

baywatch

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www.irvinebay.co.uk

 Ardrossan beach,
 January 2010

Working to make a real difference in Irvine Bay

Throughout the last year we were very aware of the effects of the economic climate on local business and the possible impact on our plans for regeneration. Our focus has constantly been to make plans for the upturn and to be ready to respond to opportunities – and we have already seen the effects of that positive approach.




 Baroness Margaret Ford,
 Chair

Long-term plans for major projects such as 'The Ayrshire' golf complex and the development at Irvine Harbour took major strides forward during 2009. These multi-million pound projects will take time to come to fruition but represent transformation for the area on a very significant scale.

More immediate change is taking place in Kilwinning Main Street, in the refurbishment of town centre buildings in Ardrossan and Saltcoats, and new-build business centres in Stevenston and at Annickbank, Irvine.

I believe that our deliberate approach to seeking out projects that will make a real difference to our area is already having an impact. Our priority is to support projects that visibly alter Irvine Bay, so we are engaged in the refurbishment of town centres, improving the built environment, bringing old property back into use and supporting new-build projects. Everything

we do is part of our overall plan to restore the economy and create new jobs in the area.

We are committed to working with our partners – North Ayrshire Council, Scottish Enterprise and the Scottish Government – and involving the community in every aspect of what we do. I'm delighted with the success that we've already seen in working closely with local communities through our education programme and through consultations on our major initiatives.

2010 is an exciting time as the momentum builds. You'll see from the number of projects featured here that many developments that were at the early stages of planning a year ago are already coming to fruition.

Irvine Bay Annual Public Meeting

You are invited...

Irvine Bay's Annual Public Meeting takes place at 10.30am on Thursday 25th March at the Menzies Hotel, Irvine.

This annual round-up of our regeneration projects will look back on the achievements of a busy and successful year and forward to our continuing plans for the transformation of Irvine Bay.

Why these projects?

We are often asked about our priorities – why we have chosen to get involved in particular projects and not others. Our plan for this year's Annual Public Meeting is to explain more about how we select the projects we support and how we make key decisions about investment that will bring regeneration to our area.

To register your attendance simply:

- Visit www.registerforevent.co.uk/irvinebay2010
- Call 0845 60 66 826 during office hours
- Or email irvinebay@starkeventsuk.com and type "Irvine Bay – APM" in the title



Education explosion

Young people around Irvine Bay are directly involved in the transformation of the area as they participate in education projects which are designed to contribute first to their learning experience and second to the successful regeneration of the places where they live.

We are leading the way with a lively and dynamic programme, co-ordinated by educationalist Moreen Smith, with projects running in local primary and secondary schools. Some highlights from the last year include:

- The 'i-sea' initiative at Irvine Royal Academy walked off with top prize in the Technology Teachers Association Award for Best Cross-Curricular Project

- Pupils from Greenwood Academy got involved in the design of a brand for Annickbank Business Park, Irvine

- Kilwinning Main Street continues to benefit from pupil power, with secondary school pupils taking part in work experience

Working with pupils in our local schools is an effective way of involving communities in regeneration – and that involvement is crucial. Our education projects have already caught the attention of the Scottish Government and Learning & Teaching Scotland as an example of best practice in developing this kind of approach.

Visit www.irvinebay.co.uk for more about our education projects. Watch a video about the 'i-sea' project at Irvine Royal Academy and Auchterharvie Academy.

"We have seen over and over again how young people can benefit from applying their learning to the developments in the real world. A regeneration project is ideal as there are so many different angles that touch on different subject areas at school."

Moreen Smith,
Education Co-ordinator

Big on the Beach

Summer 2009, and the beach was the place to be. Children and young people enjoyed a week-long event with a wide range of activities just for them. Irvine Bay Regeneration Company combined with North Ayrshire Council and Young Scot to organise the event.

Plans are coming together for Big on the Beach to happen all over again, 2 – 6 August 2010. This event provides a great showcase for the area, a treat for locals which also attracts visitors from further afield.

"Regeneration is about more than improving the physical infrastructure of an area, it's about engaging with and enthusing the people who live here."

Patrick Wiggins, Chief Executive



Young people from Irvine Royal Academy

Watch a video of the run on our website, starring local running enthusiast and event organiser, Jim Montgomerie, The Running Kilt!



A run-away success

The first ever Irvine Bay Fun Run took place on Sunday 16th August 2009 on a wet and windy morning. Despite the weather, over 120 people took part and the whole thing was hailed as a great success. Plans are already developing for a 2010 fun run, with the possibility of extending the route to take in more of the Irvine Bay area.

"We were delighted to support Jim in this fantastic event. Events such as this are really great for the local area, encouraging community spirit and highlighting what a great place Irvine Bay is to live, work and visit."

Kirsty Innes, Marketing Manager

"I've seen so many people out running in the area which inspired me to organise the event. I was really thrilled to see so many runners at Irvine Bay's first ever fun run, making it a huge success. I'm looking forward to making this an annual event, placing Irvine Bay firmly on the running event map."

Jim Montgomerie, Organiser

Funding transformation

Our Local Regeneration Fund has been set up especially to provide small grants to local community projects. 2009 was a great year for the fund, with diverse and exciting local projects benefiting from our support.

For example:

- The Scottish Maritime Museum Café in Irvine has been refurbished and re-opened

- 'Dear Mister Burns', also in Irvine, was a unique event celebrating Robert Burns during the year of homecoming

- The Museum of Ayrshire Country Life and Costume at Dalgarven Mill, Kilwinning has been extended to create a new Display and Restoration Centre

Looking ahead, all the applications we support in 2010 and beyond will be projects that enhance the environment, increase access and use of local services or improve the respect that people have for our area.

"Urban regeneration is about changing attitudes as much as changing landscapes. Events such as 'Dear Mister Burns' create a sense of civic pride for the local community in Irvine as well as providing an opportunity for visitors to experience and enjoy something that is quite unique."

James Ledgerwood, Project Manager



Pictures from top to bottom:
 • 'Dear Mister Burns'
 • The Scottish Maritime Museum Café, Irvine
 • Dalgarven Mill, Kilwinning





Digging in at Annickbank

16 December 2009 was a day for celebration at Annickbank as the contractors moved in to start the build on the new business park. Despite the economic climate, there was steady progress during 2009: firstly, with the deal being concluded with Speyroc, and then the site start taking place just before Christmas.

Speyroc was selected by Irvine Bay Regeneration Company to develop Scotland's greenest business park as the firm has an excellent track record in the delivery of high quality, flexible space that is built to very high environmental standards.

"This is a major step forward for the area. Annickbank will provide excellent space suitable for a wide range of companies. We're convinced that this project will help in the regeneration of the wider area, bringing new business and jobs to Irvine Bay." Arthur Watson, Project Manager



NACCO is key site in heart of Irvine

The 37 acre site, which we were able to buy last year, now represents a key resource for bringing new businesses into Irvine. It has a strategic position between Irvine Harbour, 'The Ayrshire' golf development and other nearby industrial land – it will therefore play a vital role in the redevelopment of the whole area. As this year unfolds we'll be considering the right plan for the future. This will include short-term commercial uses and new industrial and commercial development.



From bingo to business

The Grange Bingo Hall was once a prominent Stevenston landmark. Now the derelict building has been demolished and plans are being progressed for a brand new business centre.

A project team has been appointed, designs are at an advanced stage and we hope to submit a planning application in the summer.

Our vision is to establish Stevenston as a place for healthy living and growing businesses. The business centre will play a key role in this initiative, ensuring that the town centre meets the needs of the local community, attracts new investment and creates day-to-day activity.



Waxing lyrical

The redevelopment of the Lyric Theatre as flats and a retail unit was successfully completed in October 2009. The B listed building will enjoy a new lease of life as a high quality shop and flats. The retail unit on the ground floor provides the opportunity for new jobs in the area and the facade of the Lyric has been restored to provide a dramatic frontage for the new building development, making it an exceptionally attractive place to live or work.

After lying empty for years, the building was restored by Hovepark Properties, with substantial backing from Irvine Bay Regeneration Company.



Pigeons politely invited to leave

Making sure that Trinity Church was wind and watertight was the first step in the restoration and redevelopment of this A listed landmark in the centre of Irvine. However, the resident pigeon population had to be persuaded that it was time for a change of abode! In came Harry the Hawk, with his experienced falconer, and within minutes the problem pigeons had fled the building.

Since the pigeons moved out last spring, Irvine Bay Regeneration Company, in partnership with North Ayrshire Council and Trinity Church Trust, has been working to secure the building as a future development opportunity. A new roof has been put on the main building and essential repairs carried out on the spire.



Crystal clear

A contemporary new glass façade is to transform the Bridgegate centre in Irvine.

North Ayrshire Council's Executive has opted for a new glazed look for the fascia of Bridgegate House, replacing the 30 year old frontage with a cleaner, brighter and more modern look.

"We believe that this £3.3 million project will play a significant role in restoring the fortunes of the town. We are delighted to be working closely with the Council on such an important facelift for a key building in the centre of Irvine, which, alongside works already being undertaken in the town centre such as the Trinity Church, will help to enhance the area." Omar Elmi, Commercial Director



Down by the harbour

The last year has seen massive strides forward in the planning and consultation for the creation of a new village at Irvine Harbour. The initiative, which is modelled on traditional Scottish seaside towns, incorporates residential, retail and commercial space, close to the harbour and the beach.

A major milestone was the planning application which was submitted in autumn 2009, following a far-reaching public consultation programme.

"The transformation of Irvine Harbour and the creation of a vibrant place with stunning views and a wonderful location is a key part of our plans for the area. Our remit is to work with our partners to create successful, sustainable communities and we believe this proposal will go some way to doing that." Omar Elmi, Commercial Director

"The development will create a fantastic place for people to live, and also as a place for people to enjoy leisure time, to work, and to visit." Patrick Sheridan, Urban Splash



Ardrossan Marina set to expand?

Irvine Bay has now bought land at the south side of the marina, currently used as a car park. The proposal for this area is for contemporary office accommodation and hotel, with possibilities for a small cafe and chandlery. There will also be public car parking and a relocated feature boat park.

Building on the momentum of the recent developments in the area, the idea is to provide facilities for marina users and the hundreds of thousands of ferry users that pass through Ardrossan each year on the way to Arran.

Irvine Bay is also in discussions with Clydeport to enter a joint venture to continue cleaning up the former 30 acre shell site to the north of the marina, and create the infrastructure for residential and commercial development.

Importantly, the joint venture would pave the way to extend the hugely popular marina. Initially a further 165 berths would be possible, rising to create around 500 berths over time.

This would help further transform the area and bring expenditure and jobs to the town.



Three buildings that benefited...

In 2009 the Scottish Government announced the Town Centre Regeneration Fund as a sign of their commitment to the improvement of Scotland's town centres and local high streets. The funding, which was a response to the challenging economic climate, demanded a quick turn-around and Irvine Bay was able to secure a welcome £1.45m to use across three separate town centre refurbishment projects.

- 1. Jack Millar Hotel, Ardrossan**
Work started on this well-known town centre building in November 2009 which is being refurbished to provide around 2,700 sq ft of good quality office space.
- 2. Station building, Saltcoats**
The two-storey building will have a retail or restaurant use on the ground floor and office space on the first floor. The work is on schedule for completion by summer 2010.
- 3. Harbour Bar, Ardrossan**
The derelict Harbour Bar has been purchased and plans are being explored to bring it back into use as a restaurant and bar, serving the nearby marina, the harbour and the town centre.



The Main Street is the main thing

Kilwinning Main Street has been the focus of regeneration in the town all year, and for good reason. The refurbishment of the town's main shopping street is designed to kick-start the local economy, support existing businesses and encourage new retailers into the area.

Already there have been important spin-offs. The £2.75 million regeneration scheme for the town centre funded by Irvine Bay Regeneration Company included an agreement with main contractors Land Engineering that comprehensive training would be provided for 12 local people.

The first six trainees have now completed their training programmes – so successfully that the company has given all of them permanent jobs. A further six trainees are being given the same opportunity in the second phase of the project.

Community involvement has always been a central element in this project. School pupils were involved at the planning stages through one of our highly successful education projects and some pupils are now benefiting from work experience at the site.

We do appreciate the support and patience of local people and retailers as the work on the Main Street continues.

Go for golf resort

A massive development project on the edge of Irvine will bring 250 construction jobs as well as permanent employment for around 135 people at the new hotel and golf complex.

One of the highlights of 2009 was signing the deal between Irvine Bay Regeneration Company and The Ayrshire Golf Company, who will take forward this major development. The project includes a new 18-hole links course complete with adjoining hotel and holiday homes.

- The new golf course is expected to attract tourists and local golfers
- Currently around 240,000 visitors from around the world come to play golf in Ayrshire each year with most arriving via nearby Prestwick Airport
- The course will encourage visitors to stay in the area longer to play on all the top class courses
- The pay and play policy at 'The Ayrshire' means the course will be open to the public

Looking ahead, the next milestone will be lodging the planning application in the Summer.

Visit our website www.irvinebay.co.uk to watch a short film about the development with Brian Keating, Director of The Ayrshire Golf Company outlining the vision for the new course.

Talking business

One new element in the Irvine Bay mix over the last year has been a series of business meetings, *Irvine Bay talks business*. The idea behind these events was to create a forum for local business people to come together and discuss the issues that directly affect them. We chose to focus on procurement opportunities at Irvine Bay, to ensure that businesses were aware of local opportunities being generated and knew how to tender for them.

Around 140 businesses attended the three events and enjoyed a great networking opportunity as well as learning more about developments around the Bay. You can catch up with some of the conversations by watching the *talks business* film on our website at www.irvinebay.co.uk.

"The work we are doing is all about creating a prosperous and sustainable Irvine Bay and we need strong local businesses to do that. It's vital that local firms understand what we're doing, how our work can benefit them, and how we can work together to achieve that."

Patrick Wiggins,
Chief Executive



Irvine Bay talks business, Kilwinning

Changing how we see our coast

Our coastal beacons project is a fascinating series of developments that's designed to engage people with our coastline and help to reconnect our places and our people with the sea.

As an extension to the 'Gems among the rocks' project there are plans to introduce lighting to Saltcoats pier that will change the feel of the place, especially at night. The lights will draw attention to the iconic historical pier structure and help celebrate the heritage of Saltcoats.

In another initiative, 'Our talking wall', local school pupils have been recording their aspirations for the coast and their towns. Some of their comments will be included as inscriptions on the new sea defences. This work will also connect with a new mural at the seafront in Ardrossan, working with local artist Alison Thomas.

Other projects in this series will come on stream all the time, adding interest and vitality to the stunning Irvine Bay coastline.

'Gems among the rocks', Saltcoats

Getting the word out

Marketing has a key part to play when it comes to the regeneration of Irvine Bay. We are at work, not just to inform local people about the work that is going on, but also to change perceptions of the area and attract investment. It's a big remit and we've been making some exciting inroads.

Recent developments on the website www.irvinebay.co.uk have included the 'Our changing bay' section, which contains information on many of our projects. We also send out regular e-mail newsletters and with

some 1,800 subscribers this is a great way to keep folk up to date with new developments. Make sure you sign up today!

We've also introduced podcasts to the website. These short films bring much of the news and other material to life in short films – a great way to catch up quickly with what's going on, and they are available on YouTube too.

And finally, if you're on Twitter, so are we. Don't forget to follow us and we'll keep you up to date with everything that's going on.



Enterprise Island lives on



Over 50 people took part in the Enterprise Island challenge

Ten of the original group of Enterprise Islanders have been working with Real Work Skills on a 12 month mentoring programme to help them develop their own businesses. Businesses that have benefited from the approach include Gordon Brown's *Treasured Dreams* and Colin Surgeoner's *driving school*. *Little Grey Bird* has taken flight over the last year, providing proofing and editorial services.

"Enterprise Island helped me discover opportunities to develop my business and gave me the confidence and direction that I needed. The programme helped me to explore what I wanted from and for my business and has made an enormous difference to the approach I take."
Jacqueline McGhee,
Little Grey Bird

Another group of 14 enterprising business people have just joined the mentoring programme recently.

Funding small business property developments

The Small Business Property Fund was set up last year to provide support for developing and improving office and industrial property in the Irvine Bay area.

The fund has been created to help businesses grow by improving the quality of their commercial and industrial property. Grants and loans between £5,000 and £30,000 are available to new and expanding businesses for capital costs connected with improving buildings. Current projects include

- An extension of Booth Welsh's headquarters at Stevenston to accommodate current and future growth of this high-tech global business
- Assisting Clowes Developments in providing 10 small workshop/business units for lease from 350 sq ft to 1,000 sq ft
- Support for West Coast Karts to open an indoor karting facility at Stevenston Industrial Estate
- A fit out for D S Joiner's workshop at Kyle Industrial Estate, to create a facility for the company to manufacture and assemble joinery products off-site in all weathers

Investing in our environment

As part of our commitment to the natural environment in Irvine Bay, last year we carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment of our plans and programmes.

Aspects of our sustainable approach are the redevelopment of our local town centres to encourage use of local services and the use of public transport. We are also involved in developing new office accommodation with the highest possible environmental standards.

In addition, we are keen to encourage appreciation of the wildlife around the Bay, and this will be an important theme in our plans for a coastal park. The Irvine Bay area currently suffers from land degeneration and contamination, and we are working to decontaminate land and bring it back into use.

Property professionals take the tour

Leading property investors and developers have been visiting Irvine Bay to see for themselves the huge potential of the area.

The events took the form of detailed briefings followed by tours of key regeneration sites – including Ardrossan Marina, the Jack Miller site, Stevenston Business Centre, Bridgegate, Irvine Harbour, NACCO, and 'The Ayrshire' golf development.

Now the success of this proactive approach means we'll be running similar events for retailers, hoteliers and key players within the leisure industry over the coming months. It is all part of making sure that the right people know about the opportunities that regeneration is bringing to the area.



Art to change our public spaces

Art can change how we feel about the places around us! We are putting that idea into practice in Irvine Bay by using public art in all sorts of different ways to support the regeneration of the area.

Examples of art projects already well under way are the 'Gems among the rocks' project in Saltcoats and new seating in the refurbishment of Kilwinning Main Street. We're also working with local schools on engraving inscriptions on the sea wall at Saltcoats, a mural at Ardrossan, a tiling project in Kilwinning and other exciting initiatives.

There are many plans to use art along the coast and in the town centres to transform the atmosphere of the area. Our strategy ensures that we integrate public art with other aspects of our regeneration work for maximum impact. We are actively seeking lottery funding and have recently become members of Art and Business Scotland.



Pictures clockwise:
• Young people from Ardrossan Academy painting a mural
• Interpretation signage at 'Gems among the rocks', Saltcoats
• Seating in Main Street, Kilwinning
• Site for inscriptions at Saltcoats' sea wall



Riverside Business Park

Scottish Enterprise and Irvine Bay are working together to revisit the masterplan and generate a new development strategy for this important site, which currently belongs to Scottish Enterprise.

The masterplan should be complete in the next few months and Irvine Bay hopes to be involved with the continuing development of the park.

Overlooking the Bay

Over the last couple of years we have generated a lot of momentum and the projects featured in this edition of *baywatch* illustrate both the breadth and depth of what's going on. Looking ahead, I'm confident that we can expect to see results as more of our exciting initiatives are completed.

Gradually we will see new businesses move into the area as new office and industrial accommodation becomes available. Along with the changing streetscapes, town centre improvements, education projects and work throughout our communities, we have every reason to expect to benefit from the tangible impacts of regeneration.

It will take several years before some of the large scale projects are completed, but already these are having an impact. There is so much going on that can – and will – alter the way people see Irvine Bay.



Patrick Wiggins
Patrick Wiggins



Window shopping

A new look for shopfronts is being piloted in Saltcoats with a project involving three shop owners in the town centre. The idea is to improve the look and feel of the town centre through introducing comprehensive shopfront improvements. If the pilot is successful the project may be rolled out in Saltcoats and possibly introduced in the other towns.