

GLENKENS GAZETTE

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FREE

Former Dalry student cooks up culinary excellence

Award-winning chef and former Dalry Secondary student Fraser Cameron, currently head chef at the Globe Inn, Dumfries, has been selected as a finalist for the prestigious Roux Scholarship 2025.

Fraser impressed the judges of the highly acclaimed culinary competition with an inspiring, cutting-edge recipe. His creation included mussels, gurnard, dulce seaweed and parsnips, and it dazzled the judges.

This acknowledgement of Fraser's talents as a chef will come as no surprise to many of his dedicated followers, as he has a strong reputation for creating a 'delightful', 'amazing', and 'superb' culinary experience at The Globe Inn.

With Fraser's leadership, the Globe has secured a **Michelin listing for 2025**, landed the accolade of **Dumfries & Galloway Life Restaurant of the Year**, and was crowned the **Best Eating Experience at VisitScotland's Thistle Awards**.

Being selected as a finalist for the Roux Scholarship 2025 is an ultimate achievement for many aspiring top chefs, as it is known for identifying the best culinary talent. Fraser was "honoured and excited" and described being selected as "a dream come true".

Looking back at life in the



Fraser Cameron in his kitchen in The Globe Inn

Glenkens, Fraser thoroughly enjoyed his time at Dalry Secondary School and commented that "it was a very close-knit group of students when I was there, and I thought it gave me a very good grounding for heading out into the world".

Continued on p4...

Joshua's award-winning writing



Joshua (centre) with his winning certificate along with Castle Douglas and Dalry Schools Head Teacher, Stephen Foster (left), and representatives of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society

Joshua doesn't usually have articles written about him - he is the one writing them as the *Gazette* youth correspondent (see p8 of this edition).

However, the *Gazette* wanted to include an article in this edition celebrating Joshua's achievement in winning a local poetry award.

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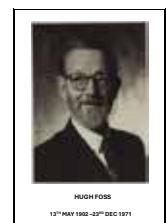
Land and Life in the Glenkens

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Youth band Rhelm rocking the Glenkens

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News from the communities of Balmaclellan, Carsphairn, Corsock, Crossmichael, Kirkpatrick Durham, Laurieston, Mossdale, New Galloway, Parton and St John's Town of Dalry

A period of security for arts, culture and youth

It seems like not long ago that CatStrand was facing genuine uncertainty about whether it would still be able to manage to run an arts programme.

However thanks to some very positive recent funding outcomes we're now entering a period where CatStrand Arts has never had such security.

Last year, funding body Creative Scotland were actively broadcasting that there was not enough in the pot, and they would be forced to make unpleasant decisions and the Scottish Government seemed unable to back statements about the value of culture with practical action. Our continued support

was far from certain.

However, at the eleventh hour, the Scottish Government's culture secretary, Angus Robertson, was able to back his good words with commitments that gave Creative Scotland a solid working budget.

As a result, Creative Scotland were able to invest in the CatStrand and we have received a funding commitment until 2028.

We can't say how grateful we are for the support and concern people have shown over the past 18 months, and we hope to repay this by delivering the eclectic programme of live music, theatre, dance and comedy that people have come to expect.

And the good news doesn't stop there!

CatStrand Young Creatives has secured a two-year commitment

from the Hollywood Trust, as well as ongoing support from the Youth Music Initiative

Cultural Glenkens

is our place-based programme, supporting locally driven projects.

Some examples include The Glenkens Story, Ken Words, Write On and Watson Birds.

We've been aware for some time that this area of work would benefit from more investment of time and resources than we have had available.

So we're delighted to announce that we have received a new three-year commitment from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to really push forward this area of work.

CatStrand



The fund will support:

- Four days a week for a Cultural Glenkens Project Lead role
- A programme of internships for young people
- Oral history recordings
- A programme of in-person and online talks

The past couple of years have been far from easy, but we can now look forward confidently to making sure we're in a good position come 2028.

*Peter Renwick,
CatStrand Creative Director*

Kendoon to Tongland Reinforcement Project

As many readers are aware, the decision on the Kendoon to Tongland 132kV Reinforcement Project came out on Valentine's Day.

Galloway Without Pylons (GWP) won the Public Inquiry battle, but we lost the war. The Reporter's recommendation was to refuse consent but the Scottish Ministers have overruled and have granted consent.

This decision is patently irrational and unfair but it looks like the UK governments are set to overturn the recommendations of reporters in pursuit of net zero. The fact that Scotland produces only 0.1% of global CO2 emissions

makes this decision even more irrational.

I was extremely angry after reading the Scottish Government's reasoning for granting consent:

"But in this particular instance ministers have decided that the benefits of protecting the security of electricity supply for around 30,000 residents and providing low carbon energy to the network means that consent should be granted to this application."

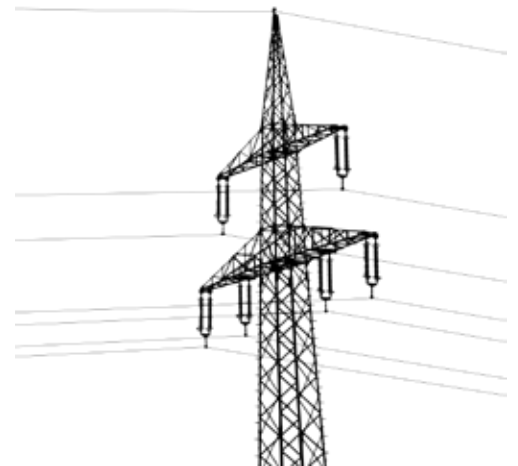
GWP has never objected regarding the need to upgrade the existing line. The above would be fulfilled if the line was underground or re-routed to follow the existing line. In fact, the following is in the very first paragraph of GWP's representation back in January 2021:

"We accept that the line needs to be updated, but the use of 118 overhead pylons, up to

35m in height, is opposed by many local groups including those concerned with: forestry protection, business, tourism, wildlife conservation, and the protection of historic sites."

The problem we have is the Scottish Government's policy of 'low carbon energy' and their obsession with exporting electricity to England. If the line is underground, wind farm and solar connections could only be made at the start or finish of the underground line, ie at Glenlee or Tongland, where there is a power station facilitating connection.

It is obvious that with wind farm and solar applications coming



in thick and fast, connections between Glenlee and Tongland will be required. This is why I believe the chances of getting the line underground from Glenlee to Tongland is now impossible, and that our only hope would be to get the project to follow the existing overhead line route and to underground the very short section around Loch Ken, where there is an environmental concern.

Paul Swift

Galloway's newest childminder serving the Glenkens



Scottish Childminding Association

Jaqueline Madeley is the newest childminder in Dumfries and Galloway after setting up her brand-new business with support provided by the Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future.

Offering all-day care for eight children in Bridge of Dee, Jaqueline's service spans the whole week, including before and after school.

"I found it hard to find a job that worked around my child and my own childcare needs. With my son, Charlie, starting school, I thought it was the perfect time to start childminding because it works around him as well as me. I can drop him off at school and pick him up and not stress about being late to another job. I also knew I could provide a nurturing, home-from-home environment that parents would want their children to be in."

Jackie also found it difficult to find childcare during the holidays and knew this would potentially become more difficult with her son now in primary school.

"I was struggling to find childcare in the holidays so I thought

all stages of the application process right up to registration and beyond.

"I feel really supported by SCMA. When I decided I'd like to find out more about childminding, I filled in the online enquiry form, and one of the team got back to me really quickly, and from then on, I knew I could pick up the phone and speak to the same person throughout the whole process."

SCMA's workforce officers provide personalised one-to-one support for candidates to ensure the application

process is as fair and straightforward as possible.

"I'm dyslexic and I sometimes find it hard to put information down on paper, but I was able to send over anything I had written as part of my application to Claire, and she looked over it for me. She let me know if anything needed to be reworked and was always really encouraging and made me feel like I could do it!"

Jackie's childminding provides vital wrap-around care for working parents. "Parents are struggling to find childcare while they work, especially after school. I've chosen to provide childcare from 8:00am to 5:30pm so parents can work and not worry about childcare. I'm flexible with these times too if required. I love that I can be there for my community and provide a vital service!"

Jackie is loving her new career and is enjoying getting to know her 'mindees', and the freedom childminding gives her and Charlie. She'd recommend childminding to anyone looking for a role where they can be their own boss whilst contributing to children's learning and development.



"I was struggling to find childcare in the holidays so I thought childminding would enable me to be there for my son while also help other families locally who need childcare."

Having worked at a local nursery for nearly 10 years, Jaqueline decided she needed a job that worked around her son starting school. She loved working with children and childminding provided the perfect opportunity to combine her childcare skills and knowledge with her own family circumstances.

childminding would enable me to be there for my son while also help other families locally who need childcare. This was one of my biggest worries when working, so I knew it would be the same for other parents."

The Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future (PSCF) is funded by the Scottish

Government and delivered by the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). The programme provides support such as a minimum £750 start up grant, free training and one-to-one support to help get started.

Jackie had a dedicated Workforce Officer, Claire, who was there to support her through

"Childminding is so worthwhile. I love that I can plan our days around what the children are interested in and that I can choose the hours I work. To anyone who is passionate about working with children – go for it! We need more childminders in the area."

To find out more about the support provided by the Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future and how to become a childminder in Dumfries and Galloway, visit www.childminding.org/getstarted

Funding was awarded by the Glenkens and District Community Fund (via Foundation Scotland) in November 2022 to support the recruitment, training and support of five new childminders within the Glenkens and district area to allow parents to more easily take up paid work.

As the Programme for Scotland's Childminding Future heads into its second year, SCMA continues to use this funding and to work with the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) and Dumfries and Galloway Council to recruit childminders in Glenkens.



Home-grown culinary talent

Continued from front page...

Fraser's first job was as a kitchen porter at the Ken Bridge Hotel, and he recounted that the environment created there is what drew him into the industry.

Fraser said: "I think the community has supported me really well while I was learning my craft...even after I moved away, there was still resounding support".

As with all routes through life, you will meet bumps and hurdles. Fraser said: "I think there was also a part of me that always wanted to prove the naysayers wrong...which spurred me on to succeed!"

Hard work, dedication and passion has driven Fraser to be where he is now, he commented that working in the industry is "difficult and hard, but what you put into it, you get back out. Hospitality

has taken me all over the world through working and competing at the highest level...

"I absolutely adore this industry, so it feels like I have never really 'worked' a day in my life!"

Fraser encourages aspiring young chefs in the Glenkens area to "go for it, 100%! There is something for everyone in this industry".

He also encourages young folk

in the area, whether you want to work in front-of-house or in the kitchen, to get in touch with

The Globe Inn for work experience. This is a fabulous opportunity to get a look into the hospitality industry, as well as to get some useful skills and experience under your belt to help progress you in your future career.

Georgiana Grimwood

See article below for Fraser's visit to Dalry School...

Chef Fraser's visit to Dalry Secondary

Pupils at Dalry Secondary School enjoyed an inspirational cookery demonstration from Scotland's Young Chef of the Year (both in 2021 and 2022) and former pupil Fraser Cameron.

Fraser is currently working at the Globe Inn, the famous inn frequented by Robbie Burns, in Dumfries.

Fraser started working, at the age of 14, in local hotels. In 2014 was awarded the Andrew Fairlie Scholarship and commenced work at Andrew Fairlie's Michelin Two Star kitchen at the Gleneagles Hotel. He then moved on to the Martin Wishart's The Honours in Edinburgh and then on to a position as Sous Chef at Paul Kitching's Michelin Star Restaurant 21212.

Fraser told pupils how he has travelled all over the world, including a three-month

spell in Australia promoting Galloway beef.

He has competed in many competitions including the IKA Culinary Olympics 2024 in Stuttgart, Germany, where his team won two silver medals.

The pupils were shown how to prepare, cook and present Michelin-standard food, using high quality local food. The dishes Fraser created, from the Globe Inn menu, used a wide range of ingredients including crab, quail eggs, Guinea fowl, venison and fillet steak.

Pupils were also introduced to fresh truffles, which can cost as much as £165 for 100g. The highlight of the demonstration was the tasting; students and staff got to taste all seven dishes. Without exception everyone thought the dishes were delicious and a completely different dining experience.

Fraser explained that every member of staff, from kitchen porter to front-of-house staff and chefs, are all key to the success of a restaurant. He also talked about the career opportunities within the hospitality industry (see article above for more on this).



Fraser's visit was inspirational, and provided plenty of food for thought...

Lorraine Gillies

Top: Fraser giving a demonstration to students in the Home Economics room at Dalry Secondary School - there aren't many schools that can boast a view like that!

Above: One of Fraser's culinary creations which pupils and teachers were lucky enough to have the chance to taste.

Eileen Campbell



To arrange a visit in the comfort of your own home please contact 07515 168 963 or empathyfothealth@gmail.com

Researching Kentucky

Continued from front page...

Joshua was presented with a certificate and a prize of £250 by three members of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society.

The representatives congratulated Joshua on his fantastic piece of writing, and gave him great feedback on his winning entry, which was

titled *Ivy Cottage: The Poem, The History, The Mystery*.

He was told that the judging panel were very impressed with the interesting and readable content and format of the project, which left the reader inspired to find out more.

Last summer, Joshua wrote about a small piece of land in the village of Balmaclellan, called Kentucky, that he had

extensively researched. This piece of land, with a bench and some large trees, mostly goes unnoticed.

When we looked at the area, we could see there was once a building on it, and when Joshua saw the competition, that required an original piece of research of around 2,500 words, he saw it as an opportunity, and it paid off.

He found that there was a link between this spot and Reverend George Murray, author of a poem about Sarah Rae who once lived in the house. He even took the opportunity to visit Cruck Cottage, in Torthorwald, just outside Dumfries, and another similar building that Alexander Murray once lived on the way to Newton Stewart.

It's hoped that this will be part of a bigger piece of work in the village - so watch this space!

Jackie Wells

150th anniversary of Carsphairn society

Carsphairn Pastoral & Horticultural Society was founded in Carsphairn in 1875 to promote the agricultural produce of the parish, and to encourage competition within the growers and the livestock breeders.

Sheep breeding is the main agricultural activity of the area and an annual show is held every year in the village on the first Saturday in June.

Carsphairn Show is considered one of the most prestigious shows at which to win a red

ticket in the Blackface Sheep Breed.

This year is the 150th anniversary of the Society being established and the committee are looking forward to putting on the 132nd show on Saturday 7 June at the Crofts, Carsphairn, by kind permission of Messrs McMorran.

The show marks the start of the agricultural show season in Dumfries & Galloway.

With judging starting from 10am, there are both confined and open classes in the Blackface Sheep section and also open classes for Commercial, Mule, Bluefaced Leicester and Any Other Breed - Native and Continental Sheep.

There is also a dog trial in the adjacent field, and from mid-day there are collie dog, young handlers, pets and dog classes for anyone to enter.

Entries for all sections are taken on the day.

There are children's sports in the

afternoon as well as a bouncy castle, and an activities tent run by Carsphairn stay-and-play children's group, Bairn Banter.

In the Lagwyne Hall there are sections for baking, preserves, handicrafts, flowers, plants, walking sticks and a children's section - all entries welcome.

There will be food stalls and bar facilities provided on the show field. Carsphairn Show is run by the Carsphairn Pastoral & Horticultural Society with the help of their generous sponsors.

For information or to enter, email carsphairnshow@btinternet.com or visit www.carsphairn.org/carsphairn-show



Thank you

Carsphairn Hedgehog Rescue would like to say a big "thank you" to everyone who supported their fundraiser.

Special thanks go to all the wonderful bakers, all the people who purchased the produce and were so generous with their donations, and especially to Jayne, who organised the event - fabulous £661 was raised!



Photographs from previous years' shows are of blackface sheep and the trophy table

Have your say on public transport in the Glenkens

Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT) and the Glenkens Hub are collecting information about public transport in the area.

This information will be submitted to the regional transport agencies on a quarterly basis in order to keep them informed on local feedback on our public transport services.

Please help us present a case for improving the service by recording the issues you have encountered with our local buses.

All information is anonymous. Thank you for your help!

The Glenkens Hub Team



GLENKENS PUBLIC TRANSPORT FEEDBACK

Tell us about your experiences with public transport in the Glenkens.

glenkens.scot/public-transport-feedback



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 p33, with a bit of information and food for thought about that location.

SHOP LOCAL

Galloway food hub

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In memory of Jackson Pringle

Jackson Pringle sadly died following a car accident on the A75 near Gretna on 16 December 2024.

His funeral took place in Carsphairn on 9 January, with around 200 mourners.

Jackson was born at Forebush, Dalry, on 7 June 1941. The family moved to Stroanpatrick farm when he was two and he went to school at Stroanfreggan and then Dalry Secondary School.

He left school at 15 to start working as a shepherd at Stroanpatrick, where he worked for the Dickies.

On retiring in 2006, after 50 years at Stroanpatrick, he and his wife Doreen moved to

Castle Douglas. For the next 10 years he rented land at Ardarroch and Blackmark and had 500 ewes of his own.

Jackson was a keen carpet bowler, playing at Stroanfreggan Club, where he was also the hall keeper. He took up green bowling when he moved to Castle Douglas and travelled frequently for club evenings.

Jackson was a friendly and sociable man, well-respected in the local community and always ready to help neighbours. He is survived by his wife, Doreen, two sons and five grandchildren.

Pictured above are Jackson and wife Doreen, and to the right a commemorative wreath hung at the Stroanfreggan bowling hut



Our Friend Kenny

Our friend Kenny was five foot six in his shoes,
He was a lovely chap through and through,
When he came to Men's Shed he brightened up our day,
A lot of banter and pulling of leg on the way.

Kenny's generosity and caring heart,
His sense of humour and cheeky smile set him apart,
We were like a band of brothers,
Kenny was always thinking of others.

Building turning drilling and sanding,
Kenny was our helping hand,
No job was too big or too small,
He was really on the ball.

Making a brew and cutting the cake, and eating peanuts,
For goodness sake,
Eating them ten to the dozen with ease,
Spluttering and sharing them with everyone during a sneeze.

We will miss you Kenny old friend,
Our thoughts and love for you will never end,
You left us too soon my friend,
Enjoy your rest in peace.

by Barry Bryan-Dixon

Keyboard player wanted

With the retirement of Geoff Davidson, Glenkens Parish is seeking to recruit a keyboard player to accompany hymn singing at our services.

Geoff is an exceptional professional musician who, as well as playing at services, has led the choir and written highly successful original musical works. We recognise that he will be impossible to replace so we hope to find someone just to play at our services in Dalry, Kells and Balmaclellan.

The services are about 50 minutes long and there are three services each month, with a few extras

at Christmas and Easter. A modest honorarium of £30 per service is offered.

This could be an opportunity for a young person to further develop their skills, or for an older person to make use of those youthful piano lessons. If you are interested, please call Ian Knox, our session clerk, on 07840 506 516.

If, like me, you have non-musical fingers but know of someone who may be interested please tell them about this notice. Geoff's last service will be on the 30 March, so ideally we would need someone to be available from 6 April.

Music has always been a central part of Christian worship. Please help us to continue that tradition in the Glenkens.

Andrew Mellor

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 talks about the D&G Youth Council.



In January I joined the Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council, for the ward of Dee and Glenkens, halfway through the two-year election cycle.

If you are not aware of the youth council, it is a way of allowing young people's voices to be heard within our region. It gives young people the opportunity to make decisions to help fellow young Dumfries and Galloway inhabitants.

I found out about the youth council from a friend of mine. There had been a change and they were looking for new ward councillors. I was really excited to hear about the opportunity because I felt that it would give

me the skills I would like for when I left school and would help me make a difference for other young people in my local area.

I couldn't just be a ward councillor, I had to complete some training. The training session, which took place over two days at The Bridge in Dumfries, with around 15 of us attending, would have us meeting various council officers and even the fascinating John Loughton.

John Loughton is a self-described "global youth leader, social entrepreneur, campaigner and leadership speaker," and has clearly shown he is a global leader through reaching almost a million young people with his work, according to UWS (University of the West of Scotland).

In this experience of a lifetime

training, I was not only able to share my opinions but also develop both my debating skills and my public speaking skills (where I was told I speak like a politician). I was also able to meet people from all over the region, with varied beliefs, lifestyles, outlooks, age groups, and most importantly experiences, allowing us to get a clear and balanced vision of young people's ideas in Dumfries and Galloway.

I was also able to attend a thought-provoking council meeting where we were able to have a conversation with one of the councillors for our ward, John Denerley, the first deaf councillor in Dumfries and Galloway.

I previously met him at an award ceremony I had attended the week before, where he presented me with an award for my attendance at a youth camp.

He asked about our views and our ideas for Dee and Glenkens, including improving bike paths and tactics to prevent bullying.

In just a few months, stepping into the role of a Youth Ward Councillor has been an incredibly eye-opening and rewarding experience. I highly encourage young people between the ages of 12 and 25 to give it a go, especially if you feel that adults aren't paying enough attention to young people's ideas.

As a youth councillor, you'll have a chance to make your voice heard. If you are a young person from Dee and Glenkens and you have any views to share with me, just get in touch, and we can have a chat at joshua.welsyc@gmail.com

(See front page article on Joshua's literary award)



Glenkens Cub Scouts

To finish off our Pet Care activity badge we held a pet show, ably judged by Robert Little, who was very thorough and tactful.

A big "thank you" to all the parents who helped the youngsters with their dogs, and a duck brought in by Cole.

The cats were too shy to make an appearance but Lily and Pippin showed their pets instead with photographs, drawings and stories. Hamish described his goldfish.

All of the pets were well behaved. Hannah was worried we might have a brawl, but luckily this wasn't the case. Freya brought in Patch, a Jack Russell terrier. Patch had an array of rosettes, presented on a cushion. Brodie showed Snoop, the cockapoo. Elliot's dog, Buster, was a collie-cross-kelpie. Caitlin brought in photographs of her Jack Russell and chihuahua, and Charlotte had a video of her shitzu.

Thanks go to Robert for judging, and well

done Cubs.

We had a Scottish food tasting in January. Charlotte recited *The Selkirk Grace*, before we all tucked into balls of haggis, Upper Dullarg egg sandwiches, Lockerbie cheese, oatcakes, shortbread, tablet and much more. To finish, the Cubs organised entertainment for the Leaders, with singing, poetry and dancing.

Fundraiser

We are hoping to have a table at the Alternative Games on 3 August. If you are spring cleaning and have bric-a-brac, unwanted gifts, toys, games, jigsaws, childrens books, tablet, jams, etc, please keep us in mind. You can leave items at the Scout Hall, New Galloway, on a Wednesday evening between 6.15pm and 7.30pm until 18 June, and thereafter ring Heather on 01644 420 375.

We would like to welcome on board Julian Watson, who has joined us as an occasional helper, and Felix, Sienna and Thomas who have joined the Cubs. Thomas is following in his dad's footsteps...

*Yours in Scouting,
Heather and Hannah*

Tentative steps towards a positive future for Glenkens education

Since December 2023, when the Education Department announced plans to mothball Dalry Secondary, work has been ongoing to try and ensure Glenkens children are able to continue to be educated in their community.

There have been various meetings and discussions of potential ways forward, trying to think outside the box in order to find a futureproof solution.

The Glenkens Community Action Plan Steering Group (CAPSG) and members of Dalry Parent Council have been actively working with Dalry school management team, D&G council's education department and local councillors to try to find a way forward.

The issue of rural education has also broadened out to a region-wide discussion since the potential figure of 25 pupils to trigger mothballing of a school was mooted in the Council's Budget Consultation as a potential option.

This did not go through in the end, but it has prompted a united front of small schools across the region under the umbrella of the Wee Schools Matter campaign.

This group is lobbying for acknowledgement of the urban-centric perspective of the Education Department, and the need for more community-based

consideration of the role of schools in our rural communities, especially with regard to the key issue of rural depopulation.

Here in the Glenkens, the results of the December 2023 survey of Dalry school parents with regard to what they wanted from their school showed strong support for an all-through-school model at Dalry, from Nursery to S4 (or up to S6 ideally), with an on-site head teacher.

This preference was echoed in the October 2024 *Review of Rural Education in the Glenkens* report, commissioned by the Glenkens & District Trust, which highlighted a strong community desire for an education 'hub' in the Glenkens.

Recent discussions have resulted in what seems to be a shared vision by all parties of an education hub serving both primary and secondary age pupils, with potential also for pre-school and post-school learning opportunities.

Further discussion and community consultation needs to be had in order to try to establish an achievable

... a shared vision...an education hub serving both primary and secondary age pupils, with potential also for pre-school and post-school learning opportunities.

solution that would satisfy immediate, medium-term, and long-term needs. Some thoughts so far are...

The immediate priority is ensuring the wellbeing and educational needs of current Dalry Secondary pupils.

Medium-term plans would hope to bridge the current situation while a future plan is built, hoping to increase numbers and build resilience through the reassurance of a



AI generated image of a rural school campus - a potential future for education in the Glenkens?

secure future for the school, and trust within the parent forum.

One model which has been discussed is an all-through school catering for children aged 2-15, with the secondary school operating as a 'middle school.'

There may be potential for the current primary school building to be repurposed for community use, potentially

as a community college campus, if the secondary building seems like it would provide a better learning environment (access to resources for all pupils of subject-specific areas such as music, woodwork, art, HE and science).

In this model, S1 and S2 students would benefit from a combination of general education and subject-specific teaching, focusing attention

on these often 'lost years' of early secondary education.

In the longer-term, the goal would be to extend the all-through model back up to S4, or potentially even to S5 and S6, if student numbers justified this.

A key part of this vision includes vocational learning opportunities through a Glenkens community college, ensuring sustainability and growth for education in the area.

In order to take positive steps in creating a sustainable model for education in the Glenkens, **feedback from parents, pupils, and the community is essential.**

Please keep your eyes peeled for updates and potential surveys going out for community input over the coming months, both in the *Gazette* and on the Glenkens Hub (www.glenkens.scot), or to get in touch with Dalry Schools Parent Council directly, contact Parent Council chair Stewart Gibson, on dalrypcchair@gmail.com

Sarah Ade

Glenkens Primaries Partnership update

Our Robert Burns school trip

In January the P4/5/6/7s of Dalry went to Alloway in Ayrshire to see the Robert



Burns Birthplace Museum.

The first thing we did was to go into a classroom where we learnt about Robert Burns' life. Then we dressed up in the clothes that people wore in the 17th century, and we went outside into the cottage that Robert Burns was born in.

We explored the cottage, and there was a farm where we learnt about how they made butter. Then we went on a walk and learned about the story of Tam o' Shanter. There were statues of animals that Robert Burns talked about in his poems.

On the way to the museum, we went to the Burns National Heritage Park, and we saw the Burns monument. Next, we went to the museum where we listened to different poems and there were lots of interesting pictures.

by Caitlin, Annie and Magnus



Our term 3 topic

At school our topic was General elections. We made our own parties and had a debate.



Our parties were called Education for Scotland; The Peace Tribe; The Scottish Oaks; The Planet Savers and The Purple Triceratops.

We also made our own manifestos and posters saying why people should vote for a certain party. On the day of the election all the parties got to present their manifestos in front of the pupils and adults.

We also had a debate with all of the other parties and asked them questions like: "Why should you be elected, where will you get the money from and what will you do to improve this?"

Education For Scotland (EFS) said they would help Scotland with its education, working with schools across Scotland.

The Peace Tribe said that they would help the homeless by giving them food and water and recruiting more police officers.

The purple triceratops said that they would protect all the local wildlife and everything that lives there.

The Scottish Oaks said they would plant more trees, protect nature and fund schools across Scotland.

The Planet Savers said that they would recycle water and will build huts with beds, food and water for homeless people.

The entire school voted in the ballot box and the winners were The Purple Triceratops. As a prize, they got to have an afternoon tea in the staff room with Mrs Murray.

by Amelia and Mahala

Kells Primary p5-7 organised their bi-annual Burns Supper.

Over 80 people attended and were treated to entertainment and food organised and

prepared by the whole school.

Thank you to everyone who supported it and the many organisers who helped make it possible.

Erin Welsh



The Optimistic Environmentalist

Electric cars - Part One

Just over two years ago, we (my husband Richard and I) bought an electric car.

This was partly an environmental choice and partly the economics - the running costs are so much cheaper. We needed an estate car as with my wheelchair, a hoist and two large Labradors, boot space is really important. We also wanted a car that could tow - at the time, many electric vehicles (EVs) had not been approved for towing, many more have now though.

Therefore, we chose an MG5 (NB, not the MG4 in the picture). The price of this compared favourably with a similarly specified petrol Ford Focus Estate. We decided to write a series for this column to explain about electric cars as a result.

The range of EVs have been improving and car manufacturers in their designs have been assessing the weight of the battery with the range; obviously, if a battery is bigger it can hold more energy which should give more range, but the extra weight uses up more energy when driving. There are new designs and materials for batteries and they are improving in efficiency all the time.

Manufacturer's claims for mileage per gallon in an internal combustion engine

(ICE) car are not what you get in the real world use. Likewise, when looking at the range for an EV, the quoted manufacturer's range (WLTP) is normally further than the 'real world' range. Also, remember, the temperature affects this a bit - you get a few more miles in the summer for your energy compared to the colder weather depending on how much air conditioning or heating you use.

Running costs

For an ICE vehicle, you will be familiar with miles per gallon (mpg). Obviously, EVs don't use gallons, they use electrical energy measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh) and, in the UK at least, we tend to measure EV energy consumption in miles per kWh.

There is an excellent website www.ev-database.org/uk that shows the energy consumption, range - both manufacturer specified and what to expect in reality, towing capacity etc. of EVs.

A comparison

ICE vehicle: if fuel is £1.40 per litre and there are 4.546 litres per gallon, then it costs £6.36 per gallon. So, if your car does

50mpg that equates to 12.7p (£6.364÷50) per mile.

EV: the calculations are simpler: if you are charging off-peak at 7p per kWh (like we are with Octopus for EV drivers) and your vehicle does 3 miles per kWh, this equates to 2.3p (7p÷3) per mile.

In reality, it will cost fractionally more than this because the car's onboard charging circuitry will consume some energy whilst charging.

Servicing do's and don'ts

All vehicles require servicing and EVs are no exception. Obviously, EVs don't have an engine so lack many consumables - oil and oil filters, engine air filters, spark

plugs, timing belts/chains and so on.

Thus, servicing costs are generally cheaper. EV's use regenerative braking most of the time - the electric motor slows the car down and puts energy back into the battery rather than the car's brakes. Thus, as described in Faircharge's, freely available, *Little book of EV Myths* (www.faircharge.co.uk/little-book-of-ev-myths), brake usage and care means that they last a lot longer than on an ICE vehicle.

Contrary to some myths, tyre wear tends to be similar to any car of that size or weight; it crucially depends on how the car is driven.

Denise MacDonald-Kiernan






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Resilience test event staged in Dalry



A pilot resilience test event was staged in Dalry on 5 March.

This was organised by the Loch Ken Trust, Dalry Community Council's resilience team, the Dumfries and Galloway Climate Hub (DGCH), and the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, with support from D&G Council's resilience team.

Light rain throughout the exercise added a touch of realism. The staged scenario included a car that had swerved to avoid a falling branch in a storm colliding with a telegraph pole, causing pedestrian, passenger and driver casualties.

The exercise began shortly after 11am on Throughgate, which was closed for the next hour while the scene played out.

The mock casualties were three adults (one of whom, played by a casualty simulator dummy, was not breathing), a shaken-up child and a dog. Members of the local resilience team took charge of the scene, administered first aid and called on passers-by and spectators to assist where necessary, including fetching the defibrillator from the town hall.

After about twenty minutes,



the emergency services arrived on scene and took over. The exercise ended with a demonstration of capabilities by the Fire & Rescue Service.

At the debrief, Jenna Cains, from DGCH, said: "We created a scenario with similarities to the issues faced by the community during storm Éowyn, which left parts of the area without power for several days. More such weather events can be expected with changing climate, and the Climate Hub encourage all communities in Dumfries and Galloway to have up to date resilience plans," a message seconded by the D&G Council Resilience Team itself.

Loch Ken Trust's resilience

work is funded by the National Lottery Awards for All Community Fund and Drax Group, owners of the Galloway Hydro Scheme. The Climate Ready Glenkens project involves supporting all Glenkens communities with resilience planning.

Head Ranger Leanne Pumpri said: "With extreme weather events on the increase, it is so important that our communities are prepared and know how best they can support themselves until wider help arrives. It was great to see so many members of the community come along and get involved with the test event. A huge 'thank you' to Scottish Fire

and Rescue, Police Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway Council Community Resilience and all our fantastic volunteers who made this event a success."

The test event had a wider message about considering vulnerable people in your community, as well as what local resources can be called upon following an extreme weather event. In the days following, ITV News ran an excellent segment on the event using real life weather damage footage from Dumfries and Galloway from this January.

The D&G Climate Hub is funded by Scottish Government's Let's Do Net Zero strategy.

Paul Goodwin





GALLOWAY AND
SOUTHERN AYRSHIRE
BIOSPHERE

Out and About in the Biosphere

The Galloway & Southern Ayrshire Biosphere (GSAB) Partnership tends to reflect the UNESCO region more widely: ramping up the energy in spring and buzzing with life through summer!

That being said, the organisation has had an incredibly busy autumn/winter 2024-25 promoting Merrick Scottish Blackface Knitwear, the social enterprise making and selling luxury knitted outerwear using locally-sourced fleece.

Several designs sold out in the first production run and a new batch of finest grade Biosphere Blackface wool is now being scoured and spun for the next collection. Sustainably produced and hand-finished, you can follow the progress of the brand and its designs at www.merrickscotland.com

Since the Biosphere's last feature in the *Glenkens Gazette*, Carsphairn has been announced as a designated 'Biosphere Community', the fourteenth village to join the scheme.

Biosphere Communities have an especially close relationship with the GSA Biosphere Partnership, being provided with additional support to develop sustainable living projects, improve green space for biodiversity, and undertake community-led tourism initiatives.

In April Biosphere officers will be supporting Carsphairn's Local Place Plan (LPP) event at Lagwyne Hall, a drop-in session for residents to comment on the draft LPP for Carsphairn.

The Biosphere will be present to look at treasured landscapes, bringing maps that show wildlife and habitats, historic sites, and land use changes over time, inviting people to contribute their local knowledge to ensure the final LPP fully encompasses everything that is important and cherished.

Another Biosphere Community,

St John's Town of Dalry, will be the venue for the next Biosphere Guide Training Course on 27 and 28 April. This free course is designed to help small guiding start-ups, supporting local people to develop tour-based visitor experiences that share the magic of the UNESCO Biosphere.

Biosphere Guides can use a bespoke logo incorporating the sundew motif and are promoted through the GSAB Partnership's marketing channels when their business is ready to launch, including being listed in an online directory of experience providers which is also platformed by VisitScotland and the South of Scotland Destination Alliance.

The two-day course at Dalry Town Hall will examine what it takes to create a memorable, meaningful guided tour, including audience outreach, building itineraries, and interpreting natural and cultural sites.

In June the Biosphere team will be back in Dalry to run a Green Health workshop at the community centre. This is part of the organisation's commitment to supporting nature connections for mental and physical health, and will introduce the vast range of Green Health activities and ways to get involved locally.

The workshop aims to inspire people to spend more time outdoors and to speak to

their own health practitioners about Green Health, Blue Health (activity connected with rivers and the sea), and social prescribing, and how these can be incorporated into treatment and wellness plans.

As many readers will know, the GSA Biosphere hosts the D&G Climate Hub, which covers the whole of Dumfries & Galloway.

Climate Officers and the Biosphere team deliver Carbon Literacy training, a bookable course exploring our carbon footprints and achievable ways to reduce them at home and at work.

Part of a rolling programme of lifelong learning available to anyone in the UNESCO Biosphere, Carbon Literacy is internationally-recognised accredited training and a great way to boost a CV, with so many employers now recognising the value in embedding this knowledge among their staff.

Faith Hillier, the GSAB Partnership's Community Officer, works on a range of community and education initiatives in the Glenkens and the rest of SW Scotland's vast UNESCO region – the largest Biosphere in the whole of the UK.

"The Glenkens has always been very engaged with creating a better future for nature and more sustainable, connected communities, and the GSAB Partnership is delighted to be able to support this," Faith says. "We have built a great learning and training offer which is available free of charge to maximise accessibility."

"Especially at this time of year we're excited to be getting out and about more often and we welcome approaches from community or interest groups that feel assistance from the Biosphere could give them additional resources or an operational boost."

More information about the GSAB Partnership's current projects including Biosphere Guide Training, Green Health, and Carbon Literacy training is available at www.gsabiosphere.org.uk, or by email request to info@gsabiosphere.org.uk. To keep in touch on social platforms, follow #gsabiosphere



Right: Faith Hillier at Carsphairn Community Woodland.
Below: Biosphere Guides training at Kirroughtree



Eco Feature

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The Glenkens Community Centre is getting glow up

The Glenkens Community Centre in Dalry has received over £160,000 to improve the thermal efficiency of the building.

Funded by Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) and South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE), the building will get a low carbon makeover.

This will provide electricity through solar panels paired with battery storage, heat through air-to-air heat pumps, warmth through wall and loft insulation, double glazed windows, and energy consumption reduced through efficient lighting.

The Glenkens Community Centre is opposite the school in Dalry and has a large hall suitable for sports, parties, large meetings and events. There is a open kitchen/meeting space which is used by Good Neighbours, art and craft groups and meetings.

The back room is a large, bright space currently home to the Galloway Food Hub. There is also a small office room at the front of the building.

The Dalry Community Properties Trust (DCPT) was established in 2015 and purchased the Glenkens Community Centre from the council. This is the first significant funding it has received since then.

Work began at the beginning of March with Cool & Easy and Parc Construction appointed to undertake the work on the building. They took no time to rip out the damp, mouldy lath-and-plaster, exposing the stonework behind.

This also exposed rotten woodwork around the existing windows which had been allowing rainwater into the centre. The walls will be framed out and insulated with new membrane and plasterboard on top. This will improve the building's ability to retain heat, meaning we can have cosier spaces for our user groups to enjoy.

Scaffolding went up to allow the installation of 34 445W solar panels on the roof. At the same time we conducted a roof survey to allow us to identify areas of water ingress that need to be resolved before the new insulation is installed.

The work is phased to allow the Galloway Food Hub to continue



to operate from the community centre, and they have moved into the main hall for the duration of the first phase. We're grateful for our existing groups for their patience during this phase of renovation, and those who have had to find temporary homes whilst we undertake the work. It will be worth it!

We have also received a further grant from SOSE to allow us to upgrade our main group space in the kitchen area. We will be able to refresh the units, buy new appliances and have fully stocked cupboards for hosting larger groups.

We expect work to be completed by the middle of May, and look forward to welcoming user groups back to our new and

improved spaces. We are also excited to host events for the wider community in partnership with the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere and Dumfries and Galloway Climate Hub, showcasing the amazing retrofit of our wonderful community centre.

This project has been made possible thanks to the countless hours and dedication of our collection of amazing members, trustees, neighbours and supporters.

The work will allow us to continue to serve the community with a warm, affordable space to meet, party, work, socialise and create for many years to come.

Sarah McCusker



Glenkens Freecycle

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If you would like to list something on this page, please get in touch on 07727 127 997 or glenkensgazette@hotmail.co.uk

FREE

Single divan bed base with headboard. Contact: Anita on 07547 301 321

Rabbit hutch and all rabbit-related bits to go with it (indoor hutch, litter tray, water bottle, some food and hay and treats). Contact: 07727 127 997

Ladies gardening gloves, very strong leather. Small size. **Blackcurrant bush cuttings**, rooted. **Black peppermint**; will dig as required. Contact: Sue, Dalry, on 07563 718 011

Horse manure, rotted and fresh, no weed killers used. Dig your own - bring sacks or trailer. Contact: 07889 229 340

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Shed clearances - any shed cleared, large or small; get in touch to for further info or to arrange a visit. Contact: 07765 034 841



PAMELA YOUNG TRUST
help with housing in the Glenkens

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

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



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

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POP IN FOR A CHAT AND A BROWSE

Galloway Food Hub seasonal recipe

The Ethical Dairy's Rainton Tomme cheese achieved celebrity status back in 2023 when it featured on James Martin's Saturday Morning on ITV.

The dish created on the programme was tartiflette.

You can see he has Carrick, Laganory, Fleet Valley Blue and half a Tomme on the board in the picture.



JAMES MARTIN'S ETHICAL DAIRY TARTIFLETTE RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 500g cooked waxy potatoes, cooled and sliced in half
- 125g lardons
- 2 finely sliced red onion
- 3 crushed garlic
- 120ml double cream
- 500g Tomme cheese
- Salt and pepper

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C
2. In an ovenproof pan, add a splash of oil and sauté the onions, garlic and

lardons, with thyme, and season. Then add the cream, potatoes and give it a big stir, then top with the cheese.

3. Bake in the oven for 45 minutes to an hour, and leave to cool for five minutes, then serve.



AN UPDATE FROM WINDY STANDARD

Fred. Olsen Renewables moves forward with construction of Windy Standard III Wind Farm.

Leading independent renewable energy generator, Fred. Olsen Renewables, has announced that it is driving forward with the expansion of Windy Standard Wind Farm in Dumfries and Galloway, following the investment decision to deliver Windy Standard III.

Windy Standard Wind Farm, located north-east of Carsphairn, is Scotland's first consented wind farm. The addition of Windy Standard III, which was consented in 2021, will bring forward an additional 20 turbines—delivering 87.6MW of green electricity, enough to power the equivalent of 131, 286 UK homes annually.

Work on the site began in early March, with tree felling of commercial forestry, followed by site set up by main contractor, Jones



Brothers Civil Engineering Ltd, who are preparing the site for the installation of the turbines. Fred. Olsen Renewables always seeks to employ local services through the construction and operation of their wind farms and encourages any of the local supply chain to get in contact.

The turbines will be supplied and installed by ENERCON with the first components due to be delivered to the site in April 2026 and installation works will start in the second quarter of that year.

Having been operational for over 25 years, Windy Standard Wind Farm has made a significant contribution to the local economy – delivering over £186 million of contracts with Scottish businesses, 116 construction jobs (FTE) and 73 operational and maintenance jobs (FTE).

To date, Windy Standard Wind Farm has delivered £4.1m funding for the local community. This has helped to support a number of local projects, including New Cumnock Development Trust and helping

to deliver a Local Energy Discount Scheme (LED scheme) in Carsphairn. Operational since 2018, the LED scheme has provided over £127,000 in direct payments, helping to address the challenge of energy costs, helping the fuel poor and minimising fuel poverty.

The combination of Windy Standard I, II and III will deliver over £15m in community benefit funding over the lifetime of the project.

It is anticipated that Windy Standard III will be commissioned in December 2026. Once operational the Windy Standard complex will deliver 87.6MW of electricity combined. Further information can be found at www.windystandardwindfarm.com

If you have any questions, please do get in touch with the team – we are happy to help! You can email us at communities@fredolsen.com or call 07435 763 900.

A Galloway National Park: *considering the pros and cons*

The Earthy Book Group is a small group of local women with shared concerns about the natural environment and our place in it.

Recently we discussed the consultation on proposals for a National Park in Dumfries & Galloway against the backdrop of a very vocal and well-financed 'No' campaign.

Inspired by the debating club recently formed by some Castle Douglas High School students, we arbitrarily divided ourselves into 'Yes' and 'No' teams, and prepared our own debate on the National Park under the headings of Social, Economic, Environmental and Political.

Gathered around our mugs of coffee, our debate developed into a collaborative discussion, beginning with a presentation from the 'Yes' team on the social/economic status quo in our region. **Here is an overview of the 'Yes' team's outcomes:**

- Not only is our region bottom of the Scottish income league, wages here are lower than in other comparable rural areas; much work is low skilled and seasonal
 - Our Gross Value Added (GVA) is 18% lower than the Scottish average
 - Child poverty sits at 26%, and a 'poverty related attainment gap' exists
 - Population decline, marked by an increasing proportion of older people, leads to the closure of local schools and the hollowing out of small communities - "Young people", says a local poet, "are our greatest export"
 - Affordable housing falls far short of demand; it is more expensive to build social housing in D&G than anywhere else in Scotland
 - We have a higher proportion (2.42%) of long term empty houses than the Scottish average (1.7%)
 - Holiday rentals are especially lucrative in a region where the local authority are seen to take a 'lenient' approach to short term rental regulations
- The 'Yes' team suggested that the joined-up structure offered by a National Park and its ability to leverage new funding, could add value and support broad change:
- New education, training and employment opportunities to address poverty
 - Create a year round tourist industry based around small scale holiday accommodation, eg glamping
 - Develop the environmental protection

sector, offering long term and sustainable employment

- Improve access to housing, especially for young people, through more effective management of the holiday rental sector, and addressing blocks to the provision of affordable housing
- Through these measures, and greater involvement of local people, build capacity, strengthen communities, and keep schools, and other services local

There is clear evidence (from NatureScot) that the other Scottish National Parks have delivered, and continue to strengthen their action, on all these fronts.

To counter the argument that a number of agencies already exist in the region, and that the addition of a further layer of bureaucracy is unnecessary, we looked at the very different functions of these organisations:

- The Southern Ayrshire and Galloway Biosphere is a collective of community based projects with no planning or decision making authority
- The Galloway International Dark Skies Park has a mainly educational remit
- Forestry and Land Scotland is responsible for economically sustainable forestry, enhancing the environment and the development of leisure access to the forests

An overarching body such as the Galloway National Park would have powers not available to these projects.

The 'No' team had questions as to how the Park would actually work and whether it would have sufficient funds. Certain projects might attract funding initially but this would have to be ongoing. Some of the objections to the National Park were set out. **Here is an overview of the 'No' team's outcomes:**

- The establishment of a National Park could undermine the qualities of natural beauty and local community that make this area so special in the first place
- The proposal was exacerbating division in the local community
- D&G is not a suitable area being both inhabited and cultivated
- The National Park will not deliver much needed improvements to infrastructure and services, eg transport networks, education, health and social care
- There was lived experience of the negative impact of increased visitors during lockdown; experience of the two existing National Parks

shows that visitors do not always follow advice so camping rights have had to be withdrawn

Research from the 'Yes' team into the politics behind the consultation uncovered lesser known aspects of the 'No' campaign:

From the day the National Park was officially announced, it was clear that the 'No' campaign had a well-funded, highly organised publicity campaign that was set in train immediately. Leaflets appeared in every household the next day, huge posters bordered every highway, meetings were instantly organised. Many, including ourselves, were confused by the insistent messages and dismayed by the escalating divisions splitting our communities. There was obviously a lot of money, not to say prepared planning, behind all this. But whose? And why?

An investigative article by Rob Edwards in *The Ferret* (Dec 19 2024 - www.theferret.scot/landowner-backing-national-park-campaign) lays out where the money comes from and the close family connections between the Jack family, who own multiple estates in Galloway, and the company Media House International, the PR agents for this campaign.

Media House International first gained a high profile with their unsuccessful campaign to prevent the repeal of Section 28 in 2003. Edwards cites Action to Protect Rural Scotland, who have faced opposition from Media House, and lost, over the proposed deposit return scheme. Kat Jones, of APRS, analyses tactics for suppressing initiatives (www.aprs.scot/news/environmental-campaigning-in-the-age-of-misinformation) - "Find a group that already feels vulnerable and make them feel more threatened", for example, small farmers, business owners, would-be home-owners, people who want to live and work here in tolerable conditions, those who already feel threatened by current rural policies. It appears their fears are being utilised by secretive private interests to stymie the debate before it has begun.

We were left wondering where the 'Yes' campaign was. For example, there was no equivalent to the very professional leaflets provided by the 'No' campaign to support their cause.

Finally, we looked at the consultation process itself. The lack of clear information around the proposals precluded an informed view while the questions were narrow and focused on specific areas of detail.

Preparing the debate had been tough homework but subsequently we felt better informed and more engaged. It got us talking to other people. It helped us to clarify our own view and, in some cases, had the effect of changing our minds on the issue.

Frances Hlanze, Leonie Ewing, Margaret Elphinstone, Margaret Glencross, Rose Ardron





A NEW COMMUNITY GARDEN

February saw the inaugural shovels hit the dirt in LING's latest outdoors project - with over 40 trees planted in one day!

Volunteers from across the Glenkens came to pitch in as we started work on our new community garden with a tree-planting day!

Over 40 trees were planted, many courtesy of Dumfries and Galloway Woodlands' tree-planting fund along with some community donations.

The garden is a permaculture design, full of native plants and vegetation from fruit trees to path-lining elders.

The opportunity to share land and resources to grow food sustainably, and learn together about ecology is most welcome in light of the climate crisis and the food insecurity that it may bring.

More broadly, the garden is a space that encourages generosity and friendship - already our volunteers have received tuition on gardening best practice while planting! And this is just the beginning...



We hope that the garden will grow into a space for everyone: jam-makers on the hunt for berries, bird-watchers seeking out tranquillity, or aspiring horticulturalists who may not have a garden of their own.

One of our purposes here at LING is to preserve and restore spaces of social and environmental significance. And so we hope that the garden can serve as a key asset for New Galloway.



HIRE THE HALL!

The town hall is available for parties, conferences, receptions and more! You can book via our website, or feel free to get in touch with any queries.

CHANGES AFOOT...

Volunteers and staff at LING have been working hard to increase our resilience and strengthen our vision, resulting in a new five-year plan.

At a time when so many are struggling with the rising cost of living, the need for open and inclusive community spaces is more apparent than ever.

Like many charities, LING couldn't function without the network of generosity that exist in our area, so local voices are essential in building organisations that can serve their communities long into the future.

We re-affirmed our core vision

of a thriving New Galloway at our Volunteer Event in March.

LING will help this vision by:

- Maintaining and improving public spaces and facilities
- Providing recreational activities for everyone
- Preserving historic or architecturally important buildings

To keep up with LING, you can follow us - or request a membership form and you'll receive our monthly updates!

 newgallowaytownhall.com
 info@ling.org.uk
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Crookmakers club showcase their skills

Castle Douglas crookmakers, who meet on a Monday evening at Balmaclellan Men's Shed, held their annual show in the

King's Arms hotel.

The winning crook overall was made from cow horn by Des Hadnett. Prize winners with tutor Andrew Carson.

Shirley Thomson

Pictured are prize winners with tutor Andrew Carson



St Margaret's plant and bake sale

St Margaret's Guild has for many years now organised a plant and bake sale to raise funds for a local charity – an event that many in the community look forward to.

This year the sale will be held outside St Margaret's Church on Saturday 26 April,

from 10am to 12noon, and all profits will be donated to the Scottish Charity Air Ambulance. The plant stall will contain a variety of flower and vegetable seedlings, as well as plants and perennials, all from local gardens.

The homemade cakes and biscuits on the baking stall are always popular – last year everything was sold by 11.30am, so don't wait till the last minute. And in addition to the sales tables, teas/coffees and cake will be served, outside if the weather is warm and sunny, or inside if not!



The baking table and plant table at last year's plant and bake sale

THE GLENKENS HUB

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Life and land in the Glenkens

At the *Gazette*, we are always looking for new ways to reflect and amplify voices within our communities.

In light of this, and thanks to funding from NatureScot, we commissioned local young journalist Ross Sanderson to delve into life in the Glenkens and condense his interpretation into the following eight-page feature.

We hope you enjoy this fresh and vibrant vision reflecting the beauty and magic, as well as the trials and tribulations, of living in our very special part of the world.

As we turn the page to this special edition of the *Glenkens Gazette*, we invite you to embark on a journey through the heart and soul of our beautiful community.

Born from the rolling hills, serene landscapes and thriving communities of the Glenkens, the pages that follow are devoted to capturing the essence of life here - our shared triumphs, tribulations, and everything in between.

The Glenkens is a tapestry woven with the threads of our unique stories, and in this special edition, you will find reflections on both the highs and lows that define our experience.

From the breathtaking beauty and biodiversity of our natural surroundings to the warmth of human connections, this issue shines a light on what makes our community truly special.

You'll find a carefully curated collection of stories, portraits, and reflections that encapsulate our life here. We want to celebrate our shared history, acknowledge our struggles, and look toward the future with determination and unity.

Every article is a reminder that while challenges may arise, there are always

stories of hope and the indomitable spirit of our area waiting to be told.

We encourage you to reflect on your own experiences in the Glenkens. What moments have shaped your story? How can we continue to celebrate what makes our community unique while addressing the challenges we face? How can we ensure that the land that we are living on allows communities, wildlife and local economies to thrive?

This is an open invitation to engage, connect, and share in the diverse narratives that compose the rich mosaic of our lives here. If you would like to get involved with projects or groups in the Glenkens, please visit the Glenkens Hub at www.glenkens.scot where you will find information and contact details.



Nestled in the heart of Dumfries and Galloway, the Glenkens is known for its landscapes, rich history, and environmental diversity.

Life here offers a serene lifestyle wrapped in natural beauty. The rolling hills, lush forests, and shimmering lochs create a unique backdrop that transforms with each season.

The slower pace of life encourages mindfulness, prioritising of both mental and physical well-being, and residents often find profound satisfaction in their connection to the land and to each other. Those

who live in the area have nature on their doorsteps and know just how peaceful and fulfilling it can be. Traditional and new job opportunities allow people to make their life here.

Rural living, however, is not without its unique set of challenges and at times this may seem a bit daunting.

Limited public transport is one of the primary challenges to life in the Glenkens, and our remoteness can make accessing essential services a significant hurdle. With the only public transport being buses, and bus services being infrequent and often unreliable, many people are dependent on private vehicles. For some, the nearest grocery store or medical facility may be over ten miles away, necessitating careful planning and reliance on neighbours and friends.

Housing also presents challenges of its own. While the breathtaking landscapes and charming homes offer a romantic

appeal, the cost of living and finding suitable accommodation can be a significant issue. For younger families and newcomers to the area especially, it can be hard to establish roots.

The absence of accessible childcare options is another pressing worry. This situation often impacts working families, limiting job opportunities and requiring parents to prioritise and compromise. Similarly, the educational landscape in the Glenkens can be challenging.

While our local schools offer a tight-knit, nurturing environment appreciated by many, limited resources and smaller school rolls can hinder some opportunities that larger urban schools can afford.

The spirit of collaboration means that the struggles of rural life are met with determination, resourcefulness, and support.

Employment opportunities are similarly constrained. Many of us seek work in sectors such as agriculture, tourism, or a flourishing variety of creative industries. Yet the demand for high quality, non-seasonal jobs currently outstrips the available positions, leading to a struggle for economic stability. Young adults in particular may look elsewhere for work, which can contribute to a slow population decline and a reduced sense of community vitality.

While these issues, mentioned one after another in this way, can make for scary reading, the light at the end of the tunnel shines bright and the community here in the Glenkens thrives on resilience and camaraderie.

The spirit of collaboration means that the struggles of rural life are met with determination, resourcefulness, and support. Local initiatives and shared gatherings foster a strong sense of belonging, ensuring that both current

residents and future generations can navigate the complexities of rural living together.

That togetherness is embodied by the many active community groups and organisations, one of which is the Glenkens Community & Arts Trust (GCAT). GCAT was created in response to the devastating Foot and Mouth epidemic of 1998 and since then has consistently delivered high-quality arts and community development work across the Glenkens and beyond.

By supporting activities that are essential to the quality of life of the people and the environment, GCAT strives to make the Glenkens an excellent place to live for residents of all ages. This is done

both through providing high quality arts at the CatStrand arts centre, but also by playing a core community development role, evolved

in response to local needs and led by supporting delivery of the Glenkens & district Community Action Plan.

Life in the Glenkens may present its share of challenges but, ultimately, emerges as a testament to the resilience of rural living. With the strength of community collaboration and an unwavering commitment to improvement, residents continue to cultivate a joyful and fulfilling life amidst the scenic beauty of this remarkable area. There are many opportunities ahead, both in community work and in the local economy, and it is by continuing to work together that we will make the most of them.

Pictured below centre is last year's Carsphairn Show © Christopher J Caygill. To the left is a view of Woodhead leadmines, Carsphairn, and below right is the New Galloway link path, both courtesy of the Glenkens Hub Photo Gallery



Case Study: Living in the Glenkens

Ten miles east of Carsphairn, deep in the Ken Valley, lies a place that perfectly captures rural living.

Twisting through the glen, the road immerses you in natural beauty, a changing landscape that never fails to inspire. No matter the weather, you can't help but smile as you take that solitary moment to appreciate what beholds you.

For most, it's a fleeting moment, but for Melissa and Ben Ade, it's home. They moved into their current house in 2011, but their hearts have always been in the Glenkens, from childhood, and have always brought them back to their roots. "We spent six months traveling around Morocco, Spain and Portugal, living in a Land Rover, but when we came back we had a very refreshed perspective on the area," explained Ben. "We had a huge appreciation for the Glenkens and for our home. We are very lucky here."

Appreciation for the area prompted the couple to stay and to raise a family, with the vision of giving their children the same treasured experiences that they hold dear. "I have fond memories of just being free as a child," remembers Melissa. "The burn, the hills, the mud. That is all I've ever hoped for my children, to be able to express themselves in nature and their environment."

"When it comes to rural living, the positives far outweigh the negatives. You could move to a city and have a lot on your doorstep but you also won't get what we have here or be able to raise a family in such a good community. Everyone in the Glenkens as a whole just looks after each other.

"I have family down in Leeds and they don't know their neighbours two doors up, whereas we know everybody locally and if anyone new ever comes into the area we are quick to introduce ourselves."

New people moving into the area is something that is becoming more and more of a rarity, due to the challenges of rural living that can be seen on the surface when one considers relocating.

As Ben says, however, if you dig a little deeper, solutions to those concerns are all around. "People often use work as a reason not to live here but if you look at things in another way, there are unlimited possibilities for you, especially if you are self-employed. Showing a bit of entrepreneurship can go a long way.

"I have fond memories of just being free as a child...The burn, the hills, the mud..."



Ben and Melissa with their three children outside the shepherd's hut they let out to holiday makers

We ourselves have thought of ways to diversify income and have built traditional shepherd's huts to be let out as holiday homes."

"Alongside that, Melissa has also recently qualified as a forest school practitioner so we will be able to open that same area up for children

to explore. This will give us the chance to teach them some rural skills such as woodworking, mechanical engineering and baking.

"Big industries do a lot to provide people in the region with jobs but the opportunities to make something for yourself here are endless."

Demonstrating their entrepreneurial spirit, Melissa and Ben have a website for their self-catering holiday business and forest school sessions: www.HeartoftheGlen.com.

Ben is the author of two travel books about their adventures abroad titled

Travels with a Tiny Tortoise and Notes from El Ahouli, which are both available to purchase online.

Housing and transport are two other hurdles that people worry about but, as can be seen across the whole of the Glenkens, communities come together to create initiatives that work for the sole purpose of bettering the lives of the locals. Time and time again, the Glenkens will provide answers to rural living problems.

"There are houses available to rent and buy, and while you might earn more in a city, life here is much cheaper. You have the space and the help of the local community to build a life." Their own home was once in a boggy field. Now, it's off-grid, powered by solar, with water from a mountain spring and wood-burning stoves for heat.

"We may be off-grid but one thing for sure is that people are trying to make a positive difference. We have our own challenges, on a personal level, but we love it here. It's not all about the money or the easiness of things for us. We're happy and healthy and really, that's all that matters."

The Glenkens & District Community Action Plan, published in September 2020, is a model for economic and social regeneration.

It aims to make the area a connected, resilient, and carbon-neutral place where people like Melissa and Ben want to live, work, raise families, and grow old. It will be somewhere that other places in Scotland will look to for inspiration.

For any community to thrive, its people must feel heard and, most importantly, understood. Residents often express concerns about limited access to essential services, employment opportunities, and infrastructure. While common in rural areas, these issues can lead to isolation. The Glenkens Community Action Plan (CAP) seeks to change this narrative by promoting active participation among its people and seeing their priorities actively delivered. In order to do this, the action plan targets four key themes to implement local initiatives and combat rural challenges. Things that have been achieved over the last three years specifically because the communities suggested them in the action plan include:

1. A Connected Community

The Glenkens Hub, launched in April 2023, provides an easy-to-use website and social media channel to amplify community voices. It hosts an events calendar, local job opportunities and loads of information about Education, Land Use and much more: www.glenkens.scot.

The Glenkens Youth Group provides a safe and undirected space for young people (P7 – S3) to hang out. The free Monday evening sessions are very youth-led, with activities such as cooking, craft making and instrument learning. They also run summer holiday programme, which last year included bee-keeping, water sports and a trip to the Edinburgh Fringe.

All of the above are now GCAT projects, although the Youth Group was pioneered by Local Initiatives in New Galloway before handing over to GCAT.

2. An Asset-Rich Community

Support for Local Place Planning (LLP) has been essential in making certain that the voices of our communities are heard at a regional level. With the support of GCAT through NatureScot and SOSE, Dalry Community Council volunteers have created an exemplar Local Place Plan which has a parish-wide focus on the issues affecting them. Their LPP was the first in the region to have a clear focus on land use and the environment in its considerations, as well as village-related priorities.



Crossmichael, New Galloway & Kells, Carsphairn, and Balmaclellan are now developing their own LPPs with support from GCAT.

Most of our Town and Village Hall are run by teams of amazing volunteers, and they have been re-doubling their efforts over the last few years, ensuring that their buildings are fit for modern rural living and meeting the needs of their communities. They are supported in this by the Glenkens Community Asset Network, which takes some of the leg-work out of managing these assets.

3. An Economically Flourishing Community

One of the most important assets to the Community Action Plan is the focus on building community wealth. The Glenkens interprets Community Wealth Building (CWB) in its widest sense and sees it as critical to thriving and sustainable communities.

It is not just about monetary benefits from wind farms or other developments – rather, it is about working in partnership with those organisations who create wealth from or within the area to ensure that some of that wealth supports the communities hosting the organisations.

The Galloway Food Hub, Propagate and the Pamela Young Trust are all examples of community responses that are working to create a more sustainable and vibrant Glenkens for us all.

4. A Carbon Neutral Community

The Loch Ken Trust Ranger Service focuses on ecological protection, responsible camping and water safety, combining their educational messages with fun activities such as cook-outs and water activities to reach as many people as possible.

Many village and town halls have secured funding for carbon footprint reductions. The CatStrand recently cut 10 tonnes of carbon emissions annually by replacing their oil boiler with solar panels and air source heat pumps.

These are just a few examples of how the Community Action Plan is shaping and

supporting the Glenkens. By resourcing the community and working together, local solutions are emerging to problems that many remote-rural communities face.

Accountability, partnership working, and delivery are key. To achieve this, the Glenkens has organised itself perhaps uniquely:

- GCAT is a delivery organisation, both delivering Community Action Plan projects and supporting the many other local organisations that are working on CAP priorities too.

- The CAP Steering Group is a group of volunteers from across the Glenkens who keep the CAP relevant and assess progress against the communities' priorities. They are planning to refresh the CAP later this year, using the Local Place Plans as valuable inputs.

- The Glenkens and District Trust is our local funding body, which administers our wind farm community benefit funds through the Glenkens and District Community Fund, supported by Foundation Scotland. Their funding strategy is aligned very heavily with the Community Action Plan, meaning that they can confidently fund projects and activities that they know the Glenkens communities value.

Between them, these three organisations are working hard to support the communities of the Glenkens to achieve their ambitions. They lobby regionally and nationally for solutions to those problems we can't fix ourselves and for regional and national agencies to see the value of working with local place-based organisations to achieve their shared outcomes.

While community empowerment is historically and currently strong in the Glenkens, strategic local and regional partnerships remain essential in continuing to combat rural depopulation and support healthy landscapes and communities.

Pictured is the village sign coming into New Galloway courtesy of the Glenkens Hub photo gallery

Case Study: The Galloway Food Hub

Life in Dalry is usually relaxed and peaceful; unless, of course, you happen to visit on a Galloway Food Hub packing day...

Every second Friday, the village comes to life and is filled with customers, box packers, food drivers and volunteers, all coming together to help the social enterprise tick. The Galloway Food Hub (GFH), born from an idea in the Glenkens Community Action Plan, was set up to give better access to local food in rural communities by creating a hyper-local supply chain.

"A scoping study showed people wanted better access to local food, and an online marketplace was the best way to do that," says GFH Coordinator Lesley Atkins.

Launched as a pilot in 2021, the Glenkens Food Hub was started by Propagate with 11 producers and 20 customers, operating every three weeks. Now, it serves over 100 customers fortnightly with 33 suppliers, expanding beyond the Glenkens to the wider Galloway region. We've even had to change the name, as we've expanded out of the Glenkens"

"Seventy-five percent of our food is locally produced, with the rest being certified organic from Scotland and beyond," Lesley explains. "We have 13 collection points across Dumfries & Galloway, plus home delivery in the Glenkens."

Lesley now champions a network of growers, farmers and makers of ecologically produced good food across the Galloway region. She helps them to build a workable, online food hub to create a circular economy around food in the local community.

Ordering is simple: customers browse all the suppliers online between midday Friday and midday Tuesday, place a single order, and collect from a chosen point.

Much like any community-run organisation, however, it takes people like Lesley and the Food Hub team to dedicate time and effort into giving back to their community. What can be seen time and time again in the Glenkens is the willingness that local people have for community wealth building, and the more people committed to helping create positive change, the better.

"There's so much that people can do to help if they would like to. They can come on a Thursday or a Friday to prep boxes or deliver.

"We usually do the whole thing with two members of staff and about four or five volunteers. Help with marketing and handing out leaflets is always appreciated, as is taking photos for Facebook and Instagram. It's a great social network and we couldn't do it without the volunteers."

As a Community Interest Company, the Food Hub is driven by a passion for sustainable, locally produced food. Membership is free to anyone in Dumfries & Galloway who wants to support its mission.

"The other thing we do offer for keen gardeners, if they are growing fruit and veg in their own gardens without chemical intervention, is that they can sell their surplus through the food hub. We have a profile called Galloway Growers



where we offer homegrown fruit and veg. People can just ring us up to say they will have an extra three cucumbers next week, for example, and we'll put them on the website to sell for them."

As a Community Interest Company, the Food Hub strives to benefit the people of the Glenkens and invites anyone to join them on the journey. Free membership is open to anyone based in Dumfries & Galloway with an interest in GFH.

Whether a customer, a supporter, a business or an organisation, if you are interested in the work that is done and would like to join a group of people who are passionate about real food, produced sustainably from the land around us, the opportunity is there.

"For me, it was a great way to meet people after moving here," says Lesley. "It's about making good food accessible while building a healthier, more connected community."

For any community to thrive and continue to grow, its people need to feel heard and, most importantly, understood. The Galloway Food Hub is a perfect example of something so positive being created in the Glenkens by doing just that. It also needs a funder that understands its community. The Glenkens and District Trust was able to fund the Galloway Food Hub through its early days because it knew it was a community priority. Funding ingenuity and passion that breeds an economically flourishing community.

To find out more visit the website at gallowayfoodhub.org.uk or Facebook and Instagram @gallowayfoodhub



The Glenkens Land Use Vision developed in 2023 in response to the rapid rate of land use change in the area, set in the context of the Glenkens at that time. Let's take a look at some of the key elements of the Vision:

"We are a forested area, a farming area, an energy generation area. We are a watery area, given life by our rivers and lochs. Our natural environment is so special that we are part of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire UNESCO Biosphere. Our landscapes attract visitors from all over the world.

We are a peaty area and our soil stores some of Scotland's best carbon. It is our home, where we work, live and play. All of these land uses are intertwined and affected by influences within and outwith our control.

We are an organised and coherent community which has sought and achieved balance in land use over many years through partnership working and effective engagement. However, the speed and intent of land use change in the Glenkens is overwhelming and the lack of power to effect change is daunting.

The disconnect between policy intent and local realities has led to disengagement in some and huge frustration in others."

Land use in the Glenkens - whether forestry, farming, wind farms, housing or business - has been on many people's minds for some time now. In late 2022, the Glenkens was selected as a focus area for the South of Scotland Regional Land Use Partnership pilot project, led by the Social Enterprise Academy. This resulted in the Glenkens Land Use Vision, adopted as part of the Glenkens Community Action Plan in summer 2023.

At its core, the Vision champions one simple principle:

Everyone who takes value from our land returns value to it.

The Glenkens could be an exemplar of sustainable land use practice in building resilience for climate, biodiversity and communities. To try

and achieve this, the Land Use Vision has three sections of recommended actions:

1) Local Action

- Embody best practice in land use for biodiversity protection and climate adaptation
 - Ensure inclusive collaboration among landowners, stakeholders and communities
 - Develop a public database of environmental data for the Glenkens to create baseline land use mapping and encourage enhanced biodiversity
- In pursuit of this, and thanks largely to support from NatureScot which has allowed GCAT to support the volunteers working on this topic, various studies and plans have been made.

A 2024 feasibility study on a Glenkens Land Use Forum concluded that a network - rather than a formal forum - would be the best model for collaboration. Another study recommended the creation of a Glenkens Festival of Land to promote community engagement with the topic, which GCAT has secured funding to deliver in 2025.

2) Regional Action

The South of Scotland needs a clear Land Use Framework and Local Development Plan that accounts for cumulative impacts and environmental sensitivity. Instead of relying on high-capacity communities to drive action, structured regional or national mechanisms should identify and address issues systematically.

Key priorities include:

- A Communities Representative on the Regional Land Use Framework (RLUF) Advisory Group to advocate for local

needs

- Updating of the D&G Forestry and Woodland Strategy (2014) and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2009)
- Involving community representatives as strategic partners in land-use policy reviews
- Ensuring meaningful local participation in land-use decisions, in line with Scottish Land Commission guidelines

3) National Action

Scotland must establish robust mechanisms nationally that value and amplify rural voices. Communities should not just be consulted but empowered to shape policies, regardless of their volunteer capacity. Urgent priorities include:

- Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and accountability across public land-use bodies
- Implementing holistic subsidy schemes for agriculture and forestry that recognise the link between climate, biodiversity, and economic sustainability
- Shifting financial structures toward positive environmental impacts rather than reinforcing unsustainable practices

The true seat of power in the land-use sector is opaque. No single public body holds full accountability for land use decisions. Best practice guidelines are not always followed, and community interests lack protection. For the Glenkens, the call for sustainable and balanced land use resonates deeply. These frameworks and policies are not merely bureaucratic jargon; they are essential tools for preserving the beauty and biodiversity of our beloved environment.



Case Study: The Upper Urr Environmental Trust

Though some challenges and hardships of life here have been highlighted in this special edition, one constant has remained clear - the Glenkens is a stunning part of the world.

While that may be easy for anyone to see, it is not as easy to understand what needs to be done to keep it that way. For those of us who cherish the beauty and biodiversity of the natural world, the importance of taking action to protect our local environments cannot be overstated.

Only by acknowledging the significance of biodiversity, nurturing our connection to nature, promoting environmental education, and engaging with our communities can we make a meaningful impact on our surroundings.

In order to do just that, the Upper Urr Environmental Trust (UUET), founded in 2020 with a board of three volunteer trustees all living within the Corsock area, was set up with the vision to improve the habitat, environment and ecology in the Upper Urr valley.

UUET chair, Joe Seed, has a centuries-long family tie to the area. He is

willing to put his hand up and be heard when it comes to our local environment.

"A lot of forestry was going on in the area when I joined the community council, so I wanted to see if anything could be done to make it work better for our communities.

"Forestry is important but there has to be balance. Well-managed woodlands are a real asset, but the commercial forests that we see that you can't actually walk in and where not a lot lives are really changing our landscape, and our biodiversity."

By definition, "forestry is the science and practice of managing forests and woodlands, encompassing planting, nurturing, harvesting, and conserving trees for human and environmental benefits."

"It's...something that can be managed by the community for the community, and that's a really good example of partnership working with developers."

The Upper Urr valley is home to some important habitats and species. Survey work from 2020 highlighted the surprising diversity of the area, with just one portion of land having nearly 150 species of plants and more than 40 species of birds - several of which are on the red list.

"It's inspiring to know that the area is so rich in wildlife," adds Joe's partner, local designer Martha Schofield.

The UUET was set up to take a lead in making a positive change in the area, protecting habitat as much

as possible for the benefit of the environment and for people.

Joe says: "We have events coming up which are all about engaging with the local landscape creatively, so keep an eye out for those on our Facebook page.

"There is a really good sense of community here and people of all ages, living nearby and in surrounding areas have given time and effort to make this a really lovely community site which is brilliant and a great thing for kids to take part in.

"Environmentally, biodiversity is the most important focus for me," adds Joe. "Working with the developers (Foresight Sustainable Forestry) to get peatland restored and the riparian planting plans we have discussed over the line will be the biggest wins for the area.

"It's good to be working with Foresight to secure the site as a nature reserve which otherwise would have been abandoned as it's unsuitable for

commercial growing."

There are seven acres in community management, and in this area the paths will be maintained, benches will be installed, and many native broadleaf trees have already been planted.

Joe continues: "It's just somewhere nice to go and spend some time, something that can be managed by the community for the community, and that's a really good example of partnership working with developers."



As we bring this special edition of the Glenkens Gazette to a close, I want to take a moment to personally reflect on the vibrant community that unites us all.

This issue has been dedicated to exploring the heart and soul of our area, showcasing the stories that illustrate our shared experiences, challenges, and triumphs.

Throughout these pages, we have ventured into the lives of our neighbours, discovering their passions and the many ways they contribute to the fabric of our community and the conservation of our lands. Each story is a thread woven into the larger tapestry of the Glenkens.

It's essential to recognise that these connections, however small, carry significant meaning and ultimately foster a sense of belonging among us. We have also taken time to highlight various initiatives and events that make this not just a place to live but a place to thrive – for wildlife, for businesses and for people.



And there are many many more that we didn't have space for here.

In light of the challenges that may arise from time to time, be they economic, environmental, or social, it's important to remember that we are not alone.

The Glenkens is filled with individuals and groups ready to lend a helping hand, share solutions, and collaborate for a brighter future. It is

this spirit of togetherness that sets our community apart, transforming obstacles into opportunities.

I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition - writers, photographers, and all those who generously shared their time and stories. It's your passion for life here that makes this edition resonate with authenticity and love.

Further reading: the bigger picture

Glenkens Hub resources:

Community Action Plan – Overview, Steering Group Meeting Reports and Annual Reports (www.glenkens.scot/reports-resources-archive/community-action-plan)

Glenkens Land Use Vision – 2023 Vision and follow-up reports (www.glenkens.scot/land-use)

Local Place Planning – Updates and the completed Dalry Local Place Plan (www.glenkens.scot/local-place-plans)

Other websites:

The Glenkens Hub - www.glenkens.scot

The Glenkens and District Trust - www.glenkenstrust.org.uk

Galloway Food Hub - www.gallowayfoodhub.org.uk

Heart of the Glen - www.heartoftheglen.com

Upper Urr Environmental Trust - www.uuet.co.uk



This Gazette special feature was written by Ross Sanderson. Originally from Edinburgh, Ross is a 26-year-old professional journalist who now lives and works in the Glenkens. After graduating from university in 2020, he spent time working in both Zambia and Spain before returning home and settling here.

This feature has been made possible through funding from NatureScot - many thanks to them for their support of our communities' work.



Rhelm rock the Glenkens music scene



Have you heard of Rhelm? If not, where have you been?!

Rhelm are an up-and-coming indie/rock band who have been playing live for two years now, despite members only being 15 years old.

They began their career at the CatStrand, playing their first ever live gig at the 2023 Battle the Bands competition where they blew the judges away, securing the top prize that year to perform at Knockengorroch Festival (see p28 for more on Knockengorroch).

Since then, the band have gone on to play at numerous events and venues around Dumfries and Galloway, including Castle Douglas and Dalbeattie civic days, Kirkcudbright Fringe, YouthBeatz, Music at the Multiverse and The Hidden Gem Festival in Dumfries.

Rhelm are fronted by former New Galloway resident, Megan Oliver, who is also a long-standing member of CatStrand Youth Players (see CatStrand Players article on p35), playing the baddie in last year's pantomime.

The rest of the band are made up of Eilidh Rutherford and Lucy Eddyshaw on guitars, Ross D'Arcy on bass

and Harrison Ansbro on drums. The band, based in Castle Douglas, began their career playing upbeat rock/indie covers from various decades, and have gone on to write and produce their own original material.

Having been given the amazing opportunity to be part of the CatStrand Creatives 'Stranded Cat' recordings programme, Rhelm are just about to release their debut single Sleep, recorded at Circa16 professional recording studio in Dumfries. Watch out for details very soon!

This year, the band are continuing to write new songs and have been

accepted on the Geez A Choon project run by Up Yer Airts, to work with industry professionals. Alongside studying for their Nat5 exams, they will be playing at numerous events and festivals across the area with their performance calendar filling up.

To keep up-to-date with Rhelm's adventures you can follow them on Facebook and Instagram @rhelm.official - and don't forget to listen out for their brand new single, Sleep!

Ian Oliver

***Pictured is Rhelm
photographed by Nicola
Rutherford***

Youth group golf sessions



We are so lucky to have a golf course in the Glenkens, and in such a beautiful setting.

This March, Dave Aitken from New Galloway Golf Club very kindly offered local youngsters attending the Glenkens Youth Group the opportunity of some free taster sessions.

We were delighted with the turnout; the chilly weather did not deter the enthusiasm and fun that was had. We started by

learning about the different golf clubs and how and when to use them.

Following this, the group took part in a putting competition and practised 'driving' into the net.

During the final session, participants were let loose on the course, under the watchful eye and careful guidance of Dave.

Hopefully some of the young people who came along will continue to play, taking advantage of the fantastic resource we have on our doorstep!

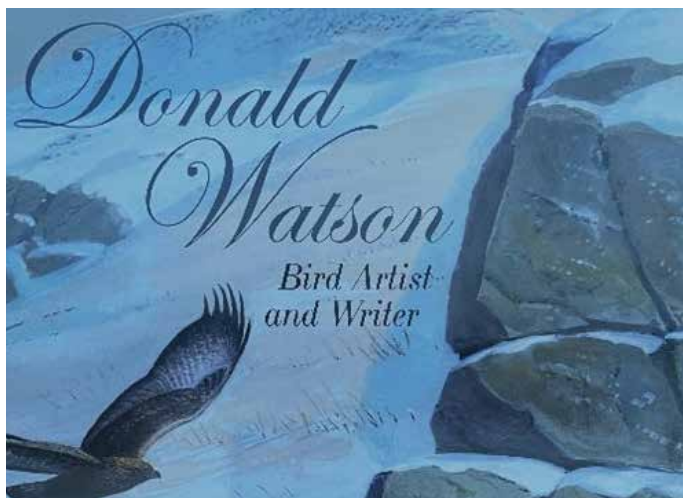
Thank you so much to Dave for his time, patience and expertise.

*Sue Curtis,
Glenkens Youth Group Lead*

Launch of Donald Watson book

There will be an event at Dalry Town Hall in April to launch a new book of the work of local bird artist Donald Watson.

Join Chris Rollie and Roger Crofts at 2pm on Friday 25 April for a talk and refreshments at Dalry Town Hall. Copies of the book will be available for purchase £17.99, as well as cards and posters of Donald Watson's work.



A CELEBRATION OF ONE OF BRITAIN'S FINEST-EVER BIRD ARTISTS AND FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

- Drives home the message of the continuing need for protecting birds and their habitats of which Donald was a leading proponent
- Covers all aspects of Donald Watson's life from childhood through to his long residence in St John's Town of Dalry in Galloway

A MUST-BUY BOOK FOR ALL INTERESTED IN BIRD ART AND IN BIRD PROTECTION

Donald Watson was a seminal figure in the wildlife art and ornithological world from the late 1950s onwards. Since his death in 2005, his work has lived on through active public demand for his outstanding paintings of birds and the continued reading of his books. Until now, there has been no book assessing his status and standing in the world of bird art and ornithology. This definitive book is written by family and acknowledged experts in their field who knew him and his outstanding contributions. There are so many perceptive insights about him and his work, and many previously untold stories that enliven the text. Beautifully illustrated with his outstanding paintings, examples of his exquisite scraper board sketches and family photographs, readers will want this book for its images alone.

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Second Sundays

Are you looking for an informal and relaxed place to find some spiritual renewal?

On the second Sunday of every month, at 4pm, St Margaret's Church in New Galloway will be hosting a short service based around music, readings and quiet reflection.

At the first one in March soon after the start of Lent, we listened to some thoughtful and absorbing sonnets about the temptations of Jesus interspersed with restful and fitting music.

We all have busy lives and often forget to look after ourselves – the idea of this service is to provide a time of calm reflection and peace, refreshing us for the week ahead. All are welcome; you don't have to be a member of a church to join us.

The next sessions will be on 13 April and 11 May. Nicolette Wise



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Important information if you electric heating or an off-peak tariff

Included here is an article by Citizens Advice, outlining the situation of changes to any meters or devices run on a radio teleswitch meter.

You might have been told by your electricity supplier you need to have your radio teleswitch (RTS) or dynamically teleswitched (DTS) electricity meter replaced. This is because the radio frequency it uses to switch between peak and off-peak rates is being switched off.

The radio frequency is expected to be switched off on 30 June 2025. Ofgem, the energy regulator, currently expects all RTS and DTS meters to be replaced by this date.

Check if you need to replace your meter

You might not know if you have a radio teleswitch (RTS) or dynamically teleswitched (DTS) meter. You might have one if:

- Your house is heated using electricity
- You have electric storage and water heaters
- You get cheaper energy at different times of day, for example if you have a peak and off-peak rate for electricity

Your teleswitch might be in the same box as

your meter or in a separate box. If it's in a separate box it will usually be black. Check the box, it might have 'radio teleswitch' or 'radio telemeter' printed on it (see examples to the right). If you're not sure if you have an RTS or DTS meter, contact your electricity supplier to check if your meter needs replacing.

Getting your meter replaced

If you've been contacted by your electricity supplier they should have told you how and when your meter is being replaced.

Your electricity supplier should recommend a tariff that will work in a similar way to what you have now, for example Economy 7.

If you also have a gas meter and you want your supplier to replace it, ask your supplier. You don't have to have your gas meter changed if you don't want to. If your gas and electricity supplier are the same, your supplier might be able to change both your meters to smart meters at the same time.

If you don't replace your RTS or DTS meter

Your electric heating might stop working as you expect. For example your hot water might be left on permanently or your storage heaters might use electricity at a more expensive time.

Your supplier won't know when you're using your electricity, so you might be charged the wrong amount. For example, you could be charged a peak rate for electricity you use during your off peak hours.

Other heating options

You might be able to get help with the cost of a new storage heater or heat pump, or getting connected to the gas grid and getting central heating.

For further information or help with this process, contact D&G Citizens Advice on 0300 303 4321 or email info@dagcas.org or you can call Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 196 8660 or visit www.energyadvice.scot



Photo of the Issue



This issue's winner is Kirsteen Curry with a gorgeous snap of Clatteringshaws.

Kirsteen wins two portions of mac 'n' cheese from our competition sponsors, the Balmaclellan-based Stockbridge Mac & Cheese Co.

Company owner and competition judge, Hannah Gould, said: "I love this photo - Clatteringshaws is my favourite spot in Galloway!"

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

Galloway Retold with Angela Miller

St John's Seat and Joseph Train

At the top of the Avillage of Dalry, where the road splits between the road that curves round into Townhead Crescent and the road to Moniaive, there's a small stone chair, carved from a single piece of rock.

Local legend tells us that it is St John's Seat, where the saint sat and rested after his very long journey from Galilee.

And if you dig a wee bit deeper, you discover some fairly astonishing claims about John the Baptist and his time in Dalry.

It was claimed that John the Baptist came to Dalry after he was beheaded in Galilee - which in itself is a pretty astonishing

feat. Supposedly his head was reattached with a gold collar. Not only that, but he actually married into the Gordon Family and is buried in the Kenmure aisle, complete with gold collar.

Now, I wouldn't go rushing to dig up the Kenmure aisle to see if the bones of the saint can be found there, but the story did lead a local antiquarian by the name of Joseph Train to make an attempt to steal St John's seat.

Joseph Train is a fascinating character. Not only was he an antiquarian, but he was, by trade, a gauger or exciseman, just like Robert Burns, although he was a little after Robert's time. He used his role in excise as a means to get his hands on things for his collection, and, indeed, to impress and help his friend Sir Walter Scott.

It's known that he passed a dossier of documents pertaining to the capture of the ship, the Rosamund, in the Solway by

the excise, including Robert Burns, to Sir Walter. This prompted Sir Walter to try and discover what had become of two small cannons from the ship that Robert had purchased (excisemen always got first dibs on assets taken by customs) and tried to send to France for the revolution.

Sir Walter discovered that they had reached no further than Dover, where they were seized.

Joseph also gave the Torrs pony cap to Sir Walter - an iron age Celtic art styled cap for a pony complete with horns that was discovered in a peat bog at Torrs Loch near Castle Douglas, among other notable things.

Anyway, Joseph was in Dalry and happened to overhear a conversation about the seat and its origins, in the tavern that used to stand where the seat is now. He resolved to take it for Sir Walter's collection, so returned with a pony and trap to take it away.



Since it's still there, you can see he wasn't successful, and you can hear the full story of that in my wee video on the subject!

There is also a video that goes into more detail about Mr Train himself, if I've tickled your interest.

Angela Miller is the librarian at Dalry Library and a keen local historian. You can view her YouTube channel by searching YouTube or Google for 'Galloway Retold'.



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The Hugh Foss story: an enigma variation

On Thursday 8 May 2025, Dalry Town Hall will celebrate the life and work of an unsung local hero - Hugh Rose Foss.

Hugh was born in Kobe, Japan, in 1902, and went on to become a Cryptanalyst at Bletchley Park, working alongside his better-known codebreaker Alan Turing. He then became Head of Section responsible for the breaking of Japanese naval codes.

One of five children and son of a missionary, Hugh went to Marlborough College and then graduated from Christ's College Cambridge in 1924. That same year he would join the Government Code and Cipher School where he learnt two models of enigma machine, the large non-reciprocal typing B Model and the small Index C mode 1.

In 1927 he was given a small reciprocal machine to examine and wrote a paper *The Reciprocal Enigma* on solving the non-plugboard enigma. In 1934 Foss and Oliver Strachey broke the Japanese naval attaché cipher.

On the 8 May 1940 Foss became the first person to break a days worth of German enigma codes deciphering by the method of Banburismus. To honour this achievement, the 8 May would forever be known as Foss Day.

Hugh left his work at GCHQ in 1953 and retired to the delightful village of St John's Town of Dalry in South West Scotland to pursue his other passion of Scottish country dancing. Indeed he went on to publish a number of volumes on the subject to critical acclaim.

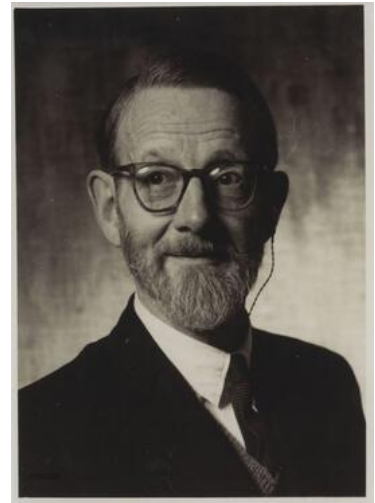
He passed away in 1971 and was laid to rest alongside his beloved wife Alison in the village churchyard. His son and daughter-in-law still reside in the village.

In his honour, the Scottish Dance

Movement are holding their annual celebration at Dalry Town Hall on the 8 May 2025 and the general public are invited to attend an exhibition between 3pm and 5pm.

There will also be a performance of a dance Hugh dedicated to his daughter-in-law, entitled Miss Fleming's Jig.

Dumfries and Galloway seems to have fallen into the strange habit of not wishing to celebrate its unsung heroes, and we at Dalry Town Hall wish to try and reverse that trend. Where better to start than with the work of a man who, with others at Bletchley, probably



HUGH FOSS

13TH MAY 1902 – 23RD DEC 1971

helped to shorten the war and save countless lives.

Gary Blissett, Chair,
Dalry Town Hall Committee

FINLAY CARSON MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for
Galloway and West Dumfries



If you would like an appointment,
please get in touch

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Screenings for April and May



There's an exciting season ahead at Dalry Film Club... Films start at 7.30pm, with doors opening at 7pm for tea, cake and a bit of chat.

Tickets are available on the door or you can get them ahead of time to secure your place through the CatStrand (cards accepted) - either call 01644 420 234 or visit www.gcat.scot

The Critic (15)

Wednesday 9 April

Set in 1930s London, The Critic revolves around a feared theatre critic named Jimmy Erskine (Ian McKellen), a newspaper owner (Mark Strong) who wants to get rid of the critic, and an actress (Gemma Arterton) who has been devastated by his excoriating theatrical reviews. The critic's determination to survive ensures that the other characters are caught in a web of blackmail, deceit and murder.

Thelma (12A)

Wednesday 30 April

Thelma, a 93 year old, is conned by telephone into losing \$10,000.

Her immediate family

wonder whether it is finally time she went into a home. But Thelma has other ideas.

Aided by a friend who has a two-seater scooter, Thelma decides to cross Los Angeles and get her money back from the swindler.

Paddington In Peru (PG)

Wednesday 14 May

Paddington Bear has been living with the Brown family in London for many years now, but he still feels the tug of his Peruvian roots.

Hearing that his Aunt Lucy, now living in the Home for Retired Bears, has been missing him terribly, Paddington and the Browns set off to Darkest Peru, only to discover on arrival that Aunt Lucy has disappeared.

So off they go into the Amazon to find her, accompanied by a boat captain,

Hunter Cabot (Antonio Banderas) and his daughter Gina. What could possibly go wrong?

Gladiator II (15)

Wednesday 4 June

After his North African home is conquered by the tyrannical twin emperors who now lead Rome, Lucius

(Paul Mescal) is forced to enter the Colosseum as a gladiator under the control of Macrinus (Denzel Washington).

He must look to his past to find strength to return the glory of Rome to its people.

THE GLENKENS HUB

Have you thought about writing for the Hub?

Just like our sister publication, the Glenkens Gazette, we're reliant on our fantastic community of contributors for our quality content.

We'd love to hear from anyone who'd like to get involved with:

- ✱ writing articles, stories, poetry
- ✱ taking photographs of the area
- ✱ producing videos and audio
- ✱ advertising your community organisation
- ✱ promoting your business

Getting in touch with us and submitting content couldn't be easier!

- ✱ @Glenkens Hub on Facebook
- ✱ Email: glenkenshub@hotmail.com
- ✱ Fill in the form: <https://tinyurl.com/GlenkensHub-update>

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Above us the sky...

We may sometimes forget the sky, but in my case, not for long.

Readers may know we are in a Dark Sky Park and they may even know about Dalry's claim as a bird town (Donald Watson and all that). But the sky (our big sky) has so much more to offer than that.

Birds – I have seen over twenty species of birds in my own back garden in Dalry. If, like me, you're no expert then you can identify birds by their sounds using a free app for your phone, like Merlin. Although you probably won't need it for the more obvious birds like geese, blackbirds and red kites.

Aircraft - The Glenkens is in a low flying training area, so you are likely to see RAF and Army aircraft from time to time. This is in addition to the airliners and private aircraft.

If you like to see what the aircraft are, where they are from and where they are going, the phone app Flight Radar 24 can tell you lots.

Low flying aircraft may not appear on the app but you can probably identify military transport aircraft (such as C130 Hercules) and helicopters by their sound alone.

Clouds – There is significant variety in the type of clouds we get. A bit of observation of cloud types (and wind direction) will give some understanding of the weather. If you want

to know more about clouds, try the website of the Cloud Appreciation Society.

Dusk – Dusk (or dawn) brings its own special light to sunsets and sunrises and provides excellent opportunities for photography. It's also the best time to see bats.

Night Sky – The night sky is, of course, the chance to see stars and planets. I like to use an app on my phone called Sky Map to tell me what that bright star is that I am looking at. In summer nights, you can also catch site of rare noctilucent clouds.

Space Weather – I like to keep an eye out for Northern Lights. I use the app Aurorawatch UK to alert me when I might see the spectacle.

If you have a night mode on your phone's camera, this is the best way to see the Northern Lights rather than just the naked eye. You can also find out when the next meteor shower is due by going to the site www.spaceweather.com

Satellites – Finally, you may have an interest in seeing satellites (or the International Space Station) pass overhead. A great many satellites can be seen with the naked eye if you know where and when to look.

The Heavens Above website www.heavens-above.com is a great way to be warned that something is about to go over, or to find out what it was that you have just seen. Just remember to set your location for accurate information.

Paul Goodwin



Name the place

(from page 6)

As spring brings new beginnings, here's a little nod to the sheer beauty of winter in our amazing Glenkens.

We are truly blessed with some amazing scenery. Here on Cairnsmore of Carsphairn you look west towards an icing sugar dusting of snow on the tops of the epic Rhins of Kells, the fields of Carsphairn an oasis of green between.

Did You Know? Apparently, our magnificent hills once reached to the heights of the mighty Himalayas, before erosion and time slowly ground them down. Just 12,000 years ago (a breath in geological time) this location would have been under up to a kilometre of ice!

The evidence of these truly monumental geological events remain all around us, barely disguised by a thin coat of soil and vegetation.

Dear Gazette,

Just a very quick "thank you" for another great issue of the *Gazette*. I think I can imagine the hard work and time that you must put in for every edition - fantastic effort!

*All the best,
Matthew*

(Matthew Newton founded the Glenkens Gazette back in 2000 and is still a regular reader, despite having left the Glenkens in 2013)

Move South

CatStrand along with Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival are proud to be showcasing **Move South: Immersive Dance Theatre In Galloway**, a dynamic programme of performances and participatory events featuring some of Scotland's most exciting touring dance companies.

Taking place between the 2 and 12 April, the show will feature performances by **Bodies of Water** (BOW Collective), **A Journey of Flight** (Kathryn Gordon) and **My Muses Take Care of Me** (Fleur Darkin), in addition to a series of workshops and engagement opportunities led by the visiting artists and Paragon Music.

Move South 2025 features:

Wed 2 - Fri 4 April - Paragon Music are running fun, sociable and fully accessible sessions for young people

and family members, exploring live music and dance, joined by the BOW Collective on the Friday.

Fri 4 April - Paper Planes is a relaxed workshop which features mindfulness activities and paper plane making, forming a mini installation during A Journey of Flight.

Sat 5 & Sun 6 April: A Journey of Flight (Kathryn Gordon) is a dreamlike and intimate immersive performance inspired by the migration of birds, exploring the themes of departure, nostalgia, and the essence of flight.

Sat 5 & Sun 6 April: Kathryn Gordon and Jorja Follina will guide participants through two movement sessions, exploring flight and suspension in the body, and delving into our hopes and dreams for the future. A short curtain-raiser will be created for A journey of flight on the Sunday. The sessions are open to all ages and abilities.



Sat 5 Apr: Bodies of Water (The BOW Collective) is a unique performance experience, exploring and celebrating transformative elements that connect all living things. A playful, multi-sensory performance experience weaving together movement, choreography, water, objects and sound.

Fri 11 Apr: My Muses Take Care of Me (Fleur Darkin) is a dynamic conversation between bodies and wild sculptural pieces by French visual artist Claire-Rose Barbier.

Drawing on themes of ancient feminine power, armoury and the presence of nature, the company carry audiences on a journey through life, death, love and regeneration.

Move South: Immersive Dance Theatre In Galloway has been made possible by support from Creative Scotland.

Festival success for CatStrand Players

CatStrand Players and Youth Players enjoyed great success with their entries at this year's SCDA One Act Play Festival at The Fullarton in Castle Douglas.

In the Youth Festival, CatStrand Youth Players won First Prize with their production of 'Gossip' by Brian Hampton. They were also awarded the 'Best Moment of Theatre' and 'Best Stage Presentation'.

The play was directed by Catherine Campbell and the cast of ten were praised by the

adjudicator for their excellent ensemble work. The main roles were played by Ella Campbell, Ben Hodson, Megan Oliver, Josh Wells, Sanna Gilbert and Liam McQueen with excellent support from the ensemble cast of Izak Entwistle, Alice Oliver, Io Heyes and Ellie Harnett.

The cast and crew were delighted to be representing Stewartry District once again at the West of Scotland Youth Final in Dunlop on 30 March and will be aiming to achieve a second appearance at the Scottish Youth Final to be held in St Andrews in June.

In the Open Festival, CatStrand Players also lifted three trophies, finishing in Second Place overall and winning 'Best Moment of Theatre' and 'Audience Choice'. Their comedy two-hander 'Its Only Make Believe' by Mark Rees was directed by Jo Jackson and starred Rose Benson and James Wallace.

The adjudicator was particularly impressed with the characterisations and comedy

timing and the audience were certainly entertained throughout.

They also go on to represent the district, together with first placed 88 Theatre, at the Open Western Final at The Beacon Theatre in Greenock on 4 April. They will be competing with the six qualifiers from the other districts for the chance to compete at the Scottish Final in Kirkcaldy in May.

This is the fourth consecutive year that CatStrand plays have gone forward to the Western Finals in both the Youth and Open categories, a great achievement.

Both plays were performed at CatStrand on 21 March in preparation for the Western Final appearances. Once the festival season is over, 2025 Christmas Panto plans will be announced – watch this space! *Brian Edgar*

Pictured are the cast of 'Gossip' with director Cat Campbell, after winning the 2nd Place trophy at the SCDA West of Scotland Final in Dunlop



Knockengorroch Festival is 27 years old

Scotland's longest-running greenfield music festival has announced the full line-up for their 27th year.

This year's festival will run from Thursday 22 to Monday 26 May, and includes sets from Mungo's Hi-Fi, The Dub Pistols, Elephant Sessions, Rokia Koné, Moving Shadow, and many more, welcoming back long-time favourite acts, and exciting new artists, from Scotland, the UK, and internationally.

This year, the festival will embody and explore the chosen theme of SURVIVAL - the survival of live music festivals, community, language, culture, and biodiversity.

Addressing both the overall global creative landscape and Knockengorroch's character personally as a unique eco-conscious music festival, Knockengorroch Festival 2025 will share its passion for a present - and future - full of resistance, staying power, resilience, regeneration, and new beginnings.

In a post-pandemic and climate crisis landscape, music events across the UK are undergoing increasing challenges - something Knockengorroch Festival is not afraid to highlight, not least through its recent partnership with fellow Celtic festival Green Gathering in Wales.

Knockengorroch's original hands-on approach to festival creation has inspired the formation of many of Scotland's past and current music festivals, to the benefit of Scotland's music industry and to Scottish musicians.

Amongst this year's performers and making her Knockengorroch solo debut is one of Mali's leading female artists and musical force to be reckoned with, Rokia Koné - the Rose of Bamako.

Psychedelic dub ensemble African Head Charge have decades of experience in the



scene, set to showcase a unique blend of polyrhythmic outernational sounds on the Knockengorroch stage this May.

Hailing from Australia with seven records under their belt, ecological-family-funk-swing band Formidable Vegetable will also join the official festival line up this May.

four-piece band Elephant Sessions. Combining the fiddle, bass, mandolin, and drums, Elephant Sessions will bring a progressive blend of intricate tunes to the Carsphairn hills this Spring as part of their 2025 tour.

Workshops, free to all ticket holders, cover a wide range of subjects and creative activities including music, song, dance, and traditional skills such as green woodworking, blacksmithing, stone carving and pottery. The silent disco is ever popular with families as is the Tigtri kids tent, which provides fun activities for the young ones with a Sunday afternoon procession.

In addition theatre, performance poetry, storytelling and talks take place in the various venues around site. The festival also offers a sauna and a healing zone down by the river.

Free hot showers, a yurt village (see website for yurt hire), global arts and crafts shopping stalls and an irresistible array of food caterers from different parts of the world are also on offer.

Knockengorroch's original hands-on approach to festival creation has inspired the formation of many of Scotland's past and current music festivals...

A celebration of the legendary Moving Shadow Records, a special takeover brings together two of the label's defining forces: EZ Rollers and Richie (of JMJ & Richie).

From the city of Mzuzu in northern Malawi, don't miss celebrated musician Gasper Nali bringing his unique one-man-band act to Scotland to share the beauty of the Babatoni instrument with audiences.

Returning to Knockengorroch festival are The Dub Pistols - one of the few remaining

working class bands whose illustrious career spans decades, still carrying the flame of reggae-driven sound system music, mixed with ska and rocksteady through to Soul II Soul, grime, dubstep, and beyond for a reggae-breaks-gangster-jungle mashup.

The Highlands bring us award-winning



LOCAL TICKETS

Reduced ticket prices are available for residents of Carsphairn, Dalry, New Galloway and Balmaclellan.

These tickets can be purchased from the CatStrand (01644 420 374) in person from the week beginning 14 April; please bring a utility bill or some form of proof of residence.

Standard tickets can be purchased at www.knockengorroch.org.uk/tickets

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.

I like science fiction because it reminds me of the deep incomprehensibility in which we revolve – a source of awe and wonder – and I generally prefer sci-fi books to films, because it's the big ideas rather than the big actions that excite me.

Not surprising, therefore, that I was excited by Samantha Harvey's *Orbital*, which you may already have heard of, because it won last year's Booker Prize.

In this short novel set more or less in the present, a team of British, American, Italian, Japanese and Russian astronauts are living at close quarters in a space station orbiting at 250 miles above the earth.

The earth may be the novel's major character, the focus of attention and a subject so complex

that endless description fails to define it. It is "the naked startling earth ... fluid and lustrous ... blue and cloud-scudded and improbably soft." At dusk it's "a bruising of azure and purple and green." It contains "thick embroidered urban tapestries" and is "contoured and landscaped by want."

It provides a poetry of turning continents, of deserts turning to ice caps turning to forests turning to sea.

If you like geography, or just poring over maps, you'll like this book. It provides a poetry of turning continents, of deserts turning to ice caps turning to forests turning to sea. The vast spatial conception of our home is refreshing in this age of attempted (and futile) retreat into tiny bordered spaces.

Like an engaging science book, *Orbital* is packed with mind-expanding facts. And, bringing together art and science, it's given me a new word – imagineered – suitable for the age.

It's not very plot-driven, but coheres around personalities and ideas. Its major theme is perspective, and constant change in perspective. The chapters are a series of meditations on the environment, the heart, borders, belief, and of course time.

The astronauts transit the earth every 90 minutes – 16 orbits a day. That means that each day "takes their twenty-four hours and throws sixteen days and nights at them in return." Because "space shreds time to pieces" they go by Coordinated



Universal Time – an arbitrary measure.

The Japanese astronaut's mother dies 250 miles below, offering further fuel for contemplation. There's a spirituality to the book that will work for materialists as much as for the religious. The continuous

shifts in perspective may by implication give you some distance on your local problems, which are always inevitably temporary.

In miserable stretches of my life I've become less miserable – or at least, I've

survived through them – by walking regularly in nature.

Taking the same walk every day, even in an urban park or along a canal bank overlooked by tower blocks, teaches you viscerally that everything is constantly changing.

Trees are in bud or unfurling their leaves or losing them. The sun is lower every day, decreasingly present, until the year turns and it climbs daily higher, and the darkness diminishes.

Remembering the summer in winter is a useful activity, and vice versa, for the only thing constant is change.

And now in the Glenkens, spring is here at last! At least for now...



EST. 2007

CatStrand

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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: 6 Apr, 4 May (communion service), 1 Jun; 11am

Carsphairn: 13 Apr, 11 May; 11.15am

Kells: 20 Apr, 11am, Easter service

Dalry: 18 Apr, 7pm, Good Friday service; 27 Apr, 18 May, 25 May; 11am

Special service: Easter communion service, Thu 17 Apr, 7pm, Crossmichael Church Hall. Early Easter Day service, Sun 20 Apr, 8.30am, Crossmichael Church Hall. Easter service, Sun 20, 10am, Crossmichael Church Hall. Spring Teas, May 3, Dalry Session House

For further info 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. **Wednesdays:** 7.30-8pm, evening prayers via Zoom shared with our sister church, All Saints' Challoch. Please contact Dawn for the link.

SPECIAL SERVICES: Sunday @4: 13 April. Maundy Thursday: 17 April, 6pm, Holy Communion. Good Friday: 18 April, 2pm, Service of Reflection. EASTER DAY: 20 April, 10.30am, Holy Communion. Sunday @4: 11 May. Ascension Day: 29 May, 12 noon, Holy Communion

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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THE STEWARTRY VETERINARY CENTRE

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

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GLENKENS MEDICAL PRACTICE

General Medical & Dispensing Services

*The Surgery
 High Street
 New Galloway*

FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL

01644 420234

GALLOWAY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

www.gallowaycommunitytransport.org

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

phone: Jon 07841 512449 / Jason 07704 662925

**APRIL 2025 – MAY 2025****REGULAR SERVICES**

We are pleased to announce a revision to our GK2 service. From Wednesday 2nd April the service will run in the evening, until the October daylight saving time change, when it will revert to a daytime winter timetable. The 'summer' times are as below:

GK2 Glenkens > Castle Douglas
Every Wednesday (Registered Route)

Outward		Return
1800	Kendoon	2150
1820	Dairy (Underhill)	2130
1825	Balmaclellan	2125
1830	New Galloway	2120
1842	Mossdale	2108
1852	Laurieston	2058
1907	Ringford	2043
1920	Castle Douglas Tesco	2030
1925	Castle Douglas ALDI	2025

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

Phone: 07841 512449 / 07704 662925

EXCURSIONS

GCT EXCURSION
THE MACHARS GARDENS
SUNDAY 8TH JUNE 2025

A leisurely drive to Wigtownshire, with visits to two private gardens full of interest and colour. Lunch will be taken at the Isle of Whithorn

Galloway House: Informal pleasure grounds where wild flowers and plants have their place besides more exotic cultivated species

Woodfall Garden: a variety of plantings within this peaceful surroundings. Meet the owners and discover the gardens history. Plants for sale

Refreshments will be available

Bus Fare: £17.00

Entry to gardens:
£3.00 Galloway House
£10.00 Woodfall (INCLUDES REFRESHMENTS)

mobile: 07841 512449 / email: gct@catstrand.com

Scan this QR code to book via TicketSource

Pick ups:

- 0830 Balmaclellan Shop
- 0845 Dairy - Underhill Stop
- 0855 New Galloway Catstrand
- 0910 Crossmichael Shop
- 0930 Dalbeattie opp. Esso Station
- 0940 Castle Douglas Market Hill
- 1000 Kirkcudbright Harbour Square
- 1015 Gatehouse of Fleet Spar Bus Stop
- 1035 Creetown Clock Tower

WEBSITE: WWW.GALLOWAYCOMMUNITYTRANSPORT.ORG

2025 EXCURSIONS

We will be running our successful Gardens of Excellence programme again this year. First one detailed above, more to come!

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

April/May

APRIL

Fri 4, Move South: Paragon Music X BOW Collective, 10:30am, CatStrand

Fri 4, Move South: Paragon Music X BOW Collective sharing, 2pm, CatStrand

Fri 4, Move South: Paper Planes, 4-6pm, CatStrand Cafe

Fri 4, Patrick Monahan: The Talkinator, 7:30pm, CatStrand

Sat 5, Carsphairn Community Woodland Volunteer Day, 10am-5pm, Muirdrochwood Forest, Carsphairn

Sat 5, Move South: Bodies of Water, 2pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sat 5, Move South: A Journey of Flight – Kathryn Gordon, 5pm, CatStrand

Sat 5, Move South: Bodies of Water, 7pm, Dalry Town Hall

Sun 6, Move South- Movement Sessions, 1pm, CatStrand

Sun 6, Move South: A Journey of Flight – Kathryn Gordon, 6pm, CatStrand

Tue 8 (start of 4-week course), Wet Felting Course for Beginners, 10.30am-12.30pm, to book call Ginny Shipway on 07486 362 379

10:30 12:30

Wed 9, Dalry Film Club: The Critic, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p33

Thu 10, Ken Words: Writers' Cafés, 7pm, CatStrand

Fri 11, Move South: My Muses Take

Care of Me, 7:30pm, CatStrand

Sat 12, Glenkens Producers Market, 10am-1pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 18, CatStrand Bar Night, 6-10pm, CatStrand

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

Sat 19, Crossmichael Gala 10am-3pm

Sun 23, National Theatre Live: Dr. Strangelove, 2pm, CatStrand

Fri 25, Book Launch- Donald Watson- Bird Artist & Writer, 2pm, Dalry Town Hall

Fri 25, Landscape with Figures II, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Fri 25, Donald Watson book launch, 2pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p29

Sat 26, Plant & Bake Sale, 10am-12noon, St Margaret's Church, New Galloway, see p19

Sat 26, Forest Learning Session, 9am-3pm, booking on 07979 492 791

Sun 27, What next for The Glenkens Story? 2-4pm, CatStrand

Sun 27 & Mon 28, Biosphere Guide Training Course, Dalry, see p13

Sun 27, Glass fusing workshop, 12.30-3.30pm, Balmaclellan Village Hall, book through the What's On section of the Glenkens Hub at www.glenkens.scot

Wed 30, Dalry Film Club: Thelma, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p33

MAY

Sat 3, HotTrod Theatre Company- El Douglas, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Mon 5, The Nordic Fiddlers Bloc, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Thu 8, Ken Words: Writers' Cafés, 7pm, CatStrand

Thu 8, 3-5pm, Celebration of Hugh Foss, Dalry Town Hall, see p32

Sat 10, Bill Drummond presents: Voices From The Galloverse – Live, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Sun 11, Cara Dillon, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Wed 14, Dalry Film Club: Paddington In Peru, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p33

Thu 22-Mon 26, Knockengoroch Festival, see p28

Thu 22, Touki, 7.30pm, CatStrand

Fri 30, Drawing LIFE, 2pm, The Smiddy

Fri 30, KT Producing presents- LIFE, 7.30pm, Catstrand

JUNE

Sun 1, Clachan Folk Session with the Ruby Warblers, 6pm, The Clachan Inn

Wed 4, Dalry Film Club: Gladiator II, 7.30pm, Dalry Town Hall, see p33

Sat 7, Carsphairn Show, The Crofts, Carsphairn, see p5

Sun 8, GCT Excursion: The Machars Gardens, see p41

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-4pm; Tue 7-9pm; Wed 6.30-8pm; Thu 9.30am-4pm

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

Dance for Wellbeing (adults), Mon 2.30pm

Creative Movement for Children, 4pm

LING Community Cafe, Mon, 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-3pm, drop-in

Martial Arts, Thu, 7.30pm

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



Duncan McNaught lands second place in photography awards

New Galloway's Duncan McNaught is no stranger to photography awards, having landed a number of accolades over the last few years.

Duncan won the **Royal Society of Biology competition in 2017**, got 2nd place in the Botanical category of the **Scottish Nature Photography Awards 2017**, 1st in the **Dumfries & Galloway Life Awards Visual Artist category 2018**, 1st place in the Botanical section of the **Scottish Nature Photography Awards 2019**, 1st place in the Botanical category of the **Scottish Nature Photography awards 2022**, and last but not least, commended in the **Sony World Photography awards 2017**.

However, it's been a few years since he's entered the Scottish Nature Photography Awards, so he was thrilled to find out he'd won second place in the 2024 competition's Botanical section.

"I only entered two images this year and ended up with a second place in the Botanical section, so I'm well chuffed!" said Duncan. "The image *Birch in the Mist* was a particularly difficult one to take; I'd say almost impossible if it wasn't for the thick mist that morning.

"The tree grows in the walled garden at Kenmure Castle, with lots of clutter and distraction in the background. Luckily that morning the mist was particularly thick and made hiding distracting elements much easier. This shot was taken in full colour, but that morning everything was changed to monochrome. It was quite ethereal to be out in."

To see more of Duncan's photographs visit the Gallery section of the Glenkens Hub at www.glenkens.scot/glenkens-gallery

The Scottish Nature Photography Awards runs each year with several categories including botanical, landscape and abstract. The competition is open to photographers from anywhere in the world.

*Pictured is Duncan's winning entry, **Birch in the Mist***



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

JUNE/JULY COPY DEADLINE: 5 MAY



Editing & Design:
sarah.ade@gmail.com

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