomed.

Joe Seed, Chairman of Upper Urr Environment Trust, said: "Balancing

commercial forestry and environmental issues is a difficult task in these times of unprecedented biodiversity loss. We welcome this opportunity to work with FSF to safeguard and restore an ecologically important area within the

Galloway Landscape. We would encourage others to engage with developments in their area as it only takes a few individuals to make a difference."

In May 2023, the proposed site was visited by a delegation of Scottish Land Commissioners to listen to the proposals and offer input. Scottish Land Commission Chief Executive Hamish Trench commented: "It is encouraging to hear this collaboration is progressing. We see big potential to develop this kind of approach further so that investment in land use change also increases the

ability of local communities to deliver their priorities. We encourage land owners, investors and communities across Scotland to think about using shared ownership and decision-making, leases or other negotiated agreements to open up opportunities."

For more information on the project, contact Upper Urr Environmental Trust at uuet.scotland@protonmail.com or follow UUET on facebook or twitter. Upper Urr Environmental Trust is registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), number SC051592.



Top left: Left to right are Ted Downs (EJD Forestry), Joe Seed (UUET Chairman), Pen Symonds (UUET), McNabb Laurie (UUET) and Rob Guest (FSF)

Bottom left & below: Crichton Carbon Centre's bog event on the site in August 2023



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Outdoor table and chairs. Contact: 07507 704 821

Old lawn mowers/trimmers/other small machinery. Non-runners/broken welcome. Contact: 07845 562 217

Launch of the Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands initiative

The Gazette has carried many articles over the years about our changing land use, including the arrival of things like carbon accounting, 'natural capital', and the implications for the Glenkens.

As we start to get our heads round what these ideas mean, the changes in nature and the climate continue to loom larger in our lives, with impacts expected and already being felt. We have no time to spare. With society scrambling to invent new mechanisms to respond to these challenges, Dumfries & Galloway can be on the front line of our response.

The Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands initiative has been established to work on tangible projects that RESPOND to these twin challenges, delivering maximum benefit for our region in the process. Supported by partners including The Woodland Trust, Borders Forest Trust and Dumfries & Galloway Council's Environment Team, the initiative is perfectly placed to draw best practice experience from regional and

national partners into our region. We are used to looking with admiration at projects like Carrifran or the Eddleston Water project. Those projects are now being harnessed to drive economic activity for their surrounding areas. A truly 'Nature-led economy' includes agriculture, silviculture, and related industries.

McNabb Laurie, Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands Officer, started in post in October 2023 and is already involved in a number of local proposals across the region – from innovative land owner/community relationships that add public amenity and biodiversity value, through to targeting national support streams into Dumfries & Galloway.

This can feel like an era of mass-commodification of our natural resources. The Scottish Government are seeking a 'just transition'. At times it can feel the biodiversity and climate changes are beyond our influence, but Dumfries & Galloway has a really important role to play on the national stage, and we can be part of the solution.

Dumfries & Galloway

Woodlands is set up on a proactive basis to seek to support habitat improvements and to respond to emerging opportunities amidst the challenges. The South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant Scheme – administered by Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands – is a perfect example of how local people can deliver biodiversity and landscape benefits that will benefit future generations.

In coming months, we will be welcoming members, seeking trustees and unveiling some of the projects under development. In the meantime, for more information, follow Dumfries & Galloway Woodlands on social media or sign up for the newsletter by emailing mcnabb.laurie@dgwoodlands.org

McNabb Laurie



D&G
WOODLANDS



SOUTH OF SCOTLAND TREE PLANTING GRANT SCHEME

The South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant Scheme aims to assist projects that are planting up to 0.25 hectares of native trees, with funds able to support the actual purchase of the trees and the tree protection.

Full information about the Scheme is available on the Glenkens Hub website at www.glenkens.scot. The Scheme was launched in Dumfries & Galloway in 2021, with more than 22,000 trees planted so far. This year's scheme is now open for applications. Join a whole range of people that will be planting trees this winter across the Glenkens. For an application form contact McNabb on 07538 798837 or on mcnabb.laurie@dgwoodlands.org



Out and About in the Biosphere

The GSA Biosphere team has been busy these last couple months working on the Blackface Sheep Wool project, for which a landmark Crowdfunder campaign has finally launched!

Almost two years since the project started, the Biosphere is now hoping to raise the final funds necessary to produce and bring to market a range of 100% blackface wool outerwear. This project is supported by the Blackface Sheep Breeders' Association and aims to raise the profile of the breed by showcasing the versatility of the wool and its potential within the circular economy.

Anyone who attended one of the Biosphere's Blead 'n' Blether events during October's Wool Month may have already seen, felt, and/or tried on the garment samples. The designs had a great reception, with people praising the quality and style.

This is the Biosphere's first foray into trading and through an innovative social enterprise

model all profits from clothing sales will go back into Biosphere projects, continuing to promote the UNESCO region, its communities, and sustainable living.

From the initial idea, to showing the first garments at the Royal Highland Show, it's been quite a journey for the Biosphere team, and with the public's help the next stage in the project can get underway. The crowdfunding campaign is live now on www.crowdfunder.co.uk - any and all donations very gratefully received. You can also find more information on the Biosphere's website and social media channels, or contact info@gsabiosphere.org.uk

With a great range of Biosphere Certification Mark businesses within easy reach of the Glenkens, this is a perfect time chance to shop local and support sustainable businesses in the run up to Christmas. Dark Art Distillery has recently launched its new Understory gin, or pick up some gifts from Gallovidia Books. If you're looking for fresh, seasonal produce for the festive period, try Barnbarroch Organic, Deer Manor Mushrooms, Glenquicken Farm and Low Auldgrith Steading; all have been awarded the Biosphere



Certification Mark for sustainability and are available through the Glenkens Food Hub.

Looking ahead to Day One of 2024...one of the most rewarding New Year's resolutions that can be made is to spend more time outdoors. Connecting with nature is good for physical and mental health, and there's plenty to see in the GSA Biosphere during winter.

In the Glenkens we're lucky enough to have the Ken-Dee Marshes Nature Reserve on our doorstep, a haven for birders as one of the few mainland sites in Scotland where Greenland white-fronted geese overwinter.

Raiders' Road is open to walkers and cyclists only (no cars) during winter; the otter pools are a fantastic place for a cold-weather picnic - bring a flask of hot chocolate and wrap up warm! And finally, the longer nights afford more opportunity to experience the region's dark skies. Home to the UK's first International Dark Sky Park, the UNESCO Biosphere region has some of the best overhead



views, with thousands of stars visible to the naked eye on a clear night. Biosphere Guides and Dark Sky Rangers can help you navigate the night sky and experience the science, myths and legends of the stars, while Kirkcudbright is home to the Dark Space Planetarium - a brilliant day out in inclement weather.

Stay connected with the Blackface Wool Project, 'Biosphere businesses', projects and events at www.gsabiosphere.org.uk or by following #gsabiosphere on social media.

Left - Winter walks in the Biosphere. Top - Scottish Blackface lambs. Above - Merrick Blackface wool jumper on stage at the Royal Highland Show





As the 2023 draws to a close, it's time to reflect on a remarkable year for the Loch Ken Trust, which has made significant progress towards its overall mission to become the first future-ready community.

The Loch Ken Ranger Service, led by Head Ranger Leanne Pumpr, has grown from strength to strength and is now firmly embedded within the communities around Loch Ken, paving the way as one of the first community-led Ranger Services in Scotland.

The Ranger Service has attended over 100 incidents this year, including wildlife crime, fly tipping and dirty camping, and has ensured the Loch and surrounding areas are well looked after. Over 300 patrols have been carried out this year both on land and water.

Thanks to generous funding from Blackcraig Windfarm Fund, through Glenkens and District Trust, the Ranger Service now has three years' security and can now make plans for the future.

Leanne Pumpr said, "It has been an exciting, busy season packed with both land and boat patrols, and a range of educational events. It's been fabulous to meet so many returning and new visitors, and being able to share knowledge with visitors and locals."

The Trust is grateful to Drax Group plc, owners of the Galloway Hydro Scheme, for supporting office staff, enabling them to continue to work towards their ambitious aims. The work of the trust follows the Loch Ken Plan, a guide to achieving all 17 of the Global Goals by 2030.

Reflections on an eventful year



2023 has been filled with a host of projects including a successful Summer Education Programme and the start of a Baseline Ecosystem Assessment.

Thanks to funding from Drax Group UK, the trust was able to bring six of our local schools to the banks of Loch Ken and educate the next generation on caring for our wonderful environment.

This year a funded project enabled Loch Ken Trust to buy a stock of children's waterproofs and footwear so that all young people are properly equipped for their visits to Loch Ken, and there are no barriers to children experiencing all Loch Ken has to offer.

Over the course of the last year 25 sessions have been delivered, the Trust and Ranger Service engaging with almost 500 people of all ages.

Great progress has been made on the Baseline Ecosystem Assessment, which began with the first ever Loch Ken Water Quality Study, carried out by Galloway Fisheries Trust. The study, the first of its kind on Loch Ken, also included a Community Water Sampling Event and can now be accessed online.

It is fantastic to have this baseline data to compare any future studies to.

Other environmental events included a Community Bat Walk and Talk. The Trust has great plans for next year for a whole host of studies to help understand the health of our ecosystem and what we can best do to protect it.

Water Safety is a top priority for Loch Ken Trust. Manager Barney Fryer

said, "To support activities to promote water safety, we have joined Loch Ken Trust up as a member of Water Safety Scotland. This has led to us joining a national working group on water safety in open water environments. We have also received funding from the Holyrood Trust to deliver water safety training sessions to 13-25 year olds in our region."

To date, over fifty young people have achieved their water safety awareness completion certificates, and the programme will be continuing into Spring 2024.

A Family Water Safety Day was held in the summer, in partnership with local and national emergency services to highlight water safety on and around Loch Ken.

Over the winter the Trust has secured funding from the National Centre for Resilience to deliver a pilot research project on how the Loch Ken Ranger Service can assist with building resilience capacity in our remote rural communities. This project will be delivered in partnership with Glenkens Community and Arts Trust, and will assist community councils and community spaces with preparation for extreme weather events.

Loch Ken Trust would like to thank the community for their support and looks forward to continuing to make more progress in the coming years to realise their purpose of supporting sustainable communities around Loch Ken.

Top: Loch Ken Rangers flying the Sustainable Development Goals flag with young people taking part in the Youth Water Safety Programme at The Galloway Activity Centre

Left: Head Ranger Leanne Pumpr delivering a water safety talk to local schoolchildren during the Summer Education Programme



Stewartry Birdwatchers winter programme

At the October meeting of the Stewartry Birdwatchers, Ronnie Graham spoke about his study of Dumfriesshire Goshawks.

He has been monitoring a specific area for the past 35 years and had a couple of interesting snippets for attendees; the eye colour of the nestlings is a steely grey-blue which turns yellow as they reach adulthood and as the birds age the eye colour of the male becomes orange-red and in the female orange-yellow. The pellets of the Goshawk show that

their prey can include Grey Squirrels, Jays, Barn Owls and even Sparrowhawks.

The next talk was 'Where East meets Africa – birding in Oman' with speaker Jeremy Brock, and was based on his three-week visit there in April 2013. Oman is the easternmost country on the Arabian Peninsula and is an interesting but little visited birdwatching destination. It is ideally suited for getting a mix of African, oriental and palearctic birds. Amongst the spectacular birds were little green bee-eaters, African paradise flycatchers and Indian rollers. With so few birdwatchers visiting Oman it is not really surprising that as recently as 2013 a

new species to science was discovered - the Omani owl, deep in the Al Hajjar Mountains.

On Thursday 11 January the Dumfries naturalist and author, Barbara Mearns, will give a talk entitled 'Birds, Butterflies and Moths – the hunters and the hunted'. Barbara will discuss the local bird species that eat butterflies and moths. Then on Thursday 15 February Stan Da Prato will help those present to identify warblers by sight and sound. The call of the chiffchaff

is unmistakable but what about the difference between the songs of the garden warbler and the blackcap?"

Joan Howie,
joanospreys1@btinternet.com

For details of meeting dates/times see What's On section on p34.

Pictured is a little egret showing off its yellow feet; one of around 500 species of birds to be seen in Oman, it is now colonising the UK





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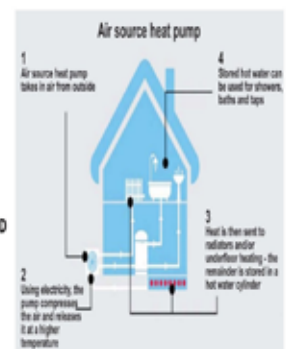
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CatStrand Young Creatives highlights

Here at CatStrand Young Creatives we have had another incredible year after kicking things off with a bang in March at the Scottish Drama Festival.

The talented Youth Players swept up multiple trophies with their performances, with the behind-the-scenes crew also taking home an award for 'Best Stage Presentation'.

We then launched our Young Critics Programme, providing young people with invaluable training and mentorship opportunities. These aspiring critics have their reviews published on our Youth Creatives blog, captivating readers with their fresh perspectives on the arts programme.

Throughout the year, our regular art, dance and drama clubs provided endless excitement during term time. We then put on a thrilling summer programme that drew in even more children to the CatStrand. From art and forest schools to shadow puppetry and beyond, the children had a blast exploring

their creative passions.

Our Young Creatives have also been working with Dalry High School to deliver weekly drama clubs. These talented students have been crafting their own devised pieces, which they will be performing at the CatStrand in early December.

And that's not all! In 2023, we were absolutely thrilled to launch the Young Music Makers project, generously funded by YMI Creative Scotland. This incredible initiative has provided young musicians with a wide range of music-making opportunities, from ukulele and guitar lessons to keyboard piano and violin classes. We've also been supporting eight budding musicians in their journey to develop their musical careers, giving them the chance to collaborate with industry professionals and create their very first tracks.

To celebrate the incredible progress made in just six months, in November we held a spectacular showcase where all the children and young people involved in the project took to the stage, and thirty talented performers wowed the audience at the CatStrand.

But the excitement doesn't stop

there! We've also been providing mentoring for a local young playwright, Thomas Petch, who has recently been working alongside Banbury Banter to develop his extraordinary script into a stageable play. We can't wait to see what incredible theatre he brings to life in the future.

Meanwhile, our Art Ambassadors have been working tirelessly to ensure that our projects remain youth-led, planning and dreaming up new ideas. Their hard work paid off when they secured funding for an upcoming project for young people, set to be delivered early next year. And right now they are pouring their hearts into creating a magical Christmas Creatives event for younger children, complete with Santa's grotto, Christmas crafts and enchanting storytelling.

The Christmas excitement continues to build as our Youth Players and 'behind-the-scenes' crew are currently hard at work on this year's Christmas pantomime – *Cinderella*.



Pictured are the Art Ambassadors honing their photographic skills outside the CatStrand

All in all, it has been a sensational year for the CatStrand Young Creatives. From the triumphs on stage to the inspiring growth of our talented youth, we couldn't be prouder of everything that has been accomplished, and are incredibly grateful to our core funder, the Holywood Trust, for their ongoing support. Get ready for even more excitement, creativity and unforgettable moments in 2024!

*Catherine Campbell,
CatStrand Young Creatives
Programme Lead*

What sound is left when all trees are felled?

In October, a three-day exhibition by Corriedoo's Helmut Lemke entitled 'deliberately inconclusive investigations into absence' gave a sound artist's interpretation of forest management practices common across the region.

Ranging through the two exhibition spaces in 'The Byre,' visitors were treated to installations and drawings that highlighted the sounds collected around forestry management techniques - and the lack of sound they can leave in their wake, as illustrated through relentlessly running empty tape spools.

Helmut said: "When we bought our new home in a managed forest, I thought I was aware of what forest management means, how it is done, and what impact

it has. How wrong was I. I have now experienced up close how the 'value' of nature is reduced to monetary measures and how our environment is forced to be productive.

"Responding to the clear felling and connected works in the forest where I live, I recorded what I saw, heard, smelled, and felt through drawing, sound recording, writing and performance; a visceral reaction underpinned through ongoing research into the UK's forest management methods and the alternatives practiced in other European countries."

Three works were exhibited at 'The Byre @ Corriedoo': deliberately inconclusive investigations into absence: an installation created from clear fell debris and empty audio tapes running through the dead branches; a series of sound drawings 'a wind wind in...' and 'sounding poems'; and a live

performance on the closing night.

'The Byre @ Corriedoo' is the studio and workshop of artists Helmut Lemke and Kerry Morrison. In 2024, they hope to host more events exploring local landscape issues and concerns through contemporary art approaches and performative acts.



Celebrating music in the Glenkens

Music making in the Glenkens was celebrated in a weekend of activities in October starting with 'A' the Way to Galloway', a concert by Jo Miller and friends performing music from their new album.

An exhibition of musical images, programmes and other memorabilia was launched in the CatStrand, and some 40 youngsters took part in 'A Wee Hooley', an afternoon of song, story and dance.

The weekend concluded with a concert 'Gaither roon folks an this story I'll tell' in Dalry Town Hall celebrating current music-

making in the Glenkens and chaired in his inimitable style by Brian Edgar.

The programme, compiled by Anne Chaurand, featured many local musicians including the CatStrand Singers (led by Kate Howard), Angela Miller (singer), the Bielinski family - Andrew (singer), Susan (singer/songwriter) and Ellen (fiddle player), The Wyrdy Women (Singing Duo), Blue (Singer/Songwriter), Rose Ardron (Singer), Claire Mann (Fiddle and Whistle),

The Dalry Protest Singing group, Faith Hillier (flute), Anne Chaurand (guitar/composer), Peter Standing (singer), Ella Campbell (singer/songwriter), and Amy Geddes (fiddle)

with Roberto Rabinovitch (Bandoneon). Robyn Stapleton, Jo Miller and friends presented a selection of their work and Wendy Stewart (clarsach/singer/composer) reprised her composition created for the Ken Bridge bicentenary.

For the enthusiastic audience, the message was clear: music-making is thriving in the Glenkens.



The Glenkens Story history event scheduled for the October weekend had to be postponed and that will now take place at CatStrand on Sunday 17 March.

The afternoon event will feature Jo Miller on her research into local music-making, Christopher Wright on what can be found of Galloway's music in the School of Scottish Studies archive and Anna Campbell will share stories of musical families from the archives of the Carsphairn Heritage Initiative.

Historian and singer Lizanne Henderson will chair a discussion on preserving our musical heritage. Presentations will be accompanied by live and recorded music, video and pictures.

Tickets £14, UC £10, U26 £4 from www.gcat.scot/arts 01644 420374

Tough times ahead at CatStrand

The CatStrand and all the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) projects have been around for so long, it's easy to forget that our continuing existence is sadly not a certainty.

Our survival relies on a huge amount of hard work, not only in delivering projects but also in finding funding to support all our work. Because our communities are so spread out, projects that might be commercially viable in a town never will be in our remote rural location. GCAT, like many of the other Glenkens charities, has historically had a good track record of making this case to funders for essential overheads (like heating, lighting and staffing our venues) - but this is becoming ever harder.

We know that many *Gazette* readers really value what we offer, so in the light of this, we are reinvigorating our Friends of CatStrand scheme. The Friends scheme demonstrates to potential funders how much our communities value what we do, as well as providing much-needed funds to keep us going.

What does next year look like?

We expect to spend £600,000 across all our GCAT projects. Nearly two-thirds of this will be spent directly in the Glenkens and nearly 90% in Dumfries & Galloway, providing a valuable boost to local businesses. We have 16 employees, and commission many more artists, freelancers and activity deliverers. Of course, we generate what we can from venue hire, ticket sales and café and shop income,

but all the rest must come from grant funders or individual supporters. Last year, we made a significant loss which was funded from our reserves. Our 2023/24 budget also shows a significant projected shortfall, due in part to massively increased energy costs and also to the costs of essential staff. GCAT and the CatStrand simply can't stay open without these overheads being covered.

In the last few months, we have been unsuccessful in two major funding applications for overheads. In addition, Creative Scotland awarded us 50% of the requested level of funds for our amazing Arts programme, despite their assessors judging us to be "highly recommended for full funding". There just isn't enough money to go around. Worse still, regional funders continue to concentrate on new project delivery, which is frustrating for established organisations with a proven track record of success in their communities. While we were over the moon to get the funding from the 'Plugged in Communities' national fund for our new electric bus, this did bring into sharp focus the fact that finding funding for purchases is easier than funding to keep the lights on.

What can we do about it?

We're not at crisis level yet, but tough times are ahead at the CatStrand. Part of the reason we are shutting on Sundays and Mondays through the winter is to save on energy costs - our electricity bill nearly trebled last month as we came out of a fixed term contract. You'll also see that the printed events programme is much smaller, as we look to cut costs without reducing activities.

We know we're not alone in this - every single

employer and community building in the Glenkens will be facing the same challenges. So if you can shop local, attend events or donate to your preferred charity, please do - it all makes such a difference.

Will you support the CatStrand?

To help secure GCAT's future, we've refreshed our Friends scheme as an easy way for people to show their support for all we do. If you like visiting the CatStrand or enjoy our many other projects - whether it's this free *Gazette* that keeps you up-to-date, or a live music gig that left you buzzing, or the patient transport service taking a relative to hospital, or a free activity your kids or grandchildren loved, or a craft workshop where you made new friends - please consider becoming a Friend of the CatStrand. A regular gift of £10 a month (or more) really would help us continue to deliver for our communities. We know not everyone can support us in this way right now and we very much appreciate all the different ways that people do support us. But if you feel it's right for you, please do take a minute now to scan the QR code or visit www.gcat.scot/about-gcat/support-us to sign up.

We are very proud of all that GCAT and the CatStrand have achieved over the last 22 years for the Glenkens, and with your support we will safely navigate these tough times into the next 22 successful years. Thank you.

*Helen Keron, GCAT
Executive Manager*



Local artists study the elusive nightjar

Earlier in the year, the *Gazette* brought you news of the Artful Migration art residency by Ted Leeming and Morag Paterson.

We checked in to hear how the conference and exhibition went and their reflections on the project. Morag said: "It has been an incredible few months. It is one of the most challenging residencies we have undertaken artistically, but it is also one of the most rewarding."

Ted explained: "Research was an essential element of the project, and I was immediately drawn by the fact that the presence, or not, of nightjars (and many other species, for that matter) is essentially down to the availability of suitable habitat for nesting, together with the availability of food at any given location, along with favourable climatic conditions during migration.

"We discovered that in just 270 years, less than 3% of the original deep peat area of the Lochar Mosses remains intact, with the remainder having been drained for agriculture, forestry and the development of infrastructure, housing and industrial parks as the population and needs of Dumfries and the surrounding area have grown. In another example, 97% of hay meadows have disappeared in the UK since 1930.

"Habitat loss is a significant contributing factor to insect populations (nightjar food) having reduced by 60-75%

across Europe since 1950, which in turn is one of the reasons, together with generational land use change, that has led to the number of birds migrating between Europe and Africa halving from 4.2 to 2.1 billion birds in just a few decades. The numbers were genuinely numbing and profoundly concerning for me and formed a major part of my thinking as we started to produce work for the exhibition.

"But we also found evidence that some landowners are implementing incredible nature-based solutions to help address such declines. On the Lochar Mosses, for example, which formed the focus of our residency, Forest and Land Scotland is reverting several hundred hectares of conifer plantation to lowland blanket bog over 25 years. Exemplary projects like this help engage new, positive thinking that will create generational change, and we are seeing an increasing number of inspirational projects of this type across the region."

From Morag's point of view, the long, quiet evenings spent waiting for the birds were one of the highlights of the project: "Initially, I was quite worried about what impact the 'night shifts' would have on my ability to function during the day, but I quickly realised that settling into a seated position to watch the sunset, contemplating clear-fell and bog, was both mesmerising and relaxing. I watched backlit bog cotton dancing in the breeze and listened to daytime birds transitioning to night-time



birds - nothing to do but wait. Better still, once night fell it was important not to use lights, which ruled out phone use, and we couldn't talk either - an enforced silent vigil.

"As soon as the eerie nightjar call (churring) commenced, you could expect a brief fly-by, but would have no idea where the bird would appear or be flying to. Of course, this made filming and photography very tricky, but this turned into a positive aspect that pushed us toward eclectic lines of enquiry."

Ted continues: "The conference itself was fascinating and drew a varied audience including scientists, academics, community and artists into a discussion of what we can take forward to increase people's engagement with nature and how artists - and imaginative processes - can take an active role in co-designing and delivering projects across a broad spectrum.

"Following a well-attended opening event, over 800 people

visited the exhibition in just a few weeks - some folks went three times! We've had some touching feedback, which is always lovely.

"We must say a big thank you to everyone who made it possible, without whom we could not have delivered to the extent we were able.

"It was a privilege to spend many nights exploring their little-known world, including sharing it with the incredible volunteers who spend summer evenings ringing and geotagging the birds so that we might all better understand population and species changes over time."

If you are interested in engaging with nature-based projects such as this, the RSPB, NTS and the British Trust for Ornithology are always looking for new volunteers - get in touch with them via their website, or to find out more about the Artful Migration project you can contact Morag and Ted at info@leemingpaterson.com

A musical history of the Glenkens



Pictured, Dave Paterson spots a much younger Dave among Snow White's Seven Dwarfs in a 1960s' New Galloway panto at the 'Music Making in the Glenkens' exhibition at CatStrand.

Exhibits range from a watercolour

of an early 19th century dance at Corsock to the fiddle players and pipers of the Galloway hill farms and the dance bands of the 1950s. The exhibition, curated by Jo Miller and with photographic production by Ian Biggar, was created as part of the celebrations of Glenkens Music Making in October organised by the Glenkens Story.

The exhibition, sponsored by the Glenkens Community Shop, will be touring a number of local venues in 2024.

Photograph taken by Andrew Mellor

From the Bookroom

In 'From the Bookroom' Glenkens-based author of the novel *The Road From Damascus* and co-author of *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*, Robin Yassin-Kassab, takes readers through some of his favourite books. In this edition Robin speaks about author Khaled Khalifa, friendship and the festive season.

For me, the festive season has nothing much to do with Christianity.

I don't celebrate Christmas religiously – though I send my very best wishes to those who do – but I do celebrate the mid winter feast. In northern Europe, and particularly in Scotland, which can be very dark and gloomy as well as cold, it's very important, for body, mind and soul, to gather with friends and relatives in a bright and cosy space, to stoke the fire, and to eat and drink the finest fare.

It's a time to celebrate what we've got – relationships more than possessions. It's a time to remember our loved ones, present and absent. This year I'm remembering in particular a good friend, and a great writer – Khaled Khalifa. Khaled wasn't a Christian (or a believing Muslim either), but there was something of Father Christmas about him. He was plump and warm with fluffy white hair, full of compassion and good cheer.

He was a screenwriter, a poet, and Syria's greatest contemporary novelist. Four of his novels are available in English, and I recommend them very highly.

"In Praise of Hatred", like all of his work, is set in Aleppo and its surrounding villages. The novel illustrates the mutual intolerance of the Baathist regime and violent Islamists as they warred in the 1980s.

"No Knives in the Kitchens of This City" extends the time scale, from the multicultural 1920s to the 2003 Iraq war, and it shows the steady disintegration of

society under totalitarian dictatorship.

The key event of "Nobody Prayed Over Their Graves" is the overnight destruction of a village by flood.

Khaled wrote this book during Syria's counter-revolutionary war, and the flood serves as a metaphor for the sudden loss of life and home suffered by contemporary Syrians.

His final novel, "Death is Hard Work" – with a nod to Faulkner's "As I Lay Dying" – describes a family taking their father home for burial. The journey should take a few hours, but in war conditions, given endless checkpoints and harassments, it stretches on interminably, as the corpse begins to rot.

I strongly recommend these books, though they're not particularly easy reading. They contain complicated plots and even more complex inter-relations between enormous casts of characters. The complexity reflects the layered density of Syrian social life as Khaled saw it. He emphasised the necessity of tolerance within a democratic framework precisely because of this vision.

Khaled was only 59 when he died. Probably he ate too much, drank too much, and smoked too much. Probably you could



also say that he was too committed to his country, too stubborn or full of love to abandon it. Because he stayed in Damascus all through the revolution and the war, though he was well enough known internationally to gain a visa if he'd wanted to, though most of his friends, if they weren't killed or imprisoned, managed to flee to safety.

I remember Khaled's laughter, his love of festivity and friendship, and I wish him – and all of you – a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



Robyn Stapleton: Songs Of Winter

SAT 2 DEC 7:30PM

Scottish singer who performs traditional songs in English, Scots & Gaelic.



CatStrand Players Panto: Cinderella

FRI 8 DEC 7:30PM

SAT 9 DEC 7:30PM

SUN 10 DEC 3:00PM

Join us for lots of fun and laughter with all the famous characters.



SongWave: Under a Star Filled Night

FRI 15 DEC 7:00PM

Celebrate the turning of the year, from many cultures and many lands.



Midwinter Ceilidh with Whirligig

THU 21 DEC 7:30PM

A heady evening of music and dance for Winter Solstice.



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Gallovidian Gathering local music extravaganza returns this December

Following on from the success of its sold-out event in May, the Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival is hosting another Gallovidian Gathering at Castle Douglas Town Hall.

Come along on Saturday 23 December to celebrate with a new spin on the auld cultural traditions of the region.

Through an immersive night of time-travel, eating, drinking, dancing and seasonal merriment, you'll gain an insight into some of the most innovative and exciting sounds coming out of Scotland.

Headlining the evening celebrating local artists will be Samson Sounds, showcasing how they bring their Gallovidian roots to the world stage with their positive dance floor vibrations. Using a combination of voice, guitar, percussion and brass with electronic musicality they bring a wide range of

grooves and energy into any situation. The band has grown through the rich UK Soundsystem culture, playing and performing in venues and festivals nationally and internationally.

They'll perform alongside a massive line-up of other genre bending musicians, DJs and traditional performers curated by the team to showcase and cultivate connections to the vibrant and authentic culture of Castle Douglas and the Stewartry.

Featuring the loudest and brightest exports of Gallovidia, the night will include drum and bass outfit Bass Injection featuring Wends, The Xenalaliens, Iron Aye Hifi, who will bring audiences all the tribal beats needed to bring together modern day Gallovidians to celebrate the winter solstice and the turning of the wheel of the year, as our ancestors have done before us.

With a full bar provided by Sulwath Brewery and more acts to be announced, join them for a night to relight local town halls and bring music back to the heart of the region.

Liam Russell, event producer at the Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival, stated: "The Gallovidian Gathering is a call to arms to the people of Galloway. We have such a rich and diverse heritage that has cultural implications



that run so deep that we may not even notice them in the everyday. We believe that the Gallovidian Gathering is a platform to celebrate what it means to be Gallovidian, and reconnect with our past to shape our future."

The event is produced by Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival's own Liam Russell and DJ McDowall of the Imaginarium and co-curated by Tom Spirals. Their aim is to celebrate the cultural traditions of the Stewartry and bring life back to the town halls that communities have missed in recent years. This is a night curated by communities for communities and showcases the incredible depth of artistic expertise of all those involved. Tickets can be purchased at www.dgartsfestival.org.uk and may also be available on the door; however, tickets sold out quickly at the summer event so audiences are advised to purchase in advance to avoid disappointment.

The Gallovidian Gathering is funded by the Holywood Trust, the National Lottery Young Start and the William Grant Foundation.

The D&G Arts Festival Team

Photographs are from May's Gallovidian Gathering in Castle Douglas Town Hall

THE GALLOVIDIAN GATHERING

SAMSON SOUNDS
LIVE BAND

BASS INJECTION
FEAT WENDS

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SATURDAY
23RD DECEMBER
CASTLE DOUGLAS TOWN HALL

7PM GILLS 12AM
GILLES £15 / £7.50 U28

Are Festival

The Covenanters of the Glenkens

Well known former Dalry resident and retired Glenkens Church of Scotland minister David Bartholomew has written a new book, *The Covenanters of the Glenkens*.

David said: "One of my early retirement projects has come to fruition with this book which gathers up the stories shared in our annual conventicles over the past 20 years. It rather grew in the writing and expanded beyond these stories, ending up 186 pages in length! I hope it will be back from the printers by early December.

"Although retailing from Carn Publishing at £15, I am offering it for an initial price of £8 plus £2.80 postage and packing. I hope it will be ready for distribution by the time of the Guild Christmas Coffee Morning in New Galloway Town Hall on Wednesday 6

The parishes of the Glenkens in northern Kirkcudbrightshire were at the heart of support for the Covenanting movement in seventeenth century Scotland and suffered greatly in the latter half of that century when the king and the political leadership of the country sought to suppress that movement and impose the Episcopalian system of church government on the people. In this book the writer explores the historical context of those days and introduces us to some of the inspiring, though often tragic, stories from those times, offering us a window into the world of the people of that day.



David Bartholomew grew up in Edinburgh within the well-known map making family. After gaining a geology degree from St Andrews University, he went on to complete a PhD at Leicester University involving fieldwork in Chilean Patagonia. After working for five years as a government geologist in Zimbabwe, he felt the call to Christian ministry and returned to Scotland where he studied for a divinity degree at Aberdeen University. In 1994 he was ordained as Church of Scotland minister of the Glenkens and served there

as parish minister for nearly 28 years. He is married to Heidi and has three children. He retired in 2022 and now lives near Broughton in the Scottish Borders.



Carn Publishing Ltd
www.carnpublishing.com/glenkens
UK £15.00 RRP



THE COVENANTERS OF THE GLENKENS

David S. Bartholomew

THE COVENANTERS OF THE GLENKENS



David S. Bartholomew

December, and that I will be able to offer it there to save people postage costs."

The book can also be ordered direct from David by emailing him at

dsbart92@gmail.com, by calling 07762 083 703, or by post with a cheque made out to David Bartholomew for £10.80, sent to Craigend Cottage, Broughton, Biggar ML12 6HH.

WINDY STANDARD LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

Season's Greetings from all the team at Fred. Olsen Renewables.

We are looking forward to 2024 and hope that this will bring forward a range of activity at Windy Standard Wind Farm.

Scottish Ministers granted Windy Standard III consent in

March 2021. This comprises the northern Meaul Hill Cluster with 12 x 177.5m turbines and the southern Waterhead Hill Cluster with 8 x 125m turbines.

The project is progressing well towards construction, and we are working to discharge our planning conditions. To ensure that the site can be delivered efficiently and can achieve the greatest capacity, we have applied to the Scottish Government to vary the consent – proposing to

increase the tip height of the 12 turbines in the northern Meaul Hill Cluster to 180m to tip. This allows us to bring forward the site using readily available turbine technology.

This is currently open for consultation representations. All of the documents can be found at www.windystandardwindfarm.co.uk.

Please get in touch if you have any questions. communities@fredolsen.com / 07435 763 900.

Glass Recycling Points

- Balmaclellan Stores, Balmaclellan
- Memorial Hall, St Michael's Road, Crossmichael
- Kirkland Street, St John's Town of Dalry
- New Galloway, Carson's Knowe Car Park
- St David Street, Kirkpatrick Durham

USEFUL NUMBERS

- Pothole Hotline: 0845 276 0000
- Police, non-emergency: 101 or email stewartryCPT@scotland.police.uk
- Doctor: 01644 420 234
- NHS 24: 08454 24 24 24
- D&G Council: 030 33 33 3000

MINUTES/REPORTS OF COMMUNITY BENEFIT SPENDING

GLENKENS DISTRICT TRUST (GDT)
www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/gdt-corporate-information

CARSPHAIRN RENEWABLE ENERGY FUND LTD (CREFL)
www.carsphairn.org/CREFLArchive

Local Job Vacancies

Up-to-date job and volunteering opportunities can be found online at the Glenkens Hub on www.glenkens.scot

There are some remote working opportunities as Natural Power at the moment; check out their vacancies page! The 'UK Office/Hybrid' roles have a UK office base, so here in the Glenkens that office would be the Green House on Forrest Estate. Visit www.naturalpower.com/uk/careers



CAB outreach clinics are held fortnightly on a Monday at the Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry, and fortnightly on a Tuesday at CatStrand, New Galloway.

ADVERTISE IN THE GAZETTE

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Please get in touch further details including small business/charity rates and series discounts.

Email glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk or call/WhatsApp 07727 127 997

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For muscular skeletal issues, recovery from injury, improved well-being and massage for relaxation.

Tel 07795170927
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www.blairtempleton.com
19 Townhead Crescent, Dalry

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Fresh produce delivered to your door

Call Charlie for more information:
07966 103 912
www.fleet-fish.co.uk

THE STEWARTRY VETERINARY CENTRE

CASTLE DOUGLAS SURGERY HOURS
Mon-Fri 8.30am-6pm

DALBEATTIE SURGERY HOURS
Mon, Wed, Fri 3-3.30 pm
Tues & Thurs 6-6.30 pm

FOR APPOINTMENTS AT BOTH SURGERIES
OR IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

01556 502263

VETERINARY SURGERY
OAKWELL ROAD
CASTLE DOUGLAS

GLENKENS MEDICAL PRACTICE

General Medical & Dispensing Services

*The Surgery
High Street
New Galloway*

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL

01644 420234

USEFUL GLENKENS CONTACTS

DOCTORS' SURGERY

Glenkens Medical Practice
- 01644 420 234

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

- Balmaclellan: Martin Warnock - 07939 261 391
- Carsphairn: Liz Holmes - 07718 358 160
- Corsock: Julie Garton -

07769 647 702

• Kirkpatrick Durham: Heather - 07551 639 629

• Crossmichael: Richard Middleton - 01556 670 691

• Dalry: Graham West - 01644 430 503

• New Galloway: 07741 656 601

• Parton: Tom - 07835821976

FOOD DELIVERIES

• Galloway Foodbank - 07730 788 335

• Galloway Food Hub - glenkens.scot/local-directory-listing/glenkens-food-hub

• Ballards Butchers - 01556 502502 (they also deliver groceries)

• Grierson's Butchers:

01556 502 637

• Henderson's Butchers: 01556 502 654

• Mitchell's Greengrocers: 01556 502 077

• Fleet Fish: call 07966 103 912 to find out about Glenkens delivery days

• Roan's Dairy - 01556 620 374

• Harris & Co: www.harrisandco.uk

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS/GROUPS

Glenkens Community Shop: Helen Crowther on 0790 467 8599 or drop by the shop on Main Street, Dalry

Glenkens Scout Group: Contact Heather McIntosh on 01644 420 375

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING): Contact newgallowaytownhall@gmail.com

Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT): Contact Gary Blissett at garyblissett51@gmail.com or 01644 430 521

Dalry Town Hall: Contact Lesley Blissett at lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

Glenkens Community Centre: Contact Sarah McAdam on minimac01644@gmail.com

Lagwyne Hall: Contact lagwynehallsecretary@outlook.com for info, or to book email lagwynehallbooking@gmail.com

New Galloway Community Enterprises (NGCE): Contact ngce5000@gmail.com or pop

into New Galloway Community Shop

Balmaclellan Community Trust: Contact Julia Higgins at julia.higgins55@outlook.com

CatStrand: Contact info@catstrand.com or 01644 420 374 or pop in to the CatStrand

Schools: Visit the school office or call Dalry Primary on 01644 430 105 (for Nursery/ELC too), Dalry Secondary on 01644 430 259 or Kells on 01644 420 340

Carsphairn Heritage Initiative: Contact Ben Ade at carsphairnhi@gmail.com

Galloway Food Hub: Contact Lesley Atkins on lesley@propagate.org.uk or 07587 122 151

Bairn Banter: Contact Melissa on bairnbanter@outlook.com or 07979 492 791

If you would like to add your community organisation to this list please get in touch with the Gazette - contact details are on the back page.

GLENKENS CHURCH TIMES

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Sunday Services

Balmaclellan: 3 Dec, 11am (morning worship & communion)

Carsphairn: 10 Dec - morning worship, 11am & Carols by Candlelight, 6.30pm; 31 Dec, 11am

Kells: 17 Dec, 11am ; 23 Dec - Toddlers Christmas Event, 5pm; 25 Dec, 11am

Dalry: 22 Dec - 10am, School Christmas Service; 24 Dec - morning worship, 11.30am & Watchnight service, 11.30pm)

For further information contact Rev Pam Bellis on 07751 379 249 or pam@bellisconsultancy.co.uk

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St Margaret's Church, New Galloway, DG7 3RP

Sundays at 10.30am: Holy Communion with refreshments after the service

Tuesdays at 11am: Informal midweek service with refreshments and chat

Thursdays 7.30-8pm: Zoom Evening Prayers. Please contact Dawn for the link

Advent & Christmas Services: Advent Carol Service, Sun 17 Dec, 10.30am; Carols by Candlelight, Fri 22 Dec, 4pm; Family Nativity, Sun 24 Dec, 3-3.30pm; Christmas Day, Mon 25 Dec, 10.30am

For further information call Dawn on 01644 420 431 or visit www.stmargaretsnewgalloway.org



Firewood logs & Wood Products for Sale

From

Carsphairn Community Woodland

A range of products are available from our community sawmill -

Contact us with your requirements

✱ Free local delivery ✱

Enquiries to:

Tel: 07710 124 255



Carsphairn Community Woodland Limited is committed to acquiring, developing and managing local woodlands in a sustainable and environmentally sound way for the long-term benefit of the local community.

Website: www.carsphairn.org/CCWL

Company Limited by Guarantee SC591976



CATSTRAND

SHOP LOCAL THIS CHRISTMAS!

WINTER OPENING HOURS

TUESDAY - SATURDAY 11:00AM-4:00PM
CLOSED SUNDAY & MONDAY.

PLEASE NOTE:

CATSTRAND WILL CLOSE FOR OUR FESTIVE BREAK FROM FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER AT 4PM - REOPENING TUESDAY 9TH JANUARY AT 11AM.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR TO OUR CUSTOMERS AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUED SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!



West Coast Sea Products



About our Christmas Shop

We will be running as normal in the lead up to Christmas. Pre-order your Christmas shop and collect from our usual van stops.

All orders must be placed before Sunday the 17th December.

Christmas range is now available on our website.

We will be closed from the 24th December until the 8th of January. So please order ahead for Hogmanay.

WWW.WCSPLTD.CO.UK
01557 330789

CHRISTMAS TREES AT ERNESPIE FARM



Nordman Fir non-needle drop
variety from £35
4ft-8ft trees available

Open Daily 10am-5pm

Ernespie Farm Centre
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DG7 3JG

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FREE DELIVERY WITHIN 2 MILES



**GALLOWAY
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**
www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org
 email gct@catstrand.com
 phone 07841 512449 (Jon) or 07704 662925 (Sue)

December 2023 - January 2023

Regular Services

GK2 Glenkens-Castle Douglas (Tesco) Wednesday Evenings (Registered Route)

Out		Return
19:00	Dalry (Underhill)	21:15
19:05	New Galloway	21:10
19:15	Mossdale	21:00
19:25	Laurieston	20:50
19:30	Townhead of Greenlaw	20:47
19:37	Castle Douglas (Market St)	20:37
19:40	Castle Douglas (Tesco)	20:35

Booking not required

Glenkens to Newton Stewart Fortnightly - Tuesday mornings

Outward Pickups:
 Dalry (Underhill) 09:30
 New Galloway (Town Hall) 09:35
 CatStrand 09:37
 To Aldi

Return Pickup Newton Stewart (Aldi Car Park) 11:30

Return fare £3.50 Advance booking required.

DRIVERS NEEDED

Galloway Community Transport needs your help to provide a wide range of community transport services across the Stewartry and beyond.

MINIBUS DRIVING

Minibus drivers with D1 (101 or by test) are needed to do volunteer and paid driving for our wide range of member community groups.

PATIENT TRANSPORT

We also urgently need drivers with their own cars for our patient transport service. Our volunteer patient transport drivers receive a generous mileage reimbursement and the satisfaction of providing a vital service to vulnerable people in our communities.

Interested?

Email gct@catstrand.com or phone 07841 512449

Excursions

GCT
GALLOWAY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

**CHRISTMAS
SHOPPING TRIP
GLASGOW**

Thursday 7th December and
Saturday 9th December 2023
 Choose from 1 of 2 days - trip to Braehead Shopping Centre, Glasgow
 (option to use Park & Ride for City Centre)

Bus Fare £12.00

Pick ups:
 0800 Kirkcudbright Harbourside
 0825 Castle Douglas Market Hill
 0835 Crossmichael Shop
 0850 New Galloway CatStrand
 0900 Dalry Underhill
 0920 Carsphairn Shop

Dropping off at:
 1050 Shields Road Park & Ride Glasgow
 1100 Braehead Shopping Centre (via Ikea)
 Return departing approx 1530-1600

CALL:
 01644 420374

EMAIL:
gct@catstrand.com

MORE CONTACT INFO:
www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org/excursions
www.ticketsource.co.uk

Member Hire

GCT has 16-, 15-, and 8-seater minibuses and a fully wheelchair accessible electric car available for hire by community organisations.

For information about membership and terms and conditions of hire see the GCT website or phone 07841 512449

www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

WHAT'S ON December/January

Turn to P8 for Together in the Glenkens Dec/Jan activities...

DECEMBER

Fri 1, Quiz Night, 7.15, Laurieston Village Hall

Sat 2, Robyn Stapleton: Songs of Winter, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 2, CatStrand Shopping Night, 6-9pm

Sat 2, Christmas Craft Fair, Mossdale Village Hall, 11am-3pm

Sun 3, Jax's Christmas Lunch, 12noon-1.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall. Booking essential - Jax on 07501400333

Sun 3, Lights-On Walk down New Galloway High Street, 4.30pm at New Galloway Golf Club Car park (hot chocolate on offer), to CatStrand (mulled wine and Christmas songs from CatStrand singers)

Sun 3, Corsock Craft Fair, 11am-3pm, Corsock Village Hall

Sun 3, Sunday Lunch, 12noon, New Galloway Town Hall

Mon 4, Menopause Really Matters, 7pm, The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

Mon 4, Dalry CC Meeting, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Mon 4, Citizens Advice drop-in, 10am-4pm, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry

Wed 6, Dalry Film Club: The Age of Innocence, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Wed 6, Guild Christmas Coffee Morning, 10.30am-12noon, New Galloway Town Hall

Thu 7, Stewartry Birdwatchers talk, 10.30am, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Thu 7, GCT Bus Trip: Christmas Shopping Trip to Glasgow, see p33

Fri 8, 15 & 22, Galloway Food Hub Shop opens for online orders, see p5

Sat 9, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 9, GCT Bus Trip: Christmas Shopping Trip to Glasgow, see p33

Sat 9, Parkinson's Fundraiser, 12-2pm, Laurieston Village Hall

Sun 10, Carols by Candlelight, 5.30pm, Carsphairn Church

Mon 11, Kells CC Meeting, 7pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Mon 11, A Concert of Traditional Music, 8pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn, free entry

Tue 12, Citizens Advice drop-in, 10am-4pm, CatStrand

Wed 13, Crossmichael CC Meeting, 7pm, Crossmichael

Thu 14, Ken Words: Writers' Café, 7pm, CatStrand

Fri 15, Songwave Choir: Under a Star Filled Night, 7pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Sat 16, Community Cafe, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 16, Vika's Ukranian Buffet, 6pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p15

Sat 16, Glenkens Childre'n's Christmas Party, 2pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Su 17, Advent Carol Service, 10.30am, St Margaret's Church, New Galloway

Sun 17, Christmas Celebration Service, 4pm, Balmaghie Kirk

Sun 17, Christmas Grotto, 11am-2pm, CatStrand

Sun 17, Glenkens Youth Group Christmas Party, 6pm, CatStrand

Sun 17, Nine Lessons & Carols, 6.30pm, Parton Kirk

Sun 17, Pub Quiz, 7pm, Clachan Inn, Dalry

Sun 17, Santa's Grotto, 11am-2pm, CatStrand

Mon 18, Citizens Advice drop-in, 10am-4pm, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry

Mon 18, Corsock & KPD CC Meeting, 7.30pm, Corsock Village Hall

Tue 19, Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch (New Galloway & Kells), 1pm, New Galloway Town Hall, contact Jackie on 07749 249 781 to book

Wed 20, Dalry Film Club: The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Wed 20, Balmaghie CC Meeting, 7pm, Balmaghie Public Hall

Thu 21, Midwinter Ceilidh with Whirligig, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 22, Carols by Candlelight, 4pm, St Margaret's Church, New Galloway

Sat 23, Gallovidian Gathering, Castle Douglas Town Hall, see p28

Sun 24, Family Nativity, 3pm, St Margaret's Church, New Galloway

Sun 31, Hogmanay Community Ceilidh, 7.30pm-12.30am, New Galloway Town Hall, BYOB and nibbles

JANUARY

Fi 5, Song Share, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 7, Jax's Sunday Lunch, New Galloway Town Hall, booking essential - Jax on 07501 400 333

Tue 9 & 23, Citizens Advice drop-in, 10am-4pm, CatStrand

Thu 11, Stewartry Birdwatchers talk: Birds, Butterflies & Moths, 10.30am, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Thu 11, Ken Words: Writers' Café, 7pm, CatStrand

Fri 12, Rachel Walker & Aaron Jones: Despite the Wind & Rain, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 13, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 13, Bob's Bingo, 4-6pm, New Galloway Town Hall, complete with traybakes - a return of this popular family event - all ages welcome - £1 a strip. Contact Jackie on 07749 249781

Mon 15, Citizens Advice drop-in, 10am-4pm, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry

Fri 19, Carsphairn Burns Supper, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Wed 24, Dalry Film Club: Whitney Houston - I Wanna Dance with Somebody, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 28, Pub Quiz, 7pm, Ken Bridge Hotel

Mon 29, GCAT AGM, 7.30pm, CatStrand, see p8

Mon 29, Citizens Advice drop-in, 10am-4pm, Glenkens Community Centre, Dalry

FEBRUARY

Thu 1, For the Love of Robert Burns: Claudia Wood & Katherine Durran, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 3, CatStrand Burns Supper, 7.30pm, CatStrand

REGULAR EVENTS & OPENING TIMES

Balmaclellan Village Hall

Tuesday Afternoon Teas, 1st Tues each month, to book email warburton.julie@googlemail.com

Glenkens Crafters, Wed 10am-12noon, for info contact julia.higgins55@outlook.com

Books in Balmaclellan Community Library, Wed 10.30-12.30; Fri 6-7pm; Sat 10.30am-2.30pm (tea & coffee available on Sat).

Tai Chi, Wed 2-3pm

Balmaclellan Blether, 3rd Thu each month, contact warburton.julie@googlemail.com

Yoga, Thu, 6pm, kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

Glenkens Art Workshop, Thu, 2-4pm

Zumba, Fri, 6.30-7.30pm

The Men's Shed, Balmaclellan

Opening Times:

Monday, 9.30am - 12.30pm

Wednesday, 9.30am - 12.30pm, Wood Carving, 2-4pm

Thursday, Art Group, 2-4pm

Friday, 9.30am - 12.30pm

Saturday, 9am - 12noon

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Monday Morning Social, 11am-2pm, come along for a blether, or bring a board game/cards, etc. Refreshments available. Call 07710 124 255 or email carsphairn.trust@gmail.com

Carsphairn SWI, 3rd Thu of the month, 7.30pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Craft Group, Fri 10am-12noon, includes tea & coffee, Lagwyne Hall, contact carsphairncraftgroup@gmail.com

Bairn Banter; family stay & play session, 0-7 years, Sat 10-11.45am

CatStrand, New Galloway

Winter opening hours:

11am-4pm Tue-Sat

Art Ambassadors (age 11+), Mon bi-weekly, 4.30-5.30pm

Behind the Scenes, bi-weekly, Mondays 5.30-6pm

Power Yoga, Tue, 9am, kathyr64@hotmail.co.uk

Citizens Advice Drop-ins, every other Tue, 10am-4pm

Weekly Bus Service to Tesco, Wednesday eve 7pm

Dramarama, (age 6-10), Wed 4-5pm

Up Skills: Musical Theatre, (age 15+), Wed 5-5.30pm

Young Writers Cafe, (age 12+), Wed

6-7.30pm, monthly

Piano Lessons, weekly, term time 4pm - 6.30pm

CatStrand Singers, Thu 11am-12noon

Dance Steps (age 10-18yrs), Sat monthly, 2-5pm

Art Explorers, (age under 10yrs), Sat bi-weekly 10-11am

Art Club, (age 11-16yrs), Sat bi-weekly 11.15am-12.30pm

Youth Players Panto rehearsals, (10 yrs plus), weekly, Sun 3- 5.30pm

The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

Margaret Morris Movement: Health Play (age 5-8), Mon (during term time), 3.45-4.30pm

Margaret Morris Movement: Youth Grade (age 8-15), Mon (during term time), 4.30-5.30pm

Glenkens Ukelele Group, Wed, 6.30-8pm

Taste of Music, monthly, 10-11am (under 10yrs)

Mini Music Makers, family session, montly 11.45pm -12.30pm (under 7yrs)

Weekly Ukuele, guitar & keyboard lessons, 12.30-4pm (6-16 yrs)

Musical Misfits, group singing class, bi-weekly, 10.30 - 11.30pm

New Galloway Town Hall

Men's Monday Morning Coffee, Mon 9.30-11am. Contact rtdglaister@aol.com

Margaret Morris Movement, (adults), Mon 2.20-3.20pm, contact SaraShackleton26@gmail.com

Tai Chi, Mon 7-8pm, contact petchy2@btinternet.com

LING Lunches, (all welcome) Tue 12.30-2pm

Hubbub, Thu 11am-2pm, activities from jam-making to Christmas wreaths (lunch provided)

Sports Evening, Tue 7-9pm, carpet bowls or table tennis, contact raymond.bridgeman@btinternet.com

Zumba, Wed 6.30-7.30pm, contact 07544 700 566

Martial Arts, (children), Thu 7.30-9pm, contact kmabrian@gmail.com or just turn up.

For further info email jackie.

communityinclusion.LING@gmail.

com or phone 07749 249781 or visit

newgallowaytownhall.com @ Local

Initiatives in New Galloway on Facebook

Glenkens Community Centre

Citizens Advice Drop-ins, every other Mon, 10am-4pm

Dalry Good Neighbours Club, Tue, 2-4pm, contact Michelle on 07795 613 148

Clachan Crafters, Thu 2-4pm, contact Sarah on 07500 861 041

Kickback Martial Arts, Thu, 7-9pm

Song Share, 1st Friday each month, 8-11pm, contact anne.chaurand@btinternet.com

Yoga For All, Fr 9.15-10.15am, contact Amy on 07733 111 466

Friendship Group, Sat (excluding Glenkens Producers Market days), 10-11.30am, contact Anne on 01644 430 052

Table Tennis/Badminton, available to hire by arrangement, contact Sarah on 07500 861 041

Glenkens Charity Shop

Winter Opening Times:

Mon 10am-1pm

Wed, Fri & Sat 10am-4pm

Dalry Library

Main St, Dalry, Tel: 01644 430 234

Tuesday Parent -Toddler Sessions - restart end Aug, Tue, 10.30-11.30am

Glenkens Book Group, last Friday of each month, 2pm, call June to book on 01644 420 361

Library Opening Times:

Tue, 2-5pm, for books and other walk-in
Fri, 11.30am-12.30pm for NEC Bus Pass and Blue Badge appointments and PCs, and 1-4.30pm for books and other walk-in services: appointments can be booked in the library or on 01387 260 196.

Dalry Town Hall

Tai Chi, video-led instruction, Mon, 2-3pm, contact lesleyblissett52@gmail.com

Dog Training, Tue, 7-8pm, contact Eric Broadhurst on 07831 590 822

Various

Glenkens Youth Group, Mon, 7-8.30pm, Dalry School (or Glenkens Community Centre)

Cosy Corner, Tue, 1-5pm, Crossmichael Church Hall, contact Anne on 07889 016 963

Crossmichael Heritage Centre, Wed & Fri, 1.30-4.30pm

Cub Scouts, Wed 6.15-7.30pm, Scout Hall, New Galloway

Dragon Boats on Loch Ken, Sun 9.30am-12.30pm, Galloway Activity Centre, Parton

Knockvennie Hall Heat Bank & Snooker Club, contact Andrew on 01556 690 677

Outdoor Bowls, Dalry, contact Fiona Ramsay on 07500 554 751

Snooker/Indoor Bowls, contact Gary on 01644 430 521

This winter at the CatStrand

It's been an exceptionally busy year this year for CatStrand Arts and we do hope you've enjoyed it!

We've definitely bounced back from Covid, seeing our highest audiences on record this year. We've averaged two events per week, selling over 4,000 tickets over the year (not including the Young Creatives - see update on that on p23). Some highlights of our Creative Scotland-funded programme this year were:

- Storming gigs by HENGE, Samson Sounds, Blue Giant Orkestar & Pictish Trail.
- Sell-out shows by international-quality audiences like Kris Drever, Martin Simpson, Kiki Dee, FARA, Ross Ainslie, Ali Hutton & Jenn Butterworth.
- D&G-based artists rightly forming a central part of the programme including The Village & The Road, Sanchez & Rigg, Gavin Marwick & Friends, and slow tours

by A The Way to Galloway & The Bookshop Band.

- Some ridiculously funny evenings with George Egg & Patrick Monahan.
- A Dark Sky Jazz weekend of unforgettable musicianship.

Theatre and Dance remained a strong part of our programme this year of course. We benefitted from being included on tours supported by Creative Scotland's Touring Fund and through DG Arts Festival. Highlights included Battery Park, Women Walking, Help! I think I'm a Nationalist, 4 Go Wild In Wellies, Make Up & Pibroch - all of them amazing to watch.

Locally-driven projects form a significant part of our work, supported through our Cultural Communities programme. Talented individuals and groups bring their significant expertise and enthusiasm to deliver a programme of events that is of an extremely high standard and firmly rooted in the Glenkens. The Cultural Communities

programme this year included Ken Words, Write On, Clachan Folk Sessions, CatStrand Singers, the SongWave Choir, Watson Birds, a rolling exhibition in partnership with South West Scotland Print Makers, and of course the very popular Glenkens history events.

Despite all of this, pressure on arts funding nationally does leave us in a somewhat precarious position (**please see article on p24 for more on this, and how you can support the CatStrand**).

It is clear that we have something very special and valuable in the CatStrand. Its intimate hall allows a real connection and warmth between the artists and audiences. Although there are many small community venues,



CatStrand is one of a very small number sustaining a regular programme of touring arts.

The support shown by our staff, volunteers and audience members means there is a real sense of community ownership of the venue. Artists frequently comment that it's been their favourite gig on their tour, and how welcomed they felt by the audiences and venue. It's something quite valuable and worth protecting. Please do keep supporting us by coming to events, stopping for lunch, buying something from the shop or exhibition or joining the Friends scheme - we very much appreciate it, and look forward to seeing you next year!

Keep up to date: @Catstrand on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, or sign up here to have the programme emailed to you: <https://gcat.scot/about-gcat/support-us>

*Peter Renwick
Creative Director: CatStrand Arts*

Pictured are Kiki Dee (top) and Henge (above) performing at the CatStrand

Friday the 19th of January 2024
BURNS NIGHT SUPPER
AT LAGWYNE HALL, CARSPHAIRN DG7 3TQ
3-COURSE SCOTTISH MENU

BOOK NOW TO SAVE DISAPPOINTMENT

Licensed Bar

Recitations
POETRY READINGS
A Celebration of Burns
7PM Start

Tickets must be booked in advance
lagwynehallbooking@gmail.com
or via any Hall committee member

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Submit events, activities, news stories, cartoons, reviews, tips & techniques, fiction, photos, ads or ideas... Contact Sarah Ade on 07727 127 997 or glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

FEB/MAR COPY DEADLINE: 5 JAN



Editing & Design:
sarah.ade@gmail.com

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The role of the Gazette is to represent the voice of the community and does not represent the views of GCAT.