

VSAS Survey Report: January 2022

Summary

Two surveys were carried out from the deck of the Ardrossan to Brodick crossing this month. Data were collected to European Seabirds at Sea (ESAS) standards, by trained volunteers, using the JNCC VSAS app to digitally capture data in real time.

A further survey scheduled for the 9th January from Kennacraig to Islay was cancelled due to Covid-19.

Routes

Ardrossan to Brodick, 8th January 2022

A total of 52 observations were made of 8 seabird species (and three 'species groups' where identification could not be made to species level) during dedicated survey effort. No marine mammals were observed. Numbers of observations and total numbers of birds recorded are presented below (Table 1).

Table 1. Numbers of observations and totals recorded per species during the Ardrossan to Brodick survey on 8th January 2022

Species	Number of observations	Total birds observed
Kittiwake	11	26
Guillemot	5	5
Razorbill	7	11
Guillemot/razorbill	6	7
Shag	1	1
Common gull	3	8
Small gull sp	1	1
Great black-backed gull	7	7
Herring gull	8	8
Large gull sp.	2	2
Gannet	1	2

Distribution maps

Figures 1 to 4 show the distributions of all seabird species recorded during the survey.

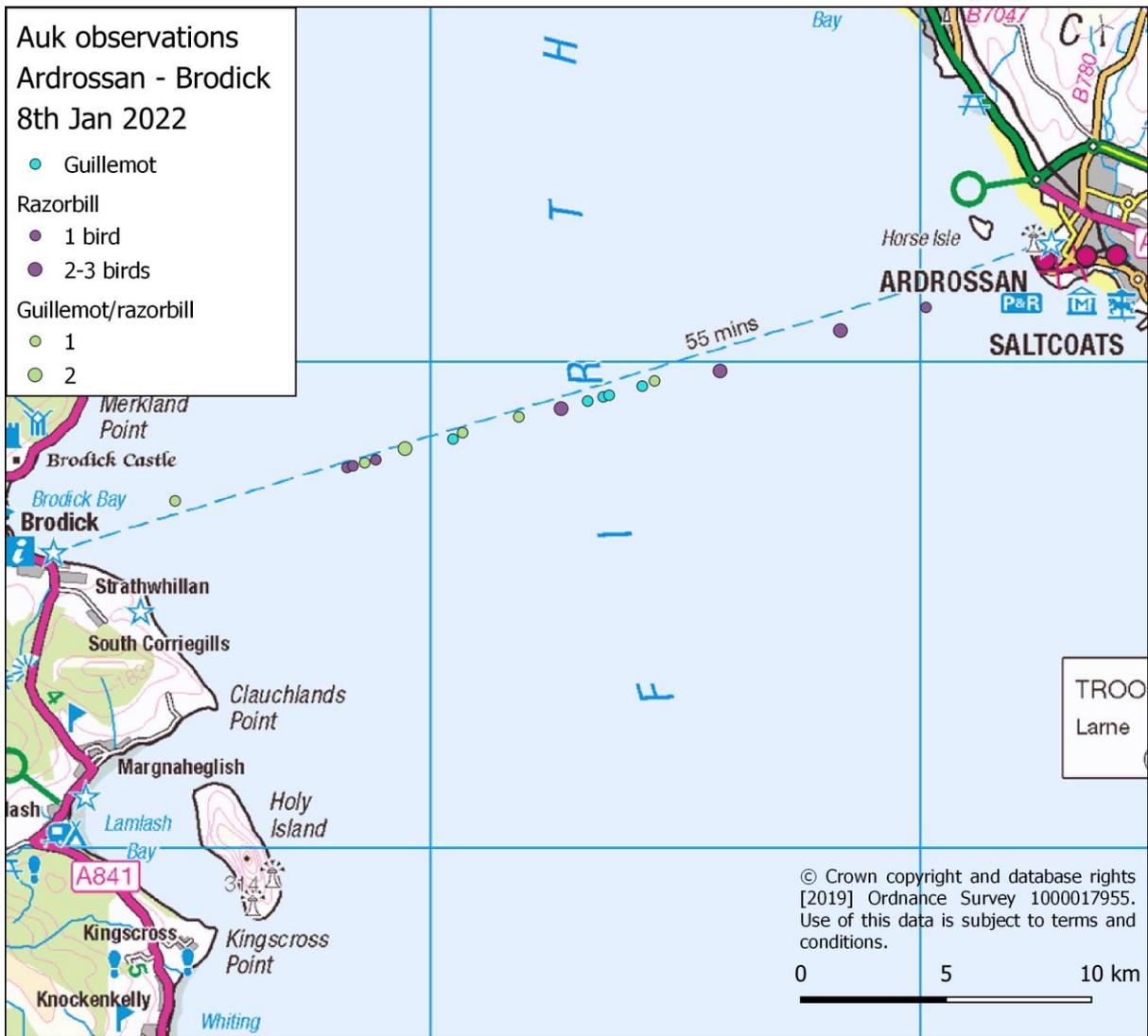


Fig 1. Auk observations recorded during the Ardrossan to Brodick survey, 8th January 2022

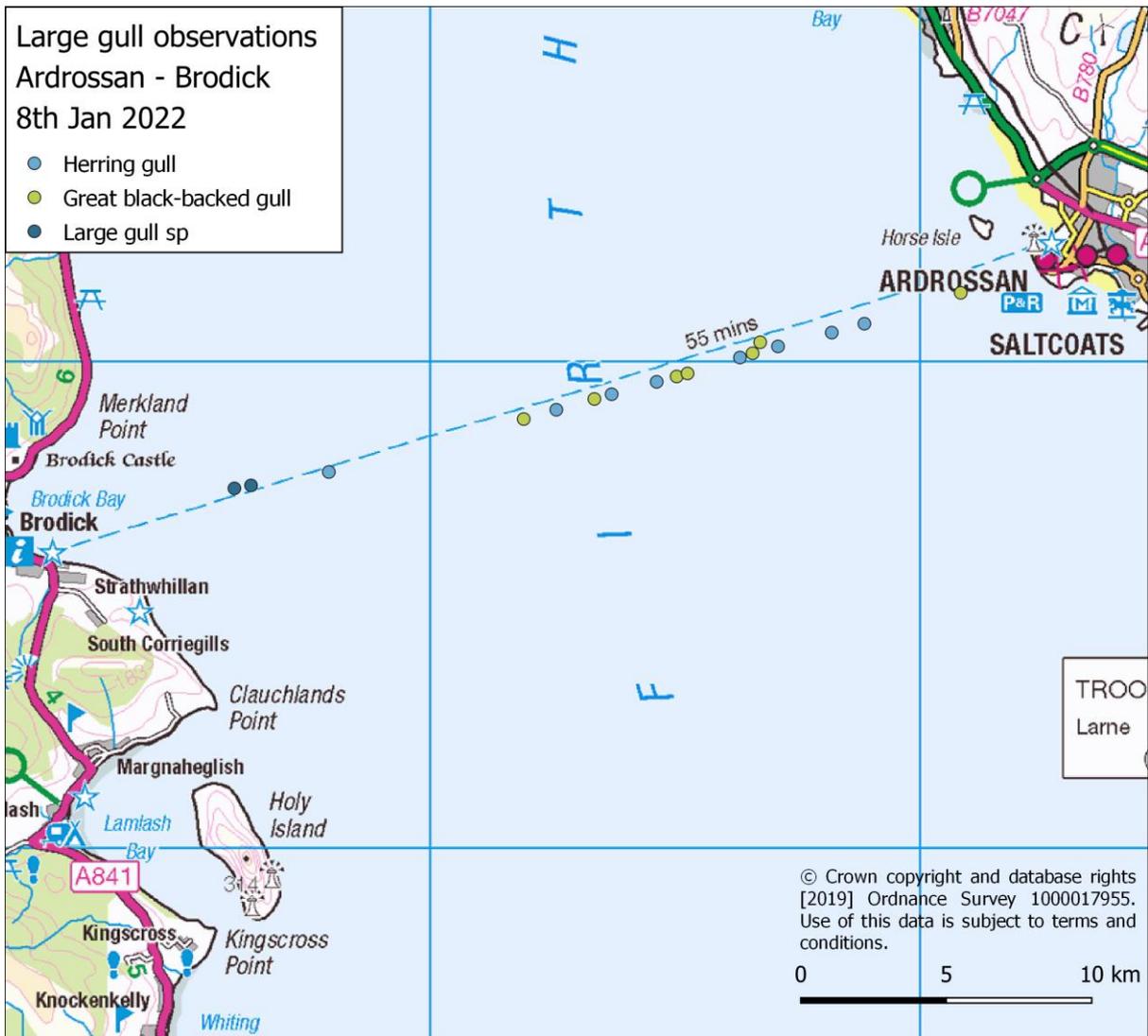


Fig 2. Large gull observations recorded during the Ardrossan to Brodick survey, 8th January 2022

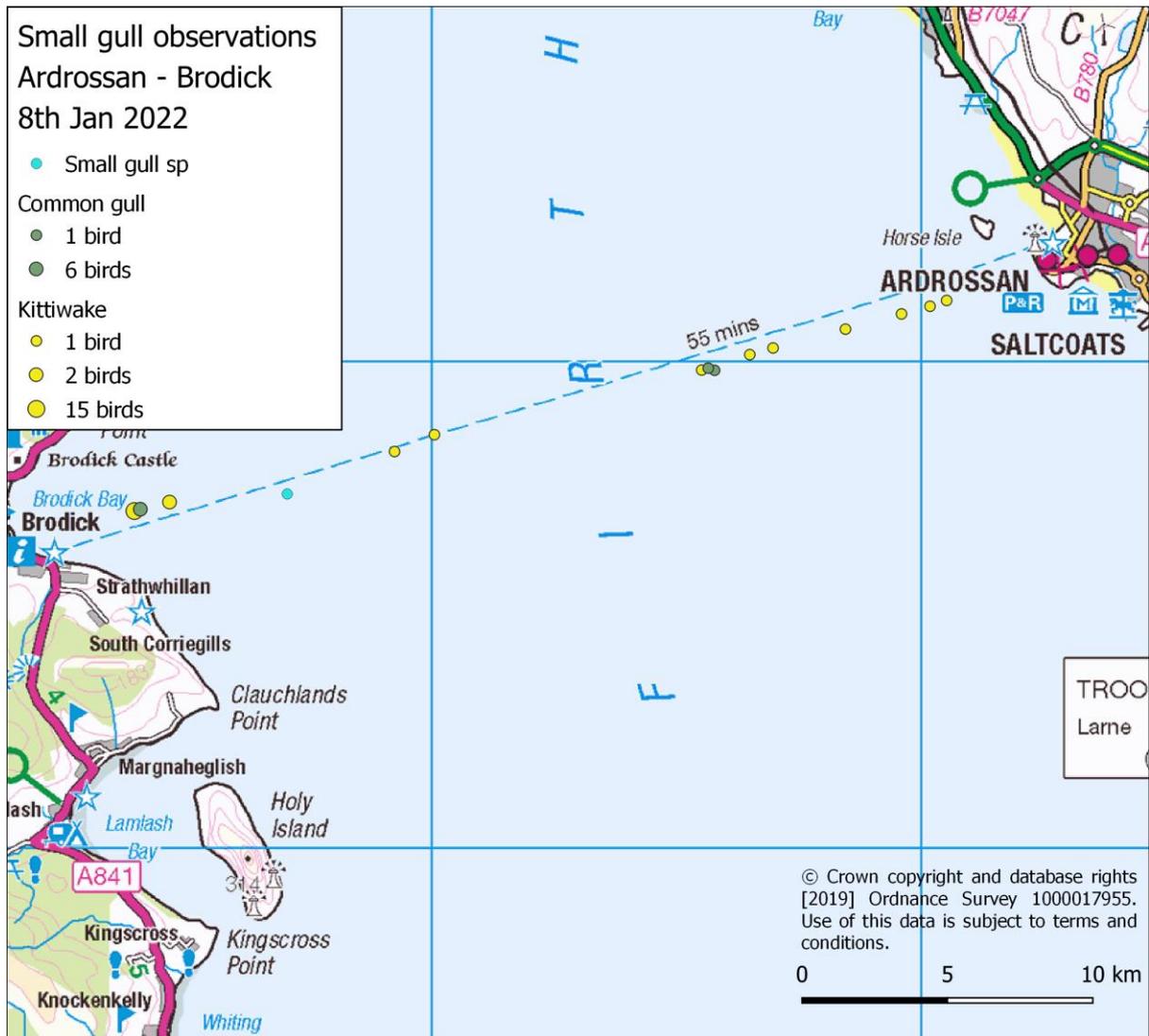


Fig 3. Small gull observations recorded during the Ardrossan to Brodick survey, 8th January 2022



Fig 4. Shag and gannet observations recorded during the Ardrossan to Brodick survey, 8th January 2022

Ardrossan to Brodick, 22nd January 2022

A total of 94 observations were made of 7 seabird species (and two ‘species groups’ where identification could not be made to species level) and two cetacean species during dedicated survey effort. Numbers of observations and total numbers of animals recorded are presented below (Table 2).

Table 2. Numbers of observations and totals recorded per species during the Ardrossan to Brodick survey on 22nd January 2022

Species	Number of observations	Total animals observed
Black guillemot	3	4
Guillemot	8	9
Razorbill	3	5
Guillemot/razorbill	10	10
Shag	2	2
Kittiwake	14	21

Great black-backed gull	7	7
Herring gull	31	43
Large gull sp.	13	17
Harbour porpoise	2	2
Bottlenose dolphin	1	5

Distribution maps

Figures 5 to 8 show the distributions of all seabird and cetacean species recorded during the survey.

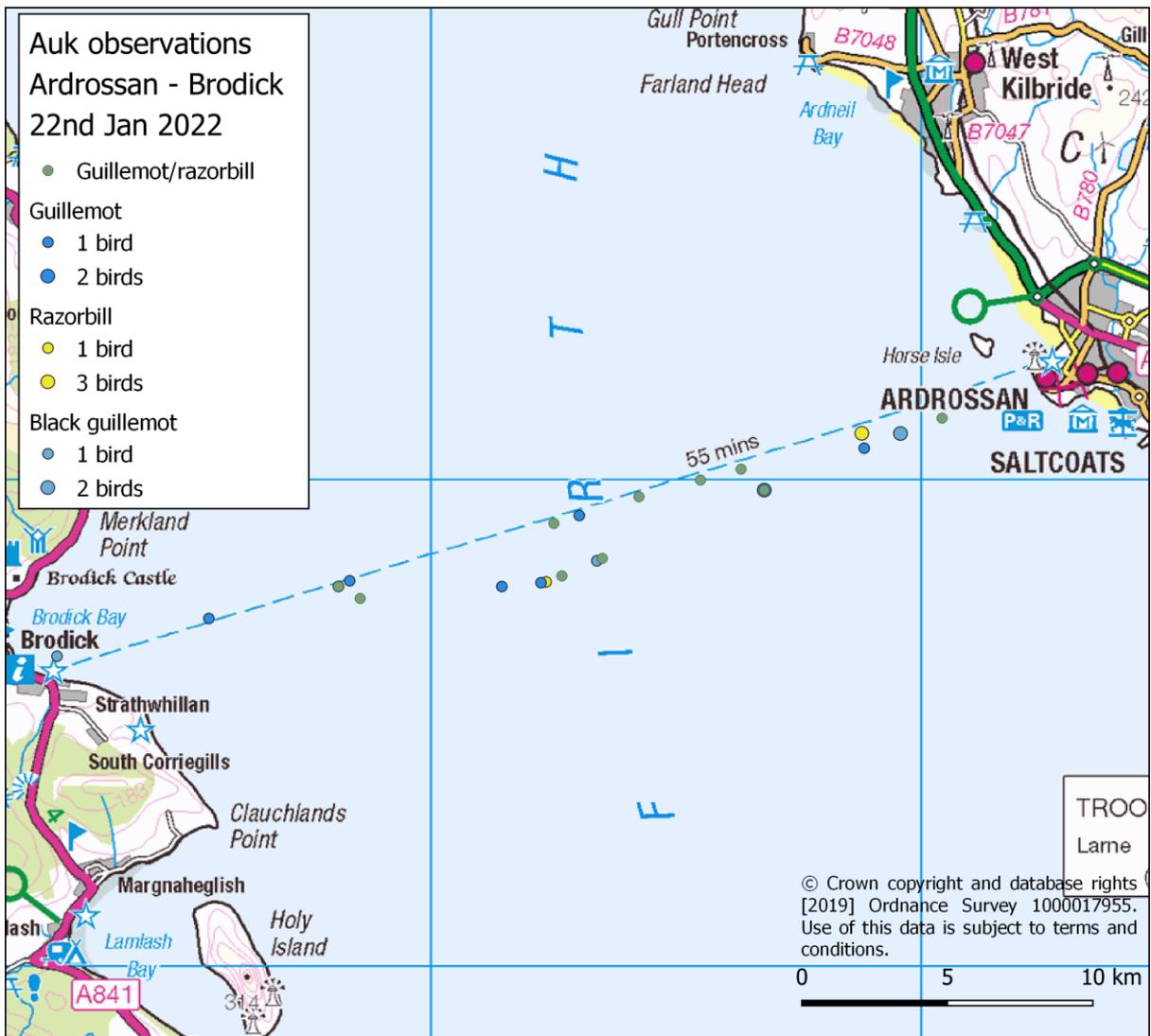


Fig 5. Auk observations recorded during the Ardrrossan to Brodick survey, 22nd January 2022

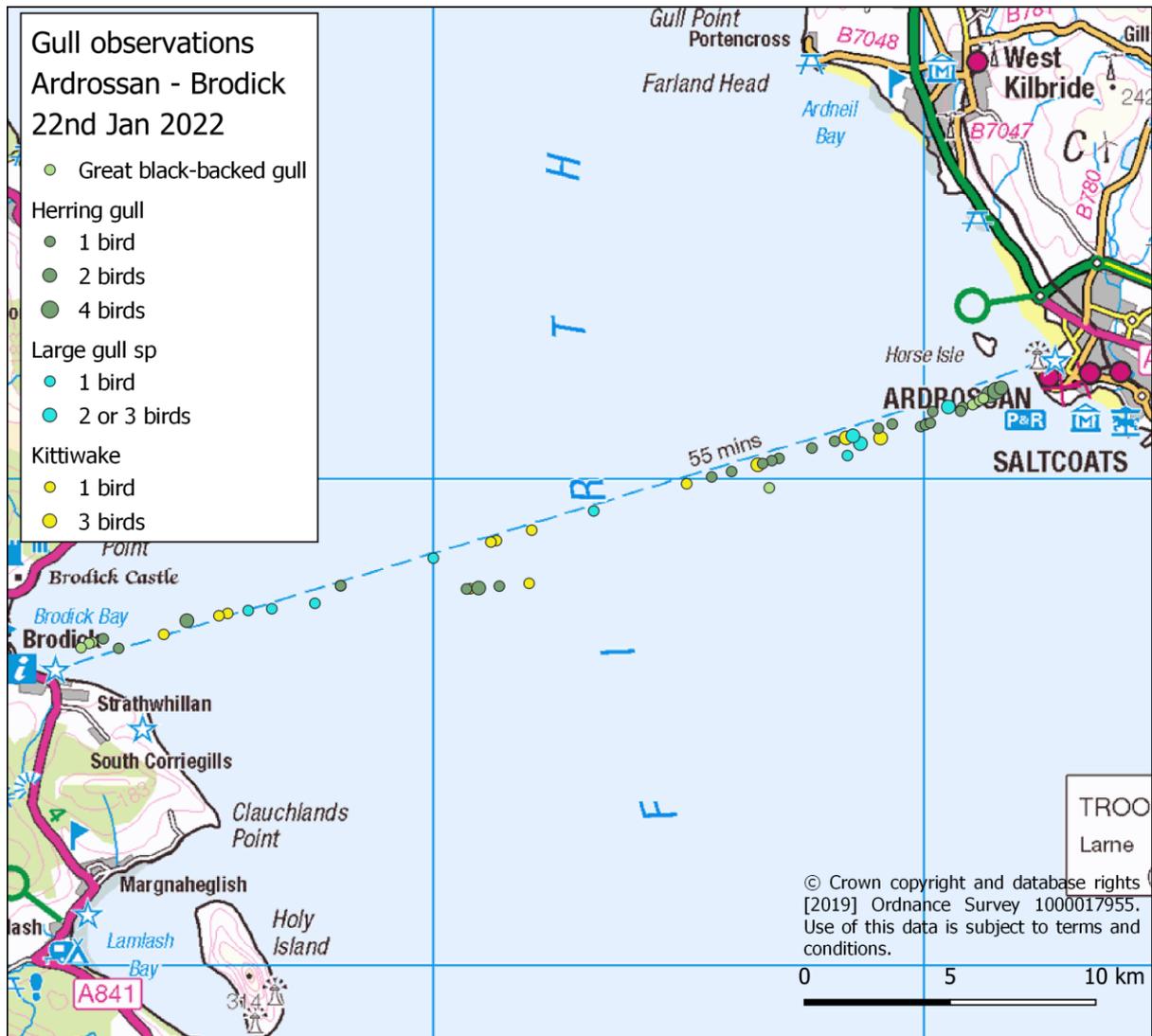


Fig 6. Gull observations recorded during the Ardrrossan to Brodick survey, 22nd January 2022

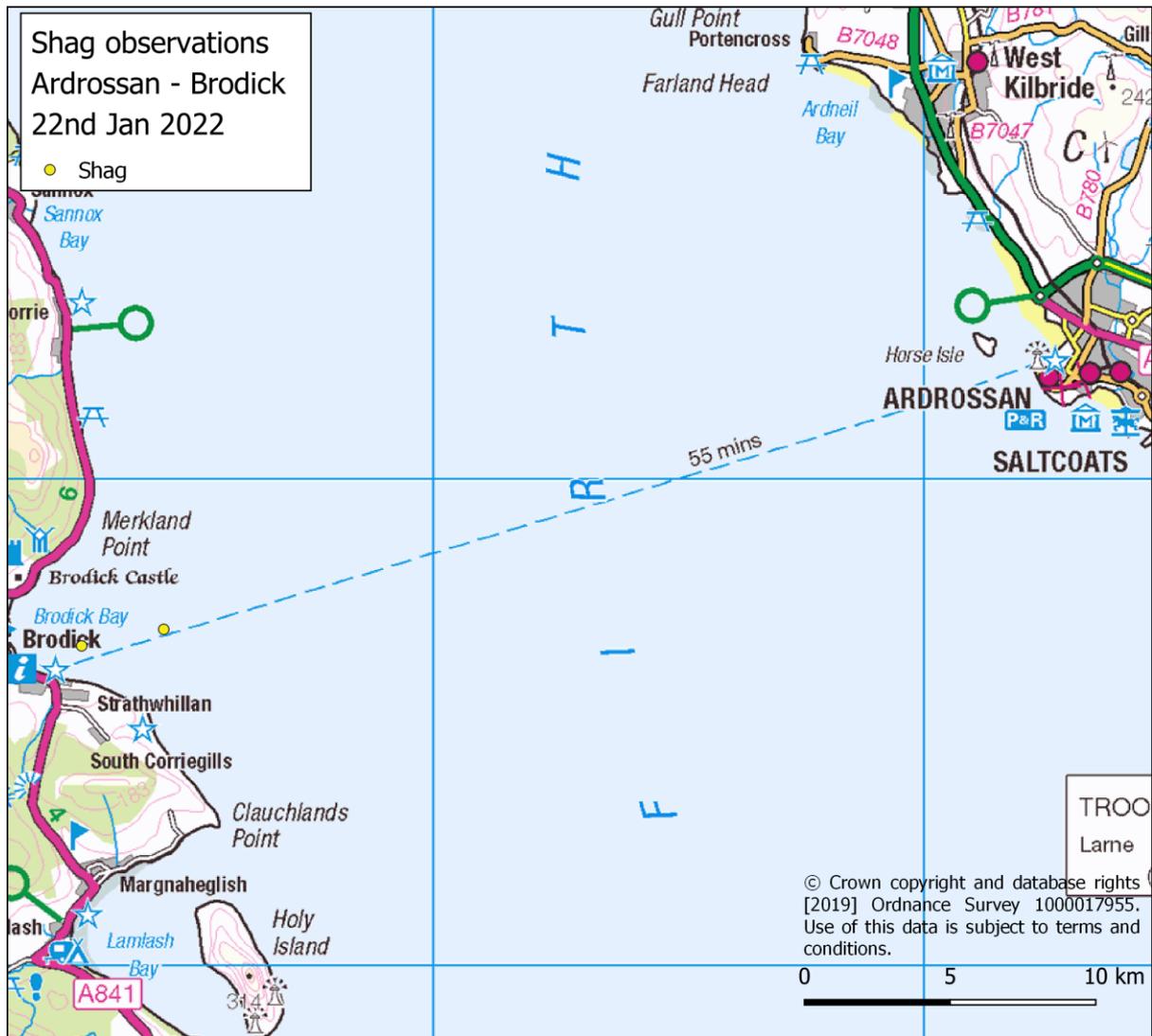


Fig 7. Shag observations recorded during the Ardsrossan to Brodick survey, 22nd January 2022

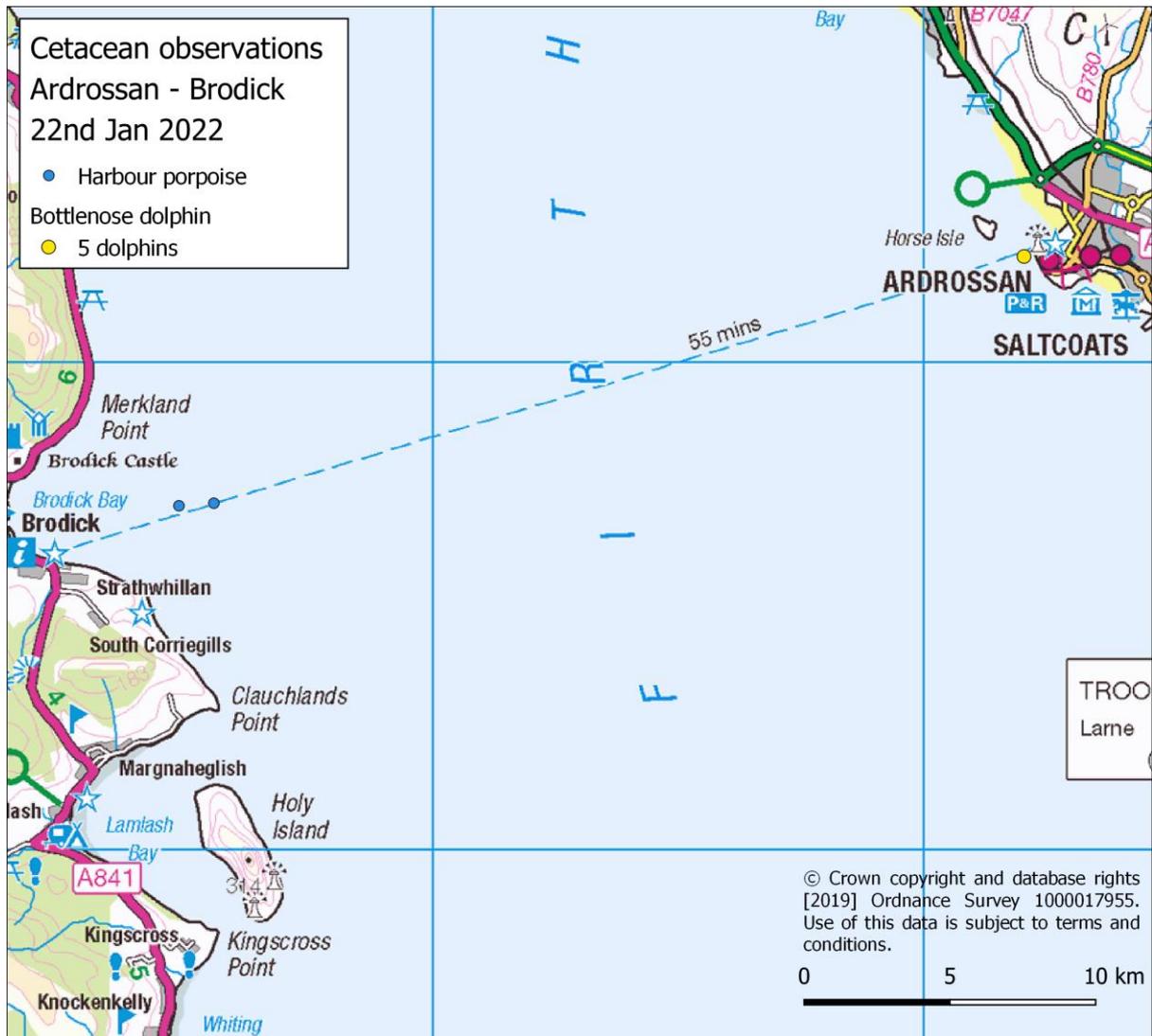


Fig 8. Cetacean observations recorded during the Ardrrossan to Brodick survey, 22nd January 2022

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the volunteers who gave up their time to take part in this month's survey – we hope this report serves as a useful reminder of your time on board! We would also like to thank the Captain and crew of the ferries for welcoming the survey teams on board, and Klare Chamberlain and Ruth Rice at CalMac who helped with access and other arrangements.