

Ballantrae NEWS

Christmas in Ballantrae



Christmas in Ballantrae was never going to be “normal” in 2020 because of the pandemic. There was no formal Christmas light switch on at the Community Hall and no Christmas parties but, as always, volunteers worked together to make sure Christmas was celebrated within government Covid-19 guidelines. We did have Christmas lights around the village (there seemed to be more than in previous years), we had Christmas characters appearing in SCOTMID, hand made Christmas cards were delivered by Primary School children to elderly and vulnerable residents, we had a visit from Santa and his elves in the week before Christmas and some 13 hardy souls took part in a freezing cold dip at the harbour on Christmas morning. Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to Ballantrae’s Christmas 2020. What a great wee village!

We’ll let Sharon’s story of the Christmas dip and Richard Kosak’s 4 pictures of some of the Ballantrae lights speak for themselves! (Please turn to page 7 for additional photos).

Christmas Dippers

When Debbie Macpherson suggested a Boxing Day dip just for the fun of it, I thought I would use this as an excuse not to send Christmas cards (I’m never organised) and donate £50 to MDN Scotland instead after my dad’s diagnosis in January 2020. Anna Kosak then talked me into opening a JustGiving page as she wanted to donate. We put it on Facebook and other people were keen to join in. After the announcement by the Scottish Government that we would be going back into lockdown on boxing day we decided to bring the dip forward to Christmas Day to avoid breaking any of the rules. We went for 9.15am as Isabelle Rostaing was district nursing that day and was having a quick dip in between! On

the day another couple of youngsters also turned up and a total of 13 people took part including two 8 year old boys. The support and donations have exceeded all expectations and we have now raised just over £2000. Not bad for a wee notion Debbie had and a bit of persuading from Anna. On behalf of all the Christmas dippers we would like to thank everyone for all the generous donations and support. Same time this year! Hopefully under less restrictions so we can all have a hot roll from the BBQ and a mulled wine after it this year! Thanks to Fiona and Robbie Roper for the sign, tide advice and taking the live video and photos.

by Sharon Robertson



Hallowe'en - but not as we know it!

Last year was an extremely difficult year for everyone with "social distancing" rules in place because of Covid-19. While the usual parties could not go ahead a few folk took the initiative to ensure that Halloween did take place, bringing a bit of cheer for all the village residents as we moved into winter. A number of competitions were organised: house / window decoration; fancy dress; and pumpkin competition (a Hallowe'en treasure hunt had to be cancelled because the weather was awful).

The results of the competitions were as follows:

Halloween House / Window decorating competition

1st Shirley McIlwraith
2nd Liga Saleniece
3rd Suzi Curtis

Sponsored by Drew Mawer (WeldPro-Qual) and judged by Willie and Vera Wilson.

Halloween Fancy Dress

1st prize - Jamie Agnew
2nd prize - Thomson Agnew
3rd prize - joint Jackson and Lincoln Curtis.
Sponsored by Neil Agnew Roofing and judged by Elspeth and Jimmy King.

Halloween Pumpkin Competition

JUNIOR -
1st - George Mills
2nd - Scott and Nieve McKinley
3rd - Ethan Agnew

SENIOR -
1st - Zoe Stevenson
2nd - Rachel Corney and Erin Fury
3rd - Chloe McIntyre



The pumpkins of Daniels Galvins and Louis Mawer were "highly recommended" although did not receive a prize this time. The prizes were sponsored by Mr and Mrs Robert McIlwraith and by Mr and Mrs Andy McAlpine. Every entry also received a bag of sweets donated by Mr and Mrs Garry Thomson. The competition was judged by Andy McAlpine.

Without a few amazing people none of this would have been possible.

The village would like to thank:

McCulloch Marie, Billy, Danny & Anne McCulloch, Shaun Smith, Neil Agnew, WeldPro-Qual, Robert & Maureen McIlwraith, Natalie & Garry Thomson, Moira & Andy McAlpine, William & Vera Wilson and Jimmy & Elspeth King. Also Fiona Love Roper, Rebecca Agnew, Kim Mawer, Natalie Thomson and Gemma Lafferty who were the organisers of the various events.

Ballantrae Scout Group



Ballantrae Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are currently restricted from meeting face to face under the COVID 19 regulations, but will be very keen to get back out there as soon as we can! We did manage to meet last term, and had a very interesting and crafty few weeks together, taking in celebrations and activities around Halloween and Remembrance Sunday, it was great to be able to meet in person!

We do have some spaces now in each section, and we would love to see you! Please get in touch so we can have everything ready for when we can meet again...which may be online any time soon!

Beavers aged 6-8, contact Kate Thomson on 07765490649

Cubs aged 8-10, contact Charlotte Whitehurst 07388909328

Scouts and Explorers, 10 years plus, contact Wendy McKechnan 07831 370514

We have SO MUCH to look forward to!

by Kate Thomson



King's Arms Update

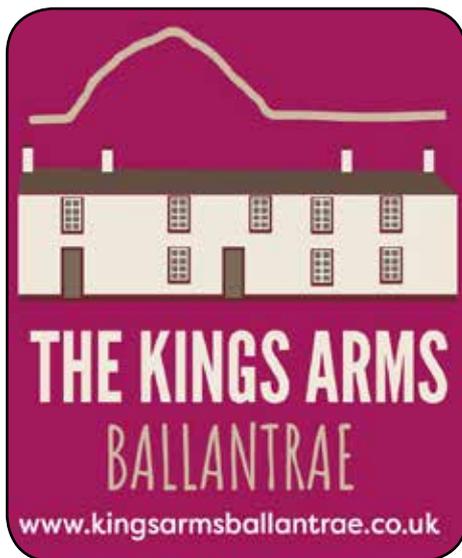
Happy New Year from everyone involved with the King's Arms! Whilst we have not yet started trading, we wanted to bring you a positive message to start 2021!

In recent weeks, a small socially distanced group of volunteers has been doing some decorating and upgrading but this has now been paused due to the tighter COVID-19 related restrictions which have come in over the last few weeks. Despite this, we have not been idle; we've finalised our logo, established a Visitor Information Point in the foyer of the pub and we've filmed our share offer video which we are currently finalising. Look out for that on @thekingsarmsballantrae, our Facebook page. We've also continued to work on putting together our share offer with help from Community Shares Scotland.

We hope to launch the share offer very soon. Shares will cost £1 with a minimum purchase of £25 and a maximum of £13,000. The Community Share Offer Prospectus will explain what's involved and this will be available to view in the coming weeks. Please go to kingsarmsballantrae.co.uk for further details. Your investment will make a massive difference and help to ensure that the King's Arms becomes, once again, the heart of Ballantrae.

We are looking forward to a successful share offer and an even more successful 2021. Remember The King's Arms will be relying on your support to enable it to survive and thrive, so when we are all able to do so, we look forward to seeing you in there.

by Dan Cunningham



Craigiemains Update

Val Stevenson, Fiona Stevenson and I are delighted to be able to confirm what is probably Ballantrae's "worst kept secret ever" ... that we are the new and excited operators of Craigiemains Garden Centre & 'Trae Bakes Coffee Shop. Over the last month we have been busy making a few internal changes and we can't wait to be able to welcome customers in to enjoy this much missed amenity again. We are optimistic that if current restrictions are eased we will be able to reopen towards the end of February adhering to current Covid guidelines.

by Marti Drummond



Making a Difference

Ballantrae folk will always tell you that villagers look out for each other. In the run up to Christmas, I spotted a short list compiled by Age Scotland entitled "How you can make a difference":

- Write a letter, Christmas card, or postcard or just drop a note through the door
- If you don't know your neighbours, now is the perfect time to introduce yourself and let them know you're there if they need help
- Offer to help with shopping or picking up prescriptions - with cold winter weather it can be even more difficult for many older people to get about
- Offer to help with pets, for example taking a dog for a walk
- Stay in regular touch with older friends by phone or video call
- If an older relative isn't confident with technology, you could help them set up video calling on their smartphone, tablet or laptop so you can stay in touch
- Assist someone with setting up an online supermarket delivery
- Arrange to watch the same TV programme and call for a chat afterwards
- Make sure people have plenty of entertainment - for example you could drop off books, magazines or puzzles
- Drop off home-baking or a home cooked meal to someone living alone
- Find safe ways to meet up, for example a chat on the doorstep or walk if the weather permits
- Don't forget to smile and say hello when you're out and about

We've certainly seen and heard of examples of all of these things happening locally during the pandemic so thank you to everyone who has tried to be a good neighbour during these difficult times. As senior citizens, my wife and I have been on the receiving end of some real acts of kindness since we moved here. I am sure others will have had a similar experience. But as we come out of the end of the Covid-19 tunnel, the list is perhaps a timely reminder for those of us who could do more of these things routinely.

by Andy McAlpine

Oor ain Scotmid Poet

Who knew that Derek the manager of the Ballantrae Scotmid store was a poet?

*Oor wee shop - we love it to bits
 even though sometimes it gets on our wits
 the banter it flows with each customer in
 we've seen floods and blizzards, been through
 thick and thin
 the lassies are smashing, the guys are too
 the jobs no just to keep them aff the broo..
 serving the punters, wrapped up nice and warm
 with smiles on their faces, quick wit and some
 charm*

*We take pride in our products and how the shop
 looks
 we sell fresh and frozen and sweets fae hooks
 we dae breakfast rolls at oor brow bakery
 ye can hae yum yums and doughnuts or a hot
 savoury
 we've got booze and crisps and hot n cold snacks
 just gie us a nudge if there's something it lacks
 speak tae us all-we're as frendly as they come
 we even dae lottery, could be lucky for some?!*

*So thanks tae yeez awe fur comin intae the store
 we hope yeez come back and buy much much
 more
 oor wee shop is a place where we hope your day
 starts
 oor wee shop is a place that lives deep in oor
 hearts...*

Derek - thanks to you and all of the staff who continued to provide a great service in Ballantrae throughout 2020. The poem pretty well sums it up!



Ballantrae Primary School and Early Years Centre

A very happy New Year to you and yours. We hope you all had a lovely Christmas holiday and have managed to stay safe and well. Unfortunately, yet again, here we are in another lock down and parents are being faced with another round of home learning. Our plans this term are for home learning and parents will be updated regularly. If, at any time, you are having difficulties with home learning, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Staff will always be available, as we are blending our own work pattern, which means there will always be someone in school whilst others are working from home. We hope you enjoy some photos of our involvement in Armistice Day and our Bubble Days before Christmas.



On Friday 18th December we still managed to have the Panto experience via an online Panto company. We also made it a Pyjama Day for children who wished to come to school in their pyjamas. Each class bubble watched "Jack and the Beanstalk" and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the show. All the children were treated to luxury hot chocolate by Miss McCathie, even the adults managed to get a cup – it was delicious!



by Yvonne Templeton and Donna Ball

Ballantrae Medical Practice Update

Although we continue to try and minimise the footfall in the surgery, we are still OPEN. Should you have any ongoing or new health problems for which you would normally see a doctor, we would urge you to call the surgery, rather than ignore any symptoms. Thank you for your patience in this difficult time for us all.

Covid 19 Vaccinations

NHS Ayrshire & Arran have now commenced their vaccination programme and we plan to begin the vaccination of patients who are over 80 in late January. All eligible patients will be contacted with an appointment date & time. As per current government guidelines the second dose of the vaccine will be given 12 weeks after the first. As the vaccination programme continues into the other age categories, appointments will be sent out so please do not contact the surgery.

Medication

GP practices and Community Pharmacies are working incredibly hard to keep their services

operating and the medicine supply flowing in this extremely challenging time. Please note that medicines are NOT in short supply. Please only order the medicines that you need. Do not order all of your medicines automatically every time. GPs, the Dispensary and Community Pharmacies will work together to ensure you get your medicines when they are due. However, we are extremely busy, so please allow at least TWO working days if you collect your prescription in the surgery and at least FIVE working days from ordering your medicine to collection from a Community Pharmacy.

If you have any COVID-19 symptoms (new continuous cough, fever, shortness of breath) or had contact with someone with coronavirus DO NOT go to your GP Practice or Community Pharmacy. Stay at home and self-isolate. Please ask someone else to collect your medicines.

Keeping Active

Keeping active is important for both our physical and mental health.

Walking, often overlooked as a form of physical activity, is simple, free, and one of the easiest ways to get more active and become healthier. A brisk 10-minute daily walk has lots of health benefits and counts towards your recommended 150 minutes of weekly exercise.

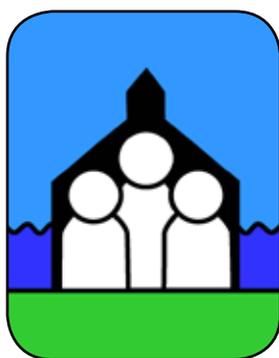
Please visit the below websites for other suggestions:

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/topics/physical-activity/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/?fbclid=IwARoGzib-aP Srmn5iSGwEdmXJV8wSNXrpNWHN OyT5I444l6wiODGEDbQBHac>

Please remember to follow the guidance below and stay safe.

by Tanya Orr and Fiona Maclean



Ballantrae Church

Dear Friends,

The end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021 has been challenging for all. As a church we were able to worship during Advent and had joint services with St Colmon on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. We were unable to sing, but were able to pray, consider the Christmas message

and listen to lovely music. We met on the first Sunday of January, but have had to close due to the lockdown. Over Christmas it was lovely to see all the lights and decorations in the village, reminding us of joy and hope in these dark days. Outside the church we had a simple nativity scene, to remind us of what Christmas is all about. Jesus came to this world to be our saviour and to show us Gods love. That he was born as a baby shows us that he understands the difficulties that we

face as well as the joys. We can pray to him knowing that he sympathises and understands us through and through. I am continuing to pray for the community and have been putting a weekly reflection on our church website. I am here if anyone wants to be in touch. God is at work today, so let us pray that things will improve for our community, nation and world as 2021 unfolds. May we all know God's blessing and peace at this time. As a church we are looking forward to being able to serve the community more fully in the days to come.



Keep safe and positive!

Rev`d Theo Corney

Dynamic Ballantrae Beach

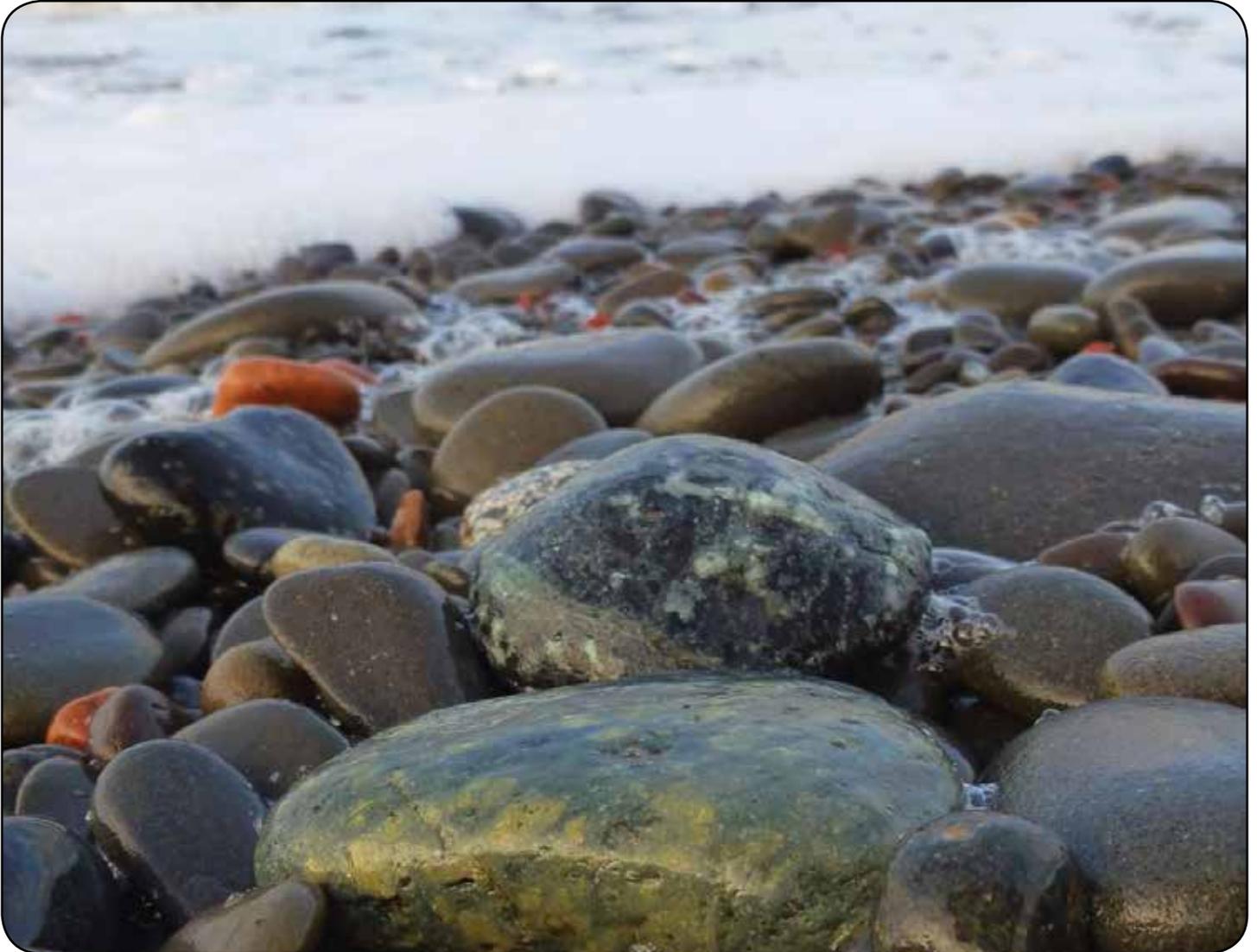
The PLACE in the Biosphere project has been making a film about the geology in the Stinchar Valley. It takes a look at the remarkable variety of rocks that are the foundation of our countryside from the Carrick Hills to the shore at Ballantrae. The film will be available shortly.

Meanwhile, now is a great time to explore the beach at Ballantrae and take a look at the pretty pebbles on the dynamic shore.

from locations to the north and east of Ballantrae. Examples include the distinctive blue microgranite from Ailsa Craig and granite pebbles that have come from much further afield.

The seaward side of the bank is very steep and is constantly moved by wave action while behind it are areas of stable shingle that are important for a wide range of coastal plant species. Sea shore flowers include sea sandwort, sea campion, sea mayweed and the nationally scarce oysterplant with its pretty pink / blue flowers and grey foliage. The shingle is also important for ground nesting ringed plovers and little terns. These birds are sensitive to disturbance and for this reason people are asked to avoid the shingle spit during the nesting season.

by Nic Coombey of GSA Biosphere



Ballantrae shingle beach creates a bar that is the final hurdle for the River Stinchar on its journey to the sea. It is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its shingle habitat but is also an outstanding example of the physical processes of a dynamic beach demonstrating active marine erosion, transportation and deposition. The river almost reaches the sea but is then held back by the shingle bank and is forced to flow south for 500 metres. The frustrated river eventually breaks through the shingle bank near the southern end of the bay however, over the last 120 years the river has breached the bank at other locations and there may be a cyclical pattern to the shifting shingle. The prevailing winds are from the southwest but it is believed that the material that makes up the bank is brought from the north and consists of small pebbles, mostly under 10cm in diameter. Although initially appearing to be made up of grey pebbles a closer look reveals of an extraordinarily diversity of rock types.

The parent rock of many pebbles can be found locally and range from the mottled greens of serpentinite, red chert, grey basalt and speckled porphyry. Other pebbles have been transported by glaciers and rivers



Shellknowe Garage 24hr Fuel Payment

Some of our customers have been having difficulty using the card machine for dispensing fuel when the pumps are on self-service. We thought you might find the following instructions helpful.

1. Insert card.
2. Select Amount, the screen will show £20. If you require a higher amount press reject below. The amounts increase in multiples of £20 up to £100. **
3. Enter your pin and press accept.
4. Select pump. The screen will show pump 1. If you would like petrol press accept or for diesel press reject and select pump 2.
5. Remove card and take fuel.
6. If you would like a receipt once fuelled replace the nozzle on the pump and insert your card back into the card terminal.

**You can stop fuelling at any point below the amount you selected. The bank will authorise the amount you select to ensure available funds. Only the actual fuel dispensed will be charged (usually the following business day).

** There can be a delay between our machine and the pumps meaning they regularly stop fuelling a few pence below your selected amount. You will only be charged the amount you dispensed.



HM Coastguard Ballantrae

Last year saw a busy year for the Ballantrae team with callouts averaging just over one a week. The team continued training to keep the high skills levels required up to date. This was done adhering to the government guidelines. With the local area having such a rich military history going back many decades, our beaches can be a hot sport for military ordnance and marine pyrotechnics washing in.



These can be highly dangerous and unstable. If these are found or objects you are not sure of please call 999 and ask for the Coastguard. When talking to the operator please give the best description possible and best location. A good app for your mobile phone to get an accurate location is what 3 words. Please DON'T touch and keep a safe distance from the object. A coastguard team will attend and make the scene safe and assess the object.



If needed further information will be passed to Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) for advice and if deemed fit for them to come and dispose of the object. The pictures are of some of the ordnance or marine pyrotechnics washed up on our beaches over the recent years.

by John Cowieson

Ballantrae Community Association

During the last few months of 2020, South Ayrshire Council carried out extensive redecoration works to Ballantrae Community Hall. The main hall area has been decorated, along with the buffet room, vestibule and toilet areas. In conjunction with the redecoration works the old flooring in the main hall has been removed and replaced, at time of writing, flooring works are due to commence in the buffet room to replace the existing floor covering. The team of contractors engaged by the council have carried out all the works to an extremely high standard and I would like to offer our sincere thanks and appreciation to both the contractors, who carried out the works, together with South Ayrshire Council for facilitating these refurbishments. I am sure that everyone entering and using the hall, once it reopens, will notice a enormous improvement.

by Laura Cunningham

...continued from front page



Right; Christmas card designed by River, Ballantrae Primary



News Snippets

Linden Hunt tells us that, everything going well, The Flower Show will be back again this year on Saturday 14 August with schedules available online to give you plenty of time to prepare.

THANKS to the Community Council for your persistence resulting in Shore Road being resurfaced!

THANKS to all of the key workers who continued to provide a service to Ballantrae residents and the wider Ayrshire community during the pandemic.

Tricia McIlwraith's memorial bench is now installed beside SCOTMID.



as a form of compensation, allowing the criminals access to the victim's bank account, and the ability to move funds out of the victims account. There has also been an increase in the variety of service providers being impersonated to commit these scams.

Always Remember

- Ensure you have effective and updated antivirus/antispyware software and firewall running whenever your computer or mobile device is switched on.
- Never install any software, or grant remote access to your computer, because of a cold call
- Do not be tempted to download programs or apps that are not from a trusted source, as they could contain malware (malicious software).
- Genuine organisations would never contact you out of the blue to ask you for personal or financial details, such as your Bank card PIN or full banking password.
- Don't contact companies promoting technical support services via web browser pop-ups.
- Hang up on any callers who claim they can get your money back for you.
- Cover your webcam when not in use.
- Regularly back up your data. If your device has been infected or you have been a victim
- If you have made a payment, contact your bank immediately. They can help you prevent any further losses
- Disconnect your device from the network as soon as possible in order to prevent further malicious activity.
- If you granted remote access to your computer, seek technical support to remove any unwanted software. If you need technical advice, look for reviews online first or ask friends for recommendations.
- If you think the infection has been removed change the passwords of your online accounts and check your banking activity and report anything unusual to your bank.

Would you be interested in taking over as Editor of Ballantrae News?

Andy McAlpine has been Editor since the Ballantrae Development Group and the Community Council introduced the Newsletter in January 2016. Andy has now indicated he would like to stand down from the role. The Ballantrae Trust is therefore looking for someone to take over. It's not an onerous task - there are 4 editions a year and it involves gathering together the contributions, liaising with the designer, the printer and the volunteers who hand deliver to homes and businesses in the area. If you are interested drop Andy an email during February at andy.mcalpine@btinternet.com or call him on 01465 831122 for an initial chat.



Cyber Security for Farmers

The National Cyber Security Centre has worked with the National Farmers Union to support the Agriculture and Farming Sector with a cyber security guide especially created for the industry. The increased use of email, online accounting tools, online payment systems as well as automated farming equipment means that its increasingly important for farmers and rural communities to look at their growing exposure to cyber risks and how we can best protect ourselves and our businesses.

The guide has been written to be clear and understandable for a range of technical abilities, to help people become more aware or enhance your knowledge of cyber security measures.

It offers advice in the form of tips for you to easily implement to become a more resilient and secure business.

Whilst there is no guarantee that you'll be protected from all forms of cyber attack, following this advice should significantly increase the protections you have from the most common cyber crimes.

You can download the guide as a PDF from <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/cyber-security-for-farmers>. You can print, share, and re-use this document, freely and flexibly, with only a few conditions.



Computer Software Service Fraud

The following information was circulated on behalf of Police Scotland Safer Communities Cybercrime Harm Prevention Unit.

Fraudsters are cold calling victims, or using a 'pop up' windows on your web browser, purporting to be from well-known IT companies or broadband providers, claiming that the victim has problems with their computers, routers, or internet connection. The criminals persuade the victim to download software to their computer or laptop and connect via a Remote Access Tool (RAT), allowing the criminals to gain access to the victim's computer or mobile phone. Victims are persuaded to log into their online banking to receive a refund

For more information on how you can protect yourself online, visit www.cyberaware.gov.uk and www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk If you have been a victim of crime and it is not an ongoing emergency, you can report this to Police Scotland on 101. For all emergency calls, dial 999.

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