

Fabulous fundraising for Castle Douglas foodbank

Two local children embarked on an admirable, and very successful, festive fundraising journey in December, raising money for the Castle Douglas-based foodbank, Stepping Stones.

Pippin and Fred, aged seven and eight, who are the children of local potters Hannah and Doug Fitch, spent their free time in 2024 making small ceramic brooches at their parents' pottery workshop. Once they were ready, these were sold alongside their parents' wares at craft fairs and shows across the region.

Last year the children also made brooches to sell, and raised an incredible £841, but this year they almost doubled that figure with an astounding £1,600 raised.

Having raised the funds, the children spent three hours in Tesco the week before Christmas buying food and necessities to stock the foodbank over the festive period.

The siblings then delivered the food to Stepping Stones Foodbank in a van packed to the roof.

Mum Hannah said: "Tesco staff were very helpful, and even gave the children a sweet treat to keep their energy levels up during the mammoth shop."

"The children have worked so hard making all their brooches and the people who have bought them have been so very generous. It can make



Pippin and Fred in their van full of supplies, on the way to Stepping Stones Foodbank

you despair, that such a thing is so very much needed in our wonderful region, but to teach the children that their relatively small efforts can have such an impact is a lovely lesson."

The *Gazette* would like to congratulate Pippin and Fred on their incredible achievement, and for setting such an inspiring example to us all.

A secure future for CatStrand Arts

The Glenkens Community and Arts Trust (GCAT) is delighted to have been awarded three years of funding from Creative Scotland.

This means the CatStrand Touring Arts programme is assured until 2028; unprecedented support in

CatStrand Arts' 17-year history. Peter Renwick, Creative Director of CatStrand Arts, said: "We are over the moon to have been fully supported by Creative Scotland's Multi Year Fund. This will allow us to continue our work with national, regional and local artists to deliver outstanding Touring Arts programmes for the communities of the Glenkens."

"We are hugely grateful for this support, which secures CatStrand both as a cultural Hub of the highest calibre and as a

key component of the Glenkens economy. Thank you to everyone who has supported CatStrand Arts over the years – you are a big part of this success."

Helen Keron, Chief Exec of GCAT, said "This award is a testament to the ambition we have for CatStrand and our long track record of excellent delivery."

"It means that we are going to be able to carry on making a huge difference to the people of the Glenkens and beyond into the long term, which is fantastic."

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Become a member of the Galloway Food Hub

...turn to p6



Loch Ken Trust Ranger wins award

...turn to p12



A successful year of community investment

...turn to p18



Ten years of the Glenkens Story

...turn to p25

Get involved in the Kells community place plan

If you live in Kells parish and care about the area we live in and wish to have a say in the way it evolves over the next 10 years, it's important that you read this article.

Local place plans are being created in all the parishes of Dumfries and Galloway, including all the Glenkens communities. They will inform the way the Council develops and prioritises services and investment in our communities and form the background to spatial and planning policy.

It is often said that local people do not have a voice; well, this is our chance for our voice to be heard and our local knowledge to be incorporated into the future plans for our area.

What is the process?

1) To gather people's thoughts about the area, what makes it special to them and what they think works well, as well as where there is room for improvement. Kells Community Council has created a questionnaire. If you have not already filled one in, they are available at www.tinyurl.com/NGK-LPP1

For those who do not like computers, there are printed copies available at New Galloway Community Shop, the CatStrand and, if you are rural, there will be one included with this copy of the *Gazette*.

2) We need your responses by 21 February so that we can collate all of your input. There will be a feedback session during March (on a date yet to be set) which will be publicised nearer the time. This will allow you to see how the first draft of the plan is evolving and how all the information gathered will feed into the process of finalising it. For paper copies, the questionnaire lists places where there are boxes to return your copy.

3) A final version will be produced in April which needs to be submitted to D&G Council

in May so that they can incorporate it into their regional plan in June.

Why is this important?

This process allows all of us, for the first time, to have a voice in the things that directly impact our communities.

Our feeling of place is integral to our overall wellbeing, and having a say in how the area evolves to ensure a well-balanced community which looks after the old, but creates sustainable jobs and futures for the young, is vital.

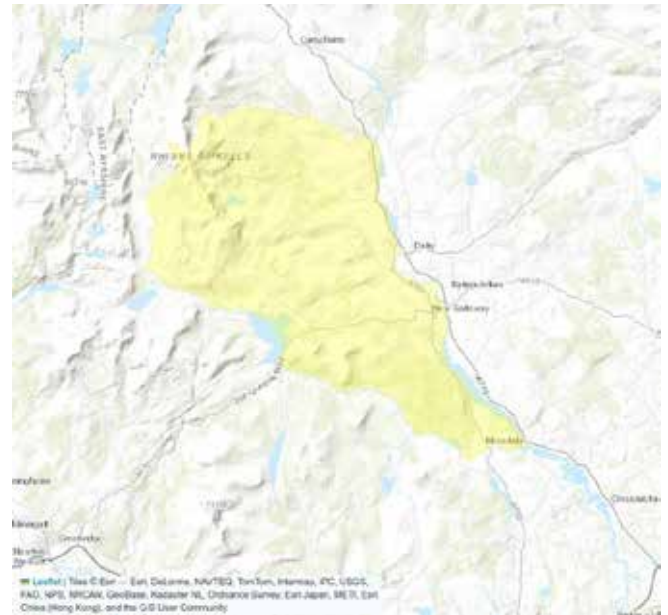
There is change all around us. It covers all the traditional industries and land uses as well as the infrastructure we rely on for our daily lives.

Agriculture, tourism, energy, forestry and our care sector, large businesses like Natural Power and any organisations which focus on our natural capital [the value of the natural world, including the living and non-living parts of ecosystems] are all areas where sustainable long-term employment can be encouraged. How do we realise these benefits without losing the essence of what we love?

Landscape, biodiversity and land use are all key to our futures. Striking the right balance is crucial to a successful plan.

Education, sports, housing and transport are all critical, together with the infrastructure of roads, communications and energy networks which create the backbone for our community wellbeing.

Planning for flooding, resilience and extreme weather events are in need of a rethink.



Linking our Kells plan to the other Glenkens plans on the larger issues listed above will make it easier to engage with developers, infrastructure providers and the Council in the way we create a coherent future for the Glenkens that fits the needs, and aligns with our local plan.

We've created a Local Place Plan team to take this forward, chaired by Anna Lawrence and with members including John Muir, Dominique Pope, Lois Aitkenhead and Jeremy Sainsbury, ably supported by GCAT through Becca Nelson.

If you treasure what we already have and want to influence the way our special environment evolves over the next 10 years, please complete the questionnaire and help us produce the best plan possible for Kells. To get in touch, call 07770 935 559 or email Jeremys@naturalpower.com

*Jeremy Sainsbury, Chair,
Royal Burgh of New Galloway
& Kells Parish Community Council*

LACE thanks for supporting plant purchases

Following on from the article in the last *Gazette* about Carol's plant stall, thanks go out to all the residents of New Galloway and the Glenkens...

All the Life After Cancer Essex (LACE) members would like to thank you and the community for the wonderful donation of £630 through the purchase of plants from Carol's street stall in New Galloway.

You can now look at your newly bought and matured plants and relate them to all the good you will have provided. As a charity close to the hearts of local residents Bill and Carol, LACE is a not-for-

profit Community Interest Company, providing comfort to those affected by cancer throughout Essex. Your donations have gone towards walks in RHS Gardens, pottery classes, mindfulness courses, and other support for those going through cancer treatment or who are on the road to recovery.

*Steve Hammond, LACE
Committee, and members*



Mixtape party night in Dalry Town Hall

The first Mixtape party night was a dance-tastic success at Dalry Town Hall, with people shaking their tail-feathers to a variety of floor-fillers.

People said: "It was great to have a space to dance like no-one is watching," and "it was a great night, great music and great company".

The idea behind this community dance night is that people request their favourite dance track that they just love to boogie to. It's then added into a playlist that is played on the night. The tunes can be from any style, genre or era, creating an eclectic mix of music from pop to punk, indie to soul, rock to reggae and much more.

This event will run every second Saturday of the month from, October to March, so some dates for your diary for the next ones coming up are Saturday 8 February and Saturday 8 March, from 8-11pm.

If you would like to select a tune you can join the Mixtape Party Night WhatsApp group, then add the title and artist of one or two tunes to be played on the night.

But you don't have to request a tune to come along - everyone and anyone is invited, and there's no entry fee, but cash donations are welcome, which go to cover the cost of hall hire, electricity and the hire of the sound system.

Kath Peters



Revellers dancing the night away at December's Mixtape Party Night

Community Action Plan annual report published

The Community Action Plan Steering Group has published its Annual Report into delivery of the Glenkens and District Community Action Plan over 2024.

The report gives updates on progress made in delivering the priorities of the Glenkens communities, as set out in the Community Action Plan (CAP) and can be found on the Glenkens Hub, under the Resources tab, at www.glenkens.scot

Great progress has been made by many Glenkens charitable organisations on these priorities, despite the cost-of-living crisis and a restricted funding landscape.

In addition, the CAP Steering Group has been strongly advocating for the rural voice to be heard at regional and national levels – working to alleviate some of the challenges our communities face at a systemic, upstream level, rather than just intervening to mitigate the symptoms.

The CAP's goal is for the Glenkens and district to be a "connected, resilient and carbon-neutral place, where people will want to live, to work, to bring up their families, and to grow old. It will be somewhere that other places in Scotland will look to for inspiration."

The CAP is now more than four years old, and so the CAP Steering Group intends to

use the current Local Place Planning process as the basis for a refresh of the CAP in the second half of 2025. There will be many opportunities to contribute to what the current priorities and needs of the Glenkens are then.

A bit more about the CAP Steering Group...

The Glenkens & District Community Action Plan Steering Group is supported by the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) and comprises volunteers from diverse backgrounds and experiences across the Glenkens communities. Their role is to ensure delivery of the CAP priorities, to respond to arising themes that impact the CAP goal, and to keep the CAP relevant. All information, including meeting reports, can be found on the Glenkens Hub under the Community/Community Groups tab at www.glenkens.scot

The Steering Group was pleased to welcome two new members after the call for members last year, Robert McTurk and Jennifer Harvie, who will be known to many as long-term Glenkens residents and will be bringing their experience and expertise to bear on CAP delivery this year.

In turn, Bob Glaister and Barney Fryer are stepping down, having been on the steering group since 2021. Many thanks are due to both of them for their wise insights and thoughtful contributions.

The CAP Steering Group is still open to



interest from more new members, and also for members specific to the Education and Learning and Land Use sub-committees.

If you'd like to find out more about any of these voluntary roles, contact Helen Keron on helen@catstrand.com before 17 February.

Helen Keron

HOUSE TO LET 1 BEDROOM

Wylie's Brae, New Galloway

large bedroom, bathroom,
livingroom, kitchen

***For further information contact
Alistair on 07783 869 686 or
smithalistair355@gmail.com***

Decarbonising CatStrand

It's an exciting time for CatStrand at the moment.

Over the Christmas break, we removed our oil boiler and oil tank and replaced them with solar panels on the cafe roof, as well as installing battery storage and two air-source heat pumps.

This means that CatStrand now produces no carbon emissions in its heating requirements, which will remove nearly 10 tonnes of emissions annually.

Of course, the solar panels won't be able to meet all of our energy demands in the winter, so we will draw electricity from the grid then to charge the batteries and power the heating, but we will maintain our 'renewables only' electricity contract to ensure that we are not just passing the emissions on.

Those of you with long memories will recall that CatStrand was an early adopter of sustainable heating solutions, installing a

wood pellet boiler on opening in 2007. However, it did not survive the 2017 flood and the only practicable solution at the time was to install an oil boiler. It is therefore excellent news all round that we are now able to make this significant step forward towards our net zero ambitions.

Also part of this project was the upgrade of all of our lighting to LED fittings, including the 17-year-old power-hungry ones in the auditorium. This will reduce our overall energy need significantly.

All this work has been made possible by funding from CARES through Local Energy Scotland and the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) ScotGov fund, administered by the D&G Local Action Group and Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway. Many thanks to them for the capital investment that is letting us make this step change in our emissions.

Many thanks as well to John Crallan, who has again volunteered significant amounts of time in support of CatStrand and the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT). His technical expertise and due diligence has made this project a reality, along with support from Dave Stewart, another long-term supporter of the CatStrand.

The panels and batteries have been installed by Smartly Energy and the Air Source Heat Pumps by Stewart Temperature Solutions, who all worked most diligently through the January cold snap to get it all up and running.

To celebrate this milestone, CatStrand is hosting a public event on 9 February, in partnership with the Biosphere Climate Hub.

We know that we are not the only ones working hard to decarbonise public buildings, and so this will be a Glenkens-wide celebration of net zero work



done across the whole area.

It will include a chance to hear from GCAT, Local Initiatives in New Galloway and Dalry Town Hall about their experiences of upgrading their community spaces, plus music from folk/country singer-songwriter Sarah Jane Scouten and local food.

This will all be followed by a screening of 'Living Proof', an evocative exploration of Scotland's complex relationship to the climate crisis explored through archive film.

To book your free ticket for this event, visit www.gcat.scot - do come along if you can - see p13 for more!

Celebrating the Bard at Lagwyne Hall

Carsphairn's 54th fundraising Burns Supper in Lagwyne Hall was a resounding success, proving itself yet again to be one of the most popular Suppers around.

Castle Douglas-based catering company, Caterbirds, provided a delicious meal. The evening's entertainment began with Ryan Fergusson and his accordion accompanying Melissa Ade, dressed as Poosie Nancy, in the celebratory parade of the haggis.

James Wallace presented a gripping Address to the Haggis and

also a beautifully sung rendition of the Burns song, *Green Grow The Rashes*.

The evening's exemplary entertainment continued with Alec Ross capturing the full room's attention with his recitation of The Immortal Memory. Local vet, Graham Bell, then had us all in tears of laughter with his Toast to the

Lassies, followed shortly after by Fiona Durham's witty Reply to the Toast. And of course a Carsphairn Burns Supper wouldn't be complete without Robert McTurk's legendary theatrical recitation of *Tam o' Shanter*, with his trusty hobby-horse mare, Meg, at his side.

The evening drew to a close as Christine Whipp gave a heartfelt

vote of thanks to those present on behalf of the Lagwyne Hall committee, for whom this annual event raises funds.

Then hands were joined in friendship and voices raised in song for *Auld Lang Syne* before everyone went their separate ways, looking forward to coming together again in celebration of The Bard next year. *Melissa Ade*



Wonky Burns Night brings a twist to tradition at New Galloway Town Hall

On Saturday 25 January, New Galloway Town Hall hosted a unique twist on the traditional Burns Night celebration.

Despite Storm Eowyn's aftermath causing some uncertainty, the Bodega Social crew pushed ahead, turning the event into a sell-out!

Rather than the usual haggis and recitations, the evening featured creative Burns-inspired cocktails and Scottish-themed Sichuanese food, including haggis gyoza and pickled neeps.

Ben Wild, one of the event organizers, shared, "We had 165 ticket holders and our wonderful volunteer crew.

The food was a hit, though we'll need to make more next time!

The night began with an informal traditional music session, featuring fiddles, guitars, and drums.

This laid-back vibe continued as the atmosphere built, with Edinburgh-based folktronica band Yoko Pono getting everyone on their feet. The event's layout allowed guests to enjoy DJ sets and a chill-out area downstairs when they wanted a break from dancing.

A standout feature of Bodega Social events is their ability to transform venues. This event, like others in village halls across Galloway, was unrecognizable with themed bars, clever lighting, and unique décor.

The inclusive, intergenerational crowd

was another highlight, with everyone from babies to teenagers joining in the fun. Wonky Burns Night showed that celebrations don't always have to follow tradition. By embracing the untraditional,

it honoured Robert Burns in a fresh, exciting way.

Keep an eye out for Bodega Social's next event, and if you're heading to Eden Festival, check out their Bodega Lounge!



MP and MSPs visit the Glenkens

The Community Action Plan (CAP) Steering Group was very happy to meet with John Cooper MP and MSPs Finlay Carson and Colin Smyth in the Glenkens last month. John came along to find out more about the Glenkens

Community Action Plan and how the Glenkens is organising itself through the Glenkens and District Trust (GDT), the CAP Steering Group and the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust to ensure that the priorities in the CAP are delivered for our communities. He was very complimentary about our processes and delivery and indeed suggested that we should be telling more

people about our successes and challenges.

Finlay and Colin came the following week to discuss the GDT-commissioned report into rural education in the Glenkens and the wider challenges of depopulation in rural Dumfries and Galloway. They saw a clear link between a good educational provision being available to a rural area

and the sustainability of those communities, and committed to continuing to work at Scottish Government level to advocate for the specific needs of rural communities.

Thanks to all three for their time, ideas and support - it's important that our national representatives hear directly from their communities like this.

Helen Keron

Become a member of Galloway Food Hub

Galloway Food Hub, our online marketplace for quality locally produced food, is looking for members.

The Galloway Food Hub, founded in 2022, has now become a Community Interest Company (CIC). This means anyone interested in sourcing good local food can now become a member.

Members may be customers, suppliers or simply interested in the project. Membership - which is completely free - is open to any individual or organisation in Galloway or to anyone with an interest in local food.

Lesley Atkins, co-ordinator of the Galloway Food Hub, says: "Membership allows you to have a say in how the hub is run. We only ask that members tell people about the food hub and its benefits and do whatever they can to promote us positively."

Members can also opt in to receive a newsletter, and can attend the annual general meeting and take part in policy discussions.

"There are volunteering opportunities for members who want to share their skills and become more involved," explains Lesley. "We have an enthusiastic team of volunteers.

They work as packers or delivery drivers or assist with the many other tasks involved in running a growing and thriving business. Members can also be elected to the food hub's nine-member management board."

Lesley stresses that the hub is open to all: "You can shop at the Galloway Food Hub whether you are a member or not, and you can be a member without buying from the shop. You can find out more about the producers and produce by visiting our website - www.gallowayfoodhub.org.uk."

The online shop opens every second Friday for four days. During that time, you can place your order, pay for it online, and then either collect it or have it delivered the following Friday. Collection points include the Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry, next to the village hall in Corsock, or home delivery in the main villages of the Glenkens.

Three-quarters of the produce available is sourced from 33 small suppliers within a 35-mile radius of the Glenkens. All products meet high climate, welfare and food safety standards. A quarter of the produce is sourced from further afield and is organically certified with high ethical principles.

The Galloway Food Hub aspires to make high quality local food affordable for everyone in the area. This is a challenge to achieve in today's marketplace, but discounts can be made



Tamsin, Gail and Lesley spreading the word about the Galloway Food Hub

available to those who would like to support the hub but simply cannot afford to, through the 'Fair Food for All' scheme. Please get in touch if you'd like to know more by emailing lesley@gallowayfoodhub.org.uk

Since its establishment in 2022 as a project of Propagate, the food hub has grown rapidly, with sales in December breaking all previous records.

Now that it is operating independently, as a CIC, Lesley and the organising team hope as many people as possible will become members. "Membership shows that the community value

the food hub and appreciate its efforts to provide local food and support the small food producers in our region," says Lesley.

Visit www.gallowayfoodhub.org.uk to complete the membership application form, or you can call Lesley on 07587 122 151 to obtain a paper copy of the form.

The Galloway Food Hub vision is to make local, sustainable, nourishing food available to everyone in Dumfries and Galloway. Your membership can help to achieve this.

Margaret Elphinstone



Name the Place

In each issue a photograph will be taken somewhere in the Glenkens by local photographer Ted Leeming and readers have to guess where it is.

The answer can be found on p25, with a bit of information and food for thought about that location.

A year in the life...

**Glenkens
Community
& Arts Trust**

What a year 2024 was for all of us here in the Glenkens - some very challenging times but some great achievements as well.

I do think this is just an amazing community to live and work in, and I take my hat off to all the hundreds of volunteers, local business people and community workers who make it what it is.

Looking back at the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) over 2024, we put on an amazing **Touring Arts programme**.

Despite the continuing uncertainty over funding, we managed to present a packed programme consisting of over 110 events of the highest quality.

At the time of writing, we're waiting anxiously for news of our three-year Creative Scotland settlement - the fund is heavily oversubscribed but I've got to assume that our amazing track record will stand us in good stead.

CatStrand Young Creatives also had a fantastic year, bringing amazing opportunities to our young people. We now know that Young Creatives is assured until at least March 2027 thanks to core funding from the Holywood Trust, plus YouthLink and (hopefully!) Creative Scotland's Youth Music Initiative, all of which is a huge testament to the work of all concerned.

The third strand of our Artistic Vision is **Cultural Glenkens**, which provided a rich programme of Glenkens-focused events throughout 2024. We are still hoping to amplify this strand through support from the Heritage Lottery - decision in March.

Aside from the Arts, our support of the Glenkens communities through the **Community Action Plan (CAP)** continues at full steam.

Our core CAP projects are delivering well:

Galloway Community Transport (GCT) had a fantastic year, particularly on fleet replacement thanks to generous private donations and matched

funding. They will of course continue providing school bus services, registered routes, patient transport, member hire and excursions.

The **Glenkens Gazette** and **Glenkens Hub** continue to go from strength to strength and we're looking forward to creating some special editions in 2025, thanks to NatureScot support.

The Glenkens Hub (www.glenkens.scot) is an invaluable font of information, from Glenkens events to news to reports and photo archives. You can also follow the Hub on Facebook and Instagram for regular updates on life in the Glenkens.

I don't think there's one person who doesn't go above and beyond in pursuit of their efforts on behalf of the Glenkens...

Brilliantly, funding from the Glenkens and District Community Fund through Foundation Scotland means that the Hub is assured throughout 2025.

The **Glenkens Community Spaces Network** continues to do a great job supporting the many volunteers of the town and village halls. We hope you find it useful to have a paid resource supporting your volunteer efforts, thanks again to the Glenkens and District Community Fund.

We've also secured funding from Awards for All to allow Jo Jackson to bring her **Together in the Glenkens** experience to bear in supporting village halls to put on more, or different, activity programmes.

These are all part of GCAT's aim to support our communities to do what they need, rather than doing it ourselves.

The **Glenkens Youth Group** continues to provide a relaxed space for P7 - S3s to chill out in - after a great year in the Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry, they're temporarily relocating to Balmaclellan Village Hall while the community centre is being upgraded, but they'll still all have an excellent time. All welcome, and quite free - thanks again to

funding from the Glenkens and District Community Fund.

The **CatStrand cafe and bar** continues to provide a welcoming space for all in the Glenkens. This winter, we were pleased to be able to offer free soup and hot drink combos to allow people to linger in our warm spaces over the winter months, thanks to the Council's 'Tackling Poverty Initiative', which continues through February. And talking of warm spaces, we have completed a major

capital upgrade to decarbonise our heating system - more detail on that elsewhere. A great result!

As well as these projects, the **Community Action Plan (CAP) Steering Group** continued to work behind the scenes in 2024 to ensure that the

CAP priorities are delivered and that the CAP stays relevant and useful. I know that they have very much appreciated the work of many Glenkens organisations on delivering CAP-related projects, such as Propagate and the Galloway Food Hub, the Pamela Young Trust and community housing, and the Loch Ken Trust and their resilience work, as well as many others.

There have also been some very interesting emerging themes over the last year. A fit-for-purpose **Education and Learning** provision underpins the CAP Vision of a thriving Glenkens and so the CAP Steering Group has been working with the Council's Education, Skills and Community Wellbeing Directorate to try and come up with more creative solutions to remote-rural education. The work is ongoing and is challenging but important!

Likewise, work continues on the topic of **Land Use** to try and ensure that the Glenkens benefits from a joined-up approach that balances food production, sustainable tourism, biodiversity, climate mitigation, energy production and productive forestry. Again, challenging but important!

Thanks as ever to all the many volunteers who give up their time to advocate for the Glenkens at a regional and national level - not always widely seen, but much appreciated.

We were very pleased to be able to support Dalry Community Council with the creation of their excellent **Local Place Plan**, which also resulted in a Glenkens template that is now being rolled out to many other Glenkens community councils. These plans should provide an important community voice looking forward, so hats off to all concerned for their work on this.

All of this work on all these fronts is underpinned by the excellent work of the GCAT staff, volunteers and key deliverers. I don't think there's one person who doesn't go above and beyond in pursuit of their efforts on behalf of the Glenkens, so thank you to them all. Also a massive thank you to our Board and Audit & Finance Committee members who work so hard behind the scenes to ensure that GCAT is a well-managed and sustainable organisation with a clear strategic vision.

This was recognised last year by the Glenkens and District Trust designating GCAT as the key anchor organisation for the Glenkens, which came with much-appreciated core funding from the wind farm funds. This was especially valued as the extremely challenging funding landscape meant that we had to re-organise to reduce core costs last Autumn. This was a difficult time for many staff, but I very much appreciated their commitment to the ongoing sustainability of GCAT and CatStrand, and I am optimistic that it puts us in a really strong position for 2025 and beyond.

If you'd like to find out more about our plans for the future, do come along to our AGM, this year on the 24 February at 7pm in the CatStrand. All are welcome, and it might not even be too late to join the GCAT Board if you'd like to be part of all this - do get in touch to find out more.

*Helen Keron, GCAT Chief Executive
helen@catstrand.com*

Glenkens Youth Correspondent

Joshua Wells, aged 15, is our *Gazette* youth correspondent and in each edition he will be writing about topics which interest him. In this issue Joshua discusses the CatStrand Christmas panto.



As we took our bows, a round of applause marked the end of our amazing journey that we had.

The CatStrand panto was sure to bring enjoyment to any panto fan, young or old, man or woman. The chosen script for the 2024 play was slightly unorthodox compared to other pantos the CatStrand Youth Players have performed. The story that we were going to perform was the wondrous tale of King Arthur.

If you don't know the story of King Arthur, it's the legendary tale of the wondrous blade in the stone called Excalibur, and

whoever pulls the sword from the stone will be crowned King of Britain.

Many men from all over the country rushed to pull the mighty blade from the stone, however, no one could pull Excalibur from the stone it was trapped in until one young boy called Arthur stepped up to give it a go.

To many this boy looked like just any other boy, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Arthur gripped the humungous handle with his tiny hands and pulled the blade out, shocking many and crowning him king.

The panto takes place 30 years after the events of the original tale. Arthur's right to the throne is threatened after his cousin

Morgana, an evil sorceress, challenges Arthur in a jousting competition.

After Arthur's courageous knight, Lancelot, wins the great competition, Morgana plots to kill King Arthur in many ways, casting a spell to get Lancelot to kill Arthur and then attempting to use a fierce dragon to end Arthur's reign. All of these plans fail, and the panto ends happily, just as any panto does.

We started the rehearsals for the panto just after the summer. For a few weeks, we read our scripts to give Brian and Cat an idea of who would be best for each character. After the weeks of hoping and wondering which character we would get, one day I came in and Brian asked if we could all sit down. Wondering what was going on, I waited patiently, watching Brian write in his notebook. After what felt like hours, Brian flipped open the cover of the notebook he had been jotting stuff into and told us our roles.

The wait was over, and I was given the role of King Arthur.

After being given our roles, we had to perfect the show for the deadline, which would be sooner than I thought. I spent hours in my room flipping each page of my script, making sure that I knew each and every word of my lines, and still it didn't feel like enough. We rehearsed every week, ironing out any mistakes and making it the best we could.

The panto weekend had finally arrived, and excitement with a sprinkle of nerves emanated through the air. After many rehearsals, costume fittings, and preparation, it was time to actually perform the play to a whole audience of people.

Everyone was full of energy, ready to give an unforgettable performance to the crowd. All the hard work had led up to this weekend. After four shows, and hearing comments from many audience members, I can happily say that the show was brilliant and fun for both the audience and the cast (even though I had to wear makeup).

(See panto article on p27...)

WRIGHTS STORE & POST OFFICE DALRY

SWEET TREAT
SATURDAY

FRESH CREAM
CAKES
AVAILABLE TO
ORDER

INFORMATION

OPENING TIMES

Mon-Fri 7.30am-5.30pm
Sat 8.30am-5pm
Sun 8.30am-3pm

POST OFFICE

Mon-Fri 10am to 3pm
Sat 9am to 12noon
Sun closed

LOCAL SUPPLIERS

DALMELLINGTON BUTCHERS
HENDERSON BUTCHERS
RAMSAY OF CARLUKE
BUTCHERS
SWEET TREATS BAKERY
GLENKENS HONEY
CREAM O' GALLOWAY
GALLOWAY LODGE
IRVINGS BAKERY
COWS & CO CHEESE
THE CRESS COMPANY
BORDER BISCUITS
HAWKSTONE BREWERY
MITCHELLS FRUIT & VEG
SULWATH BREWERY
...local delivery available...

POP IN FOR A CHAT AND A BROWSE



Dalry Secondary School - visiting Glasgow and water polo

S1-4 pupils had a lovely festive day out in Glasgow before Christmas.

First stop was the Christmas market in George Square, where they enjoyed seeing (and eating) Polish sausages sizzling on hot coals amid fairground rides for the bravest.

Lena writes: "The fairground was exciting and busy. Some went on

the 'drop tower' and we (me and Piri) told them not to lose their shoes - it looked terrifying!"

Then it was time for a Spanish tapas lunch... "The food in Café Andaluz was AMAZING!! I had some haddock bites. I ate far too much!" writes Piri. "I would definitely go again!" says Eleanor.

After the delicious Spanish food, it was time for the next cultural experience, at the Theatre Royale. "The Nutcracker ballet

was beautiful and very elegant," and "the clowns during The Nutcracker were also good," were some of the comments, and Lena concludes, "It was actually all amazing!"

Thanks to English teacher Miss Bellwood for organising the trip.

Wet Wednesday Fun

Swimming is the theme for Wednesday Afternoon Activities this term for the S1-S3 year groups.

As well as being our music teacher, Mrs St Joseph is also a qualified swimming instructor, and has started taking pupils to Kirkcudbright Pool for swimming lessons and other aquatic activities, including water polo.

As well as being great fun, this is also a great opportunity to improve skills and increase confidence in the water.



Dalry Primary School update

Dalry P4-7 class have focused on STEM activities this term, including a k-nex challenge and using Capla blocks to work together to build the tallest tower.

The children showed great innovation and engineering skills as well as navigating tricky group work scenarios.

The Christmas Fayre, where we invited members of the community in and raise money for the school, was a great success. It was lovely to see the community come together

and for primary pupils to work alongside the secondary pupils, who manned the raffle and bake stall.

Thank you to all who attended and who offered help on the day, as well as families who baked treats and donated them to sell at the bake stall. The Christmas show was also a great success,

with all the children excelling in their roles.

Four children who won the Dalry heat of the floor curling competition got to represent the school at a Stewartry event at Dalbeattie, where every school in the Stewartry attended.

The Dalry children did excellently, showing fabulous team work and sportsmanship, narrowly missing out in a place in the semi-final.



Kells Primary School activities

Our fabulous Parent Council organised and funded a community event with a bonfire, melted marshmallows, hotdogs and soup.

Some parents also set up a temporary tattoo station. It was great to see families and friends of the school come together at this event. Thank you to the Parent Council for organising.

Some of the other events and activities we've been up to are a farm trip for the P1-4 children to Littleton Farm, Maths and Literacy learning, singing for LING Christmas Lunches and a P5-7 World War II Day.



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The Optimistic Environmentalist

Reducing your home energy bills - Part Nine

Generating income

Make the most of your home by sharing with a friend or renting out a room (www.gov.uk/rent-room-in-your-home/the-rent-a-room-scheme).

This way, you can share energy and technology costs, have company, do deals for parents/children/house-sitting, have help with your physical or childcare needs, and get some income.

Generating income from the increasing number of electric vehicle users

a) You can rent out your EV charger to other electric car owners. If you sign up to Cocharger (www.co-charger.com) for instance, they will manage the charging mechanism and pay you any money generated.

People plug in their car to your outside charging point or garage and use an app on their phone to pay so generally, you don't need to do anything. Companies like Cocharger provide a map app for customers so you don't need to advertise and you stay in control of when your charger is available.

You only make a small amount of money at a time, but as electric car numbers are growing, particularly among neighbours and visitors, this will become more popular.

b) If you have land with road access that is enough for at least two cars to park

and charge, Osprey (www.ospreycharging.co.uk) will lease the land from you, organise and fund EV charger installation, and then advertise it as available to electric car users.

Other ways to generate income

Make warm dressing-gowns, body-warmers and throws with microwaveable heat pads or draft excluders, heavy curtains or water tank jackets that you can sell locally or on the internet to help people to insulate their

parts of their stay as you can; many people will be very knowledgeable and it could backfire if you are not clear what they will get. No accommodation is perfect so be honest about what you have done and what you haven't or ask for ideas.

If you have a private pension or money to invest, think about environmentally responsible companies. The Pension and Lifetime Savings Association estimates that UK pension

or to move your skills across to a new field, and whatever your age group, gender, etc, insulation, solar, ground and air source heat pumps, and other environmental technologies are growing rapidly, alongside their support services.

Traditional work is thus developing too so it is just as important that builders, plumbers, electricians and so forth keep up-to-date as well. Our local area is struggling to meet demand so be brave and don't assume you have to leave the area!

The future

Be creative, whether it's technology, work practices or processes, the world is changing rapidly. It's easier to get finance for things that make environmental and economic sense. Many companies are looking for positive change so it is important that we all give it a go. Use your creativity to help them change for the better or invent something!

This series was to give you a snapshot of some possibilities to get you started on your journey to reduce home energy usage. To find out more, websites like www.energysavingtrust.org.

uk and YouTube channels such as www.youtube.com/justhaveathink and www.youtube.com/user/fullychargedshow (which has a companion podcast too) have some great ideas.

Denise MacDonald-Kiernan



properties – please check the appropriate regulations first.

If you have a holiday let, hotel or bed and breakfast, advertise your green credentials to generate custom.

Make sure though, that you have addressed as many

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'Best article' wins head ranger top award



Loch Ken Trust head ranger, Leanne Pumpr, has been awarded the prestigious Margaret Fraser Award for the best article of the year in the Scottish Countryside Rangers Association *SCRAmble* magazine.

The award is presented each year and was judged by Ann McKillop of the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association.

Ann said: "The article that stayed with me during my deliberations highlighted good practice, practical problem solving and a holistic approach to site management. From involving the police, delivering educational messages, speaking to visitors on site and just getting out there and talking about pool!"

The Scottish Countryside Ranger's Association (SCRA) is the professional membership for countryside rangers and associated countryside professionals in Scotland. The award was presented by Kate Elliot, chair of the SCRA, who visited to present Leanne with her certificate and trophy.

Leanne won the award for her article titled *Rural Crime* which featured in the Autumn 2023 edition. You can read *SCRAmble* magazine online at www.scra-online.co.uk Leanne said: "I am surprised and thrilled

to receive this award. Working to prevent rural crime is a something I feel passionate about, and I am delighted to receive such praise for my article. I also suffer from dyslexia, so to achieve this is really special."

Climate Ready Glenkens

With extreme weather events happening more and more frequently, and three named storms in the UK already this season, Loch Ken Trust are pleased to announce that we have received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for resilience work in the Glenkens.

The National Lottery Community Fund distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK. The funding received will see the Loch Ken Trust Ranger Service working with communities in the Glenkens on resilience planning.

The Climate Ready Glenkens project will also involve a mock scenario test event in March, a resilience conference, extended ranger rural watch patrols in the communities, and the creation of a store of shared community resilience resources.

The increase in both frequency and severity of extreme weather events in recent years

has coincided with a steady reduction in resources and capacity to address issues related to these events. This situation hits remote rural communities especially hard.

Leanne said: "We are very excited to be able to continue our resilience work in the Glenkens and are looking forward to working with the communities. We would love members of the community to get involved and think about practical ways they can prepare for extreme weather events."

"We're delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised our work in this way. Thanks to National Lottery players we will be able to support our communities to be prepared for the challenges to come."

Storm Bert recently caused significant disruption across the region with heavy rain, high winds and snow causing travel chaos and power outages, and most recently Storm Eowyn with record-breaking wind speeds and widespread power cuts. With these events predicted to happen more and more in the future, it is vital that our communities, especially in remote rural areas, have robust plans in place.

Lindsay Stewart



Leanne Pumpr (left) receiving her award from chair of the SCRA Kate Elliot

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL DALRY RESIDENTS

IMPORTANT

On Wednesday 5th March there will be a resilience test event on the Throughgate between 11am-approx 12 noon. This will be a staged emergency made to look like a real emergency.

Please do not be alarmed or call the emergency services.

There will be no vehicle access through the Throughgate during this time but foot access will be possible.

This event is being held by the Loch Ken Trust with support from D&G Council, the emergency services & D&G Climate Hub, as part of Dalry CC's resilience preparations. For further information email sjtdalrycc@gmail.com

Celebrating Energy Transition

Community buildings across the Glenkens have made significant strides in improving energy efficiency and reducing their carbon footprint over the last few years.

In 2023, GCAT commissioned a report from Natural Power

Consultants, titled *Energy Efficiency and Decarbonisation in the Glenkens – Community Buildings*, which assessed energy use and outlined practical measures to enhance sustainability across 11 of our public buildings.

Due in part to this and thanks to much volunteer effort, substantial improvements have been made to many Glenkens halls, including better insulation, the installation of air source heat pumps, solar panels and battery storage -

reducing both energy costs and environmental impact.

On 9 February we are planning an event to celebrate these achievements across the whole of the Glenkens, offering a chance to hear directly from those managing community spaces about their experiences. Presentations will be given by CatStrand, New Galloway Town Hall and Dalry Town Hall on their recent historic building upgrades. There will be a chance to chat further over a bowl of 'zero waste soup' with ingredients sourced from LING Larder. This will be followed by a powered-down acoustic candle lit performance by award-winning Canadian folk and country artist, Sarah Jane Scouten.

Stay with us afterward for a screening of *Living Proof – A Climate Story*, Emily Munro's powerful portrayal of industrial change in Scotland through archival footage.

These events are presented by CatStrand Arts, in partnership with the D&G Climate Hub and take place at 2pm Sunday 9 Feb



Musician Sarah Jane Scouten, who will be performing an acoustic set at the event

at CatStrand, New Galloway, and is followed by a screening of *Living Proof-A Climate Story* at 5pm.

Free tickets can be booked from CatStrand 01644 420 374 or gcat.scot/arts

Peter Renwick,
CatStrand Creative Director



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Eco Feature

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United Nations Climate Change Conference

Roland Chaplain reports on the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference and examines the changes needed to combat the climate situation, culminating in a call to action for COP30 in 2025.

I must start any feedback report on COP29 by stating what a huge privilege it was to have been one of the 10 online participants supporting Royal Meteorological Society CEO, Professor Liz Bentley, at the conference in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November last year.

This is the first time that there has been a facility enabling observers to digitally move between meetings, enabling 3,000 digital attendees from across the globe. Those online ranged from non-governmental organisations such as youth groups, indigenous peoples and research organisations, and although there is still a long way to go before NGOs and wider civic society have significant influence over outcomes, it is a vital first step to show that it is possible.

Much of the COP process is very technical

and full of legal language to ensure nations comply with the agreements. To make the proceedings accessible to more people, throughout the fortnight I summarised what I was hearing at the press conferences, highlighting some of the discussions taking place and recording representations from those most affected right now by the climate crisis. You can read the summaries at www.glenkens.scot/glenkens-news/cop30-call-to-action

LOOKING AHEAD TO COP30 IN BRAZIL NEXT YEAR

This is the really important one, coming 10 years after the Paris Agreement, the legally binding international treaty to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

In response to calls from civic society and youth groups in Brazil, the Brazilian President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula), has called for this to be the first ever truly 'People's COP'. It is essential for tackling the climate and nature crises that COP30 is structured in a way which redistributes the balance of power and includes meaningful online participation from citizens' assemblies,

community groups and other non-governmental organisations.

THE ROUTE TO MAKING IT HAPPEN

This article is a call to everyone to recognise the inter-connectedness of all the causes and solutions to the present climate and biodiversity crises. Scotland is a microcosm of the global problems of human beings' relationship with the surface of our planet. The extreme concentration of the ownership of land into so few hands in Scotland typifies the global problem of legal systems that evolved to benefit the already wealthy and powerful, at the expense of the exploited.

For meaningful online participation at the forthcoming COP30, work would need to begin immediately in order to build the framework with the widest possible public buy in through citizens assemblies, organised down to the most local and inclusive of level.

Let's hope that the year-long process that culminates in COP30 in November 2025 in Brazil will see all of us go far beyond what any had previously thought possible to address the root cause of our present predicament.

Galloway Food Hub seasonal recipe

This is a delicious, versatile and fuss-free way to celebrate winter vegetables.

It uses only one tray and is oven baked. You can mix and match the veg with whatever you have to hand; celeriac and beetroot also work very well in this dish (the aim is to have around 800g of veg).

The blue cheese here pairs well with the sweet root vegetables, but if it's not to your liking, switch it out with a cheddar-style cheese.

WINTER VEGETABLE FRITTATA

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

3 tbsp olive oil

2 carrots
1 large leek
3 parsnips
1 small squash
8 eggs
3 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 tbsp fresh rosemary (or 1 tsp dried)
1 tbsp fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
50g blue cheese, crumbled
Salt and pepper to season

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C / gas mark 4

Peel and roughly chop the carrots, parsnips and squash into chunks of about 1-2cm. Slice the leek into thin discs.

Place the veg in a deep baking tray around 20-30cm in size. Drizzle over the olive oil and season with salt and pepper.

Place in the oven and bake for 40 minutes,

stirring the veg halfway through cooking.

While the veg is cooking, beat the eggs in a measuring jug along with the garlic, rosemary and thyme.

Remove the veg from the oven, pour over the egg mixture and sprinkle over the cheese.

Return the tray to the oven and cook for another 10-15 minutes until the egg is set.

Allow the frittata to cool slightly in the tray and serve warm.

The frittata can be made ahead of time as it will keep well in the fridge for up to three days. It's a great meal to make at the start of the week so you have some veg filled, ready-to-go lunches for the next few days.

All of the ingredients in this recipe can be purchased from the Galloway Food Hub (www.gallowayfoodhub.org.uk).

Recipe and photos by Beth Webb, chef and grower from Cree Valley Herbs - you can find more of Beth's recipes at www.creevalleyherbs.co.uk



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Lakeland food dehydrator. Electric. Good for apples, mushrooms, peppers, etc. Almost new. Contact: 07563 718 011

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Tenancy applications welcome from anyone, young or old, single or with a family, who qualifies under the terms of the Trust.



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New lease of life for Corsock's 'Auld Village Garage'

A local businessman plans to put the abandoned Corsock garage back on the map.

Corsock garage has lain empty and abandoned for nearly 30 years, but now Corsock based businessman John Carolan has plans to turn it into a destination craft centre.

John said: 'My wife and I moved to Corsock only last summer with plans to take life a bit easier now we are of a certain age!

"However, out walking the dog one morning I saw the 'For Sale' sign and just knew I could create a business out of the old garage. I put in a fair offer and just a few weeks later the

deeds were mine.

"It is in a terrible state, last used for donkeys years ago. It will clean up though; some hard graft and lots of repairs and we will soon have it presentable."

Soon to be named 'The Auld Village Garage - Corsock', the sort of wares that John believes would be at home there are garden ornaments, hanging baskets, bedding plants, garden furniture, chainsaw carvings, outdoor lamps and pottery.

But it doesn't stop there and John suggests there are plenty of 'crafty people' with more ideas who he hopes would become involved. Local craftspeople will be offered space to exhibit and sell their

stock at very reasonable rates and are invited to get in touch to find out more.

"The A712 that runs through Corsock isn't exactly a busy thoroughfare but, with good marketing, I am confident we can attract locals and tourists to stop by", says John. "I have spent much of my life building businesses - for instance, our other key business is Pet Flaps UK started less than four years ago and we are now the biggest installer and supplier

of cat flaps and dog doors in the UK."

John believes that the old garage has great potential and hopes to put Corsock firmly on the map as a destination rather than just a place to drive through.

If anyone would like to find out more or get involved with this project they can email TheAuldVillageGarage@mail.com or call John on 07934 158 726.



Hat-trick of wins for competitor Valerie

Glenkens resident Valerie Russell, who frequently enters competitions run by the Dumfries-based OG Competitions, is now on her third win.

Company director, Mo Sabur, said: "Valerie has been lucky enough to win on two previous occasions with OG Competitions,

£150 cash and £200 cash. On this occasion Valerie won a Ninja Perfect Temperature Kettle which was supplied to us by Wilsons in Dumfries, where we get all our Ninja and Shark products. I'd like to thank Valerie for entering our competitions and for the support she has shown us, not only by entering but also on social media."

Mo goes on to give a bit of background to the OG Competitions story:

I have a full time job working as an electrician at sea and work away for weeks and weeks at a time. My two daughters were my inspiration for starting OG Competitions in May 2024. Leaving the house for weeks on end was and still is becoming harder. This spurred me on to start my little venture, have some fun and create as many local winners as possible.

As well as becoming a successful business, one of our aims is to help the region as much as possible, through charitable donations and promoting local business. In 9-10 months of business, we have donated £4,611 to local charities and good causes. I've always wanted to support local business as much as possible as my parents had a business in Dumfries.

Our competitions are aimed at bringing people from outside the region to the area; for example, we run competitions for local holiday lodges and short stays in our area. Working with a number of local businesses helps to showcase what our area has to offer and to help promote Dumfries and Galloway.

If you're a local business and would like to get involved, or



Valerie Russell receiving her prize from Mo Sabur of OG Competitions

if you'd like to enter one of the prize draws, you can visit www.ogcompetitions.co.uk or get in touch with Mo directly on 07943 088 928.

Eileen Campbell

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Glenkens Community Spaces Network

The Glenkens Community Spaces Network (GCSN) meets every other month.

The network provides a forum for volunteers managing village halls and community centres across the area to come together and share successes, problems and ideas for collective working.

I've been in post as GCSN facilitator since November 2022 and am delighted that the Glenkens & District Community Fund has now awarded Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) a further year's funding for this project, securing the future of GCSN until the end of 2025.

In remote-rural communities like we have in the Glenkens, community spaces play a vital role in supporting residents to socialise, learn, enjoy music, crafts and sports, and provide a safe environment should home evacuations be necessary in cases of severe weather. It's a pleasure to be able to support the many committed volunteers in this work.

There were many positives in 2024 for GCSN members, with a number of venues securing funding to improve energy

efficiency or completing works in this area.

The Dalry Community Properties Trust was also successful in applying for the asset transfer of the Multi-Use Games Area (also known as the MUGA) beside Dalry School into community ownership. Some venues also took part in resilience planning work through a project funded by the National Centre for Resilience and led by the Loch Ken Trust.

Although there were many positives, some management committees did face challenges, such as significant issues with the fabric of their buildings. It's a really challenging time at the moment and the committees are doing a great job.

The GCSN always welcomes new members - if you are involved in running a community building in the Glenkens and are not yet a member, please get in touch (becca.glenkens.anf@gmail.com).

I would like to extend a huge "thank you" to each of the hardworking volunteers who give their time to keep the doors open throughout the year at our town and village halls and community centres.

We will be celebrating their work during Village Halls Week in March.

I am also delighted to be working



alongside Jo Jackson in her newly created role as Community Activity Adviser! GCAT has secured funding from Awards for All (National Lottery) for this new one day per week role, created to provide extra support and guidance for activity programmes throughout the community spaces of the Glenkens.

Jo will be able to use her experience gleaned over the past two years through GCAT's Connecting in Communities and Together in the Glenkens projects to support the amazing volunteers of our town and village halls in their ambitions to have a lively and well-attended space within their community. She will work with any interested committee to ascertain what

activities would best serve their community, create an action plan and do a certain amount of the leg work.

In this role, as for the GCSN facilitator, GCAT is hoping that providing a modest amount of paid support will relieve the load on our volunteers and perhaps result in renewed activity programmes across the Glenkens.

Jo has been in touch with GCSN members about the support she can offer, but if you would like to get in touch with her directly, you can email jo@catstrand.com for any further enquiries. Here's to a productive 2025!

*Becca Nelson, GCSN Facilitator
and Jo Jackson, Community
Activity Adviser*

Clanjam kids sessions

We're thrilled to announce that ClanJam is expanding to a brand-new location.



Join us at the CatStrand during February and March for magical mornings of music, stories, and community fun!

Thanks to the support of CatStrand Young Creatives, Holywood Trust and Youth Music Initiative, sessions will be held at the CatStrand, New Galloway, at 11am on the last Friday of the month (28 Feb and 28 Mar).

Expect lots of smiles, laughter and, of course, music-making. Whether you're a seasoned ClanJam regular or new to the fun, we can't wait to see you there - let's make some noise in New Galloway!

(Clanjam sessions also run at 10am each Monday at Kirkcudbright Community Centre.) *Amey Turner*

Cost of living advice day

There will be a Cost Of Living Advice Day on Thursday 27 February from 2-6pm at the CatStrand, New Galloway.

GCAT (Galloway Community and Arts Trust) has secured funding from the Dumfries and Galloway Council Tackling Poverty and Inequalities (TPI) fund to host this informational session.

It will be a free drop-in advice afternoon, where there will be plenty of advice and guidance available from relevant parties, to help us tackle the rising cost of living with information about where to go to get further support. All are most welcome, we look forward to seeing you on 27 February. For any further information please contact jo@catstrand.com

Glenkens & District Trust marks successful year of community investment

The Glenkens & District Trust (GDT) distributed more than £200,000 in 2024 to 15 local organisations, marking another successful year of supporting Glenkens communities.

"We have distributed over £1.3 million to local organisations to date," said Fiona Smith, chair of GDT. "These funds make a real difference to the communities we love and are a clear demonstration of the value of place-based decision making."

This year, GDT has focused on strengthening local community 'anchor' organisations. Fiona Smith explained: "We identified anchor organisations as groups that both deliver their own services and help other local groups succeed. These organisations are vital because they build capacity across communities and bring additional funding into the Glenkens, supporting our wider community network."

Two key organisations, Glenkens



The Glaisters Bridge project outside Corsock is one of the projects to benefit from GDT funding during 2024

Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) and Moniaive Initiative, were identified and will receive funding to provide some stability in a turbulent funding landscape, ensuring the benefits these

of defining and identifying anchor organisations gave us the confidence to work with GCAT and Moniaive Initiative and we hope this funding strengthens their core operations."

This year, GDT has focused on strengthening local community 'anchor' organisations.

organisations bring are secured for the wider community.

Fiona Smith added: "Our process

GDT funding has supported several significant local projects including the Galloway Food Hub which connects communities with sustainable, locally-produced food.

GDT has also supported protection of the area's natural heritage through Dumfries and Galloway Woodlands project, 'Woodlands Plus'. This project enhances the natural environment while making sure the woodlands benefit the surrounding communities.

This is done through a mixture of employment opportunities and providing a positive visitor experience by improving pathways and providing high quality crafted seating.

In response to challenges within rural education, GDT commissioned research to examine how other communities are addressing similar challenges. The research, by Community Development

Lens (CoDeL), shows that quality education is critical for ensuring rural communities thrive. The study found many examples of communities in Scotland and further afield finding innovative and cost-effective ways to provide education.

Theona Morrison, director at CoDeL, said: "This research confirmed the critical role that education plays in sustaining rural populations."

"Combined with the passion and deep understanding of education we found within local communities, and with the Council's priority to tackle depopulation, there is a real opportunity to develop education provision in the Glenkens that is innovative and transformational."

Meanwhile, GDT's Education and Training Fund helped 27 residents access professional and vocational training opportunities and further and higher education courses by covering travel, equipment and accommodation costs.

Other highlights from the year include:

- Supporting five local early learning centres with modest awards to benefit children's early learning experiences
- Providing small grants to every community council in the area for local projects

Looking ahead, GDT expects additional funding from new wind farm developments in the area, potentially including Benbrack Wind Farm from 2026, which will help support more community projects.

If you are interested in supporting GDT, you can become an associate member to stay informed without trustee responsibilities; apply at www.glenkenstrust.org.uk/get-involved

GDT's spring round for grant applications closes on **Wednesday 12 March** and people can visit www.glenkens.org/funding to find out more about how to apply.

THE GLENKENS HUB

- ✓ WHAT'S ON CALENDAR
- ✓ NEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITIES
- ✓ GLENKENS GAZETTE CURRENT & BACK ISSUES
- ✓ LOCAL SERVICES & AMENITIES | HOUSING | TRANSPORT
- ✓ JOBS & EDUCATION | VOLUNTEERING
- ✓ COMMUNITY COUNCILS & GROUPS | COMMUNITY SPACES
- ✓ HEALTH, WELFARE & EMERGENCY INFO
- ✓ REPORTS & RESOURCES | LOCAL FUNDERS | CONSULTATIONS

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Glenkens
Community
& Arts Trust

Busy times at the Glenkens Youth group

The Glenkens Youth Group meet on a Monday evening from 7-8.30pm during school term time.

Our usual venue is the Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry – a great space that provides us with a café/kitchen area, a large hall and space outside. We were all delighted to hear that the community centre is to undertake some renovations soon. We have therefore relocated to Balmacellan Village Hall for a couple of months - same day and time. Most Mondays we are a group of around twelve, ranging in age from P7 to S3. As we have youngsters attending Dalry, Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright schools, and with some attendees living as far apart as Parton and Moniaive,

the meetings provide a great opportunity to meet up with friends and make new ones in a safe and informal space.

The group is led by the youngsters themselves and can vary from week to week. The main focus is to have fun, socialise and provide opportunities to share ideas and skills. The enthusiasm and amazing talent of the youngsters is the driving force of the group. Within minutes of the first arriving on a dark Monday evening, the centre comes alive, full of noise, laughter and an urgency to share news with each other.

We have had music nights with guitars, recorders, drums and spoons and plenty of singing. Baking and cooking is always popular with the youngsters! With the ingredients provided, they are very happy to be left alone to follow a recipe or even create their own. A great evening



in the autumn, led by Dave and Marion Briggs, produced delicious apple turnovers.

We had great fun carving pumpkins and painting masks at our Halloween party and more recently a karaoke sing-along at our Christmas party. A huge "thank you" goes to Castle Douglas Tesco and the Co-op for their very generous donations towards those events.

Our fire-lighting skills were put into practice in November, when a perfect evening was spent round the fire pit, toasting marshmallows and singing along to Izak's guitar.

With Christmas presents in mind, we spent a couple of evenings, under the expert guidance of Helen Ramage, creating some stunning mosaic coasters. We

were very pleased with the results – thank you Helen!

The evenings are often spent playing board games, table tennis or badminton in the hall. Following a chat about how to make better use of the hall, we decided to apply for funding to enable us to buy more equipment and fund an outing in the spring term.

In December we were delighted to be awarded £500 by the Glenkens Community Charity Shop. Thank you very much – we will enjoy spending it on new resources, and an outing.

New members (aged between P7 and S3) are always welcome. For more information please contact Sue at glenkensyouth@gmail.com

We look forward to the spring term, lighter nights and more fun and games! Thank you to our funders, youngsters and all who have supported our fantastic group.

The Glenkens Youth Group is a Glenkens Community & Arts Trust project and is core-funded by the Glenkens and District Community Fund, administered by Foundation Scotland. Thanks to them all for allowing us to create this wonderful opportunity for our young people.

Sue Curtis,

Youth Group Deliverer



Galloway Glens leaving a lasting legacy

The Galloway Glens Scheme came to an end in September 2023 after a fantastic five years supporting the communities of the Ken/Dee valley.

The legacy of the Galloway Glens can be seen in many concrete ways, such as the Watson Birds Trail, a suite of new footpaths across the whole area or in renewed community buildings

and assets. However, it also supported communities in many other ways and made a very real difference to the lives of many people who live here.

To further its legacy, the Galloway Glens Scheme is operating small maintenance grants to ensure that legacy Galloway Glens-funded projects can continue to deliver great outcomes for the communities they serve.

£45,000 is available and will be spent in annual rounds over the next three years. The first round closed at the end of 2024, and awards totalling £15,000 were

made to nine excellent projects including water safety on Loch Ken, supporting Local Initiatives in New Galloway in maintaining footpaths and Balmacellan Heritage Trust in investigations into a historic local site.

The Galloway Glens Legacy Fund will re-open for the second round in September 2025. For further information please email enquiries.helen@catstrand.com

Helen Keron,
GCAT Chief Executive

(GCAT provides secretariat services to the Legacy fund on behalf of the Galloway Glens)



Water safety training at Loch Ken, supported by the Galloway Glens Legacy Scheme

Creating a better future for Galloway

a Glenkens conversation on the proposed national park

Here is a conversation between two regular *Gazette* contributors with regard to the proposed Galloway National Park, offering interesting thought-provoking views from both sides of the fence.

Roger Crofts:

There is need for action on many fronts - skilled jobs for locals, better roads, improved access to care health services, higher educational attainment, more affordable housing, improved futures for farmers. That's for existing bodies to deliver. The implication that once established a National Park will solve everything and provide the necessary funding is way off beam.

Ted Leeming:

Roger is correct. But with £10million a year and the legal ability to co-ordinate and collaborate across agencies and communities to deliver a Park Plan, it could, with the right governance, help tackle a wide range of issues that we face.

Roger Crofts:

The Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament

approve a National Park Plan. That is years off. Would overriding government priorities, such as renewable energy generation and transmission or afforestation, or support to farmers, be allowed? That's unprecedented as this would be a government body, appointed by ministers and funded from Edinburgh despite what the minister claims.

Ted Leeming:

The National Park Act has the scope to implement an innovative, efficient, well-structured (the right people on the board is essential) National

Roger Crofts:

Government funding isn't always used well. Priorities don't reflect our problems. Let's turn that round; why not demand more community benefit from wind farm owners, create more local jobs through existing agencies like Forestry and Land Scotland, Nature Scot and support the GSA Biosphere effectively? Cheaper and more effective than more bureaucracy in another body with insufficient local accountability.

Ted Leeming:

I disagree that National Park priorities like sustainable

forestry, should pay community benefits towards a just transition.

Roger Crofts:

We now have polarisation, which is unusual for our area. Adding a referendum will just exacerbate the conflict. We need calmness as a basis for respectful and open discussions with those who understand what would make a difference to their lives and livelihoods. In the 12 months left before the 2026 parliamentary elections decisions will be out of our hands. Government should support us to produce our solutions; invite a respected neutral person to bring all

parties together to determine solutions, actions and resources needed for all of our pressing issues now!

Ted Leeming:

Working together towards a collective vision is crucial and should start today, with or without a National Park. Referenda divide; getting the governance and priorities right, with the right people, is essential and no Park would secure my support unless it was thus.

We will only know what is being proposed when the next round of consultation comes out later this year. I still have concerns, but until then, for the above reasons, I give it my qualified support.

Working together towards a collective vision is crucial and should start today, with or without a park, and I would happily sit with others to create that vision.



Park, created, in the words of cabinet secretary Mairi Gougeon, "...for the people of Galloway, by the people". The latest Government policy guidance has a presumption against wind farms in National Parks, and after 25 years there are none. And as a statutory consultee in what would be a 'sensitive area', the assessment bar for commercial forestry would be higher.

communities, natural and cultural heritage and responsible use of natural resources are not very real and current. The GSA Biosphere, SOSE, FLS and Nature Scot and others are all essential partners in delivering a co-ordinated vision, but they don't carry a national designation and statutory powers of a National Park, backed by an act of parliament. I think other commercial entities, including

between February and April, after which the Scottish Government will decide whether or not to proceed with the designation of a National Park in Galloway.

If the Government decides to proceed, it will consult further on the development of a Designation Order, which would take place over the course of the next year.

The consultation survey for the proposed Galloway National Park runs until 14 February. If you would like to submit your view, you can find the survey (either a short 'summary'

version or a longer one) at www.newnationalparkgalloway.com and click on the 'Consultation Surveys' tab.

Once the consultation phase has closed, the third and final phase of the reporting process is for NatureScot to analyse the responses received and advise Ministers, taking account of the views expressed. This will be done

Balmaclellan village hall

Our annual Glenkens Children's Christmas Party was a great success with over 30 children in attendance.

Santa came along and everyone got to learn some festive circus skills with Spinning Jenny's Shenanigans – these went down a storm, with the grown-ups joining in too!

Two hampers were raffled as well as some children's toys and wine, raising over £50 for the Balmaclellan Village Hall.

Christmas afternoon tea was fully booked and cake and mince pies enjoyed by over 40 people along with a free raffle. Our next afternoon tea in February is also full, but there are a few spaces left for March,

so get booking. You can book by emailing wellsjackie@gmail.com or popping into Balmaclellan shop.

We are pleased to have received funding from the Community Led Local Development Programme for new heaters and insulation, which will further improve the comfort and upkeep of the hall – work will start in January.

Balmaclellan Village Hall continues to be home to a variety of activities and groups – keep an eye out for a new weekly Stretch and Balance class with D&G Council on Mondays at 12.45pm – no need to book, just turn up (payment by donation). And if you enjoy sewing, or would like to have a go, come along to the Sew Special sessions, starting in January and running again in February. Limited spaces are

available – please email julia.higgins55@outlook.com to book.

Meanwhile, the Community Library is open on Wednesday and Saturday mornings; Soup and Sandwiches is on Saturdays; Glenkens Crafters on Wednesday mornings; the Stewartry Birdwatchers is on Thursday afternoons monthly, and Make Do and Mend fortnightly.

Further details can be found at Balmaclellan Store, on our Balmaclellan Village Hall Facebook page and on the Glenkens Hub website at www.glenkens.scot and hall bookings can now be made easily through hallbookingonline.com/balmaclellan

A huge thanks to everyone who volunteered over the festive season to make our Christmas events happen. We are always



looking for help with setting up, planning events and lots of other things that keep the hall going strong – if you are interested in helping in any way in 2025, please get in touch!

*Balmaclellan Village Hall Committee
(wellsjackie@gmail.com)*



The children of Carsphairn parish eagerly awaited a special visit from Santa as the village began their Christmas festivities.

As part of the annual festive tradition, the community came together in the 200-year-old Carsphairn Parish Church to enjoy a fun twist on the usual church service, kindly provided by Maggie Phillips on behalf

Santa's visit to Carsphairn

of the absent minister, as well as fundraising for the Save the Children charity.

After the carols had been sung, the congregation 'strolled' along to the local hall, to enjoy a delicious tea of sandwiches and cakes provided by the wonderful volunteers and members of the community.

The evening was filled with laughter, fun and many happy memories as the games took

a hold. Children's ears soon began to listen carefully for the distant ringing of bells outside the hall, as the special man in red arrived to deliver each child under 12 a unique present (with help from his four reindeer and an elf or two!)

Many thanks to CREFL for funding the Christmas gifts and the bakers and volunteers who made the party such fun.

Melissa Ade

Glenkens Cub Scouts

In the run-up to Christmas the Cub Scouts took part in an Advent challenge.

They made cards with Bagheera, wrapped a gift wearing oven gloves, wrapped a book in pairs with one arm each tied behind their backs.

We played the A to Z game,

naming Christmas words and lots more.

We thoroughly enjoyed the CatStrand Panto, 'King Arthur'. The cast were amazing, each and every one of them; we shouldn't have favourites but we did love Smoulder, the baby dragon. The cast were a credit to the directing team. Well done all! (See article on p27...)

Pippin who is a member of our group and her little brother Fred have

been making brooches in their parents' workshop and selling them at craft fairs. They have surpassed their total during 2024 by raising £1,600 to help Stepping Stones Larder and Foodbank in Castle Douglas.

They don't just make the brooches, but they then also enquire what is most needed at

the food bank and go to Tesco and do a huge shop. Pippin is keeping her Cub Scout Promise by to 'help other people' and part of her Cub Scout Law 'a Cub Scout thinks of others before themselves'. Amazing children! (see front page article).

If you are eight to ten years old and would like to come and try Cubs, we meet on a Wednesday from 6.15-7.30pm at the Scout Hut in New Galloway.

*Yours in Scouting,
Heather and Hannah*

A history of Spalding Bowling Club

Dalry's Spalding Bowling Club was founded in 1912 and offers outdoor lawn bowling.

The club is a bit tucked away, not directly visible from the road, but you'll find the entrance on Ayr Road, just before you reach St John's Town Services.

There's plenty of parking, a small clubhouse, toilets, and seating for both players and spectators. Anyone can join the club, not just locals, and visitors are always welcome. The main goal is to get more people involved in bowling and bring the community together for some fun and social time.

You don't need to be a member to come try it out!

Lawn bowling is a sport for everyone—it's a friendly and fun environment where there are no age, gender, or ability restrictions. Plus, it's great for your fitness, coordination, mental wellbeing, and it helps you connect with others.

Contrary to popular belief, it's not just for retirees - many players on the Scottish National Team are under 40, and there are even under 18 and under 25 teams.

The club is a Community Amateur Sports Club and a member of Bowls Scotland. During the bowling season (April to September), we hold regular games 2-3 times a week, plus various competitions for members. We also have sweep nights on Mondays and Thursdays at 7pm. Members can play informal games any other time.

Coaching is available, and you can borrow lawn bowls equipment. All you need to bring is a pair of flat or low-tread shoes or trainers! Sweep games cost £1.50 per session. Membership for the 2025 season is £60, with a 50% discount for first-time members. We also have certified



coaches for kids.

The club is run by volunteers and stays afloat through competitions and local grants. We are particularly grateful to the Glenkens & District Community Fund for helping us purchase new equipment, and the Glenkens Community Shop for ongoing support.

We're always appreciative of any help with maintaining the green, clubhouse, and grounds.

The 2025 season will open on Saturday 26 April at 2pm

(weather permitting). Feel free to come along, join in a casual game, and enjoy some refreshments.

Also, don't miss our Family Fun Day on Saturday 31 May - more details will be coming soon, so keep an eye out and come try bowling with us!

For more information you can contact Fiona Ramsay at 07500 554 751 or Sharon Fishwick at 07968 526 322, or email spaldingbc@btinternet.com

Fiona Ramsay

Photo of the Issue

This issue has two winners - Paul Goodwin and Richard Nash.

Paul Goodwin's photograph, titled 'Northern lights above Craig Rotchell, Dalry', and Richard Nash's triple/quadruple rainbow pic titled 'The CatStrand - our Glenkens pot of gold'. Both Paul and Richard win two portions of mac 'n' cheese from our competition sponsors, the Balmacellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co.

Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said: "We just can't decide this issue between the amazing quadruple rainbow and the incredible shot of the Northern lights, so we're going to give a prize to both!"



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



LING helps promote rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation throughout New Galloway and Kells. We do this by maintaining and improving public amenities, preserving buildings which are of historic or architectural importance, and providing recreational facilities for the public - and especially for those who, by reason of age, infirmity, disability, or social and economic circumstances have need of them.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Shaping the future of New Galloway...

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING) held a consultation on 18 January in collaboration with the Local Place Planning steering group and the Community Council. We invited residents to bring their ideas and feedback on upcoming local projects.

The event took place at New Galloway Town Hall and gave the community a valuable opportunity to help determine the future of our area.

Local Place Planning Document

Attendees contributed to New Galloway's Local Place Plan, which is currently being developed by a steering group. This included discussing priorities in matters such as housing, green spaces, and public amenities and facilities.

Community Garden

LING then welcomed thoughts on our newly proposed community garden and its design. Everyone came up with ideas about how the garden can become a vibrant and inclusive space for everyone, reflecting the needs and aspirations of the area.

Developing an Inclusive Play Park

As well as a community garden, LING is in partnership with the community council to

create an inclusive play park, focusing on accessibility and ensuring it meets the needs of children and families of all ages and abilities.

This was the town hall's first major public consultation since its refurbishment, making it a significant milestone in the effort to establish the building as a central hub for community engagement and collaboration. It highlighted the hall's potential to facilitate important public discussions that in turn lend a voice to anyone interested in the future of the burgh.

It was also a fantastic opportunity for the community to come together and think creatively about the needs of New Galloway - and the feedback collected during the event will play a key role in advancing these important local projects.

For those who missed the event, an online survey is available to ensure that everyone can share their views. For more information or to access the survey, contact John Muir at john.muir@ling.org.uk.

John Muir



MEET THE TRUSTEES

Bob Glaister is now one of the longest standing LING trustees, having got caught up 'accidentally', as he always says, back in 2015. With a background in education, teaching first in Kelso, he had moved to a role as staff tutor in the Open University, with the whole of Scotland as his patch, in 1971.

Ultimately he became Dean of the Faculty of Education based down in Milton Keynes. He retired at the end of 2004, having been widowed and having moved back to Scotland.

His links with New Galloway go back to his student days when his mother retired here to Snowdrop Cottage from Sunderland, where he had been brought up. Some of his memories of that time include working behind the bar in the Kenmure Arms and learning to serve pink gins. Those were the days!

Although the cottage was sold after his mother's death, he and his new wife, Ann, were delighted to be able to buy it back and have now settled in New Galloway permanently.

LING has been fortunate to have his skilled and kindly support over so many years!

CHRISTMAS REVIEW

We know that Christmas feels like a lifetime ago, but it would be remiss of us not to mention all that went on for LING over the festive period! Over 30 volunteers were involved in our Christmas events, from producing and delivering the annual New Galloway and Kells Christmas brochure, to serving various food and drinks, to decorating the Town Hall and much, much more.

We started with our Christmas lights walk-down where we were led by our stalwart piper from New Galloway Golf Club to St Margaret's church at the other end of the burgh. Many mince pies and shortbread biscuits were consumed and the hot chocolate and mulled wine went down a treat if the 120 happy faces in the church were anything to go by!

Our second annual senior citizens' Christmas lunch came next, supported by Drax and our own Community Council. This year we had around 60 lunchers, ably catered for by Jackie Povall of Fabby Cakes!

To keep our attendees entertained between courses we had our Christmas raffle draw with generous prizes donated by local businesses, as well as the dulcet tones of the children from Kells School who came to sing for us.



This year we hosted our first Christmas craft fair at the Town Hall and were amazed by the number of talented artisans living in the Glenkens. It is definitely an event we would like to repeat this year!

The Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone who has helped with our events - as well as all the people who attended them! It's not just at Christmas that people help, of course, but it brings home how many are engaged with making things work. We do live in a most lovely and generous community.

Ann Glaister

newgallowaytownhall.com

info@ling.org.uk

07749 249 781

[localinitiativesinnewgalloway](https://www.facebook.com/localinitiativesinnewgalloway)

[local_initiatives_in_ng](https://www.instagram.com/local_initiatives_in_ng)

Looking after an elderly tree in Dalry

Some readers of the *Glenkens Gazette* may have noticed a huge copper beech in a back garden on Main Street, Dalry, as it is visible in the village and from the surrounding hills.

It is likely to have been planted in the 1850s when what is now

45 Main Street was built as a single-storey stone house (later converted to two storeys in the 1890s).

Owners need to take care of their tree and make sure that it does not create risks for neighbours. This is a little story of how this copper beech has been cared for to give it a new lease of life.

Copper beeches (*fagus sylvatica f. purpurea*) have an expected lifespan of some 250 years, so the Dalry tree has another 70 years or more to go.

However, there is some decay in the base of part of the trunk

which might weaken it, although the main legs are very sturdy.

So it was sensible in this situation to get expert advice on what to do. Richard Kirsch, of Glenkens Tree Surgeons, is just such a person. He advised that the tree had plenty of life left in it, thank goodness, so felling was not even contemplated.

However, the size and weight of the canopy, reaching a height of around a hundred feet, was placing a great deal of stress on the lower trunk.

Richard proposed that pollarding it was the best approach to

secure the tree's future. This meant taking out the canopy and reducing the length of the upper limbs, which is what has been done.

Now neighbours have maybe lost the top of this wonderful tree but be assured that it will begin to grow as soon as springs arrives this year as Richard left many growth points with young twigs which will readily sprout.

So, a long standing feature of our village has been given a new lease of life, for us and succeeding generations all to enjoy.

Roger Crofts



Carsphairn's festive dinner and community concert

Carsphairn Community Council organised their excellent annual seniors' festive dinner and community concert in the Lagwyne Hall.

The event has been running for 10 years now since, being resurrected in 2014. A delicious freshly cooked three-course meal was served, accompanied by the musical talents of Greg Lawson and Pete Garnett.

The music was of a very high

calibre, and described as "mesmerising" and "mind-blowing" by guests.

The event remains an excellent social get-together for the more mature members of the community, as well as welcoming in the wider community for an evening of music after the meal.

A raffle raised £120 for Carsphairn children's Christmas party.



Dear Gazette Editorial Team,

You do an amazing job with the *Gazette*, galvanising and gathering all of this material - thank you.

What a fantastic area is The Glenkens for its friendly folk, great community spirit and splendid countryside.

*All the best,
Roger*

History group making history

The Glenkens Story - 10 years on

The Glenkens Story local history group will mark 10 years of exploring the area's heritage with an afternoon of celebration on Sunday 23 March.

The most spectacular ongoing local history story over the last decade has been the unwrapping, literally, of the 'Galloway Hoard' which had been unearthed in a field near Balmaghie Kirk the year before the group was set up.

David Bartholomew, one of our most active members and

contributors, was with the detectorists who made the discovery. We will start our celebration afternoon with the latest research on the find when Dr Adrián Maldonado, Galloway Hoard Researcher at National Museums Scotland, delivers the keynote lecture: 'The Galloway Hoard - What's New and What's Next'.

The Glenkens Story began with a drop-in event in Dalry in March 2015. Numerous enthusiasts set up stalls and poster boards presenting their interests ranging from farm buildings to war graves and place names to bygone village shops.

Simultaneously, a rolling series of mini-lectures demonstrated the varied historical passions to be found in the Glenkens with

contributions from Michael Ansell, David Bartholomew, Bill Blyth, Anna Campbell, Ted Cowan, Paul Goodwin and Lizanne Henderson among others. More than 150 local people dropped in during the course of the day.

Mike Brown, one of the original organisers, will provide an illustrated review of the 10 years which followed with highlights from some of the 30 events - lectures, conferences, field trips and seminars - which the Glenkens

Story has staged since 2015.

For a number of years, the late Professor Ted Cowan (Emeritus, University of Glasgow) contributed a regular and very popular local history column in the *Glenkens Gazette*. Dr Lizanne Henderson will discuss 'Writing the Glenkens Story' in recognition of the work and passion that went into these articles, as well as future plans for their wider dissemination.

Other contributors will include Jo Miller who curated the exhibition 'Music-making in the Glenkens' and Michael Ansell who will present a smorgasbord of possible future events, offering the opportunity for anyone interested to become involved in shaping our programme.

Sparkling drinks and tasty fare will be served to complete the celebrations. Tickets are available from the CatStrand - www.gcat.scot or 01644 420 374.

The Glenkens Story is grateful for CatStrand's invaluable support

The Glenkens Story

2015 - 2025

10 years of Sharing Our History



over the last 10 years and to the Dalry Community Charity Shop for its support of the celebrations.

Pictured: Above - Dr Adrián Maldonado, Galloway Hoard Researcher at National Museums Scotland who will give the keynote lecture at the celebration. Photo © National Museums Scotland.

Left - A gold-mounted rock crystal jar and a set of three gold-socketed mounts found in the lidded vessel within the Galloway Hoard, deposited c AD 900. Photo © National Museums Scotland



Name the place

(from page 6)

Site Name - The Greenhouse, Natural Power Consultants HQ

Location - Forrest Estate Dalry

Description - Natural Power initially moved into their sustainable office in 2001. Built using timber grown and milled on Forrest Estate where ever possible, the initial phase seated 30 people. With two additional phases since, it can now seat

over 120 staff (of over 500 employed by the company globally). The sustainable building is kept warm by underfloor heating from a heat pump linked to a series of eight, 100m+ deep bore holes. A suite of kennels alongside the main building means that staff can bring their dogs to work, along with a gym for staff on site. Services provided from the office include industry leading renewable energy consultancy, from planning through to

operations for large scale, grid connected energy generation, renewable energy project construction services, a global due diligence department and a geotechnical site investigation core drilling business which in itself employs over 40 people. The office has its own generator to ensure uninterrupted service to clients should there be a grid outage.

Interesting fact - A newly refurbished on site control centre (with a backup site in Dumfries) manages over a quarter of the UK's operational onshore wind farms - that's 5% of UK's total electricity supply - 24 hours a day, 365 days a year!

Poetry for the climate and biodiversity

What is the role of poetry and the poet in a climate and biodiversity crisis?

Robert Burns is celebrated for his profound understanding and appreciation of nature. His evocative poems captured the essence of the natural world in his time, depicting its beauty, power, and the deep connection it shares with humanity. In 2025 the natural world is in a perilous state, and we need many perspectives. What can language do?

On the heels of Burns Night, Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival and D&G Climate Hub in collaboration with Bakehouse Community Arts welcome two contemporary performance poets to the Glenkens. Tawona Sitholé and Genevieve Carver will share their work and discuss with us their take on our eternal connection in the present; the fragile state we are living through, how we can respond, how we might be in best service of nature during a climate crisis. These events will blend performance and conversation.

On Saturday 8 February from 2–4pm, we welcome Genevieve Carver to the CatStrand, a writer and poet with special interests in nature writing and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The poems integrate poetic and scientific processes, data about animal life histories and first-hand encounters with ecological fieldwork, giving voice to the non-human in surprising and original ways.

In addition to the text, Genevieve collaborated with composer Lucie Treacher to create the EP Hydrophonica, blending spoken word and music with underwater field recordings of bottlenose dolphins. She won the Moth Nature Writing Prize for this work, of which judge Max Porter said: "It's such an interesting and surprising hybrid, which manages to be deeply funny and very sad at the same time, an unusual feat in both science

writing and poetry."

Genevieve is currently a Royal Literary Fund Fellow at the University of Aberdeen.

Sarah Thomas,
Climate Officer (West), D&G Climate Hub,
GSAB UNESCO Biosphere
(07425 370 895)



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King Arthur triumphs

The thirteenth CatStrand pantomime was certainly a huge success once again and despite the stormy weather, played to four full houses over the first weekend of December.

The well known legend of King Arthur isn't a regular panto subject but our favourite writer, Paul Reakes, has written a wonderful script based on the famous story – with a degree of poetic licence thrown in.

The title role of the bumbling King Arthur was brilliantly played by Josh Wells, hitting every comedy moment in the script and many more besides (see Josh's article on p8).

He was aided and abetted by the bossy Queen Guinevere, played with tremendous style by Ruby Harfield. Ruby had the audience in the palm of her hand throughout and raised the roof with her solo songs. The Royal Boudoir scene with the King and Queen must surely rank as one of the funniest and most memorable CatStrand panto scenes ever (pictured below).

The 'principal boy' of the tale was of course the bold Sir Lancelot, played in true thigh-slapping panto fashion by Rosie Spernagel, with Sophie Roberts as her charming

'principal girl', Olivia.

The comedy duo of Squire Squirt and Sally the Castle Cook were played with great aplomb by Liam McQueen and Alice Oliver. In their first major panto roles, they certainly took the stage by storm and had the audience in stitches every time they appeared.

Squirt's new friend, Smoulder the Baby Dragon, became the Royal Pet and was very cutely brought to life by Marie Dobbin. Marie deserves a special mention as the late arrival of the dragon costume meant that she didn't have any rehearsal time at all with the costume until the opening night!

Of course, it wouldn't be Camelot without a Merlin, and Rose Benson made the challenging role her very own. Rose admirably delivered the clever rhyming lines perfectly, with a few ad-libs here and there too, whilst at the same time battling to retain some order and keep the story on track.

Merlin's most troublesome problems were mainly caused by the 'baddies', ably led by Megan Oliver as the evil Morgana, with her son Mordred (Izak Entwistle) and daughter Mordreda (Io Heyes). The nasty threesome

excelled in their task of terrorising the 'goodies' and the audience, but of course got their comeuppance in the end thanks to Smoulder's fire-breathing Mummy appearing and 'frying' them!

Musical interludes were provided during the show by the Camelot Strolling Player, Ella Campbell, who even composed a song especially for the opening scene.

Daniel Blaylock was the Royal Page, with the special task of looking after Excalibur and the multi-tasking chorus members, Keira Hawker, Caitlin Jones, Frankie Gordon and Jess King appeared variously as courtiers, ghouls, messengers and villagers.

The panto was directed by Brian Edgar assisted by Jo Jackson. The fabulous set was designed by Cat Campbell together with the young people in the 'Behind the Scenes' crew. The huge task of costuming the show was led by Sue Lindsay and the excellent sound and lighting plot was designed and operated by Jim Ranyard.



Another great show and we'd like to thank everyone for coming along and supporting us and also all those who kindly sponsored some of the costs or helped in any way to get the show on stage!

We can't wait for the next panto but we've already turned our attention to the One Act Festival and have started rehearsals for our two entries, 'It's Only Make Believe' by Mark Rees in the Open Festival and 'Gossip' by Brian Hampton in the Youth Festival.

They are both on stage at The Fullarton on 28 February and will be performed at CatStrand shortly after that.

Brian Edgar



Songs for the turning of the year

Winter Sundays Past
Getting dressed under the bedclothes
Net curtains stuck to ice, inside windows
Dad lighting the fire with a gas poker
Holding a sheet of newspaper up to
help the fire draw
Porridge for breakfast with plenty of sugar
Milk - solid on doorstep, pushing up cap like
a frozen fountain
Sunday school
Making snowmen with wet woollen gloves
Chilblains
Dinner at midday
Steak and kidney pudding or toad in the
hole, rarely a roast
Spotted dick and golden syrup for afters

Put on best clothes for visiting
An aunt with fire tartan legs and shiny toilet
paper
Nan with the outside loo, newspaper
squares hanging on string, put salt down
after you flush
Dripping on toast for tea
Sunday Night at the London Palladium in
Black and White
Off to bed, no more coal going on the fire
Squabbling siblings push to stand on the
spot on lino that was heated by hot water
pipes
Wincyette pyjamas and dressing gown in
bed
Heavy coats on top of the eiderdown

by Paul Goodwin

Snow.

Snow came, quiet as thieves
After lead, left the church roof
Blank for birds to scribble
Their secret language.

Wind erased paths,
Swept grass, mixed leaves
Into drifts, came again
Left new depths, wind played
A different game of sweep and pile.

Frost joined the play
Added sparkle, furred twigs,
Fragile beauty gone in a breath,
As more snow fell.

Anne Micklethwaite

FINLAY CARSON MSP Member of the Scottish Parliament for Galloway and West Dumfries



If you would like an appointment,
please get in touch

Write to:

107 King Street, Castle Douglas, DG7 1LZ

Email: Finlay.Carson.MSP@parliament.scot

Phone: 01556 504991

Facebook: [FinlayCarsonMSP](https://www.facebook.com/FinlayCarsonMSP)

Twitter: [fincarson](https://twitter.com/fincarson)



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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 on a journey into his world of writing, reading and general thoughts on life.

Since the offensive began which liberated Syria after almost 14 years of struggle, I've been stuck to the computer screen or the telephone receiver, talking to Syrians, gobbling news updates, reading analysis, watching videos, listening to testimony.

Though the stuff I'm looking at is fascinating, informative, and important, the internet medium through which most of it is delivered, in tiny byte-sized bleeps, is congealing my brain. I can feel it. I can feel the stupefying effect.

I become addicted to those bleeps, those info-nuggets, and rapidly grow so sick on them that I can only function in bleep-time. My brain not only congeals but shrinks and hardens, and soon it won't stretch far enough to think complex thoughts or feel balanced emotions. This may explain quite a bit of what's

happening in our societies.

There's a book by Nicholas Carr called *The Shallows: How the Internet is Changing the Way We Think, Read and Remember*, which uses solid research to demonstrate that we learn less and think less flexibly when we are presented information online and in multimedia format as opposed to on the written page.

I, in any case, am pulling myself back from the Twitter brink. I am hauling myself from the maw of the cyber abyss. I am returning to reading novels.

To be specific, I am returning to a novel by Tim Winton – a writer who is, according at least to my limited knowledge of Australian writing, that country's greatest novelist. Peter Carey notwithstanding. I read Winton's *Breath* a few years ago. That's a story about surfing, sex and death, and it's really very good.

But now I'm reading *Cloudstreet*, which is about a huge rackety house in Perth (the antipodean Perth, of course) inhabited by two large rackety families, the Pickles and the Lambs.

Water is always important in Winton's novels. The mystery of a boy called Fish is at the centre of this one. Fish is a particularly intelligent boy, but is caught up in the nets during a fishing

expedition and nearly dies. His parents, "Bible-bashers", rush to declare the miracle of his survival in public, but slowly and quietly lose their religion afterwards, when they realize that Fish after his drowning is slow and different, and persistently wishes to return to the waves.

The novel is about time passing like a river, and historical flux, from World War Two to the mid nineteen-sixties, and drunkenness, anorexia, gambling, envy, and love. Like the best novels, it's an entire world all of its own, complex and complete.

I am soon smoothly immersed in the flow of the story, even with net-addled brain. The focus streams from one character to another in easily digestible episodes.



Reading a high quality novel is a mental yoga workout. After some hours of it, my brain is no longer brittle, but well-stretched, and four or five dimensional. It contains space for nuance, contradiction, and change-through-time.

As for the changes underway in Syria, soon it will be time to go and see them actually happening, not cut up into bytes, not meditated by the screen.

David Tallontire CHIMNEY SWEEP

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CatStrand

HIGHLIGHTS



BOO HEWERDINE & BROOKS WILLIAMS

THU 13 FEB 7:30PM

"AMERICANA AT ITS FINEST!" - FROOTS.



Herak / Bulatkin Quartet - Feat. Paul Towndrow

WED 19 FEB 7:30PM

CZECH JAZZ QUARTET FOR "2024 YEAR OF CZECH MUSIC," MIXING FOLK, BALKAN RHYTHMS, AND IMPRESSIONIST CLASSICAL.



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PATRICK MONAHAN: THE TALKINATOR

FRI 4 APR 7:30PM

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HIGH ST, NEW GALLOWAY
01644 420 374 GCAT.SCOT

Glenkens
Community
& Arts Trust



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: Michele Owen - 07940 313 445

• New Galloway: 07741 656 601

• Parton: Tom - 07835 821 976

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 info@ling.org.uk

Dalry Communities Properties Trust (DCPT): Contact Michelle Owen at sjtdalrycc@gmail.com

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: 2 Feb, 2 Mar, 6 Apr, 11am

Carsphairn: 9 Feb, 9 Mar, 13 Apr, 11.15am

Kells: 16 Feb, 16 Mar, 11am

Dalry: 23 Feb, 23 Mar, 11am, Holy Communion

Special service: Dalry School Easter service, Thursday 27 March, 2pm, Dalry Church

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

The Rev Dawn Matthew

Sundays: 10.30am, Holy Communion with refreshments after the service. **Tuesdays:** 10am-12noon, look for the 'church is open' sign and pop in for private prayer or to chat with Dawn. **Thursdays:** 7.30-8pm, evening prayers via Zoom shared with our sister church, All Saints' Challoch. Please contact Dawn for the link.

SPECIAL SERVICES: Wednesday 5 March, 6pm, Ash Wednesday communion service. Sunday 30 March, 10.30am, Mothering Sunday communion service

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

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

SEE AD ON PAGE 16...

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



The *Glenkens Gazette* is a member of independent UK press regulator, Impress. To find out more about our complaints process you can visit www.glenkens.scot/complaints-and-corrections or scan the QR code here.



GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

You can now apply for a Garden Waste Collection Service permit at £40 per bin, for regular collections from March to November 2025.

Apply online at www.dumgal.gov.uk/wasterecycling or in person at a customer service centre such as Dalry Library.

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GALLOWAY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

email: gct@catstrand.com / gctadmin@catstrand.com

phone: Jon 07841 512449 / Jason 07704 662925

**FEBRUARY 2025 – MARCH 2025****REGULAR SERVICES**

We are pleased to announce a change to our GK2 service. From Wednesday 4th December the service will run during the day instead of the evening, with more calling points in Castle Douglas. New timetable as per below:

GK2 Glenkens > Castle Douglas
Every Wednesday (Registered Route)

Outward		Return
0925	Kendoon	1513
0945	Dalry (Underhill)	1453
0950	Balmaclellan	1448
0955	New Galloway	1443
1005	Mossdale	1433
1013	Laurieston	1425
1030	Ringford	1408
1048	Castle Douglas	1350

(with drop-offs at CoOp/B&M/Tesco/Aldi)

Booking not required

MINIBUS DRIVING

Minibus drivers are needed to do volunteer and paid driving for our wide range of member community groups, as well as for our contracted school services. MiDAS training will be provided. Not got a D1 on your licence? Not a problem, we have a couple of buses that do not require D1. Ask us for more details.

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 / 07704 662925

EXCURSIONS**GCT EXCURSION****CREATIVE CRAFT SHOW, GLASGOW**

Saturday 8th March 2025



The Creative Craft Show is a haven for knitting, cross-stitching, paper crafting, jewellery making, dressmaking and stitching enthusiasts, offering all the very latest supplies, ideas and innovations in the hobby world!

Bus Fare £19:00

(Tickets for the show available separately from the SEC website)

Option to be dropped off in Glasgow City Centre or the Riverside Museum prior to the SEC arrival

**Pick ups:**

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

Arriving at:

1050 Glasgow City
1100 SEC Glasgow
1110 Riverside Museum
Return departs at approx 1550

MOBILE:
07841 512449

EMAIL:
GCT@CATSTRAND.COM

FURTHER INFO:
WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/GALLOWAY-
COMMUNITY-TRANSPORT

WEBSITE: WWW.GALLOWAYCOMMUNITYTRANSPORT.ORG

2025 EXCURSIONS

We will be running our successful Gardens of Excellence programme again next year. Watch this space for further details!

MEMBERSHIP HIRE

We have 3 x 16 seat buses, a 15 seat, an 8 seat minibus and a fully wheelchair accessible electric car available (and minibus) for hire by community organisations.

For information about membership and terms and conditions of hire see the GCT website or phone 07841 512449 / 07704 662925

www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

WHAT'S ON February/March

FEBRUARY

Wed 5, Carsphairn Village Shop Ltd AGM, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall

Wed 5, Hannah Read, Cahalen Morrison and Michael Starkey, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Thu 6, Haggis Drive in aid of Crossmichael Primary, 6pm, Crossmichael Primary School

Sat 8, Sew Special Saturday, 10am-4pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Sat 8, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 8, When it Burns - with Genevieve Carver, 2pm, CatStrand

Sat 8, Glenkens Agricultural Show Ceilidh, 7pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Sat 8, Mixtape Party Night, 8pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 9, SongWave Singing Workshop, 10am-3pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Sun 9, Celebrating the Energy Transition in the Glenkens, 2-5pm, CatStrand

Sun 9, Film: Living Proof A Climate Story, 5pm, CatStrand

Mon 10, Parton Village Hall Coffee Morning, 10.30am-12noon

Tue 11, Lagwyne Hall AGM 2025, 7pm

Tue 11, Charlie Hooper-Williams: What if you could see music? 7.30pm, CatStrand

Wed 12, Talk - The Port Road Line, 1.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Thu 13, Ken Words Writers' Café, 7pm, The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

Thu 13, Boo Hewerdine & Brooks Williams, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sat 15, Make Some Noise music session, 10.15am, The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

Sun 16, The Vintage Ensemble concert, 2.30pm, Kirkpatrick Durham Church

Mon 17, Dalry Town Hall Management Meeting, 7pm

Wed 19, Dumfries Mobile Fish & Chips in New Galloway, 5.15-11.55pm, Smithy Car Park, New Galloway (see Facebook @ DumfriesMobileFishAndChips)

Wed 19, Herak/Bulatkin Quartet- feat Paul Towndrow, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sun 23, National Theatre Live 2025 - The Importance of Being Earnest, 3pm, CatStrand

Mon 24, GCAT AGM, 7pm, CatStrand

Thu 27, Cost Of Living Advice Day, 2-6pm, CatStrand

Fri 28, ClanJam Family Music Making, 11am-12noon, CatStrand

Tournament, 6-9pm, Thistle Inn, Crossmichael

Sat 8, GCT excursion: creative craft show, Glasgow, see p33

Sat 8, Permaculture Workshop at Lothlorien, 10am-1pm, Lothlorien, Corsock

Sat 8, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 8, Mixtape Party Night, 8-11pm, Dalry Town Hall

Wed 12, GDT's spring round for grant applications closes; visit www.glenkens.org/funding info, see p8

Thu 13, Ken Words Writers' Café, 7-9pm, CatStrand

Sat 15, Sew Special Saturday, 10am-4pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall

Sun 23, The Glenkens Story - a time for celebration, 9am-5pm, CatStrand, see p25

Fri 28, ClanJam Family Music Making, 11am-12noon, CatStrand

APRIL

Wed 5, Resilience Test Event: staged emergency, 11am-12noon, Throughgate, Dalry, see p12

Sat 19, Bairn Banter Easter Egg Hunt, 10.30am, Carsphairn School Playground

MARCH

Sat 1, Dalry Community Café, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 1, Carsphairn Community Woodland Volunteer Day, 10am-3pm

Sat 1, Crossmichael Open Darts Tournament, 1-7pm, Thistle Inn, Crossmichael

Sun 2, Crossmichael Domino

Glenkens & District Community Councils

Balmaclellan Community Council: Bi-monthly, 7.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall - contact Martin on 07939 261 391

Carsphairn Community Council: Last Monday each month, 7pm, Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn - contact carsphairncc@gmail.com or 07531 035 824

Dalry Community Council: First Monday each month, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall - contact sjtdalrycc@gmail.com or 07940 313 445

New Galloway & Kells Community Council: Second Monday each month, 7.30pm, New Galloway Town Hall

Corsock & Kirkpatrick Durham Community Council: contact mcnabbblaurie@hotmail.com or 01644 440 200

Balmaghie Community Council: contact secbalmaghiecc@btinternet.com or 01644 450 621

Parton Community Council: contact ericaporteous@hotmail.co.uk or 01644 470 277

Crossmichael Community Council: Second Wednesday every month - contact richardandjane@phonecoop.coop or 01556 670 691

Full minutes of local Community Council meetings can be viewed at Dalry Library or online at www.glenkens.scot

REGULAR EVENTS & OPENING TIMES

Balmaclellan Village Hall

Tuesday Afternoon Teas, 1st Tues each month, 2.30-4pm, warburton.julie@googlemail.com

Exercise Class, Tue, 6-7pm

Tai Chi, Wed, 2-3pm

Zumba, Fri, 6.30-7.30pm

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

Community Library, Wed, 10.30am-12.30pm; Sat, 10am-12noon

Make Do & Mend, fortnightly from 14 Feb, 7-9pm

Stewartry Birdwatchers, 2nd Thu each month Sep to Apr (Sep & Apr, 7.30pm; Oct-Mar, 2.30pm)

Soup & Sandwich, Sat, 12noon-2pm, Oct-Mar

Men's Shed, Balmaclellan

General Opening Times: Mon, Wedn & Fri, 9.30am-12noon

Stick Making - Mon, 7-9pm

Art Group, Thu, 2-4pm

Lagwyne Hall, Carsphairn

Monday Morning Social, 11am-2pm, 07710 124 255

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

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

Bairn Banter; family stay & play session, Sat, 10am

CatStrand, New Galloway

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

Behind the Scenes, bi-weekly, Mon, 5.30pm

Energising Yoga Flow, Tue, 9.30am, booking essential, 07733 111 466

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

Weekly Bus Service to Tesco, Wed, 7pm

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

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

Young Writers Cafe, (age 12+), Wed, 6pm, monthly

Piano Lessons, weekly, term time 4-6.30pm

Morning Flow Yoga, Thu, 9.30am, booking essential, 07733 111 466

CatStrand Singers, Thu, 11am

Dance Steps (age 10-18yrs), Sat, monthly, 12.30-3.30pm

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

Art Club, (age 11-16yrs), Sat, bi-weekly

11.30am

Musical Misfits, Sat, bi-weekly, 10am

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

The Smiddy, Balmaclellan

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

Mini Music Makers, family session, monthly 11.45am (under 7yrs)

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

Art Explorers, Sat, 10.30am, fortnightly

New Galloway Town Hall

Community Larder, side door open for access Mon 9am-4.30pm; Tue 7-9pm; Wed 6.30-8pm; Thu 9.30am-6pm

Men's Monday Morning Coffee, Mon 9.30-11am

Dance for Wellbeing (adults), Mon 2.30pm

Creative Movement for Children, 4pm

LING Community Cafe, Tue, 12.30-2pm

Sports Evening, Tue, 7-9pm, carpet bowls or table tennis

Zumba, Wed, 6.30pm

Ukulele Group, Wed, 6.30pm

Hubbub, Thu, 12noon-5.30pm, drop-in

Martial Arts, Thu, 7.30pm

Babies & Toddlers, Fri, 10am

For further info email info@ling.org.uk, phone 07749 249 781

Glenkens Community Centre

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

Glenkens Youth Group, Mon, 7-8.30pm

Dalry Good Neighbours Club, Tue, 2pm, 07795 613 148

Wee Wonders, Thu, 9-10am

Clachan Crafters, Thu, 2pm, 07500 861 041

Kickback Martial Arts, Thu, 5.30-7pm, kmabrian@gmail.com or drop-in

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

Yoga For All, Fri 9.30am, drop-in, 07733 111 466

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

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

Glenkens Charity Shop

Opening Times:

Mon 10am-1pm, Tue 6-8pm, Wed, Fri & Sat 10am-4pm

Dalry Library

Main St, Dalry - 01644 430 234

Library Opening Times:

Tue 2-5pm, Fri 12noon-5pm with the first hour for NEC Bus Pass & Blue Badge appointments, etc. Book at the library or call 01387 260 196.

Bookbug and Parent & Toddler Session, Tue, 10.30-11.30am

Glenkens Book Group, last Fri each month, 2pm, 01644 420 361

Lego Stay N' Play, every 3rd Sat of the month, 1-3pm, contact Michele Owen on Facebook

Dalry Town Hall

Tai Chi, Mon, 2pm

Dog Training, Tue, 7pm, 07831 590 822

Song Share, 1st Fri each month, 7.30-10.30pm

Mossdale Village Hall

Mossdale Painters, Wed, 9.30-11.30am

Yoga, Fri, 2.15pm

Soup Saturday, last Sat each month, 1-3pm

Various

Bumps, Babies & Beyond, every 2nd Mon, 10.30am, Kirkpatrick Durham Village Hall

Learn to Play Bridge, Mon, 7-9pm, Lochinvar Hotel

Keep Fit with Alex, 7.15-8.15pm, KPD Village Hall

Strictly Get Dancing, Mon, 7pm, Loch Ken Activity Centre, Parton

Spalding Bowling Club Sweep Nights, Mon, 7pm, shazfish1@gmail.com

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

Glenkens Oil Painters, Wed, 10am, Corfield House Art Studio

Crossmichael Heritage Centre, Wed 2-4.30pm

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

Patchwork Workshop, Thu, 1-3pm, Crossmichael Church Hall

Dragon Boats on Loch Ken, Sun 9.30am, Galloway Activity Centre

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

Outdoor Bowls, Dalry, contact Fiona on 07500 554 751

Snooker/Indoor Bowls, contact Gary on 01644 430 521

Mum & Baby Movement Thu, 9.30-11.30am, Laurieston Village Hall

Crossmichael Youth Club, Fri, Crossmichael Memorial Hall

Élite Consultancy

Summary of Report for New Era Clearance Commission

Historical overview

Current policy can be traced back to early industrial development and modernisation. By the early twenty-first century it was evident that traditional rural societies were obsolete in the post-industrial world. Economic and social control is key to advanced urbanisation. External corporate ownership of rural areas is synonymous with increased production, affordable infrastructures and control of dissident elements among the masses, particularly sections of the population who have proved themselves economically unsuccessful within advanced global financial structures.

Proposed policies

Recommendations are based on trends that were already under way by the 2020s. These trends originally appeared to be initiated by governments with uninformed attitudes to rural requirements, eg sale of social housing. It has since become apparent that such policies are deliberate, based upon sound principles of social, political and economic control. These policies will limit central government financial outlay in a world in which surplus marginal populations are an ever-increasing drain upon entitled communities.

We identify the following policies to achieve the desired outcomes:

- Removal of farming practices which are out of alignment with modern requirements. Family farms, local growers and traditional hill farming practices to be discouraged by lack of government incentive, reduced access to land, and closed markets.
- Marginal agricultural land to be replaced by forestry policies implemented by corporations outwith the area. Government incentives for such projects will ensure that vast tracts of land are owned by such external corporations. These bodies must be authorised to remain anonymous and therefore unaccountable to local institutions.
- These forestry policies offer the additional advantage of making agricultural land non-viable for several generations, long enough to break the stranglehold of local interest and residual traditional sentiment.
- To dismantle infrastructure in terms of housing, education, health, social services and communications, thereby disincentivising local populations from stubbornly staying put. As well as being expensive to maintain, rural populations tend to have obstructionist opinions about biodiversity, environmental conservation and quality of life. These can seriously impact economic growth, including essential measures such as sufficient profit incentives for company directors.
- To replace permanent populations through advanced policies for second home ownership. This eliminates protest, as locals, particularly younger people, cease to exist as inconvenient barriers to economic development. Holiday accommodation requires little expensive infrastructure, especially when marketed as 'wilderness experience', ie no villages, shops, pubs, schools, roads etc. Consumers will naturally accept arboreal monocultures as the wilderness they crave, whereas indigenous populations have proved far more intransigent.
- To encourage financially capable residents to amass multiple estates. The richer they become, the fewer they will be, and therefore even less service provision will be necessary. Such residents can afford their own infrastructure, police their own boundaries, educate their children elsewhere, and supply themselves by drone when there are no public roads.
- To root out with due vigilance any stubborn elements who fail to conform. We understand many have taken to caves in the hills, and meet in large secret gatherings in defiance of the law. Apparently it's an old habit.

Full Report 999 pages, 10 years, untold millions.

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sarah.ade@gmail.com

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