



Going Places

Newsletter 2025 - 2026

View From The Chair

The year just past has been a successful year for the Trust thanks to the hard work of fellow Directors and our friends/ supporters and volunteers of the Trust. Though our main success this year has been undoubtedly in helping improve the lower reaches of the Goat Fell path both at Brodick and at Corrie, which could not have been accomplished without the aid of a number of different funding partners, including those from our own funds, which are largely composed of kind donations received or bequeathed to us.

Throughout the year we have been involved in trying to help out on other projects, both large and small, ranging from offering advice on alterations to the Machrie standing stones carpark to allow the sale of beverages to renewing the flower barrel containers at the Coastal way, start and finish point at Brodick, which sadly had deteriorated due to their age and the weather.

As is the case with many organisations today, finding cash and funding for such projects is imperative and not surprisingly it is getting harder with more and more competition for less and less money. Even small amounts of money have dried up courtesy of the cashless society. To this end, both Jamie Barrow and Lucy Wallace have been working on ways of using QR codes and crowd funding to help people donate to the upkeep of our path network. So please do watch out for the QR codes that could be installed along the more popular paths to help pay for required upgrades and maintenance, note these days type 1, aggregate for dressing is currently costing £30 per tonne delivered!

...continued page 2, "Fisherman's Walk"

WORK PARTY REPORT

'25

One man and his spade...

Following the second hurricane to hit Arran last winter, we were out at the end of January checking paths most likely to have suffered storm damage. Worst was the Prospective Hill path out of Lamlash where a medium-sized Ash tree was lying along the route. This was cut away and the timber removed.

In February we checked the drainage from the Fallen Rocks to Laggan route and in March had a couple of sessions clearing sand & gravel from the Fisherman's Walk in Brodick. March saw us up at Catacol Glen cutting whins back from the path near the road together with some stone clearance further up.

King's Cave was our next destination although not a lot needed done to the paths in this area as they now seem to look after themselves apart from the bracken of course. It is possible that the forest on the return part of this path will be felled within the next two years, we wonder what views will be opened up again after so many years.

In May the Postman's path between Lochranza and Catacol was, as usual, the first to have the bracken cut back and other paths occupied us until July. The route from Clauchlands to Dunfion still gives us problems – there was evidence that walkers were using the adjacent fields probably on wet days.

Resting over August, we went down to the Kildonan shore car park where we levelled the surface to improve drainage. In October the Bab's Well path out of Lamlash received a makeover with drains cleared and hedges cut back. The removal of the hedge on the top side has made maintenance much easier.

November saw us out at the Machrie Stones track clearing side drains, such was the state of the road that we had to return a second day to complete the job. We still cannot understand why the stones were situated so far from the main road!

Highlight of the year – in mid August we met a couple from Wisconsin on the Laggan shore. Looking northwards over a sun drenched Sound of Bute and the Argyll mountains beyond, the man said 'we have good views over the Great Lakes but nothing like this!' Great!

Kenny Morrison

FISHERMAN'S WALK

With less and less funding available to the Trust and a lot of paths to try and maintain, in recent years the Trust took the reluctant decision, to not put Access Trust money directly into replacing the existing boardwalk on the basis that it is under constant threat from Coastal erosion and the imminent threat of sea level rise, but to work with other to come up with an alternative solution. The current routeway has become increasingly exposed to erosion and submergence, as shown in the picture.

Most people reading this article realise that Sea level is rising and the diagram below from Climate Action demonstrates the situation we are faced with which was highlighted during a public discussion back in 2023. The prediction is that sea level, along with higher tides and storm surges could result in a new high tide storm level which is 1 metre higher than present, this could be the reality within 25 years, or by 2050! If this comes to pass, Fisherman's walk, or the lovely coastal stroll that many are used to will have to be in a totally different place to that of today and North Ayrshire Council are working with others on a new route.

Our path counter on the existing route demonstrates that 100000 people pass along this walk each year, visitors and locals alike, enjoying an iconic path which features on many of the advertisements portraying Arran. I learned firsthand and from many Arran residents who attended the Volunteering fete held at Brodick High school that it is a route enjoyed by many a local and in particular, mums and dads with prams, young families, the less abled, including those in wheelchairs, dog walkers to name but a few. They might be out for a short stroll returning the same way or they could be people accessing local businesses in the Cladach area or the Goat fell path or entrance to Brodick Castle. In short, not only is it an iconic path, but it is currently part of an important extended village network joining two separate and distinctive parts of the bay.

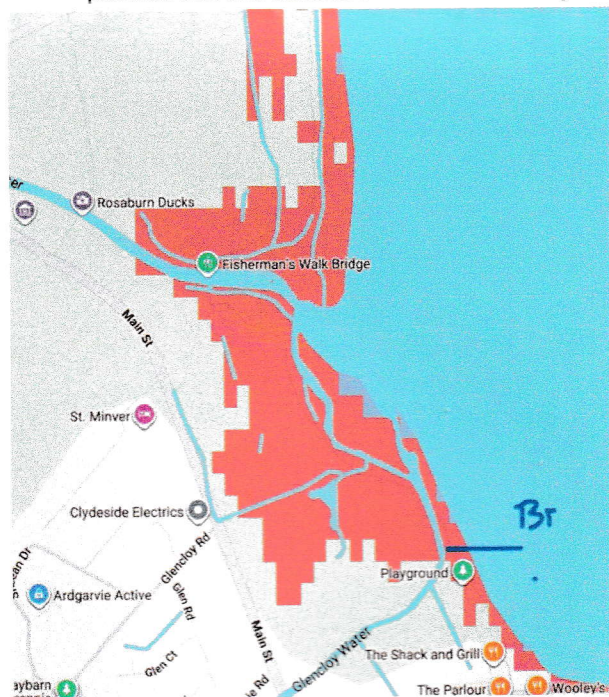
This situation has not gone unrecognised, I am pleased to say that currently quite a number of local organisations and companies have been putting forward ideas, costings and plans and trying to raise funds to tackle the problem, both in the short term, for this year and next, the intermediate term, 5 to 10 years and the longer term. This though is not an easy or straightforward process as demonstrated last autumn when the Trust did spearhead an application to Crown Estates in the hope of obtaining funding for a replacement bridge over the Cloyburn. Sadly, this application was declined on the basis of oversubscription. However, rest assured the Trust will continue to work, along with many other parties, in trying to find solutions and money to try and restore this routeway for the benefit of all.

Finally, a plea to all those who like walking on Arran. If you do walk along one of our maintained paths, please spare a thought for the work that goes in to maintain it and donate small amounts if you are able. These days we need a community response to help us maintain these paths, see the crowd funding initiative launched by Brodick improvements committee, which is certainly the case with Fisherman's walk.



Above: Easterly winter storms have destroyed parts of Fisherman's Walk

Below: Climate change predictions – Red shows the potential sea encroachment within the next 25 years.



STOP PRESS

Repairs are now underway on Fisherman's Walk and we hope it will be fixed by Easter!

Thanks to all who donated to the repairs and to Brodick Improvements Committee for raising the funds.

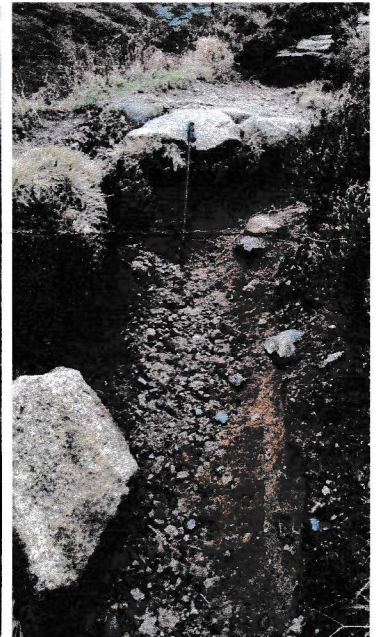
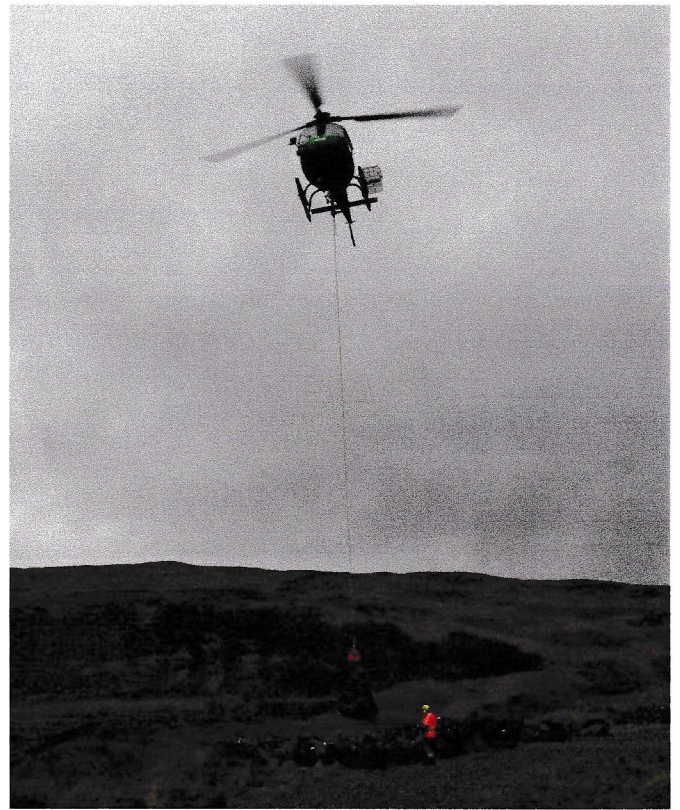
SORTED!

Months of planning and funding bids came to fruition in November when work finally got under way to repair the Goat Fell path approaches at Brodick and Corrie.

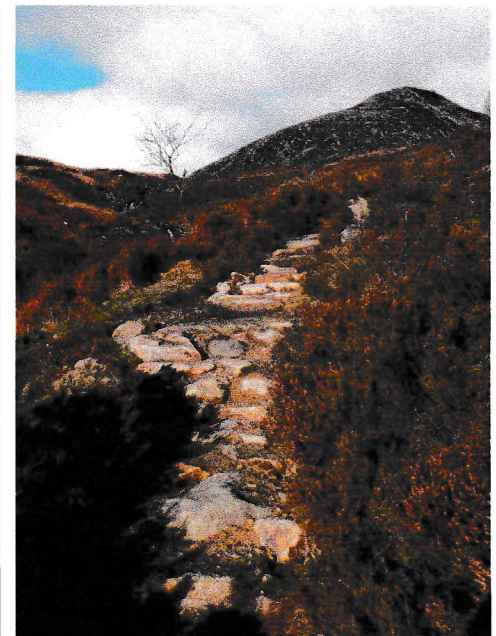
Years of weather and foot erosion had taken their toll on these popular paths and the Trust assessed that urgent work was needed to stop the rot. With permissions in place from the landowners, funding bids were submitted. Support came from Browns Forbes Charitable Trust, Arran Trust, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Arran Community Fund and along with AAT funds we were ready to offer a contract for works.

130 tons of stone and aggregate was air lifted into place and 6 weeks of hard graft by Arran Footpaths and Forestry Co has resulted in much improved and more sustainable routes.

As with this project and all other improvement works that the Trust initiates, progress can only be made through the time and effort put in by the (voluntary) board of directors and co-opted representatives of Arrans community. If you feel you would like to make a positive contribution to our work, the Trust would love to hear from you. Secretarial skills and fundraising experience are just two areas where support would be most welcome.



Before, during and after photos of work on the lower Goat fell path



Seasonal Ranger Report 2025

Once again Jamie Barrow has been active around Arran this year undertaking the daunting task of maintaining the many miles of paths and encouraging responsible access to the island.

His post has been financed by the Arran Geopark to whom the Trust is grateful since we have benefited from his input.

In fact, the majority of his time has been spent either directly, or with the help of volunteers, working on the path network clearing vegetation, repairing path structures and improving signage. Those volunteers contributed and impressive 269 hours of work.

He has also played a leading role in engaging with the community and visitors and promoting responsible behaviour in the countryside. With increasing numbers of wild campers and campervans on the island the need for his input is clear.

Sadly, some visitors are still not heeding the message to `leave nothing but footprints and take nothing but photos` but on a positive note the signs he installed asking campers not to light fires seem to be having an effect.

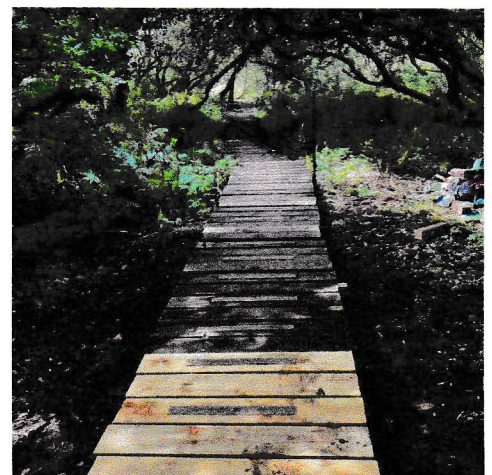
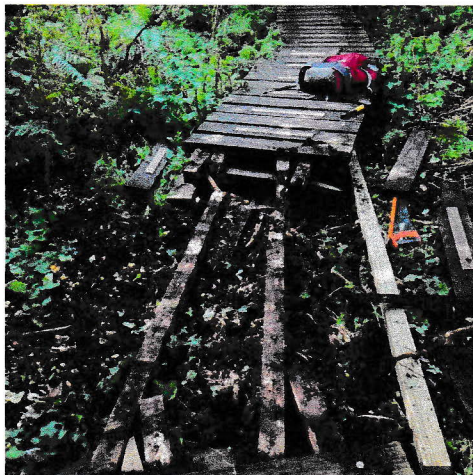


Volunteers help clear rubbish from Arran Coastal Way



Abandoned tents are on the increase

Below: Boardwalk: before, during and after repairs



The Arran Access Trust is a charitable organisation and depends on membership subscriptions to survive. If you are one of the many thousands of people who enjoy walking, horseriding or cycling on this lovely island, please help us to contribute to our work by sending a cheque to the above address - it is just £10 per annum but it does mean such a lot to us. Thank you.