



T-Birds help stack Hope Kitchen's shelves

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All hands on deck



Marine duo help diesel dames stay the course

• See page 11 for more

Colonsay shop sale



Couple at centre of internet dress debate selling up

• See page 4 for more

The trolley of treats won by Pauline MacLennan from Dunollie. Photograph: Kathie Griffiths



Dunollie mum is quids in thanks to Tesco competition

Dental worker Pauline MacLennan has lots to smile about after winning The Oban Times' trolley dash competition, courtesy of Oban's Tesco supermarket.

She enjoyed her spending spree this week, when reporter Kathie Griffiths caught up on Monday.

For the full story, turn to page nine.

YOURSTORY

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SSEN ACCUSED OF 'GREEN WASHING'

Energy giant SSEN has been accused of 'green-washing at its worst', writes Kathie Griffiths.

The claim was made during Glenorchy & Innishail Community Council's Zoom meeting discussing plans for a new woodland between Cladich and Dalmally. Planting of trees in the woodland near Achlian would be paid for by the power network company behind controversial plans for a new overhead line through the scenic area.

Proposals, at a pre-planning application stage, to create the new wood of more than 245.24 hectares on the eastern shore of Loch Awe are coming from Scottish Woodlands Ltd.

Letters and a map from the company were sent out to stakeholders in December asking them to consider

the project and to raise any issues so they could be appropriately addressed. The proposal sets out that planting the new conifers – mainly Sitka spruce to fit in with producing a sustainable source of timber – 'will be funded by SSE to replace the trees felled in surrounding properties for the creation of their new transmission line (LT000040). A new road will also be built by SSE to allow the construction of the transmission line,' the letter says. And open ground around the SSE transmission line will be landscaped. SSEN's hopes for an access track through the woodland came up on the agenda during discussions about the planting project.

Farmer Jon Strickland told this month's community council meeting: 'This is green-washing at its worst.'

The Achlian planting would be to provide replacement planting for trees felled on SSEN's Inveraray to Crossaig project, which is already in construction, but does not include the compensatory planting for the Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275 kV project.

Compensatory planting for the Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275 kV project will be delivered through other woodland creation planting schemes within the Argyll and Bute Council area.

Long-running plans for more pylons have also triggered a No More Pylons Dalmally campaign.

Although community councillors are not opposed to the idea of the new woodland, they will be writing to Scottish Woodlands Ltd to make them 'very aware'

Continued on page 10.

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OT

Homeless man jailed after spitting in hospital and threatening to kill police

A homeless man has been jailed for spitting and being abusive in Oban's hospital, after he refused to leave A&E early one morning.

Krzysztof Kranz, 28, of no fixed abode, pleaded guilty to behaving in a threatening or abusive manner, repeatedly shouting, swearing and spitting, at the Lorn & Islands

General Hospital and Oban Police Station, on November 3, 2021.

Procurator fiscal James Dunbar told Oban Sheriff Court on January 12: 'At around 12.40 in the morning, the accused was found sleeping in the door of commercial premises in Oban by a member of the public. He

was found shivering. He was taken to hospital.

'Around 3.30am the same morning, police officers were contacted by A&E. The accused was refusing to leave the department. The accused shouted and swore at them.'

Handcuffs and a spit hood were applied to Kranz, Mr Dunbar said, and he was put

into the back of a police vehicle, where he continued to spit, shout, and swear. Later, in a police cell, Kranz 'uttered a threat to kill police officers'.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes asked Kranz: 'Is there anything you would like to say about this incident?'

Kranz replied: 'I was under the influence of alcohol and

it was a while ago, so I do not remember much. I will just wait for you to give me a sentence.'

Sentencing, Sheriff Hughes told Kranz: 'You have a significant record. It is clear there is a real problem when you are dealing with emergency services.'

'Having regard to your

record and the nature of this offence, I can see no alternative but a prison sentence.

'The sentence would have been 10 months' imprisonment, but since you pleaded early and removed a need for a trial, that sentence will be reduced to 27 weeks, and that will be backdated to 4 November.'

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STOP COVID-19 HANGING AROUND

Islay offshore wind farm could power every home in Scotland

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

ScottishPower has won the seabed rights to develop its first offshore windfarm in Scottish waters, off the west coast of Islay, that could power almost every home in Scotland.

On Monday the Crown Estates' ScotWind Leasing programme, which leases areas of the seabed around Scotland for wind farm developments, awarded rights to 17 renewable projects which will cover over 7,000km² of Scottish waters, and bring £700 million in option fees to the Scottish Government for public spending.

'This is just the first stage of the long process these projects will have to go through before we see turbines going into the water, as the projects evolve through consenting, financing, and planning stages,' the Crown Estates said.

Announcing its successful bid for an Islay offshore windfarm, ScottishPower said: 'The 2GW MachairWind project will make a significant contribution to tackling the climate emergency and achieving net zero,' the Glasgow-based energy company said, 'with the potential to generate enough clean electricity to power more than 2.3 million homes - almost every home in Scotland.'

Keith Anderson, CEO of ScottishPower, said: 'Offshore wind is set to become the backbone of the UK's energy mix



ScottishPower's windfarm off the coast of Islay.

and will do the heavy lifting as we ramp up the production of clean electricity on the journey to net zero.

'Our Islay project will play an important part in that and make the best use of the region's fantastic natural resources to help power the UK's transition from fossil fuels to renewables and a better future, quicker.'

'It will also help deliver investment, support jobs and boost supply chains - opening up immense opportunities for businesses and institutions across the region and the country - who can register their interest on our online portal now.'

As well as the Islay project, ScottishPower - in partnership with Shell - has been awarded the seabed rights to develop two floating windfarms off the east and north-east coasts of Scotland. At 2GW and 3GW respectively, these will be among the first large-scale floating windfarms in the world.

Delaying harbour authority is 'in no one's interest', says OCHDA

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Extensive delays developing a new harbour authority for Oban is in no one's interest and could jeopardise safety, it has been warned.

The warning comes as Oban Bay Management Group backed council plans for a municipal port for the town.

The move has effectively stopped development of an independent trust for the immediate future, according to OCHDA (Oban Community Harbour Development Association).

The association will discuss what happens next at its AGM on Tuesday January 25 but will also be debating its own future. OCHDA was set up in 2019 to explore and develop proposals for a community-run port.

POCHDA chairman John

Delays in developing a new harbour authority could jeopardise safety, says OCHDA.



MacAlister said: 'OCHDA still believes that Oban needs a trust port with the sole focus of its work being Oban harbour, a view which is shared by the majority of the Oban Bay Management Group (OBMG). However, in order to help get the new harbour authority up and running, and bring

greater safety to water users in Oban Bay, we will work with Argyll and Bute Council to help establish the municipal port as efficiently as possible while also ensuring that the trust port project continues to be an integral part of the process.'

After three years' work by

the association, a proposal for a trust port was rejected by Argyll and Bute's Harbour Board in December 2021 and instead a decision made to promote the development of a municipal harbour authority for Oban.

OCHDA's case had included new analysis of shipping in the bay, detailed financial plans, public consultation over proposed harbour limits and arrangements for the management oversight of the trust port, showing it would all be achievable probably in time for the 2023 sailing season.

OCHDA argued a trust port would be affordable by generating income for the council and would be sustainable benefitting the harbour and the town but their proposal relied on leasing some of the council's North Pier assets. Although that was previously

agreed by the Harbour Board, they changed their mind although there is an intention to still develop a community-run port at some stage.

At last week's OBMG meeting, members noted OCHDA's trust port proposal could not progress without leasing North Pier assets so endorsed the municipal port plan.

OCHDA said council officers could not provide any details of timescale, funding, existing and future jurisdictions, or governance and project management aspects of the proposal but committed to having all those details in March.

OBMG has recognised positive support from all stakeholders would facilitate speedy establishment of a new harbour authority and suggested it should be built into the council's planning and governance arrangements.

Oban patients allowed up to two visitors

Relaxed restrictions means up to two visitors can now visit patients at Oban's hospital.

Lorn and Isles Hospital has been moved to level one after only essential visiting was previously allowed. Belford Hospital in Fort William and New Craigs Hospital in Inverness are also in level one, while Raigmore remains at essential visiting only.

Katherine Sutton, NHS Highland's chief officer (acute), said: 'The importance of visiting cannot be overstated, bringing comfort to both those receiving visitors and to those visiting.'

'We know just how difficult it is for everyone involved when visiting restrictions are put in place and I am pleased that we have been able to move these hospitals back to level one.'

'I must stress, however, that the risk of Covid cannot be ignored. We are taking a cautious approach and would also ask, as per national guidance, that visitors take an LFD test before coming into any of our hospitals and only visit if the test is negative.'

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Couple behind #The Dress selling share in island shop

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

The couple behind 'the dress that broke the internet' are selling a majority share of Colonsay's only shop, but any potential buyers on the island are going to the front of the queue.

Colonsay General Store in Scalasaig, styled 'The Best Wee Shop in the Hebrides', has had five owners since the 1960s – the most recent being Keir and Grace Johnston who took over in 2012.

It's been an eventful decade for the couple, whose wedding in the Colonsay Hotel in 2015 sparked 'the world's most famous dress' viral internet sensation, titled #TheDress, that 'divided the planet' over whether it was white and gold or blue and black.

Keir, director of Colonsay's annual music festival Ceòl Cholasas, announced on the Colonsay

Community Noticeboard on January 11: 'April will mark 10 years since I took over the reins of Colonsay Shop. It was never my intention to be its guardian long term, so this anniversary seems a good time to move on to something else.'

'I will therefore now be actively looking to sell my share

'It had been tearing the community apart – we were losing our minds.'

of the business (60 per cent), with any purchaser forming a partnership with the remaining stakeholders. The other partners are also potentially interested in selling, meaning 100 per cent of the business could be purchased.

'I thought best to announce this here first in case there is any initial interest locally.'

Keir's post attracted its own sensational number of tributes. 'You should be very very proud of yourself, of what you've achieved, and of what you've done for locals and visitors alike over the years, and especially throughout the pandemic,' wrote one.

'You will be a big miss,' wrote a second. Many more wished them good luck for the future.

Thanking everyone, Keir replied: 'I've actually been open to selling for the last six years or so and nothing has come of it, so I doubt anything will happen quickly. You may be stuck with me for a while yet!'

Keir and Grace shot to fame a week before their wedding in February 2015, when Grace's mother Cecilia was in Chester choosing what to wear, and sent Grace three photographs of three dresses.

'I said: "So which one is it? Which one do you like the

best?" Grace explained to a US audience of 4.4 million on The Ellen DeGeneres Show, to which her mother replied: "The third one."

'I said: "Oh, the white and gold one?" And she said: "No, the blue and black one."

'I said: "No mum, that's white and gold. If you think it's blue and black you need to go to the doctors." So we had a bit of a row.'

Keir, a 'founding member of Team Blue and Black', asked his dad next door what colour it was. 'He said: "White and gold." I thought they were playing a trick on me.'

Caitlin McNeill, the director of the Colonsay Community Development Company who first uploaded the image online, said: 'It had been tearing the community apart – we were losing our minds. I posted it on Tumblr.'

'The rest is internet history.'

Man threatens Oban Times staff

A man has pleaded guilty to alarming staff at The Oban Times by sending threatening emails.

Appearing at Oban Sheriff Court on Wednesday January 12, Kevin Hobbs, 33, of 69 West Princess Street, Helensburgh, admitted causing fear and alarm in Oban Times staff by emailing threatening and abusive remarks to a newspaper mailbox between April 2 and June 3 2021.

Sheriff Patrick Hughes deferred sentence until February 23 for reports, and ordered Hobbs not to contact The Oban Times by telephone or email, or approach any members of staff.

Medivac sparks lifeboat launch

Oban's lifeboat crew have helped ambulance personnel rescue a casualty from Mull.

The Mora Edith MacDonald was called on to help with a night medivac from Craignure on Thursday January 13.

The lifeboat left the station with two paramedics onboard shortly after 9pm and made best speed over

to Mull where an ambulance was waiting to transfer the person needing help.

It was 10.40pm when the lifeboat made it back to Oban's linkspan where the town's coastguard rescue team helped move the casualty to a waiting ambulance.

Oban train office – open as usual

Ticket office opening hours at ScotRail stations in and around Oban have escaped proposed changes.

The train provider says the changes are all part of a review following the impact of the pandemic. A public consultation is now under way.

Under the review, no staff will lose jobs and neither will there be change to the number or frequency of trains calling at any stations.

Before the pandemic, customers were increasingly using online options or ticket vending machines, rather than ticket offices, with the pandemic quickening that pace of change.

To see proposed changes go to www.scotrail.co.uk/scotrail-ticket-office-consultation.

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Endangered DiCaprio tree has its roots in Lismore

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Lismore-linked Lorna MacKinnon is among Kew scientists who have named an endangered tree after Hollywood heartthrob Leonardo DiCaprio.

The DiCaprio tree, that only grows in the Cameroon forest, is the first plant new to science to be officially named by scientists at the Royal Botanic Gardens this year.

It was named in a paper published in the scientific journal PeerJ and botanist Lorna, whose family on Lismore goes back generations, is excited to be one of its co-authors.

Her involvement in presenting the tree as new to scientists was congratulated by island friends in a post on the Isle of Lismore Community Noticeboard Facebook page.

The tree – official name



Botanist Lorna MacKinnon 'collected' the DiCaprio tree from Cameroon back in 2008.

Uvariopsis dicaprio – which has glossy yellow flowers growing from its trunk, was named after the famous actor DiCaprio to honour his help in saving a rainforest from logging.

The small evergreen was first spotted by Lorna 15 years ago in a remote tropical forest while

working on a six-month research project. The forest makes up one half of the Yabassi Key Biodiversity Area, home to the world's only known chimps to crack nuts and fish for termites.

Plans to open up huge parts of that forest for logging caught DiCaprio's attention and he took to social media to save it.

In August 2020, after an outcry also from scientists, conservations and locals, the President of Cameroon cancelled permission to log there.

It was during one of last year's lockdowns that the tree sample, collected by Lorna on her first job as a botanist after graduating, was picked up as something new by a team at Kew who were working on tropical African plants and identified it as something new and not named.

'It's just a co-incidence I happen to be working at Kew now!' said Lorna, whose Lismore roots go back to her grandparents Bessie Miller and Alasdair MacKinnon and whose family still have a home there.

The part of the Ebo Forest where the DiCaprio tree was found has still not achieved protected status so it and lots of other still-to-be-seen plants

could still be under threat, said Lorna, adding: 'Protected status still hasn't been confirmed but the revoking of the logging concession is a very significant improvement to the forest's prospects. The involvement of Leonardo DiCaprio in raising international awareness was greatly appreciated by scientists and conservationists fighting to protect the area but locals also played a massive part.

'If the area was to be damaged, we could lose many plants before we get to know about them.

'There have been other trees of the DiCaprio species observed in the area but not many so it is classed as critically-endangered – a single event could wipe it out,' said Lorna who began work at Kew last May and hopes to be back on Lismore in the spring.

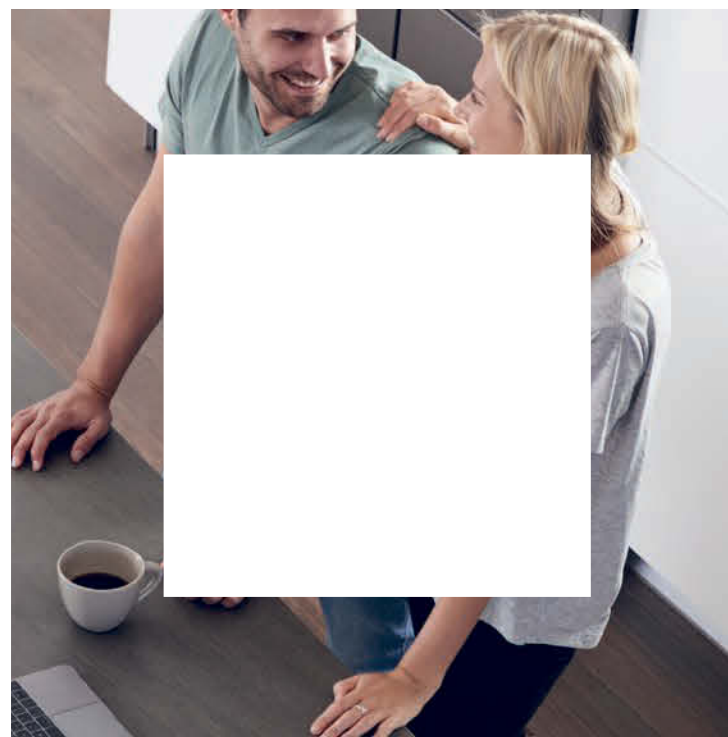
'Lismore definitely gave me

an appreciation of the natural world' from a young age,' she added.

In Cameroon in 2008, Lorna spent four weeks at a time out in the forest: 'It was hot but not oppressive because it was a high altitude. Also there wasn't much sun exposure in the forest so it was a good environment for Scottish people!'

Her task with the Ebo Forest Research Project was, with great care, to collect samples of any plants with fruit or flowers. The collected material was quickly pressed in newspaper and between card with details and notes made on anything from a description of its location to colour, fragrance and texture. Sometimes, only photographs were taken.

If all goes to plan, Lorna's next mission will be a research trip to Madagascar to study its grasses.



Three Square Kitchen Design

Kitchens Designed for Food and Life

Coming 2022

Mums give up trying to catch U22 bus passes

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

The Scottish Government's new free bus passes for young people under the age of 22 has been vaunted by local SNP MPs and MSPs, but Argyll mums are giving up applying for their youngsters, blaming 'unbelievably tedious and frustrating hoops'.

The First Minister's announcement that all under-22s in Scotland can access for free bus travel from Monday January 31, in an SNP commitment agreed with the Scottish Greens, was welcomed by all political parties.

From Monday January 10 young people aged five to 21 years old or their guardians have been able apply for their new or replacement National Entitlement Card (NEC) or Young Scot NEC in order to

access the free bus scheme. Politicians from across the board praised the move and encouraged young people in their constituencies to apply.

However, parents are now complaining of the difficulties in applying for the card.

'It's such a hassle to apply that I can't help wondering if people will be put off.'

One computer savvy mum from North Connel, helping her daughter apply, cursed 'unbelievably tedious and frustrating hoops'.

'It is such a hassle to apply for it that I can't help wondering if people will be put off,' she said.

'I spent nearly three hours trying to get the card for my

teenage daughter; registering for myscotgov.org, finding all the relevant paperwork – including birth certificate – only to find I needed a camera on my computer, which I don't have.

'I then tried to use my phone but the website refused to recognise the original YoungScot card number. Three times. I gave up after that. Maybe that's what they want? Would save the government money...'

More mums agreed. 'Bl**dy system was a nightmare,' said one in a Facebook mums' group: 'I was in and out the system for days. I eventually got it done.'

'Spent ages trying to do it online then just gave up,' wrote a third.

'It was definitely a fuff as I was completing the application on a laptop and had to scan documents using my phone,'

added a fourth. 'It would be helpful if it told you at the start what documents you needed depending on age,' said a fifth.

'Patience and time needed,' advised a sixth.

A lady also complained on Argyll & Bute Council Facebook post sharing the scheme: 'Folk having nothing but issues trying to get this. It keeps telling the majority of us our number is wrong or the process has failed.'

Others, however, reported no problems.

Transport Scotland said: 'For those who don't have the required proofs to apply online, applications can be made direct with individual local authorities which allows for a much wider range of proofs to be used and, in some local council areas, schools are coordinating applications on behalf of their pupils.'

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



WHO IS THIS?



Happy New Year everyone, a little late I know but I've been enjoying a wee break and even left the town for a couple of days, which was great.

It was nice to go but even nicer to come back again – sometimes it's only when you visit somewhere else that you realise how well Oban is doing and how lucky we are to have such a thriving community.

Speaking of thriving, we have lots to look forward to this year, with Oban International Shanty Festival at the end of June being the one I'm looking forward to most, so far. After two years of online versions, to be able to attend a real live event is fantastic.

The Corran Halls has a few shows on the books already, with Abbamania, Wedding Planners (musical comedy) and Dylan Moran making appearances to name but a few – and there's a Gin and Fizz Festival, yippee!!!

The View also has a Beer Festival in March for those

of you with a taste for hops. It's so good to see the return of events that you can go to in person, I have my fingers, toes and eyes crossed that nothing else happens this year to call a halt to having fun.

For those of you who love the great outdoors there's also no shortage of events to look forward to, with Craggy Islands, Sportif and West Highland Week to look forward to, and as the year progresses I'm looking forward to many more things being announced as restrictions lift.

For a wee change from places to recognise, I thought I might try well-kent local faces instead, starting with this one.



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West Coast Tory MSPs urge PM to go over 'partygate'

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

The Highlands and Islands' Tory MSPs want Prime Minister Boris Johnson to resign after he hosted a BYOB 'work' party at No 10 Downing Street during lockdown.

Mr Johnson is facing growing calls to quit from outside and inside his own party following his apology in the House of Commons last Wednesday for hosting a lockdown-busting 'bring your own booze' party in Downing Street on 20 May 2020 - which he insists he thought was a 'work event'.

At the time, social mixing was banned except with one other person from another household outdoors in a public place.

Jamie Halcro Johnston, a Highlands and Islands MSP for the Scottish Conservatives,



Highland Conservative MSPs have called on Prime Minister Boris Johnson to step down, saying his position is 'untenable'.

to follow the rules and do the right thing.

'That begins with those at the top. That the Prime Minister hasn't followed his own rules makes his position untenable.'

Donald Cameron, a fellow Scottish Conservative MSP in the Highlands and Islands, agreed: 'The Prime Minister should step down. People are rightly angry that the rules they were following were not being followed by those at the top of government.'

'While the Prime Minister made an apology, that was an acceptance that he was in the wrong and that makes his position untenable.'

Their calls echoed that of the leader of the Scottish Conservatives Douglas Ross, an MSP and MP.

It brings the Scottish Tories in rare agreement with Labour, the Liberal Democrats

and SNP, who all urged Mr Johnson to resign.

Following further revelations, on Friday Downing Street apologised to Buckingham Palace for two further staff parties in No 10 on the eve of Prince Philip's funeral. Opposition parties contrasted the behaviour of No 10 staff with pictures of the Queen sitting alone at the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral, due to Covid restrictions.

In Argyll and Bute Council, former Tory councillor Alastair Redman, a 'campaign captain' who backed Johnson to be Conservative leader in 2019, called the Prime Minister's behaviour 'unacceptable'.

The Kintyre and the Islands councillor, who was expelled from the Scottish Conservative party in 2021, now sits as an independent.

He said: 'The Prime Minister's actions have been unacceptable. To tell our nation to follow overzealous rules while failing to do the same is not the mark of good leadership. This is in stark contrast to the selfless leadership shown by our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth during these trying times.'

'Our leaders, regardless of their political stripe, must lead by example.'

The council's deputy leader and the region's Conservative leader Councillor Gary Mulvaney, and its Provost, Conservative Councillor David Kinniburgh, have been contacted for their views.

Oban South and the Isles Conservative councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor, who served as a Highlands and Islands MSP for the party from 1999 until 2016, declined to comment.



Do a lateral flow test before you travel, mix with others or visit busy places.



**Living safely
this winter**



OT

Tiree council first to use Gaelic translator

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

Tiree Community Council held its online meeting partly in Gaelic this month, becoming the first to test a pioneering Gaelic-English translation service run by Argyll culture network CHARTS.

Via Zoom on Wednesday January 12, the chairperson of Tiree Community Broadband (CIT) Rhoda Meek updated Tiree community councillors in Gaelic about the Scottish Government's R100 roll-out of superfast broadband, thanks to a live English translation by Iain Mac Ille Chiar.

'It is really wonderful people can hear this in Gaelic,' said convener Dr John Holliday. 'We are the only council in the world doing this translation. It really is a wonderful service.'

Rhoda, a native Gaelic speaker, said: 'It's very important to me that Gaelic continues as a language in natural daily use. By normalising Gaelic in



Rhoda Meek gave an update on broadband in Gaelic to Tiree Community Council.

these situations, others may be encouraged to use it more too.

'If I can use my native language again at a Tiree Community Council meeting or in another similar context, I will! I certainly had to brush up on my more technical Gaelic vocabulary, which is no bad thing!'

The Teangan Earra-Ghàidheal project, run by the Culture, Heritage & Arts Assembly, Argyll & Isles (CHARTS), says it 'aims to assist our Gaelic speaking members, both fluent and learners, and increase the usage and familiarity of the Gaelic language across cultural and community development in Argyll and Bute'.

'We believe this is the first project of its type in Scotland outside of administrative services being provided by the Scottish Government,' said CHARTS' director Kathleen O'Neill.

'As well as simultaneous translation services to meetings, this pilot project includes the recruitment of Gaelic speakers as translators. We encourage keen Gaelic speakers to apply and are providing training and support.

'We aim to create a pool of Gaelic translators from this project as a legacy, that anyone can contact CHARTS for a translator in the future.

'CHARTS received almost £2,500 from the Argyll and Bute Supporting Communities Fund for this project.

As a small pilot project, this aims to identify both the needs and benefits of making this service available.

'This pilot project was designed by CHARTS in partnership with Tiree Community Council, Mull Community Council, and the Mull and Iona Gaelic Partnership.

'The project targets Gaelic speakers and groups principally in Oban, Lorne and Isles, and also in the Mid-Kintyre and Isles area. The Argyll Estate and the Gaelic Gathering will also use and benefit from this project over coming months through development projects with CHARTS.

'Tiree Community Council are able to use this project for meetings until March when the pilot is due to end. Mull Community Council intends to use the project for simultaneous translation over coming months.'

CHARTS' chairperson Jo McLean added: 'Our Gaelic projects are producing tremendous results and we look forward to developing this work throughout 2022.'

Rockfield bookbank closes due to 'regular damage'

The bookbank at Oban's Rockfield Centre has been temporarily closed after 'regular damage' to the books and shelter.

The Rockfield Centre, or Oban Communities Trust, has contacted the police about the incidents and CCTV is being reviewed.

The community benefit society, which runs the bookbank outside the old Rockfield School building, a newly regenerated £3 million culture hub, says it will rehouse the exchange in a telephone box.

In a post on social media on Friday January 14, the trust said: 'It is with regret that due to what is now becoming regular damage to the books and the shelter area, we have made hard decision to temporarily close the bookbank exchange.'

'This is very disappointing as it has functioned so well for two years without any damage.'

'We do know how much the exchange of books is valued and used by the whole community. Please be reassured we do plan asap to rehouse the book exchange in phone box.'

'Police have been informed of incidents and CCTV is being reviewed.'

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Trolley dash win for Oban mum, Pauline

Dental worker Pauline MacLennan from Dunollie has lots to smile about after winning The Oban Times trolley dash competition, courtesy of Oban's Tesco supermarket

The sharing mum, on the left of the picture with Tesco staff member Natalie Cook on the right, filled her trolley high with treats and essentials worth £200 making sure there was 'something for everyone', she said. It was Pauline's aunty Anne MacLennan, also from Dunollie, who helped collect the coupons – the bunch of roses were especially for her.

'It's just lovely to be able to share good luck when you get it! I was so excited when I got the phone call telling me the news. I couldn't believe it.

'It was my aunty who helped collect the coupons but she has a bad knee and hips so wouldn't be able to run round!

'I made a list and did my best to choose something for everyone so I could share it out.' Thank you Oban Times and thank you Tesco.'

Scottish Legislation for Fire and Smoke Alarms has changed and time is running out... - Are you compliant?



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Timetable cut extended as 200 CalMac staff hit by Covid

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

CalMac is extending its essential services timetable, introduced to cope with Covid-related staff absence, for a further two weeks until at least Sunday February 6.

The increasing number of crew on vessels and staff in ports either testing positive, self-isolating or waiting for PCR test results has meant that CalMac is unable to operate to full capacity. The latest figures show 203 members of staff are unavailable because of Covid, which is an increase of more than 50 staff absent since CalMac introduced the temporary timetable on Monday January 3.

CalMac's website says it employs 1,000 sea-going crew, running 29 routes to over 50 destinations. Its fleet of 33 vessels complete approximately

136,000 sailings a year, with crossings ranging from five minutes to seven hours.

'While the total number of sailings has had to be reduced by around 15 per cent, we are

'While sailings had to be reduced by around 15 per cent, we are still carrying all passengers, cars and commercial traffic who wish to travel.'

still carrying all passengers, cars and commercial traffic who wish to travel,' a spokesperson said.

'Our ports at Stornoway, Ullapool, Uig, Lochmaddy, Lochboisdale, Castlebay, Armadale, Mallaig, Coll, Tiree, Ardrossan and Brodick will

be operating reduced hours focused on sailing times.'

The affected routes include: Oban to Mull, Coll, Tiree and Colonsay; Mallaig to Lochboisdale; and Tarbert (Loch Fyne) to Portavadie.

'All services, irrespective of timetable or service change, are subject to change, cancellation, or interruption at very short notice,' CalMac added.

Robbie Drummond, CalMac's managing director, said: 'We fully appreciate the difficulties these changes will cause for some of our customers, and we apologise for any disruption to their journeys over the next few weeks. I am very grateful for their continued patience and understanding at a time of intense pressure.

'We will continue to review the temporary timetable and will add services back in as soon as we possibly can, how-

ever a return to a full service will require a significant reduction in the level of staff absence.

'In the meantime, we will continue to operate as flexibly as possible to ensure we restore sailings where and when we can.

'Community feedback is also important at this time. In response to recent feedback, we altered the temporary timetable on the Portavadie-Tarbert route in Argyll to ensure that local schoolchildren could get home from school. A change we were happy to make for the local community.'

On one island hit by the disruption, Tiree Community Council praised CalMac staff.

'CalMac are on their knees,' said treasurer Gerard McGoogan: 'Please bear with them.' Community councillor Phyl Meyer agreed: 'They are doing the best they can.'

Energy distributor accused of 'green-washing' pylon plans

Continued from page 1.

there is a lot of opposition to SSEN's pylons plan.

The energy provider has been preparing an Environmental Impact Assessment as part of its planning consent application to go before Scottish ministers soon. Community councillor John Kerr told the meeting that would be happening 'any minute'.

The assessment will include a detailed take on landscape impact, including effects on properties and will also have visual representations of SSEN's proposals from key locations in the area.

'As a community we are getting ready to react and are progressing well with that,' said Mr Kerr.

The new overhead line would be at an average height of around 50m, not the 200m claimed by some opposers, and has been designed to minimise impacts on the landscape and avoid close proximity to people's properties, says SSEN, stating the line would be around 1km from all properties in Dalmally village, with the closest property to the line in the

wider area around 400m away. Throughout the development of the project, several options have been considered but SSEN says alternative routes proposed by the Dalmally community have had to be discounted because of 'significant challenges'.

Speaking after the community council meeting, Mr Kerr told The Oban Times: 'We are not Luddites. It is something that will happen but there are other routes. They [SSEN] are just choosing the cheapest possible option. There are several other options which they are discounting because of trumped-up reasons.'

SSEN told The Oban Times it plans to submit its Section 37 planning consent next month and will let the community know at the time, including how they can make representation to Scottish ministers.

A spokesperson for SSEN Transmission said: 'We remain committed to continue to work constructively and openly with the local community and wider stakeholders as we take forward this project of critical national importance to support the transition to net zero emissions.'

ADVERTORIAL

£30,000 Renewable Energy Fund

Loganair has introduced a new £30,000 community grant scheme dedicated to supporting local renewable energy projects across Scotland.



The airline is involved in a wide range of initiatives to manage and mitigate the environmental impact of flying including the introduction of a mandatory £1 carbon offsetting charge levied on all flights. The money is invested in accredited offsetting schemes certified to the highest international standards of Loganair's net zero plan. These schemes include; the Albano

Machado and Rio dos Índios projects and the Tambopata-Bahuaja biodiversity reserve in Peru.

However, Loganair recognises the importance of supporting local communities on their own path to Carbon Zero which is facilitated via the GreenSkies Community fund.

The fund will be released in three instalments of £10,000 with applicants able to access a maximum grant of £5,000 per project. The application deadline for the first instalment is 31st January 2022.

The initiative is open to communities and will help to establish renewable energy projects such as

small-scale wind systems, solar panels, small-scale hydro power, and air source heat pumps. It is not available for funding research or feasibility studies.

Jonathan Hinkles, CEO, Loganair, said: 'We've made our position clear. The transport industry as a whole has a duty to address and reduce emissions from every



form of travel, and it's our responsibility as the UK's largest regional airline to lead the way.

'Our GreenSkies Community Fund will support local renewables projects that not only tackle carbon emissions but also benefit communities by providing power that reduces energy bills. As an airline we are involved in some incredibly exciting and innovative initiatives to decarbonise aviation and we hope our GreenSkies Community Fund will encourage the same pioneering spirit in communities across Scotland.'

Readers are reminded that the GreenSkies Community Fund is now open should you have a project you wish to apply for, but the deadline for the first instalment is approaching soon. Simply write in to Loganair and let them know about your proposed project and you could be awarded the grant. You can apply via our website at: loganair.co.uk/people-and-planet/environmental-engagement/ or via post to: **Marketing – Loganair Limited, 9 Marchburn Drive, Glasgow Airport, Paisley PA32SJ** – All applications must be received by **31st January 2022**.

Disney to Diesel Dames for marine training couple

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

From Disney to Diesel Dames, marine training couple Hannah and Derek Grier mean business.

The husband and wife launched their training centre in 2019 at Dunstaffnage and were all onboard to sail into their new venture when Covid struck and shut them down.

With calmer seas on the horizon as more restrictions relax, the pair are powering on from their base at the European Marine Science Park running Royal Yachting Association (RYA) courses and more.

As well as teaching, the couple can help plan the perfect marriage proposal out on the water and have also had a role in filming a new Disney movie.

Nautical navigation, marine radio, power boats and oppor-



Derek and Hannah Grier from Seagrass Marine.

tunities to take beginners up to advanced levels, achieving fully-qualified yacht master status, are just examples of the water and shore-based courses they run, with Hannah and Oban born-and-bred Derek also at the helm of developing other qualifications useful to businesses with maritime links. One of their latest projects is working with the

Maritime and Coastguard agency to offer its mandatory safety training.

'We're very excited about this. At the moment the only place nearest to Oban to do that is Glasgow,' said Hannah.

Boat hire is also possible from Seagrass Marine, whether it is as a skippered safety boat for long distance swimmers or as a workboat helping keep road,

rail and construction workers safe from the water. Marine surveying and taking water samples are also on their can-do list, says Hannah.

This weekend, they put on a RYA Diesel Engine course for a group of six women from the area who dubbed themselves the Diesel Dames.

'This group of friends were all into boats and sailing but wanted to make sure they understood how the marine engine works so they wouldn't have to rely on anyone else if there was an issue. They also wanted a bit of fun together, so they booked our RYA Diesel Engine course as a ladies only.'

'This is the first of our courses we've designed for a target group. There are so many possibilities if people want to get in touch and tell us what they need. We can work around them,' Hannah said.

£3m support to help families struggling with energy bills

A £3 million scheme has been launched to help families struggling with their energy bills amid a growing cost-of-living crisis.

The Scottish Government scheme, which is administered by Advice Direct Scotland, is designed to prevent households falling into fuel poverty and help those 'rationing' their energy use.

The Home Heating Support Fund is open until Thursday March 31 and applications can be made on behalf of individuals by local authorities and housing associations, as well as charities and organisations on behalf of people through www.homeheatingadvice.scot. These 'referral partners' are being encouraged to register online so that they can seek funding for people they support.

Individuals cannot apply directly, but they should contact Advice Direct Scotland for free on 0808 800 9060 or visit www.advice.scot, and trained advisers can assess their eligibility and refer them if appropriate. Even if they are not eligible, Advice Direct Scotland can

offer free advice on energy and debt issues.

Last year, a poll found that nearly a third of Scots had rationed their energy use so they could afford to spend money on other goods and services. With recent price rises and a further steep increase in bills expected in spring, there are growing concerns about the impact on households.

Targeted funding from the Home Heating Support Fund will reflect each individual's circumstances, with extra support available for households where one person is over 75, they rely on electric heating, or live in a remote or island community. Payments start at £100, rising to £500 to clear outstanding debt, with the money paid directly to suppliers on behalf of the household.

Eligibility is based on households which are 'self-rationing' energy, meaning those who are deliberately limiting their energy use so that they can afford to spend money on other goods or services. Households 'off-supply' are not eligible and should seek support from their energy supplier.

 Loganair
Scotland's Airline

Greenskies Community Fund.

Welcoming applications now.

Application deadline 31st January 2022.

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GreenSkies
IN THIS TOGETHER

OT

Tiree flights halve as Covid slows bookings

Loganair has temporarily cut daily flights between Tiree and Glasgow from two to one as the current Covid spike deters air travel, writes Sandy Neil.

Loganair, the UK's largest regional airline, flies to and from Tiree, Islay, Campbeltown, Barra, Benbecula, and Stornoway, with a network of more than 70 routes in Scotland, England, the Channel Islands, Belgium, Isle of Man, Norway, Ireland, Denmark and Germany.

This month Tiree Community Council heard that, given the low number of passengers currently travelling to and from the island, Loganair was asking the Scottish Government to cut flights to one a day.

Convener Dr John Holliday said: 'Loganair asked Transport Scotland if they could cut their afternoon flights between Tiree and Glasgow for the next few weeks, as forward bookings were very poor. This is put down to Omicron deterring travel and a quiet time of year.

'Tiree Community Council was consulted as this is a subsidised service. We took soundings from the doctor's surgery, the school and the airport, and asked for a retention of one double rotation to allow people to come to Tiree for the day. This has been granted. It's a reduction in service, but we understand the circumstances and we need a financially healthy carrier. We are happy with the consultation process.'

At the meeting, a member of the public said the daily morning and afternoon flights allowed islanders to make hospital appointments in Glasgow without incurring the cost of an overnight stay.

A spokesperson for Loganair said: 'Loganair has seen lower customer confidence translate directly into reduced travel demand during this challenging period. We have reduced our schedule by one third for January and at this time, by 20 per cent for February. We expect and plan to resume a more normal level of service as soon as possible.'

Oban Free Church welcomes minister

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Oban Free Church welcomes a former maths teacher as its new minister this weekend.

The Reverend Iain Morrison's induction and ordination service is this Saturday, January 22.

This is the first charge for the Reverend Morrison who spent 30 years teaching before leaving the classroom to answer God's calling.

The dad-of-three grown-up children is coming from Rosskeen Free Church on the Cromarty Firth where he has been serving as a ministry assistant since 2017.

During his time in education, he held numerous roles, including deputy headteacher of The Nicholson Institute in Stornoway - the biggest school in the Western Isles.

'There wasn't a day in those



The Reverend Iain Morrison's induction and ordination service is on Saturday in Oban.

used to islands and ferries.

'I've felt very much at home in Rosskeen, but to me this is definitely God's calling. I was invited to preach in Oban over a couple of weekends and had a few meetings with people. It just seemed to click for them and click for me. From the kindness and friendliness I've already experienced in the town, I'm sure I'll be right at home in no time at all,' he said.

As well as son Jonathan, daughter Abigail and her twin brother Christopher, the Rev Morrison has more family in Argyll - including his second cousin John Lowrie Morrison OBE, best known as Jolomo, who is one of Scotland's most successful and best loved contemporary artists.

Last year the Oban Free Church congregation said goodbye to its retiring minister Reverend James Beaton after 31 years of faithful service.

30 years that I thought: 'I'm not looking forward to tomorrow'. I used to think it was the best job in the world but now I think it is being a pastor,' said the Rev Morrison, who is looking forward to his new role and getting to know the communities he will serve.

As well as Oban, he will be minister for the Free Church's

members in Mull and other islands, including Tiree, Lismore and Coll. The Oban church will also become a hub for future work in other areas in Argyll that are without a minister of their own, such as Lochgilphead and Campbeltown.

The Rev Morrison was brought up in Stornoway so is

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Esplanade resurfacing

Work to resurface the A85 along Corran Esplanade in Oban was delayed slightly, with resurfacing work not starting until yesterday, rather than Sunday January 16.

Resurfacing will now run until Tuesday January 25 (five nights excluding Friday and Saturday nights), from 8pm until 6am. During this period the road will be closed, with two-way convoy on Dunollie Road. Road marking work will now start on Wednesday January 26 until Sunday January 30 (three nights excluding Friday and Saturday), from 8pm-6am. The road will be closed during this time, with a two-way convoy on Dunollie Road.

To ensure the safety of both roadworkers and motorists, Corran Esplanade will be closed during working hours. Vehicles will be escorted under a 10mph convoy along George Street and Dunollie Road. Access to Williams Street and Breadalbane Street via Corran Esplanade will be restricted during working hours. The A85 will remain open during this time.

Tesco T-Birds help stack Hope's shelves

Retired Oban supermarket staff have donated more than £2,600 to Hope Kitchen.

The money will help re-stock food shelves at the charity's Soroba Road base, helping feed people in need.

Teresa Russell and other members of the T-Birds, a group of ex-Tesco staff, handed over a cheque for £2,684.15 to Hope's service manager Catriona Petit.

The supermarket has a fund to support its retired workers keep in touch with regular get-togethers, lunches and activities but when the pandemic put paid to their social meet-ups, the money was unspent - until now.

Teresa said: 'There was money left in the pot because we haven't been able to meet because of Covid so we decided we wanted to use it to help out locally. Tesco was happy for us to choose a charity. We knew how much work Hope had done during lockdown to support the community in many incredible ways and thought it would be good to replenish their pot.'

The charity is especially close



Christine MacDonald with Catriona Petit, Teresa Russell and Kay and Jim Harrison handing over the T-Birds Tesco cheque.

to Teresa's heart after it helped her out of a lockdown panic.

'During the first lockdown, someone was concerned enough to mention me to Hope. The next thing I knew, a car was pulling up to check

on me to see if I needed help and supplies. It took away all the worry. It just went. I was getting anxious and beginning to panic. My prayers were answered. It was just brilliant. For that reason, Hope will

always be close to my heart,' said Teresa who was involved in a serious road accident a number of years ago and uses a wheelchair.

Catriona from Hope said the T-Birds' donation from Tesco

was 'a bonus' at this time of year.

Over Christmas, the charity helped more than 400 people with goods and sent out 700 gifts across the community.

'We need to replenish our food stocks. Receiving this money in January is a bonus for us. We get money from other places but we have to spend it in certain ways. We tend not to get money to buy food, but we need to buy staples to go with other food donations to help us provide people with a good, balanced diet. Thank you T-Birds and Tesco,' said Catriona.



Living safely
this winter



Changes to self-isolation and testing in Scotland.

If you test positive on a lateral flow,
you do not need to go for a PCR test
(unless you are advised to or are applying
for a self-isolation support grant).

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to **covidtest.scot** – even if you're negative.



[NHSinform.scot/testing](https://www.nhs.uk/informationscot/testing)
#WeAreScotland



When it comes to money, it is good to have someone to talk to



Campbeltown's Iain Reid, the Director of Argyll and Bute Consultants Ltd, is a man who believes that he can best help a client if he has a good face to face meeting with them first.

Iain is a former Campbeltown Grammar School pupil who then went to Napier University to study banking and he joined the Clydesdale Bank in 1989, based in the Campbeltown, Lochgilphead and Tarbert branches, before joining the Prudential in a financial consultants role up until 2001.

After a short spell working as an Independent Financial Adviser for a

Glasgow-based firm, he decided to set up his own Independent Financial Advice business based in Campbeltown which now serves more than 400 loyal clients.

With a family farming background, Iain understands agricultural and rural life and its finances and understands Kintyre, Argyll and the people who live here.

When long-established and respected financial advisor Alasdair McPhee retired, Iain took over his client list so there has been a continuation of great, personal, local care within the town.

Iain works as a one-person consultancy and outsources legal and regulatory practices and procedures which ensures full compliance and security. Argyll and Bute Consultants Ltd is also regulated by the FCA and is backed by professional indemnity insurance and national compliance services.

'People can be assured that my work is secure and legally correct,' said Iain. 'You should always look for this level of compliance and assurances

from any advisor, as well as the appropriate permissions and qualifications for the class of business you wish to be advised upon.'

He is concerned many people do not understand the nuances of financial products and the legislation around them.

Iain said: 'A lot of younger people are taking advice based on social media because it is trending on line and there are a lot of outrageous and unregulated things out there, including crypto currencies with a high risk and no protection. Their capital is at risk.'

He added: 'I look after people's wealth by making sure it is in the right place and tax efficient to meet their expectations and objectives. It is all about planning and avoiding the common mistakes many investors can take years to recover from.'

'I am not a salesperson so you will always get the right advice from me. If something you are considering is not in your interests, I will tell you

and help you understand the risks so you can make an informed decision.'

Iain's core advisory services include investments, pensions, unit trusts and tax planning. Iain's work helps families plan: 'We are talking about inter-generational planning all the time these days and making sure your money stays in your family and not needlessly handed over to HMRC.'

Iain believes: 'it is essential to have a long term relationship with clients and be with them on their financial journey for years.' Clients with an ongoing relationship with their advisor are much more likely to achieve financial success.

Iain's service involves initially advising on and implementing suitable plans for clients, but more importantly carrying out annual reviews to make sure that all plans are on track, still performing well, and investigating whether or not the client's needs have changed.

'It is not just about money and returns when you are advising clients,

it is also just as important to consider that everyone has different levels of financial knowledge or indeed interest in their finances. Everyone is unique and their financial advice should be too.'

Personal wealth is about accumulating and decumulating; helping your wealth grow until the point you retire and start to use your pensions and savings so that you can enjoy the retirement you aspired to without running out of money or taking unnecessary risks.

It's not how much money you make, but how much money you keep, how hard it works for you, and how many generations you keep it for."

Many people will know Iain as a keen cyclist and see him regularly on the Southend or Carradale road when he is not in the office.

He also serves on the Machrihanish Golf Club Committee and sponsors the Machrihanish Golf Club Winter League.

'It is about being part of, and understanding, a local community,' he said.

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Director: Iain Reid
ACIBS DipPFS

Mary's Meals now working in Yemen to feed hungry schoolchildren

A charity founded in a Dalmally shed is bringing hope and daily meals to 4,000 children in Yemen.

Mary's Meals has announced it is now working in its 20th country, serving up nutritious food to schoolchildren affected by one of the world's biggest humanitarian crises.

Yemen in the Middle East has been devastated by conflict for several years, hitting the economy hard and causing high levels of poverty and food insecurity.

Approximately 21 million people, about 70 per cent of the population, are in need of humanitarian assistance - this includes more than 11 million children.

Millions of people have fled their homes in search of safety and many children are malnourished. Since the conflict began in 2015, the



Mary's Meals is now working in Yemen feeding hungry schoolchildren.

number of school-age children not in education has doubled with many having to work to survive.

Malawi, Haiti, Ethiopia, Syria and South Sudan are just some of the world's poorest countries where Mary's Meals

already provides daily meals, helping attract hungry children to the classroom.

Mary's Meals founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow said: 'Mary's Meals always has a desire to support those in the greatest need.

'Given that Yemen can be described as the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world, and so many children are suffering, we are delighted to begin serving our daily school meals there - meeting the immediate need of the

hungry child and, crucially, at the same time, enabling their education.'

In Yemen, the charity is serving pitta bread sandwiches, filled with various ingredients to suit local tastes alongside fruit and vegetables, to more than 4,000 children at four schools every school day.

The charity is working in partnership with established international non-governmental organisation Yemen Aid to reach children living in the Al Mansoor district of Aden, an area home to a large number of internally displaced people and other marginalised populations all experiencing high levels of hunger.

Mary's Meals began in 2002 by feeding 200 children in Malawi. It now reaches more than two million children every school day in 20 countries around the world.

The charity is currently running a match-funding campaign called Double The Love. Donations made until Monday January 31 are being doubled by a group of generous supporters with up to £1.6 million available.

Magnus added: 'Feeding children in Yemen is an important moment in our mission but we are always thinking of the next child waiting for our nutritious meals. That's why I'm so pleased that donations made to Mary's Meals this winter are being doubled by a group of generous supporters - meaning we can reach even more hungry children around the world with a life-changing meal at school.'

For more information on the work of Mary's Meals and to donate to Double The Love, please visit marysmeals.org.uk.

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OT

LETTERS

Get the glitches sorted...

When it was announced late last year that young people under the age of 22 would be able to apply for a free bus pass, it was quite rightly applauded by all the political parties as a good idea.

Young people have been hit hard during the pandemic and this was seen as a way of helping boost their wellbeing.

But the application process has hit teething problems, with parents taking to social media to complain about the 'unbelievably tedious and frustrating hoops' they are having to jump through, and many are falling at the various hurdles.

One mum told us: 'I spent nearly three hours trying to get the card for my teenage daughter; registering for myscotgov.org, finding all the relevant paperwork – including birth certificate – only to find I needed a camera on my computer, which I don't have.

'I then tried to use my phone but the website refused to recognise the original YoungScot card number. Three times. I gave up after that.'

This is a great scheme, but let's hope the glitches are sorted quickly so our young people get the full benefit from the end of this month.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page.



However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

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Importance of Oban's woods

The stark pre-1880 picture of Oban Hill that you reproduced in your celebration of 16 decades of the Oban Times brings home the importance of trees and woodland when compared with the attractive facade the town presents today.

This easily ignored aspect of our townscape must be cherished and maintained as much as any other, especially if investment and tourism are to flourish.

Ian Reid, Kilnwick.

Oban Bay clarification

We write jointly in response to the letter, published in your January 13 edition, from the chairman of the Argyll and Bute Harbour Board concerning a Harbour Authority for Oban Bay and Approaches.

We are delighted that the Harbour Board has recognised the need for action and agree that safety is the priority. We look forward to taking part in the preparatory work to facilitate the development of a Municipal (Council-run) Port, which the Harbour Board agreed on December 2, while recognising the need to continue 'exploration of the future development of a Trust Port'.

We would, however, point out that Councillor Colville's clarification fails to address the principal issues raised in the letter from OCC: consultation, timescales and finance. In putting forward the amended proposal during the Harbour Board meeting there was no opportunity for consultation with stakeholders, including local elected representatives, local businesses, or the Community Council. Councillor Colville asserts that the Municipal Port option will deliver a new Harbour Authority in 'the shortest time possible' but offers no timescale. With council support, as intended by the December 2019 Harbour Board, the Trust Port could have been in operation in time for the summer of 2023.

Councillor Colville states that 'managing the bay will incorporate cost'. Trust Ports make surpluses which they reinvest in their harbour and community. If Councillor Colville is referring to initial setting-up costs then these should have been indicated, in broad terms at least, in the report. The setting-up costs of the Trust Port are detailed in the proposal.

Trust Ports in Scotland are driving local development – for example, in Stornoway, Mallaig and Ullapool. Run by independent, suitably qualified and experienced trustees, these ports are working collaboratively with their local councils, supported by external funding from government and private sources, to reshape their harbours

and reinvigorate their economies. Planning for the development of a Trust Port for Oban, which remains the best option, will continue to be worked on. In due course the Oban Harbour Trust should take its place in developing a vision for Oban Harbour in 2030 or 2040 just as other Harbour Trusts are doing.

Why Argyll and Bute Council seems so unwilling to work towards the same objective is a mystery which Councillor Colville's letter does nothing to clarify.

Signed on behalf of Oban Community Council (Marri Molloy),
Oban Bay Stakeholders Group (Ross Wilson), and Oban Community Harbour Development Association (John MacAlister)

Keep Oban safe and tidy

Used Covid-19 lateral testing cassettes have been picked up from the roadside opposite Millpark Terrace in Oban. They could have been easily picked up by children and present a bio-hazard that should have been disposed of as the test kit instructions directed. Oban's streets are also littered with dropped masks, which should be binned in the proper places.

We all want to keep our town safe and keep the streets looking clean and tidy, so as we start this new year let us all try that bit harder to keep Oban safe and beautiful.

Stephen Jones, Oban.

Throwing the book at him

Your article on my old pal Jeff Anderson's well-deserved scouting award, and his first badge for cycling, triggered a schooldays memory.

Jeff and I sat together in Mr Dobbins' French class – in a front seat so he could keep an eye on this cycling enthusiast.

The boy cycled home for lunch and often returned with something to amuse himself during boring classes. One afternoon he brought Chinese wire puzzles and sat fiddling surreptitiously. I leaned forward, chin supported with the left hand, to observe old Dobbins's line of sight. Our bored professeur droned on, reading from son livre. Suddenly, he yelled ANDERSON!, slammed the book shut and hurled it straight at the fiddler's head. I turned to see the spinning missile speed across the room. My left hand shot out and caught it in mid-air. Quelle miracle!

Some months later, the French class relocated to the music room while they used the other for exams. Jeff and I managed to position ourselves nearer the back. Former pupils will remember

YOUR PICTURE



the room tiered like a Roman arena. Jeff had returned from home, where he had been tinkering with his bike, bringing some ball-bearings. He flicked one along the desk groove so that it jumped over the inkwell hole. I stopped it and flicked it back. Mr D droned on. Now and then, he would crack a little joke. No one ever laughed.

Unexpectedly, the silvery ball made a hole-in-one and hit the shelf below. It sounded to our ears like a thunderclap. Was another book about to be fired? We froze. The tiny sphere hit the floor and took off in a trajectory straight for our irascible master – stotting nearer and nearer. How could he possibly not see or hear it? I steeled myself to leap to Jeff's rescue should le livre Francaise be launched.

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RES



Reader Betty Cookson recently sent us this photograph, which was taken from Connel surgery and looks on to Loch Etive.

If you have a photograph you would like to share with our readers, we would love to see it. Please email the jpeg (1MB) to editor@obantimes.co.uk

YOURPHOTO

share with us: editor@obantimes.co.uk
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We stared dumfounded as the bouncing bearing took a final leap into the turn-up of the French masters' trousers – just as he cracked a little joke. Two relieved schoolboys exploded with laughter. Mr D beamed over his glasses at us, half-suspicious, half-pleased. Have I made somebody laugh at last? All the other kids turned to look at us. What were those two up to now? We whispered the explanation around the class. From then on, when Mr D made a feeble joke, everyone howled with laughter. It must have made his day.

As Madame Dobbins stood lovingly ironing her husband's breeks, I wonder what choice French expression escaped her fair lips on discovering le roulement à billes!

William Clark, Barcaldine.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Four Black Lives Matter activists were acquitted of charges of criminal damage by a jury in Bristol Crown Court for toppling a statue of Edward Colston. These young activists had a great deal of backing from the people of Bristol. The jury seemingly defied the advice of the judge and set the four free.

Colston died in 1721. He was an MP and an Atlantic slave trader. He was a wealthy benefactor to the city. Some of the establishments named after him have changed their names, as people become sensitive to the past.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Cha b' fhada a thug naidheachdan na dùthcha, agus an t-saoghail, a' teasachadh às ùr an dèidh beagan analach làithean-saora deireadh na bliadhna agus ann am Breatann tha na h-aon chasaidean guineach air ais anns na meadhanan aig irean fiù 's nas faramaiche na bha an-uiridh. Chan eil sealladh ga chall air Covid agus sgapadh an t-strèan Omicron, ach 's iad an dà sgeulachd as "blasta" leis na meadhanan, agus theagamh a' mhòr-shluagh, na bha a' tachairt ann an Sràid Downing tro àm a' ghlasaidh, agus na casaidean eucoir feiseil a tha ga chur às leth a' Phrionnsa Anndra ann an cùirt an New York.

Tha gach sgeulachd maslach ann an dòighean eadar-dhealaichte ach tha iad le chèile an eisimeil an aon dà fhuasgladh, sin firinn na thachair ann an da-riribh, agus fianais a dhearbhas an fhirinn sin. 'S iomadh adhbhar a bhios a' fàgail dhaoine feargach mun dà shuidheachadh seo, agus nam measg sin bidh mar a tha cumhachd agus beartas a' toirt comas dhan fheadhainn air am bheil casaidean cumail a' dol ag àicheadh cron. Dearbhadh air mar a tha daoine beò ann an saoghail eadar-dhealaichte, far am faicear tric cumhachd airgid agus ughdarras mì-iomchaidh na chois.

Cha b' iongnadh cuideachd dearg-chuthach a bhith air daoine a dh'èist a-rithist 's a-rithist ris a' Phrìomhaire, agus ri Ministearan a' cur taic ris, gu mòrchuiseach ag innse dhan dùthaich nach deach riaghailt sam bith a bhriseadh. B' i an teachdaireachd a bhathas

a' biathadh dhuinne gun robh sgioba Sràid Downing lèirsinneach agus tuigseach a thaobh na bha, is nach robh, ceadaichte agus nach robh dòigh a dhèanadh iad dad ceàrr! Aig amannan ma thèid argamaid aithris tric gu leòr tòisichidh daoine ga chreidsinn mar firinn, ach a rèir choltais chan eil sin idir air obrachadh dha Boris Johnson agus tha a-nise cuid de na Buill Pàrlamaid aige fhèin a' moladh dha a dhreuchd mar Phrìomhaire a leigeil dheth. Aig àm dhomhsa seo a sgrìobhadh tha mòran de luchd-taice a' Phrìomhaire a' gabhail fàsaidh air chùl na h-aithisg rannsachaidh a tha an t-àrd-sheirbheiseach chatharra Sue Gray a' deasachadh air na thachair ann an Sràid Downing tro àm a' ghlasaidh. Theagamh gum bi an aithisg sin air nochdadh mun àm a bhios sibh a' leughadh seo, ach a rèir choltais tha mòran air co-dhùnadh mar-thà gun do dh'innis am Prìomhaire breugan mu na cuirmean aig 10 Sràid Downing, agus na b' aithne dha mun deidhinn, agus ri linn sin tha iad den bheachd gum bheil e air creideas agus earbsa an t-sluaigh a chall. Cha chreidear an fhirinn bho bheul nam breug!

Cha b' e annas a bh' ann gun deach urraman Rioghail a thoirt air falbh bhon Phrionnsa Anndra, gu dearbh b' iongantach nach do thachair e na bu luaithe. Tha an fhirinn tric searbh, agus 's coma mar a chrìochnaicheas a' chùis-lagha sam bheil esan an sàs tha e air cron maireannach a dhèanamh air cliù agus inbhe an teaghlaich Rioghail.

London, Bristol and Liverpool were at the heart of the slave trade. Let's not forget that Scotland was involved too. Streets in Glasgow commemorate the link to Jamaica.

At one time in my work for the church I was at Wedderburn House in Musselburgh, which, like the adjacent Inveresk Lodge, was bought by James Wedderburn with money earned from 27 years in Jamaica as a plantation and slave-owner.

Court rulings have featured in the progress against oppression. In 1778 the Court of Session in Edinburgh ruled in favour of a slave, Joseph

Knight, who petitioned for his freedom.

The Bible moves towards an enlightened view, allowing for slaves to be released.

Job says it would be wrong to despise a slave or servant. Paul the apostle says that in Christ a slave has equal status to a free person.

We can see things in a way that those in the past could not; that should temper our judgement of them. It is good though, that we learn about what happened.

Rev Dr Malcolm Kinnear, Church of Scotland Kinlochleven and Nether Lochaber.



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Now is the time to be thinking about where this will be taking place and getting ready to register.

Early learning and childcare (ELC) is free to families and is funded via the Scottish Government.

ELC registration in Argyll and Bute will take place online during the week commencing Monday January 24 2022. See the council website for more details and there is a helpline on 01369 708503/708517 or by email at early-years@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Across the council area there are 51 ELC settings based in primary schools, which offer hours in the morning or afternoon and all day.

Argyll and Bute Early Years is currently in partnership with 23 providers offering quality ELC within the private, voluntary

and independent sector. This also includes three outdoor nurseries. These are joined by approximately 25 child minders who are commissioned by the council to provide ELC for eligible two-year-olds.

In the Highland Council region there are more than 245 ELC providers. The Highland Council's enrolment week begins on Monday February 14th concludes on Friday February 18th.

Extra help

There is no obligation to provide transport for ELC tots, but in Argyll and Bute the council recognises it is a unique rural area and in 'exceptional transport

difficulties' parents can receive help. Call the helpline on 01369 708503.

There is a useful website to help with many aspects of parenting, including guidance on childcare: www.parentclub.scot

Remember to have your child's birth certificate ready when registering!



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'do what we do', but it's our ethos, values and people that really deliver the magic of what we do.

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Watch videos, get in touch, register or find out more on our website stramash.org.uk



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- **OPTION 2 – 38 WEEK MODEL:** If you prefer term time only then you can access the 38 week model and have 6 Free sessions per week, mornings, afternoons or join them together for full days. Still need more childcare? then in addition to this you can buy in more sessions to add on. This option is term time only and runs in line with Argyll & Bute School holidays,

Children attending will also be provided with a hot lunch for morning sessions or a packed lunch for afternoon sessions.

Please contact our Centre Manager Jane Duffy or Deputy Manager Katy Davidson for more information

Tel: 01631 564160

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Rainbow Childcare: "Where smiles and laughter bring colour to our Centre"

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- a visual walk about is available and please contact us at any time over this period for more information.

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Campaign highlights new legislation to protect livestock from dog attacks

A campaign to protect Scotland's livestock has been launched following new legislation which protects animals from dog attacks through measures including updating the livestock definition, fines up to £40,000 and prison sentences for owners who let their pets worry, kill or injure farmed animals.

The Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC) is launching the Livestock Attack and Distress campaign with the slogan Your Dog – Your Responsibility to educate dog owners about the new leg-

islation, plus, where applicable, use the new powers to report owners of dogs which attack livestock.

The campaign was launched by SPARC on Wednesday January 11 at an event at Pentland Hills Regional Park, near Balerno, Edinburgh. The park is a popular location for dog walking and has experienced a number of attacks on farm animals in recent years.

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2021 came into force on November 5 2021 following a successful Members'

Bill brought by Emma Harper, MSP, supported by SPARC, NFU Scotland and livestock owners.

Under the new legislation, camelids such as llamas and alpacas, together with ostriches, game birds and farmed deer are now protected. The inclusion of the word 'attack' is welcomed as this reflects the serious aspect of such an incident. The new law also includes provision to fine the owners of dogs that attack livestock up to £40,000 or send them to prison. The need to communicate the new measures to the

dog-owning public has been shown by a recent survey* commissioned by rural insurer NFU Mutual with Scottish dog owners. Only four per cent of people surveyed knew they could now be fined up to £40,000 if their dog attacked livestock and only 22 per cent knew they could be jailed if their dog attacked livestock.

NFU Mutual claims figures show dog attacks on livestock in the UK rose by 50 per cent in the first quarter of 2021, compared to the same period the previous year, as the pandemic led to an increase in dog own-

ership and countryside visits. Inspector Alan Dron, Police Scotland national rural crime co-ordinator, said: 'Attacks on livestock by dogs is an emotive issue that impacts on rural communities therefore Police Scotland welcomes this new legislation.'

NFU Scotland rural business policy adviser Rhianna Montgomery said: 'NFUS is delighted to be involved in this campaign. With hundreds of incidents across Scotland each year, the protection of livestock is paramount. The new Bill gives greatly enhanced powers

to tackle this blight.' Mark McBrearty, regional manager for Scotland at NFU Mutual, said: 'Dog attacks are causing appalling suffering to animals and huge anxiety for farmers and crofters as they deal with the aftermath. The new legislation is a huge step forward as it means farmers and police are able to trace offending dogs' owners and impose serious penalties.'

*Survey conducted for NFU Mutual by Petbuzz Market Research with 261 Scottish dog owners from December 23 2021 to January 6 2022.

SCOTTISH FIELD

February



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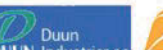
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Covid support for businesses

Many businesses across Scotland are still dealing with the long-lasting effects and challenges that the Covid pandemic has caused, and the emergence of the Omicron variant has made the situation more difficult.

With the situation changing, businesses are encouraged to keep up to date with support available via the Find Business Support Scotland website.

'Guidance for businesses and information about the UK and Scottish Governments' financial support package is available at findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/coronavirus-advice,' explains Councillor Robin Currie, policy lead for the economy and rural growth.

'We also recommend that you keep up to date by signing up to email updates FindBusiness SupportScotland...'

'You can search and filter the funding options and guidance available to help your business during the coronavirus pandemic.

'We also recommend that you keep up to date by signing up to email updates from FindBusinessSupportScotland to get the latest Government funding announcements.

'In addition, our local Business Gateway advisers remain available to help business owners across the region respond and adapt.'

Argyll and Bute Council's Business Gateway has added recovery support to its existing programme of business growth assistance, helping more businesses in the region access timely expert advice and funding to support growth or recovery from the impact of the pandemic.

The Argyll and Bute Business Gateway Local Growth

Local B&B 'growing' thanks to help of Business Gateway

A hospitality business has been able to expand its gardening offering after accessing advice and funding through the Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme.

Burnside Lodge, a two-room bed-and-breakfast located in the quiet village of Port Wemyss on the south-western tip of the Isle of Islay, is an idyllic location for those looking for a remote getaway.

As well as welcoming bed-and-breakfast guests and facilitating small civil weddings, Burnside Lodge provides a hive of activity throughout the year, with owners Tom and Kate Skinner baking cakes for local cafés, supplying pies to distilleries and even offering craft classes in furniture upcycling for customers during the quieter winter months.

Although Tom and Kate had established a good reputation for Burnside Lodge within the local area, they lost a key part of their customer base when the pandemic hit in early 2020 and turned to Business Gateway for support.

Tom and Kate used a range of Business Gateway's services including one-to-one support from a dedicated business adviser, as well as receiving advice on funding.



The couple decided to scale up the gardening offering of Burnside Lodge to help them recover, something which they had done on a small scale in the past.

The couple received a recovery grant through the Local Growth Accelerator Programme which was put towards the cost of equipment. Tom, who was previously head gardener at the Islay Community Garden, is now on hand to help

locals with gardening jobs, as well as offering top horticulture tips and advice.

This service has been critical for Burnside Lodge's recovery from Brexit and Covid and, compared to the previous year, has increased their gardening revenue considerably.

Tom said: 'Since Kate and I took over Burnside Lodge in 2008, we have worked hard to diversify our offering and keep meeting the needs

Tom and Kate Skinner upscaled their business's gardening offering to help them recover from the pandemic.

of the Islay community. Brexit and Covid really took their toll on our business, but we were determined to turn things around.

'Support from Business Gateway was essential for scaling up our offering and giving a greater choice for our customers.

'I can't thank them enough for their help and support over what has been a really difficult time for our business.'

Donald Melville, Business Gateway Adviser, said: 'Like many business owners in Scotland, Tom and Kate felt the effects of what has been a hugely challenging couple of years.

'It can be difficult to implement a new business direction, but Tom and Kate were very flexible in adapting their business. Through our Recovery grant, we were able to provide support to help them pivot their offering and generate alternative income.'

For further information about how Business Gateway can help your business, please visit www.bgateway.com.

Accelerator Programme now includes Recovery grant funding of up to £5,000.

The support is aimed at existing small and medium sized enterprises who are either aiming to restore their annual turnover to pre-Covid levels within three years or aiming for modest growth.

The programme also continues to offer growth support, via grants and expert help, with

more than 100 businesses in the region assisted with grant funding and 27 with specialist advice.

The programme must close in 2022, so business owners looking for support are encouraged to register as soon as possible at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/bglgap. The Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme, worth a total of £855,239, is funded by

Argyll and Bute Council and the European Regional Development Fund under the 2014-2020 Structural Funds Programmes.

Digital coaching

Through Business Gateway, businesses can also benefit from dedicated coaching as part of DigitalBoost, Scotland's digital upskilling programme.

These online coaching sessions with a digital specialist take a small group of business owners through specific topics and answer questions that they may have about their social media platforms, digital marketing strategy, website design, and more. To book onto a coaching session visit bgateway.com and search for events in Argyll and Bute

Investment in digital tech-

nologies, whether that has involved making a website more mobile-friendly, launching a new social media platform, or creating an online shop, have all been vital for businesses to survive the pandemic.

Businesses should not lose these practices and ways of working, as digital technology still has a vital role to play as businesses rebuild from the challenges of the last two years.

Guiding your business towards a brighter future

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DIGITALBOOST

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OT

DISTRICT NEWS

OBAN



Margaret Ayling, right, and Dinease Crowe visited Etive House in Benderloch and Eadar Glinn in Oban before Christmas to hand in hats, scarves and blankets made by the Dove Knitters.

Knitters beat the Covid blues

Dove Knitters supporting Oban Hospice spread warmth and cheer by raising £180 for the charity.

The informal group of knitters started after Covid suspended the Dove Centre's Thursday afternoon Knit and Natter group in March 2020.

Needles have kept clicking with knitters carrying on with projects for their own wellbeing and for others, including the hospice, across the community says Dove centre co-ordinator Peter Darling.

'Special mention to Margaret Ayling and Dinease Crowe who since March last year have sorted the fantastic donations of wool that have been handed in from the community as well as distributing the wool when required.

The Dove Knitters have used their creative skills to produce items that have been donated locally. These include baby hats and blankets to the maternity unit at the hospital, beautiful twiddle muffs to those with dementia, via the local dementia team, scarves and snoods to the Macmillan Day Bed unit at the hospice, blankets to Hope Kitchen for inclusion in the Christmas parcel and many more.

'The knitters decided, during the lead-up to Christmas, to hold a sale by donation of some of the knitted hats and scarves in aid of the hospice which raised £180,' said Mr Darling.

Anyone interested in finding out more about Dove Knitters, including the projects they are working on, should contact The Dove Centre on 01631 561315, email enquiries@obanhospice.org.uk or drop into the centre in Stevenson Street.

LISMORE



Fionn Cook with dad Robbie Cook and friend Donald MacCormick.

Football fundraiser takes off for air ambulance

Teenager Fionn Cook pitched in with a charity event on Lismore over the festive season and raised more than £1,168 for the Scottish Air Ambulance.

The 14-year-old Oban High School pupil organised a friendly Boxing Day football match on the island and a re-match on New Year's Day for those who could not make the first game.

Mum Laura Cook and sister Katie, 17, helped organise a raffle and donations from people on and off the island, and the collection taken at the church's Christmas Eve service also boosted funds.



Taynuilt Gaelic Choir at the 2019 National Mòd in Glasgow. Photograph: Graham Hood.

Gaelic Choir 'chord'ially invites new members

Taynuilt Gaelic Choir is looking for more members to tune into its silver anniversary celebrations.

The choir hopes more voices will boost its core membership which totals 18.

Weekly rehearsals are still on Zoom but the choir's vice chairman Davy Paterson and his conductor wife Audrey hope sessions in the village sports pavilion will return soon.

No previous choir experience or knowledge of Gaelic is needed. You just need to be able to 'hold a tune', said Davy. 'We have a Gaelic tutor and put things up on SoundCloud so people can hear the pronunciation. That helps a lot. We probably only have two or three people who are fluent. The rest have no or just a little Gaelic, so that shouldn't put anyone off joining us. We hope to meet back in person soon but for the meantime it's on

Zoom. We still have a wee chat and a laugh so there's a good social side to it as well.

'We'll be learning new tunes for the next national Mòd in Perth in October and we're hoping the Oban Mòd will happen in June and that the Mull Mòd will go ahead this year. We're keeping everything crossed.

'About half of the choir went to last year's Mòd in Inverness but it was more of a showcase, it wasn't competitive. It was still good to be there and to take part. We all hope this year will see the return of more normality and that we might also be able to perform at ceilidhs again,' added Davy.

Interested in joining? Call 01866 822565 for a Zoom link to rehearsals every Tuesday at 7.30pm or go to the Còisir Ghàidhlig Thaigh an Uillt (Taynuilt Gaelic Choir) Facebook page for more details.

Help keep community bus running on Lismore's roads

An island's community transport service hopes younger passengers will jump onboard to help keep it on the road.

Once known as the 'Granny bus', the Lismore service can now be used by anyone aged over 16 who lives on the island and signs up for membership.

Gilly Dixon-Spain who helps run the charity-status service said: 'We've had to look at how we can keep the service sustainable. That's why we decided to open it up to younger passengers who need to get around our island to the shop, the cafe or the heritage centre or to go over to Oban for appointments or to the library.

'Not everyone has their own transport here. For some people, getting to our shop is a seven-mile trip, which isn't easy without wheels.

'We are trying not to call it the 'Granny bus'



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Oban's Mora Edith MacDonal lifeboat.

Medivac sparks Oban lifeboat launch

Oban's lifeboat crew have helped ambulance personnel rescue a casualty from Mull.

The Mora Edith MacDonal was called on to help with a night medivac from Craignure on Thursday January 13.

The lifeboat left the station with two paramedics onboard shortly after 9pm and made

best speed over to Mull where an ambulance was waiting to transfer the person needing help.

It was 10.40pm when the lifeboat made it back to Oban's linkspan where the town's coastguard rescue team helped move the casualty to a waiting ambulance.

any more because people might think they can't use it and that's not the case,' added Gilly. The service, that can also take a wheelchair and its user, relies on sourcing funding and people's donations to run it. Insurance is about £2,000 a year and there are maintenance costs, fuel and ferry fares to cover.

Charges are made for each journey. On Lismore it is £2. For the time being, the service will not be opening up to taking anyone younger than 16. Whether that will change will be discussed in the future.

'So far the response to us lowering the age of passengers to over 16s is that it will make such a difference to some of our residents,' said Gilly who is also hoping to hear from more drivers willing to take a turn at the wheel.

Anyone interested in supporting Lismore Community Transport or in becoming a member should email lismorecommunitytransport@gmail.com.

ARGYLL AND BUTE

New school holiday dates

Argyll and Bute Council has issued new holiday dates to take into account the extra public holiday for the Queen's Jubilee.

Oban High School will now be open for staff and pupils on Monday May 30 and off on Thursday June 2 and Friday June 3 instead. Pupils and staff return on Monday June 6.

Business as usual at Oban's ScotRail ticket office

Ticket office opening hours at ScotRail stations in and around Oban have escaped proposed changes.

The train provider says the changes are all part of a review of its customer-facing functions following the impact of the pandemic. A public consultation is now under way.

Although some passenger habits will return to normal after Covid, others will never be the same, says ScotRail. Under the review, no staff will lose jobs and neither will there be changes to the number or frequency of rail services that call at any stations. ScotRail says the transformation will improve passengers' travelling experience and the changes are intended to see less fare fraud and ticketless travel, generate and protect more revenue, reduce antisocial behaviour and to introduce new family friendly working hours and part-time shifts which have not been prevalent in the past.

CO emissions would decrease by around 102 tonnes each year from less heating and lighting. Before the pandemic, customers were increasingly using online options or ticket vending machines, rather than ticket offices. There has been a 50 per cent drop in the use of ticket offices over the past 10 years, with the pandemic quickening that pace of change.

Last week, independent watchdog for transport users Transport Focus began conducting a public consultation on behalf of ScotRail.

To see proposed changes go to <https://www.scotrail.co.uk/scotrail-ticket-office-consultation>. Anyone with specific mobility or access needs will continue to be supported.



Oban Railway Station's ticket office opening hours are not under review - but many others are.

At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Time will tell for Colonsay

Confession time: I have never been to Colonsay, so cannot tell you what it is like to visit or to live there.

However, I was much interested in the report of understandable ire among residents over what many thought was a 'patronising' and 'superficial' video log (vlog) about a trip to the island by a Mr Noel Philips from Derbyshire.

Mr Philips apparently made factual errors in his vlog as well as talking down some of the aspects of life on Colonsay. He also, it must be said, praised the islanders for 'just how nice they have been'.

Now, there is an old saw which holds that there is no such thing as bad publicity. Ergo, even a bad report online will have spin-off benefits.

From some of the comments on the vlog, that is certainly the case here. The images of Colonsay have been received very positively, with some viewers saying they now want to visit.

We are still living in these very strange times so it will be interesting to see how this year shapes up for Colonsay.

Will it be a boom summer for the island as a result?

We'll just have to wait and see but Mr Philips may have done Colonsay a favour, however inadvertently.

Protect livestock

Spring is, hopefully, just around the corner and that means the lambing season is imminent.

You've heard this before but I make no apology for repeating the annual appeal to dog owners to take extra care when out with their pets near livestock (see page 20).

We report every year incidents of animals - especially sheep - being mauled and killed by dogs running off their leads.

It is principally heart-breaking for the farmers but it is also costly.

Worst, of course, is the suffering inflicted on the animals under attack.

So please, when you are out with your pups near livestock, keep them on their leads and under control.

What do you think?

Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

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Thursday - 8am & 9.30am
Gillian 07796 040803

Campbeltown - Masonic Recreation Club
Wednesday - 9.30am, 5.30pm & 7pm
Tracey 07984 473361

Fort William - Salvation Army Hall
Thursday - 3.30pm, 5.30pm & 7pm
Friday - 9.30am & 11am
Gillian 07796 040803

Lochgilphead - Lochgilphead Baptist Church
Monday - 5.30pm & 7pm
Miriam - 07765 020776

Business Improvement Grants keep Oban looking good



Businesses across Oban are looking good thanks to thousands of pounds of funding to keep up appearances

Over the last year thanks to BID4Oban members' levy payments and extra funding from the Scottish Government, businesses have been able to invest more than £50,000 in how their properties look by using Business Improvement Grants to improve signs or redecorate their shop fronts.

In just under a decade BID4oban has awarded significant funds to many businesses to successfully achieve one of its key objectives - to keep the

town looking good and Business Improvement Grants have played a successful part of that.

'First impressions count and last so making sure the front of business premises look bright and well cared for can have a major impact on the town's appeal 'and support the cost to the business,' says BID4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence.

Many businesses have used the grants to support them throughout the COVID pandemic

with funding being awarded to help cafes and similar trade.

'Businesses have also used grants to enable COVID mitigation enhancements to be made.

'Some businesses have used the grants to improve external signage at their premises. It is not just for town centre businesses and any BID4Oban Levy payer can apply for a grant.

'We are always keen to support any business and encourage them wherever possible to use local

contractors to undertake any improvement works. This ensures that any funds invested benefit all local businesses and trades.

'We have fixed annual budget and funding is awarded on a first come first served basis,' added Mr Spence.

Full details on how a business can apply for a grant can be found by visiting www.bid4oban.co.uk or contacting the BID4Oban office in Stevenson Street.

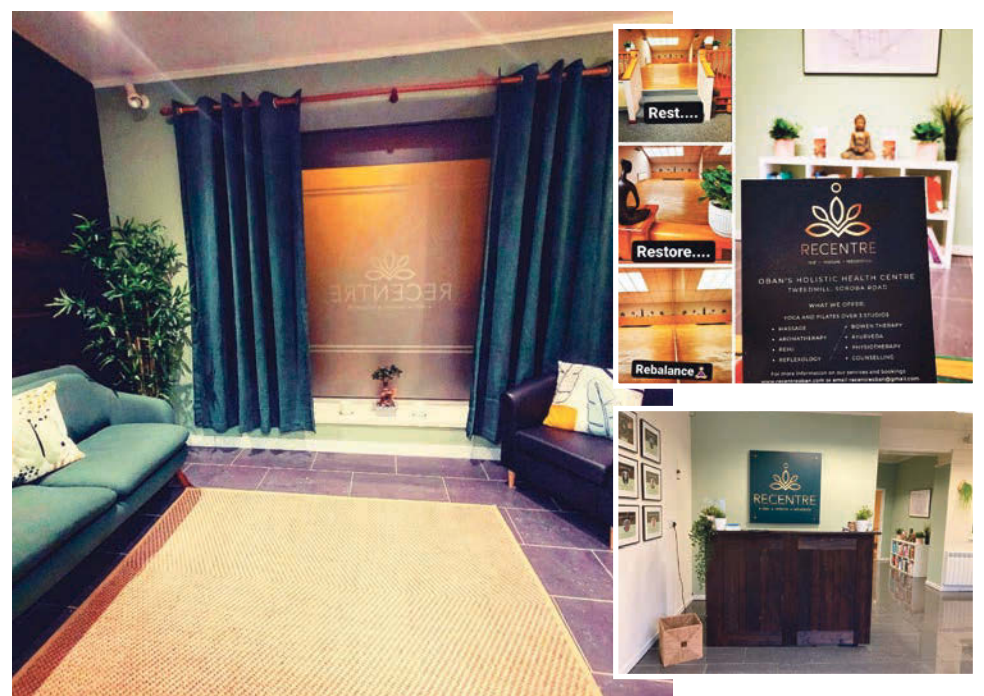
ReCentre

'I think businesses really need to know about what help is out there for them. Hearing from someone about the Business Improvement Grants made a big difference to us. It's well worth applying for if you can,' said Susan De Almeida Ferreira who runs ReCentre holistic health centre at Tweedmill in Soroba Road

'Everyone comments wow what a nice sign. The look of a building on the outside will definitely make an impression on what people think is happening inside. The funding helped me give the outside of the centre a fresh lick of paint, tidy up the gutters and put hanging baskets outside. It had been a bit of a state before I took it on. The before and after photos show just what a huge difference the grant made. I would not have been able to do it without the funding. I'd already spent £500 on a sign I'd put up when I first moved in but that got blown off and damaged by strong winds.

'Some of the grant money was able to go to-

wards a new sign . I put a lot of thought in to this one. We worked with local design business Michael Acey, got the timber from Rembrand and Digital Kangeroo did the lettering for us so it was team work and also meant our funding supported not just us but other businesses in the town too,' said Susan.



ants



Cakebread's Garden Centre

For more than 25 years gardeners across Oban and Argyll have been supplied with everything they need for their thriving gardens - now a business improvement grant is doing its bit to help keep trade flourishing.

At the end of last year, Cakebread's off Soroba Road and run by Elaine Tosh and Lynn Fisher - received funding to buy new outdoor benches to show off their plants for sale.

'The old ones were a bit worn having been outside for so long so they needed replacing. The Business Improvement Grant helped us do that. We only got the money at the end of last year so really they'll show their worth this year when all the plants are ready to go out.'

'Applying for the funding was easy to do and we found that the people at BID4Oban were very helpful.'

'Any help businesses can get is appreciated, especially by small ones. We'd definitely encourage others to apply for this grant,' said Elaine.



Bay Bath & Body

Caroline Hutchison took a huge leap of faith when she opened her Bay Bath & Body business in George Street in April last year and getting a Business Improvement Grant of £1,500 gave her a helping hand.

'It was a huge leap of faith and a huge risk to start up a business during a pandemic but sometimes in life you've just got to try - and I'm so glad I did. I've found that the business is doing okay and I know if I can survive a pandemic then the signs are positive for moving forward.'

'I was able to take that leap of faith because I had faith in Oban and because I did all my market research. Despite the hurdles and obstacles that Covid put in the way, I knew as long as I had the right product to fill a need then I would get through it,' said Caroline.

Trading as a bath, body and fine gift shop, Caroline knew how important it was for her shop front to present the right image.

'My business is all about well-being, looking after your body and staying beautiful so I had to make sure the front of the premises reflected exactly that. It had to look good.'

'I found out about the Business Improvement Grant through my aunty who also has a business in town. Last year there was no funding available to help any start-up businesses in Argyll and Bute so it was a struggle. Without that money, I wouldn't have been able to re-paint the front, get a new sign and get an internal door fitted.'

'When I heard about the grant I decided to give it a go and it was so easy. I just called up BID4Oban and they were very helpful in giving me a form to download and fill in. I met the criteria and it was as simple as that, not difficult at all.'

'Getting that funding was a massive relief, it's made a huge difference. Thanks to the funding my shop looks so inviting. It draws the eye of passers-by and that draws them in through my door which is exactly what I want.'



West Coast musicians help kick MND into touch

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Musicians do not have much to sing about at the moment, so one six-piece outfit has been tuning into alternative activities and raising money for a worthy cause.

Encouraged by former Scotland rugby captain Rob Wainwright, members of Trail West are taking part in Doddie 2022 in support of the My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation in the fight against Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

The band are walking, running and cycling as many miles as possible in January while raising awareness about the amazing work done by the charity.

Trail West accordionist Ian Smith said: 'Seonaidh [MacIntyre], Alain [Campbell] and I took part last year and thoroughly enjoyed the



Trail West are taking part in Doddie 2022 in support of the My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation in the fight against MND.

being the strong winds in Tiree at this time of year, so I have been trying to maximise the calmer weather in the mainland. All the others are based in Glasgow.'

Last year the band took part in a competition as part of Doddie Aid 2021 – Team Tradmill – Teuchters vs Weegies. The group, which included members of Skerryvore, Manran, Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Tide Lines, as well as Highland dancers from Flings and Things, raised £4,135.

Being part of a team really helped with motivation and Ian hopes having all his fellow band members on board this year will have the same effect.

'We are all looking to feel slightly fitter by the end of the month than we did at the start - which wouldn't be hard after the New Year shenanigans,' he added.

'It's good to see such a strong

connection between the islands and the challenge, in particular both my and Alain's neighbours in Coll, with Rob [Wainwright] cracking the whip over there.

'The challenge was Rob's idea. He was Doddie Weir's former Scotland and British and Irish Lions teammate.

'Rob also challenged the band along with the islanders of Tiree to a 'Doddie Dook' on New Year's Day but unfortunately most of us were in the mainland and didn't fancy a dook in the Clyde. Quite a few islanders braved the cold in Tiree though.

'Our main inspiration is to raise as much money as possible for the My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation, raising awareness and helping them to realise its vision of a world free of MND.'

To find out more and/or to donate visit the Trail West Doddie Aid 2022 JustGiving page.

challenge and we've convinced the rest of the boys – Allan Nairn, Andrew Findlater and Jonathan Gillespie – to take

part this year. 'Most of us are running, but there is also a bit of cycling and walking. Alain and myself

will be in action between the mainland and Tiree. I spent the first few weeks of the year in Glasgow, one of the reasons

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CITY
PLUMBING

Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I think it was former British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, who coined the phrase 'a week is a long time in politics'.

That may well be true but these days a week is also a long time in the music business. So much so that half the Celtic Connections gigs I said were cancelled last week have since been un-cancelled.

Rumours that the festival managed this by changing the status of the shows to "work events" rather than "parties" are unconfirmed!

It is a fantastic boost for so many artists and fans alike. I won't attempt to cover the full list of shows that are and aren't happening, but ticket holders will have been informed as to the status of their own concert and I would recommend anyone else head to the Celtic Connections website, which clarifies which shows are going ahead and which have sadly fallen by the wayside.

The opening night (entitled 'Neath the Gloamin' Star) will take place on Thursday January 20 as usual in the iconic Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. The audience may be restricted in number but the quality of artists on the stage is in abundance: Fiona Hunter, Steve Byrne, Paul McKenna,



Niteworks' album launch has been postponed until June.

Ellie Beaton, Cameron Nixon and Jenny Sturgeon, plus joint musical directors Hannah Rarity and Innes White.

As you can perhaps tell by these names, it is a celebration of the Scots folk song revival. All the singers are also Scots songwriters who are following in the tradition of the late Tony Cuffe whose song is the title of the concert.

Even with a myriad of cancellations, there are still too many shows for me to preview in one column.

This coming weekend, though, among other things, is a tale of two album launches – one of which is going ahead at a rearranged date and one which has been postponed.

Megan Henderson's launch of Pilgrim Souls will take

place on tomorrow (Friday January 21) alongside The Jeremiahs and The Canny Band in the Royal Concert Hall. Meanwhile, Niteworks' launch of A' Ghrian (due to go ahead this weekend) has been postponed until Wednesday June 22. At the time of writing, Megan's album is days from release but Niteworks' third album came out last Friday to great acclaim. It features a lovely blend of pipe tunes with their trademark electronica as well as beautiful Gaelic and Scots songs from a whole host of fantastic guest vocalists including Ellen MacDonald, Hannah Rarity, Beth Malcolm, Alasdair Whyte, Sian, and Kathleen MacInnes.

Buried somewhere in the mix of Alasdair's rendition of Thèid Mi Lem Dheòin is my own voice along with a squad who joined the band in a Glasgow studio one night to contribute some vocables.

It is always a great laugh with the Niteworks lads but they obviously manage to get some serious work done when we're not looking because this is a first class album. Their Celtic Connections show, when it eventually comes round in June, will definitely reward the patience of all who awaited it so eagerly.

Covid emergency fund set to benefit West Coast culture

A compensation package worth £65 million for culture and major events that have lost income due to the Covid pandemic has been announced by the Scottish Government.

Within the total pot, £31.5 million is allocated to cultural organisations, £19.8 million to the events sector, £10 million to freelancers, £2 million for national performing companies, and £1.7 million for museums, galleries and heritage.

Culture Secretary Angus Robertson commented: 'The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is once again causing disruption and uncertainty in the culture and events sector, who have already been hit so hard by its impact.'

'These additional funds will help protect the livelihoods of the people working in the sector – and allow us to give further support to freelancers, culture organisations, venues and our national performing companies.'

Welcoming the announce-

ment, Creative Scotland said the £31.5 million pot was specifically for cultural organisations which have lost income due to cancellation or deferral of performances or cultural activity, as a result of the necessary steps taken to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.

Iain Munro, Creative Scotland chief executive, said: 'The winter period is a critical time for many cultural organisations when a significant proportion of their annual income is generated, so this emergency funding from the Scottish Government is a lifeline for them.'

Creative Scotland's guidance for the Cancellation Fund for Cultural Organisations was published yesterday.

The fund will open for applications at 2pm on Wednesday January 26 and payments to organisations will begin from Monday January 31.

Mr Munro added: 'Our Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers is live and more

information on support for organisations and venues will follow as soon as possible.'

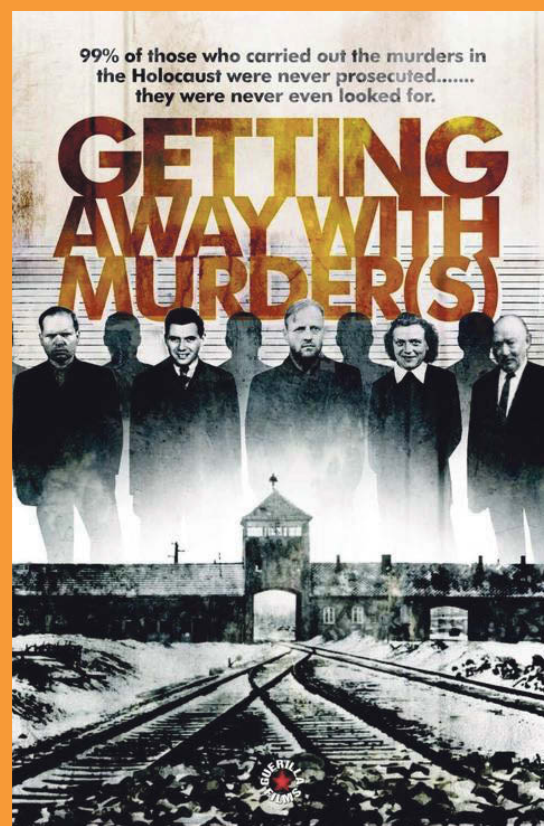
VisitScotland director of events Paul Bush said: 'EventScotland is currently working with the Scottish Government and the Event Industry Advisory Group (EIAG) to determine the best way of distributing the funding to ensure we get support to those in need across the sector, and details on this will be shared shortly.'

Funds worth £27 million for culture and £17 million for events were announced by the First Minister on Wednesday December 29.

This was additional to the £20 million of business support funding for culture and events that First Minister announced on Tuesday December 14.

With the utilisation of an additional £1 million of underspend from the existing events budget, this creates a total funding package of £65 million.

What's on at Oban Cinema



GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER(S)

Filmmaker David Wilkinson questions why so few of the perpetrators of Holocaust atrocities were ever prosecuted.

Includes an interval and a recorded Q&A.

Coming next week: Scream & Sing 2

Friday 21 January

The Story Of Looking 15	12:30
Clifford The Big Red Dog PG	16:30
The Electrical Life Of Louis Wain 12A	16:45
The King's Man 15	19:15
The Matrix Resurrections 15	19:30

Saturday 22 January

West Side Story 15	12:30
Clifford The Big Red Dog PG	13:30
The Matrix Resurrections 15	16:00
The Electrical Life Of Louis Wain 12A	16:15
The King's Man 15	19:15
Bad Luck Banging 18	19:15

Sunday 23 January

West Side Story 15	12:30
Clifford The Big Red Dog PG	13:30
The Electrical Life Of Louis Wain 12A	16:15
The Matrix Resurrections 15	15:45
The King's Man 15	19:15

Wednesday 26 January (screenings marked with ★ are captioned)

The Story Of Looking 15	12:30 ★
Clifford The Big Red Dog PG	16:30 ★
The Electrical Life Of Louis Wain 12A	16:45 ★
The King's Man 15	19:15 ★
The Matrix Resurrections 15	19:15 ★

Thursday 27 January

The Story Of Looking 15	12:30
Clifford The Big Red Dog PG	16:30
The Electrical Life Of Louis Wain 12A	16:45
Getting Away With Murder(s) 15	19:00
The King's Man 15	19:15

Key: HOH - Captions for the hard of hearing.

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MONDAY:	8am-12pm 12-3pm 5pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-9pm 9pm	Breakfast show with Stephen Lunch with Bob G Drive Times with Marcus Highland Fling with Rosemary Calum McLuckies Show David Cullen Show
TUESDAY:	8am-10am 10am-12.30pm 1pm-3pm 5pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-9pm 9pm	Breakfast Show with Stephen Ken Hunter Macky on FM Drive Times with Archie Darling Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron Oban Pride on the Waves with Jay & Crystal
WEDNESDAY:	8am-11am 11am-1pm 1pm-3pm 4pm-7pm 7pm-9pm 9pm	Breakfast Show with Stephen Comfort Zone with Lesley Doug in the afternoon Drive Times with Campbell Country meets Rock N Roll with Len Gordon's Grooves
THURSDAY:	8am-11am 11am-2pm 3pm-7pm 7pm-9pm 9pm-10pm 10pm	Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah Lunch Show with Steve Drive Time with Stephen Christine's Collections Ann's Ceilidh Margo Till Midnight
FRIDAY:	8am-10am 10am-1pm 1pm-4pm 4pm-6:45pm 6:45pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-10pm	Breakfast Show with Anna & Phil The Brunch Show With The One Bob G Country, Rhythm & Blues show Teeny & Tiny Show with Harry & Janet Sports View with the Dream Team Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig
SATURDAY:	8am-10am 10am-1pm 2pm-4pm 6pm-7pm 7pm-8pm 8pm-10pm	Evening Show with Peter Rainnie Breakfast Show with Andy Saturday Morning Live with Linda Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc Sports View with the Dream Team Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
SUNDAY:	9am-11am 11am-2pm 3pm-5pm 7pm-9pm 9pm	Sunday Morning with Breege Sunday Brunch with Stephen Mental Musings with Mer New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch Drum & Bass with Graham.



Liane McKay will publish new and original writing from Scotland and beyond, through her Soor Ploom Press.

Appeal for stories from new publisher in Lochgilphead

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

A new Argyll publisher Soor Ploom Press – named after the editor's favourite sweetie – is looking for submissions for their first digital newsletter and print collection.

The press, based in Lochgilphead, will publish new and original writing from Scotland and beyond, particularly pieces which are fun, playful, sweet, savoury, sharp, strong or sour. Submissions are currently open for short pieces of fiction or creative non-fiction (up to 500 words) and poems (up to 14 lines).

The newsletter is launching at the end of this month with the first email going out on Monday January 31. Each email will be sent on Monday mornings to start the week with flavour and will contain a short piece of writing accompanied by an audio clip.

Founding editor Liane McKay said: 'I'm so excited to be bringing Soor Ploom Press to life. I come from a strong storytelling background and enjoy sharing my own short

stories and poems online. With this press, I'm hoping to give other people the opportunity to take part and get more creative writing into their lives, too.

'I wanted to create a digital-first press because I

'I wanted to create a digital-first press because I often find myself checking my phone first thing in the morning...'

often find myself checking my phone first thing in the morning, scrolling through social media even before getting out of bed, and it's an impossible habit to break. So I thought, 'if I can't get off my phone, why not at least use it better?' and the idea came about for poetry and stories, tiny pieces that you can enjoy while waiting for the kettle to boil. That's what I'm aiming to achieve with this newsletter.'

A keen poet, Liane has a back-

ground in music and English language teaching abroad. After a lockdown 2020 project of writing and self-publishing a series of novellas for Kindle, her interest in publishing deepened. Although she continues to write, in October 2021 she completed her MLitt in Publishing Studies from the University of Stirling where she was assistant project manager of the University's Stryvling Press. She now works in digital publishing and has had a couple of poems published in collections in print and online.

In the past year or so there has been an increase in publishers moving away from London, where much of the UK's trade publishing industry is still centred, as well as a growing interest in independent presses publishing local voices.

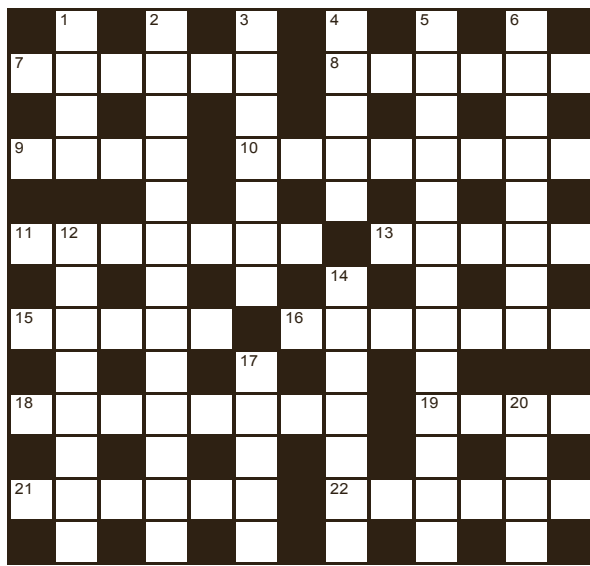
Founding Soor Ploom Press in Lochgilphead, where Liane lives, was important to her because although running a publishing company in a more rural area presents challenges of its own (in printing and distribution, for example),

she believes great writing can come from anywhere and wants to contribute to the growing number of publishing opportunities outside of London – in particular in an area such as Argyll, which has such a rich cultural heritage of its own.

Soor Ploom Press also plans to publish an edited anthology twice a year, in summer and winter. Proceeds from the anthology will go to the Shannon Trust, a charity whose work the company admires: training prisoners to teach their fellow inmates to read.

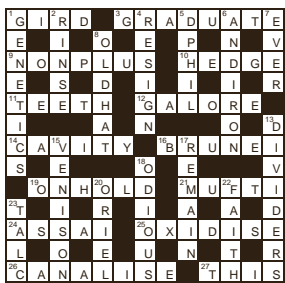
For more details and to sign up to receive the free weekly emails for a burst of good writing, check soorploom-press.com.

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- Across**
- 7 Chipper (6)
 - 8 Oil transporter (6)
 - 9 Input rubbish will allow for the output of rubbish (4)
 - 10 Nickname (8)
 - 11 Proof of purchase (7)
 - 13 Unqualified speech? (5)
 - 15 Goddess in blue jeans according to the song (5)
 - 16 Ref's call (7)
 - 18 An extra day in this (4,4)
 - 19 Healing plant (4)
 - 21 Project image back (6)
 - 22 Wrestling hold (6)
- Down**
- 1 Monkey (4)
 - 2 Benefit money (6,7)
 - 3 Blackout (7)
 - 4 Platform (5)
 - 5 Certain (13)
 - 6 Clergyman (8)
 - 12 Interpretation of the bible (8)
 - 14 Put down... (7)
 - 17 ...put down (5)
 - 20 Woodwind instrument (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



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01631 568000

Colin shares his sadness of lost Connections this January

Mull musician Colin MacIntyre has spoken of his sorrow at having to cancel his Celtic Connections show in Glasgow as well as an appearance at An Tobar's 25th Anniversary celebration, writes Fiona Scott.

Both gigs were cancelled following last week's announcement on the ongoing Covid restrictions.

Colin told fans: 'Obviously everyone's safety is paramount.

'I was hugely looking forward to playing for you, but we will just have to do it all again at Celtic Connections '23 and all ticket holders will be contacted.'

This year is also the 20th anniversary of Loss, the debut album of indie pop band Mull Historical Society of which Colin is a founder member.

Inspired by the sudden death of his father in 1999 and his upbringing on Mull, the album reached number 43 in the UK album chart. It contains sound samples from a Caledonian MacBrayne ferry and the waves on Calgary Bay.

'In these times — and in my 20th anniversary of Loss — you as "The Society" and this thing of community generally seems even more vital and continues to drive my new songs and stories,' he added.



Mull Historical Society's Colin MacIntyre. Photograph: Soren Kristensen.

'To that end, a new MHS album and reissues of the first three albums are coming this year, which I hope will soften the disappointment of those who were planning to come to Glasgow.'

Celtic Connections confirmed last week that a number of shows and elements within the 2022 programme were no longer able to go ahead.

A spokesperson said: 'Our ambition for the 29th edition of the festival was to bring everyone together once again, however the uncertainty and disruption caused by the Omicron variant has meant it is not feasible for us to continue with our existing plans on the

scale we had originally hoped. Artists and ticketholders for the shows affected so far are being contacted directly and we would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support and patience.

'We have not come to these decisions lightly and are committed to presenting a form of the festival which brings the connection and joy of Celtic Connections to audiences, while being both feasible and safe for all involved.'

Organisers are also encouraging all artists impacted to apply to the Creative Scotland Covid-19 Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers to help with financial support.

National video competition aims to tackle disinformation

Young people in Lochaber and Argyll and Bute are being encouraged to take part in a national video competition aimed at tackling disinformation.

Launched last week by Stewart McDonald MP, the contest, which runs until Monday January 31, asks young people aged 16 to 30 to make a six-minute video on how disinformation has affected them and their peers. It also encourages them to share their own ideas on how disinformation can best be tackled.

Newly-elected Fort William and Ardnachurchan councillor Sarah Fanet is backing the competition and said: 'When I was a student, the internet and social media didn't exist and our sources of information were limited to a number of TV channels and newspapers often recommended by teachers. In the world of social media, it has become far more difficult for young people to know whether the source of



Councillor Sarah Fanet. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

information they are using is reliable.

'As Stewart McDonald rightly said: 'We know it is young people who are so often the target of disinformation but we also know they are often the most resilient to it too.'

'Disinformation poisons every part of our lives from our democracy to our security and has detrimental effects on the well-being of groups of people who are constantly tar-

geted and stigmatised through false, inaccurate or distorted information.

'It is important our young people are equipped to challenge this and producing the six-minute video is an opportunity for them to reflect and share ideas and policies to tackle disinformation.

'I hope there will be many entries from Lochaber and Argyll and Bute and am sure discussions from them will be used as a basis for future work to find solutions to tackle the threat disinformation poses to us all.'

Videos can be emailed, along with a 100-word biography, to stewart.mcdonald.mp@parliament.uk or sent via WeTransfer at stewartmcdonaldmp.wetransfer.com by Monday January 31. The winner will be announced on Monday February 7 and will receive £100. The videos will be published on Stewart McDonald's website and social media channels.

M'ALBA MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 20 Am Faoilleach THURSDAY 20 Am Faoilleach

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 An Lot/The Croft
- 21.00 Am Fear Cinnidh Òg
- 22.00 Dana/Scotland's Wild Side
- 22.30 Afganastan – An Tir Fo Leòn: Jihad/ Afghanistan-Jihad
- 23.20 Dhan Uisge
- 23.30 Na Milleni-Gaels

DIHAOINE 21 Am Faoilleach FRIDAY 21 Am Faoilleach

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 An Là
- 19.25 Dàn
- 19.30 Machair
- 19.55 Fraochy Bay
- 20.00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo
- 20.30 Fuine
- 21.00 DIY le Donnie
- 21.45 ALT
- 22.00 Man in Room301: Letter/ Finnish Drama
- 22.45 Dealbh is Slighe
- 23.00 Fèis Rois

DISATHAIRNE 22 Am Faoilleach / SATURDAY 22 Am Faoilleach

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 17.45 An Là
- 18.00 Tiugainn a Dhannsa

- 19.00 An Là/Tide
- 20.00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo
- 20.30 Golf: Mun Cuairt Alba
- 21.00 Skipinnish aig Barrowland
- 22.00 Afganastan- An Tir Fo Leon/ Afghanistan:Kingdom
- 22.50 Dhan Uisge
- 23.00 Tatu Rioghail Dhùn Èideann – Edinburgh Military Tattoo
- 00.45 ALT

DIDÒMHNAICH 23 Am Faoilleach SUNDAY 23 Am Faoilleach

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 18.15 An Là
- 18.30 Seachd Là/News Review
- 19.30 Alleluia!
- 20.00 An Lot/The Croft
- 20.30 Garraidhean Mora na h-Alba
- 21.00 An Là/Tide
- 22.00 Skipinnish aig Barrowland
- 23.00 Man in Room 301: Letter/Finnish drama
- 23.45 Dealbh is Slighe

DILUAIN 24 Am Faoilleach MONDAY 24 Am Faoilleach

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Turas a' Bhradain/The Salmon's Journey
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là
- 20.30 Fuine
- 21.00 Trusadh – Sloinneadh agus Far-ainmean

- 22.00 Piping Live
- 22.30 Opry le Daniel
- 23.25 Dàn
- 23.30 Dana | Scotland's Wild Side

DIMÀIRT 25 Am Faoilleach TUESDAY 26 Am Faoilleach

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 Garraidhean Mòra na h-Alba
- 21.00 Sàr-Sgeoil – Robert Burns NEW
- 22.00 Trusadh – Sloinneadh agus Far-ainmean
- 23.00 Machair
- 23.25 Dàn
- 23.30 Alleluia!

DICIADAIN 26 Am Faoilleach WEDNESDAY 26 Am Faoilleach

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Turas a Bhradain/The Salmon's Journey
- 19.30 SpeakGaelic
- 20.00 An Là - NEWS
- 20.30 Golf: Mun Cuairt Alba
- 21.00 Opry le Daniel
- 21.50 Dhan Uisge
- 22.00 Scottish Premiership – Dundee Utd Ross County
- 23.45 ALT



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High to the north east of the village of Kinlochewe in the parish of Garloch is Strath Chrombuill, overlooked by an old stalker's house called Leckie.

Originally the strath was part of the extensive Garioch estate. The quality and quantity of its deer was once exceptional, thanks largely to its owner, Mr (later Sir) Arthur Bignold of Lochrosque who, over two decades, created some wonderful habitat and shelter for deer by planting over eight million trees pre-1923 – something NatureScot and their new age partners might be inclined to forget today. A fine pipe march 'Arthur Bignold of Lochrosque' is named after him.

Leckie (from the Gaelic word leacaidh meaning flaggy, as in flagstones) was home to an exceptional stalker called James Ferguson who was well-liked by Mr Edward Hickman his employer at the time, and by Mr Duncan Mathieson, the estate head stalker.

At some stage James approached Duncan Mathieson saying that when he died, he wished to be buried far out on the hill amongst the deer he loved. It was an unusual request. However, James persisted and being so highly thought of, his wish was granted. Sometime before he died, he fell ill and his wife employed a nurse to help look after him.

On one occasion, he told them of a dream he had had the previous night. It was, he recounted, a lovely sunny day and that he was on the hill with a stalking party, when suddenly he was alone in the foothills of Groban – a high hill above the head of Glen Tanagaidh. James died



The Ross-shire hills near where James Ferguson was buried. Photograph: Miles Welsh

on January 19, 1930 and the burial took place on Groban three days later. Interestingly January 22 was fine and sunny – the only settled day in a prolonged period of wind and rain – it was as if the day of his funeral was the one he had dreamt of earlier!

Stories of coffins being carried long distances over the hills are not new but first-hand accounts and photographs are rare. When I was researching this one, I unexpectedly came across the following which I thought worthy of repeating for its style and detail.

'By the death of Mr James Ferguson, Leckie, Kinlochewe, Ross-shire, in his sixty-sixth year, an interesting personality has been removed from our midst. Mr Ferguson, who was a native of Insh, Kingussie, will be much missed by a wide

circle of friends, particularly in the Kinlochewe district, where he resided during the past twenty-two years. He was well known in other parts of Ross and Inverness, and spent some time in Park Forest, on the Island of Lewis. He also served on the Drummond Hay estate in Perthshire.

'Mr Ferguson was a man of keen intellect and an ardent lover of nature. His chief pastime was reading and his favourite books were: "The Volume of the Sacred Law," "Spurgeon's Works," "The Poems of Burns" and the "English Dictionary." Truly a comprehensive collection. To quote his own words: "In these books I find all the information I require."

'He often expressed the wish that when he died, he would like nothing better than his remains would be laid to rest among the hills with

which his duties had made him so familiar. He had pointed out to his colleagues the spot where he desired to be laid, and so his wishes were respected and his desire duly fulfilled under circumstances which are unique in the annals of the Highlands.

'At 10am on a winter's day, a party numbering fifty had gathered from far and near to render their last tribute to their departed friend. It was fortunately a beautiful morning, and in view of the extremely hard task of bearing the remains six miles into the heart of the hills it was doubly so. There were in all thirty-six pall bearers divided into nine parties of four, and on looking round I could not but admire the splendid physique of these men. Their looks proclaimed them what they were, hardy, experienced hillmen, worthy bearers of the mortal remains of one who was, in this respect, in a class by himself.

'We left the main road at 11.30am and wended our way along the rough track which goes up the side of Allt na Muic. On reaching the top of Gleann na Muic – about a mile and a half from the road – a halt was called and a cairn erected to mark the first resting place - this being an old established custom in the Highlands. (Each man contributing a stone to the cairn where they probably partook of a dram as it was recorded

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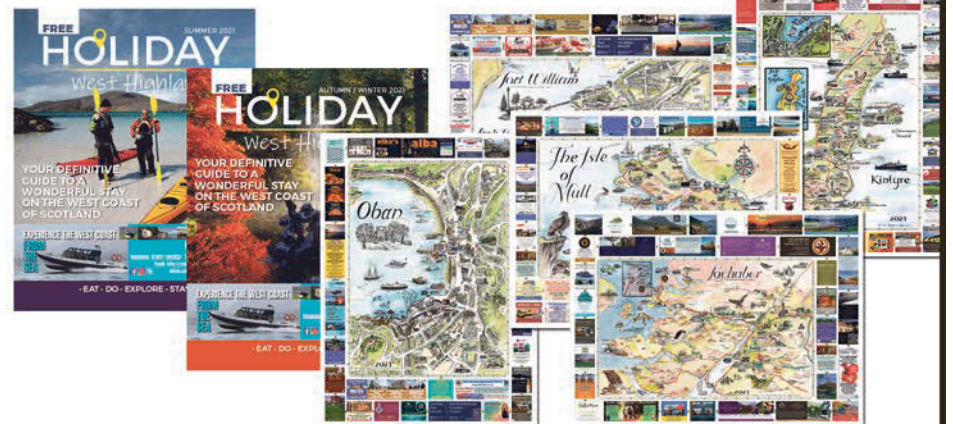
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Left, A rare photograph showing James Ferguson's coffin and the burial party on the way to Groban. Photograph: Mr Norman Kelman, head stalker, Kinlochewe Estate.

that 15 bottles of whisky were consumed that day.)

'After a brief rest, we proceeded with our task, which, owing to the nature of the ground, was becoming more and more difficult. On reaching the summit of Cairn Homish (now shown as Meall an Odhar on OS maps) a magnificent panorama lay before us. Nestling at the base of the surrounding hills a beautiful green valley (Glen Tanagaidh) through which a river meandered like a bar of silver in the bright sunshine, broken here and there with the shadows cast by the hills, which reminded us that, after all, life is

made up of "sunshine and shadows." A herd of deer were browsing peacefully by the side of the river, unaware of our approach.

'At the foot of the Groban, about two miles across the valley, discernible only to those whose eyes were accustomed to searching the hillsides, lay the spot chosen by Mr Ferguson and often designated by him as his "Paradise on Earth". Colleagues acted as pall-bearers on the last stage of the journey, and at 2.15pm the mortal remains of Mr Ferguson lay at rest. In a few heartfelt words, which expressed the thoughts of all of us, Mr Mathieson rendered thanks unto the Most

High for enabling us to carry out an almost super-human task.

'The cairn was then erected at the head of the grave, and inside the cairn was placed a casket containing the following words: "On this, the twenty-second day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and thirty, we, the undersigned, laid to rest the mortal remains of James Ferguson, Leckie - Aig Foish (Gaelic 'at rest') Then followed the names of the thirty-six pall-bearers. Deep sympathy is felt for his widow and daughter, also to his surviving brothers in their sad bereavement".

The final word though must go to Charles Kingsley, the well-known English poet who, although writing more than 50 years earlier, penned a verse in 'The Outlaw, which might well have been written for the occasion:

Ye'll bury me 'twixt the brae and the burn, in a glen far away,

Where I may hear the heathcock crow, and the great harts bray;

And gin my ghaist can walk, mither, I'll go glowering at the sky,

The livelong night on the black hill sides where the dun deer lie.

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Are electricity and gas costs adding to your debt worries?

Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau may be able to help

Household budgets are being squeezed like never before, and it can be particularly hard when an energy supplier also deducts money from each top-up made to a pre-payment meter to pay for an old energy debt.

For one local resident struggling to find work and worried about how her universal credit would stretch to cover the rising cost of heating for her flat, daily living costs and still manage to re-pay council tax arrears, the local citizens advice bureau was there to help.



Commenting on the case, the Bureau's manager Jen

Broadhurst said, "the client's expenditure was higher than her income and with each top-up to her electricity pre-payment meter, more than 10% of the money went straight towards paying off an old energy debt. Something had to give, the client was already trying hard to repay other debts and she just didn't know how she was going to manage. Also, having lost the £20 per week Universal Credit uplift, meant that she was running out of money to buy food and was having to reply on her local foodbank".

Looking into the debt repayment levels for this client, the adviser identified that she had been asked to pay considerably more than the rules required her to. The reduction of £20 per week to her Universal Credit hadn't filtered through to the amount she was asked to pay, so getting that fixed was a priority.

"Almost every day the Citizens Advice Bureau is contacted by people really struggling to cope with debt and the rising cost of living. Thankfully advisers at the Citizens Advice Bureau can provide confidential, free advice and practical help – that's what we are here for" said Jen.

Jen added, "Trying to live on a low income, in work or out of work, can be very hard and it can seriously take its toll on mental health". The energy price cap is expected to rise sharply by April 2022, and further hikes to electricity and gas prices are expected, so we are urging residents struggling with debt and worried about how to afford the rising cost of living to contact the bureau. People sometimes think there isn't anything that be done, but our debt and money advisers can go through a range of options available to really help manage debts."

Contact your local bureau on 01546 605550
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Dreuchd ùr ann an 2022?

Aig an àm seo den bhliadhna, bidh sinn gu tric a' smaoinneachadh air ar dreuchdan atharrachadh agus mar sin is dòcha gum bi an goireas ùr aig Bòrd na Gàidhlig feumail dhuibh ma tha sibh a' beachdachadh air dreuchd ùr ann an teagasg tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

A' leantainn air na dleasan agus geallaidhean a tha ann am Plana Cànan Nàiseanta Gàidhlig 2018-23 gus tidsearan Gàidhlig a thrusadh, a ghleidheadh is oideachadh agus sanasachd a dhèanamh air teagasg Gàidhlig mar dhreuchd, tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig air padlet a chruthachadh mar ghoireas ùr. Tha seo a bharrachd air a' bhileag aig Comhairle Choitcheann Teagaisg na h-Alba 'A bheil thu airson teagasg sa Ghàidhlig?'

Dè a th'ann am padlet?

'S e goireas didseatach a th' ann am padlet a tha a' tabhann aon àite airson stuthan a chur an cèill – nàdar de bhòrd-fiosrachaidh air-loidhne - far a bheil làraich-lìn, sgrìobhainnean agus bhideothan air an cruinneachadh air balla. Air gach padlet lorgair na slighean eadar-dhealaichte a-steach gu teagasg sa Ghàidhlig, air an cruinneachadh agus air an taisbeanadh ann an cruth soilleir. Tha e na amas gum bi seo na dhòigh shìmplidh agus tharraingeach dha daoine am fiosrachadh a tha a dhìth orra gus gluasad gu teagasg sa Ghàidhlig a lorg ann an aon àite.

Cò dha a tha e?

Tha aon phadlet ann a tha ag amas air stiùireadh a thoirt do thidsearan clàraichte a tha airson an sgilean cànan a leasachadh gus gluasad gu Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig; agus padlet eile dhaibhsan a tha a' beachdachadh air cùrsa Foghlam Gàidhlig a dhèanamh aig ìre fo-cheum no iar-cheum gus Gàidhlig a theagasg na cuspair fhèin neo cuspair àrd-sgoile a theagasg tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig.

Ciamar a gheibh mi cothrom air?

Gheibh sibh a-steach dhan phadlet le bhith a' sganadh an còd QR leis an inneal agaibh.

Ma tha ceistean sam bith agaibh, nach cuiribh fios don Oifigear Leasachaidh againn aig angela@gaidhlig.scot

Thinking about a new career in 2022?

At this time of year, we often think about changing careers so you may find Bòrd na Gàidhlig's new resource useful if you are considering a new career in teaching through the medium of Gaelic. Following on from the commitments in the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 to recruit, retain and educate Gaelic teachers and to advertise Gaelic teaching as a career, Bòrd na Gàidhlig has created a new resource called a padlet. The padlet complements the existing General Teaching Council for Scotland's leaflet 'So you want to teach in Gaelic?'

What is a padlet?

A padlet is a digital tool – a form of online noticeboard - where websites, documents and videos are clearly displayed on a single wall. In each of our padlets you will find information on the different routes into Gaelic teaching, collected and presented in an appealing format. The aim is for this to be a straightforward and accessible way for people to find the information they need in one place as they begin their journey into Gaelic Teaching.

Who is it for?

One of our padlets provides guidance for registered teachers who wish to develop their language skills in order to transfer to Gaelic Medium Education; while the other padlet has been created for those considering an undergraduate or postgraduate course in Gaelic Education to teach Gaelic as a subject or to teach a secondary subject through the medium of Gaelic.

How can I access it?

You can access the padlet by scanning the QR code with your device.

If you have any questions, please contact our Development Officer at angela@gaidhlig.scot



Do dh'Oileanaich



Do Thidsearan Clàraichte



SO YOU WANT TO TEACH IN GAELIC?

Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig air goireas ùr a chruthachadh gus do chuideachadh le bhith a' tòiseachadh air slighe gu teagaisg tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig!
Cleachd an Còd QR gus fhaicinn.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig has created a useful new resource to help you get on a path towards teaching through the medium of Gaelic!
Scan the QR code to see it.

RECRUITMENT

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HIJOBS

Visit hijobs.net

support for people with disabilities at home
and in the community.



Fort William

Could you be Key?

Support Worker

(various hours available up to 39 per week)
Hourly Rate: £10.58 (£10.02 induction rate)
Sleepover Hourly Rate £10.02

Relief Register (Bank)

Hourly Rate: £10.02
Sleepover Hourly Rate £10.02

Ref: SWR/FOR/14408

Due to the ongoing growth and development of our personalised support services we currently have a number of exciting job opportunities in the Fort William area.

Working locally, join one of our teams delivering great quality individualised support where every day is different in this challenging but rewarding role.

Applicants must be prepared to work flexibly as part of the team to meet the needs of the people who use our service. Supports will include work in the evenings and weekends as well as sleepovers and waking nights when required.

If you are caring, reliable, flexible and passionate about getting alongside people providing support to achieve the life they want then... you could be Key!

In turn, you will receive:

- 31 days annual leave
- Occupational Sick Pay
- Excellent Training
- Support to achieve a SVQ 2 qualification
- Access to Employee Counselling Service

No experience necessary! Full training and support will be given to help you achieve your full potential.

If you would like to get involved in support work but cannot commit to a contract due to other commitments, we also have opportunities for you to complement our existing workers by joining our relief register of bank support workers. This will mean you can work in a way that best suits you and fits with your life.

We would encourage you to submit your application as the earliest convenience as we may be able to offer interview at an earlier date to shortlisted candidates. If you would like to arrange an informal chat to find out more do not hesitate to get in touch!

For an application form and job description please visit our website at www.key.org.uk; email: jobs@key.org.uk or telephone: 0141 342 1892.

Closing date: 11th February 2022.

Key, Key Support and Key Housing are names used by Key Housing Association Ltd, a charity registered in Scotland, No SC006652.



The Crinan Canal



We are currently looking to hire Waterway Operatives for our 2022 season to work along the Crinan Canal, one of Scotland's most beautiful tourist attractions!

Information about Scottish Canals and details of the roles, including salary, locations and role descriptions can be viewed on our 'Join Our Team' section of our website at www.scottishcanals.co.uk

The Caledonian Canal



We are currently looking to hire Waterway Operatives and Destination Assistants for our 2022 season to work along the Caledonian Canal, one of Scotland's most beautiful tourist attractions!

Information about Scottish Canals and details of the roles, including salary, locations and role descriptions can be viewed on our 'Join Our Team' section of our website at www.scottishcanals.co.uk



Domestic/Cleaner

Dunmar Court, Oban

12.5 hours per week

Monday - Friday

£9.65 per hour

Temporary to cover staff sickness

This post requires; • Basic Disclosure Scotland check

To apply visit the recruitment section of our website at www.acha.co.uk
If you cannot access the website, please contact the recruitment team: 01546 605817 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

For more information, please contact Seonaid Cameron (HNS Local Manager) on 01546 605903 or email Seonaid.Cameron@acha.co.uk

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 28th January 2022

Interviews will be held on Tuesday 8th February 2022

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Full time positions available for the following:

Joiners (Mid Argyll & Oban)

Bricklayers (Mid Argyll & Oban)

**Foreperson/
Site Supervisor** (Mid Argyll)

(Training is also available for experienced tradespersons who wish to move into a managerial role.)

For more information call 01546602989 or email jobs@mkmacleod.co.uk



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North Argyll House

Bealach an Rìgh, Oban, Argyll PA34 5TG
Residential Care Home for the Elderly are looking for the following people to come and join our team.

Part Time and Full Time positions available.

Kitchen Assistant, House Keeper and Laundry Assistant (£9.68 per hour)

Experience preferred but not a requirement.

Carer (£10.21 - £10.75 per hour)

Senior Carers (£13.16 per hour) with SVQ Level 3 or nursing equivalent.

Please contact us on
01631 562168 or email
info@northargyllhouse.org.



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Institute of Aquaculture

UNIVERSITY of STIRLING

Two positions have become available at the Marine Environmental Research Laboratory (MERL), Machrihanish, Argyll.

- Senior Animal Care Technician.
- Senior Animal Care Technician, Lead NACWO

MERL is the Marine Facility for the University of Stirling's Institute of Aquaculture and runs a range of work with species including Atlantic salmon, ballan wrasse, lumpfish, mussels, oysters and other marine invertebrates.

For applications and further details please visit the University of Stirling's website,

www.stir.ac.uk/about/work-at-stirling/list/details/?jobId=2920&jobTitle=Lead%20NACWO%20Animal%20Care%20Technician

www.stir.ac.uk/about/work-at-stirling/list/details/?jobId=2922&jobTitle=Senior%20Animal%20Care%20Technician



Post Title: Purser/Boatmaster Recruitment reference - HGH10134 Location: Fort William

Duration: Permanent

Salary: £31,067 – £34,887 p.a.

Salary placing will normally be at the first point of the scale.

Closing date for applications: 24.01.2022

Contact Person: Richard Porteous, Tel: 07979 706515

Job Purpose: We are looking to recruit a Purser/ Boatmaster for the Corran Ferry, the successful candidate will be required to carry out the safe operation of the vessel ensuring the safety of passengers, crew and protection of the environment and act as Purser/Deckhand, Engine Watcher and Relief Skipper as required by work pattern.

The ideal candidate will have engineering/mechanical experience preferably from a marine background but this is not essential.

The Shift Pattern is 5 days on/5 days off.

For more details see the Job and Person Specification on www.myjobscotland.gov.uk

OBAN PORT USERS LTD

Port Operative

Oban Port Users Ltd are seeking to employ a Part-Time person (20 Hours per week)

This role includes tasks associated with the operation and maintenance of the South Pier. This is a Permanent Part-time position.

We are looking for someone who possess a positive attitude and is a diligent and conscientious worker, must be able to work as part of a small team.

We offer an attractive hourly rate of £11.00 per hour, contribute to a Pension Scheme. 28 days Annual Leave (pro rata).

If you are interested in applying for this post, please send your CV with a covering letter to: Peter Tosh, Oban Port Users Ltd, Office 1, South Pier, Oban, PA34 4LS.



Hebridean Pursuits

Outdoor Learning



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Finance and Administration Lead
(P/T 15hrs per week) £26-30K pro rata

An exciting opportunity to join our small team making a huge difference to young lives in Argyll and across the UK.

To download details go to

www.hebrideanpursuits.org

or email jane@hebrideanpursuits.org for further details.

Role is home based but will involve regular travel to Oban as required.

**Deadline Monday 7th Feb,
Interviews w/b Mon 21st Feb**

Work on rewarding projects in fantastic locations, as part of a great team.
We're recruiting for

ACT Finance Manager

Responsible for managing our financial processes, project budget management, forward planning and forecasting. Candidates should have experience of preparing financial reports, working with SAGE and knowledge of current legislation and charity finances.

This role is available for between 15-25 hrs per week, location flexible, salary £25-£30K p.a. (pro rata)

For job specification and application form please apply at

www.act-now.org.uk/work-for-us

For further details please contact Julie Young, ACT Development Manager,

Julie@act-now.org.uk tel:

07920083857.

Applications invited before
Thursday 3rd Feb 5pm.



Fish Farmer Magazine

Media/Publishing - Commercial Assistant B2B (Aquaculture)

**SALARY DEPENDING ON EXPERIENCE
£21K- £24K**

Applicants should be capable of working well within a small team, have excellent grammar skills, telephone manner and an ability to identify commercial opportunities.

General duties will be orientated around assisting both sales and editorial on a well established widely respected business to business print and online publication.

- Research and support for sales and editorial
- Contacting companies via email and phone
- Identifying commercial leads
- Expanding free circulation publication database via print and digital
- Editorial assistance - including proofreading and writing
- Website and social media administration.

Please apply with CV to:

jjohnston@fishfarmermagazine.com

PUBLIC NOTICES



CLÀRACHADH AIR-LOIDHNE AIRSON CLAS 1 & TRÀTH-IONNSACHADH IS CÙRAM-CHLOINNE ANN AN SGOIL AIRSON 2022

Ma bhios ur pàiste còig bliadhna a dh'aois air no ro 28 Gearran 2023, faodar an clàrachadh airson Clas 1.

Tha làn-chòir aig clann a rugadh eadar 1 Màrt 2018 agus 29 Gearran 2020 air àite maoinichte Tràth-ionnsachaidh is Cùram-chloinne.

Tha an seisean ùr a' tòiseachadh air 16 Lùnastal 2022.

'S e an t-seachdain chlàrachaidh airson Clas 1 airson sgoiltean na Gàidhealtachd

Diluain 31 Faoilleach gu Dihaoine 4 Gearran 2022.

'S e an t-seachdain chlàrachaidh airson àiteachan Tràth-ionnsachaidh is Cùram-chloinne Diluain 14 Gearran gu Dihaoine 18 Gearran 2022.

Gus ur pàiste a chlàrachadh no airson tuilleadh fiosrachaidh mu bhith a' lìonadh an fhoirm air-loidhne, pròiseas clàrachaidh, sgìrean-sgoile, Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig, còmhdhail sgoile agus iarrtasan àiteachan-sgoile, tadhailibh air www.highland.gov.uk/enrol.

Nuair a tha sibh air ur pàiste a chlàrachadh air-loidhne, cuiridh an sgoil fios thugaibh gus inntrigeadh a chur air dòigh. Air sàillibh galar leantainneach COVID, cha bhi clàrachadh aghaidh ri aghaidh ann air an t-seisean. Na tadhailibh air an sgoil no air an ionad TCC tron t-seachdain chlàrachaidh.

Ma tha sibh airson 's gun tèid ur pàiste gu sgoil eile seach a' bhun-sgoil ionadail agaibh, thoiribh an aire gum feum sibh an clàrachadh an toiseach ann am bun-sgoil na sgìre-sgoile agaibh agus iarrtas airson àite-sgoile a dhèanamh às dèidh sin.

Mura h-eil cothrom agaibh am pròiseas clàrachaidh a dhèanamh air-loidhne, cuiribh fios gu oifis na sgoile san sgìre agaibh tron t-seachdain-chlàrachaidh.



ONLINE ENROLMENT FOR 2022 PRIMARY 1 & EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PLACES IN A SCHOOL

If your child will be five years of age on or before 28 February 2023, they are eligible to enrol for **Primary 1**.

Children born between 1 March 2018 and 29 February 2020 are entitled to a funded **Early Learning and Childcare place**.

The new session starts on 16 August 2022.

The **P1 enrolment week** for Highland schools is Monday 31 January to Friday 4 February 2022.

For **Early Learning and Childcare places**, enrolment week will be Monday 14 February to Friday 18 February 2022.

To enrol your child, or for further information on completing the online form, the enrolment process, catchment areas, Gaelic Medium education, school transport and placing requests visit www.highland.gov.uk/enrol.

Please note that once you have enrolled your child online, the school will contact you to arrange the necessary induction for your child. Due to the ongoing COVID pandemic, there will be no face-to-face enrolment again this session. **Please do not visit the school or ELC setting during enrolment week.**

Although you may wish your child to attend a school other than your local primary school, you must first enrol at your catchment area primary school and then make a placing request.

If you do not have access to the online enrolment process, please contact your catchment school office during enrolment week.

Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

The applications listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be viewed electronically through Argyll and Bute Council website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Having regard to Schedule 6, Part 3, s10 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, documents are only available to inspect electronically at this time. Customers requiring assistance can contact us by e-mail: planning.hq@argyll-bute.gov.uk or tel. 01546 605518.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013
REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
(AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
21/02607/PP	Demolition of extension and erection of replacement single storey extension	8-10 Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA75 6PE
21/02636/PP	Demolition of existing dwellinghouse, erection of replacement dwellinghouse with detached garage	Fonn Aline, Aros, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA72 6JP
21/02237/PP	Erection of replacement conservatory and porch	Carraig Beag, Isle Of Iona, Argyll And Bute, PA76 6SP
21/01990/LIB	Erection of two-storey extension to residential property within the existing courtyard space	The White House, Isle Of Coll, Argyll And Bute, PA78 6TE
21/02511/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Land West Of Tigh Na Mara, Dervaig, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
21/02560/LIB	Construction of permanent cantilevered walkway to the east elevation of the bridge	Connel Bridge, Connel, Argyll And Bute
21/02381/PP	Demolition of existing storage shed and erection of mixed use building, with commercial business units within the ground floor, and 2 residential accommodation units above	Council Depot, Ardmor Road, Salen, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA72 6JL
21/02104/PP	Removal and relocation of the existing non-original SVP and rainwater pipework respectively on the front elevation, formation of 3 rooflights and installation of replacement windows	Bayview, Main Street, Port Charlotte, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA48 7TY
21/02114/PP	Site development and servicing relative to planning permission 19/02602/PPP (Site for the erection of two dwellinghouses)	Land Adjacent To Dunollie, Mansfield Road, Port Ellen, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
21/02105/LIB	Removal and relocation of the existing non-original SVP and rainwater pipework respectively on the front elevation, formation of 3 rooflights and installation of replacement windows and internal alterations	Bayview, Main Street, Port Charlotte, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA48 7TY

Written comments can be submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> or to Argyll and Bute Council, Development Management, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed on the Council's website. Customers are requested to use electronic communication where possible during the coronavirus pandemic as our ability to process postal mail is restricted.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 MOORINGS SEIL SOUND, ARGYLL

Notice is hereby given that Mr. K. Hall has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of two moorings at:

Cost	<£2500
Location	Latitude Longitude
Mooring point	56° 18.373' N 05° 35.355' W
	56° 18.367' N 05° 35.362' W
	(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at <http://www.bit.ly/32rQyh9u>

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made by email to:

MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot within 28 days of the date of this notice, quoting reference: 00009492 and Mr. K. Hall.

Fair Processing Notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-LOT) determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make representation to MS-LOT. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.

A full privacy notice can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/policies/marine-and-fisheries-licensing/marine-licensingoperations-team-privacy-notice/>. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-LOT at: ms.marinelicensing@gov.scot



Argyll and Bute Council

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997, AS AMENDED ADVERTISEMENT UNDER SECTION 67(2) OF THE MAKING OF A REVOCATION ORDER OR MODIFICATION ORDER

Planning Permission in Principle for the erection of dwellinghouse At Land South West Of Elzeard House Aros Isle of Mull Argyll And Bute

REFERENCE NUMBER: 20/01127/PPP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Argyll and Bute Council have made an order under section 65 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 to revoke the above planning permission.

The Council have been notified by the owner or lessee (if any); the occupier of the land, and all persons who in the Council's opinion will be affected by the Order that they do not object to the Order.

Any person who will be affected by the Order and who wishes for an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by a person appointed by the Scottish Ministers, must give notice in writing to The Scottish Ministers, Planning and Architecture Division, Planning Decisions, 2F (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ not later than 17th February 2022.

If no such notice is given by that date the Order will take effect by virtue of the provisions of Section 67(7) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 on 3rd March 2022 without being confirmed by The Scottish Ministers.

Date 20th January 2022

David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

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The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>;

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
21/05674/LBC	The Stalkers House, Fassfern, Kinlochail, Fort William, PH33 7NP	Alterations & extension
21/05871/PIP	Land 90M NE of Camus Sealladh, Achateny, Acharacle	Erection of house
21/05921/FUL	Laimhrig, Galmisdale, Isle of Eigg	Change of use & erection of extension to form commercial units (Class 4)
21/05926/FUL	Mam Apartment, The Garage, Leven Road, Kinlochleven, PH50 4RP	Erection of holiday pod, and store/shed
21/05993/FUL	Unit 4, Ben Nevis Drive, Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 6PR	Refurbishment of depot & yard
21/06040/FUL	Birch Cottage, Banavie, Fort William, PH33 7PB	Siting of holiday letting unit
22/00019/FUL	Plot 2 Land 50M NE of Sealladh Na Coille, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge	Siting of holiday letting pod
22/00020/LBC	Inverloch Castle, Torlundy, Fort William, PH33 6SN	Demolition of existing glass houses & refurbishment & extension to former stables building in walled garden to convert to hotel room accommodation

Time period for comments is 14 days from the date of this notice with the exception of 21/05674/LBC & 22/00020/LBC which is 21 days

ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

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PROPOSED LET OF A CROFT/PART OF A CROFT

Mr & Mrs C Rozga are applying to let the tenancy of part of a croft at Ardmenish, Jura, to Miss Rhovan Rozga, 2 Ardmenish, Isle of Jura, Argyll. PA60 7XZ. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot within 28 days from the date of the advert.

PROPOSED LET OF A CROFT/PART OF A CROFT

Morag Cameron is applying to let the tenancy of the croft at 2 Pottie, Kilfinichen & Kilvickeon to Marion Cameron of (Kilinnan, Fionnphort). Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot within 28 days from the date of the advert.

Proposed Let of a Croft

Mr Crawford Duncan Cameron is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to let the tenancy of the croft at 29 Anaheilt, Strontian to Mr Duncan Cameron of 5 Burnside, Strontian, Argyll, PH36 4HZ. If you are a crofter, shareholder or owner of a croft in the township or if the Commission consider that you have a direct interest in this application, you may submit comments on the proposal in writing or other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW (e-mail: info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk) within 28 days from the date of publication of this advert. Please note that any comments you provide are part of an open process and will be made available to interested parties. Your comments would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry.

PROPOSED ASSIGNATION OF A GRAZING SHARE(S)

Crawford Duncan Cameron is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the grazing share(s) pertaining to the croft at 29 Anaheilt (Share), Ardnamurchan & Sunart to Duncan Cameron in the Anaheilt Common Grazing, Sunart Estate, Strontian, Argyll.

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DEATHS

CAMPBELL - Sadly but peacefully at home on Seil Island on Monday, December 27, 2021, Duncan (Dochie to his friends). Funeral service at Luing Parish Church on Monday, January 24, 2022, 12 noon and thereafter to Kilchatten Cemetery, to which all are welcome. Family flowers only. Sorely missed by all who knew him.

KEMP - Philip Hugh Kemp of Callander, passed away suddenly but peacefully Queen Elizabeth University Hospital on Sunday, January 16, 2022. The beloved husband of Margaret, a loving and much loved dad to the late Morven, father-in-law to Scott and the adored granddad to Lilly-Grace and Fearghas. Funeral service will be held on Thursday, January 27, 2022 in Callander Kirk at 10.30am, thereafter to Thornhill cemetery for approx. 11.15am, to which all family and friends are respectfully invited. You are also invited to pay your respects as the cortège travels through Callander towards Thornhill Cemetery at 10.55am. Family flowers only donations if desired to Strathcarron Hospice.

MACDONALD - Peacefully, at home, surrounded by her family on Thursday, January 13, 2022, Elizabeth Jane (née MacNaughton), aged 75 years, dearly loved wife of Allan, loving mum of Charlie and Wendy, devoted granny to Katie and Angus, a much-loved sister, aunt, and friend. Funeral service on Monday, January 24, 2022 at 12noon in Arisaig

Parish Church; thereafter to Beoraid Cemetery. Donations, if desired, to The River Fund and Arisaig Church Funds can be given at the service or forwarded to Greenlees & Son Funeral Directors, Kilmallie Road, Caol PH33 7AR.

MACLEAN - (Muir-of-Ord). On January 16, 2022, in Raigmore Hospital, Dr Iain Matheson Maclean (formerly of Argyll), beloved husband of Alexandra, father, grandfather, brother and friend. Funeral service private. Enquiries to D Gunn Funeral Home, Blackwells Street, Dingwall. Tel: 01349 863951.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CARSON - Lilian, Susan and Andrew would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for the overwhelming love and support shown to them during Les' short illness and since his passing. The visits, cards, flowers, baking and other acts of kindness were much appreciated. Thanks also to the doctors, district nurses and carers for the amazing support which allowed Les to remain in his home, where he wanted to be. We are truly grateful. To everyone who lined the streets to pay their respects on his final journey to Oban, and all who travelled to attend his funeral at St. Oran's and Pennyfuir cemetery. Thanks also to Lynette for the beautiful flowers, Angus McColl for his moving piping and to Soroba House for the excellent refreshments. Thanks to Rev Fred Booth for his caring support, and a special thanks to Jim Auld for his uplifting

service. Also, to Jim and his team for the care, compassion, and guidance given to us at such a difficult time, nothing was too much trouble for them. To those who donated in Les' memory, a total of £1,000 was raised and has been forwarded to Pancreatic Cancer UK. We will love and miss this very special man, always and forever.

McRAE - The family of the late Sheila McRae would like to express their sincere thanks to everyone who sent kind messages of sympathy and attended the services in Iona and Inverness. Special thanks to Rev Jenny Earl and Rev Joyce Watson for their comforting services and visitations. Grateful thanks to all the staff at the Macmillan Cancer Unit at Oban Hospital and the District Nurses on Mull for their unstinting help during Sheila's illness. Thank you also to Billy McClymont for his caring guidance with all the funeral arrangements. Finally thank you to the St Columba Hotel, Iona and Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness for their hospitality. To all who donated, a generous sum of £1012 was raised for Iona Defibrillators & the Macmillan Unit at Oban Hospital.

WATTERS - Richard's family would like to sincerely thank everyone who attended his funeral. Fr. Roddy and Fr. Stan for their caring service, Margaret for her beautiful singing, Graham and Donald for piping, John and James for ferrying us back and forth to the island, Jill for her catering, the NHS for all the attention

but mostly to the carers who took such care of Richard, especially Linda. For all the cards, letters and phone calls, the undertakers Manson and MacBeath for the professional care and attention and McDonalds for the beautiful flowers. The sum of £745 was collected for MS.

MEMORIALS

CLARK - Treasured memories of our parents, Angus Ross Clark, who we lost on January 19, 2009 and our mum Peggy Clark (née Brown) who joined him on January 28, 2016. Missed more than words can say

"Lives on forever within our hearts"
Remembering also, our Granpa Donald Brown who passed away January 19, 1973. - Morag, Dugie, Donald and Gavin, Mike, Kaye, Lorraine and James, Nicola, Paula, Ryan, Cooper, Taylor, Dara and Iona, Colin, Gregor and Ciaran.

CRAWFORD - In memory of Jessie, died January 20, 1995, a dear mother and gran. Sadly missed.
- The family.

MACDOUGALL - In loving memory of Donnie, dear husband, father and grandad who passed away January 24, 2020.

Always in our thoughts.
- Morag, Kenneth, Duncan, Sheena and families, Dalmally.

MACRAE - Precious memories of Len, a loving husband, dad and grampa, who died January 18, 2003.

Forever in our thoughts.
- Kate and families.

McKINNON - Treasured memories of my dear husband Charles McKinnon, who passed away on December 28, 2005. Also my dear mother Catherine Brown who passed away on July 26, 2001.

Memories of days together Live within my heart forever. Also remembering loved ones gone before and since.
- May, Colonsay.

POTTER - Precious memories of Jennifer, much loved daughter and sister.
- Mum and family.

POTTER - Always remembering my lovely granddaughter, Jennifer, who was sadly taken from us on January 20, 2001, age 17 years.
- Love from Nana Potter xxx

POTTER - Treasured memories of my dear niece and cousin, Jennifer, who died tragically on January 20, 2001. Always in our thoughts.

- Auntie Kirsty, Uncle Stephen and cousins Findlay and Susannah.

POTTER - Jennifer, tragically taken on January 20, 2001. Fondly remembered by Auntie Irene and family.

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ACHA launches grand funding to help struggling tenants

In these challenging times, Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) management board has approved a £40,000 grant assistance fund. The money will assist any tenant experiencing hardship between January and March 2022.

ACHA's welfare rights staff and other colleagues are actively supporting tenants through a variety of other initiatives at this time.

This additional initiative is designed to assist those who may not have qualified for other assistance, or have particularly challenging needs at the present time.



ACHA chief executive, Alastair MacGregor.

ACHA's chief executive Alastair MacGregor said: 'We live in very challenging times with substantial increases in fuel, food, clothing and other costs. If you add to that the stop-start uncertainties of Covid-19 in economic terms; a substantial number of tenants have endured financial pressure. As a landlord and a charity ACHA's board has taken this particular initiative to ensure this additional funding is available to help the most vulnerable. We hope it will allow a number of our tenants to improve their household income over the next few months.'



Island couple Gill and Tim Vollum are looking for a new chef to run the Waypoint restaurant at Kerrera marina.

Dream dish of a job up for grabs on Kerrera

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Have you got the right ingredients for a dream job on Kerrera?

Island couple Gill and Tim Vollum are looking for a new chef to run the marina's Waypoint restaurant.

A social media search is now on to find the ideal candidate to take on a foodie adventure.

Gill and Tim are looking for someone who will revel in the challenges of running a restaurant on an island and say a

little bit of quirkiness will help.

And there is even accommodation on Kerrera thrown into the mix - although it is likely to be a caravan.

'We can sort out a caravan, houses are in short supply and big demand over here but chefs have come over from Oban in the past, it must be the coolest commute to work and back,' adds Gill.

The job is only seasonal for now but there are plans to make it a year-round role in the future.

Amazing produce from the

farm on the island and from the sea fills Kerrera's larder.

'The right person would be a whizz at making delicious meals from our own meat and get excited whenever a fishing boat passes the pontoons.

'We're getting lots of interest but mostly from down south at the moment. This could be someone's dream job. Kerrera is a beautiful place to live and work,' said Gill.

The grand opening is April 1 with the marina in tip top condition, and the couple are looking forward to a busy year.

OT

Supporters' team of the season

Oban Camanachd and Scotland U21 defender Daniel Sloss has been named in the 2021 shinty supporters' team of the season.

The young defender has been a stand-out for his club during the year.

The Camanachd Association contacted all senior club captains and asked them to nominate a player from another club in the senior leagues in each position to determine a shortlist for the Mowi supporters' team of the season. The nominated players were then put before supporters in their respective playing position and the final team was voted on by fans via a Twitter poll.

The popular poll ran over the festive period and amassed more than 3,500 votes.

The team was dominated by Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and cottages.com MacTavish Cup winners Kinlochshiel who had six players selected. Silverware success at Kyles Athletic and Kingussie was also acknowledged.

The only non-Premiership inclusions were co-managers Gregor MacCormick and Niall MacLennan from Beaulieu who saw off Kinlochshiel boss Johnston Gill and Kyles Athletic's Robert Baxter in the managers' poll.

Camanachd Association marketing and communications officer Aarron Duncan-MacLeod said: 'It's great to see so many deserving winners in the Mowi team of the season. These polls are often close-run and always contentious and I hope this will give shinty fans the world over something to talk about ahead of what is set to be an exciting 2022 campaign.'

The team was: Josh Grant, Kinlochshiel; Finlay MacRae, Kinlochshiel; Andrew King, Kyles Athletic; Daniel Sloss, Oban Camanachd; Conor Cormack, Kinlochshiel; Donald Nixon, Kinlochshiel; Ross MacRae, Kyles Athletic; Steven Macdonald, Newtonmore; Ruairidh Anderson, Kingussie; James Falconer, Kingussie; Jordan Fraser, Kinlochshiel, and Keith MacRae, Kinlochshiel. Managers - Gregor MacCormick and Niall MacLennan, Beaulieu.

Off-field changes for Fort William

It is same again on the pitch but there are a few off-field changes as Fort William co-managers Victor Smith and Adam Robertson prepare their side for the 2022 shinty season.

Speaking just ahead of one of the club's twice-weekly training sessions, Victor



Down Memory Lane: Oban Camanachd Club's AGM 1960

Following The Oban Times' report on Oban Camanachd's annual general meeting (AGM), which was held on Friday December 3 2021, reader Iain MacIntyre submitted this photograph which shows those in attendance at the club's AGM in 1960.

Iain told The Oban Times: 'The meeting was held in the Columba Hotel and noticeably, compared to today's club committees, there are 18 officials present.'

'Having had a lifetime association with Oban Camanachd, I can confirm

the committee members in the photograph were all actively involved in the club. They are: back row, Iain MacIntyre, 'Swallie'; Hugh MacLean, 'Toots'; Ian Donn, Palace Hotel; David Buchanan, The Oban Times; Colin Logan; Jackie MacInnes; Davie Brogan; Alistair Ferguson; Mickey McCuish; Billy Craven; Donnie MacVic-ar; unknown, and Robert Galbraith.

'Second row, Robert Gillfillan; Ivor Clark; Alan Hoey; Ewan Campbell, 'Hippie and unknown.

'Third row, Alistair MacAr-

thur 'Cally'; John Mac Neil; unknown; Donald Boyd; Joe Black, 'Marconi'; unknown; Archie Gillespie, Columba Hotel.

'Fourth row, Jim Felgate; Alistair MacLean; Duncan Cameron, chemist; Willie Currie, former Provost; Robert Donn; James Allan 'Spiv'; Bertie MacKay; Alex Campbell, Coal Righ; Baldy Stewart and Willie MacKay, Atholl Hotel.

'Front row, Dougie Boyd; Grigor Currie; Alex MacTaggart; John MacInnes; Alistair Stewart, Pennyfuir Farm; Eric Mouat, Post Office,

and Angus Robertson. My life-long attraction to the game of shinty and to Oban itself, despite living away from the town for 38 years, is in no small way due to the support and encouragement shown to me by the committee members listed, who were without exception all gentlemen who had a great pride in our game and its place in our community.

'I would be happy if those marked as 'unknown' were identified and advised to me. People can contact me on 01631 562148.'

Smith said: 'We are looking to do something different with our training this season. The players have signed up with Wolfhouse Gym in Fort William where Jamie Gall is involved and Emma Hebborn is the head coach. The boys can do weights, spinning classes, cardio, the full works but there is more to it than that.'

Emma Hebborn is a former Lochaber High School pupil who spent 10 years in the Royal Navy. She qualified as a personal trainer in 2016. She also has an impressive powerlifting medal haul at Scottish, European and World Championship level.

Victor Smith said: 'Emma will be involved. Her qualifications and experience will be a huge asset. She will be working on the players' fitness and will advise players on their preparations ahead of matches as well as what they do after games. This should help the boys be at their best and reduce injuries.'

'We will be in the gym one evening a week. Henry Milne remains involved for outdoor training when we'll do stick-work under the floodlights at the new pitch. Henry is a wonderful servant to the club.'

Alan Knox also has a big contribution to make. A former Fort William player, he also turned out for Lochaber and

Ballachulish. 'He will come on board to help with first aid,' added Victor. 'This means we'll always have someone to provide medical support from the touchline. Iain Fraser also assumes that role but it means if Iain is working on a Saturday, Alan can come with the first team and there will always be someone for the second team too. Alan will be a great addition as it is so important to have medical support for the players.'

James Tangney, a popular figure, is the new Fort William chairman, taking over from the well-respected Duncan MacPhee.

On the field, Fort William were runaway Mowi National Division winners at the end of the 2019 season, completing the league campaign with a 100 per cent record to earn a return to shinty's top flight. Their opening Premiership fixture against Kyles Athletic in March 2020 was postponed before Covid brought shinty to a standstill. Ryan Boyle is still sidelined after suffering a dislocated knee in a pre-season match against Kingussie a year ago. However, Ruairidh Shaw is home for a year after completing university and will be available for selection. The remainder of the first team squad remains unchanged with

all the players signing up for a shot against shinty's big guns.

Youngster Cameron Stephen has every chance of breaking into the first team squad if his development to date continues, according to Victor Smith.

'Cameron could easily have been more involved with the first team squad last season but we thought it would be more beneficial for him to play 90 minutes every week for the second team than coming on for 10 or 15 minutes as a first team substitute. He is now very much on our radar. He's a versatile player and I can see us using him at wing forward to start with but his future will be in a more central position. He is a good prospect.'

The Camanachd Association Competitions Committee meets before the end of the month to confirm plans for the start of the shinty season in March 2022. They will consider the most recent updates from the First Minister before confirming plans.

Victor Smith is hopeful of a return to something more akin to a normal shinty season.

He said: 'Last season was a bit of a disaster for us. We only managed games on successive Saturdays once and that was through no fault of our own.'

'Cup games were seen as much more important last

year. That meant the cup ties had a buzz about them but the league games were mostly flat.'

Fort William played nine competitive games in 2021, reaching the semi-final stage of the cottages.com MacTavish Cup. 'I hope we can have a normal season in 2022. We should at least attempt to start the season in the usual way. That will bring the excitement back to all matches, whether league or cup. I appreciate that managing Covid will be difficult for the game though and we don't want any adverse consequences for any clubs. We just have to trust clubs to do the right thing at the right time.'

The Fort William Street Shinty has also been a success. Victor Smith said: 'Willie MacDonald has done a great job with street shinty. It really took off and there were great numbers coming along every week. Shinty needs innovations like this.'

Fort William have so far planned pre-season friendlies against Kingussie on Saturday February 19 and Oban Camanachd a week later.

They may factor in at least one more game, as Victor Smith explained. 'We usually play Kyles Athletic during the pre-season for the Drew Ferguson Memorial Trophy. We'll look to do so again this

year, however, we'll wait to see the fixture list and if we have an early league meeting with Kyles, that game will double up for Drew's trophy.'

'It's going to be a massive season for Fort William. Our aim is to get a foothold in the Premiership and stay up and we will do everything we can to achieve that.'

Skye pre-season friendlies

Skye Camanachd first team manager Kenny MacLeod has set his side a testing pre-season schedule.

Skye Camanachd will host the popular John MacKinnon Memorial Sixes at the Portree High School astro pitch on Saturday February 5.

A week later, Skye travel to Blairbeg to play Glenurquhart.

Skye then welcome Kilmallie to Pairc nan Laoch, Portree, on Saturday February 19 to contest the Thomas Ferguson Memorial Cup, with Kilmallie the current holders.

The final pre-season friendly is against Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and cottages.com MacTavish Cup winners Kinlochshiel at Pairc nan Laoch on Saturday February 26 when the teams will play for the George Michie Memorial Cup.

The competitive shinty season starts on Saturday March 5.

Managers stand down

Morgan Smith and Alan Clark are standing down as Ballachulish team managers.

Increased work commitments influenced the duo's decision, announced at the club's annual general meeting, so the club is looking for a new management team.

The Ballachulish committee thanked Alan and Morgan for all the hard work they have put into the team and wished them all the best for the future.

Senior players wanted

Dunoon Camanachd and Strachur are appealing for new players.

Dunoon is looking to represent Dunoon and surrounding areas at senior level. This will once again provide a pathway for players coming through the thriving Dunoon junior set-up.

Strachur haven't played league shinty since the end of the 2018 season when they won Mowi South Division 2. Whilst they haven't had the required numbers recently, they hope they might be able to get a team together with Dunoon and Glasgow-based players.

Both clubs can be contacted via their Facebook page but time is short with the new fixture list due to be issued in early February.

Bob swings back into action at Abu Dhabi event

Continued from page 44 events with this tournament and next week's Dubai Desert Classic carrying huge world ranking points and \$8m prize pots.

Bob will return to competitive golf full of confidence after finishing last season with a fourth place in the DP World Tour finals in Dubai.

There is something about the desert sun the brings out the best in the left-hander, with consecutive top ten finishes in his last two appearances at the Dubai Desert Classic among the best results of his career.

After the disappointment of the heavy defeat at last year's Ryder Cup, 2022 feels like a transitional period for European golf, with the door wide open for fresh young talent to emerge as serious contenders on the world stage and a good start this season could see Robert MacIntyre lead the way.

FOOTBALL

Oban Saints and Lochnell youth football results and fixtures

Last Sunday's results: Oban Saints Under 13s lost 7-1 at home to Scotland Boys Club. Saints' goalscorer was Krishnan Davidson.

The Under 16s defeated Park Sports 4-1, with Michael Campbell netting all four goals for Saints.

This Sunday's fixtures: Bailleston Thistle v Under 13s; Under 15s v Morton; Under 16s, to be confirmed.

Lochnell Football Club, Sunday January 9: Under 14 friendly: Lochnell Blues 6, Lochnell Yellows 4.

Scorers for the Blues were Matthew MacAllister, 2, Lewis Rae, 2, Innes Fraser, Jack Bruce. Scorers for the Yellows were Cameron McAllister, 3, and Hamish MacIntyre.

Sunday January 16: Ashfield Juniors 6 Lochnell Under 14s 0.

This Sunday, January 23, Lochnell have a home game against Clyde FC Community.

GETINTOUCH
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RUGBY ROUND-UP

Lochaber S3/S4s played Oban Lorne at Banavie on Sunday January 16 in a friendly prior to the upcoming U16 West Region Youth Cup games.

Oban Lorne were one of the strongest teams in the West Region league before Christmas, while the Lochaber boys have had limited game time.

Oban Lorne were always likely to win and so it turned out on the day as they scored umpteen tries to Lochaber's one. A partisan Lochaber supporter would have had very few passages of play to cheer about during the game, but there's a lot to be satisfied with.

It was unfortunate Zach Alexander and match captain Stuie MacLennan, both rock solid in defence, had to come off with injuries.

Also in the backs, Callan Griffin and Taylor Barr had to cope with unfamiliar positions but played really well.

Front rower Anton Bodkin was Lochaber's outstanding player. Not far behind him were second rowers J-J Blackley and Archie Campbell.

Looking ahead to the U16 West Region Youth Cup, the

club's reasonable ambition for them is that they remain free of significant injuries and that they fulfil all three first round games.

Philip Thurlow.

Hamilton Ladies 5 Oban Lorne Ladies 57

The Oban ladies ventured into this game with a mix of 'old' and allegedly retired faces and new faces keen to get stuck into their first rugby game, with S Keppie and V Speirs leading the charge as captain and vice captain for the day.

Throughout the first half Oban shut down Hamilton's forward momentum before they could plan an attack. The Oban ladies were relentless in their tackles which lead to forwards C Fowler, L MacCormick and K Roche charging into Hamilton's strong defensive line.

This let A R Love and L Stewart to lead the backs and ship the ball out wide to centre M Letizia so she could draw the Hamilton ladies and pop the ball off to L Telfer who sped down the line and scored the first try of the game in the first two minutes. This was L Telfer's first ever try and it was converted by L Stewart.

LORN HEALTHY OPTIONS

This year I will get fitter. How many times have you chosen that as your New Year's resolution?

Around 80 per cent of us tend to fail by week three so what's going on? Is regular activity that difficult. Perhaps could we increase our chances of success by changing the processes we use to develop a healthy habit? Here's a few simple tips which may help.

Make your sessions easily achievable – start with short sessions that can be achieved even on the days when your motivation may be waning.

Master the art of turning up first, even if your sessions last as little as two minutes. Once you identify as someone who is active regularly the length and difficulty of your sessions can be increased gradually.

Don't see all activity as formal exercise. All activity counts. It doesn't have to be done in a formal setting like a leisure centre or gym. Walking, cycling, jogging, swimming or gardening outside are a great alternative and just as effective in many ways. Having said that, we do live in a part of the world where winter days are short, cold and often wet, so choose an activity and location where you will feel comfortable and safe. Oban's Atlantis Leisure provides a controlled and dry environment even when the

rain is falling outside and is worth considering when starting off in the colder months.

Track your progress. Make use of that new calendar you got for Christmas by marking an 'X' on it every day you carry out physical activity. This way you can see your progress which can motivate you to keep going on the tough days. And if the rest of the family can see it, there's a little more pressure to fill the next box with an 'X'. Then all you have to do is try not to break the chain and, if you do, don't miss twice in a row.

Join a group of people whose normal behaviour is closer to the identity you wish to adopt. If you want to exercise to music, find a suitable class that is easy to access. If you want to walk more, join a rambling group. Social interaction can also be a powerful motivator and lift your mental health.

Don't underestimate a shorter or easier session than what you had planned. Lost days hurt you more than successful days help you. This maintains momentum and strengthens your identity as someone who has mastered turning up.

Those struggling with a long-term health condition can ask their GP for a referral to Healthy Options.

Rob Graham,
lead exercise professional,
Healthy Options.

The Oban ladies kept this intensity up for the entire first half with K Roche, L MacCormick, L Stewart and R Sinclair scoring another four tries which were all successfully converted by L Stewart.

In the second half Hamilton did not allow for much ground to be made leading to a couple of knock-ons as Hamilton turned up the pressure on the Oban side.

Oban fought back though with R Egan scoring another try. However, with another kick from Hamilton the pressure was back on the Oban ladies, resulting in a knock on which Hamilton took full advantage of, squeezing in a try on Oban's blind side.

The Oban side didn't let this deter them though and scored another two tries through winger-turned-flanker C Hilder and G Thompson.

Hamilton kept up their intensity until the final minute when forward momentum led by V Speirs, E Mitchell and N Taylor resulted in a try by R Sinclair, converted by L Stewart.

Men's report

After more than three weeks with no rugby played, Oban travelled to league leaders Cumnock.

Oban knew this was going to

be a very hard game. During the first 10 minutes, Oban put pressure on Cumnock in their 25. Unfortunately, Oban lost the ball and Cumnock ran the full length of the park to score the first try. There was some good individual hard runs from Oban, but the tries kept coming for Cumnock.

The only Oban try came from Jamie Bate. A lot of work is to be done at training this week as Oban host Helensburgh at Glen this Saturday, January 22, kick-off 2pm. Final score Cumnock 40 Oban 5.

Oban Under 14s 3 Greenock Wanderers 71

On their first outing since November, the Under 14s came up against a very fast and physical Greenock team on a day perfect for running rugby.

Greenock tries came regularly but despite having key players missing Oban kept going until the end with man of the match Ruari Cottier leading the tackle count and Milo Llewelyn scoring a great try.

Greenock were well organised and clearly benefit from having five coaches for this age group.

It's back to the league this Sunday when the team takes on Loch Lomond at Glencruitten.

Under 13s match report

This was Oban's first outing at Under 13 level this year with

some players getting their first outing in a full competitive game against Greenock's well-drilled team.

Oban started strongly and were quickly rewarded with an early try by Ben Docherty.

Relentless pressure, strong tackling and attacking runs saw Oban run in four more tries in the first 15 minutes by Dougie Brown, Fin Mackechnie, Josh Olds and Aidan Lawrie.

The start of the second spell saw Greenock pile on early pressure resulting in an unconverted try.

From the restart, Oban ramped up the pressure with great surging runs from Ben Docherty at centre, Josh Olds at number eight and William Maclellan at second row. Great runs by Fin Mackechnie, Charlie Cameron and Lewis Cairns resulted in three more tries by Finlay Cottier, Josh Olds and Fin Mackechnie.

The third spell resulted in four more tries by Fin Mackechnie, Dougie Brown, Josh Olds and Jake Jevons resulting in a final score of 43-3 to Oban. Ten out of the 12 tries were converted by man of the match Fin Mackechnie.

Oban displayed some fantastic rugby with great play by regulars and the newer players.

Darrell Williams.

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February
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Hebridean crofter takes on Airbnb...
The real Macbeth... Ghillie Basan recipes...
Graham McTavish's Credo... Beautiful Fife garden...
Artist Lily Macrae... Underwater photography...
A Scot's 5,000-mile trek across Canada...



Robert MacIntyre.

Bob swings back into action at Abu Dhabi event

Oban's Robert MacIntyre tees it up today (Thursday) at the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship in the United Arab Emirates, after his plans to play in South Africa before Christmas were scuppered by Covid.

The event is the first in a four tournament 'Desert Swing' that also takes in Dubai and Qatar and is the European Tour's first full tournament since it rebranded as the DP World Tour and forged closer ties with the USPGA tour.

The world's number 58 will be hoping to build on his 16th place in this tournament last year and get his season off to a good start.

The Abu Dhabi Championship is the first of two consecutive Rolex Series

Continued on page 43.

Saints go marching on in fourth round cup tie

Uddingston Anvil	0
Oban Saints	2
West of Scotland Cup - fourth round	

Oban Saints' twice-postponed West of Scotland Amateur Cup fourth round tie against Uddingston Anvil finally got under way at the Sir Matt Busby Sports Complex last Saturday afternoon.

Having previously fallen victim to high Covid numbers and snow, the all Central Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division tie went ahead on the all-weather surface in Bellshill where first half goals from Cammy Hill and Daniel MacCuish saw the visitors prevail.

Manager Willie Gemmell was forced to make three changes to the starting 11 which had rounded off 2021 with a home win against Gartcosh United, giving a starting role to young Thomas McCrindle in central defence and a debut in central midfield to new signing James Conington. To complete the changes, veteran goalkeeper David Dunlop took the gloves for the second time this season.

The hosts were looking for a repeat of their two-goal victory at Glencruitten when the two sides met ten weeks previously on league business but, despite having the better of the early exchanges, Uddingston got little change out of the previously untried Saints back three of Steven MacLeod,

Myles McAuley and Thomas McCrindle. Saints opened the scoring after 20 minutes when James Conington, who impressed on his debut in central midfield, won possession on the halfway line and found Cammy Hill on the left touchline. Hill played his way out of a tight situation with the help of Craig MacEwan and Matty Kelly and continued his run to get on the end of Kelly's pass which sent him racing through on goal.

Hill held off the challenge of Ross Ferguson before wrong footing Anvil keeper David McKegney with a clipped finish into the bottom corner.

Hill was instrumental in Saints' second goal when he showed Paul Finnigan and Christopher McAleney a clean pair of heels with another incisive run on the left. The flying wing back drew David McKegney off his line before squaring to Daniel MacCuish for a tap-in to double Saints' advantage.

Kieron Markey's late challenge on Cammy Hill earned the Anvil striker a booking two minutes into what would be a frustrating second half for the home side which could find no way through a solid Saints defensive performance.

A dipping 59th minute Alan Inch effort from 30 yards was probably Anvil's best chance of the match but the ball was tipped over the bar by David Dunlop who was in no mood to give up his highly-prized



Ross Ferguson and Daniel MacCuish, who netted Saints' second goal.

clean sheet. Saints responded with an off-target effort of their own when Gavin Forgrieve lifted a shot from 30 yards over the crossbar after good work on the left from Cammy Hill, James Conington and Craig MacEwan.

Saints' gaffer Willie Gemmell made his first change after 65 minutes, replacing David Beaton with Kyle Cooper in a straight swap at right wing back.

A double block by Craig MacEwan from a 72nd minute Robert Dimmer free-kick personified the 'they shall not pass' Saints' attitude which gave the home side little encouragement in their pursuit of a route back into the game.

Willie Gemmell made his second and final change with 15 minutes remaining, replacing Daniel MacCuish with Ruaridh Horne. The change



Saints' new signing James Conington impressed in midfield.

saw Kyle Cooper join Craig MacEwan up front with Horne taking the right wing back berth.

James Conington was denied a goal to round off an impressive debut when David McKegney saved his shot from 18 yards after Kyle Cooper had raced forward on the right

from a good advantage played by referee David Cameron after Anvil substitute Ryan Hutchison had clattered into Matty Kelly on the halfway line.

Kelly will claim he hadn't quite fully recovered from the challenge when he miscued his finish from 14 yards wide of the target from a Ruaridh Horne cross after Craig MacEwan led a counter-attack in the 90th minute.

Neither goalkeeper was troubled in the five additional minutes allowed by Mr Cameron before the final whistle confirmed Saints' progress to the fifth round.

Awaiting Saints in the last 16 is an away tie against Giffnock North of the Caledonian League Premier Division, Glenburn Miners Welfare of the Ayrshire Premier League or Glynhill Moorcroft of the Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division.

This Saturday, Saints return to league business for the visit of Greenock High School Former Pupils. The game will be played at Glencruitten with a 2pm kick-off.

Match report and photographs: Derek Black.



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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 20 January, 2022** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

20	0106 1.0 0708 3.9 TH 1342 1.3 1932 3.7	22	0211 1.1 0811 3.8 SA 1441 1.4 2034 3.5	24	0327 1.2 0927 3.6 M 1558 1.6 2155 3.3	26	0517 1.5 1121 3.3 W 1812 1.8
21	0138 1.0 0739 3.8 F 1413 1.4 2002 3.6	23	0246 1.1 0846 3.7 SU 1513 1.5 2111 3.4	25	0416 1.3 1017 3.4 TU 1656 1.7 C 2251 3.1	27	0006 3.0 0631 1.5 TH 1252 3.2 1935 1.7

OBAN WEATHER

Thursday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

Friday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 8°C.

Saturday

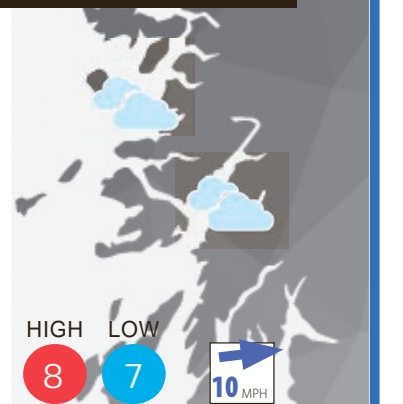
Light cloud and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.

Sunday

Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

Ardriishaig	-5.35
Campbeltown	-5.30
Crinan	-0.47
Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Lochboisdale	+0.30
Mallaig	+0.25
Portree	+0.55
Tobermory	+0.16
Dover	+5.30



LOCHABER TIMES

& OBAN TIMES

No 8599

Thursday 20 January, 2022

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95p



Fort pays tribute to Lochaber stalwart

Childcare Choices: register your child for their early learning place

Dolphin stranding



Scientists to investigate cetacean death

• See page 4 for more

Dial it in Doric



Mix up with phone book raises a few eyebrows

• See page 2 for more

CALL TO DITCH FORT ROAD NAME WITH LINKS TO PRINCE

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

Fort William residents are being asked to back a petition urging Highland Council to ditch the name of a road in the town due to its connection with Prince Andrew who is facing a civil sex assault case in the United States.

One of Prince Andrew's titles is Earl of Inverness and controversy has sprung up over the road of the same name into Inverloch, which comes off the North Road roundabout on the A82 in Fort William.

As well as being the Duke of York, Prince Andrew has held the title of Earl of Inverness since 1986, following his marriage to Sarah Ferguson. There is now a growing clamour of calls for him to also be stripped of that title.

Prince Andrew has consistently denied the allegations. However, Drew Hendry, SNP MP for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, has said it is unthinkable for the Queen's second son to continue as the Earl of Inverness in the current circumstances.

The petition concerning the road in Fort William states: 'In light of the negative



Former Highland councillor Brian Murphy, above, is one of those who support changing the name of Earl of Inverness Road at Inverloch. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos Inset: Prince Andrew.

and controversial publicity surrounding Prince Andrew, Duke of York, aka Earl of Inverness, and the resultant punitive action taken by HM The Queen we, the residents of Fort William, call on Highland Council to rename the road currently known as Earl of Inverness Road.

'We ask that after consultation the road name has a

popular local connection. To date popular suggestions are (Willie) MacKillop Way, (Sandy) MacDonald Road and School Brae.

'We ask that these names be included in the consultation process. Supporting information can be supplied.'

The petition, which is on the Change.org website, was started by local resident Donald

'Skeegan' Cameron. Although it has been slow to garner a lot of support as yet, the issue was due to be discussed by Fort William community councillors on Tuesday night.

The possibility of altering the name of the road was also talked about by Highland Council elected ward members for Fort William and Ardnamurchan on Monday.

One of them, Councillor Andrew Baxter, told the Lochaber Times on Tuesday: 'I've asked that council officers provide details as to the process that must be followed to change a street name following contact from constituents.'

'The local community council is always consulted on the naming of new roads and we would want them to be involved in any discussion about renaming.'

'Councillors briefly discussed this yesterday and agreed to wait until confirmation of the process before considering further.'

Asked why he felt the need to get the name of the road changed, Mr Cameron said: 'There appears to be a groundswell of opinion locally to remove the name of the road.'

'Given that HM The Queen has stripped her son of the HRH title and honorary military appointments, it seems appropriate for Highland Council to follow suit. A number of alternative names have been suggested and hopefully, after consultation, one will be adopted.'

Continued on page 2.

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Call to ditch Fort road name with link to Prince Andrew

Continued from page 1.

Former local councillor Brian Murphy has signed the petition and says even without the current controversy, the road name should be changed to something with more of a local connection.

Mr Murphy told the

Lochaber Times this week: 'The name Earl of Inverness Road doesn't have any relevance to Inverlochy.'

'It was always known locally as School Brae. Certainly, when I was a pupil at Inverlochy Primary School in the 1950s, everybody knew it

as School Brae, as did subsequent generations.'

Mr Murphy says he did not know for sure when the sign bearing the name Earl of Inverness Road first appeared.

'It might have been about 20 years ago. I can't say exactly when.

'But I don't think it was put up at the request of locals. But even if there wasn't this current stushie involving Prince Andrew, I think the name should be changed to something with more of a local connection. I think it should've been changed to

something more local a while ago, but with this situation now, maybe we will see more of a push for that to be done.'

Asked to comment, Highland Council said: 'On the matter of the title of the Earl of Inverness we have no comment. That is a matter for the Palace.'

'The council has a petitions procedure, details of which and how to petition the council are on our website.'

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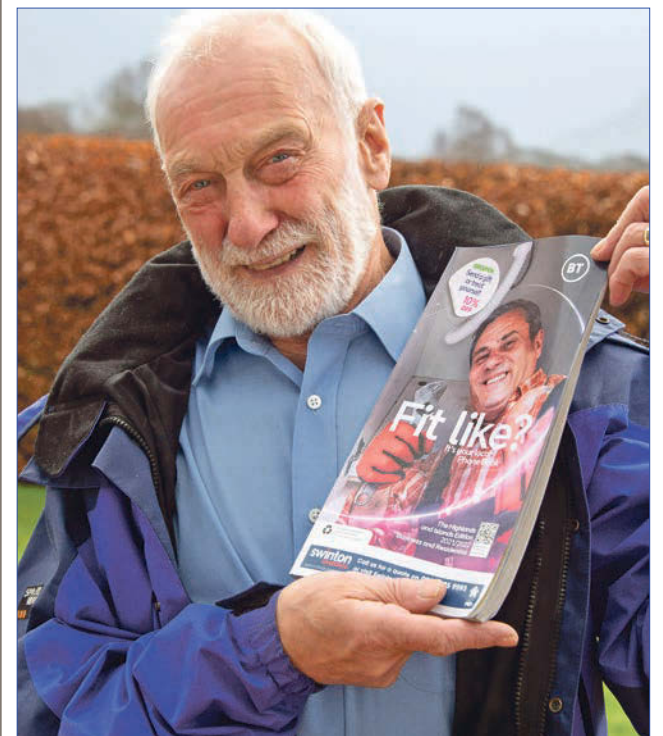
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Fit like? 'Corpach Aberdonian' George Bruce is amused by the greeting on his Highland and Islands phonebook.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

New phonebook raises a smile due to mix up with cover

Many local people were a bit surprised when the new telephone directory popped through the letterbox, writes Iain Ferguson.

Not because it is only a shadow of its former self, being thin, light and not very big. Nor because a strong set of glasses may be needed for any search of person or number. No, what caused more than a few raised eyebrows was the front cover, which has a photograph of a happy gentleman with a spanner saying: 'Fit like? It's your local Phone Book'.

Adding to the confusion, it goes on to say that it is The Highlands and Islands Edition,

which many have observed as a slight anomaly, given that the expression of inquiry into one's well-being is generally confined to the Aberdeen area.

However, Corpach resident and former Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team member, George Bruce, who moved to Lochaber from Aberdeen more than 50 years ago was delighted at the greeting, which he still uses daily when meeting friends in the street.

He told us: 'I didn't notice it at first, but when it was pointed out to me, I thought it was quite funny. At last people will realise that I am indeed a true Highlander!'

Hydro boss says 'every care taken' over Glen Etive scheme

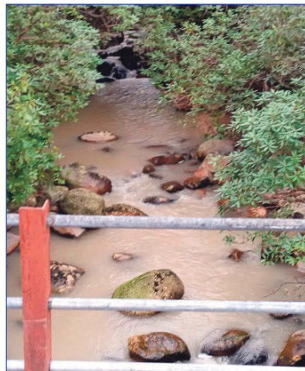
by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

The boss of the company constructing a hydro scheme on the Allt Charnan burn in Glen Etive claims every care has been taken to try to ensure problems with silt do not occur.

The comments from William Dickins, of Dickins Hydro Resources, were in response to recent complaints about silt being washed into the Allt Charnan burn.

The development is one of seven 'run of river' hydro schemes in Glen Etive for which Dickins Hydro Resources received approval from Highland Council planners almost three years ago.

Two days before Christmas, the parkwatchscotland website and blog carried a report - accompanied by photographs supplied by a local resident - appearing to show the Allt Charnan burn water coloured



The Allt Charnan river discoloured by what is claimed to be silt. Photograph: John Sinclair.

brown.

The silt concerns were reported to both Highland Council and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

Asked to comment last week, a SEPA spokesperson told the Lochaber Times: 'We received a report from a member of the public on December 23 regarding silt in the Allt Charnan.

Staff are investigating and we have no current concerns regarding any significant environmental damage.'

And a council spokesman added that the local authority was aware there had been an issue with regard to silt affecting the watercourse.

Contacted by the Lochaber Times for an explanation, Mr Dickins told us that his understanding of the situation was that there had been an issue with a culvert that failed, causing dirty water to mix with clean water runoff, which in turn caused silt to be washed into the Allt Charnan.

'This was reported to SEPA for which the mitigation was to replace the culvert and improve the silt fence. Replacing this was a controlled action which would have caused a pulse of siltation during the remedial works,' Mr Dickins told us.

'Construction on this scheme started in spring 2020 and

should be finished on this site in the next six weeks, thereafter reinstatement and restoration works will commence.

'We have taken every care during the construction period to ensure, as far as possible, that these incidents do not occur.

'We have had an Ecological Clerk of Works on site one or two times a week depending on the time of year. More frequent visits during periods of bad weather.

'In general during construction, this site has performed well with minimal incidents. Where any such incidents did occur they were reported and mitigated in a timely fashion.

'We would obviously prefer to have no such siltation issues on site. We feel that, in conjunction with our site contractor, we have worked hard to minimise the potential for any such siltation incidents to occur.'

Man who extorted cash from uncle asks to be jailed

Sean McCuish, of Wallace Place, Fort William, appeared for sentence at Inverness Sheriff Court after previously admitting a charge of extortion and possessing a lock-knife.

The 30-year-old instructed his lawyer, Mike Chapman, not to plead for any other sentence than one of prison and Sheriff Sara Matheson obliged by jailing him for 16 months.

But she sympathised with McCuish after reading a confidential background report and expressed the hope incarceration would benefit him.

She told him: 'It is no surprise given your childhood that you find yourself in this position.'

Mr Chapman told the Sheriff: 'It is accepted this is an unpleasant offence and he has expressed a degree of remorse. He attributes the reason to a drug addiction. He does not wish a deferred sentence. He feels prison will do him more good and help him get to a better place.'

Fiscal depute Martina Eastwood had previously told the court that McCuish's uncle, Anthony McCuish, inherited

more than £36,000 following the death of his parents.

Mrs Eastwood described Mr McCuish as 'a vulnerable adult' who had a conversation with his nephew about women on social media in May 2018.

'It led to the accused offering to organise a prostitute. There is then an exchange of messages over the next few days during which the price of the prostitute rises...When no prostitute appears, the accused tells his uncle the pimps are now angry and he can still make an appointment with her but further money up front is required. He then threatens his uncle with the consequences of non-payment, saying the pimps have guns and that they may shoot him.'

'Overall between July 5 and July 27, 2021, he extorted £2,000 from his uncle,' Mrs Eastwood told the court.

'The court heard that when police went to arrest McCuish, he was outside his home and had a lock-knife in his pocket. 'He told police it was for cleaning out oil on his bong,' Mrs Eastwood added.

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Beinn Dorain is one of the most instantly recognisable Munros in the southern Highlands, a huge conical peak that dominates the A82 when driving north from Tyndrum. Its ascent can easily be combined with neighbouring Beinn an Dothaidh which has a fine outlook over Rannoch Moor.

Total distance: 15km, 1200m ascent, 10km, 830m ascent - Beinn an Dothaidh only; 9km, 892m ascent - Beinn Dorain only

For more detail of the route please visit our website www.nevishillwalking.club or the Nevis Hillwalking Club Facebook page.

Please note that walks may change at short notice due to conditions on the day and Covid restrictions.

Scientists to investigate Loch Aline dolphin death

Scientists at the University of Glasgow are hoping they can shed some light on the causes surrounding the death of a dolphin that became stranded in Loch Aline on Friday, writes Mark Entwistle.

It was earlier that day that Annabel Lawrence, director of the Community Association of Lochs and Sounds (CAOLAS), was alerted by Drimnin Estate that a common dolphin had live stranded in the shallow waters at the head of Loch Aline on Morvern.

British Divers Marine Life Rescue and Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme were contacted. Sadly, however, the dolphin, which was showing signs of being very poorly, subsequently died later that same evening.

On Saturday morning, Ms Lawrence along with a few volunteers met with Texa Sim, the



CAOLAS Marine Community Officer, who is also a cetacean ecologist, to assess the animal and collect it for necropsy.

The dolphin turned out to be a large adult male, showing very little external damage, with worn teeth indicating that it may have been an older

of Veterinary Medicine, where it will be necropsied.

'Hopefully this will shed light on why this beautiful animal died, and tell us more about its life when it was alive.'

Ms Sim, who has been invited to attend the necropsy when it takes place in Glasgow, told the Lochaber Times: 'Short-beaked common dolphins [Delphinus delphis] are typically seen in summertime around the Scottish west coast, often in large groups.'

'They are usually the second most common species to strand in Scotland, with the harbour porpoise being the most common.'

'The species is often seen in the Sound of Mull and surrounding areas, and it is possible underlying health issues caused this older animal to swim into the shallow head-waters of Loch Aline.'

Fort cinema gets exclusive on McAvoy film

Highland Cinema in Fort William has been granted an exclusive week-long theatrical run of the new movie My Son, providing the only opportunity to see the film on the big screen in the UK from tomorrow, Friday.

A ground-breaking thriller, where both actor and audience uncover a mystery at the same time, it was filmed entirely in Lochaber around Loch Leven, Glencoe and Ballachulish.

Driving in the heart of the Highlands, Edmond Murray (McAvoy) receives a call from his ex-wife Joan (Claire Foy), in tears. Their seven-year-old son has gone missing from a campsite. Edmond sets out to find answers, as their worry and desperation rises.

This film features a unique performance from McAvoy, who was not given a script and had to improvise his scenes as he discovered the truth in real-time. Rated 15, My Son will be showing at Highland Cinema for a second week after its exclusive run.

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West Highlands lose 'real fighter'

Tributes have been paid from across Lochaber to roads campaigner, former Fort William FC chairman and local businessman, Stewart MacLean, who died earlier this month, writes Mark Entwistle.

Among those attending Mr MacLean's funeral service, held at Fort William Kilmallie Church of Scotland on Saturday, was Scottish Conservatives leader Douglas Ross MSP and former Conservative Highlands and Islands MSP Mary Scanlon.

Caol and Mallaig councillor, Allan Henderson had known Mr MacLean since the two men both ended up on the Fort William and Lochaber Tourist Board in 1980.

Mr Henderson added: "There he quickly displayed his marketing talent, sharp intellect and strategic thinking while never frightened to scrutinise



Tributes have been paid to Stewart MacLean following his death earlier this month.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba. photos

decisions. Over the years he continued to be generous with his voluntary time while developing his own business interests. His work in helping to save the Belford and with Transport Scotland/Government officials, firstly getting pulpit rock corner realigned, and then lobbying with the A82 campaign group for the upgrading of the

Inverarnan to Tarbet stretch is legendary.

"Completing this stretch of road will be a suitable legacy in memory of Stewart."

Mr Henderson's former Caol and Mallaig ward councillor, Ben Thompson, told us: "Stewart was active in many Lochaber community causes but I knew him best through his work with

the A82 Partnership. He was a vocal and fearless campaigner for better transport links and his commitment to that cause was unflinching over very many years.

"The West Highlands has lost a real fighter for one of the most important issues we face."

John Hutchison, retired senior council official but now community advocate, added: "Stewart did a great deal for the broader community over many years, sometimes through other groups but mostly by his own initiative.

"I was fortunate to be his colleague in TBag, the A82 Partnership and a cinema project. Stewart's business experience and single-mindedness often brought focus and drive to community efforts, to everyone's benefit."

■ Turn to page 44 for more tributes.

Mums give up catching under-22 bus passes

The Scottish Government's free bus passes for young people under 22 has been vaunted by local SNP MPs and MSPs, but Highland mums are giving up applying for their youngsters, blaming 'unbelievably tedious and frustrating hoops'.

The First Minister announced last year that all under-22s in Scotland can access free bus travel from Monday January 31.

From Monday January 10 young people aged five to 21, or their guardians, were able to apply for their new or replacement National Entitlement Card (NEC) or Young Scot NEC in order to access the scheme.

However, parents are now complaining of the difficulties in applying for the card.

One computer savvy mum helping her daughter apply, cursed 'unbelievably tedious and frustrating hoops'.

She told us: "It is such a hassle to apply for it that I can't help wondering if people will be put off. I spent nearly three hours trying to get the card for my teenage daughter; registering for myscotgov.org, finding all

the relevant paperwork – including birth certificate – only to find I needed a camera on my computer, which I don't have.

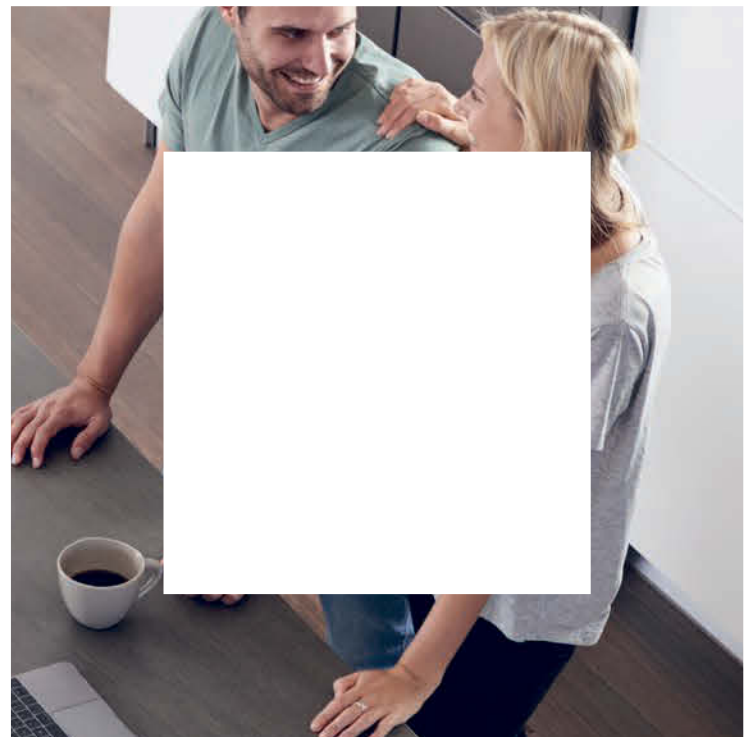
"I then tried to use my phone but the website refused to recognise the original Young Scot card number. Three times. I gave up after that. Maybe that's what they want? Would save the government money..."

More mums agreed. "Bl**dy system was a nightmare," said one in a Facebook mums' group: "I was in and out the system for days."

"Spent ages trying to do it online then gave up," said second.

"It was definitely a fuff. I was completing the application on a laptop and had to scan documents using my phone," added another. With another advising: "Patience and time needed."

Transport Scotland said: "For those who don't have the required proofs to apply online, applications can be made direct with individual local authorities and, in some local council areas, schools are coordinating applications on behalf of pupils."



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Belford Hospital moves to level one for visiting

NHS Highland bosses have now moved rural general hospitals such as the Belford in Fort William to level one visiting rules, writes Mark Entwistle.

This means up to two visitors are able to visit patients at the Belford Hospital, Lorn and Isles Hospital in Oban, Caithness General Hospital, and New Craigs Hospital in Inverness.

Raigmore Hospital in Inverness remains at essential visiting only. This was due to be reviewed on Monday (January 17).

Katherine Sutton, NHS Highland's Chief Officer (Acute), said: 'The importance of visiting within hospitals cannot be overstated, bringing comfort to both those receiving visitors and to those visiting. It is a fundamental part of the care of a patient in



hospital.

'We know just how difficult it is for everyone involved when visiting restrictions are put in place and I am pleased that we have been able to move these hospitals back to level one visiting.

'I must stress, however, that the risk of Covid cannot be

ignored. We are taking a cautious approach with this and ask that visitors should still liaise with the ward to ensure arrangements are agreed before they come in to visit.

'We would also ask, as per national guidance, that visitors take an LFD test before coming into any of our hospi-

The Belford has moved to level one.

tals and only visit if the test is negative. Please do not visit the hospital if you or anyone else in your household has tested positive for Covid-19 or has any symptoms.'

Mrs Sutton added: 'Raigmore Hospital remains at essential visiting only but we will review that this week. If your visit is essential, please contact the hospital ward your relative or loved one is in, and the staff will support you with making arrangements to visit safely.

'We are grateful to the public for your ongoing cooperation and understanding. If you are visiting the hospital please ensure that you wear a face mask and wash your hands or use hand sanitiser before you go on to the ward/department and as you leave the hospital.'

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Are you a business that is looking to support career pathways for young people? Perhaps you're a parent or carer that wants to understand the opportunities available for young people to find their future destination?

Our hosted Developing the Young Workforce West Highland programme continues to showcase and secure work experience opportunities, inspirational speaker events and much more, within high schools across the Lochaber region. The programme needs your support to find new work experience placements across business sectors, can you help?

As a Chamber of Commerce working for businesses across the Outdoor Capital of the UK, we are keen to support the future prospects of young people across the region and continue to help local businesses by linking them with the DYW West Highland programme. You don't need to be a member of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce to offer work experience placements and we're keen for as many businesses as possible across sectors to get in touch and start a conversation



with our school coordinator team.

In addition to work experience placements being made available to pupils, the programme is keen to share the many development pathways that are available and will be showcasing these as part of a dedicated Scottish Apprenticeship week of action between March 7-11, looking to highlight employers, sector-based apprenticeships and the many regional success stories that show clear benefit and growth for young people in the West Highlands.

If you would like to offer placements, workplace insight or to talk to our school coordinator team about joining the placement network, please contact DYW West Highland team directly.

You can find out more about the work across the DYW West Highlands network at dywwesthighland.org and get in touch with the team by emailing info@dywwesthighland.org.



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West Coast Tories urge PM to go

by Sandy Neil
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

The Highlands and Islands' Tory MSPs want Prime Minister Boris Johnson to resign after he hosted a BYOB 'work' party at No 10 Downing Street during lockdown.

Mr Johnson is facing growing calls to quit from outside and inside his own party following his apology in the House of Commons last Wednesday for hosting a lockdown-busting 'bring your own booze' party in Downing Street on 20 May 2020 - which he insists he thought was a 'work event'.

At the time, social mixing was banned except with one other person from another household outdoors in a public place.

Jamie Halcro Johnston, a Highlands and Islands MSP for the Scottish Conservatives,

said: 'From my own experience of lockdown and being kept apart from my family and friends, I can fully understand the public reaction in recent days.

pandemic required everyone to follow the rules and do the right thing.

'That begins with those at the top. That the Prime Minister hasn't followed his own rules

the wrong and that makes his position untenable.'

Their calls echoed that of the leader of the Scottish Conservatives Douglas Ross, an MSP and MP.

It brings the Scottish Tories in rare agreement with Labour, the Liberal Democrats and SNP, who all urged Mr Johnson to resign.

Following further revelations, on Friday Downing Street apologised to Buckingham Palace for two further staff parties in No 10 on the eve of Prince Philip's funeral. Opposition parties contrasted the behaviour of No 10 staff with pictures of the Queen sitting alone at the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral, due to Covid restrictions.

'While the Prime Minister apologised, that was an acceptance he was in the wrong and makes his position untenable'



'To allow me to meet my parliamentary responsibilities in Edinburgh, while avoiding putting my loved ones in Orkney at risk or bringing Covid into the islands, I was not able to go home for nearly five months.

'While I recognise the Prime Minister has acknowledged the palpable anger that is being felt across the country and apologised, tackling the Covid

makes his position untenable.'

Donald Cameron, pictured, a fellow Scottish Conservative MSP in the Highlands and Islands, agreed: 'The Prime Minister should step down. People are rightly angry that the rules they were following were not being followed by those at the top of government.

'While the Prime Minister made an apology, that was an acceptance that he was in

Plea to community to come forward for 'wee' council elections

Community-minded individuals are being encouraged to step forward and sign up to represent their areas at grassroots council level.

Nominations are being invited from people seeking election to 15 Highland community councils including three in Lochaber. Acharacle and Kinlochleven require five new members while Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry need nine people to join to enable them to form a quorum.

All three community councils are currently in abeyance.

Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Andrew Baxter is one of many who believe community councils form a vital part of the political process locally.

He told us: 'Good community councils are important here in Lochaber.

'They effectively represent local opinion on a wide range of issues that otherwise would go unnoticed by a range of public bodies.

'I know from experience how their absence makes it even more difficult to get those at Highland Council in Inverness

to listen to Lochaber people. They do make a difference.'

Community councils are voluntary organisations that express the views and concerns of local people within their area across a wide range of issues from new buildings and roads to local services and facilities.

Anyone who wishes to support their local community council should be registered in the current Electoral Register for the Community Council area and must be 16 or over. Nomination forms and copies of the scheme for the establishment of Community Councils can be downloaded from www.highland.gov.uk/elections, obtained by email to: election@highland.gov.uk, or by contacting the appropriate ward manager. Details available at www.highland.gov.uk/elections.

Completed forms must be submitted to the appropriate ward manager no later than noon on Tuesday February 1, 2022. If any community council's nominations exceeds its membership, an election will take place on Thursday March 3, 2022 via postal ballot.



Do a lateral flow test before you travel, mix with others or visit busy places.



**Living safely
this winter**



LT

Fort and Mallaig rail ticket offices escape cuts to hours

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

It appears the ticket offices at both the West Highland Line rail stations - in Fort William and Mallaig - have escaped any proposed reduction to their opening hours as part of ScotRail's just announced review.

ScotRail is proposing changes to ticket office opening hours at stations throughout the country - aimed, it claims, at delivering a better level of service for customers.

No members of staff will lose their job in this review of all customer-facing functions, and ScotRail says it will deliver improvements for people travelling and better meet the needs of rail users.

However, Kyle of Lochalsh booking office will see a few changes. While it will open a



minute earlier from Monday to Friday at 9.45am, it will close on these days 35 minutes earlier at 4.15pm.

On Saturdays it will open 29 minutes earlier at 9.45am but also close 63 minutes earlier at a new finishing time of 4.15pm instead of the current 5.18pm. The station booking office does not open on Sundays. ScotRail is undertaking the wide-ranging review of customer operations, such as ticket office opening hours,

as it looks to transform the railway following the impact of the pandemic.

While some aspects of the travelling patterns of customers will return, ScotRail believes others will never be the same and the review will ensure the best possible service is provided to those using ScotRail services and stations.

This dramatic shift in customer patterns prompted the review of the opening hours of ticket offices for the first time

Fort William railway station.

since 1991 to see if the needs of customers are still being met.

The assessment has considered where there is a decline in tickets sales at stations, the opportunities that exist to reduce fraudulent travel, and how to increase revenue through more revenue protection teams.

Transport Focus, the independent watchdog for transport users, is conducting a public consultation on behalf of ScotRail seeking the views of customers about the changes.

Phil Campbell, head of customer operations, said: 'There has been no real review of our ticket office opening hours for 30 years, and it is important we keep up with the changing

habits of customers who no longer rely on purchasing tickets in that way.

'With more than a 50 per cent drop in the use of ticket offices, heightened by the pandemic, we want to do everything we can to make sure everyone has a hassle-free journey.

'Nobody in ScotRail will lose their jobs as a result of these changes, and it is important to note that rather than being about cutting jobs, this is about adding value for our staff and customers.

'Over the coming weeks we'll be talking to customers, staff, and stakeholders about the improvements they can expect to see and experience as they travel around Scotland's Railway.'

First to flag up the fact that neither Fort William nor Mallaig stations were in line for a cut to their ticket

office opening hours was Hege Harnaes at Glenfinnan Station Museum.

Commenting, Councillor Allan Henderson (Caol and Mallaig Ward) told the Lochaber Times: 'Absolutely delighted and glad that we have people like Hege and John [Barnes] monitoring ScotRail and their services to the public.

'However, I am sure ScotRail will eventually go the way of Stagecoach et al by only selling online.

'The Hitrans way is to get joined up travel ticketing which will be computerised and probably more convenient than multiple tickets.

'I believe the public see security in stations that are staffed with information freely available, rather than a malfunctioning intercom system that probably isn't manned.'

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LT

Clan Donald Lands Trust looks to open up its archives to celebrate 50th anniversary

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

Over the course of 2022, the Clan Donald Lands Trust, the charitable organisation that cares for Armadale Castle, Gardens and Museum and the wider estate on Skye, is continuing its 50th anniversary celebrations.

To mark the significant anniversary, over the coming year the trust will be looking back through its archives and sharing some favourite moments.

There will be special trust posts with material from the archives on social media. The trust is also marking the anniversary through its Trees for the Future programme, where it is planting the next generation of trees at Armadale



One of the photographs in the exhibition, showing a family group from the 1870s-90s. Photograph: CDLT.

through a collaboration with the International Conifer Conservation Programme.

During 2022, there will also be a special exhibition and events programme which will celebrate Armadale Castle past, present and future.

The trust will be sharing stories from people from all walks of life who have been

involved in Armadale over the years.

The museum exhibition will focus on the castle in its heyday and shine a spotlight on some of those who have worked there – from Victorian gardeners to the castle's last housekeeper. The trust will also be inviting people to share their own stories

and memories. Alex Stoddart, CEO of Clan Donald Lands Trust, told the Lochaber Times: 'In 1971, members and supporters of Clan Donald, both local and from the migration diaspora, came together and facilitated one of Scotland's first community land acquisitions. Despite long odds, the community won through and the Clan Donald Lands Trust was born.'

'Celebrating this anniversary is not so much about looking back at an extraordinary 50 years, but looking forward to what we can accomplish for future generations.'



'The future of our young people on this magical island and the durability of our culture and heritage are inextricably entwined.'

On July 31, 1971, the trust

officially acquired the 20,000-acre Armadale estate.

The former home of the Macdonald clan chiefs, the state had come up for sale earlier in the year, following

ADVERTORIAL

£30,000 Renewable Energy Fund

Loganair has introduced a new £30,000 community grant scheme dedicated to supporting local renewable energy projects across Scotland.

Machado and Rio dos Índios projects and the Tambopata-Bahuaja biodiversity reserve in Peru.

However, Loganair recognises the importance of supporting local communities on their own path to Carbon Zero which is facilitated via the GreenSkies Community fund.

The fund will be released in three instalments of £10,000 with applicants able to access a maximum grant of £5,000 per project. The application deadline for the first instalment is 31st January 2022.

The initiative is open to communities and will help to establish renewable energy projects such as

small-scale wind systems, solar panels, small-scale hydro power, and air source heat pumps. It is not available for funding research or feasibility studies.

Jonathan Hinkles, CEO, Loganair, said: 'We've made our position clear. The transport industry as a whole has a duty to address and reduce emissions from every



form of travel, and it's our responsibility as the UK's largest regional airline to lead the way.

'Our GreenSkies Community Fund will support local renewables projects that not only tackle carbon emissions but also benefit communities by providing power that reduces energy bills. As an airline we are involved in some incredibly exciting and innovative initiatives to decarbonise aviation and we hope our GreenSkies Community Fund will encourage the same pioneering spirit in communities across Scotland.'

Readers are reminded that the GreenSkies Community Fund is now open should you have a project you wish to apply for, but the deadline for the first instalment is approaching soon. Simply write in to Loganair and let them know about your proposed project and you could be awarded the grant. You can apply via our website at: [loganair.co.uk/people-and-planet/environmental-engagement/](https://www.loganair.co.uk/people-and-planet/environmental-engagement/) or via post to: **Marketing – Loganair Limited, 9 Marchburn Drive, Glasgow Airport, Paisley PA32SJ** – All applications must be received by **31st January 2022**.



The airline is involved in a wide range of initiatives to manage and mitigate the environmental impact of flying including the introduction of a mandatory £1 carbon offsetting charge levied on all flights. The money is invested in accredited offsetting schemes certified to the highest international standards of Loganair's net zero plan. These schemes include; the Albano

ooks back in anniversary



Left: Armadale Castle on Skye. Photograph: CDLT/Marcus Adam. Above: Lord Macdonald, high chief of Clan Donald, and children plant a tree to mark the anniversary. Photograph: CDLT/Paddy McKay.

the death of Alexander Godfrey Macdonald, 7th Lord Macdonald. Clan members worldwide founded the trust in order to purchase some of

the last remaining lands in Clan Donald ownership and preserve this very special place for everyone to enjoy.

A cornerstone of the trust's

mission is to conserve and promote the culture and history of the Highland clans, and Clan Donald in particular.

This has involved a huge array of projects and activities including restoring the historic gardens, opening an award-winning museum, establishing a world-renowned programme of Gaelic performing arts competitions, and welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the globe to the 'spiritual home of Clan Donald'.

To find out more visit the trust website and check out its page, The First Five Decades.

Also download Godfrey, Lord Macdonald's recollections, CDLT – the first steps, also on this page.

Global inquiries about Canna guesthouse lease

More than 100 people from around the world have inquired about taking on one of Scotland's remotest guesthouses on the tiny island of Canna.

Tighard guesthouse and the island itself – the island is home to just 15 residents – are both owned by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS).

An Edwardian villa built in 1904, Tighard overlooks Canna's shallow bay, a popular natural harbour in the summer for visiting yachts.

However, with only one private bedroom and three guest rooms, the successful new leaseholders will be expected to provide breakfasts and dinners and share their living room with guests.

The trust is reported to be 'thrilled' with the quality and diversity of the applicants, but has warned them that life and work on such a small, isolated island is not for the faint-hearted or those simply looking for a bolthole to escape the rat race.

A spokesperson for the NTS told the Lochaber Times: 'We've been delighted by the level of interest in the tenancy for Canna's Tighard House, which attracted inquiries from around the world.'

'A hundred formal applications were received by the closing date and these have been whittled down to a short list of 10.'

'The next stage is for the trust to review ap-



There were more than 100 inquires about taking on the tenancy of Tighard guesthouse on Canna, pictured. Photograph: National Trust for Scotland.

plicants' business plans for the running of the guest house and then enable travel to Canna for viewing of the property and, most importantly, meeting with the community.

'This will give the applicants the opportunity to make sure that island life is for them and that they in turn can contribute to Canna's wellbeing.'

'Together with the community, a decision will be made on the successful application with a view to the tenancy being taken by around Easter time.'

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Scotland's Airline

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 GreenSkies
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LT

Corncrake numbers fall in Inner Hebrides stronghold

Corncrake numbers in Scotland are continuing to decline, the latest RSPB Scotland survey has revealed, adding to concerns about their precarious future.

In 2021 only 850 calling males were recorded across the 16 areas in the country where these elusive birds are found, down from 870 in 2019.

Corncrakes are usually surveyed annually but the Covid travel restrictions in 2020 meant that it was not possible to complete the count across all areas.

Whilst the decline from the 2019 survey is relatively modest, especially compared to other years where numbers have seen sharp reductions, it continues the overall worrying downward trend since the record high of 1,289 calling males in 2014 and highlights how vulnerable these birds are.



Within the survey there are regional differences in how corncrakes are faring.

In the Inner Hebrides the population has plummeted by 12.2 percent from 2019 but in the Outer Hebrides numbers are up by 9.9 percent.

The reasons for these regional differences are unclear. In order to safeguard the species

and try to provide a more certain future for them in Scotland targeted measures are needed.

The Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) has been crucial in supporting corncrake-friendly farming methods for many years but its future has looked uncertain in recent times.

Corncrakes are the land-dwelling relatives of coots and moorhens and one of Scotland's rarest breeding bird. Photo: RSPB.

The Scottish Government's announcement at the end of October that AECS will continue for the next three years was therefore welcome news.

RSPB Scotland will work with farmers, crofters and Scottish Government to ensure as much corncrake and high-nature-value-friendly management is delivered through AECS whilst it continues.

From 2025, the Scottish Government has signalled that it intends to introduce new farming policy and changes to farm payments.

RSPB Scotland is calling for payments for nature and climate-friendly farming and crofting to be at the heart of this new policy.

Jane Shadforth, project manager for Corncrake Calling, an RSPB Scotland initiative, supported by National Lottery heritage funding, to improve these birds' fortunes over the next few years, says: 'RSPB Scotland would like to thank everyone who supported this year's survey.'

'The results highlight how vulnerable this species remains with numbers declining by more than 30 per cent since 2014.'

'RSPB Scotland will use these results to help target management for corncrakes in the right places, working with farmers and crofters through Corncrake Calling and to make best use of the Agri-

Environment Climate scheme. The importance of island communities in protecting this magical species cannot be underestimated.

'The continuation of AECS over the next few years is welcome news to many.'

Corncrakes are the land-dwelling relatives of coots and moorhens and one of Scotland's rarest breeding birds.

Due to their shy character they are surveyed by counting the number of males making the distinctive 'crex crex' call during breeding season.

The birds migrate to Scotland every summer from Africa and used to be found across the UK before the changes in agricultural practices in the 19th and 20th century saw their range and number contract to just a few isolated pockets in Scotland.

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Lewis playpark will be fit for future visitors

Sensory and disabled friendly play equipment is to be installed at Newmarket Playpark on the Isle of Lewis.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Community Learning and Development service, working in partnership with the playpark, has secured £97,470.64 through the Healthy Islands Fund to provide the upgrade.

The partnership also secured funding through the Crown Estate and Community Landfill Scotland to buy an eco-friendly toilet and complete the community path from Newmarket Playpark to Tong. Work on the path is almost finished.

In 2018, a survey of the Western Isles revealed Stornoway North, the area Newmarket Playpark sits in, as having poorer outcomes for individuals and families coupled with social and economic issues.



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Following the survey, a group was formed in Stornoway North to draw up a plan to look at community issues.

As a result, the park committee started to source funding to start upgrading and replacing equipment.

The increase in population around the playpark, planning permission being granted for more social housing, coupled with the popularity of the area to visitors and residents has resulted in a need to ensure all playpark equipment is fit for purpose.

Roddie Mackay, comhairle leader, said: 'At a time when

'This would not have been possible without the hard work of our volunteers and we are grateful to everyone involved in this project'

the global pandemic and restrictions have impacted on our communities both mentally and physically, it is even more important to provide safe accessible outdoor areas for children, families and individuals to enjoy.

'Congratulations to everyone who have got us this far in this exciting project.'

Murray Macleod, chairman of Newmarket Playpark, added: 'Securing this funding is great news but now the hard work really begins.

'It has been one of our main goals to make the park accessible to everyone and with the completion of the

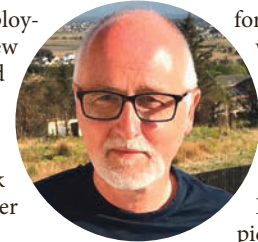
community path connecting the Newmarket and Tong communities, and the addition of toilets, we hope to encourage more visitors to the park.

'This would not have been possible without the hard work of our volunteers and we are grateful to everyone involved in this project.'

The area is currently used by a range of the community including senior citizens making use of the pathway for regular exercise, walkers out on the recommendation of their doctor, disabled users, parents and visitors to the Newmarket garden and play area, schools, nurseries and youth groups.

Comhairle welcomes offshore wind news for Outer Hebrides

Three of the deployment zones for new offshore wind developments announced by the Crown Estate Scotland this week are around the Outer Hebrides.



for area N3, north-west of the Butt of Lewis.

Commenting on the lease awards, Councillor Roddie Mackay, pictured, leader

The ScotWind Offshore Wind Leasing Round has awarded option agreements to offshore wind developers for 17 identified deployment zones around Scotland.

Three of these deployment zones – N2, N3 and N4 – are located around the Outer Hebrides and option agreements have been awarded in all three Hebridean areas.

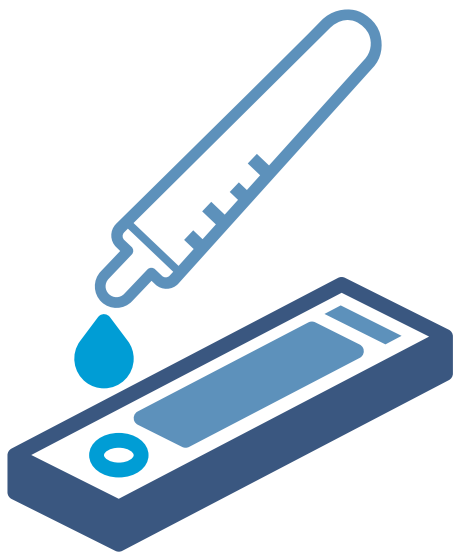
Canadian developer Northland Power have been awarded option agreements for areas N2 (north-east of the Butt of Lewis) and N4 (west of Lewis) while the Norwegian consortium, Magnora Offshore (partnering with Technip FMC), have been awarded an option agreement

of the local authority, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, said: 'We are very pleased that Northland Power and Magnora Offshore have been awarded offshore wind leases in Hebridean waters.'

'There is an historic affinity between the people of the Outer Hebrides and those of Norway and Canada and today's announcement marks the start of a strengthened relationship which, we believe, will bring real and enduring benefit to island businesses and communities; introducing investment at a scale that will support our drive towards net zero through green hydrogen production and locally sourced electricity.'



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this winter



Changes to self-isolation and testing in Scotland.

If you test positive on a lateral flow, you do not need to go for a PCR test (unless you are advised to or are applying for a self-isolation support grant).

Every time you take a lateral flow test, it's really important that you report the result to **covidtest.scot** – even if you're negative.



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Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn celebrates 15 years of community estate ownership

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn celebrated 15 years of community ownership of Galson Estate last week.

Although there was no formal occasion on the day because of ongoing Covid health risks, special events will run throughout the year to mark this major achievement.

The recently-built business centre at South Galson, on the Isle of Lewis, will be formally opened in the next few months.

The new centre will include a community land mini-exhibition and new visitor facilities.

The strategic plan for the area is due to be refreshed in 2022 and consultation events will be organised soon. A re-launch of the Community Investment Fund, which was suspended due to the failed undersea power cable, is also planned alongside this.

This year is expected to see a comprehensive programme of popular events to be back

up and running. These include Sunnd, Plòigh and Plòigh Mhòr, Fèis na Fairge and Dùthchas, plus family favourites Bookbug and health walks.

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn will add further activities to celebrate the significant milestone and continue to grow the popular health and wellbeing programme.

Speaking on the anniversary day, Agnes Rennie, chairperson of the Urras, said she felt extremely proud to be part of the Urras team that has achieved this amazing milestone.

She added: 'It seems like yesterday several hundred people gathered on a stormy January day in 2007 to mark the official transfer of Galson Estate to community ownership.'

'So much has been achieved since that day and we owe a massive debt of gratitude to staff and board, past and present, who have made this



The new UOG business centre with staff, contractors and architect.

happen. The resilience of the Urras has been tested many times but never more so than when our office was destroyed by fire in February 2019 and during the last two years by the impact of the pandemic.

'I am grateful that despite all this the Urras has continued to

deliver a first-class service for the community and together we can look forward with great optimism.'

In the past 15 years, the Galson Estate community has experienced many benefits that can be achieved through community land ownership.

Not least amongst these is the critical response provided during the Covid lockdown when the Urras took temporary responsibility for key services including delivering local prescriptions and crofting supplies, together with publication of a community newspaper.

The first four years of ownership saw the management of the Urras being undertaken by the volunteer board of directors, with some initiatives being supported by short-term project staff.

Over subsequent years, with an increase in projects and the move to in-house administration of crofting records, staffing has grown to a team of 14 people in full and part-time positions, situated in the purpose-built UOG Business Centre in South Galson and the Habost Household Recycling Site.

One essential project de-



livered over the past decade, which underpins the sustainability of the Urras and the wider community, was the installation of three wind turbines at Ballantrushal, near Barvas.

This has been a result of the excellent working relationships between the Urras and the directors of Galson Energy Limited and Urras Energy Society, all partners in a successful community model that has been replicated across other areas.

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LT

LETTERS

**Lochaber mourns loss of
'fearless campaigner'**

This week a number of people across Lochaber have been in touch to pay tribute to Stewart MacLean.

Stewart was known to many in Fort William, most notably as a staunch campaigner to have the A82 upgraded – something that was highlighted by the BBC's Panorama this week, and which we will have more next week.

Mr MacLean had a real love for the area and was generous with his time, volunteering with many organisations and causes, while developing his own business interests.

Fort William FC, Lochaber tourism, the retention of the Belford Hospital, all benefited from Mr MacLean, sharp intellect, strategic thinking and willingness to get involved no matter how high the mountain to climb was.

Our condolences go out to his family and friends. Lochaber has lost a 'real fighter'.

READMORE

www.lochabertimes.co.uk

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve



the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

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Importance of Oban's woods

The stark pre-1880 picture of Oban Hill that you reproduced in your celebration of 16 decades of the Oban Times brings home the importance of trees and woodland when compared with the attractive facade the town presents today.

This easily ignored aspect of our townscape must be cherished and maintained as much as any other, especially if investment and tourism are to flourish.

Ian Reid, Kilnwick.

Oban Bay clarification

We write jointly in response to the letter, published in your January 13 edition, from the chairman of the Argyll and Bute Harbour Board concerning a Harbour Authority for Oban Bay and Approaches.

We are delighted that the Harbour Board has recognised the need for action and agree that safety is the priority. We look forward to taking part in the preparatory work to facilitate the development of a Municipal (Council-run) Port, which the Harbour Board agreed on December 2, while recognising the need to continue 'exploration of the future development of a Trust Port'.

We would, however, point out that Councillor Colville's clarification fails to address the principal issues raised in the letter from OCC: consultation, timescales and finance. In putting forward the amended proposal during the Harbour Board meeting there was no opportunity for consultation with stakeholders, including local elected representatives, local businesses, or the Community Council. Councillor Colville asserts that the Municipal Port option will deliver a new Harbour Authority in 'the shortest time possible' but offers no timescale. With council support, as intended by the December 2019 Harbour Board, the Trust Port could have been in operation in time for the summer of 2023.

Councillor Colville states that 'managing the bay will incorporate cost'. Trust Ports make surpluses which they reinvest in their harbour and community. If Councillor Colville is referring to initial setting-up costs then these should have been indicated, in broad terms at least, in the report. The setting-up costs of the Trust Port are detailed in the proposal.

Trust Ports in Scotland are driving local development – for example, in Stornoway, Mallaig and Ullapool. Run by independent, suitably qualified and experienced trustees, these ports are working collaboratively with their local councils, supported by external funding from government and

private sources, to reshape their harbours and reinvigorate their economies. Planning for the development of a Trust Port for Oban, which remains the best option, will continue to be worked on. In due course the Oban Harbour Trust should take its place in developing a vision for Oban Harbour in 2030 or 2040 just as other Harbour Trusts are doing.

Why Argyll and Bute Council seems so unwilling to work towards the same objective is a mystery which Councillor Colville's letter does nothing to clarify.

Signed on behalf of Oban Community Council (Marri Molloy),
Oban Bay Stakeholders Group (Ross Wilson), and Oban Community Harbour Development Association (John MacAlister)

Keep Oban safe and tidy

Used Covid-19 lateral testing cassettes have been picked up from the roadside opposite Millpark Terrace in Oban. They could have been easily picked up by children and present a bio-hazard that should have been disposed of as the test kit instructions directed. Oban's streets are also littered with dropped masks, which should be binned in the proper places.

We all want to keep our town safe and keep the streets looking clean and tidy, so as we start this new year let us all try that bit harder to keep Oban safe and beautiful.

Stephen Jones, Oban.

Throwing the book at him

Your article on my old pal Jeff Anderson's well-deserved scouting award, and his first badge for cycling, triggered a schooldays memory.

Jeff and I sat together in Mr Dobbins' French class – in a front seat so he could keep an eye on this cycling enthusiast.

The boy cycled home for lunch and often returned with something to amuse himself during boring classes. One afternoon he brought Chinese wire puzzles and sat fiddling surreptitiously. I leaned forward, chin supported with the left hand, to obscure old Dobbins's line of sight. Our bored professeur droned on, reading from son livre. Suddenly, he yelled ANDERSON!, slammed the book shut and hurled it straight at the fiddler's head. I turned to see the spinning missile speed across the room. My left hand shot out and caught it in mid-air. Quelle miracle!

Some months later, the French class relocated to the music room while they used the other for exams. Jeff and I managed to position ourselves

YOUR PICTURE



nearer the back. Former pupils will remember the room tiered like a Roman arena. Jeff had returned from home, where he had been tinkering with his bike, bringing some ball-bearings. He flicked one along the desk groove so that it jumped over the inkwell hole. I stopped it and flicked it back. Mr D droned on. Now and then, he would crack a little joke. No one ever laughed.

Unexpectedly, the silvery ball made a hole-in-one and hit the shelf below. It sounded to our ears like a thunderclap. Was another book about to be fired? We froze. The tiny sphere hit the floor and took off in a trajectory straight for our irascible master – stotting nearer and nearer. How could he possibly not see or hear it? I steeled myself to leap to Jeff's rescue should le livre Francaise be

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RES



Reader Betty Cookson recently sent us this photograph, which was taken from Connel surgery and looks onto Loch Etive.

If you have a photograph you would like to share with our readers, we would love to see it. Please email the jpeg (1MB) to editor@obantimes.co.uk

YOURPHOTO

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launched. We stared dumfooned as the bouncing bearing took a final leap into the turn-up of the French masters' trousers – just as he cracked a little joke. Two relieved schoolboys exploded with laughter. Mr D beamed over his glasses at us, half-suspicious, half-pleased. Have I made somebody laugh at last? All the other kids turned to look at us. What were those two up to now? We whispered the explanation around the class. From then on, when Mr D made a feeble joke, everyone howled with laughter. It must have made his day.

As Madame Dobbins stood lovingly ironing her husband's breeks, I wonder what choice French expression escaped her fair lips on discovering le roulement à billes!

William Clark, Barcaldine.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Four Black Lives Matter activists were acquitted of charges of criminal damage by a jury in Bristol Crown Court for toppling a statue of Edward Colston. These young activists had a great deal of backing from the people of Bristol. The jury seemingly defied the advice of the judge and set the four free.

Colston died in 1721. He was an MP and an Atlantic slave trader. He was a wealthy benefactor to the city. Some of the establishments named after him have changed their names, as people become sensitive to the past.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Cha b' fhada a thug naidheachdan na dùthcha, agus an t-saoghail, a' teasachadh às ùr an dèidh beagan analach làithean-saora deireadh na bliadhna agus ann am Breatann tha na h-aon chasaidean guineach air ais anns na meadhanan aig irean fiù 's nas faramaiche na bha an-uiridh. Chan eil sealladh ga chall air Covid agus sgapadh an t-strèan Omicron, ach 's iad an dà sgeulachd as "blasta" leis na meadhanan, agus theagamh a' mhòr-shluagh, na bha a' tachairt ann an Sràid Downing tro àm a' ghlasaidh, agus na casaidean eucoir feiseil a tha ga chur às leth a' Phrionnsa Anndra ann an cùirt an New York.

Tha gach sgeulachd maslach ann an dòighean eadar-dhealaichte ach tha iad le chèile an eisimeil an aon dà fhuasgladh, sin firinn na thachair ann an da-riribh, agus fianais a dhearbhas an fhirinn sin. 'S iomadh adhbhar a bhios a' fàgail dhaoine feargach mun dà shuidheachadh seo, agus nam measg sin bidh mar a tha cumhachd agus beartas a' toirt comas dhan fheadhainn air am bheil casaidean cumail a' dol ag àicheadh cron. Dearbhadh air mar a tha daoine beò ann an saoghail eadar-dhealaichte, far am faicear tric cumhachd airgid agus ughdarras mì-iomchaidh na chois.

Cha b' iongnadh cuideachd dearg-chuthach a bhith air daoine a dh'èist a-rithist 's a-rithist ris a' Phrìomhaire, agus ri Ministearan a' cur taic ris, gu mòrchuiseach ag innse dhan dùthaich nach deach riaghailt sam bith a bhriseadh. B' i an teachdaireachd a bhathas

a' biathadh dhuinne gun robh sgioba Sràid Downing lèirsinneach agus tuigseach a thaobh na bha, is nach robh, ceadichte agus nach robh dòigh a dhèanadh iad dad ceàrr! Aig amannan ma thèid argamaid aithris tric gu leòr tòisichidh daoine ga chreidsinn mar firinn, ach a rèir choltais chan eil sin idir air obrachadh dha Boris Johnson agus tha a-nise cuid de na Buill Pàrlamaid aige fhèin a' moladh dha a dhreuchd mar Phrìomhaire a leigeil dheth. Aig àm dhomhsa seo a sgrìobhadh tha mòran de luchd-taice a' Phrìomhaire a' gabhail fasgaidh air chùl na h-aithisg rannsachaidh a tha an t-àrd-sheirbheiseach chatharra Sue Gray a' deasachadh air na thachair ann an Sràid Downing tro àm a' ghlasaidh. Theagamh gum bi an aithisg sin air nochdadh mun àm a bhios sibh a' leughadh seo, ach a rèir choltais tha mòran air co-dhùnadh mar-thà gun do dh'innis am Prìomhaire breugan mu na cuirmean aig 10 Sràid Downing, agus na b' aithne dha mun deidhinn, agus ri linn sin tha iad den bheachd gum bheil e air creideas agus earbsa an t-sluaigh a chall. Cha chreidear an fhirinn bho bheul nam breug!

Cha b' e annas a bh' ann gun deach urraman Rìoghail a thoirt air falbh bhon Phrionnsa Anndra, gu dearbh b' iongantach nach do thachair e na bu luaithe. Tha an fhirinn tric searbh, agus 's coma mar a chrìochnaicheas a' chùis-lagha sam bheil esan an sàs tha e air cron maireannach a dhèanamh air cliù agus inbhe an teaghlaich Rìoghail.

London, Bristol and Liverpool were at the heart of the slave trade. Let's not forget that Scotland was involved too. Streets in Glasgow commemorate the link to Jamaica.

At one time in my work for the church I was at Wedderburn House in Musselburgh, which, like the adjacent Inveresk Lodge, was bought by James Wedderburn with money earned from 27 years in Jamaica as a plantation and slave-owner.

Court rulings have featured in the progress against oppression. In 1778 the Court of Session in Edinburgh ruled in favour of a slave,

Joseph Knight, who petitioned for his freedom. The Bible moves towards an enlightened view, allowing for slaves to be released.

Job says it would be wrong to despise a slave or servant. Paul the apostle says that in Christ a slave has equal status to a free person.

We can see things in a way that those in the past could not; that should temper our judgement of them. It is good though, that we learn about what happened.

Rev Dr Malcolm Kinnear, Church of Scotland Kinlochleven and Nether Lochaber.



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DISTRICT NEWS

LOCHALSH

Community groups urged to apply for funding

Community groups and organisations in Lochalsh are being urged to apply for a share of the Scottish Government's Place-Based Investment programme funding to help deliver local projects.

The chairman of Highland Council's Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Area Committee has reminded community groups and organisations across Ward 5 to apply for the cash.

The Scottish Government has allocated Highland Council £1,963,000 of ring-fenced Place-Based funding for the current financial year, of which Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh ward will receive £80,906 in the first round.

The programme seeks to support capital projects including town centre revitalisation and community-led regeneration, shaped by the needs and aspirations of communities.

Committee chairman councillor Ian Cockburn said: 'This area-based approach to divvying up the funding from the Scottish Government means we can target support where it is most needed. This is a great opportunity for groups across Ward 5 to get funding to support them in their work. We expect demand to be high so I urge anyone with a project that they think could benefit from this funding to get their application in as soon as possible.'

The closing date for applications is 2pm tomorrow (January 21) and full details, guidance notes and application forms can be found on the council's website at www.highland.gov.uk/regeneration.

OUTER HEBRIDES

National acclaim for Hebridean walking project

A well-established health walk project in the Outer Hebrides has received the national walking charity Paths for All's Dementia Friendly Walking accreditation.

Managed by NHS Western Isles, Walk on Hebrides received the recognition for working in partnership with local agencies and third sector organisations to involve people living with the long-term condition and their carers. Their

input has helped to shape the four dementia friendly health walks now on offer across the Outer Hebrides.

The walks are available in North Bay in Barra, Grimsay in North Uist, Uig in West Lewis and Pairc and Kinloch in the south of Lewis.

To date, 19 leaders with Walk on Hebrides have attended a half-day dementia friendly walking training course provided by Paths for All to ensure anyone living with dementia feels safe and supported on the weekly short routes.

Trained walk leader Lianne MacInnes, who leads the North Bay walk in Barra, said: 'The walks are a great way of motivating people to get out as a group and enjoy some fresh air. Those living with dementia enjoy the different scenery and company on our walks.'

For someone with a dementia diagnosis, being side by side while walking can feel more comfortable and less daunting than face to face group activities. Walking in local surroundings can help a person remember and share stories from different stages in their life.

Carl Greenwood, senior development officer at Paths for All, congratulated Walk on Hebrides for gaining its accreditation. He said: 'The number of people in Scotland currently living with dementia, which has no cure, is around 90,000 and this is expected to increase to 164,000 in the next 15 years.'

'The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted how important community services are for supporting people where they live.'

'Dementia friendly health walks can play a role in preventing dementia through encouraging regular exercise and providing direct support to those living with the condition.'

Find out more about Walk on Hebrides at <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/walk-project/Walk-on-Hebrides>.

Find out more about Paths for All's dementia friendly walking at www.pathsforall.org.uk.

GLENFINNAN

Community Council holds January meeting

Among the issues discussed at this month's meeting of Glenfinnan Community Council (GCC) were:

Matters arising:

■ Callop Bridge and boardwalk – the secretary to contact David Robertson of Forestry and Land Scotland and ask if there is progress to report and, if so, invite him to present any information at the February/March GCC meeting.

Bus travel bonus welcomed

Children and young people in Na h-Eileanan are being encouraged to apply for a new or replacement National Entitlement Card (NEC) offering free bus travel to everyone up to the age of 22.

Everyone aged five to 21 years with an NEC or Young Scot NEC can access the scheme from Monday January 31.

The scheme, extending free bus travel to everyone aged up to 22, builds on the Scottish Government's commitment to provide free bus travel to all under 19s in Scotland which started in August 2021.

Isles MP Angus MacNeil and MSP Emma Roddick support the scheme.

Mr MacNeil has welcomed the initiative which will be particularly helpful to island students travelling regularly between their island homes and mainland locations for university and college.

He said: 'This is a hugely significant commitment from the Scottish Government that will benefit hundreds of thousands of young people.'

'Making bus travel free for under 22s is important for helping tackle the climate emergency and will take pressure off young people's finances and improve their access to education, leisure and work. Whilst we continue to live through the pandemic, we



Emma Roddick MSP and, inset, Isles MP Angus MacNeil.

all recognise essential travel must be prioritised so I want to specifically encourage children and young people with essential journeys to make to apply now.'

The scheme will benefit around 930,000 young people across Scotland with research from Transport Scotland indicating 70 per cent of young people would use public transport more frequently if it was free.

Ms Roddick said: 'I have always argued that if we are to tackle climate change and make our public spaces accessible to walking, wheeling and cycling, clean, cheap and sustainable public

■ The land owner has emailed David Devine of Transport Scotland and given his permission for a No Through Road sign to be sited at the top of the Back Track.

■ A thank you letter has been sent to Broadland Renewable Energy Ltd (Garvan and Duisky) for the £1,283.61 donation.

■ War memorial – permissions to use two photographs on an information board, one from the Valentine's Postcard Collection managed by St Andrew's University and the other from NLS, is making slow progress.

■ Gemma Robinson, a project officer working on the EU INTERREG VA-funded FASTER

project has responded to GCC's concern about the maintenance of the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) charge points once the 10-year lease expires. If Highland Council and NTS agree, the lease will be extended. Failing that, Highland Council will decommission the EV charge points and remove the above ground asset.

■ Pot holes on Pier Road – Pauline Donaldson has forwarded GCC's request to the roads officer and foreman for pothole repairs to be completed.

■ Callop rail bridge – a village resident, who wishes to remain anonymous, has cleared the

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transport must be front and centre. If it is easier for young people to visit our town centres, or travel between home and their places of work and study via public transport, they will be less likely to opt for travel by car and the streets of our towns and cities will come alive as accessible places of work, education and leisure.'

The scheme will be delivered in partnership with Transport Scotland, the Improvement Service, the National Entitlement Card Programme Office, Young Scot, local authorities and bus operators.

drainage ditch and puddle underneath the Callop rail bridge. As this is a long-term recurring issue, the secretary is to contact Transport Scotland to ask about a permanent solution.

■ Grit bin for the new car park – thanks to Kristen Tate for organising a new grit bin at the

HAVE YOUR SAY
email us at editor@lochabertimes.co.uk

junction of the Pier Road outside Innis Aluinn.

The request for a grit bin for the slope at the new car park was denied as the car park is a business. Moving the unused grit bin from the A830/U1191 junction was not a solution as it would not be stocked.

■ Glenfinnan Community Facilities Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation update from Ingrid Henderson: Work on the picnic area and new path were due to begin last week. Trees at the side of the shorebase are being felled by James Gillies. Villagers are welcome to remove any firewood, which is being stored on the loch side of the community hut.

■ Police report – minor recorded incidents in Glenfinnan and the surrounding area in the last month included road traffic, a call of good intent and a dead deer on the railway line.

■ Chairperson's report: 12 bags of tinned and dried goods were received from Fair Share and Caol Regeneration and distributed to households in Glenfinnan with children. There will be more food donations, but not until the end of the summer. If anyone is struggling and needs assistance, GCC will provide help. Thanks to Fair Share and Caol Regeneration.

■ Community councillor Ally Entwistle raised the possibility of loaning ebikes from HITRANS for the community to trial. It was agreed she should investigate the insurance/maintenance costs, which would have to be borne by the community group they would be loaned to, and length of trial and report back to the next community council meeting. There was a query about the need for public liability insurance.

■ Date of next meeting: Wednesday February 2.

Essential works on Caledonian Canal bridges due to start

Essential maintenance on two bridges that carry the A82 over the Caledonian Canal was to get under way this week.

The £220,000 project will see work undertaken on the Fort Augustus and Laggan Swing Bridges on the A82, involving the replacement of the hydraulically operated nose wedges that support the ends of each bridge.

These essential works will ensure both bridges continue to operate safely for years to come.

The works on the Fort Augustus bridge were scheduled to take place from Monday of this week until tomorrow (Friday) from 9.30pm to 6am. Overnight road closures will be in place during working hours as the bridge will be swung 'open' to allow for engineers to safely access the components on the ends of the structure, resulting in a full closure of the A82 at this location.

A diversion route using the A87 and A887 will be signed from Invermoriston and Invergarry for northbound and southbound traffic. The diversion route will add approximately 20 minutes on to journey times. There will be local access only on the A82 to Fort Augustus.

On the Laggan Swing Bridge, the works will start on Monday February 7 to Friday February

11 from 9.45pm to 6am. Overnight road closures will be in place during working hours as the bridge will be swung 'open' for the same reasons as with the Fort Augustus bridge, again resulting in a full closure of the A82 at this location.

A diversion route using the A86 and A9 will be sign posted. The diversion route will add approximately 25 minutes on to journey times. All traffic management will be removed during the daytime period.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative, said: 'This project will see essential maintenance work carried out on Fort Augustus and Laggan Swing Bridges that cross the Caledonian Canal, ensuring they continue to function safely for road users as well as canal traffic.'

'The road closures are essential in order to facilitate the maintenance of the bridges. We've arranged for the works to take place overnight to minimise disruption as much as possible.'

'We thank road users for their patience in advance and our teams will look to complete the project as quickly and safely as possible. We encourage motorists to plan their journeys in advance and check Traffic Scotland for real-time journey information.'

£3m support for families struggling with energy bills

A £3 million scheme has been launched to help families struggling with their energy bills amid a growing cost-of-living crisis.

The Scottish Government scheme, which is administered by Advice Direct Scotland, is designed to prevent households falling into fuel poverty and help those 'rationing' their energy use.

The Home Heating Support Fund is open until Thursday March 31 and applications can be made on behalf of individuals by local authorities and housing associations, as well as charities and organisations on behalf of people through www.homeheatingadvice.scot. These 'referral partners' are being encouraged to register online so that

they can seek funding for people they support. Individuals cannot apply directly, but they should contact Advice Direct Scotland for free on 0808 800 9060 or visit www.advice.scot, and trained advisers can assess their eligibility and refer them if appropriate.

Even if they are not eligible, Advice Direct Scotland can offer free advice on energy and debt issues.

Last year, a poll found that nearly a third of Scots had rationed their energy use so they could afford to spend money on other goods and services. With recent price rises and a further steep increase in bills expected in spring, there are growing concerns about the impact on households. Targeted funding from the

Home Heating Support Fund will reflect each individual's circumstances, with extra support available for households where one person is over 75, they rely on electric heating, or live in a remote or island community. Payments start at £100, rising to £500 to clear outstanding debt, with the money paid directly to suppliers on behalf of the household.

Eligibility is based on households which are 'self-rationing' their energy, meaning those who are deliberately limiting their energy use so that they can afford to spend money on other goods or services.

Households 'off-supply' are not eligible for the fund and should seek immediate support from their energy supplier.

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Friday - 9.30am & 11am
Gillian 07796 040803

Campbeltown - Masonic Recreation Club
Wednesday - 9.30am, 5.30pm & 7pm
Tracey 07984 473361

Lochgilphead - Lochgilphead Baptist Church
Monday - 5.30pm & 7pm
Miriam - 07765 020776

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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I think it was former British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, who coined the phrase 'a week is a long time in politics'.

That may well be true but these days a week is also a long time in the music business. So much so that half the Celtic Connections gigs I said were cancelled last week have since been un-cancelled.

Rumours that the festival managed this by changing the status of the shows to "work events" rather than "parties" are unconfirmed!

It is a fantastic boost for so many artists and fans alike. I won't attempt to cover the full list of shows that are and aren't happening, but ticket holders will have been informed as to the status of their own concert and I would recommend anyone else head to the Celtic Connections website, which clarifies which shows are going ahead and which have sadly fallen by the wayside.

The opening night (entitled 'Neath the Gloamin' Star) will take place on Thursday January 20 as usual in the iconic Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. The audience may be restricted in number but the quality of artists on the stage is in abundance: Fiona Hunter, Steve Byrne, Paul McKenna,



Niteworks' album launch has been postponed until June.

Ellie Beaton, Cameron Nixon and Jenny Sturgeon, plus joint musical directors Hannah Rarity and Innes White.

As you can perhaps tell by these names, it is a celebration of the Scots folk song revival. All the singers are also Scots songwriters who are following in the tradition of the late Tony Cuffe whose song is the title of the concert.

Even with a myriad of cancellations, there are still too many shows for me to preview in one column.

This coming weekend, though, among other things, is a tale of two album launches – one of which is going ahead at a rearranged date and one which has been postponed.

Megan Henderson's launch of Pilgrim Souls will take

place on tomorrow (Friday January 21) alongside The Jeremiahs and The Canny Band in the Royal Concert Hall. Meanwhile, Niteworks' launch of A' Ghrian (due to go ahead this weekend) has been postponed until Wednesday June 22. At the time of writing, Megan's album is days from release but Niteworks' third album came out last Friday to great acclaim. It features a lovely blend of pipe tunes with their trademark electronica as well as beautiful Gaelic and Scots songs from a whole host of fantastic guest vocalists including Ellen MacDonald, Hannah Rarity, Beth Malcolm, Alasdair Whyte, Sian, and Kathleen MacInnes.

Buried somewhere in the mix of Alasdair's rendition of Thèid Mi Lem Dheòin is my own voice along with a squad who joined the band in a Glasgow studio one night to contribute some vocables.

It is always a great laugh with the Niteworks lads but they obviously manage to get some serious work done when we're not looking because this is a first class album. Their Celtic Connections show, when it eventually comes round in June, will definitely reward the patience of all who awaited it so eagerly.

Covid emergency fund set to benefit West Coast culture

A compensation package worth £65 million for culture and major events that have lost income due to the Covid pandemic has been announced by the Scottish Government.

Within the total pot, £31.5 million is allocated to cultural organisations, £19.8 million to the events sector, £10 million to freelancers, £2 million for national performing companies, and £1.7 million for museums, galleries and heritage.

Culture Secretary Angus Robertson commented: 'The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is once again causing disruption and uncertainty in the culture and events sector, who have already been hit so hard by its impact.'

'These additional funds will help protect the livelihoods of the people working in the sector – and allow us to give further support to freelancers, culture organisations, venues and our national performing companies.'

Welcoming the announce-

ment, Creative Scotland said the £31.5 million pot was specifically for cultural organisations which have lost income due to cancellation or deferral of performances or cultural activity, as a result of the necessary steps taken to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic.

Iain Munro, Creative Scotland chief executive, said: 'The winter period is a critical time for many cultural organisations when a significant proportion of their annual income is generated, so this emergency funding from the Scottish Government is a lifeline for them.'

Creative Scotland's guidance for the Cancellation Fund for Cultural Organisations was published yesterday.

The fund will open for applications at 2pm on Wednesday January 26 and payments to organisations will begin from Monday January 31.

Mr Munro added: 'Our Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers is live and more

information on support for organisations and venues will follow as soon as possible.'

VisitScotland director of events Paul Bush said: 'EventScotland is currently working with the Scottish Government and the Event Industry Advisory Group (EIAG) to determine the best way of distributing the funding to ensure we get support to those in need across the sector, and details on this will be shared shortly.'

Funds worth £27 million for culture and £17 million for events were announced by the First Minister on Wednesday December 29.

This was additional to the £20 million of business support funding for culture and events that First Minister announced on Tuesday December 14.

With the utilisation of an additional £1 million of underspend from the existing events budget, this creates a total funding package of £65 million.

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A KENNETH BRANAGH FILM



FRIDAY 21ST JANUARY

Belfast (12a) 12pm, 3:30pm, 5:45pm + 8:25pm.
Licorice Pizza (15) 12:30pm. Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 2:30pm.
My Son (15) 6pm. Scream (18) 8:10pm.

SATURDAY 22ND JANUARY

Clifford The Big Red Dog (PG) 10:30am. Licorice Pizza (15) 11am.
Belfast (12a) 1pm, 3:30pm, 5:30pm + 8:25pm. Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 2pm. My Son (15) 6pm. Scream (18) 8pm.

SUNDAY 23RD JANUARY

Licorice Pizza (15) 11am. Clifford The Big Red Dog (PG) 11:45am.
Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 2pm. Belfast (12a) 2:30pm, 5:15pm + 7:30pm. My Son (15) 5pm. Scream (18) 7:45pm.

MONDAY 24TH JANUARY - ALL SHOWN WITH SUBTITLES

Belfast (12a) *Bairns At The Box Office*: 12:30pm.
Highlands From The Air (U) 12:45pm. Licorice Pizza (15) 2pm.
Belfast (12a) 3pm, 5:30pm + 7:45pm. Scream (18) 5pm. My Son (15) 8pm.

TUESDAY 25TH JANUARY

Belfast (12a) 12:30pm, 3pm, 5:30pm + 7:45pm.
Highlands From The Air (U) 12:45pm. Licorice Pizza (15) 2pm.
Scream (18) 5pm. My Son (15) 8pm (subtitled).

WEDNESDAY 26TH JANUARY

Belfast (12a) 12:30pm, 3pm, 5:30pm + 7:45pm.
Highlands From The Air (U) 12:45pm. Licorice Pizza (15) 2pm.
Scream (18) 5pm. My Son (15) 8pm.

THURSDAY 27TH JANUARY

Belfast (12a) 12:30pm, 3pm, 5:30pm + 7:45pm.
Highlands From The Air (U) 12:45pm. Licorice Pizza (15) 2pm.
Scream (18) 5pm. My Son (15) 8pm.



FILM SYNOPSIS, TRAILERS, TICKETS AND TO SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER:

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LT

Off-field changes for Fort William

It is same again on the pitch but there are a few off-field changes as Fort William co-managers Victor Smith and Adam Robertson prepare their side for the 2022 shinty season.

Speaking just ahead of one of the club's twice-weekly training sessions, Victor Smith said: 'We are looking to do something different with our training this season. The players have signed up with Wolfhouse Gym in Fort William where Jamie Gall is involved and Emma Hebborn is the head coach. The boys can do weights, spinning classes, cardio, the full works but there is more to it than that.'

Emma Hebborn is a former Lochaber High School pupil who spent 10 years in the Royal Navy. She qualified as a personal trainer in 2016. She also has an impressive powerlifting medal haul at Scottish, European and World Championship level.

Victor Smith said: 'Emma will be involved. Her qualifications and experience will be a huge asset. She will be working on the players' fitness and will advise players on their preparations ahead of matches as well as what they do after games. This should help the boys be at their best and reduce injuries.'

'We will be in the gym one evening a week. Henry Milne remains involved for outdoor training when we'll do stick-work under the floodlights at the new pitch. Henry is a wonderful servant to the club.'

Alan Knox also has a big contribution to make. A former Fort William player, he also turned out for Lochaber and Ballachulish.

'He will come on board to help with first aid,' added Victor. 'This means we'll always have someone to provide medical support from the touchline. Iain Fraser also assumes that role but it means if Iain is working on a Saturday, Alan can come with the first team and there will always be someone for the second team too. Alan will be a great addition as it is so important to have medical support for the players.'

James Tangney, a popular figure, is the new Fort William chairman, taking over from the well-respected Duncan MacPhee.

On the field, Fort William were runaway Mowi National Division winners at the end of the 2019 season, completing the league campaign with a 100 per cent record to earn a return to shinty's top flight. Their opening Premiership fixture against Kyles Athletic in March 2020 was postponed before Covid brought shinty



Down Memory Lane: Oban Camanachd Club's AGM 1960

Following The Oban Times' report on Oban Camanachd's annual general meeting (AGM), which was held on Friday December 3 2021, reader Iain MacIntyre submitted this photograph which shows those in attendance at the club's AGM in 1960.

Iain told The Oban Times: 'The meeting was held in the Columba Hotel and noticeably, compared to today's club committees, there are 18 officials present.'

'Having had a lifetime association with Oban Camanachd, I can

confirm the committee members in the photograph were all actively involved in the club. They are: back row, Iain MacIntyre, 'Swallie'; Hugh MacLean, 'Toots'; Ian Donn, Palace Hotel; David Buchanan, The Oban Times; Colin Logan; Jackie MacInnes; Davie Brogan; Alistair Ferguson; Mickey McCuish; Billy Craven; Donnie MacVicar; unknown, and Robert Galbraith.

'Second row, Robert Gilfillan; Ivor Clark; Alan Hoey; Ewan Campbell, 'Hippie and unknown.'

'Third row, Alistair MacArthur

'Cally'; John Mac Neil; unknown; Donald Boyd; Joe Black, 'Marconi'; unknown; Archie Gillespie, Columba Hotel.

'Fourth row, Jim Felgate; Alistair MacLean; Duncan Cameron, chemist; Willie Currie, former Provost; Robert Donn; James Allan 'Spiv'; Bertie MacKay; Alex Campbell, Coal Righ; Baldy Stewart and Willie MacKay, Atholl Hotel.

'Front row, Dougie Boyd; Grigor Currie; Alex MacTaggart; John MacInnes; Alistair Stewart, Pennyfuir Farm; Eric Mouat, Post

Office, and Angus Robertson. My life-long attraction to the game of shinty and to Oban itself, despite living away from the town for 38 years, is in no small way due to the support and encouragement shown to me by the committee members listed, who were without exception all gentlemen who had a great pride in our game and its place in our community.

'I would be happy if those marked as 'unknown' were identified and advised to me. People can contact me on 01631 562148.'

to a standstill. Ryan Boyle is still sidelined after suffering a dislocated knee in a pre-season match against Kingussie a year ago. However, Ruaridh Shaw is home for a year after completing university and will be available for selection. The remainder of the first team squad remains unchanged with all the players signing up for a shot against shinty's big guns.

Youngster Cameron Stephen has every chance of breaking into the first team squad if his development to date continues, according to Victor Smith.

'Cameron could easily have been more involved with the first team squad last season but we thought it would be more beneficial for him to play 90 minutes every week for the second team than coming on for 10 or 15 minutes as a first team substitute. He is now very much on our radar. He's a versatile player and I can see us using him at wing forward to start with but his future will be in a more central position. He is a good prospect.'

The Camanachd Association

Competitions Committee meets before the end of the month to confirm plans for the start of the shinty season in March 2022. They will consider the most recent updates from the First Minister before confirming plans.

Victor Smith is hopeful of a return to something more akin to a normal shinty season.

He said: 'Last season was a bit of a disaster for us. We only managed games on successive Saturdays once and that was through no fault of our own.'

'Cup games were seen as much more important last year. That meant the cup ties had a buzz about them but the league games were mostly flat.'

Fort William played nine competitive games in 2021, reaching the semi-final stage of the cottages.com MacTavish Cup. 'I hope we can have a normal season in 2022. We should at least attempt to start the season in the usual way. That will bring the excitement back to all matches, whether league or cup. I appreciate that managing Covid will be difficult for the game though

and we don't want any adverse consequences for any clubs. We just have to trust clubs to do the right thing at the right time.'

The Fort William Street Shinty has also been a success. Victor Smith said: 'Willie MacDonald has done a great job with street shinty. It really took off and there were great numbers coming along every week. Shinty needs innovations like this.'

Fort William have so far planned pre-season friendlies against Kingussie on Saturday February 19 and Oban Camanachd a week later.

They may factor in at least one more game, as Victor Smith explained. 'We usually play Kyles Athletic during the pre-season for the Drew Ferguson Memorial Trophy. We'll look to do so again this year, however, we'll wait to see the fixture list and if we have an early league meeting with Kyles, that game will double up for Drew's trophy.'

'It's going to be a massive season for Fort William. Our aim is to get a foothold in the

Premiership and stay up and we will do everything we can to achieve that.'

Skye pre-season friendlies

Skye Camanachd first team manager Kenny MacLeod has set his side a testing pre-season schedule.

Skye Camanachd will host the popular John MacKinnon Memorial Sixes at the Portree High School astro pitch on Saturday February 5.

A week later, Skye travel to Blairbeg to play Glenurquhart.

Skye then welcome Kilmallie to Pairc nan Laoch, Portree, on Saturday February 19 to contest the Thomas Ferguson Memorial Cup, with Kilmallie the current holders.

The final pre-season friendly is against Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and cottages.com MacTavish Cup winners Kinlochshiel at Pairc nan Laoch on Saturday February 26 when the teams will play for the George Michie Memorial Cup.

The competitive shinty sea-

son starts on Saturday March 5.

Supporters' team of the season

Oban Camanachd and Scotland U21 defender Daniel Sloss has been named in the 2021 shinty supporters' team of the season.

The young defender has been a stand-out for his club during the year.

The Camanachd Association contacted all senior club captains and asked them to nominate a player from another club in the senior leagues in each position to determine a shortlist for the Mowi supporters' team of the season. The nominated players were then put before supporters in their respective playing position and the final team was voted on by fans via a Twitter poll.

The popular poll ran over the festive period and amassed more than 3,500 votes.

The team was dominated by Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and cottages.com MacTavish Cup winners

Kinlochshiel who had six players selected. Silverware success at Kyles Athletic and Kingussie was also acknowledged.

The only non-Premiership inclusions were co-managers Gregor MacCormick and Niall MacLennan from Beaulay who saw off Kinlochshiel boss Johnston Gill and Kyles Athletic's Robert Baxter in the managers' poll.

Camanachd Association marketing and communications officer Aarron Duncan-MacLeod said: 'It's great to see so many deserving winners in the Mowi team of the season. These polls are often close-run and always contentious and I hope this will give shinty fans the world over something to talk about ahead an exciting 2022 campaign.'

The team was: Josh Grant, Kinlochshiel; Finlay MacRae, Kinlochshiel; Andrew King, Kyles Athletic; Daniel Sloss, Oban Camanachd; Conor Cormack, Kinlochshiel; Donald Nixon, Kinlochshiel; Ross MacRae, Kyles Athletic; Steven Macdonald, Newtonmore; Ruairidh Anderson, Kingussie; James Falconer, Kingussie; Jordan Fraser, Kinlochshiel, and Keith MacRae, Kinlochshiel. Managers - Gregor MacCormick and Niall MacLennan, Beaulay.

Managers stand down

Morgan Smith and Alan Clark are standing down as Ballachulish team managers.

Increased work commitments influenced the duo's decision, announced at the club's annual general meeting, so the club is looking for a new management team.

The Ballachulish committee thanked Alan and Morgan for all the hard work they have put into the team and wished them all the best for the future.

Senior players wanted

Dunoon Camanachd and Strachur are appealing for new players.

Dunoon is looking to represent Dunoon and surrounding areas at senior level. This will once again provide a pathway for players coming through the thriving Dunoon junior set-up.

Strachur haven't played league shinty since the end of the 2018 season when they won Mowi South Division 2. Whilst they haven't had the required numbers recently, they hope they might be able to get a team together with Dunoon and Glasgow-based players.

Both clubs can be contacted via their Facebook page but time is short with the new fixture list due to be issued in early February.



Oban's Thomas Jackson engulfs Stewart McMillan in a powerful tackle.



Above: Oban's Kuba Kolodziejczyk makes a fast break down the wing chased by Anton Bodkin.

Right: Lochaber's Anton Bodkin commits to a determined tackle against Oban's Rhys Neil. All photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



Lochaber's Cody MacKay makes a powerful drive against an Oban tackle.



Rugby friendly action

Lochaber S3/S4s played Oban Lorne at Banavie on Sunday January 16 in a friendly prior to the upcoming U16 West Region Youth Cup games.

Oban Lorne were one of the strongest teams in the West Region league before Christmas, while the Lochaber boys have had limited game time.

Oban Lorne were always likely to win and so it turned out on the day as they scored umpteen tries to Lochaber's one. A partisan Lochaber supporter would have had very few passages of play to cheer about during the game, but there's a lot to be satisfied with.

It was unfortunate Zach

Alexander and match captain Stuie MacLennan, both rock solid in defence, had to come off with injuries.

Also in the backs, Callan Griffin and Taylor Barr had to cope with unfamiliar positions but played really well.

Front rower Anton Bodkin was Lochaber's outstanding player. Not far behind him were second rowers J-J Blackley and Archie Campbell.

Looking ahead to the U16 West Region Youth Cup, the club's reasonable ambition for them is that they remain free of significant injuries and that they fulfil all three first round games.

Philip Thurlow.

Clubs pay tribute to former Fort William Football Club chairman Stewart MacLean

Continued from page 44.

He was at the helm when Fort won four games in a row for the first time in their history in the 2014/15 season when the club finished in 13th place, the highest league position since 2004/05.

Speaking about Stewart's influence

on the area's football, Lochaber Thistle manager Alan Gray said: 'When I moved here and started coaching at Fort William FC alongside Calum MacLean, Ally Ewen and John Matheson, Stewart couldn't have been more helpful. He would be excited to hear how the lads were

training and gave a lot of his time and money to the club to keep it afloat and help the management team be as competitive as possible on the park.

'Stewart was a man always willing to listen and take on board advice on the footballing front and gave me an opportunity along with Calum to be

involved in football in the town. He will be sadly missed.' Fort William FC were also saddened to hear about Stewart's passing. A club spokesperson said: 'Stewart did a huge amount for the club.' Both teams expressed their condolences to Stewart's family and friends.



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February
Sea cliffs of Scotland...
Hebridean crofter takes on Airbnb...
The real Macbeth... Gillie Basan recipes...
Graham McTavish's Credo... Beautiful Fife garden...
Artist Lily Macrae... Underwater photography...
A Scot's 5,000-mile trek across Canada...



Tributes have been paid to Stewart MacLean following his death earlier this month.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Clubs pay tribute to Stewart MacLean

Football clubs have been paying tribute to former Fort William Football Club chairman and local businessman Stewart MacLean who died on Friday January 7.

Stewart loved football and particularly enjoyed working alongside his family at the club.

Continued on page 43.

New look Fort go down 4-0 to Brechin City

Brechin City took all three points in their first competitive meeting with Fort William on Saturday, when the Lochaber side travelled to Glebe Park for the Highland League clash.

Brechin's goals came via a hat-trick for Garry Wood - including a penalty kick in the 75th minute - and a first City goal for Ewan Loudon.

However, there was plenty of good play on show from the hard-working new-look Claggan Park side which bodes well for the side under new manager Shadab Iftikhar.

Thistle knocked out of President's Cup

SLT	3
GSC Amateurs	5
President's Cup quarter final	

South Lochaber Thistle started the new year with a home defeat to GSC Amateurs in an ill-tempered President's Cup quarter final fixture.

The Kinlochleven outfit began with a strong 11 on the park with Sean Noble picking out long-time partner Keir Kennedy with five minutes on the clock for the pacy forward to open his account.

Things stayed that way for the next half hour as the Jags put together chance after chance but failed to capitalise.

The visitors punished such profligacy by equalising before Kennedy turned provider, picking out his fellow striker after an inventive dummy by Noble allowed Archie Gillies to score, putting SLT 2-1 ahead with only three minutes left of the half.

However, the first half drama had not yet ended. Talismanic captain Martin Munro was scythed to the ground and, in the ensuing melee, was dismissed from the field along with an opponent, meaning both sides were reduced to ten men.

As the second half began, the Jags tried to take advantage of the extra space. Noble finally added to his season's tally from open play, the full back gobbling up a pass from Lewis



Above: The first goal of the game went to South Lochaber Thistle's Keir Kennedy.

Right: Sean Noble heads for the Giffnock goal.

Left: Archie Gillies flies past a Giffnock opponent. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



Campbell and converting to put Thistle 3-1 ahead. Sadly, this was the last of the good news for the home side. GSC built on Thistle's sense of injustice as decisions by the referee appeared to infuriate them and, without their skipper and with the loss of Campbell to

injury, the Glaswegians scored three, quick fire goals to book their place in the semi final and wrap up the tie 5-3.

Manager Alan Gray said: "This was a very hard result to take. We are a better side than we showed today and we will be looking for a big response in

attitude and application from the players next week. We were without assistant Albie Robertson, who is isolating due to Covid, and Rebecca Small and I missed him from the touchline.

"We, and everyone at the club, wish him a swift recovery."

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The Lochaber Times: 95p

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 20 January, 2022** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

20	0106 1.0 0708 3.9 TH 1342 1.3 1932 3.7	22	0211 1.1 0811 3.8 SA 1441 1.4 2034 3.5	24	0327 1.2 0927 3.6 M 1558 1.6 2155 3.3	26	0517 1.5 1121 3.3 W 1812 1.8
21	0138 1.0 0739 3.8 F 1413 1.4 2002 3.6	23	0246 1.1 0846 3.7 SU 1513 1.5 2111 3.4	25	0416 1.3 1017 3.4 TU 1656 1.7 C 2251 3.1	27	0006 3.0 0631 1.5 TH 1252 3.2 1935 1.7

FORT WILLIAM WEATHER			
Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 4°C to 6°C.	Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.	Light rain and a moderate breeze Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.	Light rain and a moderate breeze Temperatures 7°C to 9°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

Ardrishaig	-5.35
Campbeltown	-5.30
Crinan	-0.47
Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Lochboisdale	+0.30
Mallaig	+0.25
Portree	+0.55
Tobermory	+0.16
Dover	+5.30

HIGH 9 LOW 7 9 MPH