

Wemyss Bay Village News

185th Edition

March 2005

Ken and Eila Roberts Tel: 529375 eilaroberts@care4free.net
Community Centre Tel: 521955 <http://wemyssbay.net/>

Car Boot Sale

The Community Association is holding a Car Boot Sale at the Community Centre on Saturday 9th April from 10.30am – 12.30pm. £5 books your pitch and, as space is limited, it will be strictly on a first come basis. To reserve a space contact **Ann Marie on 522998**.

To add to the fun there will also be "Beat the Goalie", the bouncy castle and, to make sure that your energy doesn't flag, a tea-room with home baking.

All money raised will be used to fund this year's gala Weekend. It costs several thousand pounds to run a successful gala and we are dependant, to a large extent, on good weather to recover this initial outlay. By supporting the car Boot Sale you will help ensure that arrangements can be made to make this year's gala the best yet!

Woodland Association

At last, after months of fundraising followed by legal wrangles, contractors moved in to the woods in January and finally work on phase 1 is virtually finished. The rhododendron in the main wood has been cut and chipped with the cut ends and new growth treated to eventually kill off the plants. Essential tree-surgery has been carried out to ensure that the wood is safe to use. A network of paths has been completed and seating provided. We are very aware that the wood looks very bare in places and the paths stark against the surrounding area. Please bear with us. We still have some seeding and planting to do and indeed planting will continue throughout the year at the appropriate times. We hope that you can use your imagination to visualise how it will look as all the new plants come up and have a chance to flourish now that they have access to light and are not being subjected to the herbicide which leaches out from rhododendrons into the surrounding soil.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all of our funders, without whose assistance none of the work would have been possible. The Forestry Commission, Fresh Futures (lottery funding), Inverclyde Council and Scottish Natural Heritage awarded grants totalling in excess of £75,000 (unfortunately not the £750,000 reported in the Greenock Telegraph!). Part of the costs had to be met locally although this could take place in the form of donation in kind and volunteers therefore contributed over £15,000 worth of labour. In addition the Association directly paid for part of the costs of two paths. Finally we have to thank everyone locally who has donated to our Bulb Fund – this fund remains open for donations throughout the year and money donated is ring-fenced for the purchase of native bulbs and wildflowers.

There will be a formal opening event in April – look out for the date and more details in the April Village News. We hope to turn this into a real family affair with a Treasure Hunt and art activities for the children, guided bird walks and displays depicting before and after.

We will also be using the event to canvass your ideas on the next phase. The disabled parking bay had to be put on hold due to legal and financial constraints and we would intend this being part of the next phase. Provisions for a family cycle path and mountain bike area have also been discussed previously and we will certainly be considering how this can be achieved. Please let us know what you think. How do you feel about cycling provision? Is there anything else which you think should or shouldn't be included? At this stage we are canvassing ideas and any further work will go out for consultation prior to anything happening. One of the roles of the Woodland Association is to represent the needs and wishes of the local community and we can only do this if you tell us what you think.

Volunteer work days continue on a fortnightly basis and are, once again, concentrated in the terraced garden area. We will be working on Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th and Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th March from 10.00am – 3.00pm. We are now meeting at the Ardgowan Road end of Castle Wemyss Drive. If you are not along at the start, enter through the gate in the wall opposite the end of the road, follow the path to your right up the hill to the garden area – if you are not sure where to go listen and you should hear us. Gloves, tools and refreshments are provided. We still have an enormous amount of work to be done to clear the rhododendron in the terraced gardens and new volunteers will be made very welcome. There are always plenty of "old hands" around to show you the ropes and we can even provide gloves and tools for youngsters, although they have to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

St Joseph and St Patrick's Church : Lent 2005

We will have three evenings centring around the theme of healing and forgiveness. They will take place on Thursdays 3rd, 10th & 17th March at 7.30pm. The first evening will be led by Sr. Mary Ross SND on the subject of 'Healing Life's Hurts'. Sr. Mary is a clinical psychologist and is Director of the Notre Dame Centre which deals with the issues which can arise for children, young people and families. She has a wealth of experience in these areas and her down to earth manner belies her learning and skill.

The second evening will be dedicated to prayer for healing and forgiveness. We will reflect on how prayer for forgiveness is a central aspect of biblical spirituality.

The third evening will be led by Fr. David Cotter OSB who was such a success at Advent. Fr. David will speak about the Suffering Servant of the Prophet Isaiah 'who takes our faults upon himself'. This passage is the first reading on Good Friday and it is the basis for much of the Passion narratives.

The format of the evenings is as usual, beginning at 7.30pm with the talk, then a cup of tea and afterwards a chance for questions and discussion and on the second evening a time of prayer in the Church, all concluding at 9.30pm.

Thanks to Father Boyle for submitting the above information.

Street Competition

For the last few years Rannoch Road has done it and this year Brueacre Drive are joining them. What am I talking about? The Gala of course. This year the Gala committee are urging streets to get together and take part as a group to help out for a couple of hours. All you need are a few willing individuals who can commit one hour (or more!) to staff the bar. It would be great if different streets covered the bar for the whole weekend. We need 16 streets to come forward and agree to do an hour each – is that too much to ask for? By limiting the time to an hour it means that everyone has time to enjoy themselves instead of the same people being tied up for the whole weekend.

Perhaps your group doesn't fancy bar work but is willing to spend an hour face-painting or supervising the bouncy castle on Saturday afternoon – that would be great too.

Everyone who takes part will be invited to a special Gala Volunteers Party in the Community Centre later in the year. An added bonus is developing more of a community spirit by getting your neighbours to pull together and have fun at the same time.

David Cairns MP : Help make Inverclyde a Fairtrade Area

Nobody doubts the generosity and goodwill of people in Inverclyde. Within weeks of the Tsunami hundreds of thousand of pounds was raised - but where do we go from here? Can we do more than just respond to disasters and give money to our favourite charities? Global poverty is such a big problem that it is difficult to understand how people in Inverclyde can help. I've been giving this a lot of thought since the terrible events of Boxing Day and it's prompted me to launch a campaign to make Inverclyde a Fairtrade area.

Fairtrade is all about ensuring that workers and farmers in the developing world are paid a decent price for what they produce, and making certain that they have equal access to the world's markets. Seventy-seven towns and cities throughout the UK have already achieved Fairtrade status and I see no reason why Inverclyde can't be a Fairtrade area too.

I have already sent out almost 1000 copies of a petition calling for Inverclyde to become a Fairtrade area and I would urge as many people as possible to sign up. Petitions have already gone out to schools, churches, voluntary organisations and local businesses. If you would like to join the campaign, just call my office on 791820 and I will pop your petition in the post.

Alternatively, the petition will soon be on my website and you will be able to sign up on line at www.davidcairns.com.

Dozens of petitions have already been returned and the response is just tremendous.

I want to see goods with the Fairtrade mark routinely available in local shops, offices and canteens. We can all do our bit to help the developing world by making Inverclyde a Fairtrade area – all we have to do is persuade local businesses and civic leaders to join our campaign. I'm hoping to form a local steering group and, once we have persuaded a certain number of local outlets to stock Fairtrade produce, we can apply to the Fairtrade Foundation and have Inverclyde recognised as a Fairtrade area.

David Cairns holds surgeries on the first and third Friday of the month from 10am – 12noon at his Parliamentary Office, 20 Union Street, Greenock Tel: 791820. Alternatively you can phone the office for details of his next surgery in Wemyss Bay.

Fly-Tipping

No sooner than work had been completed in the woods than one inconsiderate individual ripped out the bollard in the middle of Cliff Terrace Road, reversed a trailer in and dumped a full trailer of garden waste across the road, blocking it completely. A small tractor and trailer was spotted in the area around the time the waste was dumped but it would be helpful if anyone else who saw it happening would come forward. You can pass on information to the National Fly-tipping Stop Line, the police or to your local councillor. In addition the Woodland Association would like to know who is trying to undo all their efforts so please let Eila know too on 529375.

Illegal dumping doesn't just spoil the view, it endangers wildlife and affects your wallet – according to figures released by Keep Scotland Beautiful it costs taxpayers £11 million every year.

That is why a new national fly-tipping hotline was launched last year, backed by a national information campaign featuring Inverclyde's own Richard Wilson.

Funded by the Scottish Executive, the line provides a single point of contact for anyone who witnesses fly-tipping, or who wishes to inform the authorities of a fly-tipping site which needs to be cleared.

When caught, serious offenders will be dealt with by the courts. And, under the Antisocial Behaviour Bill, local authorities, the police and SEPA have the power to issue fixed penalty fines for less severe offences.

If you witness fly-tipping, or find a fly-tipping site, help keep Inverclyde beautiful by calling the new National Fly-tipping Stop Line on **08452 30 40 90**.

Duncan McNeil MSP

As delightful a place as it is, Wemyss Bay is not immune from some of the more unpleasant legacies left by Inverclyde's heavy industrial past.

Many of my former colleagues who now live in Wemyss Bay, for example, have had their hearing seriously damaged by years of working in the din and clamour of the shipyards.

So it's hardly surprising that, despite the best efforts of hardworking and dedicated staff, the NHS cannot keep up with the demand for digital hearing aids in areas such as ours.

I have, therefore, been campaigning for action to cut waiting times and, when I questioned Deputy Health Minister, Rhona Brankin, in the Chamber recently, she recognised the problems here and, at a subsequent meeting, told me that the Executive is investing £587,432 in audiology services in Argyll and Clyde this year – a 260% increase on the previous 12 months.

This extra cash means there will be more space and more staff, giving more people the chance to get their digital hearing aid more quickly. It will also help clear the digital hearing aid backlog by paying staff overtime, so that the service can operate at weekends.

When technological advances such these are available, we shouldn't have to suffer, literally, in silence.

Duncan can be contacted at the Parliamentary Office, 20 Union Street, Greenock PA15 8JL, by E-mail:

duncan.mcneil.msp@scottish.parliament.uk or via his website: www.duncanmcneil.com

Community Association

The next meeting of the Community Association will be held at 7.30pm on Sunday 13th March 2005 at 7.30pm in the Inverkip Hotel. The Association is responsible for the management, letting and upkeep of the Community Centre and also organises the Gala Day, the Christmas lights switch-on and other community events. You are very welcome to come along to any of the meetings, whether you are interested in becoming involved or if you simply want to observe what goes on.

Greenlight Recycling

Greenlight will be continuing their regular kerbside collections with uplifts on Mondays 7th & 21st March and 4th & 18th April. They collect newspapers & magazines, plastic bottles & milk cartons, food & drinks cans, rags and carrier bags. Recycling couldn't be easier - do your bit for the environment.

Largs and Millport Weekly News

The Largs and Millport is looking for someone to write a regular column about what is going on in Wemyss Bay and approached me to take this on. I am too busy at the moment with the Village News and Woodland Association so, if you would be willing to do this, for a small remuneration, contact the editor, Drew Cochrane on 689009, email: dcochrane@cfpress.co.uk

Alternatively, if you just want to let them know about something you, or your organisation are up to, get in touch on 689009, email: editorial.in@cfpress.co.uk Don't forget to let the Village News know too!

Inverclyde's Going Green!

Currently 94% of household waste in Inverclyde is disposed of in landfill sites, costing you and me as council tax payers over £1.5million per year. Many of us are already aware that landfill sites are not a sustainable option and use up limited natural resources. They give off greenhouse gases, such as methane and carbon dioxide, which contribute to climate change and global warming. Landfill sites can also effect air quality and contribute to land and ground water contamination. They also, of course get full, which means that new sites are being created all the time.

We are all aware by now of the need to protect our environment and reduce the amount of rubbish we dump into landfill sites. It can sometimes seem however that there isn't much we can do as individuals to halt the environmental damage that is part of our consumer society. We know that we should be recycling our waste, but sometimes the recycling site seems just too far away for us to be bothered. How many times have you thrown a bottle or jar in the bin because you can't be bothered to walk down to the bottle banks at the Community Centre?

A new recycling initiative by Inverclyde Council aims to make it as easy for households to recycle most of their waste as it is to throw it in the bin! Between March and June this year households across Inverclyde will be receiving recycling bins which will supplement their existing bins.

A blue bin will be provided for cans, paper, cardboard, plastics and textiles; and a brown bin will be provided for garden waste including grass cuttings, hedge trimmings and weeds. Your existing black bin will be used for all other waste. For those of us who already save our recyclable materials for Greenlight it will save space in our cupboards and garages for all the papers and plastic bottles etc that we already recycle. For those of us who don't already recycle, having your own bins will make it even easier and hopefully will encourage more of us to play our part.

Collection of the bins will be rotated on a fortnightly basis with the blue and brown bins being collected on week, then the existing bin the following week. Once you get the hang of separating your waste you will find that your black bin will have less in it each fortnight than the other two.

56 "Mini-Bring" sites will also be created throughout Inverclyde where glass and textiles can be recycled. The locations of these additional sites are being decided through consultation with local community councils.

The recycling initiative aims to ensure that, by 2010 we are recycling 25% of our household waste in line with government targets and European legislation. Similar schemes are being implemented across Scotland to ensure that everyone plays their part and levels are met. For many years similar schemes have existed across many European countries where recycling is something which is just a way of life and not something people even have to think about.

As Inverclyde currently recycles only 6.4% of its waste there is a long way to go to meet European targets, but the new bins and recycling sites, as well as an ongoing education campaign in Inverclyde schools, should make it a lot easier for us all to play our part in turning Inverclyde green!

Recycling is, of course, only one step towards a sustainable waste management system. In order to do as much as possible we have to try and get into a Reduce, Re-use and Recycle way of life. Everyone can play their part in this by:

1. Reduce:
 - Buy unpackaged goods – millions of pounds are spent each year on disposing of unnecessary packaging
 - Buy second hand
 - Avoid disposable items – a little more spent on the initial outlay will save you money in the end and will help the environment
 - Refill containers
2. Reuse:
 - Repair goods if they break rather than throwing them away and buying a replacement
 - Donate unwanted goods to charity shops – someone can always use what you no longer require and the charity benefits financially
3. Recycle:
 - Segregate your household waste for recycling
 - Buy recycled items. Most of the time you will not notice any difference – check your cupboards and you may find that you are already using recycled goods without realising.
 - Get a compost bin – you can get rid of virtually all your table scraps, fruit and vegetable peelings, grass cuttings and even things like shredded paper in this way and your garden benefits from the excellent, cheap compost produced.

Things You May Have Missed...

An Ohio official has been rapped for her comments in tax filing instructions. People whose companies had not turned a profit for five years were advised to try another line of work.

A Long Island man made a grisly find among his dead father's belongings. The hospital had accidentally included another patient's amputated leg.

Australian scientists have developed a vaccine to reduce the methane belched by sheep. I know a few people who could benefit from that!

A man who waited six hours in a Brazilian store to have his credit card checked, only to have it rejected, paid for his next purchase with coins: 32,052 of them.

Drink-drive laws apply on frozen lakes as well as roads, Wisconsin's court of appeal has ruled.

20 homeless Dutch people withdrew over £70,000 with their social security cards following a bank error. Rotterdam Police think they used the money to go on holiday.

Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church

Every Sunday, 11.00am	MORNING WORSHIP, Sunday School and Crèche
Every Monday, 7.30pm	BIBLE STUDY – studies in St John
Every Wednesday, 7.30pm	COUNTRY DANCING
Every Thursday, 1.15-2.45pm	NOAH'S ARK
Every Friday, 12.15-1.30pm	FRIDAY LUNCHESES
Every Saturday, 1.30-4.30pm	JUNIOR BADMINTON
Mar 2	MEN'S FELLOWSHIP, <i>Visit to Erskine Hospital</i>
Mar 4	WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE <i>at St Joseph's</i>
Mar 6	STATED ANNUAL MEETING, <i>following Worship</i>
Mar 11	QUIZ NIGHT, <i>7.30pm in Church Hall</i>
Mar 13	HOLY COMMUNION, <i>11.00am and 7.00pm</i>
Mar 17	MEN'S FELLOWSHIP, <i>7.30pm - AGM and Len Millward</i>
Mar 20	PALM SUNDAY
Mar 24	MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE, <i>7.00pm in Church Hall</i>
Mar 25	GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE, <i>7.00pm in Inverkip Church</i>
Mar 27	EASTER DAY 7.00am - Sunrise Service followed by breakfast and Holy Communion 11.00am - EASTER PRAISE
Mar 27	PRAYERS FOR THE SICK, <i>10.15am</i>

Bible Club

The Bible Club Easter party will be on Monday 21st March at the community centre. The club will then be off due to the Easter holidays and will resume on Monday 18th April in the community centre from 6.15pm to 7.30pm. All primary school age children are welcome. Contact Stephen Renton on 01505 355994 for further details.

Having a Party?

If you are thinking of having a party, why not hold it at the Community Centre? Although it is pretty busy, party bookings are still available outwith the regular lets. Even better, why not theme your party? When placing your booking just say if you would like a Bouncy Castle Party or would like DJs "Disco Divas" to provide your entertainment. A 2-hour Bouncy castle Party costs £52, while a 2-hour Disco booking only costs £50. To make your booking or for more information contact Kirsty on 520738. Remember that if you are having food at your party, the centre's kitchen was refurbished last year and is available for your use.

What Would You Like To See In The Village News?

Since taking over editing the Village News we have listened to a number of suggestions and tried to include them where possible, however we are aware that many people may be sitting at home with great ideas about how to improve things. Perhaps you would like to contribute to the newsletter on a regular basis – if so get in touch and we can chat about how you can contribute. Contact Eila Tel: **529375** E-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net or leave your suggestions in the Village News folder behind the counter in Spar.

Quad Bike Application

A planning application has been submitted for the formation of a quad bike area with access and parking at Kellybank Cottage, Wemyss Bay. Inverclyde Council's Planning Department have required that the applicant submit an environmental assessment taking into account noise and ground disturbance, among other issues. The application is available for viewing at Inverkip Library.

Girlguiding Wemyss Bay

Congratulations to Jennifer, Nicola, Sophie and Natalie who were presented with their Baden-Powell Challenge Awards at our annual World Thinking Day service at Skelmorlie and Wemyss Bay Parish Church. This award is the highest award that a girl can gain in the Guide section, and it really stretches them physically and mentally. We are very proud of all four of them! We attended two services for World Thinking Day, one in the local church (thank you Mr Armstrong for a lovely service) and one for all the members of Girlguiding in Inverclyde, which was quite a bit different with the flags being piped in and out, and some games as well as the usual songs. The girls seemed to really enjoy it.

Seven new Brownies made their Promise in February, just proving that Girlguiding is still very popular.

We are looking to re-open a Ranger unit in Wemyss Bay and would like to discover if any girls aged 14 and over are interested, and if so when they'd like to meet and what they'd like to do. If you are interested please e-mail marilyn@mclaughlintraining.com.

The Brownies are losing Fiona, one of our leaders. We want to thank her for all her help and wish her all the best for her forthcoming marriage and in her new home. However this means we are desperately looking for some more adult help as are the Guides. You do not have to commit to coming every week as Girlguiding is right into job-sharing, and we are a fun bunch to work with to. Come on *Surprise Yourself*.

Councillor Eric Forbes

Planning Application – Wemyss Bay Station: An application has been made to demolish a wall at the station immediately behind Pearson's Garage. Hopefully, this will eventually lead to a more formalised parking system and will help to relieve the problem of parking on the main road (A78) and the pierhead.

Motorcycles etc.: I have received a number of complaints regarding different types of motorcycles and scooters running about the village, both on and off the road. The police are also aware of this and will take action. It is absolutely essential that both the users, many of whom are children, and their parents are aware of the law regarding their use.

Woodlands: The formal work in the woods has now finished and it is looking good. I'm sure that many people will now want to go for walks through the wood more often. Volunteer work is still carrying on however and every pair of hands helps and you will be made very welcome if you go along.

Waste Strategy: A new waste strategy is about to be implemented throughout Inverclyde in order to meet Scottish Executive targets. It involves the use of three bins and requires householders to separate their waste at a house level. Information will be

sent to every household as to how it will be collected and what has to go in each bin. It will require us all to acquaint ourselves with this procedure and play our parts. Disposal of waste and recycling has become a very expensive exercise and everyone has to play their part and I would urge everybody to do this. The scheme will start in Kilmacolm in early March and will work its way through the area, reaching Inverkip and Wemyss Bay in June sometime.

I would like to remind everyone that, if you have a problem or query which you think I may be able to help with, I can be contacted at the Municipal Buildings **Tel: 717171 Fax: 01475 712976 or e-mail: Eric.Forbes@inverclyde.gov.uk** Out with office hours I can be contacted at **home: 520012** or on my **mobile: 07747 006725**. I believe that rather than waiting several weeks for a surgery, it is better for my constituents if I am available at the end of a telephone at any time. Thereafter, if necessary, I can arrange a suitable follow-up meeting.

And Now For the Small Print.....

Please note that we do our best to ensure that adverts are neither misleading or offensive, however the appearance of an advertisement in the Village News does not imply that either the editors or the Community Association endorse the advertiser and / or their products / services.

ITV Gives Viewers the Chance to Settle Disputes in the People's Court UK

Are you arguing with your ex about who gets the sofa? Is a friend refusing to pay back the money they borrowed? Are you in dispute with your neighbours over parking boundaries or are they having too many noisy parties? An all-new court show, *The People's Court UK*, is coming to ITV1 Daytime to help resolve and settle personal disputes and arguments for the Great British Public.

With real disputes and real-life drama, this is the first UK show of its kind and is being filmed for ITV1 by SMG TV Productions in their Glasgow studios. *The People's Court UK* wants to hear from members of the public with real grievances. The show will give them the opportunity to present their argument to *The People's Court UK* Judge, who will hear evidence from BOTH sides in the dispute and reach a resolution.

The all-new ITV1 show is based on the long-running hit US show *The People's Court*, where disputes between families, friends, enemies, work colleagues and neighbours have provided compelling viewing for millions over the past 20 years.

Helen Alexander, Head of Factual at SMG TV Productions says: "*The People's Court* has been a huge success in the US and people even seem to enjoy their time in front of the judge. Now people in Britain are getting a chance to have their disputes heard before *The People's Court UK* judge. We want to hear your stories!"

Anyone with an unresolved disagreement or dispute that they would like put before *The People's Court* Judge, should call **08712 44 25 25**, or log on to ITV's web site: **itv.com/peoplescourt** and let *The People's Court UK* decide.

Calls cost 10p per minute from a BT landline. Calls made from other networks and mobiles may vary in price.

What's On at The Arts Guild

Borderline Theatre Company presents "**Passing Places**" by Stephen Greenhorn on Saturday 12th March @ 7.30pm

£9.00 (£7.00) or £6.25 as part of the Season Ticket

When Motherwell boys, Brian and Alex, steal a prized surfboard, they are forced to make a quick departure north in a clapped out Lada Riva with the psychotic gangster Binks in hot pursuit. As they wind their way up the single track roads from Motherwell to Thurso they encounter a diverse range of characters in this hilarious, extremely well written and enlightening road movie for the stage. Expect an enjoyable evening's entertainment from Borderline in their 30th Anniversary year. *There is some swearing in this production.* OVER 150 TICKETS ALREADY SOLD!

Sounds of Progress presents "**Heal!**" by Forbes Masson & Gordon Dougall on Friday 25th March @ 7.30pm

Tickets £9.00 (£7.00) or £6.25 as part of the Season Ticket

Belinda's waiting at the station. She's been waiting her whole life. Maybe, just maybe today she'll see him...The Healing Hero!

The Spiritual Superman! The remarkable...the incredible...Dr Dennis Taupe and his amazing Ray of Hope...Daddy.

Belinda longs to finally meet her father. But who will Dr Dennis Taupe really turn out to be? As we join him and the eccentric cast of his sensational religious roadshow will Dr Taupe emerge as a corrupt conman exploiting his faithful followers? Or is he indeed a gifted, spiritual superhero who can miraculously heal the sick?

It's the seventh successful collaboration between Forbes Masson and Gordon Dougall. They wrote/directed the Tron Panto 'Alladie' in 2004 - which was the most successful production in the history of the Tron Theatre. So you can expect lots of the same 'slightly twisted sense of humour' and an outstanding live soundtrack!

Auction of Promises

Wemyss Bay Primary PTA are once again staging their popular Auction of Promises on Friday 18th March 2005 from 7.30pm till 11.30pm (doors open 7.15pm) at the school. Following on from a similar event held a few years ago they have been gathering promises from local businesses, parents and teachers.

Lots range from a '3' mobile phone, a trip on the "Eye in the Sky" from Arnold Clark, golf lessons to VIP family passes to the opening of the new Funworld Entertainment Complex in Gourrock.

After the auction a ceilidh disco will be held. Tickets cost £2.50 per person and are available with a catalogue of all the available lots from the school. Please note that as the event is licensed it is open strictly to over 18's.

Prize Bingo

It's eyes down on Saturday 19th March at 7.30pm in Skelmorlie Community Centre, when the 71st Ayrshire Scout Group (Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay) will be holding a Grand Prize Bingo Night. Tickets, priced £1 will be available at the door.

Film Club

Are you a film buff? Many outstanding films from around the world get very little screen time unless they appeal to a mass market and, even when they do get shown, you have to travel to Glasgow to see them. Plans are underway to start a film club in Largs showing outstanding films from around the world. In order for it to be successful they are trying to establish if local people would be interested in attending as the costs involved mean that it would be prohibitive without local support. If you are interested please contact Peter Allam on 674317.

Scams Awareness Month

The Office of Fair Trading declared February, Scams Awareness Month. Even though we are a bit late, we thought that we should pass on the information they issued on the following scams:

Telephone lottery scams – these include the Canadian lottery scam and the El Gordo Spanish lottery scam, which deceptively uses the name of a genuine lottery. People respond to an unsolicited mailing or telephone call telling them they are being entered into a prize draw. They then receive a telephone call congratulating them on winning a big prize in a national lottery – but before they can claim their winnings, they must send money to pay for taxes and processing fees. The prize doesn't exist.

Prize draw, sweepstakes and foreign lottery mailings - many typical scams take the form of prize draws, lotteries or government payouts. Most appear to be notification of a prize in an overseas draw or lottery in return for administration or registration fees.

Premium rate telephone number scams – notification by post of a win in a sweepstake or a holiday offer includes instructions to ring a premium rate 090 number to claim your prize.

Investment related scams – an unsolicited telephone call offering the opportunity to invest in shares, fine wine, gemstones or other soon-to-be rare commodities. These investments often carry very high risk and may be worth a lot less than you pay. The shares are not quoted on any stock exchange and you will not be able to sell them easily afterwards. 'Solid' valuable investments, such as gem stones, are often said to be stored in secretive Swiss bank vaults, so you can never see your investment.

Nigerian advance fee frauds – an offer via letter, email or fax to share a huge sum of money in return for using the recipient's bank account to permit the transfer of the money out of the country. The perpetrators will either use the information given to empty their victim's bank account; or convince him or her that money is needed up front for bribing officials.

Pyramid schemes – offer a return on a financial investment based upon the number of new recruits to the scheme. Investors are misled about the likely returns as there are not enough people to support the scheme indefinitely – only the people who set up the scheme are able to make any money.

Matrix schemes – are promoted via websites offering expensive hi-tech gadgets as free gifts in return for spending £20 or similar on a low-value product such as a mobile telephone signal booster. Consumers who buy the product join a waiting list to receive their free gift. The person at the top of the list gets their free gift only after a prescribed number – sometimes as high as 100 – of new members join up. In reality, the majority of those on the list will never receive the expensive item they expect.

Credit scams – another advance fee fraud, originating in Canada. Advertisements have appeared in local newspapers offering fast loans regardless of credit history. Consumers who respond are told their loans have been agreed but before the money can be released they must pay a fee to cover insurance. Once the advance fee is paid, the consumer never hears from the company again and the loan never appears.

Property investment schemes – would-be investors attend a free presentation and are persuaded to hand over thousands of pounds to sign up to a course promising to teach them how to make money dealing in property. Schemes may involve the opportunity to buy properties which have yet to be built at a discount. A variation is a buy-to-let scheme where companies offer to source, renovate and manage properties, claiming good returns from rental income. In practice, the properties are near-derelict and the tenants non-existent.

Work-at-home and business opportunity scams – often work by advertising paid work from home but which require money up-front to pay for materials; or by requiring investment in a business with little or no chance of success.

Christine Wade, director of consumer regulation enforcement at the OFT, said: 'Scammers are resourceful, enterprising, and manipulative. By exploiting the same routes to market as legitimate business, they damage not only individual consumers, but the interests of fair-trading businesses as well. We will continue to work with our partners within the UK and overseas to enforce the law against perpetrators of these misleading and fraudulent schemes; and to provide the public with the knowledge and skills they need to recognise these scams.'

Remember, never give out bank details over the telephone or by e-mail and always check out a company's details and profile before agreeing to any new schemes, joining any mailing lists or giving out any personal details. For more information visit www.nafn.gov.uk (National Anti-Fraud Network) or www.offt.gov.uk (Office of Fair Trading). If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!!

Finally

That's all for this month. **The closing date for any articles or adverts for the April edition of the Village News is the 20th March.** This is an absolute deadline and cannot be extended under any circumstances! If you would like a reminder let us know and we will add you to the e-mail list. If you have anything which you would like included please send it to **Eila Roberts, 14 Brueacre Drive, Wemyss Bay PA18 6HA Tel: 529375 e-mail: eilaroberts@care4free.net** or place it in the Village News folder, which is kept behind the counter in Spar

Kid's Stuff

The work to make the paths through the woods and remove the rhododendron is finished now, although the next step is to plan out a bike route. In the meantime there are already a lot more birds to be seen in the woods. The names of some of the birds which live in Wemyss Bay Woods and which have been seen or heard recently are hidden in this month's wordsearch. How many can you find?

L	S	K	C	O	N	N	U	D	R	I	B	K	C	A	L	B
N	O	R	M	T	W	A	R	B	L	E	R	W	O	X	A	L
L	G	N	C	B	T	I	T	T	A	E	R	G	S	O	E	U
G	O	J	G	O	L	D	C	R	E	S	T	D	E	H	R	E
W	L	A	O	T	U	P	N	K	L	W	O	Y	N	W	A	T
C	D	F	K	W	A	H	W	O	R	R	A	P	S	A	R	I
R	F	F	L	X	R	I	M	M	A	G	P	I	E	P	E	T
E	I	A	E	T	S	E	L	C	R	B	R	H	N	A	H	R
P	N	H	I	U	Q	N	N	E	I	O	S	S	G	C	C	E
E	C	C	D	F	I	T	E	W	D	Z	T	U	P	K	T	K
E	H	F	M	K	S	N	O	I	T	T	L	R	O	C	A	C
R	D	F	S	C	F	R	E	H	G	N	I	H	T	A	C	E
C	R	I	W	I	C	O	A	L	T	I	T	T	L	M	Y	P
E	S	H	N	G	E	H	C	N	I	F	L	L	U	B	L	D
E	L	C	H	A	F	F	I	N	C	H	T	E	S	I	F	O
R	H	A	E	G	N	I	W	D	E	R	O	B	I	N	D	O
T	C	E	B	M	R	L	N	O	E	G	I	P	D	O	O	W

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| BLACKBIRD | CROW | LONG-TAILED TIT | TAWNY OWL |
| BLACKCAP | DUNNOCK | MAGPIE | THRUSH |
| BLUE-TIT | FLYCATCHER | REDWING | TREECREEPER |
| BULLFINCH | GOLDCREST | ROBIN | WARBLER |
| CHAFFINCH | GOLDFINCH | ROOK | WOODPECKER |
| CHIFFCHAFF | GREAT-TIT | SISKIN | WOODPIGEON |
| COAL-TIT | GREENFINCH | SPARROWHAWK | WREN |

WORDFINDER

Try and find as many words as possible using the letters below. Each letter can only be used once and every word must contain the letter in the middle square. No plurals, names or hyphenated words are allowed. There is at least one 9-letter word.

D	T	I
S	E	R
I	V	Y

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 20 words – at least you're trying! | 25 words – good |
| 35 words – well done | 45+ words – brain-box!! |