

CROC TALK

CUMBRAE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

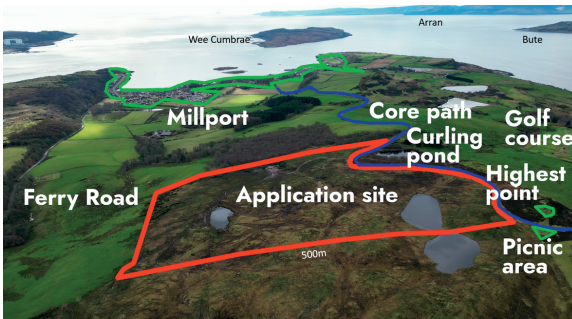


Millport Support Group

Solar Farm Application

A big THANK YOU to everyone who took the time to voice their views on the solar farm.

The application resulted in 350 written comments, a huge number for our small island. 98% were objections. The majority of people made clear they don't object to solar power on the island, but they do object to this proposal which would result in destruction of a local beauty spot and important habitat, with a private development which doesn't benefit the community.



The proposal received extensive press coverage:

- 2 news broadcasts on TV
- 10 pieces of print media (Scotsman, Herald, Daily Record, Daily Mail, Largs and Millport News)
- 24 digital news pieces
- pieces on radio

At the planning committee meeting on 24 May, Dr Gregor Harvie and Councillor Tom Marshall (representing the view of the four ward councillors permitted to comment) presented evidence supporting the comments made by the community of Cumbrae. The Planning Committee was unanimous in rejecting the application, with deputy chair Councillor Timothy Billings highlighting the special nature of Scotland's islands as places large numbers of people visit because of their natural spaces and spectacular views.



What's next?

1. The applicant has the right to appeal within three months from 9 June 2023 when the decision notice was lodged.
2. If an appeal is lodged, interested parties (including anyone who submitted comments on the original application) will be contacted and given two weeks to submit evidence.
3. If an appeal is lodged, CCC will advise on how to respond. New information isn't allowed, and it's not necessary to repeat comments already made.

CCDC Funding Success

Cumbrae Community Development Company (CCDC) have been working for the last two years to secure funding for much needed building repairs required to our stunning Garrison House, the island's Community Hub in the heart of the town. We were ecstatic to be awarded £730,998 through our application, with North Ayrshire Council, to the Islands Programme fund in May 2023. Additional match funding has been secured through Kelburn Windfarm Trust and the Greening Communities Assets Fund.

The Garrison House Regeneration Scheme will restore, re-purpose and enhance the Garrison House complex, a significant asset to the island and an important hub for both residents and visitors alike. The project will secure the building fabric for future generations, improve accessibility, improve the availability of and access to services and increase its energy efficiency and resilience to climate change. Work will include a comprehensive conservation scheme, a new gym accessible to all and a 'changing places' facility.



We now have Loom with a View in one of our Garrison Courtyard Units, enhancing what is already on offer through Cumbrae Crafts, Studio64 Alan Cawley Photography and Garrison House Café & Courtyard.

CCDC will be working this year with NAC on the Pit Stops Project for Cumbrae with £540,000 of funding shared with Arran, for improvements to public toilet blocks and facilities offered.

Our West Lodge Business Centre is thriving and is now home to not only our local Community Radio Station but also Energise Therapies & Training and Think Zap. Both are island businesses, allowing CCDC to support growth and opportunity on Cumbrae.

Garrison Motorhome Site continues to be extremely popular, helping to generate income for businesses on Cumbrae, allowing CCDC to continue supporting our island economy.

CCDC continues to make improvements to their Millport Holiday Apartments this year, investing in more energy efficient water heaters and the installation of Wi-Fi, for the benefit of our clients.

CCDC thank their members and the community for their continued support and invite anyone interested in joining one of our Boards to call into our office within Garrison House for a chat to learn more.

CalMac improved(!) ticketing

The Ferry User's Group (FUG) provides a community view to the Ferry Owners and Operators, CMAL and Calmac, with



representatives of community groups (Community Council, Commuters, NHS, Business Owners, FSC, Cumbrae Forum, Millport Motors, agriculture) working to try to improve the service for islanders.

The new ticketing system, including a new requirement for tickets each way, has been introduced and continues to cause problems despite many of the issues being anticipated and highlighted to CalMac by FUG and islanders during consultations. The FUG committee continues to challenge Calmac and the Transport Minister over the discriminatory way it was introduced onto Cumbrae. We have been promised a meeting with Calmac's senior management for them to explain their plan to improve the system.

Some key points and learnings about the new system:

- Old tickets are valid until the end of June, even those singles dated May, but you will need to exchange them for new ones at either Largs or Cumbrae prior to travel
- It is possible to buy tickets (single from Cumbrae only) by card or cash at Cumbrae Slip, although there have been technology issues which have restricted some sales recently. Calmac claim to be working to fix this.
- If you are setting up an online account, the form seems to only work properly if you fill all boxes in manually (don't use autofill), make sure the postcode identifies your correct address and that you select the +44 (UK) dropdown for your mobile number
- 10 journey tickets for adults can be bought online, but if you do want to continue to buy them over the counter at the Largs Office, it is a convoluted slow process involving an individual transaction for each return journey
- Online individual tickets can be bought for SPT concession users, and there is a process to buy up to 7 "multi journey" concession tickets. Paper copies of this process are available at Pots & Pets or the Forum Shop, however it is not simple (20 steps)
- Car tickets must now include a driver. It's possible to buy a car & concession driver online, just make sure you first remove the default adult passenger on the booking form and select 'more' to view the other options. Similarly for Blue Badge car tickets

@ Passengers

Select number of passengers

Adult Adult: 16 and Over	-	0	+
Child 5-15 Years Child	-	0	+
Infant under 5 Years Infant under 5	-	0	+

Show more

Done

Other FUG work

We are awaiting feedback from (yet another) Transport Minister about the restoration of discounted season tickets.

We are also expecting to contribute to a more strategic view of Island Ferry services and Island Connectivity for Cumbrae with Transport Scotland and North Ayrshire Council this summer. We have asked that they consider developing their plans around these desired outcomes for Cumbrae:

- Less ferry disruption on windy (but not extreme stormy) days
- Improve the resilience of Cumbrae to a single point of failure in the transport network
- Reverse depopulation trends
- Reduce the carbon footprint of Cumbrae
- Encourage more visitors to Cumbrae, but with fewer cars
- Improve the visitor experience to encourage and grow active travel
- Ensure Islanders can get access to the ferry as required
- Ensure that ferry travel pricing for islanders isn't increased



Cumbrae Slip Consultation

There will be a public consultation on 28th June about CMAL's plan to rebuild Cumbrae Slip on its existing location with work starting in 2024 and completing in 2025. The Ferry User's Group have raised the following concerns about the proposals:

- There is no improvement in weather resilience in the design of Cumbrae Slip, which the committee feel is unacceptable given the increase in windy days due to global warming.
- The plan for a temporary (narrower) slipway risks high disruption over the winter period, potentially compromising schooling, NHS services and daily provisions onto the island.
- The traffic management plans during construction risk gridlocking the ferry and bus turning area on busy summer days.

We have proposed an offline build with weather protection, (suggested protection for southerly winds or seas) and adequate off-road vehicle marshalling for 2 ferry loads of cars (50), and passenger welfare for at least a bus load of passengers (70).

Please come along and have your say at Garrison House on **Wednesday 28th June** from **3pm** to **7pm**.

An online survey will be available from 28th June to 19th July on the CMAL website: www.cmassets.co.uk

Carbon Neutral Islands

The Carbon Neutral Islands (CNI) Project on Cumbrae continues to make progress towards its 2040 net-zero goals as part of the CNI project, but importantly, also improving the way we live, work and sustain our island community.

The Cumbrae Community Climate Action Plan has recently been published (available at carbonneutralcumbrae.co.uk), and we welcomed the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, Mairi Gougeon to Garrison House recently as part of the launch of the action plans for each of the 6 project islands (Cumbrae, Barra, Hoy, Islay, Raasay and Yell). CCDC are the anchor organisation for Cumbrae.



Domestic energy efficiency continues to be an area in need of improvement on Cumbrae, and CNI is helping to deliver several key programmes to help households locally including the Area Based and ECO4 Flex schemes, both through North Ayrshire Council. Information on these is available from Scott Watson at Garrison House.

In the coming months, Community Energy Scotland will work with us on various feasibility studies around community owned energy generation, as well as ground-truthing the carbon audits completed earlier this year. Various funded initiatives to improve the energy consumption of domestic properties, such as in-home energy monitors and lowering the carbon footprint of our local businesses, are under way.

For more information on the CNI project, please visit the website above, follow our Facebook page or speak to Scott Watson CNI Community Development Officer (Cumbrae).

Community Council



To stay in touch with what's happening sign up to Community Council updates at www.cumbrae.org

If you have a smartphone, scan the QR code.



Cumbrae Forum

TEN things you might not know about The Cumbrae Forum:

1. You can become a member for just £5 a year.
2. As a charity we work for the benefit of the whole community.
3. We run The Cumbrae Forum Charity Shop for the benefit of the community.
4. We run Cumbrae Forum Lunch Club which is £15 a year – over 50 members get together at The Newton every Wednesday, from September to June, to enjoy lunch and a chat!
5. We run campaigns and we particularly promote inter-generational connectivity like 'Plant to Plate' which we're delivering along with Cumbrae Parish Church.
6. Community groups can use The Forum Hub; a donation is always welcome!
7. We run 'Simply Support', a free weekly advice session open to all, on Thursdays 2.00 – 3.30pm at The Forum Hub.
8. We recently bought laptops for The Hub to enable islanders to improve their IT skills.
9. If an individual is in need, we step in to support them.
10. We sponsor other groups' activities on the island, such as Cumbrae Queen and the Queen's Jubilee.

If you would like to follow us, check out our new website to find out more about the Cumbrae Forum. cumbraeforum.org



If you would like to volunteer phone 07425 298 052 or pop into the Forum Charity Shop for information.

Cathedral of the Isles



THE CATHEDRAL OF THE ISLES
and College of The Holy Spirit
Diocese of Argyll & The Isles • Scottish Episcopal Church

The popular summer classical music concerts started again at the Cathedral on **Sunday 11th June** and run every week from then until **Sunday 24th September**.

The music starts promptly at 3pm and entry is free. There will be a retiring collection at end of concerts.

There are two additional special events:

Tuesday 4th July @ 3pm: Choral evensong to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd, one of Britain's greatest composers

Thursday 27th July @ 3pm: The Lonan Consort from Oban lead choral evensong to mark the 120th anniversary of the death of John Comper, made 'Hero of the Faith' in 2003 by the Episcopal Church



It has been a busy time at Cumbrae Parish Church. One of our ongoing projects is establishing a memorial garden for islanders who died during Covid lockdown.

In partnership with Cumbrae Primary School we planted 6 fruit trees at the rear of the Church building last year. These seem to be establishing well. The Boys Brigade have donated an all-age buddy bench within the trees and the area is now paved to allow safe access.

What we need now are the names of island residents whom you wish to remember in the garden. You don't have to be a church member. The only criteria is that they were island residents who died during the Covid lockdown and whose family could not hold a proper funeral service.

If you wish your loved one's name included on the memorial stone please contact 07846782456.



96 Young People and 36 Officers from 11 BB Companies had the experience of camping under canvas, taking part in various outdoor activities on the island as they camped in the Garrison grounds at the end of May.

Island businesses supplied 190 litres of milk, 30 loaves of bread, 20 kilos of chicken, 20 kilos of minced beef, 21 slabs of slice Sausage and 396 bottles of water.

Local Church congregations joined us for Sunday worship in the marquee.



Activities included 'It's a Knockout', cycling, STEM, raft building, Robot Wars, BB's got Talent and much more.

Jackie Wilson, Captain of 1st Millport Boys' Brigade, would like to thank the local community and businesses for all their help and support. We're all booked up for next year!

Millport Town Hall

We continue on what has turned out to be a rather epic journey! The local community, and our supporters from far and wide, have really encouraged the volunteers, who are working so hard on delivering the project, to maintain their efforts and enthusiasm.

The building work progresses and behind the scenes we already have equipment for children and adults arts & crafts and sports, a creative writing group/competition organised, a film club in the making, more street theatre, music, singing, tea dances, drama, heritage artefacts and memories. We've secured funding for youth groups to have free room hire and we can offer some free adult sessions to get activities under way.



We look forward to the next exciting chapter and new members, trustees and volunteers coming on board to run this community asset. Membership of the charity is free and will give you a voice - the building is for you to make your own. Contact Judith our community liaison officer on judith@millporttownhall.co.uk to get involved. When will it open?? Watch this space - what is certain is it will be one **enormous** party!

Annual Flower Show



The Cumbrae Garden Club Annual Flower Show will take place on Saturday 19th August in the DA Hall with doors open at 2pm. Prize-giving is at 2.30 and there will be a tearoom & raffle with prize hampers. You can pick up a schedule of classes, which include flowers, vegetables & fruit, baking, preserves and crafts, from Garrison House if you'd like to exhibit in the show.

Children can enter free to categories such as a miniature garden, flower arrangement in a teacup and a decorated flower pot - so come along and support your local show!

KA Leisure Active North Ayrshire

Join our Health Walk on Mondays at 2.15 from the DA Hall for an hour of walking at a leisurely pace. Free for all ages & abilities!

Scan this code with the camera app on your mobile device for a digital version of Croc Talk that you can enlarge for easier reading



We're always happy to receive suggestions for future content or articles to include in the Croc Talk. Please send to:

cumbraecs@gmail.com

