

# NHS Education for Scotland

## Rural Fellowships in General Practice – Local Job Information

Supplementary Information for NHS Highland, Argyll and Bute HSCP  
Isle of Bute Rural Fellowship

Location:

*Welcome to the Isle of Bute - Fàilte gu an t-Eilean Bhòid*



When no less than National Geographic announces that The Isle of Bute is one of the National Geographic Top Ten Adventure trips, you have to take notice. "Take a hop, skip, and 90-minute jump from Glasgow to the heathered moors to the north. They offer rugged beauty, while the sandy beaches in Rothesay and the manicured gardens of Mount Stuart offer a completely different experience".

Similarly, the Victorians saw Bute as, "Most extensive and enhancing views are to be had, and embracing elevated ground in no less than seven Scottish counties. The Bays of Rothesay and Port Bannatyne, with the Kyles of Bute and Loch Striven, lie spread out like an extensive lake, which, with on the one hand the sound of Bute and on the other the majestic sweep of the Firth of Clyde from the Cloch to the Cumbrae and Garroch Head present a sea vista unsurpassed for variety and beauty. But only half the tale of loveliness has been told, for on the one hand, there are the grandly rugged peaks of Arran, and, on the other, the tamer but still magnificent hills of Dumbarton and Argyllshire with Ben Lomond crowning the lofty and picturesque range. Then at our feet are the lovely and peaceful Lochs Fad and Ascog - The town of Rothesay with its ancient castle, tapering spires and well-wooded hillsides; and smiling across the bay, the castles of Toward - old and new, with their rich background of pine-clad hill."

Bute lies in the Firth of Clyde. The only town on the island, Rothesay, is linked by two ferries to the mainland. Villages on the island include Kilchattan Bay, Kingarth and Port Bannatyne. Bute is divided in two by the Highland Boundary Fault which runs

right through the middle of the town. North of the fault, the island is hilly and largely uncultivated with extensive areas of forestry. The highest hill is Kames Hill at 267 metres. To the south of the fault, the terrain is smoother and highly cultivated although in the far south is to be found the island's most rugged terrain around Glen Callum bay. Loch Fad in the centre of the island is Bute's largest body of freshwater and runs along the fault line.

The western side of Bute is known for its beaches, many of which enjoy fine views over the Sound of Bute towards Arran and Bute's smaller satellite island Inchmarnock. The west is also home to some villages that include Straad, around St. Ninian's Bay, and Kildavanan on Ettrick Bay.



In the north, Bute is separated from the Cowal peninsula by the Kyles of Bute. The northern part of the island is sparsely populated, and the ferry terminal at Rhubodach connects the island to the mainland at Colintraive, by the smaller of the island's two ferries. The crossing is short, less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile, and takes only a few minutes. Lord Richard Attenborough had a house here for many years and described the island as 'having the unmistakable feel of home'.

Naturally there is a wide range of outdoor activities available including; sea kayaking, sailing in the world famous Kyles of Bute, seal watching at Scalpsie Bay, mountain biking, road cycling with the Bute Wheelers, trout fishing in Loch Fad or walking the West Island Way. When you have done all that you can, enjoy a gin at the Isle of Bute Distillery situated in the centre of town.



The surprisingly extensive ruins of St Blane's Church pictured below lie close to the southern tip of the [Isle of Bute](#). Most of the remains you see today, of the nave and part of the chancel, date back to the 1100s. Built in a sheltered hollow near the top of a south facing slope, its site comes complete with beautiful views south to the [Isle of Arran](#) and its outlier, Holy Island.



## Work experience:

The Rothesay fellowship offers an exciting mix of rural general practice along with gaining experience of working in a GP-led community hospital and casualty department all of which occupy the same site. The Bute Practice comprises 8 doctors, 2 ANPs and the full complement of Practice Nurses, Community Nurses, Community Mental Health Team, and Clinical Pharmacist. There is only one Practice on the island serving the needs of 6,400 patients. Many rural areas in Scotland continue to run hospitals staffed entirely by GPs; the Victoria Community Hospital in Rothesay is one of these. It is an 8-bed hospital, with a GP run 999 receiving casualty unit. It has a radiology unit but no on site lab facilities. (I-STAT near patient testing device is on-site) It accepts patients 24/7, more serious acute cases are generally triaged, stabilised and transferred to definitive care by either ferry or helicopter. The main referral centres are Inverclyde Royal in Greenock for general secondary care, Argyll and Bute Hospital in Lochgilphead for psychiatry, Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley for maternity and the Royal Sick Children's for all paediatrics. You will find the staff friendly, helpful and supportive. We are used to having medical students who give us great feedback. The doctors are enthusiastic and excited about general practice and will be keen to share their skills with you.



Rothesay Victoria Hospital

We also have another practice the Cowal Medical Practice which is based in Dunoon. It is about half the size of the Bute Practice, but it is likely that the practice will merge with another Dunoon practice creating another sizeable practice with over 7,100 patients. Even more excitingly is that this new practice will move location to a purpose built site within the Cowal Community Hospital, giving patients closer access to the services the hospital offers. The new practice will seek to be involved in providing care to the patients in Dunoon along the lines that we operate in Rothesay providing 24 hour care to the community in Dunoon. As a fellow coming to the practice, you will get an opportunity to work in both sites.

**OOH:**

In Rothesay, we have not opted out of 24-hour care. We cover the duty doctor role and the A&E department on a 24-hour basis. While we are occasionally called out of bed during the night, we ensure that we have the following 24 hours off to recover afterwards, with no scheduled duties. Being a practice of 8 doctors means over the year we do a 1 in 8 on call rota. We are aware that Fellows are expected as part of their educational programme to gain some experience in Out of Hours and Emergency Care and we would expect the Fellow to participate in the on-call rota but we would be flexible about the amount of on-call they would wish to do. Incidentally, one of our salaried GPs Dr Will Thorne is a former rural fellow having spent some time based in Cowal and attached to the Kyles of Bute Medical Centre.

**Supervision:**

One of the GP principals will provide Mentor support, but our whole team including our ANPs, Clinical pharmacist and administrators are here to make your experience as rewarding and enjoyable as possible.

**Educational opportunities:**

We hold fortnightly multidisciplinary educational meetings where we discuss Significant Events, present audits and disseminate best practice. Fellows will have the opportunity to negotiate additional experience in secondary care, remote practices and to undertake specific course activity as available. A variety of regional educational activities is available including courses such as Advanced Life Support. There are numerous visiting Consultant Clinics within the hospital including; psychiatry, paediatrics, general surgery, ophthalmology, orthopaedics, gynaecology and ENT, allowing close working and specialist interest development. Argyll and Bute has a very varied range of general practices, including rural, mainland and other island practices. The fellow would be supported to utilise opportunities available, to maximise their experience and achieve their personal education goals.

### **My Thoughts on Working on Bute — Aaron Donald**

My first view of Bute was staring across the Kyles of Bute from the nestled village of Tighnabraich. I had managed to get the Cowal Remote and Rural Fellowship post and was based there. The island looked very green and serene, but I thought it would be a nice contrast to the smaller scattered population of Kyles Medical Centre in Tighnabraich, as much of the population is centred in the town of Rothesay. A part of the fellowship we have the chance to arrange up to 4 weeks of placements in other remote or rural practices and so I arranged a week on Bute.

Arriving on Bute on the shortest ferry ride ever, there was a picturesque drive from Rhubodach to Rothesay, passing a variety of seabirds, seals and even deer. If you like boats, there was a vast selection scattered around the coastline on both sides too. Then as I continued towards Ardbeg, houses started to rise from the shoreline and grew denser into the town of Rothesay. The practice and hospital sit side by side at the top of the High Street and were easy to locate.

The practice is warm and friendly and I was initially met by the smiles of the admin

team and cleaners who, like me, were early starters. Graham, the practice manager, soon appeared and had me all set up with passwords for logging on, but first the tour. I met all the staff who were about by 9 am and had a walking tour of the practice and hospital, getting a feel for the organisation and running of the services available. I was keen to get started, so was soon seeing some of the local patients, booking in to 'on-the-day' appointments. Sick as they may have been, no patient failed to advocate the beauty of the island, the friendliness of the people or the benefits of island life. Having loved my time in A+E in Dunoon, I was keen to get stuck in to the services available here. I got my wish and by Thursday, I was sharing the on-call with one of the GPs and got a taste of triage skills. The on-call doctor doesn't have any prebooked appointments and helps mop up the extras as needed as well as covering the A+E. It was a good chance to put in place the medicine we often miss in urban practice.

The satisfaction of recognising what is going on and then treating, stabilising or arranging transfer for the patients to appropriate and potentially life saving treatment is very rewarding. Certainly, that is my opinion anyway.

We even have our own local community hospital and I got to make use of this too, admitting one man for some extra TLC to get him back on his feet after a flare up of his heart failure. Many of the patients prefer to stay on the island, so it offers a unique opportunity to really offer patient centred care in a way not available in many other places in Scotland these days.

If it is not yet clear how much I enjoyed myself on Bute from my comments above, suffice to say I am now working on Bute covering for a maternity post for 10 months. When the job came up and the practice asked if I was interested, how could I say anything but yes!

Now, perhaps, you are being asked the same question.

Aaron Donald

## In Summary

We would love you to phone for a chat about what it is like to live and work in Bute, and what a great opportunity a Rural Fellowship post on Bute gives.

## Contacts

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Dr Scott Samuel, GP & lead Mentor, The Bute Practice ([scott.samuel@nhs.scot](mailto:scott.samuel@nhs.scot))

Useful Websites:

[www.visitbute.com](http://www.visitbute.com)

[www.thebutepractice.co.uk](http://www.thebutepractice.co.uk)

[www.mountstuart.com](http://www.mountstuart.com)

[www.calmac.co.uk](http://www.calmac.co.uk)

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