

PRESS CUTTING SERVICE

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Variety of walks in the festival

ALLSEASONS at the Meadows at Galston is part of this year's Irvine Valley Walking Festival.

The ecological tourism development and nature reserve on the West Coast of Scotland will host walk 14 on the last day of the festival on May 13.

This short walk, graded 'easy', starts at 2pm and will include commentary on the many birds that make their home at the site and a chance to watch for wildlife along the way. Refreshments will be provided at the end.

The site is home to over 40 species of birds, both endemic and migratory, and has five RSPB red list (priority species of conservation concern) and 14 amber list (priority species of medium concern).

Allseasons at the Meadows plans to build a sympathetic and ecologically friendly hotel, self catering and marina leisure complex on the site around the 25 acre man-made loch. This tourism development will be of appeal to domestic and overseas visitors who will be able to visit the site to walk, cycle, dine and shop.

The site's biodiversity increases year on year and the company encourages visitors with a keen interest in nature and wildlife to visit. They have been recording the annual activities and habits of the many species over the years. A wildlife diary will soon also be available to web visitors when the company

launches their new website www.allseasonsscotland.com, which will include regular wildlife news and sightings.

Owner of Allseasons, Andrew Malcolm, said: "We've been participating in the walking festival since it began. We have always been keen to welcome visitors to the site to share in its natural beauty and the walking festival is an excellent event for the local community and visitors to get involved. Over the years, when we have spoken to visitors we have been pleased and encouraged to find some of them have travelled from all over the UK annually to participate in the event."

May Anderson, one of the event's organisers, added: "I think what makes the walking festival so popular is that we have tremendous support from local landowners to allow the public to walk some really stunning parts of this region that in some cases visitors are rarely available able to see. We have a wealth of history, scenery and wildlife in this part of the world and it's really important that people are able to enjoy it and experience it."

Irvine Valley Regeneration Partnership's 5th Walking Festival is on the weekend May 11-13. As well as a full programme of walks, covering differing lengths and terrain, a number of additional events are planned. For details call 01560 322966 or visit www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/ivrp/walkingfestival.htm