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## Big welcome at Campbeltown for new Ardrossan ferry

Posted on May 24, 2013 by newsroom



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There she was, driving past Davaar Island, guardian to the lovely Campbeltown Loch – looking brightly spick, as she forging purposefully on for the 'wee toon'.



On her inaugural run last night, she gave Campbeltown a whole series of hoots on her way in – and the pipes of the Kintyre Schools Pipe Band responded across the water.

Berthed in the busy harbour, Davaar kept a watchful eye on her antics – from a safe distance.

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Party politics on the way back as  
more confusion reigns in Argyll  
and Bute Council (30)  
Minutes of today's meeting of  
'Concerned Councillors' Group  
(26)  
Update on SNP meeting (25)  
Argyll and Bute Council: Where  
are we now? (19)  
SNP tightens party grip on local  
councillors in further chaos (17)  
NOW – 21.00: BBC 2's 'Town'



There was a large crowd on the quayside to welcome her [out of sight to the left] – but for the record and from her stern – this was the first vehicle ashore.



Ruby, from Muasdale was enchanted.

Now 21,000, BBC 2's town with Nicholas Crane visits Oban (17)  
Big welcome at Campbeltown for new Ardrossan ferry (10)

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Linsey, Becky and Caitlin from the consistently successful Kintyre Schools Pipe Band went off to get their pipes to safety after giving the new arrival the sound of celebration and intent known across the world.



On the other side of the pier, another life was thriving and concentrating on its own business. Wondering if the breathtaking activities on the slipway sometimes ended in a splash, it didn't take long to learn that Daniel, Mark and Campbell are local aces at this gig – and it was easy to see why. Oh, to have the chance to start again.



Campbeltown was looking and feeling spectacular – compelling. Here, the glorious Picture House, a national gem and sitting on the grand sweep of the town’s long and elegant waterfront, twinkled warmly on its centenary. Visitors from the ferry can look forward to nights in a unique example of British cinema – living strongly in the 21st century.



The newly restored and reopened Royal Hotel glowed a welcome in the evening light – adding to the immediate hit of a strong, confident town that is visually stunning.





Argyll and Bute Council has done a simply wonderful job at Campbeltown. The new blocks of flats on the new road through to the harbour are very cleverly designed. With more than a nod to the scale and nature of Campbeltown's astonishingly consistent architectural style [the entire town - seriously - should be listed], they are already at home here.

What the Council needs to do now is to know when to stop, to preserve the stone facades of the buildings in the town rather than plaster them, as one has already been – and not to indulge in the awful sort of kitsch street decorations that bedevil the centre of Dunoon. It might look at a classier approach to urban flowerbeds too. The traditional approach remains every colour under the sun, all in together and all of them loud.

The new flats are sited just opposite the fabulous Aqualbrium – the curving library and swimming pool on the waterfront – and another local authority initiative – with what has to be the best view from any pool in the UK. Try it.



A minute down the road is the Victoria Hall, one of Campbeltown's centres of entertainment, almost on the harbourside – and beside Aqualbrium is a new all weather sports pitch. So here you have new – but architecturally aligned – accommodation built virtually in the town centre and seconds away from a range of activities and first class facilities.

The Mull of Kintyre Half marathon and 10k Run and the Kintyre Songwriters' Festival are both on this weekend – so head down the peninsula.

Now all we need is a mini-moto track, maybe at Machrihanish on the old RAF base – and with the great

surfing beach at Westport, the two world class golf courses and another restored grand hotel, the Ugadale, there on the outskirts of Campbeltown.

The town is not a shopping experience – that has still to come and, with the reach of its hinterland to mid Argyll – will reward well judged investment in line with what is a simply splendid town for chilling out and being active – in whatever order you like.

Who wouldn't jump on a ferry, hop on a plane from Glasgow or take a coach to get here?

And who would want to leave?



Back at the harbour, the Isle of Arran faced the loch, job well done, ready for the 07.30 out this morning.

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