working really hard in tackling all challenges that lie ahead. We are trying to make community leaders within our towns. They are a huge asset to our community. Our Foodbank has also really taken off and we are and is based in the town's Springvale Street. Neil Bibby, Labour MSP for West Scotland, explained the positive impact the gym is having on the local community.

He said: "I was delighted to attend the IMC Project in Saltcoats along with Councillor Jimmy Millar and significant impact it is having in the area and the support it is giving local young people.

"There is often concerns raised about kids hanging around the streets but we need to ensure that young people are supported and are able to participate in activities they enjoy in their community - and this people exercise, be trained in healthier lifestyles and learn the discipline that comes with competitive sport.

"The work the project is doing to support people in need with food hampers also demonstrates a huge contribution to the community."

Arran conservation zone is a great success for Scotland and beyond

A NEW study has found a four-fold increase in the number of Lobsters and Scallops around the south coast of the Isle of Arran.

The peer reviewed study from the University of York reports how some species have increased by nearly 400% since the community-backed No Take Zone (NTZ) project was established at Lamlash Bay in 2008.

The paper, which was released last week reports on the positive impact the NTZ – which was the first of its kind in Scotland - and the wider-ranging South Arran Marine Protection Area has had on marine ecosystems in the Firth of Clyde.

A resident at Lamlash Bay. Credit: Howard Wood

MSP, Kenneth Gibson, who was instrumental in the designation of the Lamlash Bay NTZ and the South Arran MPA, said: "I am absolutely delighted that the No Take Zone has been such an outstanding success. The community on Arran should be very proud of their achievements over the last decade to promote marine conservation. This study proves the potential of effective marine management and I will be pressing the Scottish Government to seriously consider the creation of more NTZs as part of their marine management plans."

Whilst the impact of the conservation efforts in Arran are being celebrated here, the scheme is also being heralded for its impact on marine protection globally.

"Arran's conservation success has been recognised internationally and is inspiring greater involvement of local communities around the UK and further afield," said Dr Bryce Stewart from York's Department of Environment and Geography. "Evidence from Lamlash Bay has supported the development of strong protection for marine protected areas, at times seeing off lobbyist efforts to weaken management.

Local communities around the UK have looked at the story unfolding in Lamlash Bay and - like COAST - have decided to take the destiny of their coastal waters into their own hands."