



# The Oban Times

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No 8588

Thursday 4 November, 2021

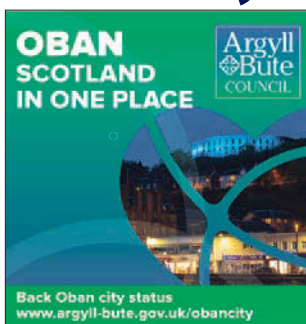
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95p

## Young carer Max focuses on volunteering

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### Drive to be a city



Transport plans that will benefit Oban area.

• Turn to page 2.

### Parish change



Minister moving on to Appin and Lismore churches.

• Turn to page 7.

## SPOOKY FUN AT THE VIEW



• FULL STORY AND MORE PHOTOGRAPHS, PAGE 6.

## Oban hit by mail delay

by Sandy Neil  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

An Oban resident missed her operation after the Royal Mail delivered four first-class letters

from a Glasgow hospital all at once – up to 14 days after the first one was posted and on the day her operation was due.

In an ongoing investigation, The Oban Times can reveal

that many Oban residents have recently reported missing and late post.

Last month we were contacted by a man in Oban about a missing second-class parcel.

When the package, due for delivery on Monday October 11, failed to arrive at his Oban home on the Longsdale run, he visited the Royal Mail's Oban Delivery Office on Albany

Street that day to locate it. A member of staff checked, but said it was not there.

The man returned twice more that week – first thing

Continued on page 4.

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OT

# Councillors say no to plan for a national care service

by Sandy Neil  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

Fears have been expressed over what impact proposals for a National Care Service could have for island communities in Argyll.

A consultation is taking place on plans for a centralised service, which the Scottish Government feels will improve the way social care is delivered in Scotland.

Argyll and Bute Council convened a special full council meeting on Thursday October 28 to consider the proposals. It argues the government's plan is not the solution to social care service challenges, especially for rural communities.

Leader of Argyll and Bute Council, Councillor Robin Currie, an island resident who lives on Islay, said: 'People use social care services at very difficult, vulnerable times in



their life. It's vital therefore any changes are the right ones.

'We welcome the focus on improving social care support for anyone who needs it and the opportunity to get involved in developing services for the future. However, we have significant concerns about the proposals and what they could mean for Argyll and Bute.

'For example, more consider-

ation needs to be given to their impact on rural and remote communities like those of Argyll and Bute. Delivering services in the urban, central belt of Scotland can be very different to delivering them on islands and to dispersed communities. Services based on local knowledge will better meet local need.

'The changes proposed

**The council is concerned about the impact the proposal will have on rural and remote communities in Argyll and Bute.**

would cost a lot of money. There needs to be clarity on investment available for social care services.

'These proposals have the potential to be the most significant public sector reform in Scotland for decades. Given councils' knowledge of their area's needs, councils must have the opportunity to play an active part in developing the way forward.

'Any changes introduced have to be right for all areas in Scotland.'

At Thursday's special meeting, councillors unanimously approved the council's response, which included calls for an island impact assessment.

But Oban South and the Isles independent councillor Mary Jean Devon, who lives on Mull, was worried about unequal treatment for island communities.

Councillor Devon said: 'I have serious concerns about these proposals and their deliverability, particularly for island communities. We are having to send carers to the mainland to provide care and this is not sustainable.

'The Scottish Government introduced the Islands Bill in 2017 with the aim of improving life for island communities.

'We are nearly five years on and I am struggling to see any flesh on the bones. When the Island Bill was launched, it was to secure parity, so I'm now wondering whether the national care plan will mean that.'

A Scottish Government

spokesperson said: 'We are committed to delivering a National Care Service by the end of this parliament to end the postcode lottery in the provision of care services in Scotland. The Independent Review of Adult Social Care found the current way of working has not fully delivered the improvements intended.

'We understand there is often a need for a different approach for people living in island and rural areas and the National Care Service will help ensure that is delivered.'

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**OBAN  
SCOTLAND  
IN ONE PLACE**



## Oban city status

**"Cities come in all shapes and sizes. Bidding for city status is one step in ensuring that Oban, and Argyll and Bute more widely, have as much chance for a successful future as other parts of Scotland."**

Councillor Robin Currie,  
Leader of Argyll and Bute Council



**Back Oban city status**  
[www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/obancity](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/obancity)

## Taking the Hy road: West Coast Motors to trial hydrogen bus

Oban will become the next place after the Highland capital to trial a hydrogen bus this month, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The hydrogen fuel cell bus, in a joint initiative between HITRANS, Protium Energy Limited and Opportunity Cromarty Firth, is currently being operated by Stagecoach Highlands on routes from Inverness to Alness.

The trial will conclude following the COP26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, before the bus is passed on to West Coast Motors to run the 5/405 service from Oban to Balcaldine from November 8-12.

The future of transport in Oban is also high on the agenda for Argyll and Bute Council. A successful bid for city status next year as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations would help bring in extra funding to fuel its vision for an integrated travel hub in the port.

A new link road for Dunbeg and creating a drone hub at the airport where there have been recent experiments for Royal Mail and the NHS are also part of the focus ahead.

Leader of Argyll and Bute



Council, Robin Currie, says potential benefits of city status would be about creating opportunities for investment to progress things that matter to local people.

Looking to the future, West Coast Motors, which has grown from the 1920s to employ 600 staff and run 270 buses and coaches today, said the hydrogen bus trial will give them 'a fantastic opportunity to understand the technology involved'.

The Caetano hydrogen fuel cell bus has a 60kW fuel cell and a 44kW battery pack, providing a range of 400km with 30km of this distance powered by battery alone. The high performance bus emits zero CO2 emissions and the hydrogen fuel cells are stored in the vehicle's roof, allowing

more space on board for the comfort of passengers.

Highland councillor and HITRANS chairman Allan Henderson said: 'In funding the hydrogen supply from Element2, we are demonstrating the Highlands and Islands are willing and able play a key part in the development of Scotland's hydrogen economy.'

'With transport responsible for 37 per cent of greenhouse HG emissions in Scotland, we are all going to have to shift towards more environmentally-friendly, low carbon transport.'

David Beaton, managing director at Stagecoach Highlands, said: 'The future of transport is undoubtedly heading towards ultra-low and zero emission so it is really exciting to be able to trial this next generation of vehicles. Travelling by bus, when we can, is one of the easiest ways to address climate change through carbon reduction of our own journeys.'

Tim Harper, chief executive officer of Element 2, said: 'As with all Element 2's supply, the hydrogen will be from green or sustainable sources in our commitment to helping the UK reach its net zero targets.'

# Men's shed needs new base

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Oban Men's Shed needs a new roof over its head.

The peer to peer support group, which encourages men to socialise and be constructive, has had free use of part of the Stevenson Street building owned by the Salvation Army, but now the premises is being put up for sale, although they have not been given an exit date.

The Shed's John McAllister wants to hear from anyone who can help or has an idea.

A central spot in town would be ideal but size is more important, says John. A space a little wider than they have now would be the best fit.

One of the locations they have in mind is the hall at the back of the former church in Argyll Square, but they are struggling to find out who owns it.

'It would do the job nicely but we can't find out who



John McAllister and Colin Turtle in the workshop at Oban's Men's Shed.

owns it now. It was sold by the Church of Scotland some time ago. If anyone knows who we need to talk to about it, we'd love to hear from them,' said John.

The church building was

used as a pub before it was taken on by VisitScotland and is now lying disused.

Although the group, which classes itself as a community resource, could try for a grant to buy a building - get-

ting a grant to pay rent is not easy. The Men's Shed relies on donations.

There was an offer of a hut at Rockfield but there was not enough money in the pot to afford it, said John.

'We rely on donations. We see ourselves as a community resource. If we start making a profit we would turn ourselves into a business and that's not what we are about,' he added.

Members of the Men's Shed take on projects and jobs brought to them by the community, from fixing benches to restoring shelves and garden equipment as well as taking on special one-off requests like making a muscle-strengthening piece of kit for the hospital's occupational therapy unit.

'They ask for it, we do it the best we can,' said John.

Last month the 'Shedders' partnered up with Argyll and Bute Council to bring a disused shack at the side of Ganavan toilets back into use as a public shelter.

The revamped shack, that will be gated overnight, can now be used by groups meeting up at the beach and snack van customers needing shelter. A community

noticeboard will also go up in it soon.

'Up until the Salvation Army's last service in town we had not been told we would be closing here,' added John. 'We realised what was happening when we saw the note on their door.'

'We'd been given gratis of the building as a community resource for about four or five years, which we've very much appreciated and want to thank them for.'

'It's worked well, but now we have to search for somewhere else to go.'

A former sandwich place in a Nissan hut near Tesco is also being looked at as a possibility.

Talks with Argyll and Bute Council about old toilets below the Corran Halls fell flat three months into talks when the council realised it did not own them.

If you can help the Men's Shed find a new home, message Men's Shed Oban on Facebook.

## Vaccination bosses issue second apology over invite errors

Apologetic vaccination bosses investigating a mass of mistakes that led to confusion and missed appointments say they have resolved what went wrong, writes Kathie Griffiths.

One of the latest incidents was the failure to send out any appointments for two booster clinics at the Corran Halls.

The error, blamed on 'data processing inaccuracies', was only discovered when a vaccination team turned up in Oban on October 26 ready for a six-hour shift with sufficient vaccine but no-one to jag.

The Oban Times had reports of frantic scenes and ring-rounds as staff tried to muster people for jags and not waste the Pfizer vaccine.

One man claimed he was flagged down as he drove past the Corran Halls. Many other people just turned up on spec after hearing the clinics were 'drop-ins'.

Making a second apology within a week, Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) said the data processing inaccuracies have now been sorted.

Clerical errors sending out booster appointment letters affected people in Lochgilphead, Helensburgh

& Lomond, Cowal and Lochgilphead, as well as in Oban.

Last week's Oban Times also reported how the HSCP had wrongly invited 163 Oban teenagers for a second dose of the vaccine they were not eligible for.

This week the HSCP admitted letters were also sent out

**The error was only discovered when a vaccination team turned up in Oban but had no-one to jag.**

too late inviting people for Age 50 plus booster clinics yesterday (November 3) and today (November 4) at the Corran Halls. Anyone eligible who is a patient with Lorn and Taynuilt medical practices is advised to just turn up between 9am and 4pm - a U-turn from seven days ago when the HSCP appealed for people to be patient and wait for official invites.

'The Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) would like to apologise for a number of clerical errors

administering booster vaccination appointment letters for residents in Lochgilphead, Oban, Cowal, Helensburgh & Lomond and Lochgilphead. Our Vaccination Programme managers have now completed their investigation and resolved the data processing inaccuracies,' said a spokesperson for the HSCP.

Errors included Lochgilphead and Lochgilphead residents being invited to appointments at mixed-up addresses. Appointment letters were also sent out too late for people in Tighnabruach to attend and they are now being encouraged to just drop in at any planned clinics in their area - the next booster clinic for over 50s is tomorrow (November 5) at The Kames Hall, Tighnabruach, from 9am until 4.45pm.

All the clinics affected by the errors have been correctly updated on the HSCP's website.

Tomorrow (November 5) will see a booster clinic at Lochgilphead Community Education Centre in Manse Brae from 9.30am to 3.30pm and same place, same time on November 10 and November 17.

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OT

# Woman misses op as Oban hit by mail delivery delays

Continued from page 1.

on Wednesday and Friday mornings, since the sorting office's opening hours are 8am to 10am on weekdays. Each time he was told his parcel was not there. It was tracked to a Glasgow mailing centre on Saturday, where a member of staff told him it was very unlikely to still be there.

He went back to the Oban sorting office for a fourth time on Monday October 18, a full week after the parcel should have been delivered. 'Lo and behold,' he told The Oban Times, 'my parcel was found.' He was also handed a parcel for his flatmate, due to be delivered almost a fortnight earlier. 'People are waiting on more serious stuff than me,' he said.

On Sunday October 24, we contacted the Royal Mail about this incident. A spokes-



person told The Oban Times: 'We are currently experiencing staff shortages in the Oban area which may cause some disruption to service.'

'We are in the process of recruiting new members of staff and we are looking to restore our high service levels as quickly as possible. We apol-

ogise for any inconvenience. Every item of mail is important to Royal Mail. We aim to deliver all items of mail in line with the relevant service specification.'

On Monday October 25, we heard a further complaint from another Oban resident, who is also on the Longsdale mail run.

**Royal Mail says it is recruiting more staff to restore service levels as quickly as possible.**

She was waiting to hear the date for her operation at Ross Hall Hospital in Glasgow, but had heard nothing - until the hospital lab called her on Monday October 25 to ask her if she'd taken a Covid test before her operation the next day, Tuesday October 26. This was the first she had heard about her operation date.

She discovered the hospital had sent her four letters before her upcoming operation, but all had failed to reach her. As a consequence, her operation has had to be rescheduled to December. However, following the call from The Oban Times, on Tuesday October 26, the day her operation was due, all four letters from the hospital arrived through her letterbox in Oban, plus a huge amount of other mail.

All four envelopes were stamped with the dates they were sent, postmarked on October 12, 13, 19 and 20. The first contained a letter confirming her admission to hos-

pital and the third contained the Covid test, which was to be done and sent back on October 22, before her admission on October 26.

All four pieces of correspondence arrived 14 days after the first letter was postmarked. Each had been posted first class. The Royal Mail website explains the service aims to deliver first class letters and parcels the next working day, including Saturdays.

Many local residents took to the Oban Community Forum Facebook page to report similar problems on Monday October 25 and Tuesday October 26.

One, on Monday 25, said: 'We have received no mail at home for a week, until it all arrived this afternoon in one bundle, apparently due to a shortage of postal staff locally. It is rumoured that a third of Oban is similarly affected.' Another person that day added: 'Wrapped in elastic band...weeks worth.' On Tuesday 26, another person wrote: 'We know and respect our local postie. This is not in any way a complaint about him, simply reporting the fact that our entire road received similar bundles of a week's

mail yesterday.' 'I can attest to that,' another person said. 'After no mail for several days, we received a huge amount on Monday including some bills, birthday cards and important documents long overdue. Am hoping the situation improves soon or the run up to Christmas could be severely affected.'

'Yes, likewise,' added another person on Tuesday October 26. 'Been waiting for over eight days for several items that should have been here in two days and that triggered disputes with eBay suppliers due to delays.'

'My family posted for next day delivery birthday gifts for me. It took five weeks to arrive!' reported another on Tuesday 26. 'Then the two parcels arrived one box damaged. Paying for a service and not getting it.' Despite The Oban Times contacting Royal Mail and asking why it had taken up to 16 days to deliver a first class letter from a hospital in Glasgow to Oban and how Royal Mail aims to solve this problem affecting so many people in the town, particularly so close to Christmas, Royal Mail sent us the same response as before.

## POLICE FILES

■ Between 4pm and 10pm on Thursday October 21 at Station Square, Oban, it is alleged that an unattended parked car was struck by another vehicle. The driver failed to stop. Enquiries continue.

■ At 1.15am on Sunday October 24 at George Street, Oban, two men, aged 32 and 23, were arrested and issued Recorded Police Warnings for fighting in the street.

■ At 1.20am on Sunday October 24 at George Street, Oban, two men, aged 20 and 22, were arrested and issued Recorded Police Warnings for fighting.

■ At 9.50am on Saturday October 23 on Glencruitten Road, Oban, it is alleged a motorist was driving without due care and attention. He is to be charged with careless driving and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ At 5.45pm on Monday October 25 on Shore Street,

Oban, police arrested two men, aged 34 and 27, for fighting. A report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ At 11.35pm on Monday October 25, within premises on the Railway Pier, Oban, police were called to a report of two men having assaulted individuals. Two men, aged 36 and 17, were identified as responsible, arrested and charged with assault. A report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ Between 5pm and 5.30pm on Monday October 25 within Lidl car park, Oban, a parked car was struck and damaged by another vehicle. Police are investigating.

■ Between 3pm on Monday October 25 and 1pm on Tuesday October 26 at Airds Crescent, Oban, it is alleged a quantity of service and core cable was stolen. Enquiries continue.

■ Between 8.10pm and 8.30pm on Wednesday October 27 within an Oban hotel, police responded to a report of a man assaulting a staff member. Police attended and the 32-year-old was arrested and taken to Oban Police Station where he allegedly continued to act in an aggressive manner and further assaulted a police officer.

He was charged with the offences and held in custody to appear at Oban Sheriff Court.

■ At 4.15pm on Thursday October 28 at Gallanach Road, Oban, police were called about a man allegedly sitting in a vehicle consuming alcohol. Police attended and a 57-year-old man failed the road side breath test and was arrested and charged with being under the influence of alcohol whilst in charge of a motor vehicle. He will appear at Oban Sheriff Court in due course.



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Ganavan toilets will stay open this winter thanks to Covid funding.

# Forever fix needed to keep Ganavan toilets open all year

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

A community takeover could be the permanent solution to keeping Ganavan toilets open all year round.

Oban ward councillor Jim Lynch says now winter opening has been secured for this year it is time to look for a forever fix - and that could mean a community group taking on the upkeep responsibility.

The toilets at Ganavan are one of six council-run facilities across Argyll and Bute that will be staying open when traditionally they would close for the winter months until April.

Crinan, Ulva, Kilchattan Bay, Glenmorag and Sandy Beach near Dunoon are the others.

Funding to keep them open is one-off and has come from excess Covid money after an executive decision was made by the council last week.

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson said: 'This reflects the fact there are still ongoing Covid issues and some evidence of staycation activity, albeit reduced from peak season. This is a one-off allocation from Covid funding and there is no budget beyond this current financial year from existing budget allocations.'

Councillor Lynch said: 'Everyone is out and about now that restrictions have been lifted.

ed. People are enjoying making the most of going places, especially places like Ganavan. Now we have secured this winter's opening we need to be looking for a permanent solution. We need to work now to get a solution for it. That could be a community take-over.

'We need to look at all the options.'

Just 10 days before Ganavan toilets were due to close, a letter signed by 13 sporting and

**'Our local councillors have pushed hard for this outcome and it's great news they will stay open this winter.'**

outdoor groups who regularly use the popular spot and its public conveniences was sent to council bosses.

In February this year Adventure Oban stepped up following an appeal by BID4Oban for someone to open and clean the toilets at weekends until they reopened fully in April.

BID4Oban helped pay costs and there was an honesty box for donations.

Doreen Henderson from Adventure Oban said: 'Our local councillors have pushed hard for this outcome and it's great news they will stay open

this winter. As for the future, funding would need to come from somewhere.

'Someone would need to be employed to clean them but the community could take on the management.

'I'd like to think what Adventure Oban did earlier this year has helped prove that could happen.'

Oban North and Lorn Councillor Elaine Robertson raised the need to keep Ganavan toilets open through the winter at a virtual meeting of the authority's policy and resources committee on October 14, where a report revealed that more than £1.6million of Scottish Government funding for the purposes of recovery from the pandemic still remained available to the authority.

This week Oban community council convener Marri Malloy said it was 'great news' for this year, but she was worried about next year.

'We've tried before as a community council to take it on and there have been other offers of help.

'Ganavan is Oban's public park rain, hail or shine, so its toilets need to be open all year,' she said.

**GET INVOLVED**  
email us at [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk)

## BID boss Andy shortlisted for Scotland Loves Local award

BID4Oban Chief Executive Andrew Spence has been shortlisted in the Place Leader category for the inaugural Scotland Loves Local Awards, writes Fiona Scott.

Individuals, businesses and community organisations from across the country are in the running for the accolades after being nominated by people who have seen and felt the positive impact of their work.

The awards are organised by Scotland's Towns Partnership (STP) as part of the Scotland Loves Local campaign, which encourages everyone to choose local and support businesses in their communities to build a better, stronger future.

Commenting on his nomination, Andy said: 'BID4Oban is delighted to have been nominated for this award after what has been a challenging period of time.

'Although we have not been able to carry out all our activities, we have been involved in promoting Oban and working with businesses to support



Andy Spence has been nominated for a Place Leader award for his work with BID4Oban.

them throughout the Covid period. This nomination is recognition for all the work that we do behind the scenes.'

Winners will be announced during an online event, presented by STV's Sean Batty, to be broadcast via social media on Thursday November 25. The celebration will also be the culmination of the Scotland's Towns Conference, a week-long showcase and celebration of innovation improving the nation's towns and places.

STP Chief Officer Phil Prentice said: 'All of our shortlisted entries stand testament to the dedication and innova-

tion of those who make our communities great places in which to live.'

The recipient of the 2021 High Street Hero Award will also be announced during the event. The awards are sponsored by Collective Architecture, Commsworld, Creative Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, Message Matters, South of Scotland Enterprise, Spar Scotland and ThreeSixty Architecture. They are also supported by STV.

Visit [www.lovelocal.scot](http://www.lovelocal.scot) and by following #ScotlandLovesLocal and #ChooseLocal On social media.

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**CITY PLUMBING**

OT

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

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WHERE IS THIS?



Who would have thought November would arrive so quickly?

There has been so much happening lately that the time has flown by and now we're in November with only seven weeks until Christmas and it doesn't look like we'll have time to draw breath before the year is over.

We still have lots of visitors with us, especially at weekends, which is adding a nice buzz to the town, so maybe that's why I can't quite believe it's November.

There is still plenty to look forward to this month, with the annual BID4Oban Fireworks display on Friday November 5, kindly sponsored by Scottish Sea Farms and, courtesy of the Northern Lighthouse Board, set off from its pier, which is the perfect place as it gives as many people as possible a fantastic vantage point. Of course, none of it would be possible without the lovely people from Fireworks Scotland, who seem to make the display bigger and better every year.

Don't forget to find your spot before 7.30pm, in time for the countdown by Oban FM.

We're also in the run-up to Oban Winter Festival which returns this year. It's so nice to have a little bit of normality back, especially for the festive season. That means it's nearly time for Santa to visit too. I'm so excited that we'll have Santa and his reindeer visiting us again this year on November 27, kicking off the Christmas celebrations beautifully. Despite everyone having to be a bit more aware of distancing, it will be great to see them again.

The photograph last week was of the window at Rogerson Shoes leading into the distillery.

This week I'll just leave you to guess.

# Happy horror-we'en

by Kathie Griffiths

kggriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Witches, vampires and ghouls were just some of the little horrors out partying for Hallowe'en at the weekend.

The View in Oban opened its doors on Sunday afternoon for a spooky fancy dress disco and there were plenty of tricks and treats to be had – including candyfloss.

Children in Seil and Kilmelford also had parties to go to.

Daniel MacIntyre from The View said: 'We had a very busy day and thank all the children and their parents or guardians who turned up and showed Oban's great community spirit and had lots of fun.'

I'd like to personally thank all our staff who took responsibility for making the event happen, plus the girls from Wee Bay Candy Floss Co and George Noble for providing the disco.

'It was a fantastic effort from everyone. And we'll get busy planning more!'



These guys were dressed to thrill.



Amber Rowan, 2, was on Paw Patrol.



These youngsters were spellbound.



This little devil was enjoying the candy floss. KG\_T45\_spooks04



Dressing up as a dinosaur was mega-tastic for this Seil youngster.



Vampires Benjamin and Harry Laidler from Connel were dressed to chill with their werewolf friend.

KG\_T45\_spooks01



What a shocker at The View's Hallowe'en party! KG\_T45\_spooks05



Little Elodie Layden from Seil was bewitching in her Hallowe'en costume.



Kilmelford youngsters enjoyed a fantastic Hallowe'en party.



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# Appin and Lismore welcome their new minister from Oban

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Reverend Dugald Cameron was inducted at Appin Parish Church on Saturday after spending the last 15 years leading Church of Scotland worship at Kilmore and Oban.

Sundays will be doubly busy from now on as the morning service at Appin will be followed by a ferry ride across to historic St Moluag's Church on Lismore for another at 12.30pm.

To help him cover his new parish, the Glasgow-born minister is planning on getting an ebike to speed him on his way - as well as help cut his carbon footprint and keep fit.

Leaving Oban is a 'wrench' he says, but making the move



is exciting. There comes a time in ministry when you realise that change is good.

It's a wrench leaving Oban because I've loved it, but it's exciting moving to Appin

**The Reverend Dugald Cameron at Appin Church.**

and Lismore. This would've been my 15th Christmas at Kilmore and Oban. Coming out of a pandemic, there is a lot of change happening everywhere in the church and sometimes it's difficult to carry out changes when you've been somewhere for quite a while.

I'm looking forward to being alongside people in a rural, island community and discovering more about a place that I know to some extent.

The ministry here will be different to the busy town of Oban, even though it is not that many miles away. Here there will be more time for pastoral work and I'm looking

forward to that, living within the communities and to being a pointer for God.

Both Appin and Lismore are vibrant. It will be revitalising taking on a new way of doing things and encountering new people,' he said.

Despite the move away from the bright lights of Oban, the Reverend Cameron will still be heading back from time to time to sing with the Gaelic Choir.

Last week saw the Reverend Cameron and his wife Kirsten move into their new home at Appin Manse. Daughter Islay is studying early years learning at college in Glasgow and other daughter Christiana is spending a year on a Scots and International law course at Leuven University in Belgium.

At Reverend Cameron's

final service, joint session clerk John MacLean, on behalf of the Kirk Session and the Oban and Kilmore congregation, spoke highly of Reverend Cameron's compassionate ministry and wished him well in his new parish. Among gifts of appreciation were flowers, artwork from the Faithshare Group, as well as a framed photograph of the PS Waverley and a cheque from the congregation.

Reverend Cameron thanked the congregation and said he would leave with many good memories of Kilmore and Oban and was sure the parish was well equipped to move on with strength.

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OT

# Young carer Max puts a focus on volunteering

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Young carer Max Allen is clocking up volunteering hours and winning a Saltire award for supporting others.

The 15-year-old Oban High School pupil is North Argyll Carer Centre's first young carer to be honoured by the Scottish Government's national youth volunteer awards.

Max helps his family look after his big brother Cameron who has brittle bones but has also found the time on top of school studies to help run a young carers' photography group and support a younger snapper in the group.

With a certificate tucked under his belt for the first challenge stage of the awards, Max is looking forward to volunteering his way through



the next levels. Ultimately he could become a Saltire Ambassador, helping promote and support the awards that

**Young carer Max Allen has a focus on photography and volunteering.** Photograph: Ewen Munro.

celebrate and recognise the commitment, contribution and achievements of young volunteers across Scotland.

Max was eight when he got involved with Young Carers after mum Helen suggested it.

Helping out at home, from getting Cameron a drink or breakfast to making sure he is comfortable, is routine for Max who says he has got used to it over the years but is thankful for the opportunities opened up by the Young Carers service.

Oban Youth Cafe, fun activities, day trips, residential stays on Mull and Tiree, annual Young Carer festivals and

having adventures at Atlantis Leisure Centre are just some of the many positive experiences the service has brought him over the last seven years.

'I feel it was better for me to start with them from a younger age.

'It has helped me and still does. It gives time to step back from the caring role, do your own thing and enjoy yourself talking to others in similar situations.'

Covid was tough for everyone. Meet-ups had to stop in person but turned to Zoom. CalMac funding meant Max's photography group could put on an exhibition of work but just as the frames were ready - the virus kicked in bringing plans to a halt.

Instead, the images were shown at North Argyll Carers Service online annual general

meeting and Max is focusing on his future. Landscape photography is what he enjoys most from behind the lens but he is looking forward to what is on the horizon next.

'I enjoy volunteering because it feels good.

'Doing something to help others is good for yourself too,' he said.

Accolades from the Saltire Awards will follow him when he moves to college, university and into the world of work.

'It's something to be proud of,' added Max, who also has a Duke of Edinburgh bronze award on his 'to do' list.

The teenager's achievements so far are also the inspiration behind a potential young leader training programme being set up across Argyll with the help of funding from the Social Enterprise Academy.

## SCOTTISH FIELD December



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## Remembrance events

Oban's Remembrance Sunday plans are back on after Covid, writes Kathie Griffiths.

This year's parade will muster at the Corran Halls car park at 10am on November 14, setting off at 10.15am to reach the war memorial on the Esplanade at 10.45am. Chaplain Peter Park will open the ceremony before wreaths are laid and a two-minute silence starts at 11am.

Last year, Tier 2 Covid restrictions cancelled Oban's Act of Remembrance parade.

Despite lots of safety planning, a small-scale parade and service scheduled at the town's War Memorial on the Esplanade and a second act of remembrance at the Garden of Remembrance on George Street had to be called off.

Instead people were encouraged to take to their doorsteps for the usual two-minute silence and to go online to make donations to The Scottish Poppy Appeal.

Oban councillor Jim Lynch said: 'It's so important we keep the Remembrance event going in Oban. I hope people will come out to show their respects as they have in the past. We've had so many offers of help from people from the pipe band to West Coast Motors and all the cadets and it is very



A commemorative gathering was held at Killin War Memorial. Photograph: Ron Allner.

much appreciated.' On Seil people are invited to gather at Balvicar's old cemetery at 10am on Remembrance Sunday for an Act of Commemoration at 10.15am where crosses will be placed on the Commonwealth War Graves. An Act of Remembrance will follow at the war memorial at 10.45am where the branch's acting padre Phil Moss will lead the service.

On Luig, there will be a gathering at 10.30am at the island's war memorial for a service led by Jean Alexander.

A service will follow at Kilbrandon Parish Church on Seil at 11.45am and there are plans to livestream it and put it on YouTube so the congregation at Luig Church can watch it as it happens.

In Kilmelford, people are asked to assemble at the village's war memorial for 10.45am to lay poppy wreaths and for the minute's silence. A 'special' church service will follow, said Easdale Royal British Legion branch chairman Ron Hetherington.

October 27 saw the centenary rededication of Killin War Memorial. The ceremony was performed by Reverend Russel Moffat.

Killin Memorial Preservation Group planned the ceremony for last year but was forced to postpone because of the pandemic until now. Members of The Black Watch attended the ceremony along with many former soldiers from the area, supported by a good community turnout.





Marjorie Sheasby had a happy day on October 17 celebrating her 100th birthday and would like to thank all her friends from Appin and from Oban Bridge Club for their cards, gifts and kind words. Marjorie recently moved to North Argyll House where she has been made welcome by the team. Marjorie is pictured with her special card from Her Majesty, The Queen.

# Are Argyll Tories in crisis after loss of councillors?

by Sandy Neil  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

Argyll and Bute's Conservative group has lost three councillors in as many months, through suspension, resignation and deselection.

The first shock to rock the region's Tories came in August 2021 when the Conservative councillor for Kintyre and the Islands Alastair Redman was suspended by his party for the second time in two years.

In November 2019, two months after becoming policy lead for economic growth in the council's administration, Councillor Redman was one of 25 members suspended from the Tory Party over claims of Islamophobic and other prejudicial social media posts. His suspension ended in May 2020.

Then, in August this year, a Conservative party spokesperson confirmed councillor

Redman had once again been suspended pending investigation, but no reason for the suspension was given.

Councillor Redman told The Oban Times his suspension was an 'internal matter'. 'It will be dealt with in good time,' he

**'I have continued to represent my constituents...'**

said. 'I have continued to represent my constituents and work as hard as ever. My constituents need not worry. Whether I stand as a Conservative or as an Independent in the next election, I will continue to fight for my area. At local level, party politics isn't the prime motivator of voters, I believe.'

The following month, at a full council meeting on September 30, councillor Redman stood

down from the administration and his role as policy lead for business, regeneration and commercial development. Councillor Redman told The Oban Times he had voluntarily stepped down because of his suspension.

It is one of the council's most important portfolios, overseeing huge and expensive projects. This weighty brief has now been split between councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor, as Deputy Policy Lead, and councillors Robin Currie and Gary Mulvaney, as Policy Lead and Deputy Lead for the Economy and Rural Growth.

Another blow soon followed for Argyll and Bute's Conservatives. In October, Lomond North's Conservative councillor Barbara Morgan, who had been chairperson of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee since October 2020, resigned from Argyll

and Bute Council for personal reasons with immediate effect.

Then, that same month, South Kintyre councillor Donald Kelly, who has stood as a Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party councillor for the last 20 years, was blindsided by a decision to remove him from the party with no explanation.

After submitting his application to once again represent the party in the 2022 election, he was told he cannot be considered because he is no longer a Conservative councillor.

'I strongly believe a local councillor should put the interests of their community before party politics,' Mr Kelly said, 'and this is something I have done and will continue to do.'

When contacted by The Oban Times, a Scottish Conservative spokesperson would only say: 'We don't comment on internal party matters.'

## Over 50?

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OT

## Oban Sealife demolition

Demolition of Oban's former Sea Life Sanctuary building will not require prior permission from Argyll and Bute Council.

A demolition notice from DM Hall was submitted to the local authority which has seen no reason to raise any objection to the plans.

The sea life sanctuary at Barcaldine was bought by Gael Force.

'The applicant has confirmed by email that he is aware the site is within a countryside zone and that the proposed demolition and removal of the buildings from the ground at this time may impact any future development opportunities proposed for this site.'

'As the means of demolition and aftercare of the site have been demonstrated, there is no reason to raise any objection to this prior notification.'

'The council's major applications team currently has a screening and scoping opinion request for the site to be investigated. This is currently not progressing as further information has been requested.'

# Swing band gets Oban moving



That Swing Sensation got toes tapping at the charity vintage tea dance on Sunday.

Oban's Argyllshire Gathering Halls was swinging to the tune of a vintage tea dance on Sunday, writes Kathie Griffiths.

That Swing Sensation, a 10-piece swing band from Glasgow, and The Catalina Sisters got toes tapping in aid of Link and Connect,

the charity arm of Oban Link Club.

Plenty of homebaking and raffle prizes kept up the tempo throughout the well-attended afternoon.

All funds raised will go towards the upkeep of the group, which meets on a Wednesday from 2pm to 4pm at the Baptist Church Hall, then on a Friday from 11am to 2pm at The Perle Hotel. Oban Link Club also supports a wellbeing group at Hope Kitchen on a Thursday afternoon from 2pm to 3.30pm.



Top: The Catalina Sisters and, above, Liz Bamber was on raffle ticket selling duty at the vintage tea dance.



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## Workers suspend strike over pay but GMB action goes ahead in Glasgow

Council strikes across Scotland next week have been suspended by unions.

Members of the GMB, Unison and Unite unions who represent refuse workers as well as school cleaners, caterers and janitors across Scotland were due to take industrial action on November 8-12.

Unions have now put that on hold while they consult members about a £48 million offer currently on the table.

Council umbrella group COSLA proposed a rise in pay of 5.8 per cent for the lowest paid staff as part of a £1,062 increase for all staff earning below £25,000. Unison announced that £30m is coming from the Scottish Government while £18.5m is from local government.

Johanna Baxter, UNISON Scotland head of local government, said: 'This improved pay

offer rightly puts more money into the pockets of those on the lowest pay.'

'It is just disappointing UNISON members had to threaten to go on strike for their employer to recognise their worth.'

'We will now consult our members on this offer and UNISON will continue to lead the fight to improve the terms and conditions of these workers in the forthcoming negotiations for the 2022 pay review.'

Mark Ferguson, chairman of UNISON Scotland Local Government Committee, added: 'It has taken 10 months and the threat of strike action for COSLA and the Scottish Government to recognise the vital role of local government workers.'

'Local government needs a new deal, we need to invest in

local services and those who work in local government need their value properly recognised in the years to come.'

Councillor Gail Macgregor, COSLA's resources spokesperson, said: 'We are pleased our trade union colleagues have notified us that they will suspend strike action.'

However, on Sunday GMB Scotland confirmed a strike in Glasgow was back on. GMB Scotland said members in the city council's cleansing department would be striking from midnight for the next week.

The union announced: 'Glasgow City Council has acted in bad faith and failed to give our members proper time and space to discuss the 11th hour offer from COSLA.'

The strike started as world leaders arrived in Glasgow for the COP26 climate summit.

# Britain's oldest warship tests robot rib in navy first

by Sandy Neil  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

A major milestone in the Royal Navy's use of autonomous vessels in future operations has been reached during recent trials aboard HMS Argyll, Britain's longest serving frigate which celebrated its 30th birthday this year.

In a first for the navy, the warship successfully controlled an uncrewed Pacific 24 rigid inflatable boat (RIB) while sailing at sea.

The week-long tests, held by the navy's innovation experts NavyX and industry partners BAE Systems, saw the Type 23 frigate take command of the RIB while it zipped along the water.

The boat's onboard cameras and sensors gave constant feedback to Argyll, with a temporary operating centre



set up in the ship's hangar. In another first, the RIB's control system was also integrated into the ship's ops room meaning it could be controlled and commanded from the depths of the frigate.

As well as operating the Pac24 from up to 10 miles away, the ship successfully sent instructions to the boat for it to carry out autonomously such

as conducting basic missions, identifying targets on the water and cueing its camera and remote weapon station to tracked targets when operated by the trials team, the navy said.

Lieutenant Commander Rob Manson, trials lead for NavyX, said: 'This was a great first step in integrating fully autonomous vessels into Royal Navy

**The uncrewed Pacific 24 under the control of HMS Argyll, which was able to send instructions to the boat, such as identifying targets on the water.**

warships. What we managed to do with these trials was prove that systems such as those to control autonomous and uncrewed technology can be successfully introduced into our current fleet.

'Operating with the Pac24 while at sea showed that in the future these vessels have the potential to deploy with current frigates and destroyers and be used for a range of operational tasks.'

He added: 'The Royal Navy is committed to putting this sort of technology through its paces and conducting experiments on how we could use it on the frontline. The past

two years have seen crucial developments in uncrewed operations and we're excited for the future.'

Lieutenant Keaton Leyland-Jones, a warfare officer on Argyll, said: 'It is great to see the ship involved in this landmark moment for the Royal Navy. Frigates are the workhorses of the Royal Navy, regularly conducting anti-submarine warfare, countering piracy and Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief Operations. Argyll may be the oldest frigate in the fleet, but numerous capability upgrades have allowed us to press ahead at the cutting-edge of maritime warfare. Autonomous technology such as the Pac24 proves this, enhancing our versatility and improving our ability to conduct crucial missions, gaining advantage over the aggressor.'

For safety reasons, the Pac24 had sailors on board but was controlled remotely from Argyll throughout the trials.

Over a long and successful career at sea, Argyll has, to date, steamed more 685,000 nautical miles – enough to go around the world 32 times.

Despite being designed and laid down in the 1980s and 30 years old outwardly, the tech inside the frigate remains cutting-edge.

'Argyll is a special ship, with a fantastic team and a well-deserved reputation for operational success,' said Commander Wheen, who served as the frigate's operations officer between 2013 and 2015. 'She is hugely capable and has a great deal still to offer.'

'I very much look forward to meeting whatever challenges the future brings.'

## WHAT'S ON @ CORRAN HALLS 2021

WED NOV  
10

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Tickets: £15  
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or phone the box office 01631 567333

WED NOV  
17

**AN EVENING WITH ALEX GRAY**  
Doors open 6.45pm  
Tickets: £6 + booking fee  
Available from [ents24.com](http://ents24.com)

FRI DEC  
31

**HOGMANAY PARTY WITH MANRAN**  
Doors open 8pm  
Tickets £27.50 + booking fee  
Available from [manran.co.uk](http://manran.co.uk)

THU NOV  
11

**DOUG ALLAN - ITS A WRAP**  
Doors open 7pm  
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+ booking fee  
Available from [ents24.com](http://ents24.com)

SAT DEC  
11

**GARY MEIKLE COMEDY SHOW**  
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Available from [seetickets.com](http://seetickets.com)



Covid vaccination passports may be required for some events.

Find out more at  
[liveargyll.co.uk/whats-on](http://liveargyll.co.uk/whats-on)



OT

## New Lismore ferry close to completion

Lismore's new passenger ferry is getting ready for delivery in December.

Lady of Lismore, the new all-steel 12-metre replacement vessel designed by Keel Marine in Petersfield, will be launched next month for sea trials and certification by Maritime and Coastguard Agency surveyors before steaming 302 nautical miles north to Port Appin on Loch Linnhe.

She is being built by Mainstay Marine Solutions Limited in Pembrokeshire and will have a crew of two with room for 23 passengers all year round and a cruising speed of eight knots.

Argyll and Bute's Policy Lead for Roads and Infrastructure Services, Councillor Rory Colville, said: 'We're looking forward to taking delivery of the new Lady of Lismore and hope it will serve Lismore island residents, businesses and visitors to the island for many, many years.'

# Winter Festival set to get taste-buds tingling

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Organisers of this year's Winter Festival have all the ingredients to get taste-buds tingling.

Diners can look forward to a fine feast with whisky pairing brought to the table by a world-renowned foraging chef.

Taste of Argyll Kitchen in Argyll Street will be opening on November 27 and November 28 with sittings at 5.30pm and 8pm for a seven-course field to fork set menu. Tickets are £45 or £65, including the whisky experience. The cafe will also be hosting a cheese and wine night on November 26, which is bookable for £19.99.

Taste of Argyll's Katherine MacKenzie hopes news of the events will start to work up people's appetite for the Winter Festival's 10-day programme.



Above: Winter Festival mascot Coolio with Kyle Mackie, aged 8, of Nant Drive, Oban, whose scarecrow was a winner with judges of a Hallowe'en competition at Taste of Argyll in Aird's Place and, right, Arran Higgins, 14, with his winning pumpkin and Coolio.

'We're really looking forward to this year's festival. People missed it last year. We all did, so it's fantastic it's back and we can be a part of it.'

Winners of a pumpkin and scarecrow competition met at Taste of Argyll's Aird's Place shop to receive their prizes by Winter Festival mascot Coolio.



As part of the festival, ReCentre in Oban is offering a Winter Wellness event from November 18 to November 21. Over the four days, there will be a health boosting programme packed with holistic therapies, pilates, yoga and reflexology sessions, a skincare awareness workshop with Barcaldine Botanics and the chance to tuck into nutritious food at a pop-up Catchacarrot vegan cafe.

ReCentre's Susan De Almeida Ferreira said it will be just the tonic as a perfect self-care pick-up during the dark months. The wellness event was inspired by the joy of ReCentre's first birthday celebration at the start of September when people were able to start getting together again for workshops.

'It just felt as though there was a lot of healing going on, just by people coming together again. We thought as we enter the darker months and haven't got the sunshine to pick us up that it would be a good idea to organise a wellness festival. When we came up with the dates we didn't realise it was going to be the big winter festival at the same time, so it's a double bonus,' said Susan.

All the details can be found at [www.recentreoban.com/events](http://www.recentreoban.com/events)

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# Oban rescue team receives new defib

by Sandy Neil  
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

A new lightweight defibrillator costing £2,300 has been donated to Oban Mountain Rescue Team by the Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease (ABCD) charity.

'We hope we do not have to use it, but having it very close to hand means it could save a life,' said the rescue crew's medical officer Stuart Shaw. 'It could be on the mountain, it could be at events - you just have it when you need it.'

'It has been one of our busiest years in the last decade,' added team chairman Gordon Binnie: 'There are a lot more people going outdoors after lockdown.'

Dampness eventually meant the end for the rescue team's old portable defibrillator, also donated by ABCD 13 years ago. Since its inception in 2000, the ABCD Trust has raised more than £250,000 and has spent in the region of £200,000 on 190 projects



ABCD's Alfie MacKenzie, Stephen Clarke, Andy Henderson and chairperson Nicky Campbell donate a new lightweight defibrillator to Oban Mountain Rescue volunteers Stuart Shaw, Gordon Binnie and Andy Ravenhill.

in Mull, Islay, Lochgilhead, Campbeltown.

'This past 18 months or so have been very difficult for us to do our usual activities,

including fundraising,' said ABCD secretary Andy Henderson, 'but we are now gradually getting back to normal with this presentation to

the Oban Mountain Rescue group. Our next fundraising will be our Christmas raffle which is well supported by many Oban businesses, who

donate the prizes.'

In the same week, Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie Halcro Johnston encouraged people and organisations who have defibrillators in their communities to ensure they are registered with a new a UK-wide national defibrillator network.

The Circuit integrates with ambulance dispatch centres to direct bystanders to the nearest defibrillator in case of a cardiac arrest, reducing the time it takes those needing defibrillation to start receiving treatment.

The campaign to register defibrillators is being supported by the British Heart Foundation, in partnership with the Resuscitation Council UK and the Scottish Ambulance Service.

Mr Halcro Johnston said: 'Only one in 10 people currently survive an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in the UK, but we know that accessing a defibrillator can

greatly improve the chances of survival.'

'Unfortunately, the majority of defibrillators are not known to the ambulance service which can mean that in an emergency people are not directed to their nearest device.'

'However, registering your defibrillator with The Circuit should help the ambulance service direct people to their nearest defibrillator more quickly in the event of someone suffering a cardiac arrest. That could save lives.'

'And this could be particularly significant in the Highlands and Islands given the potential distances emergency services have to cover to attend to someone who needs help.'

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OT

# Why rapid weight loss diets don't work

## Lorn Healthy Options weekly health tip

We've all seen the before and after shots of someone who has lost a huge amount of weight by following a particularly low calorie, commercial weight loss programme.

I should say that my intention here is not to belittle their efforts, more to highlight the longer-term effects and perhaps the pictures you never see a little further down the line. Sometimes these advertisements will have small print stating that the person's weight loss is not typical and this is the real issue as what is typical is their rebound and subsequent weight gain in the months and years to come.

Anyone who has tried to lose weight will know that it's a tough process and requires a sustainable investment and high levels of will power. We recognise that mental health is a contributing factor and we will explore this in future



health tips. A slow and steady weight loss programme through a common sense approach to nutrition, activity and other lifestyle factors is something we promote at Healthy Options. Rapid weight loss strategies will fail for the vast majority, with nine out of 10 dieters returning to their original weight or heavier within five years.

The diet industry is well

aware of these statistics but let's face it, what a great business plan to have their clients experience short-term success followed by an almost inevitable relapse and subsequent return in the future to pay for another crack using the same method.

The human body tries to maintain its weight within a range of 10-15lbs known as a set point or defendable range

and this is a job carried out by part of our brain called the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus acts like a kind of thermostat. If weight is gained it will try to bring it down and if weight is reduced it will do the opposite.

These processes are controlled by a range of hormones and neurotransmitters and the crux of the problem is that the brain will reduce weight half-heartedly but will try to correct rapid weight loss relentlessly. This appears to stem back to our evolution as hunter gatherers, for who gaining excess weight was very unlikely, but starvation was a real possibility.

We are hard wired to avoid starvation as a survival strategy even though it's very unlikely to happen in our modern environment. Rapid weight loss kicks our brain into survival mode regardless of the starting weight of the individual. Seriously restrictive diets will also lead to severe fatigue which means less activity and subsequent

muscle wastage. So the overall outcome is a body that may be lighter but with a vastly reduced metabolism and when a more normal calorific intake is resumed weight gain is rapid and more than often exceeds the starting point.

For the majority of people the best way to maintain a healthy weight body and mind is through a common sense approach to nutrition, regular physical activity, better sleep patterns and reducing dangerous habits such as smoking or consuming higher than recommended amounts of alcohol.

The odds are stacked against those trying to manage their weight through diet alone and we should see the process as a long-term project involving a broader range of lifestyle improvements.

For the full message go to the free resource section on the [lornhealthyoptions.co.uk](http://lornhealthyoptions.co.uk) website.

**Rob Graham,**  
Lead Exercise Professional,  
Healthy Options.

## Ambitious future for rural Scotland

Farmers and crofters are to be supported to play their part in Scotland becoming a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture. A National Test Programme will begin next spring, with up to £51 million invested over the following three years.

The programme will encourage farmers and crofters to learn about how their work impacts on climate and nature, including offering finances to carry out carbon audits and nutrient management plans. This will establish a clear baseline and options for action. Work will also be done to find out how sustainable farming can be supported to ensure the right tools and support are in place when, from 2025, the climate and biodiversity performance of businesses will determine the level of agricultural payments.

At the annual general meeting of the National Farmers' Union of Scotland, Rural Affairs Secretary Mairi Gougeon praised the farmers already taking action to address the climate and nature crises.



# Dont let these guys work in the dark...

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## BEHIND THE SCENES AT ATLANTIS

Shorter days might mean less daylight and cooler temperatures but we're loving the beautiful display Oban puts on at this time of year with crisp air and stunning autumn colours.

Here's what's been happening at Atlantis as we pass into a new month and a new season:

### Improvements

Last time, we told you about a project to upgrade Atlantis' wifi system.

The original project didn't include work to the Squash Lounge but we've felt the difference so positively elsewhere in the building that this month we extended coverage to include high speed access in the lounge.

This month saw significant repairs carried out to the sports hall roof. We struggled to find a suitable weather window to carry these out, but managed towards the end of October. We even had to wait for the roof to thaw on the day of repairs, how's that for the changing of the seasons! This was a vital piece



of maintenance and repair ahead of readying the sports hall for activity once the gym moves back to its usual home.

After years of faithful service, our pool Hoover broke down this month.

With such a vital piece of

equipment, it's a helpful reminder of how reliant we are on our kit to operate Atlantis safely every day. Whilst we wait for our replacement to arrive, Mallaig Community Pool is helping us out with the loan of one of

theirs to see us through. Thank you Mallaig.

This month also saw the annual service of our tennis courts and MUGA pitch. An important part of our year-

**Atlantis is ready to welcome back young climbers, with the climbing cube having been reset by professional routers and, inset, Mika will be running the climbing classes.**

round maintenance, the work prepares the surface for the coming winter season.

### Programme

A very warm Atlantis welcome to Helen Gilbertson who has joined our group fitness programme offering yoga classes.

We're also looking forward to welcoming back our young climbers to the climb cube. Climbing is returning for primary and secondary school children, with tuition from Mika Schröder. This coincides with a reset of the cube and we can't wait to figure out the new challenges set by our professional routers after their visit.

### Squash club

Oban Tennis and Squash Club hosted squash coach Martin Woods this month.

Martin is a Level 4 coach from Scotstoun Eagles and used his visit to help upskill and motivate our squash players.

Check out Oban Squash Club on Facebook to find out more about this visit and all the other plans the club has as squash returns to Atlantis.

### Staff

Training and development continues in the staff team, with Erin O'Rourke being supported through her Level 2 gym instructor qualification this month.

All the very best to Katie MacCorquodale who left Atlantis in September to study Geography at Stirling University.

We're looking forward to having Katie back at Atlantis during the holidays.

We're really proud of Natasha Bryan, too, as she was successful in obtaining a scholarship to Germany to continue her Masters degree in marine science.

Whilst we'll be sorry to see Natasha go, it's a fantastic opportunity. Well done.

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Oban's biggest ever fireworks display across the bay.  
Fireworks set off from Northern Lighthouse Board Pier  
Best viewed from Oban Town Centre, North Pier and Esplanade.

Image courtesy of Anna Forgive

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OT

# Oban remembers loved ones in lost hours walk

Amazing, powerful and emotional were just three of the words used to describe Argyll Wellbeing Hub's Lost Hours Walk on Sunday morning, writes Fiona Scott.

More than 50 people wrapped up warm and set off from Oban's North Pier at 1am for a torch-lit walk to remember those who have died.

The Lost Hours Walk is the Campaign Against Living Miserably's flagship event and every year as the clocks go back thousands of people walk forward, together, against suicide and to remember those hours we have lost with our loved ones through bereavement.

Hub co-ordinator Des MacMillan told The Oban Times: 'It's our opportunity in Oban to deal with grief differently and defiantly, smash the silence around suicide and remember our sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, partners, loved ones and friends.'



'Suicide prevention takes hard work from the whole community - from families and friends, schools and colleges, workplaces, pubs and entire towns.'

'The weather was perfect and the venue was beautiful.'

'We had our trustee Suzanne Baines from You Matter Always read some of her amazing poems which fitted the event just perfectly and we heard some lovely pipes

More than 50 people turned out for Argyll Wellbeing Hub's Lost Hours Walk on Sunday morning.

from Ali, The Hairy Piper, to finish the night off.

'Thank you so much to everyone who volunteered to make this happen and to Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds for the use of their venue. This place is amazing and made the night complete.'



Gill McDougall with Mouse, her Royal Marine mascot, and her friends from Dunearn Bluetits on Seil.

## Final splash sees wild swimmer Gill complete charity challenge

Seil sea swimmer Gill McDougall is in her element out in the waves, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Sunday saw her complete her 100th swim in 100 days in aid of The Royal Marines Charity.

Gill's friends from Dunearn Bluetits open swimming group and other supporters flocked to celebrate the final splash and congratulate their water-buddy on raising more than £1,000.

'I'm so happy I exceeded the

target. Bringing in the funds kept me going. The Royal Marines never give up when the going gets tough so neither was I going to. It's been great fun and I can't wait to get back in the water again,' said Gill.

## Butternut squash soup

A pumpkin shell filled with scrumptious soup

Syn FREE

Takes 45 minutes

Serves 4

### Ingredients

Low-calorie cooking spray

1 onion, diced

1 medium butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into wedges

1 small potato, peeled and quartered

2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

900ml hot vegetable stock

Fat-free natural fromage frais, to serve



### Method

Spray a large non-stick pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a low heat. Add the onion and cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Increase the heat to medium, add the butternut squash and potato and cook for 2 minutes. Add the garlic and season lightly. Pour in the stock and simmer for 25 minutes, or until everything is tender and cooked through.

Using a hand blender or food processor, blend the mixture until smooth. Transfer the soup to a hollowed-out pumpkin (or a large serving bowl!) and top with a swirl of fromage frais and the sliced chillies.

### GROUPS ARE OPEN

New & re-join very welcome.



Detailed recipes available at: [slimmingworld.co.uk](http://slimmingworld.co.uk)

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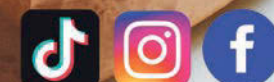
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# Derek Wilson Carriers delivers the goods

## Exciting new chapter in history of an iconic Oban business



New owner Allan Kill.

Just over 30 years ago Derek Wilson was one man with a van who built up his business to become a by-word for delivery and service to the islands. Now the next chapter is being written by Allan Kill.

Today's story would read like science fiction to Derek when he started out. Back then the internet was a fledgling enterprise using dial-up modems; Amazon began as a bookseller in the US during the summer of 1994. Mobile phones were very expensive, analogue, and the size of a brick.

Today's van driver has a smart phone, Bluetooth headset, sat-nav and a world of logistics at their fingertips.

### EVOLUTION, NOT REVOLUTION

'Evolution, not revolution is how I describe the change,' said Allan Kill, who bought the business from Derek when he finally retired. Derek stayed on as an advisor during the initial months to impart his unique insight. The first thing Allan did was decide that the name stayed; it represents the ethos of the company.

'It is now my job to build on this heritage and take the company forward,' said Allan.

Derek Wilson Carriers is helping to defeat one of the biggest headaches facing West Highlands and islands residents and commerce alike, the problem of delivery surcharges.

'You either hear 'we don't deliver to the Highlands and islands' or there is a surcharge,' he said.

'We have a depot in Glasgow serving the Greater Glasgow area and customers can have their orders delivered there or sent on from there. This depot significantly reduces costs for consumers and businesses.'

### TRADITIONAL CORE BUSINESS

Derek Wilson's traditional core business is the islands, predominantly serving Mull, Coll, Colonsay, Tiree and Islay.

Allan Kill has come to the business with a career in civil engineering and a thorough knowledge of logistics. After attending Achaleven Primary and Oban High Schools, he went on to study at Glasgow Caledonian University.

'I left college during a recession and you went where the work was; I began my career on a project in Hong Kong,' he said.

Allan specialised on mega projects and railways across

the Middle East, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Thailand and then back to the UK to be based in London.

### EXCELLENT, SOUND BUSINESS

He and his wife decided on a change of lifestyle and moved the family back to Argyll from London and looked to start, or invest in, an existing enterprise. Derek Wilson Carriers fitted the bill; Allan could see an excellent, sound business he could grow using his experience and logistics skills and Derek saw in Allan someone who would build on his work and take the company forward.

As well as the Glasgow depot, Derek Wilson Carriers now serve Perth, Stirling and Edinburgh, as well as Lochgilphead and Inveraray.

There is hardly a queue on the CalMac pier in Oban that does not include a Derek Wilson van and serving the islands will always be at the heart of the company, but now you can spot Derek Wilson vans as far south as Carlisle and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and north beyond Inverness.

Nothing is too big, or too small or too complicated; they even helped deliver a seal from Tiree to a sanctuary near Edinburgh for a rescue charity.

The company is now linked into the National Pallet Network so Derek Wilson can send your goods far and wide across the UK.

Derek Wilson Carriers also serves a number of blue-chip companies, the NHS medical service and wind farms as far away as Ayrshire from its base on Crannog Lane, Oban, with its fleet of vans of all sizes and 11 members of staff.

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OT

# DISTRICT NEWS

## Scottish Sea Farms donates £6K for fireworks in Oban Bay



Fireworks are always a spectacular sight when seen across Oban Bay.

Scottish Sea Farms has contributed £6,000 towards the costs of the BID4Oban annual fireworks display across Oban Bay.

The fireworks will take place at 7.30pm on Friday November 5. 'The event is always spectacular and we are expecting a good turnout

to view the spectacle,' said BID4Oban's chief executive Andy Spence. 'It has been two years since the last event and this year promises to be bigger and better than ever.'

'BID4Oban is grateful to Scottish Sea Farms for its financial support and the Northern Light

House Board for providing the safe location for setting off the display.

'It is hoped there will be stalls in Station Square and any groups that would like to participate are asked to contact the BID4Oban office.'

## Salmon farmer electric with first

Salmon farmer Scottish Sea Farms has taken delivery of a hybrid power workboat, the first vessel of its kind to be used in Scotland's aquaculture sector and another step towards greater sustainability.

The 15m catamaran, Laurence Knight, was commissioned by Mull-based boat operator Inverlussa Marine Services from Norwegian yard Moen Marin and goes into service this month on Scotland's west coast.

The boat, which will run primarily on its batteries, marks a 'massive milestone' in carbon reduction and cost savings, said Inverlussa managing director Ben Wilson.

'There are similar hybrid vessels in Norway and we thought it was the right time to introduce this technology to our Scottish customers, who are committed to lowering their environmental impact,' he said.

The boat can perform on-farm duties for five to six hours without recharging its batteries from either of the two generators on board.

With no demand for an overnight generator, noise will be reduced, as well as diesel fuel consumption and the vessel's carbon footprint.

For Scottish Sea Farms, the new vessel will

The new Laurence Knight mission Inverlussa



## 'Blue wave' climate protest planned for Oban young people

An anti-climate change organisation in Argyll and Bute is calling for residents to take part in school strikes on a day of youth engagement at COP26.

Time for Change Argyll and Bute is looking to rally behind events in Oban, Lochgilphead and Helensburgh on Friday November 5.

That is the date when younger people will be involved at the COP26 conference in Glasgow, which will see thousands of delegates from all over the world descend on

the city. Events are also planned by Time for Change Argyll and Bute for the following day, Saturday November 6. The planned school strikes are expected to be peaceful.

A spokesperson for the organisation said: 'We'd love to support the School Strikes on Friday November 5, which is the day of Youth Engagement at COP26.'

'We're in the process of organising strikes in Lochgilphead, Oban and Helensburgh on this day so that as many people as possible can take part and show solidarity for the

global strikes happening in Glasgow on the same day as well as on Saturday November 6. If you'd be interested in taking part or helping to organise strikes in any of these locations, please email us at [timeforchange-argyll@gmail.com](mailto:timeforchange-argyll@gmail.com).

'We can't do this without your help.'

A member of Time for Change Argyll and Bute, Ellen Bird, told The Oban Times: 'We are planning an event for the Global Day of Climate Action in Oban on November 6.'

On this day, people across the world will

take to the streets calling for real and urgent action to be taken on climate change.

'In Oban we will join the global mobilisation by forming a great blue wave of people along the front of town to represent rising sea-levels and highlight areas of Oban that will be impacted by flooding caused by climate change.'

'The wave will also be a celebration of all that we love about our coastal town and wish to protect.'

'The event begins at 10.30am.'

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# switches to first hybrid boat

15m catamaran  
Laurence Knight com-  
missioned by Mull-based  
Inverlussa Marine Services.



help achieve CO2 savings of around 234 tonnes a year, as well as potentially cutting fuel costs by up to 50 per cent. The batteries, with a total capacity of 244kW hours, can drive cranes and all other energy requirements, including steaming back and forth from the shore.

The batteries have a typical life expectancy of 16 years and are 100 per cent recyclable. And in another clever eco-friendly measure, the water used to cool the batteries is recycled to help heat the four cabins.

Scottish Sea Farms regional director for the Mainland Innes Weir said the boat will instil confidence in the future of hybrid technology across the business.

The Laurence Knight brings Inverlussa's fleet up to 17 vessels and five new jobs have been created to crew the boat in shift patterns.

Ben Wilson added: 'I think this type of vessel is going to become more common in the Scottish salmon farming sector as producers look for greener solutions.'



## Go-Kids-Go visit to St Columba's raises wheelchair awareness

Primary six pupils at Oban's St Columba's Primary School joined in a wheelchair awareness and activity day when specialist charity Go-Kids-Go paid them a visit.

The charity works with children to give them a greater insight into the challenges faced by young wheelchair users.

The pupils were given a wheelchair for the day, taught how to use it and got to take part

in lots of wheelchair sports, including basketball. They also had a go at negotiating an obstacle course and got the chance to boogie at a wheelchair disco.

Headteacher Michaelina MacLellan said: 'It truly was a memorable experience for all of the children and staff who took part and has ensured that the children have some perspective of what life is like for a wheelchair user.'



Wheelchair basketball was part of the awareness day at St Columba's Primary School when Go-Kids-Go charity representatives visited.

## At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



### Welcome return

One of the many casualties of the Covid lockdown last year was, unfortunately, the annual Oban Winter Festival, held each November.

Thankfully, it is making a return this year, from November 19-28, to be precise.

It's wonderful news for the town and surrounding area and I, for one, salute the brilliant organisers of this fabulous highlight in the calendar.

Previous winter festivals have been fantastic for residents, alleviating as they do the dark and cold onset of winter at just the perfect time with a great programme of activities and celebrations, including late night shopping, the best dressed shop window competition, the reindeer parade and Christmas lights switch-on and the Victorian market.

They have also been magnificent fillips for businesses and the town's economy. To illustrate that point, let me repeat figures for the 2019 event: £37,900 raised for good causes and a whopping £1.8 million boost to the Oban economy.

This year's festival will be scaled back a little from the 2019 one but it's great to have it again and local people can be involved in a number of ways. For more information, go to [obanwinterfestival.com](http://obanwinterfestival.com). It deserves all the support it can get.

### Dangerous markings

Let me add my voice to those raised already against the new white lines at Achnacloch bridge.

I have driven that road a few times recently since the new road markings appeared and I agree wholeheartedly that they are unnecessary, confusing and dangerous. I have witnessed car drivers swerving into head-on collision positions on the road as they follow the instructions to use the centre of the carriageway.

The lines are, we have been told, intended to assist HGV drivers to realise the height restriction of the bridge but the fall-out is the point just made about cars. There is, as most of you will know, ample room for two ordinary cars to pass safely under the bridge at the same time. Let's have these markings removed, and promptly.

What do you think? Send your comments to [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk)

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OT

# LETTERS

## Vaccination apology

Hard-pressed vaccination teams were in the spotlight again this week after the health and social care partnership issued a second apology because processing errors meant appointment letters for booster clinics were not sent out.

Teams at the Corran Halls were left to make frantic calls to alert those eligible, with one man saying he was flagged down outside the halls, and others turning up after word got round that the clinics were drop-ins.

Let's hope the errors have been fixed for good – not only does it waste a lot of valuable time for vaccinators, as Covid numbers rise in Oban, these booster shots are vital.

## Mail delivery woes

Royal Mail has also been in the spotlight after many residents complained about late delivery of letters and parcels, with one woman missing a operation because vital letters were not delivered on time.

Royal Mail said the problem has been caused by a lack of staff. With Christmas just around the corner, we hope they sort this out as soon as possible, as current employees in Oban are working flat out as it is.

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.

**The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.**

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## Ferry error

Firstly, I would like to correct an error in your article regarding the MV Utne in last week's edition. Rather than carrying 'four times as many' cars and passengers than the Coruisk she replaces, she has a lower capacity.

Rather than a typical full load of 35 cars for the Coruisk, it is anticipated the Utne will carry 34. Rather than carrying the Coruisk's 250 passengers, the Utne will carry 195, or perhaps a few more if extra seats can be squeezed in. The Utne is also slower and crossing times will lengthen by around five minutes.

The key benefit the Utne offers is an improved winter timetable, by running additional services at the beginning and the end of the day in addition to those operated by the Isle of Mull. We have long campaigned for this 'island focused' service and to finally have it delivered is fantastic news for the island.

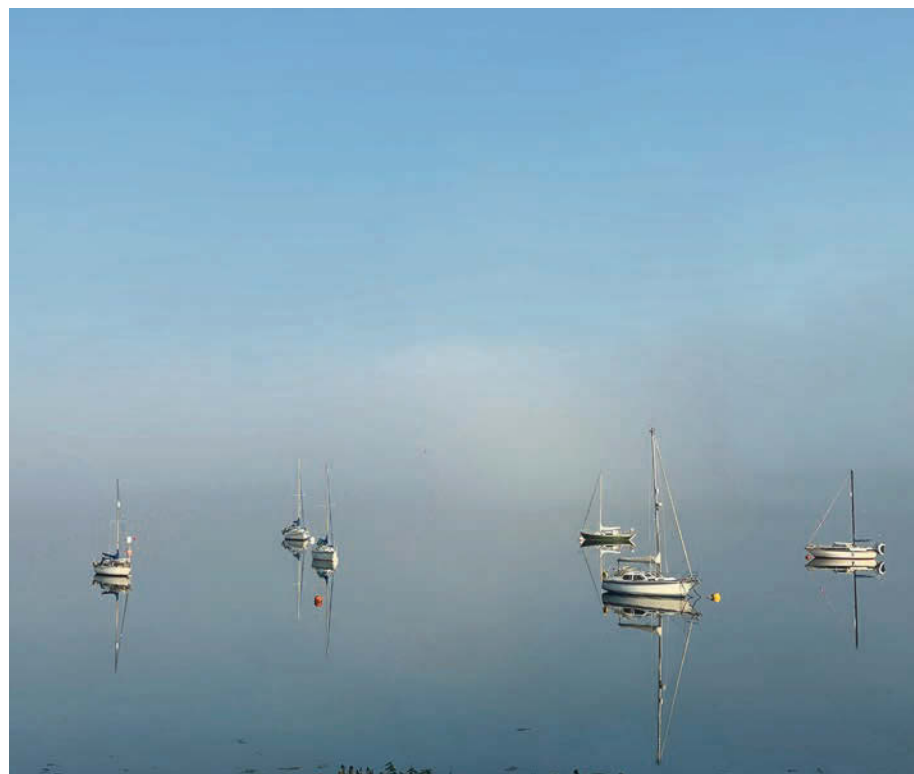
This small seven-year-old second-hand ferry is not a panacea. It enables some shuffling of vessels in summer that brings benefits to other routes and will improve our winter service. But the summer congestion we have suffered this year – resulting in islanders being unable to travel off the island unless they book weeks in advance – will only worsen.

It is difficult not to compare the Utne with the catamaran we tried to persuade CMAL to purchase, but was ultimately rejected on spurious grounds. The catamaran was far more capable, being able to operate to any port in the network; the Utne is only certified for Mull, Armadale and the Clyde. The catamaran was far bigger and would have fixed our summer congestion problem - 80 car spaces rather than 34. The catamaran was faster and better suited to Craignure pier; the passenger access system would have fitted, unlike the Utne. It would have been able to cope with worse weather - four metre waves as compared with the Utne's 2.5. All round, the catamaran was far better value for money.

She would also have had a much bigger impact on network-wide resilience by entirely releasing the MV Isle of Mull in winter, giving CalMac a spare vessel. The Utne, by comparison, is far too small to operate the Mull service on her own, so the Isle of Mull has to stay on the route alongside her. This also means that should the Isle of Mull be used for emergency relief service, which is now more likely, Mull will be left with one under-sized and weather-vulnerable vessel.

The decision to buy the Utne but not the catamaran is as baffling as it is frustrating. But the

## YOUR PICTURES



As summer turns to autumn, we are resurrecting our weekly slot to show off our readers' fantastic photographs of the region.

After all the rain this month, we thought you might appreciate Connel reader Sharon Kill's beautiful photo-

graph of West Connel Moorings in the morning mist.

We'd love you to send us your photographs for publication. If you have one you would like to share, please email the jpeg to editor@obantimes.co.uk or send it via our Facebook page.

Utne does offer significant winter benefits and we welcome them.

The summer, however, can only get worse with the introduction of the Utne.

There is a solution to that, however. As well as taking a ferry from the Norwegian ferry system, government should take a lesson too. Many Norwegian ferries operate 18 or 20 hours per day. Thanks to having small crews that live ashore rather than on the vessel, they can operate shift systems that enable far more crossings over a longer operating day.

Like Norway, we could have sailings from 6am till midnight. Not only would that give us far more opportunities to travel, it would go a long way to overcoming the very small capacity of the Utne.

We have written to Transport Minister Graeme Dey to urge that the Utne follows a Norwegian-style crewing regime so that the full potential of this vessel can be felt. We very much hope the answer is positive.

Joe Reade, Chairman, Mull & Iona Ferry Committee.

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## Oban police station

I was astonished by the recent exchange in the Scottish Parliament between Donald Cameron MSP and Scottish Government minister Keith Brown MSP.

In 2019, the Police Federation described Oban police station as being by far the worst they had come across.

This is a damning indictment and embarrassing for those who are proud of Oban, especially its helpful police personnel.

One would think the Scottish Government would wish to help rectify such an important part of the infrastructure of Oban for residents and those who come on holiday.

Minister Brown's response was negative. Perhaps he doesn't realise the importance of Oban to the Highlands and Islands, but it is imperative he does so soon.

**Councillor Jamie McGrigor.**

## Classic shinty final

Two weeks ago I travelled to Tighnabruach and watched an enthralling Bullough Cup Final between Kyles Athletic and Lochside Rovers.

Although we did not get the result we wanted, credit goes to both teams for such an entertaining final.

Thanks go to Kyles Athletic for the preparations and getting the playing field in such good condition.

Thanks also to councillor Roddy McCuish and shinty development officer Les Kinvig for their contribution and to Alec MacNaughton for presenting the cup and medals.

The teams produced one of the best Bullough Cup finals in recent years and while our young Lochside team came up short, the players and management team did Oban Camanachd Club proud.

Finally, the lack of interest shown by the Camanachd Association should not come as any surprise to any of us involved in shinty in the south. Nevertheless, it should not detract from a terrific final played in the right spirit and so much young talent on view augurs well for the future of shinty.

**Nigel Evans, Oban Camanachd.**

## Fit for the job?

It was interesting to note that Craig Harrow has called on Blair Allen to stand down as a Highland councillor, as he now lives in the central belt.

Personally I think that where he lives is less

relevant than whether he is actually doing the job. Unfortunately Mr Allen, like so many of our other elected councillors, seem to believe that the role simply requires them to turn up to full council meetings in Inverness every couple of months – currently being made so much easier for them since there isn't even any travel involved.

Too many councillors take the (minimum) £16,994 per annum for five years, but never make themselves available for contact to their constituents.

I have lost count of how many times I have written to all four of my elected Ward 21 councillors, either personally or on behalf of Acharacle Community Council, and to date, I haven't yet received a single reply from Mr Allen – not once.

I can count on the fingers of one hand how often Niall McLean has replied or made contact.

It really is about time that we all stopped voting according to whether someone is a 'nice' person, a 'decent bloke' or 'highly regarded' in their working life and considered instead whether they have the interest, capacity and time to undertake the role for which they are paid, by us.

**Joanne Matheson, Acharacle.**

## Caol housing decision

Regardless of the merits of the Scottish Ministers' decision to overturn the Highland Council planning committee's decision, there is a fundamental unfairness in the appeals procedure when the council has to prepare its own defence/response to the appeal without the benefit of input and expertise from its own highly-skilled and qualified planning staff – as they had already recommended that the application be approved.

In instances such as this, the local authority should be allocated Scottish Government funding to engage professional planning consultants to prepare a case to defend the planning committee's decision.

**Ken Johnston, Fort William.**

# GETINTOUCH

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## Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

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Mun àm a bhios sibh a' leughadh seo saoilidh mi gum bi aire mhòran de shluagh an t-saoghail air co-labhairt COP 26 ann an Glaschu, is tuigse a' fàs nach eil dùthaich neo duine nach eil dol a dh'fhaireachadh buaidh blàthachadh na cruinne. An seo an Alba tha sinn mothachail air tiormachd mhi-chumanta tron t-samhradh, agus leithid nan tuiltean millteach a chunnacas anns na crìochan bho chionn bheagan làithean. Nochd fios iongantach bhon chompanaidh aiseig Caledonian Mac a' Bhruthainn gum b' fheudar còrr air sia mìle seòladh de shoithichean na companaidh a chur dheth anns na naodh mìosan mu dheireadh, agus bha droch shìde na mhàthair-adhbhar dha mòran den trioblaid.

Tha seanfhacal ag ràdh gur e goirteas a chinn fhèin is dorra do gach neach, agus saoilidh mi gur ann mar sin a tha mòran againn air a bhith a thaobh blàthachadh na cruinne, agus sinn a' faireachadh gur e dùbhlán a tha seo a tha ùine romhainn fhathast agus an urra ri ceannardan poilitigeach agus ghniomhachasan eadar-nàiseanta a leasachadh. Ged a tha dleasan oirnn uile a thaobh na h-àrainneachd bidh gun teagamh a' bhuaidh as motha an urra ris a' bheagan leis a' chumhachd as motha! A dh'aindeoin fianais luchd-iomairt fad bhliadhnaichean chan eil iad fhathast air buaidh gu leòr a thoirt air feallsanachd agus modhan-obrach gus stad a thoirt air milleadh gnàth aimsire na cruinne. Chan e a-mhàin gum bheil uimhir a' meas seo mar uallach chuideigin eile, tha cuid de na daoine as cumhachdaiche san

t-saoghal a' dol às àicheadh gum bheil blàthachadh na cruinne idir a' gabhail àite! Mo bheannachd air na ceatharnaich a chuir ùine agus astair mhòra às an dèidh gus fianais a thogail a' caismeachd tro mheadhan Ghlaschu fa chomhair luchd-poilitigs agus cheannardan an t-saoghail. Bidh cuid nach toir spèis sam bith dha leithid de dh'iomairt, ach 's fhiach cuimhneachadh gun tog clachan beaga càrn mòr, agus 's iomadh adhartas ann an siobhaltachd an t-saoghail a bha an urra ri daoine a thog fianais agus a rinn spàirn airson leasachadh.

Abair gum bheil ceannardan air a bhith dripeil, is cruinneachadh an G20 san Ròimh dìreach beagan làithean ron cho-labhairt aimsire COP 26 ann an Glaschu, agus 's dòcha gum biodh e nàdarra dhuinn uile a bhith air ar misneachadh a' faicinn nan riaghladairean cumhachdach sin a' cuimseachadh aire air Sluagh, Saoghal, agus Soirbheachas. (People, Planet, and Prosperity!) Ach mar a tha seanfhacal eile ga chur cho ealanta, ged 's e beul a labhras 's e gnìomh a dhearbhas, agus bha e car mi-chneasta mar eisimpleir a bhith a' faicinn a' Chinn-suidhe Biden a' siubhal tron Ròimh le ochdad 's a còig carbad agus a' mhòr-chuid dhiubh sin air an giùlan à Ameireagaidh a dh'aon ghnòthaich! Cha bhiodh duine ag àicheadh dìon iomchaidh dha, ach nach saoleamaid gum biodh carbadan freagarrach rim faotainn air mòr-thìr na Roinn Eòrpa seach a bhith a' gànrachadh na h-iarmailt le itealain ag aiseag chàraichean air ais 's air adhart thar a' Chuan an Iar!

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Jesus said: 'Let the little children come to me and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.' Luke 18:16

But he also warned against people who are like wolves in sheep's clothing in Matthew 7:15-20.

Most children begin life trusting those around them, and some of us continue to do so, believing in the inherent goodness of people, despite evidence to the contrary. I've always been a trusting, perhaps naive, person but after some hard lessons, I thought I had eventually learned to be more cautious, until last week when I fell for a telephone scam call, supposedly from Amazon. Thanks to the quick action of my bank, a considerable

amount of money was rescued from being transferred to some obscure bank account. I am a few days older and, hopefully, considerably wiser, but still firmly believe, as the Iona Community puts it, 'We affirm God's goodness at the heart of all humanity, planted more deeply than all that is wrong'. We must never lose that precious childlike trust, but at the same time be aware of the darker side of life. We need not fear if we combine common sense with trust in God, whose love for all his children is unshakeable.

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight. Proverbs 3:5-6.

**Reverend Joyce Watson, Isle of Iona.**



## Home Reports and Valuations

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## Trust demands cash to save our rainforest from rhododendron

Urgent action is required to stop *Rhododendron ponticum* wiping out Scotland's rare rainforest, according to a new report published by Woodland Trust Scotland in partnership with Scottish Land and Estates.

Recommendations in the Rhododendron in the Rainforest report includes establishment of a Rainforest Restoration Fund to help communities and land managers tackle the scourge.

The report was funded by Postcode Green Trust and made possible by support from players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Temperate rainforest is a globally rare habitat, and Scotland is home to a substantial proportion of the surviving European fragments. Only 30,000ha are left. They are scattered down the West Coast but in total is an area just slightly larger than Edinburgh.

Woodland Trust Scotland director Alastair Seaman said: 'This dwindling habitat is being choked by *Rhododendron ponticum*. The shrub colonises woodland fast, out-competes native trees for light and is not palatable to any grazing animals. It quickly shades out rare flora, and results in loss of insect habitat. That in turn has a knock-on effect on birds and bats.'

'Some stakeholders told our report authors they believed more rhododendron is establishing and re-establishing than is currently being cleared. If this is a war, rhododendron is winning.'

Karen Ramoo policy adviser at Scottish Land and Estates said: 'One of the main recommendations is the establishment of a Rainforest Restoration Fund, along the lines of the highly praised Peatland Action Fund, which was recently extended, with a £250m funding package over a 10-year period.'

'Land managers across other areas of Scotland are committed to eradicating invasive species such as rhododendron. This is not a cheap problem to solve but we believe the situation can be turned around, especially if this new Rainforest Restoration Fund is introduced.'

The new report notes that if invasive rhododendron and its rootstock are still on the market for sale to the public, it will be difficult to build a sound case for eradicating it in the wild.

# Endangered insects released in Highlands

The biggest ever releases to boost Britain's critically endangered wild population of pine hoverflies are being carried out by the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) and the RSPB-led Rare Invertebrates in the Cairngorms (RIC) project.

Following a record-breaking breeding season for the extremely rare native species at Highland Wildlife Park near Aviemore, the wildlife conservation charity is releasing over 3,000 pine hoverfly larvae in three carefully chosen forest habitats in the Cairngorms National Park.

It is hoped the releases mark a turning point for this important pollinator which has not been seen in its adult form in the wild in Britain for over eight years.

Dr Helen Taylor, RZSS conservation programme manager, said: 'This is a very exciting day for pine hoverfly conservation in Britain. Following habitat loss over the past century, our pine hoverflies are on the brink of extinction, with the majority of the known native population being cared for by our charity's dedicated team at Highland Wildlife Park.'

'Like many other insects, pine hoverflies play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems, but are sadly often overlooked until it is too late.'

'It is absolutely incredible to be in a position to release more than 3,000 pine hoverfly larvae into the wild this year after just 25 larvae were brought into our conservation breeding programme in 2019.'

'Thanks to a huge amount of collaboration and support from our partners, funders and other conservation champions, including visitors to our parks, the future is starting to look brighter for one of Britain's most endangered species.'

Genevieve Tompkins, RIC project officer, said: 'With another release planned for March, this really is a significant effort to establish vital new populations of this species, providing a lifeline before it's too late.'

'We'll have to wait until we conduct surveys next September to see whether our work has led to successful breeding in the wild, but everything is looking a lot more hopeful than it



Dr Helen Taylor and Kevin Robertson releasing more than 3,500 pine hoverfly larvae into specially-selected forest sites within the Cairngorms National Park.

did 12 months ago.'

Andy Ford, head of conservation at the Cairngorms National Park Authority, said: 'The Cairngorms National Park is home to one quarter of the UK's rare and endangered species, including the pine hoverfly, and it is great to see a project based in the Cairngorms leading the way in protecting species from extinction in the wild.'

The pine hoverfly is arguably the most endan-

gered hoverfly in the UK.

It has always had a restricted range, but was regularly recorded in Strathspey and Deeside, in Scotland, up to the 1940s.

Since then, it has dramatically declined and in the late 1990s surveys by the Malloch Society (a specialist academic organisation that studies flies), funded by NatureScot, found only two remaining populations of this species, both in Strathspey.



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# Judge rules NatureScot issued beaver-killing licences incorrectly

Scotland's agency for wildlife and habitats unlawfully allowed beavers to be killed, a judge has ruled, writes Sandy Neil.

NatureScot has been ordered to stop issuing licences to cull the animals without first giving its reasons in writing.

The rewilding charity Trees for Life challenged the beaver-killing policy at the Court of Session, saying too many licences were being issued.

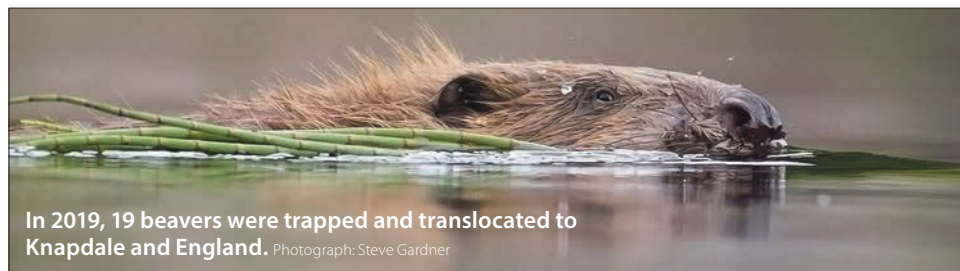
Out of five complaints from Trees for Life, four were rejected by the court. NatureScot said the decision, 'for the most part', vindicated their approach. The ruling applies to all European protected species in the UK.

In a written judgement, Lady Carmichael said all killings authorised by NatureScot had been unlawful and it must in future fully set out the reasons why it believed beavers should be killed.

'In approaching matters on the basis that it has no duty to give reasons for granting a licence, the first respondent has erred in law,' she wrote. 'The contention is that the licences should have been reviewed and revoked because they should never have been issued in the first place.'

But Lady Carmichael added that she was 'not satisfied' with some of the arguments put forward by Trees for Life about NatureScot's 'generalised unlawful practices', adding that some 'criticisms are misconceived'.

Alan McDonnell, Trees for Life conservation manager, said: 'With Scotland hosting what could be the most important summit on climate



In 2019, 19 beavers were trapped and translocated to Knapdale and England. Photograph: Steve Gardner

breakdown in our lifetimes, this result offers a better future for Scotland's beavers. The Scottish Government must take this ruling seriously, and it means that from here on in there can be no more rubber-stamping of licensed killing of beavers. This is an important victory for accountability and transparency, which will benefit everyone, including conservationists and farmers.'

Now that beavers cannot be killed under licence without a full explanation of the reasons, Trees for Life says NatureScot needs to rethink its approach to beaver management, with the killing of beavers only carried out as a last resort. The charity is calling for beavers to be relocated to areas of Scotland where they have been missing for centuries, instead of being shot.

'By moving rather than shooting beavers, we can help them get to work boosting biodiversity, tackling climate breakdown and creating wildlife tourism opportunities,' continued Alan McDonnell.

'The Scottish Government has been blocking relocation of beavers to areas of Scotland where they belong but are missing, but today's ruling creates hope that this will change so that farmers will no longer be put in a position where they have no choice but to shoot much-loved animals.'

Following the ruling, NatureScot's director of sustainable growth Robbie Kernahan said: 'We welcome the court's decision which, for the most part, vindicates our licensing approach.'

'Of the five complaints under consideration by the court, four were rejected entirely. The court found only one complaint to be well founded – not issuing written reasons with licences – on what amounts to a technical point of law.'

'Most importantly, the criticism of our underlying licensing decisions was entirely rejected by the court and this does not affect the legality of any acts carried out under the affected licences.'

'We have been working with partners for 25 years to bring back beavers to Scotland because

of the many benefits they bring to both people and nature, particularly in this crucial time of climate emergency. In certain circumstances, beavers can cause problems. In those specific situations where beavers pose a risk of serious damage to farmland or where they occasionally cause a public health and safety concern, we issue species control licences accordingly.'

The president of the National Farmers Union in Scotland, Martin Kennedy, said: 'In our opinion, the framework remains a positive platform to review, balance and resolve conflicts between the growing population of beavers and land management in a pragmatic and sensible way.'

'To those impacted by beavers on their land, the licence system has been a valuable way of protecting their farm from economic and environmental damage, with lethal control remaining a last resort.'

'We will now look to work with NatureScot and other stakeholders in the coming days to assess the implications of the ruling. However, we welcome the clarification from NatureScot in its statement that the ruling does not affect the legality of any acts carried out under the affected licences.'

'We also welcome its statement that in those specific situations where beavers pose a risk of serious damage to farmland or where they occasionally cause a public health and safety concern, NatureScot will issue species control licences accordingly.'

## Act now at COP26 to protect Argyll's natural assets, says tourism chief

VisitScotland regional director David Adams McGilp has spoken of the opportunities this year's Climate Change Conference (COP26) could bring for Argyll and the Isles.

Currently under way in Glasgow until November 12, the conference is the biggest political gathering in Scotland's history.

'Some of the world's most prominent leaders have come together to agree action to tackle one of the biggest threats facing humanity; climate change,' said Mr McGilp. 'It may seem strange that someone who is committed to supporting local tourism would be so invested in the out-

come of an event taking place in Glasgow but at VisitScotland we know that environmental change is one of the biggest challenges facing our tourism and events sector.'

'Scotland's breath-taking scenery is the number one reason why people visit our shores. Visitors from every corner of the world have fallen in love with our world-famous views and natural assets. They are what make Scotland so special. This is particularly true for visitors to Argyll and the Isles, Helensburgh, Loch Lomond and Dunbartonshire.'

'And that is exactly why we need to take action against climate change today, to protect these assets for the visitors of tomorrow.'

'The outcome of these crisis talks in Glasgow will impact each and every one of us and will shape how we rebuild tourism sustainably following the Covid-19 pandemic.'

'VisitScotland is committed to working with the industry and communities to create a long-lasting sustainable tourism destination which will protect the environment and benefit visitors and residents alike.'

'The Covid-19 pandemic has already made people pause and think about the future environment, and their impact on it. For VisitScotland and the wider tourism industry, it was a chance to reset and build back responsibly, sustainably and safely.'

'COP26 presents a unique opportunity to demonstrate the decisive action that Scotland's tourism industry is taking to secure its future prosperity in the face of a growing climate crisis.'

'Across Argyll and the Isles, more and more businesses are already looking at what they can do to embrace responsible and sustainable tourism.'

'There are now over 70 Green Tourism accredited businesses in our region, with half of those achieving gold status – including Calgary Self Catering and Cill-Mhoire Lodges on Mull, to Iona Abbey and Nunnery, and Iona Hostel, Dunstaffnage Castle and Cruachan Visitor Centre.'

'Reducing the distance travelled and emissions through the supply chain is a key part of a sustainable business. By making sustainable travel choices, we can all help protect our landscapes while at the same time boost the local economy, culture and diversity of the areas we visit.'

'Despite the many challenges we face with the climate emergency, VisitScotland is part of the solution. We are committed to working with tourism and events businesses and communities to ensure sustainability is at the heart of their offering.'

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# BUSINESS NEWS

## Bunnahabhain aims for net zero with new energy centre

Bunnahabhain is on track to become the first whisky distillery on the island of Islay to have a net-zero distillation process with the construction of a biomass energy centre.

The £6.5 million facility, being built behind the existing Bunnahabhain distillery, will save 3,500 tonnes of carbon emissions per year – a CO2 saving equivalent to the emissions of 1,800 diesel cars, which is more than the total number of vehicles based on Islay.

It will be powered by wood chippings from spent malt, known as draff, as well as low-value timber felled 15 miles away, supporting the local economy, while ash from the biomass boiler will be repurposed as natural fertiliser for the forests.

Julian Patton, supply chain director at Distell International, owner of Bunnahabhain Distillery, said: 'This is an exciting new chapter for Bunnahabhain distillery and whisky production on Islay. The Scotch Whisky Association has set a net zero target of 2040 and a lot of work is under way by our team in pursuit of achieving this goal long before this.'

'The biomass centre makes Bunnahabhain Islay's first distillery with a net zero distillation process, and we're extremely proud, not only of the scale of the project but the entirely locally-sourced fuel system, which supports the island's forests and economy.'

Scheduled to be operational by spring 2022, the biomass energy centre has been funded by AMP Clean Energy, which will own, manage and operate the system.

Richard Burrell, chief executive of AMP Clean Energy, said: 'Through our fund, develop, own and operate model, we are delighted to be supporting Distell Group to help meet its carbon reduction targets.'

'The energy centre being developed at Bunnahabhain is a landmark low carbon project which sets the bar for how manufacturers can reduce their Scope One Carbon emissions, key to achieving net zero.'

# Whisky giant's peat bog pledge on Isle of Islay

The owners of two Islay distilleries have moved to help restore precious peatland and water resources to ensure drinks production is sustainable in Scotland, writes Sandy Neil.

Beam Suntory, the maker of Laphroaig, Bowmore and Teacher's, and its parent company Suntory Holdings have announced the launch of the Peatland Water Sanctuary initiative, a large-scale series of peatland restoration and watershed conservation projects.

The companies plan to invest more than £3 million in the restoration and conservation of 1,300 hectares of peatlands by 2030, enough to produce the same amount of peat that Beam Suntory harvests every year in making its Scotch whiskies on an ongoing basis.

Once restored and conserved, peatland naturally accumulates by 1mm per year, and that 1mm growth spread across 1,300 hectares will equate to Beam Suntory's annual use.

The first project is due to begin at Ardmore distillery in November 2021, followed by subsequent projects at Bowmore and Laphroaig, and other distilleries across Scotland.

In the first phase, nearly 15 hectares of peatland in the Ardmore Knockandy Hill north side slope will be restored, with more to follow in 2022. Restoration will also potentially include Malsach Burn Valley as early as 2022.

This initial restoration project at Ardmore will be undertaken in partnership with the James Hutton Institute, which is assisting with the research, planning, and execution of the restoration, and Forestry and Land Scotland, which owns the land.

Initial assessments for new projects are already under way on Islay and surveys on potential watershed activities near Beam Suntory's Auchentoshan and Glen Garioch distilleries are also being planned.

Tak Niinami, CEO of Suntory Holdings,



Laphroaig Distillery is part of the Peatland Water Sanctuary project on Islay.

said: 'The Peatland Water Sanctuary initiative is inspired by Suntory's Mizu to Ikiru (Living with Water) promise, which is underpinned by our mission to create harmony with people and nature. We believe that water flowing through peatlands is suited for whisky production and by restoring and conserving peatlands we hope to not only contribute to preserving whisky production as an indispensable part of Scotland's culture, but also fulfil our responsibility as a company that relies on the blessings of nature and water.'

Beyond this 2030 ambition, the long-term aim of the Peatland Water Sanctuary initiative is for Suntory and Beam Suntory to have restored sufficient peatlands by 2040 to equate to twice the volume of peat that Beam Suntory harvests to make its Scotch whiskies.

Although Scotch whisky production as a whole accounts for less than one per cent of Scotland's peat use, and Beam Suntory's Scotch

production accounts for part of that one per cent, both companies share the industry's commitment to ensuring their use of peat is sustainable and to making a positive impact on Scotland's environment more broadly.

Professor Colin Campbell, chief executive of the James Hutton Institute, said: 'We are pleased to be working alongside Suntory, Beam Suntory and Forestry and Land Scotland on this vital initiative to help restore and protect one of Scotland's most iconic habitats. Healthy peatlands help build resilience into our water supplies and restoring them allows nature to recover from the impact of climate change and promotes long-term carbon sequestration.'

'These natural assets are essential for sustaining one of Scotland's most important industries, and it is truly a pleasure to work with partners who have such a well-developed philosophy around the protection of our natural environment.'

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# Strike plans suspended in Western Isles' air traffic talks

Western Isles politicians have welcomed apparent progress in the latest discussions between Highlands and Islands Airports (HIAL) and the Prospect Union around the future of air traffic control jobs, writes Sandy Neil.

HIAL and Prospect have released a joint statement outlining their agreed framework for discussion to establish a new way forward for the implementation of HIAL's air traffic management strategy (ATMS).

Prospect has agreed to suspend all industrial action while these talks continue.

Air traffic control jobs from Stornoway, Sumburgh, Kirkwall and Dundee had been due to be centralised to a remote tower centre in Inverness, with Benbecula and Wick John O' Groats airports to be downgraded to Flight Information Services, despite widespread concerns about the removal of skilled jobs from rural communities.

The planned discussions between HIAL and Prospect will focus on the introduction of a surveillance programme across the HIAL network to be provided by a combined surveillance centre in Inverness, with air traffic services continuing to be provided locally at Stornoway, Sumburgh, Kirkwall and Dundee for the duration of the surveillance programme.



There will be a review at the end of the surveillance programme (or at five years, if that is sooner) of air traffic provision against a scope agreed by both HIAL and Prospect to inform the next steps of the programme. There will also be a phasing out of procedural air traffic control and the adoption of more modern and widely used techniques across HIAL's network.

Further separate talks will take place regarding air traffic services at

**Air traffic services will continue to be provided at Stornoway airport for the duration of the surveillance programme.**

and Benbecula airports can be secured for the long-term. It is essential that jobs continue to be de-centralised if we are going to effectively tackle the issue of depopulation in our islands, and I am glad that today's news brings us a step closer to reaching a solution.'

Following the announcement of progress in the HIAL talks, Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP Angus MacNeil said: 'It is good to see that HIAL and the union Prospect are moving towards the right outcome. It was certainly worth defending these airport jobs and I am pleased that political colleagues of all parties, across the Highlands and Islands, joined with myself and Alister Carmichael of Orkney and Shetland, to get the right decision with regards to island jobs.'

'I am sure that Scottish Government ministers will be delighted that the scrutiny from five political parties means savings of £2 million for them, each and every year, by keeping the jobs in the islands, rather than centralising in Inverness. This is the right decision and I congratulate HIAL and the union Prospect, for their work.'

'This issue is too important for our communities; we need to maintain island jobs and that has also saved the government's purse.'

## Mairi takes the lead on Highland land management

A leading businesswoman from Lochgilphead is set to head up the Highland division of a national land managers' organisation.

Mairi MacLeod Coleman takes up the post of chairperson with Scottish Land and Estates after 15 years' experience in the banking industry.

She recently joined her family's business, MacLeod Construction and Achnaba Estate and is based full-time in Lochgilphead.

She is also the vice-chairperson of liveArgyll and the chairperson of Young Enterprise Scotland in Argyll. Mairi succeeds Gordon Robertson, who has served as Highland chairperson for more than 15 years.

Mairi said: 'I'm really passionate about helping to address important issues in our rural areas such as housing and skills and training opportunities.'

'There are unique challenges for rural Scotland and Scottish Land and Estates' members are al-

ready playing their part in helping to positively address those. I'm looking forward to working with businesses in the Highland region to build our contribution even further.'

Chairman of Scottish Land and Estates Mark Tennant added: 'Mairi is a very welcome addition to the SLE regional team and will play a crucial role in ensuring the views of our members are well represented.'

**Mairi MacLeod Coleman was recently appointed chairperson with Scottish Land and Estates.**



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# LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

## Sea Change film festival returns to Tiree

The Sea Change Film Festival is returning to Tiree with a programme of international movies directed by women.

The annual celebration of female film-making talent will take place on the big screen at An Talla, as well as online. The festival, from November 6 to November 9, is curated by Screen Argyll and supported by the Film Hub Scotland BFI FAN Exhibition Fund.

The past 18 months have been a bumper time for acclaimed work by female directors and Sea Change 2021 is a chance to enjoy a hand-picked selection of modern classics and cult gems.

Saturday November 6 begins



A scene from **Nomadland** which is to be shown at the **Sea Change Film Festival** on Tiree.

with an 11am screening of Lisa Rovner's *Sisters With Transistors*, the remarkable untold story of electronic music's female pioneers who transformed how we listen to and produce music today.

It will be followed at 2pm by an online workshop with

Leeds-filmmakers F=, who explore the significance of feminism in creative practices.

The next screening at 6.30pm, *Poly Styrene: I Am A Cliche*, is the life story of the X-Ray Spex legendary front woman, directed by her daughter Celeste Bell who joins the festival for

a digital question and answer (Q&A) session.

It's a bracing start on Sunday November 7 at 10am with the *Polar Bears Swim* at the island's Crossapol Bay, followed at 2.30pm by a selection of the best short films from the Feminista Film Festival.

This is followed at 4pm by the Oscar-nominated tale of beekeeping traditions in North Macedonia *Honeyland* and at 6.30pm by Frances McDormand in *Nomadland*, which earned director Chloe Zhao the Best Director Oscar, making her only the second woman to win it.

As world leaders gather in Glasgow for the COP26 climate

summit on Monday November 8, the festival hosts a 6.30pm screening of Scottish director Dr Emily Munro's new feature documentary *Living Proof*, which unpicks Scotland's complicated relationship to the global climate crisis using archive footage and a soundtrack by Scottish musicians past and present.

On the final day, Tuesday November 9, there will be a 7pm screening of Cathy Brady's *Wildfire*, the gripping drama of two inseparable sisters growing up on the Irish Border whose lives are shattered by the mysterious death of their mother, followed by a digital Q&A with the director.

On November 29, Sea Change will host a bonus screening of Zeina Durra's new haunting romantic drama *Luxor* followed by a digital Q&A with Zeina.

The Farmhouse Café will be running a pop-up café throughout the weekend.

Jen Skinner, director of Screen Argyll and festival director, said: 'We have a fantastic selection of films and access to some brilliant directors. I am so excited about the possibilities of connecting people through film across the UK via our online player and opening up the shared experience of cinema radiating out from the isle of Tiree.'

# COMPETITION TIME

## WIN £250 OF LOVE OBAN VOUCHERS



With Christmas around the corner and pockets tightened this year wouldn't it be great to give that special someone exactly what they want! Courtesy of our friends at BID4Oban, one lucky reader will win £250 worth of Love Oban Vouchers COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE.

All you have to do is collect 3 tokens over three weeks starting on 28th October, get them to us by 10am Tuesday 16th November and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic prize.

**What are you waiting for, give the gift of Oban and start collecting your tokens!**



### HOW TO ENTER

All 3 tokens must be sent in a single envelope with your contact details to Oban Times Love Oban Competition Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate Oban, PA34 4HB. One token from each week is required, multiple entries are allowed, but must be submitted in separate envelopes. Photocopied tokens will not be accepted. Winners must agree to take part in publicity, Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.

**View [www.bid4oban.co.uk](http://www.bid4oban.co.uk) to find out where you can spend the vouchers.**

T&Cs Winner must be able to collect vouchers from the BID4Oban Office, 43 Stevenson Street, Oban PA34 5NA at 10.30am on Monday 22nd November. Digital Subscribers, please email your subscription number with a screenshot of each token to [adverts@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:adverts@obantimes.co.uk). You will be interviewed by one of our trained journalists and photographed and this will appear in the Oban Times on Thursday 25th November. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.

# Glasgow Letter

**ROBERT ROBERTSON**

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



COP26 got off to an exciting start this week when President Joe Biden's motorcade drove straight down Argyle Street and past the famous Islay Inn and Park Bar.

As world leaders' collective willpower to reverse climate change is under the spotlight this week, I must commend President Biden. I have never had the willpower to go past these pubs without popping in!

I wrote last week about some of the interesting events surrounding COP26. This week, at the time of writing, myself and Ali Turner from Tide Lines are getting ready to head to the Renfrew Ferry for a short performance as part of the Extreme Hangout fringe event. I will review this next week.

The cold autumn wind that can be felt channelling up the Clyde is an indication that it is also the time of year for the annual gatherings of the Kindred Associations in the city.

After a two-year hiatus forced on everyone by coronavirus, I have some good news and some bad news on that front.

The good news concerns the Tiree Association which will go ahead with its 121st gathering a full 20 months after its 120th. The concert will take place on Thursday November 18 at 7.30pm in Kingsborough Gardens Sanctuary, 79 Hyndland Road, G12 9JE.

The evening will be chaired by Ian Lamont and there is a fantastic line-up of performances including Mary Ann Kennedy, Jamie MacDonald,

President Biden travelling down Argyle Street.



Kaitlin Ross, John Joe MacNeil, and Kathryn Callender.

The following evening, Friday November 19, the Gathering Dance will be held in the Glasgow University Union with music from Gunna Sound.

Due to venue policy, a vaccine passport will be required for all those attending the dance in the GU.

Tickets for each event are £10 and must be pre-booked by contacting the Tiree Association either on Facebook, via email at [thetireeassociation@gmail.com](mailto:thetireeassociation@gmail.com), or via text to 07763 126309.

All essential Covid-19 procedures will be followed to ensure a safe event and attendees are encouraged to take a lateral flow test prior to attending.

The bad news, with regards association gatherings, is that the Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association will unfortunately not be going ahead with their annual event this month.

This is particularly bad news for me because I was

looking forward to singing at it! However, every association committee knows their own audience better than anyone and the decision to wait one more year before hosting another gathering is, therefore, absolutely correct and understandable.

Rather than Covid concerns, it is instead worries over traffic disruption and potential demonstrations caused by COP26 that has led to the cancellation of the Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association gathering, with major road closures planned only streets away from the proposed venue for the evening.

As a substitute to the main event, the association will be taking a dip into the archives and providing access to a recording of a previous year's gathering.

Little did President Biden know as he was driven down Argyle Street, the havoc he was causing for the Gaelic community in Glasgow!

# Oban Music Society concert features 'exceptional' duo

The Gaia Duo will perform for Oban Music Society at its next concert this Sunday, November 7 at 3pm.

GAIA are an award-winning violin and cello duo, comprising two of Scotland's most distinguished chamber musicians, Katrina Lee and Alice Allen.

'The Gaia Duo are exceptional and we are very lucky to be included on their tour of Scotland,' said Oban Music Society member Molly Adams.

'They are a multi award-winning cello and violin duo performing both early music and a great array of contemporary music, also promoting the work of female composers.'

The concert's programme comprises Arcangelo Corelli's Sonata for Violin and Cello 15' Op.5 No.9, Ravel's Duo for



The Gaia Duo are touring Lochgilphead, Oban and Portree this November.

Violin and Cello 30', Rebecca Clarke's Lullaby/Grotesque 5.5' and Sally Beamish's Stone, Salt and Sky 25' - a GAIA Commission. Tickets are £10 at the door. The day before, Saturday November 6 at 2.30pm, the duo will perform for Mid Argyll Arts Association at Kilmory Castle in Lochgilphead.

After the Oban concert,

they will move on to Skye for a performance in Portree's St Columba's Church on Tuesday November 9.

Alice and Katrina are co-founders of the Scottish Freelancers Ensemble, formed as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic, helping the community of freelance musicians support each other to keep its art alive.

## What's on at Oban Cinema



Venom 2 is rated 15 by the BBFC. This means that absolutely no-one under 15 can see this film in a cinema. Even with a parent or adult.

### Friday 5 November

Venom 2   15	12:30/19:15
Ron's Gone Wrong   PG	16:15
Boss Baby 2   PG	16:30
Dune   12A	18:45

### Saturday 6 November

Boss Baby 2   PG	11:30/14:00
Ron's Gone Wrong   PG	14:45
No Time To Die   12A	16:30
French Film Festival: Just A Breath Away   12A	17:15
Dune   12A	19:15
Venom 2   15	20:00

### Sunday 7 November

Boss Baby 2   PG	12:15/15:00
Ron's Gone Wrong   PG	12:30
No Time To Die   12A	15:00
French Film Festival: Just A Breath Away   12A	17:30
Dune   12A	18:30
Venom 2   15	19:45

### Wednesday 10 November

Venom 2   15	12:30★/19:15★
Ron's Gone Wrong   PG	16:15★
Boss Baby 2   PG	16:30★
Dune   12A	18:45★

### Thursday 11 November

No Time To Die   12A	12:30
Ron's Gone Wrong   PG	16:15
Boss Baby 2   PG	16:30
Dune   12A	18:45
Venom 2   15	19:15

★ Key: HOH - Subtitles & audio description for the hard of hearing.

Face coverings must be worn when moving within the building. Once seated you can remove your face covering. All showtimes are subject to availability and change. Updates can be found on our Facebook page.

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For requests, competitions or questions please call us on 01631 570057 or email: [studio@obanfm.org.uk](mailto:studio@obanfm.org.uk)

**MONDAY:** 8am-12pm Breakfast show with Stephen  
12-3pm Lunch with Bob G  
5pm-7pm Drive Times with Marcus  
7pm-8pm Highland Fling with Rosemary  
8pm-9pm Calum McLuckies Show  
9pm David Cullen Show

**TUESDAY:** 8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen  
10am-12.30pm Ken Hunter  
1pm-3pm Macky on FM  
5pm-7pm Drive Times with Archie Darling  
7pm-8pm Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers  
8pm-9pm Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron  
9pm Oban Pride on the Waves with Jay & Crystal

**WEDNESDAY:** 8am-11am Breakfast Show with Stephen  
11am-1pm Comfort Zone with Lesley  
1pm-3pm Doug in the afternoon  
4pm-7pm Drive Times with Campbell  
7pm-9pm Country meets Rock N Roll with Len  
9pm Gordon's Grooves

**THURSDAY:** 8am-11am Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah  
11am-2pm Lunch Show with Steve  
3pm-7pm Drive Time with Stephen  
7pm-9pm Christine's Collections  
9pm-10pm Ann's Ceilidh  
10pm Margo Till Midnight

**FRIDAY:** 8am-10am Breakfast Show with Anna & Phil  
10am-1pm The Brunch Show With The One  
1pm-4pm Bob G Country, Rhythm & Blues show  
4pm-6.45pm Teeney & Tiny Show with Harry & Janet  
6.45pm-7pm Sports View with the Dream Team  
7pm-8pm Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig  
8pm-10pm Evening Show with Peter Rainnie

**SATURDAY:** 8am-10am Breakfast Show with Andy  
10am-1pm Saturday Morning Live with Linda  
2pm-4pm Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc  
6pm-7pm Sports View with the Dream Team  
7pm-8pm Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling  
8pm-10pm Evening Show with Dave Hobbs

**SUNDAY:** 9am-11am Sunday Morning with Breege  
11am-2pm Sunday Brunch with Stephen  
3pm-5pm Mediation with Heartfelt Change  
7pm-9pm New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch  
9pm Drum & Bass with Graham.

# Short story collection boosts mental health charity funds

**Oban author Stuart Simms tells us how his struggles with mental health during the pandemic inspired his first book of short stories, Elementals.**



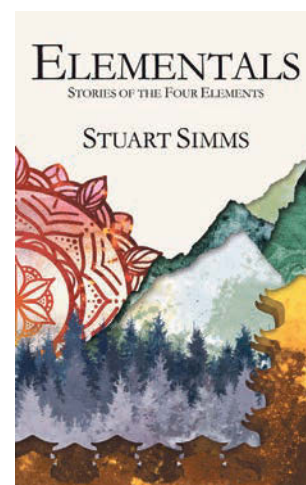
Stuart Simms.

Mental health and our struggle to talk about it isn't a problem exclusive to the past two years, but many of us have seen a worsening of our mental health as a direct result of Covid-19.

There are few situations more anxiety-inducing than a global pandemic and Covid regulations have separated us from people we might have turned to for help.

Personally, I can't imagine many scenarios worse for someone with OCD than the risk of catching a deadly virus from any surface or person you come into contact with. I felt fortunate that I lived in Oban throughout the pandemic and enjoyed its relative remoteness, but being located here meant that I, like a lot of people, was faced with the added anxiety of low job security.

Finding ways to express how I was feeling during the past two years was challenging so I returned to an old hobby and started writing again. I began with an idea for a short story about a young man struggling with his identity. After that the ideas kept coming and I had three more stories. The end result of a year-and-a-half of writing was Elementals, a collection of all four stories. Each story was inspired by a different aspect of mental



The cover of Stuart's book.

health and each of the four characters faces their own unique physical and mental challenges. Their struggles are tied to the four elements and the elemental creatures associated with them:

'A young warrior must capture a dangerous earth ele-

mental to prove himself. A reluctant hero endures a haunted forest to hunt an undead beast. A group of travellers face a deadly climb for the promise of a wish. A novice recovers from a difficult trial and finds new meaning from her life.'

My earliest motivation for writing these stories was to benefit my own mental health, but with the encouragement of my partner, family and friends I decided to self-publish the stories, with the goal of raising money for a mental health charity.

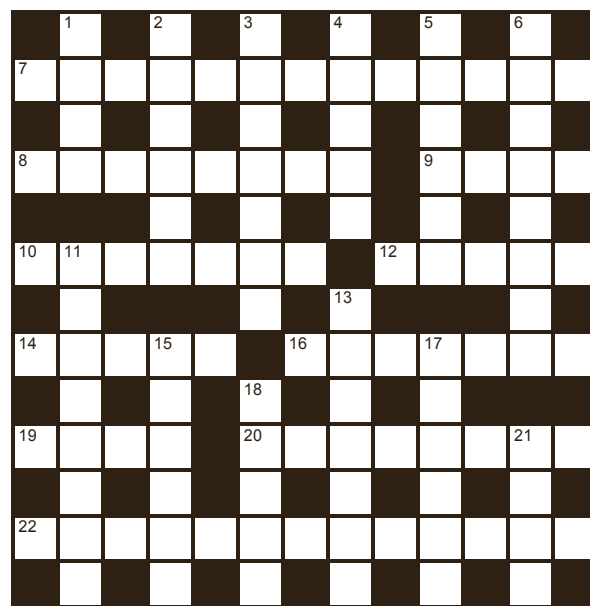
My chosen charity is Shout 85258, a free text helpline available day and night UK-wide. The helpline is anonymous and confidential, making it ideal for anyone that feels more comfortable starting a conversation about their mental health through a text. I believe a service like this is especially important in places like Oban where it can sometimes feel like we're far

removed from outside support. Until December 31, all royalties from the sale of paperback and eBook editions in the UK will be donated to Shout 85258. To contact the helpline text 'Shout' to 85258 or visit [giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org).

The experience of writing these stories has only encouraged me to continue writing and next year I aim to self-publish a full-length novel featuring a character from Elementals. I hope to support charities through writing for years to come, as long as the ideas don't stop.

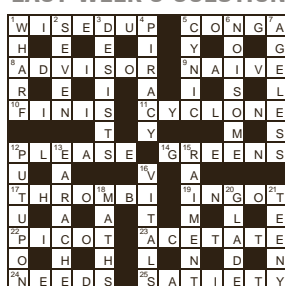
Elementals: Stories of the Four Elements by Stuart Simms is available through Amazon.

## CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Not to be spoken about (13)
  - 8 Gesture that takes everything in (8)
  - 9 Toy that does tricks (2-2)
  - 10 As much as a public transport vehicle can hold (7)
  - 12 Way to walk... (2,3)
  - 14 ...under (5)
  - 16 Left work (7)
  - 19 Weight (4)
  - 20 Specially trained military unit (8)
  - 22 Of the mind (13)
- Down**
- 1 Winter forecast (4)
  - 2 Say it again (6)
  - 3 Upright (7)
  - 4 Drum played with the hands (5)
  - 5 Fig tree (6)
  - 6 Part of a school day not for lessons (8)
  - 11 Political upholder of the joining of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (8)
  - 13 When a natural satellite is only just visible (3,4)
  - 15 Split (6)
  - 17 Slanted (6)
  - 18 Offspring (5)
  - 21 Unexciting (4)

### LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



## 'Hong Kong to Sligo' worth the wait

In any ranking of difficult second albums, Orchestra Macaroon's Hong Kong to Sligo should win hands down. Seventeen years have elapsed since the collective released what Scotland on Sunday called 'the massive, intoxicating sound' of Breakfast in Balquhider.

Co-leaders Colin Blakey and Philippa Bull have been busy on other projects, after moving from Easdale Island in the Inner Hebrides to Cumbria for several years, then back to Argyll. 'We always had it in mind and had a lot of the material written. Then lockdown allowed us the space to finish Waterboy Colin explains.

It's been worth the wait. Like the first album, Hong Kong to Sligo is a freewheeling kaleidoscope of world, folk, roots and jazz. The new music has the group's signature Celtic-influenced, multi-genre sound and reflects time spent by



Philippa Bull and Colin Blakey.

Colin and Philippa listening to and playing English folk, as well as ceilidhs.

Among the new names there is some continuity in the line-up and instrumentation: Kimho Ip, yang qin, cello, and Stephen McNally, border pipes, who featured on the previous release, are back for more. The classic 'trio' of drum kit, double bass and piano is still there, this time featuring Shooglenifty's James Mackintosh, Lunasa's Trevor Hutchinson - also an ex-Waterboy - and seasoned Macaroon collaborator Pete

French. Renowned English trad players - Carolyn Francis, fiddle, and Ben Farmer, accordion, and brilliant jazz saxophonist Cath Sewell all bring their unique melodic styles to the mix.

The percussion section includes Sam Nicholls, principle percussionist of the National Youth Orchestra. Special Irish guest stars are accordionist Sharon Shannon and another Waterboy Steve Wickham on violin.

Colin explained how it all came about: 'As we couldn't gather the band together in

one place, Philippa and I sent scores to the other musicians, along with demos of the pieces using electronic instruments. The players then recorded their own parts however and wherever they could, literally from Hong Kong to Sligo, and sent them back to us.'

The music was compiled, edited and mixed by Colin and Philippa in their new place in Taynuilt. 'We think the sound and especially the mastering, by Finlay Wells in Oban, this time is superb,' said Colin. 'The album has a real in-the-moment feeling of everyone playing together with one voice.'

The album will be released on November 8. CD copies will be on sale in Millstone Wholefoods in Oban and in Turadh craft shop in Taynuilt. The album can also be bought online, as CD or digital download, from Bandcamp - just search under 'Hong Kong to Sligo'.



Claire Foy as Margaret Campbell, Duchess of Argyll, and Paul Bettany as Ian Campbell, 11th Duke of Argyll. Photograph: Alan Peebles.

# BBC drama spotlight on divorce of Duke and Duchess of Argyll

The BBC has unveiled its new drama series *A Very British Scandal*, about the divorce of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, 'one of the most notorious, extraordinary, and brutal legal cases of the 20th century'.

The three, one-hour episodes, coming soon to BBC One and BBC iPlayer, star Claire Foy, who played Queen Elizabeth II in *The Crown*, as Margaret Campbell, Duchess of Argyll, and Paul Bettany, famous for *A Beautiful Mind*, *The Da Vinci Code* and *WandaVision*, as Ian Campbell, 11th Duke of Argyll.

'Famed for her charisma, beauty and style, Margaret, Duchess of Argyll, dominated the front pages as the divorce exposed accusations of forgery, theft, violence, drug-taking, bribery and an explicit Polaroid picture that was to haunt her for the rest of her life,' the BBC explained.

'A *Very British Scandal* turns this scandal inside out to explore the social and political climate of post-war Britain, looking at attitudes towards women and asking whether institutional misogyny was widespread at the time.'

'As her contemporaries, the press and the judiciary sought to vilify her, Margaret kept her head held high with bravery and resilience, refusing to go



*A Very British Scandal* focuses on the divorce of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, one of the most notorious, extraordinary and brutal legal cases of the 20th century. Photograph: Alan Peebles.



Left: A scene from *A Very British Scandal*.

quietly as she was betrayed by her friends and publicly shamed by a society that revelled in her fall from grace.'

Joining the series, written by the screenwriter of *The Pale Horse* and *Dublin Murders* Sarah Phelps, are Gavin & Stacey actress Julia Davis as Maureen, Marchioness of Dufferin, and Ava and Amanda Drew from *The Trial Of Christine Keeler*.

*A Very British Scandal*, directed by Anne Sewitsky and produced by Chris Ballantyne, comes from the makers of the award-winning comedy drama *A Very English Scandal*, which tells the story of Jeremy Thorpe MP, a former leader of the Liberal Party who, in 1979, was tried and later acquitted of conspiring to murder his ex-lover Norman Scott.

# M'ALBA

## MY ALBA

<b>DIARDAOIN 4 An t-Samhain THURSDAY 4 November</b>	22.00 An Gabh an Saoghal Fhuarachadh? / Can we cool the Planet?	19.00 Dileas/Working Dogs
17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	22.55 Celtic Connections Shorts	19.30 SpeakGaelic S1 Ep3 An Aimsir/The Weather
19.00 Dileas/Working Dogs	23.00 Scottish Premiership – Hearts v Dundee United	20.00 An Là – NEWS
19.30 SpeakGaelic S1 Ep2	00.45 Binneas-Na Trads	20.30 Golf: Mun Cuairt Alba
20.00 An Là – NEWS		21.00 Sruth/Music programme
20.30 Ceathrar air Chuairt		22.00 Trusach-Finding David/Fois ann am Fios
21.00 Birdman of Pollock/Curaidh ns Coille		23.00 Dan
22.00 Mach a Seo!		23.05 Machair
22.30 An Gabh an Saoghal Fhuarachadh? / Can we cool the Planet?		23.30 Alleluia
23.20 Fraochy Bay		
23.22 Fraochy Bay		
23.30 Transatlantic Sessions: Dluh an Daimh		
<b>DIHAOINE 5 An t-Samhain FRIDAY 5 November</b>	<b>DIDÒMHNAICH 7 An t-Samhain SUNDAY 7 November</b>	<b>DICIADAIN 10 An t-Samhain WEDNESDAY 10 November</b>
17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	16.00 SWPL-Celtic v Rangers	17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 An Là – NEWS	18.05 Celtic Connections Shorts	19.00 Fuine
19.25 Dan	18.15 An Là	19.30 SpeakGaelic – S1 Ep4 Teaghlach/Family
19.30 Machair	18.30 Seachd Là / News Review	20.00 An Là – NEWS
19.55 Fraochy bay	19.30 Alleluia/Spiritual praise	20.30 Gàrradh Phàdrug
20.00 Fianais S1 Joe MacNeil	20.00 Ceathrar air Chuairt	21.00 Caileagan a' Chogaidh Mhoir/ A Great Adventure
20.30 An Cuan Sgith / The Minch with Anne Lunden	20.25 Fraochy Bay	22.00 Bannan S5 Ep3
21.00 Archibald Hall-An Uaislean/ The Perfect Gentleman	20.30 Golf: Mun Cuairt Alba	22.25 Transatlantic Sessions: Dluh an Daimh
22.00 DNA S1 Ep2	21.00 Mac's Uaine/MacSween Goes Green	23.00 Birdman of Pollock/Curaidh na Coille
22.40 Binneas-Na Trads	22.00 Bannan (S4 Ep5)	
22.50 Dealbh is Slighe	22.40 Bannan (S5 Ep1)	
23.00 ALT	23.00 DNA /Danish Drama	
	23.40 Celtic Connections Shorts	
	23.45 Sgeul Slainte	
<b>DISATHAIRNE 6 An t-Samhain SATURDAY 6 November</b>	<b>DILUAIN 8 An t-Samhain MONDAY 8 November</b>	<b>DIARDAOIN 11 An t-Samhain THURSDAY 11 November</b>
16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.45 An Là	19.00 Fuine	19.00 Dileas/Working Dogs
18.00 Scottish Premiership 2021/22 – Hearts v Dundee United	19.30 SpeakGaelic (S1Ep4) Teaghlach/Family	19.30 SpeakGaelic S1 Ep3 An Aimsir/The Weather
19.45 Sgeul Slainte	20.00 An Là – NEWS	20.00 An Là – NEWS
20.00 Fianais-Joe MacNeil	20.30 An Cuan Sgith/ The Minch with Anne Lunden	20.30 Eorpa/European Current Affairs
20.30 Gàrradh Phàdrug	21.00 Trusach-Finding David/Fois ann am Fios	21.00 Tearlach Ceannadach/ Charles Kennedy: A Good Man Speaking
21.00 ALT (S1 Ep5)	22.00 Bannan (S5 Ep2)	22.00 Mach a Seo!
	22.30 Luther 500: An t-Strì Spioradail/ The Battle for Souls	22.30 Rudeigin san Eadhar/Something in the Air
	23.30 Mach a Seo!	23.25 Fraochy Bay
		23.30 Transatlantic Sessions: Dluh an Daimh
	<b>DIMÀIRT 9 An t-Samhain TUESDAY 9 November</b>	
	17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	



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Co-bhanntachd eadar MG ALBA agus am BBC | A partnership between BBC and MG ALBA

## Screen Machine Scotland's Mobile Cinema

**Jura Wed 10 - Thu 11 Nov**  
**Port Ellen Fri 12 - Mon 15 Nov**

Book at [www.screenmachine.co.uk](http://www.screenmachine.co.uk) or buy tickets at the cinema 30 mins before screenings. £7.50 Adults. £5.50 concs. Fully accessible for wheelchair users.

**The Last Bus** (12A) 86 mins  
A man goes from John O'Groats to Land's End. 10/11 at 5:30pm

**No Time to Die** (12A) 163 mins  
10/11 at 8pm, 12/11 at 8pm, 13/11 at 5pm, 14/11 at 8pm, 15/11 at 2pm (captioned), 15/11 at 5:30pm

**PAW Patrol: The Movie** (U) 86 mins  
11/11 at 5:30pm, 12/11 at 5:30pm, 13/11 at 2pm

**Our Ladies** (15) 106 mins  
Scottish comedy drama. 11/11 at 8:30pm, 13/11 at 8:30pm  
The short film SIXTEEN will precede the 13/11 screening.

**LAUNCH! On the Sea with Scotland's Lifeboats** (U) 44 mins + 20 min Pre-recorded Q&A  
Dive into archive footage of RNLI crews with an immersive soundtrack from contemporary musicians. 14/11 at 5:30pm

**Living Proof** (8+) 98 mins  
Documentary about Scotland's complex relationship with the global climate crisis. 15/11 at 8:30pm  
The short film Our Plastic Ocean will precede the feature.

Read about our Covid measures at [www.screenmachine.com/covid-measures](http://www.screenmachine.com/covid-measures)

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# What's on this Christmas

**FESTIVE HAM**

**IAIN DARLING/WYNNE BUTCHERS**  
 A family butchers just a short walk from the top of tesco car park, turning right at Bossard cafe, they deliver to businesses with-in and out with the town, and also do home deliveries  
 Open: Mon-Sat 9am-2pm  
 Address: 4 Combie St, Oban PA34 4HN

**TABLE FANCIES**

**MCDUGALL'S OF OBAN**  
 A specialist cook shop and kitchenware store, also selling gifts for the home and children's toys.  
 Web: www.mcdougalls.shop  
 Address: 103-105 George St, Oban PA34 5NT

**JOLLY CARROTS**

**GO NAKED VEG**  
 A plastic-free and organic shopping experience, right in the heart of Oban. Fresh, Organic vegetables and fruit delivered to your door.  
 Open: Tuesday-Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am-4pm  
 Address: Stevenson St, Oban PA34 5NA

**COMPLIMENTARY CONDIMENTS**

**ALBA KITCHEN GARDEN**  
 Newly opened and stocking a wide range of fine cheese, cold meats, jams, preserves and other goodies, an Aladdin's cave for your kitchen.  
 Open: Monday - Saturday 9am-5.30pm  
 Address: 6 Albany St, Oban PA34 4AR

**SPARKLING GLASSWARE**

**TESCO**  
 A British multinational groceries and general merchandise retailer including household goods and clothing.  
 Open: Monday-Saturday 7am-10pm, Sunday 8am-8pm  
 Address: Lochside St, Oban PA34 4HP



**Oban Business Improvement District**  
[www.bid4oban.co.uk](http://www.bid4oban.co.uk)



# your table Christmas?



### SHOWSTOPPING TURKEY

#### JACKSON BROTHERS MASTER BUTCHER

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# Union launches COP26 video to celebrate sustainable farming

NFU Scotland's president Martin Kennedy takes viewers on a scenic and factual tour illustrating the industry's contribution to food production, tackling climate change and biodiversity enhancement.

Farmers and crofters throughout Scotland are not only providing us with fantastic nutritious food and drink but are doing so in a fashion that puts Scotland at the forefront when it comes to climate change, the environment and economic return.

That's according to a COP26 personal video message recorded by NFU Scotland's president Martin Kennedy available to view at [vimeo.com/639088826](https://vimeo.com/639088826)

In the video, Mr Kennedy

pays tribute to consumers, thanking them for their growing support throughout Covid, resulting in strengthening sales of local and sustainably produced food and drink. He outlines how important the world-renowned food and drink sector is to the Scottish economy and points out the huge steps being taken at farm and croft level to tackle climate change and address biodiversity enhancement.

He also calls on greater political support to recognise the huge challenges faced by the sector including damaging trade deals, the labour crisis, soaring input costs including



fuel and fertiliser and lack of recognition and appreciation given to food security.

During the video, Mr Kennedy, speaking from his hill farm in Perthshire, says: 'A massive thank you to our consumers who are now more aware than ever about the value of local Scottish food production.'

'Sales through supermarkets, farm shops, butchers, green-grocers, farmers' markets and online of Scottish meat, dairy, fruit, veg, eggs and more have all grown throughout this pandemic and the strengthening support we have received through this difficult time has been hugely appreciated

by all farmers and crofters. The Covid-19 pandemic has focused our minds on how important food security is. Just a few decades ago, the nation was 80 per cent self-sufficient in food. This has now dropped to 60 per cent.

'That is dangerously low and unless we are incredibly careful, we will be at the mercy of other nations across the world to produce our food for us and, in many cases, it will be produced with less care and attention to climate change, biodiversity and animal welfare.'

'As we welcome the world to Glasgow for COP26, inviting them to taste some of the best food and drink on the planet, let me reassure everyone that farmers and crofters understand they will have to do more in the future to meet the

climate change targets ahead. But let us not forget that from a global perspective, we are starting from a great place and we are on the right road.'

'Between 1990 and 2018, agriculture saw a 15.9 per cent reduction in net emissions. Methane and nitrous oxide emissions fell by 18 per cent and 14.8 per cent respectively and we now know our managed permanent and rough grazing pastures in Scotland hold around 172 million tonnes of carbon.'

'Looking at biodiversity, in 2018 Scottish farmers managed the equivalent of 36,000 rugby pitches under ecological focus areas. In 2019, more than 3,000 farms, crofts and estates also managed land under agri-environment climate schemes to benefit biodiversity.'

'And we remain at the heart of the Scottish economy.'

'Scottish agriculture directly employs more than 67,000 people and this goes wider into the food and drink sector where 360,000 jobs are supported.'

'That makes our world-famous Scottish food and drink the nation's biggest economic driver, worth a staggering £15bn.'

'At COP26, we will talk a lot about energy. I do not think there is any energy more important than the quality of food we consume.'

'Without it, we cannot survive and if we rely on imports from other countries that do not share our concerns around climate, biodiversity and animal welfare, then Scotland will not survive either.'

## SCOTTISH FIELD

### December



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Aberdeenshire photographer Dan Christie...

## NFU anger at New Zealand trade deal announcement

NFU Scotland has reacted with anger and dismay to the announcement of a further free trade deal that grants a major exporting nation unfettered access to the UK and offers virtually nothing to Scottish farmers, growers and crofters in return.

The UK Government's free trade agreement with New Zealand, coupled with the Australian deal signed in June, will see the UK potentially open up its borders to huge volumes of imported food, a significant proportion of which may not have been produced on farming systems permitted here.

That threatens the viability of Scottish farmers and crofters at a time when consumer demand for local, sustainably produced Scottish food and drink is growing.

As with the Australian deal, the New Zealand negotiations have been concluded without proper parliamentary scrutiny, the Union says. It believes this is vital but says that with the continued absence of the promised Statutory Trade and Agriculture Commission, the UK Government has failed to establish a route

to effective scrutiny. NFU Scotland president Martin Kennedy said: 'Our free trade deal that grants a major exporting nation unfettered access to the UK and offers virtually nothing to Scottish farmers, growers and crofters in return.'

'Having now put in place a similar deal to grant unfettered access to New Zealand, another major food exporting nation, the cumulative impact of all such deals on farmers and crofters will be substantial.'

'This latest deal offers virtually nothing to Scottish farmers and crofters in return but risks undermining our valuable lamb, dairy and horticultural sectors by granting access to large volumes of imported goods that could be produced in farming systems not currently permitted here.'

'As with the Australian deal, there is to be a cap on tariff-free imports from New Zealand for 15 years.'

'That is merely a slow journey to allow New Zealand, a major exporter of food and drink, unfettered access to food and drink UK markets.'

'Once again, this is a deal that has not been afforded the appropriate level of scrutiny

and consultation and has been agreed in advance of the promised statutory Trade and Agriculture Commission being established.'

'The Department for International Trade has repeated its claim that there will be safeguards without ever identifying what those safeguards would be.'

'That is why parliamentarians must be given the opportunity to examine the Australian and New Zealand deals and any future deals with the likes of the USA, Canada and Mexico, with the government also carrying out a detailed impact assessment on what all such deals may mean for the agriculture and food sectors.'

'We are ambitious to identify and grasp opportunities to build our industry and wider economy and our reputation for world-class produce. Trade deals could be an enabler of this, but it is going to require investment and collaboration between the UK government and the industry, collaboration which does not exist at present.'

'The reality is the government is increasingly imposing rules on us that make the industry less competitive.'



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Around the markets

United Auctions, Oban, Tuesday October 26: sold 205 breeding type Heifer Calves, 66 Bullock Calves & 154 Adult Breeding Cattle. Bulls sold to £720 for 7 AAx from SRUC, Kirkton Farm to average £499.17. Heifers sold to £1020 for SimX from F Ronald, Saulmore to average £580.59.

Bulls sold to 236.2p/kg for 5 SimX from I MacKay, Torloisk while heifers sold to 371.9p/kg for 2 SimX from F Ronald Saulmore.

In the Breeding section, incalf heifers sold to £2050 for a SimX from A McNair & Son, Stroneskar while incalf cows sold to £1550 for BSx from F Ronald, Saulmore. A good turnout of buyers was in attendance, albeit they were very selective with their purchases and were prepared to pay premium rates for quality stock whilst less sought after kinds were making commercial values.

LEADING LOTS & PRICES PER HEAD  
BULLOCKS – AAx - £720(7), Kirkton. LIMx - £600, Oban Seil Croft. LUING - £540(4), Arisaig Farms. SIMx - £580, Drimnin Estate.  
HEIFERS – AAx - £570(2), Kirkton. BSHx - £920(3), £860(2), £600(3), Castles Estate. SHx - £980(2), Creag-nich. LIMx - £720, £650, Fuinary; £600, Achnacloch. LUING - £860(4), Kildalloig; £820(2), £800(2), Clachan Farms; £780(3), £770(4), £720(4), Kildalloig. SIMx - £1020, £900(2), Saulmore; £900, Scammadale; £900(2), Saulmore; £810, Ardencaple; £800, Saulmore; £800(2), Scammadale; £800(2), Saulmore. WBSHx - £680(5), Balure of Shian.  
INCALF HEIFERS – AAx - £1600, Achnacree Bay. BSx - £1800, £1400, Kirkton; £1400, Achnacloch. BRBx - £1550, Achnacree Bay. BLGx - £1450(2), Ardnaw Farms. LIMx - £1350, Ardionra; £1200, Stroneskar; £1120, Achuaran. SIMx - £2050, £2000(2), Sroneskar; £1950, Mid Farm; £1900, Stroneskar; £1900, Dall Farm; £1900(2), £1850(4), £1800(2), Mid Farm. WBSHx - £1400(2), Stroneskar.  
INCALF COWS – BSX - £1550, £1400, £1350,

£1300(2), £1200(2), £1150, Saulmore.  
COW & CALF - £1500, Inshaig Farm.  
BULL – SIM - £3500, Saulmore.  
LEADING LOTS & PRICES PER KILO  
BULLOCKS – LIMx – 235.6p, 233.5p(2), Callachally.  
LUING – 214.3p(4), Arisaig.  
SIMx – 236.2p(5), Torloisk; 232.1p, Drimnin Estate.  
WBSHx – 235p(4), 235p, 220p, Callachally.  
HEIFERS – BSHx – 309.8p(3), 280.8p(2), 228.1p(3), Castles Estate. LIMx – 228.3p(3), Keil Farm; 220.3p, Loch-buie. LUING – 324.1p(6), Tenga; 309.4p(2), 301.9p(2), 283.4p(2), 280p(2), Clachan Farms; 230.3p, Drimnin Estate. SIMx – 371.9p(2), 367p, 329p, Saulmore; 324.7p(3), 316.9p(2), Arden-caple; 301.9p(2), Burnside; 293p(2), Scammadale; 292.9p, Burnside; 292.2p, Scammadale; 289.9p(2), Saulmore; 289.3p, Arden-caple; 280.4p(2), Saulmore; 275.6p(2), Ardencaple; 273.8p, Torloisk; 273.5p(2), 270.9p(3), Saulmore; 263.2p(2), Scammadale.  
WBSHx – 352.6p(4), 338.9p(4), 322.8p(3), Achnacloch; 290.9p(2), Resipole; 286.9p(3), Balure of Shian; 271p(2), Resipole.

Caledonian Marts Ltd, Stirling, Tuesday October 26: Caledonian Marts Ltd (Tuesday 26th October 2021) had forward 2053 Prime Lambs, Ewes and Tups at their weekly Prime Stock Sale. Prime Lambs met a very strong trade with an average of 240p per kg or £112.66 per head, well fleshed lambs in great demand although anything lacking flesh definitely still harder to sell. Pence Per kg topped at 298p per kg for a Texel from D Nicol, Auchtenny and Pounds Per Head went to Doune Farms, West Lundie at £145 for a pair of Beltex Lambs.  
Leading Prices:  
Lambs:  
39.1kg – 45.5kg  
Beltex: 282p Bankhead; £127, Bankhead  
Beltex X: 266p Auchtenny; £115 Auchtenny  
Texel: 278p Braco Castle;

£125 Braco Castle  
Texel X: 261p Meikle  
Seggie; £117 Blindburn  
Blackface: 215p Thorn (Sibbald); £95 Thorn  
Mule: 210p West Kirkton; £90.50 Glenquey  
45.6kg – 52kg:  
Suffolk: 245p Ayton; £123 Ayton  
Texel: 298p Auchtenny; £140 Auchtenny  
Texel X: 287p Whiterigg; £135 Whiterigg  
Beltex: 273p Doune Farms; £131 Doune Farms  
Mule: 235p Meikle Seggie; £115 Meikle Seggie  
52.1kg+  
Texel: 254p Doune Farms; £140 Doune Farms  
Beltex: 250p Doune Farms; £145 Doune Farms  
Texel X: 245p Birch Avenue; £135 Birch Avenue  
Mule: 205p Meikle Seggie; £133 Meikle Seggie  
Cast Ewes: Ewes met another strong trade with all classes being in strong demand. Selling to £150 for Texels from J A C Stewart, Kinninmonth, Ceres.  
Other Leading Prices  
Suffolk: £134 Claylands; £120 Kinninmonth; £114 Claylands  
£110 Grange of Lindores  
Cross: £110 & £108 Grange of Lindores  
Blackface:  
£72 Immeroin  
£63 Burnhead  
£59 Turfbeg  
Cheviot: £90 Carden  
£89 Kinninmonth  
£88 Carden  
Texel: £150 Kinninmonth  
£139 Claylands  
£138 Ledrismore  
£134 Craigmad  
£130 Birch Avenue  
Mule: £107 Carden & Birch Avenue  
£100 Golland  
£99 Carden

**Dingwall & Highland Marts Ltd, Thursday, October 28:** sold 4,260 store sheep. Lambs (2,816) averaged £67.74 and sold to £109 gross for a Texel cross lamb from Lochfleet, Dornoch. Ewes (1,303) averaged £54.39 and sold to £125 gross for a pen of Cheviot ewes from South Cuil, Uig. Feeding Sheep (141) sold to £450 gross for a Texel ram from Easter Glackton, Gollanfield.

Other leading prices per head:  
Lambs: Chev – Carrol Farm, Brora, £107, £88, £82, 17 North Erradale. Gairloch, £95, £85, Achosnich, Dornoch, £90, Kerrow Farm, Cannich, £84, 319 Culkein, Lairg, £80; TexX – Upper Gartally, Drumadrochit, £100, 29 Fraser Park, Nairn, £96, £90, Glaich na Goire, Kiltarlity, £95, St Ninians, Drumadrochit, £92, 28 MacColl Road, Cannich, £87, Nuide Farm, Kingussie, £86, Glencarron Estate, Strathcarron, £86, Wester Coillemore, Invergordon, £85; BeltX – Ruivard, Ardross, £99, £84; SuffX – Corslett Farm, Rosemarkie, £97, Mid Farm, Ardgay, £87, Rhevackin Farm, Kiltarlity, £87, £83; CharX – 17 North Erradale, £96; ABX – Upper Bogrow, Edderton,

£92, £85; Tex – Gardener’s House Dunphail, £90; Cross – Lochfleet, £89, Torachilty Farm, Contin, £85, Monessie Farm, Roy Bridge, £81; Mule – Achnabat, Torness, £78, Nuide Farm, £77; Bf – Nuide Farm, £77, Achnabat, £77, Aldenham Cottage, Ardindrean, £77, MacRitchie’s Croft, Dingwall, £76.  
Ewes: Chev – Achue, Spinningdale, £112, Rhannich Farm, Edderton, £98, South Cuil, £95, 7/8 South Duntulm, Portree, £92, Kirkham, Lybster, £90, Coulags, Strathcarron, £88, Upper Gartally, £86; SuffX – Achnagart, Glenshiel, £111, £80, 7/8 South Duntulm, £87, 12 Morefield, Ullapool, £82; Cross – Lochfleet, £89, Drumbuie, Drumadrochit, £86, Rhannich Farm, £80;

Mule – Achue, £84, Strathgarve Farms, Garve, £84; TexX – Upper Gartally, £78; CHM – Auchmore Farm, Muir of Ord, £75; BF – 1 Laurel Avenue, Inverness, £60, Insh Farm, Spean Bridge, £58, Aberarder Estate, £58.  
Feeding Sheep: Chev ram – Clachan Farm, Inverbroom, £180, Cambusmore Estate, £124, Erich Farming Co, £108, £102, Achosnich, £100; Tex ram – Easter Glackton, £150, Invercharron, Ardgay, £90; Mule gmr – Balloan, Farr, £125; Chev wdr – Kerrow Farm, £97; TexX wdr – 29 Fraser Park, £96; HMP ram – Invercharron, £90; Cross wdr – Glenvarragill, Portree, £87, MacRitchie’s Croft, £84; Chev gmr – Achanalt G, Achnasheen, £75; BF ram – Marys, Heights of Docharty, Dingwall, £75.

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Subaru UK reported an increase in the 2021 Q3 performance of 19.82% over Q3 2019, in a market that was down 31.54%, delivering pre-pandemic performance levels and looking to increase sales further in 2022. A key part of this success was down to the performance of the improved dealer network which helped Subaru UK become the fastest growing SUV brand in the UK with a record year to date sales increase

of 143.45% year-on-year. This performance was predominantly due to the number of conquest sales with the introduction of a new 2.9% APR PCP offer which we are delighted will continue into Q4. Pat Ryan, Managing Director of Subaru UK, said: "The last few months have been very successful for Subaru UK and we are very proud of both our dedicated dealer network and our latest sales campaign which has

driven the performance. I would like to thank our dealer partners for their drive and passion for the brand which has contributed to this sales success. We have a clear plan and a 5-year road map which will see new and exciting products launching in the UK which provides us with confidence for our ambitious growth plans." Better Where it Matters A car's grip on slippery roads matters. How safe your car keeps

your family. That really matters. Reliability, year after year. That matters too. Subaru make cars for people who understand what really matters and that's why Subaru build them better, where it matters. Consisting of three SUVs, the core Subaru range includes Forester e-BOXER, new XV and all-new Outback; embodying safety, capability and reliability at their core.

Since 1954, Subaru have been making cars for everyday life and every challenge. Whether it's a hiking holiday or the school run – capability, safety and reliability is engineered into every part. Subaru has earned a reputation for engineering excellence; we're proud to build cars that are better, where it matters. For more details on the Subaru range contact S&S Services on 01292 880080



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If you feel you have the leadership qualities and skills required for this post or just want some more information, please contact Mairi Dunning Practice Manager [mairi.dunnings@nhs.scot](mailto:mairi.dunnings@nhs.scot) or telephone her on 01631 563175 for further information or send a c.v with a covering letter explaining why you would like to join the team..

**Closing date; 15 November 2021**



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Practice Manager, Lorn Medical Centre,  
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by 15 November 2021

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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
21/03987/PIP	Land 400M NE of Allt-Nan-Sheallach, Kilmonivaig, Spean Bridge	Erection of House
21/03988/PIP	Land 430M NE of Allt-Nan-Sheallach, Kilmonivaig, Spean Bridge	Erection of House
21/04655/FUL	Layby off A82, 600M North of Letterfinlay Lodge Hotel, Letterfinlay, Spean Bridge	Siting of snack bar
21/04682/FUL	Forestry Commission Depot, Invergarry, PH35 4HG	Revised design for amenity building - amendment to 20/04717/FUL : Erection of amenity building and 8 No eco holiday cabins
21/04729/FUL	37 High Street, Fort William, PH33 6DH	Demolition of a building and erection of a class 3 building with outside seating area with 4 holiday apartments
21/04782/FUL	72 Camaghael, Fort William, PH33 7NF	Installation of 3 pods
21/04871/FUL	Stewart House, Old Railway Goods Yard, Ballachulish, PH49 4LR	Amendment to planning permission 16/00386/FUL to omit 1no. dwelling from the block of 3no terraced dwellings and erect a single storey detached dwelling
21/04878/FUL	7 Riverside Grove, Lochyside, Fort William, PH33 7RD	Erection of letting unit
21/04899/FUL	Glencoe House Hotel, Glencoe, Ballachulish, PH49 4HT	Internal alterations to ground floor accommodation to form restaurant and spa facilities and erection of additional hotel accommodation wing. Formation of additional car parking area.
21/04900/LBC	Glencoe House Hotel, Glencoe, Ballachulish, PH49 4HT	Internal alterations to ground floor accommodation to form restaurant and spa facilities and erection of additional hotel accommodation wing.
21/04919/FUL	Taigh Eas, Wades Road, Kinlochleven, PH50 4AB	Erection of Annex
21/04961/FUL	Ardrhu House, Onich, Fort William, PH33 6SD	Change of use of land to Class 7 and erection of replacement conservatory
21/04990/FUL	Otterburn, Banavie, Fort William, PH33 7LY	Integrate the first-floor self-contained apartment with the ground-floor dwelling house

**Time period for comments is 14 days from the date of this notice, apart from 21/04900/LBC which is 21 days.**

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

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008**

**Notice of Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) to be published in a local newspaper under regulation 7(2)**

E POWER LIMITED, the prospective applicant, hereby gives notice of a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) to be undertaken in advance of the submission of a planning application to Argyll and Bute Council for a prospective development comprising up to 14 wind turbines, with tip heights of up to 180m and associated ancillary infrastructure with an installed capacity of more than 20MW at land around Sidh Mor, South of Lochan Anama and West of A'Chruach Wind Farm.

Further information in respect of the prospective development may be obtained by contacting E POWER LIMITED, 15 Pitreavie Court, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU.

A public event which will include a presentation of the prospective development and opportunity or public discussion with the prospective applicant is to be held at the Ford Community Hall on 12 November and 26 November between the hours of 3pm and 6pm.

Any persons wishing to submit comments should submit these to the prospective applicant at 15 Pitreavie Court, Dunfermline, KY11 8UU before 10 December 2021.

**Persons submitting comments in response to Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) are advised that comments submitted to the prospective applicant at this time are not representations to the planning authority; in the event that prospective applicant submits a formal application for planning permission then there would be an opportunity to submit representations to Argyll and Bute Council as the planning authority at that time.**

**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](http://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](mailto: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
21/01702/PP	Alterations and change of use of former ground floor Restaurant (class 3) to form letting rooms (class 7) and extension to existing first floor Restaurant	Former Yu Wu Restaurant And The Waterfront Fishhouse Restaurant, 1 Railway Pier, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4LW
21/01863/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land North West Of Lochawe Boathouse, Kilchrenan, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
21/02041/PP	Renewal of planning permission 18/02388/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access)	Plot 5, Lagganmore, Kilninver, Oban, Argyll And Bute
21/02018/PP	Alterations and conversion of vacant store building into art gallery and seating area	Store Portmore, Main Street, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA75 6NU
21/01940/PP	Installation of a fibre optic telecommunications cable from the mean low water mark to the roadside via a beach manhole	Kiloran Bay, Kiloran, Isle Of Colonsay, Argyll And Bute
21/01866/PP	Erection of storage shed and installation of 10 solar panels onto roof of industrial building, erection of chicken shed and run (retrospective) and formation of bund (retrospective)	Land East Of Glenegeedale House, Glenegeedale Industrial Estate, Glenegeedale, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
21/01679/PP	Erection of new community hub to replace the former pavilion, relocation of play area, new road and parking, increased motorhome parking, construction of new toilet/shower block, addition of storage containers and change of use to facilitate hot food takeaway van	Port Ellen Playing Fields, Land Adjacent To Filling Station, Charlotte Street, Port Ellen, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute

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 Councils 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](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)  
**Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid**



**GOODSVEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE**

Travis Perkins Trading Company trading as Travis Perkins of Lodge Way House, Lodge Way, Lodge Farm Industrial Estate, Harlestone Road, Northampton, NN5 7UG is applying to change an existing licence as follows: To keep 0 extra vehicles and 1 trailers at Unit 1, Ben Nevis Estate, Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 6RU. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre, who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Application Services, Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

**CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATIONS**

1. C Kennedy, 2 Arinagour, 0.443ha, Site for a dwelling house (111960)
2. J Campbell & C D Campbell, 2 Lower Scotstown, 0.090 ha, Site for a dwelling house (111773)

Comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 02/12/21 at [info@crofting.gov.scot](mailto:info@crofting.gov.scot) / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

**DECROFTING DIRECTION ISSUED**

1. I Campbell, Brolas, 0.151ha, Site for a dwelling house. (109145)

Full details at [www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk)

**Proposed Sublet of a part of a Croft by Tenant**

Helen Fraser is applying to sublet part of the croft at 2 Mandally, Kilmonivaig to Donald Fraser of 7 South Laggan, Spean Bridge PH34 4EA for five years.

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](mailto:info@crofting.gov.scot) within 28 days from the date of the advert.

**Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence**

Tarff Valley Ltd of Old Station Yard, Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway, DG7 2AN is applying for a licence to use Coal Yard, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay as an operating centre for 3 goods vehicles and 1 trailer. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

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# PUBLIC NOTICES

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## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

### THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL TREE PRESERVATION ORDER No. HC142, 2021, RIVER SPEAN, SPEAN BRIDGE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN in terms of Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 of the following particulars in relation to The Highland Council Tree Preservation Order No. HC142, 2021, River Spean, Spean Bridge which was made on 29 October 2021.

1. The reasons for making this Order are: The area is a mixture of mature upland oak and birch woodland and open rough ground on gently sloping ground between the A86 in the north and the River Spean to the south. There is an 11kV overhead powerline running roughly east – west across the northern part of the site and there is an associated wayleave of open ground around it. Concern has been expressed over significant clearance of trees; excavator damage to remaining trees; formation of tracks; formation of what appears to be a very large car park. There is currently no planning permission in place for development in this area and nor is there any Felling Permission through Scottish Forestry to remove trees. The Order will allow the Council to protect this woodland feature as well as encouraging appropriate longer-term management.

2. As the Council Service Points are currently closed, a certified copy of the Order has been deposited for inspection on the Council's website: [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)

3. Objections and representations in respect of the Order may be made, in writing, to The Highland Council at Planning and Development Service, Council Buildings, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX (Ref: GS/TPO/HC142, 2021), not later than 28 days from the date of the service of the Notice of the making of the Order or the date of publication of the Notice by advertisement as the case may be. Objections and representations shall state the grounds thereof, and shall specify the particular trees or groups of trees in respect of which the Order is made.

4. The Planning Authority shall, before deciding whether to confirm the Order, take into consideration any objections and representations duly made in accordance with the said Regulation 4.

5. Section 161 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended states that a Tree Preservation Order takes effect on such date as may be specified in the Order but expires 6 months after it is made unless it has, within that period, been confirmed by the planning authority without modification or subject to such modifications as the planning authority consider expedient.

Stewart D Fraser, Head of Corporate Governance, Council Buildings, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX

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## Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Derek Wilson Carriers Ltd of Units 2/3, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB is applying for a licence to use Units 2/3, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB as an operating centre for 2 goods vehicles and 3 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.



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## WEDDING



**McInnes/Kitchin**

Married at Barcaldine Castle on July 24, 2021 by the Rev. Margaret Millar, Barbara Catherine McInnes, eldest daughter of Ian and Rhoda McInnes, Connel to Tristan Christopher William Kitchin, eldest son of the late Andy Kitchin, Newcastle.

## DEATHS

**HUNTER** - Marjorie. Suddenly but peacefully on October 26, 2021 at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Marjorie (formerly of Oban and St Madoes). Beloved wife of Stewart, mother to Gavin and Lucy, mother-in-law to Laura and grandmother to Sam and Emily. Funeral Service at 1.30pm on Monday, November 15 at Clydebank Crematorium to which all friends are invited. Family flowers only. If desired, donations may be made either to Cancer Research UK or to the Beatson Cancer Charity.

**MACNEIL** - Peacefully on October 28, 2021 at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, aged 81, William Alexander MacNeil (Willie). Beloved father of Stephen, Kenny, Iain and

Martin. Dearly loved Grandpa and great-grandfather, brother and uncle. Sorely missed by all.

**MAIR** - James (Hamish), peacefully at home on October 26, 2021, with his loving wife Valerie by his side, as always, loving dad to Malcolm and Lesley, grandad to Jennifer and Daniel, stepdad to Ross and Deborah and friend to many. Will be sadly missed.

**MOUAT** - Very sadly after a short battle with cancer, Ruth Mouat (née Waddell) passed away on October 27, 2021 at Lorn and Islands Hospital. Beloved wife of Duncan Mouat, incredible mum to Hannah Cringles and the late Daniel Mouat. Much cherished sister to Margaret and Elizabeth and best friend to Hazel. She will be missed more than words can say.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**CARMICHAEL** - The family of the late Rhoda would like to thank the following people, Oban Ambulance Crew, the staff at Lynn Court, Catriona and staff at Hamish Hoey and Sons, Petals for the beautiful floral arrangements and Soroba House Hotel for catering. Finally a big thank you to all who attended the church service and at the graveside.

## MEMORIALS

**BINNIE** - Deborah (née Clark), taken from us on November 8, 2020.



A year has passed with so many changes and things we did not know Our thoughts are of Deborah, a daughter we loved but could not save. Where a heart of gold is laid to rest. - Love Mum and Dad.

**BINNIE** - Deborah née Clark, November 8, 2020. The days and months pass Forever in our thoughts Always remembered - Lots of love Pamela, Gary, Alex and Gabriella.

**GRANT** - John Duncan (Iain). So many memories of Iain, a much loved brother and uncle. You are in our thoughts every day as another year passes since you left us so sadly on November 4, 2008. Miss you always.

- Love Margaret, Neil and families.

**MACINTYRE** - In loving memory of Andrew, who died November 7, 2017.

Always in our thoughts. - Maureen, Andrew Jr, Lynne and loving papa to Kerry, Abby and Matthew xxx

**MACINTYRE** - In loving memory of Andy, a dear brother-in-law.

Always in our thoughts, sadly missed.

- Iain and Sandra.

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## GOLDEN WEDDING

*Golden Wedding*

Wishing Susan (née MacIntyre) and Jim Smith a wonderful 50th wedding anniversary, with love from their children Susan, Gillian, Jacqueline and Iain and all of their family.



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Oban Lorne Rugby Club's Under-14 team who won their game against Ardrossan Accies at the weekend.

## Etive Vikings host penultimate Dalriada festival at Taynuilt

Etive Vikings hosted the penultimate Dalriada Festival of 2021 at the sports field in Taynuilt last weekend.

More than 100 players from Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Oban, Fort William, Mull and Taynuilt took part with some fantastic rugby on display across all the age groups from the Micro P1-P3s to the P6/7s.

Conditions were damp under foot given the amount of rain that has been falling lately. The rain on the day did not dampen the enthusiasm of everyone taking part, who revelled in rolling about in the mud.

Congratulations to Kintyre who won both the P4/5 and the P6/7 competitions. They had a real desire to compete and were deserved winners.

It was also great to see Mull being represented again after missing the last few festivals



Isle of Mull players take a well earned rest.

and they acquitted themselves well in their first games under their new coaches.

A big game of girls touch rugby topped off a great day with all the girls taking part to celebrate Women and Girls in Sport week. This was one of the highlights of the day with the

youngest player in P2 all the way through to the P7s

A big thank you to everyone at Etive Vikings for their hospitality. The last festival of the season will take place at Lochaber Rugby Club, Fort William, on Sunday November 21.

## Oban rugby ladies inspired during Women and Girls in Sport Week

Oban Lorne RFC Ladies celebrated Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week by asking their senior players to come up with five reasons why they play rugby.

The initiative was part of the #shecanshewill campaign and was run through the Oban Lorne RFC Facebook page.

Five examples of why the women's team enjoy rugby were:

- 'Playing rugby builds my confidence.'
- 'Playing has increased my fitness levels and strength.'
- 'Spending time with other strong inspiring women who support one another fully and encourage each other.'
- 'It helps me focus and clear my mind especially after a tough day at work.'
- 'There is a place for everyone on the pitch, no



A horrible, wet, miserable night and Oban Lorne Ladies still turned out for training.

matter your shape, size or background.'

One of the organisers, Veronica Speirs, told The Oban Times: 'Recently the women's team have had a lot of new members, which is brilliant. This is due to lots more social media coverage, bringing friends along and chatting to people.'

The photograph was taken on a horrible, wet, stormy

night and despite the weather everyone still had great fun and thankfully no-one was put off or disheartened, with everyone coming to training again two days later.'

Anyone interested in joining the Oban Lorne Ladies rugby team should turn up at training on a Tuesday and Thursday night at the rugby club in Glencruitten from 6pm to 7pm.

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OT

## SHINTY ROUND-UP

A shinty season like no other drew to a close on Saturday October 30.

**Mowi Senior League A  
Glenurquhart P Kilmallie P**

A mixture of injuries, suspensions and prior commitments meant Kilmallie were unable to field a team for their 1pm throw-up against Glenurquhart at Blairbeg.

The postponement means Kilmallie duo Innes Blackhall and Stuart Callison will now carry suspensions into the 2022 shinty season. Blackhall will miss the first three matches of the new season, whilst Callison is out of the opening two games.

Kilmallie manager Martin Stewart said: 'We only had seven players available and Michael [Rodger] was the only one of them who is an established first team player. It would be asking too much of our younger players to call them up for a game at Glenurquhart.'

Martin Stewart will reflect on the 2021 shinty season in next week's Oban Times and Lochaber Times.

**Kinlochshiel P Lochaber P**

With two cup wins, Kinlochshiel claimed the title of shinty's most successful team this season and they had hoped to display the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and the cottages.com MacTavish Cup in front of their supporters ahead of their meeting with Lochaber at Rèaraig.

However, heavy rain during the week led to a postponement 48 hours ahead of throw-up.

Paul MacRae, Ali Nixon and

Donald Nixon are amongst the Kinlochshiel players who will benefit from the break as they take time to recover from injury, whilst manager Johnston Gill will take time to consider his future.

Lochaber's Barry MacDonald must now wait until next season to serve his four-match suspension.

**Mowi Senior League B  
Lovat P Caberfeidh P**

Lovat and Caberfeidh were to meet for the second successive Saturday, this time at Balgate.

Caberfeidh were 8-1 victors a week earlier but Lovat were unable to field a side this time around. The postponement has repercussions for some suspended players. Lovat's Callum Cruden missed out on the chance to serve the second game of his three-match suspension so his ban carries into next season. However, Lorne MacKay served the final game of a two-game ban, which saw him miss the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup Final last weekend so is now free to play.

Caberfeidh's Connor MacGregor was left disappointed as the final match of his four-game ban will carry into next season.

**Mowi North League B  
Newtonmore 3 Inverness 1**

The Newtonmore colts came from a goal down to maintain their unbeaten league record, defeating the Inverness first team 3-1 at the Eilan.

Inverness hit the front on 25 minutes through Steven Bellshaw but Craig Macleod drew Newtonmore level five minutes before the break.



**Beaulieu Under 17s booked their place in the MacTavish Cup final with a 3 - 1 win over Fort William at the weekend.** Photograph: Neil Paterson.

Second half strikes from Tristan Ross on 56 minutes and Brodie MacBean on 71 minutes made the final score 3-1.

**Kingussie P Lovat P**

The Lovat seconds were unable to fulfil their fixture with the Kingussie seconds at the Dell.

**Mowi South League A  
Bute 3 Col Glen 2**

Bute marked an historic day for the club with an exciting 3-2 derby win over Col Glen in their 12.30pm throw-up at the Meadows.

It was the day Bute held a ceremony to officially mark the transfer of deeds for their pitch, the Meadows, gifted to them by the Mount Stuart Trust earlier this year.

The proposal to transfer ownership stemmed from negotiations on the renewal of the ground lease from the Mount Stuart Trust to the club when both parties agreed the

best way forward would be to transfer ownership.

Mount Stuart Trust generously offered to do so at no cost to Bute and included the wider Meadows area, subject to the ongoing tenancy of Argyll and Bute Council.

The club currently boasts one of shinty's best clubhouses and this new ownership of the pitches and surrounding land will allow the club to further develop its ambitions for this important island resource.

Speaking ahead of the handover, Sophie Crichton-Stuart from the Mount Stuart Trust said: 'Working closely with the team at Bute Shinty Club, we are delighted to officially mark the handover of ownership of the playing pitches. Recognising the importance of the role of shinty and the club in island life and acknowledging the facilities as an invaluable resource for

the wider community, it gives me great pleasure to know this new ownership will allow the club to realise its ambitions for the Meadows and I look forward to visiting for a shinty match or other future events.'

Bute Shinty and Amateur Athletic Club chairman Barry Martin added: 'This gift of the Meadows pitches will have a huge impact for Isle of Bute Shinty Club. We are very much a community club with our clubhouse used for a huge range of events from yoga classes to Irish dancing, weddings and funerals. Many will also be aware of the key role the club plays in hosting the annual agricultural show and Highland Games and this transfer of ownership will allow us to move on and start to plan much-needed storage for the agricultural society/ Highland Games.

'The club is grateful for the

generous support and advice provided by Elaine Campbell of Wm. Skelton and Co, Solicitors. In marking the handover today, we are also recognising the many years of service of volunteer Margaret Whitelaw whose post match catering has fed many a team and its supporters over the years.'

When play got under way James Hamilton threatened to spoil the celebrations when he gave Col Glen the lead on three minutes.

Leon MacMillan equalised on 15 minutes but Auryn Kerr put Col Glen back in front on the stroke of half-time. Bute levelled for a second time through Craig MacKay three minutes after the re-start.

Ryan Craig struck on the hour with what proved to be the game's winning goal.

**Mowi South League B  
Aberdour P Kyles Athletic P**

The Kyles Athletic second team were unable to field a team for their trip to Silversands to face the Aberdour second team.

**Glasgow Mid Argyll P Bute P**

The clash between the Glasgow Mid Argyll reserves and the Bute reserves at Peterson Park was postponed as the visitors were unable to raise a team.

**Mowi Central League  
Ardnamurchan 2 Kilmory 2**

Euan Gilmour's goal a couple of minutes from time gave Kilmory a share of the points with Ardnamurchan following their 2-2 draw at Strontian.

Both teams fielded a number of young players and the first half looked like it would end goal-less before James Baxter popped up on the stroke of half-time to give Kilmory a 1-0 interval lead.

Freddie Patterson drew

## New project hopes to secure future of caman making

A new partnership aimed at securing the future production of camans has been welcomed by shinty clubs.

Currently made by a small number of independent carpenters, caman production has been identified as 'a critically endangered craft'.

The Camanachd Association is to work with Inverness College UHI to address the issue, implementing modern business processes to develop a manufacturers' co-operative. The five-month initiative has received funding from the Scottish Government's innovation voucher scheme which encourages collaborations between organisations, businesses and academia.

Regional Development Officer Les Kinvig told The Oban Times: 'I am delighted to see the project moving forward and we are all hopeful that this will lead to sustaining the craft of caman making for the benefit of everyone who plays shinty.



**Caman production has been identified as a critically endangered craft.**

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

'It is a craft that is mastered by a limited few and therefore vital that this knowledge is passed on while also exploring the opportunities to expand and enhance the art of caman making to wider shinty communities. Thankfully, looking

forward to season 2022, it seems there will be no shortage of camans due to the hard work of the current makers.

'Unfortunately, in the current economic climate with the cost of materials, labour and shipping

there may be a rise in prices but hopefully with this project and the collaborations taking place we will see the costs reducing and the art of caman making increasing.'

Leading the project at Inverness College UHI business and management lecturer David Jack explained: 'As caman making is a critically endangered craft, the Camanachd Association is looking for innovative ways to make the manufacturing process more sustainable.

'The two organisations will work together to explore opportunities around volunteering, work experience, education and training, coaching and community awareness. Our main goal will be to support caman makers to work together so they can share expertise, ideas and realise the benefits of greater co-operation.'

Derek Keir, chief executive officer of the Camanachd Association, said: 'This project is a fantastic example

of our partnership plans with the University of the Highlands and Islands and highlights the benefits of partnership working to grow the support network for shinty and our respective communities. We also hope to progress work to include further exchange of expertise as well as a greater connection to teacher training in the Highlands and Islands.'

Dr Iain Morrison, University of the Highlands and Islands' Dean of Students, added: 'The caman project is a great example of the synergies that exist in this new relationship. We share similar geography, socio-cultural roots and a strong desire to support communities across the Highlands and Islands. Our partnership is inherent in the success of our communities and our communities are fundamental to our strategy and operation so we are proud to be working closely with Scotland's most iconic team sport.'

Ardnamurchan level with 20 minutes remaining and gave the hosts the lead with his second goal of the game on 81 minutes.

Kilmory were not to be denied though and Euan Gilmour scored a couple of minutes from time to earn the visitors a share of the points.

It was a good season for Ardnamurchan who only failed to play one fixture.

Kilmory look forward to next season to further test their developing squad.

#### Glenorchy P Oban Celtic P

The Oban Celtic second team were unable to gather a team to play Glenorchy at the Mart Park.

#### MacTavish Juvenile Cup – semi-final

#### Beaully U17 3 Fort William U17 1

Beaully U17s are through to the MacTavish Cup Final after beating Fort William U17s 3-1 in their 2pm throw-up at the Dell.

This last-four tie was originally scheduled for Craighard, Invergarry, but an unplayable pitch led to a midweek switch to Kingussie.

Beaully's Euan Maccormick and Fort William's Craig MacDonald were key players.

Beaully forward Callum MacIver gave his side the lead after just 20 seconds of the throw-up.

Beaully created chances to increase their lead, but Jack Kearney in the Fort William goal was in excellent form, making several good saves.

Fort William equalised on 57 minutes when the ball came to Rhys Kennedy who slotted it by keeper Lennox Stewart to make it 1-1. Beaully regained the lead almost straight from the re-start when Fort William failed to clear a ball from Finlay 'Stork' MacLennan and Scott Cameron took advantage to score. It was now Fort William's turn to press, but Beaully defended well and added a third goal on 70 minutes.

Charlie MacRae, Fraser MacPherson and Finlay MacLennan combined to find Torrin Cairns who slammed the ball high past keeper Kearney to make it 3-1.

Beaully deserved their victory as they had more of the play,

but Fort William keeper Jack Kearney deserves credit for several outstanding stops.

The Dell pitch was in immaculate condition given the recent rain, with the drainage system working well. It did, not surprisingly, get heavy towards the end with several players suffering from cramp. Beaully U17s, coached by Beaully first team co-managers Gregor McCormick and Niall MacLennan, will now play Kingussie U17s, who were 3-2 winners over Skye Camanachd U17s in their semi-final, in this year's MacTavish Cup Final.

Following a toss of the coin, it was confirmed the final will be held at Braeview Park, Beaully, on Saturday November 13, throw-up time to be confirmed.

#### Coaching course in Fort William

The Camanachd Association will be running a shinty foundation coaching course at An Aird, Fort William, on Saturday November 6 from 10am till 4pm.

Anyone interested should email [ronald.ross@shinty.com](mailto:ronald.ross@shinty.com)

#### Glengarry school shinty success

Glengarry Shinty Club has held its first shinty sessions at Kilchuimen Academy.

With the support of Kilchuimen Academy, Ronald Ross from The Camanachd Association and Glengarry Shinty Club coach Elaine Cameron, 60 children from primary one to third year had a great time playing the game.

It is hoped these sessions will continue for a few more weeks with the addition of a lunchtime shinty club run by senior pupils and overseen by staff. It is also hoped to have school teams entering competitions next year. Support from Cruise Loch Ness - Debi and Ronald, Glendoe Estate and The Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation allowed the purchase of 20 shinty helmets, 20 camans, 36 shinty balls and portable goals, meaning every child in the community has the chance to play shinty.

Kilchuimen Academy is the eighth secondary school to sign up to the Camanachd Association's School of Shinty programme.

# Ten-man Saints hang on for share of points

Castlemilk Dynamo	2
Oban Saints	2
Central Scottish AFL Premier Division	

Ten-man Oban Saints held on for a share of the points against 2019-20 Division One Champions Castlemilk Dynamo in an absorbing Central Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division encounter at Toryglen last Saturday afternoon.

Injuries, suspensions and work commitments continue to hamper manager Willie Gemmell's selection options forcing the gaffer into a rare starting role in central defence alongside Dene Cassells. Myles McAuley also returned to the starting 11 with youngster Louie MacFarlane earning a place on the substitutes bench.

The hosts made an early change replacing Dominic Reynolds with late arrival Alan Semple after 23 minutes.

Semple's impact on proceedings was instant when he provided the cross from the left with Cammy Hill's ineffective clearance landing at the feet of Robert Hughes who tucked

the ball past Graham Douglas from the corner of the six-yard box.

In the dying stages of the first half, referee Stephen Payne flashed yellow cards in the direction of Daniel MacCuish and Ryan Kerr after a minor scuffle on the touchline at a Saints throw-in with MacCuish's caution ultimately proving costly.

Saints made a positive start to the second half which saw Lewis Cameron send a free-kick just wide of target and Daniel MacCuish have a powerful left foot shot charged down on the edge of the Castlemilk penalty area.

Thomas Hollis saved again from Lewis Cameron pushing the Saints skipper's stabbed effort around his right hand post in the 57th minute. Cameron's corner kick from the left was headed away by the Dynamo defence but hopes of a counter-attack floundered when Alan Semple was adjudged to have controlled with his hand.

From the resulting free-kick, Hollis saved to his right once again tipping Willie Gemmell's effort behind for another Saints corner kick.

The building Saints pressure finally told and Dene Cassells' glancing header from six yards diverted Lewis Cameron's corner kick beyond Thomas Hollis and Ryan Kerr on the goal line and into the bottom corner to level the scoring.

Saints impressive start to the second period continued and on the hour Lewis Cameron was sent sprawling inside the Dynamo box with referee Stephen Payne immediately pointing to the penalty spot. Dene Cassells made it two successful penalty kicks in as many weeks when he stepped up to slot past Hollis to give Saints the lead.

Saints' hopes of building on their lead were dealt a blow when Daniel MacCuish fell over in the Dynamo penalty area with Mr Payne considering this to be simulation and therefore worthy of second yellow card.

The ten men came close to adding to their advantage 60 seconds later but were denied by a fine save from Hollis low to his left from another Lewis Cameron strike.

The hosts set up a rousing final 20 minutes when defender Mark Blakey came in

unmarked at the back post to send a stooping header from a Connaire Dawson free kick from the right beyond the despairing dive of Graham Douglas to level the scoring.

This Saturday, Oban Saints face fellow Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division side Drumchapel Amateurs in the Scottish Amateur Cup third round. Caledonian League referee Joseph Todd takes charge of the 2pm kick-off at Glencruitten, which must be decided on the day.

## Youth results and fixtures

Oban Saints' Under 16s won 7-0 v Whitecraigs last weekend. Scoring for Saints were: Michael Campbell, 2, Louis Paterson, Cody McCulloch, Ewen Campbell, Calum MacMillan and Preston MacIntyre.

Fixtures, Sunday November 7: League Cup, Dumbarton United v Oban Saints Under 13s; Under 15s - no game; Scottish Cup third round== - Oban Saints Under 16s v Pollok.

## Swallie's boys star for Hibs with a little help from Saints

Continued from page 44.

Academy in Edinburgh under a Scottish Football Association scholarship. He recently represented his country in a Scotland v England Under 16 schoolboy football international. Unfortunately, Scotland lost 3-2.

Over the past few weeks, Jacob has also participated in the Victory Shield Home Internationals held in the Danny Blanchflower Stadium in Belfast. Playing against Northern Ireland, The Republic of Ireland and Wales, Scotland retained the shield. England did not participate due to Covid issues. Jacob, who featured in all the games, was the Scotland captain.

Older brother Oscar is also part of Hibs' Youth Development Programme and recently signed a two-year contract with the Easter Road outfit and will go full time on completion of his schooling.

He is the youngest player to make an appearance for Hibernian's under 18s and their first team when turning out for a pre-season friendly against Dunfermline earlier this year.



Rhys Kennedy equalises for Fort William during his team's MacTavish Cup semi-final against Beaully.

Photograph: Neil Paterson.

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Iain MacIntyre with grandsons Oscar, left, and Jacob and the Scotland jersey Jacob wore on his debut v England.

## Swallie's boys star for Hibs with a little help from Saints

Siblings with a strong Oban connection have been shooting to success on the national soccer scene.

Oscar and Jacob MacIntyre are the grandsons of Oban's well-known Iain 'Swallie' MacIntyre who was also an accomplished footballer in his youth with Oban Saints FC but was best known as a stalwart for Oban Camanachd for many years, despite living away from the town due to work.

Oscar, 16, and Jacob, 15, live in Edinburgh but train regularly with Oban Saints Youths while visiting their grandparents during school holidays.

Proud grandad Iain reckons this training has helped the boys on their way to national success.

Jacob is part of Hibernian Football Club's Youth Development Programme and attends Broughton

**Continued on page 43.**

## Let's hear it for the girls in sport

Lochnell Football Club celebrated SportsScotland's 'Active Girls Day' on Saturday by staging their first girls' football festival, writes Fiona Scott.

Despite the unavoidable withdrawal of some teams, there was still a healthy turnout with teams representing Lochgilhead Red Star and South Lochaber Thistle joining the hosts to play a series of games. These featured play of the highest standard and some outstanding goals, demonstrating the increasing popularity of girls' football in Argyll and Lochaber.

Each participant received a commemorative medal for their efforts and the hope now is that similar events take place regularly to further promote competitive football for girls across the region.



Lochnell Under-15s Girls squad.

## Under-14s play first home fixture

### RUGBY

Both men's and ladies' Oban Lorne 1st XV fixtures were called off due to the weather last weekend but the Under 14s played their first home fixture of the season.

Ardrossan Accies were the visitors and, playing on a great playing surface, Oban were determined to improve on their last two outings.

From the outset the hosts dominated the tackle and ruck areas led by man of match Scott Macphee. This enabled the backs to get over the gain line time and again ensuring regular tries.

The coaches were particularly pleased with the improvement in the rucking and support play



**Hamish MacIntyre, of Oban Lorne, goes over for a try against Ardrossan Accies at Oban Rugby Club.**

Photograph: Kevin McGlynn.

**Team photograph on page 41.**

well at nine behind a beaten pack, Harrison Felgate proved a thorn in Oban's side making some darting runs and Alex Gregory set up one of the opposition tries with a nice show inside before passing outside for a score in the corner.


This Saturday, November 6, the men's 1st XV are away to Clydebank with a 3pm kick-off agreed by both sides.

**More rugby on page 41.**



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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 4 November, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

<b>4</b>	0500 4.0	<b>6</b>	0015 0.6	<b>8</b>	0138 0.7	<b>10</b>	0319 1.2
	1104 0.6		0609 4.2		0731 4.0		0914 3.5
TH	1711 4.3	SA	1230 0.4	M	1405 0.8	W	1600 1.4
●	2339 0.7		1826 4.3		1949 3.7		2135 3.0
<b>5</b>	0533 4.1	<b>7</b>	0055 0.6	<b>9</b>	0225 0.9	<b>11</b>	0422 1.4
	1146 0.5		0648 4.1		0818 3.8		1032 3.3
F	1748 4.3	SU	1316 0.6	TU	1459 1.1	TH	1711 1.6
			1907 4.1		2037 3.4	Ⓛ	2320 2.8

### OBAN WEATHER

#### Thursday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 8°C to 9°C.

#### Friday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 8°C to 11°C.

#### Saturday

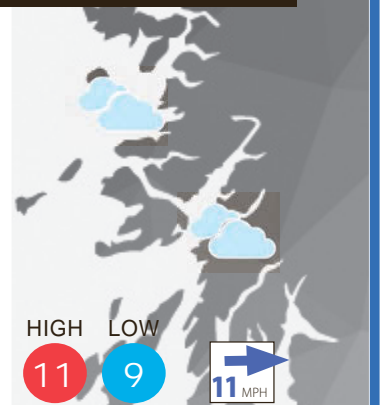
Heavy rain and a moderate breeze  
Temperatures 8°C to 12°C.

#### Sunday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 8°C to 11°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



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### Stepping down



**Ben Thompson bows out of local politics**

• Turn to page 4.

### Beer cheers



**Ardgour Brewery celebrates major win**

• Turn to page 8.

## MATT CHILLED OUT ABOUT COVID JAB

Fort's Matthew Phillips receives vaccination in Antarctica.

• FULL STORY PAGE 7

### Baxter fails to scupper Corran Ferry fares hike

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Andrew Baxter has hit out at four of his fellow Lochaber councillors who last week voted through a savings package that will see a hike in Corran Ferry fares to the tune of an extra £100,000 a year.

Highland Council is having to plan for a budget gap in 2022-23 ranging from £9million at best, to as much as £35.4m and to that end councillors last week agreed a package of initial savings for 2022/23 amounting to £1.61m - a savings package being proposed mid-year instead of at normal budget time in March.

Councillor Baxter, Conservative, Fort William and Ardnamurchan, was the only Lochaber elected member present to vote against raising any fares on the ferry at last week's online meeting of the full council.

Although councillors backed an amendment by Councillor Baxter's fellow ward 21 representative, Blair Allan, SNP, to not increase the price of books of pre-paid ferry tickets and to spread the £13,000 shortfall in savings across drive-up fare categories, it still means a three per cent rise for other single ticket purchasers - residents and tourists.

• Turn to page 3.



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## Seven set for Ardnamurchan and Fort by-election tussle

Seven candidates have been confirmed for next month's by-election for the vacant Highland Council seat for ward 21 - Fort William and Ardnamurchan.

The by-election was triggered by the death of Councillor Ian Ramon and voting will take place on Thursday December 2 2021, with the electronic count taking place the following day in the ward.

The seven candidates are: Mark Drayton, Sarah Fanet SNP; Roger Liley, Scottish Lib Dems; Joanne Matheson, Andy McKenna, Independent; Ruraidh Stewart, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; and Kate Willis, Scottish Green Party.

Ward 21 is a four-member ward. The successful candidate will join fellow ward members councillors Blair Allan, SNP; Andrew Baxter, Scottish Conservative and Unionist; and Niall MacLean, SNP.

# Lochaber chef wins top UK title with lockdown food story menu

A former head chef at Fort William's Inverloch Castle Hotel has been crowned the National Chef of the Year, thanks to his dinner telling the story of the pandemic through food, writes Sandy Neil.

Thomas Swaby said National Chef of the Year, run by the Craft Guild of Chefs, is 'the most prestigious cooking competition in the UK and that is reflected in the quality of the judges we cook for, so winning this title is an absolute privilege'.

Thomas impressed the judges in a cook-off at the Everyman Cinema in Broadgate, London, with his stunning three-course menu. The brief for the final was for each chef to tell their story of the pandemic through food. Menus had to include a vegetarian starter incorporating ingredients on the KNORR Future 50 Foods list.



These ingredients have been identified with the support of the WWF as having a positive impact on the environment, by improving the diversity of the crops we consume as well as having excellent nutritional credentials.

The main course focused on

supporting British suppliers on land and at sea with a dish incorporating meat and fish, whilst desserts had to reflect the start of the pandemic, when ingredients were sparse, and households turned to baking for comfort.

Thomas's starter was roast-

**Thomas Swaby claimed the top title in a close battle for National Chef of the Year.**

ed maitake chawanmushi, mushroom ketchup, roasted maitake, nasturtiums, pickled enoki and mushroom tea. British suckling pig with Orkney scallop, burnt apple puree, spinach, Chardonnay vinegar mash, apple, shallot and pig sauce was the main course he served up, with a dessert of sticky toffee pudding.

Thomas said: 'Earlier this year, Paul Ainsworth created a thought-provoking brief which tackled many important issues. I was most excited about the Future 50 Foods starter as the pandemic has encouraged us to find new ways of cooking and eating and it's important we all address

the issue of sustainability.' Chairman of the judges Paul Ainsworth added: 'When I set this brief, it was hard to know what kind of dishes we'd be tasting at the final. I left it open to interpretation as I wanted to see how the chefs demonstrated their style of cooking, personality and creativity.'

'This not only led to some amazing cooking, but these menus will go down in history, highlighting the incredible culinary talent we have here in the UK.'

'Choosing the winner went down to the wire but Thomas gave us everything we were looking for; three delicious and stunning plates of food, a real focus on sustainability and loads of passion coming through his dishes.'

Thomas will soon take up a new and exciting role in the Caribbean for six months.

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Leader of Argyll and Bute Council



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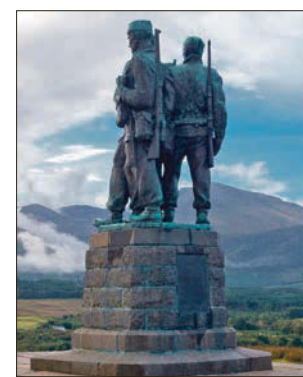
## Fort and Spean Bridge veterans muster for Remembrance Day

The order of Remembrance Day services in Fort William and Spean Bridge on Sunday November 14 has been published.

The Fort William Remembrance Day Parade will form in the Viewforth Car Park at 10.30am and come to attention at 10.45am before marching off to the War Memorial.

The order of the parade will be: the pipe band, Colour Party, parade commander, council members, Royal British Legion Scotland, Commando Veterans, Fleet Protection Group Royal Marine, Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers, police, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, St Andrew's Ambulance Corps, British Red Cross, Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, Air Training Corps, Red Cross Cadets, Boys Brigade, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides.

At 10.58am, the parade commander will read the Ode to the Fallen: 'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will



**The Spean Bridge service will be held at the Commando Memorial.**

remember them.' The parade will reply: 'We will remember them.'

The bugler sounds the Last Post at 10.59am before the two-minute silence begins at 11am, broken by the pipe major playing a bagpipe lament.

Following a prayer and reading by the presiding minister, wreaths will be laid by Highland Council, the Royal British Legion, Commando Veterans, Navy, Army and RAF representatives, police and uniformed organisations. Family wreath bearers will then be called forward.

An ode will then be read:

'When you go home tell them of us and say, for our tomorrow they gave their today.'

After the Act of Remembrance, the Colour Party will march off first, followed by ward members and guests. Unit commanders will then be given the order to 'Carry On'. Once spectators have cleared, unit commanders will fall out their own units and, if attending the church service, will move into the church.

At Spean Bridge, the service will be held at the Commando Memorial at 3pm. Organisations will muster at 2.40pm at the lay-by on the south side of the Commando Memorial and at 2.45pm will march northwards to the memorial using the old Gairloch Road.

Drivers are requested to arrive early to avoid getting tangled up with the parade which starts at 2.45pm. Cars are asked to park in the Memorial Car Park and along the north side of the B8004 to Gairloch and the east side of the main road.

The area of road opposite the Memorial Car Park is reserved for disabled people

## MSP Forbes does rounds at COP26

MSP Kate Forbes has been attending the COP26 climate conference.

The SNP MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch said it was a great privilege for Scotland to be hosting such a critically important event, which has drawn leaders and negotiators from around the world. 'There are great economic opportunities for Scotland as part of the just transition to net zero carbon emissions,' Ms Forbes told the Lochaber Times on Tuesday – day two of the two-week conference. 'The Highlands and Islands have played such an integral role in the nation's energy generation. We have an opportunity again to reap the economic benefits of this industrial shift.'

During the first day of the conference, Ms Forbes met Bertrand Piccard. She said: 'He handed me his Environmental Solutions Guide for Scotland, which is full of great ideas to invest in the economy and reduce carbon.'

# New Coire Glas group chairman appointed

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Former senior executive at VisitScotland Riddell Graham has been appointed permanent chairman of the Coire Glas Community Liaison Group (CLG).

Mr Graham, who was director of industry and destination development at VisitScotland until his retirement in September, was confirmed in the role at a CLG meeting held by videolink on last Wednesday.

Councillor Ben Thompson, whose Caol and Mallaig ward includes the Coire Glas site, had filled the position of temporary chairperson until a permanent appointment could be made.

Mr Graham, who lives in the Scottish Borders, will oversee regular meetings of the CLG,



Riddell Graham - the new chairman of the Coire Glas Community Group.

which gives representatives of the community an opportunity to discuss the progress of the proposed Coire Glas pumped storage hydro plant near Loch Lochy.

His recent consultation experience includes chairing the Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group, which was

created to support tourism during the Covid-19 crisis and chairing the Gaelic Tourism Strategy Implementation Group.

The massive Coire Glas project received planning consent in October 2020 and SSE Renewables is currently conducting necessary investigative work before a final decision is made on whether to proceed with its construction.

The scheme would create enough capacity to power three million homes for periods of up to 24 hours and make a significant contribution towards Scottish and UK Government zero emission targets.

Coire Glas project director Ian Innes said: 'We are delighted that Riddell has agreed to chair the Coire Glas CLG. He has considerable experience in public engagement and will ensure the liaison group is an

effective means of community consultation. The role of the CLG is crucial to the development of Coire Glas and we look forward to moving ahead under Riddell's chairmanship.

'On behalf of SSE Renewables, I would also like to thank Councillor Thompson for stepping in to chair the first two meetings of the CLG. His contribution to the launch of the CLG has been critical in making sure it will be a robust and effective body.'

Mr Graham said: 'It was a privilege to be asked to serve as chairman of the Coire Glas CLG and I am looking forward to working with members of the community in Lochaber and the Coire Glas project team at SSE Renewables as the development progresses.

'I have witnessed the importance of effective community consultation during my time at

VisitScotland. This experience will be useful in shaping the way the CLG operates and making sure it is a meaningful platform for consultation for the duration of this exciting project.'

Councillor Thompson commented: 'I didn't know Riddell before but have had the opportunity to speak with him twice now and I was very impressed. He's clearly a big hitter and certainly extremely experienced. Most importantly, he clearly understands the concerns of communities and businesses connected to tourism, which we have to reflect in our largest industry.'

'He understands how those particular sectors can be impacted by developers and that's the thing I was looking for in terms of the chairman – that they would have that understanding coming in.'

## Baxter fails to scupper Corran Ferry fares hike

Continued from page 1.

Caol and Mallaig members Allan Henderson, Ben Thompson, both Independents, and Denis Rixson, Lib Dem, all backed the savings proposals package after Councillor Allan's amendment was adopted. Councillor Niall Mclean of the SNP was absent.

Councillor Baxter had beseeched his fellow Lochaber councillors to scrap any rises in ferry fares.

'I am disappointed because once again it seems officers in the administration see this as an easy option to raise revenue,' he said.

'I am disappointed because all the promises from the former chairmen of the corporate and resources committee, past and existing directors to work with the community over the fare structure on the Corran Ferry have yet again been broken and ignored.'

'I am disappointed that after four years we are being told that smart ticketing is still not in operation when we've been told it was imminent and that



Councillor Andrew Baxter, left, pleaded with fellow Lochaber councillors to ditch proposals to raise ferry fares.

it would lead to operational savings.

'I am disappointed that Lochaber residents and businesses have once again been asked to stump up revenue where other wards across the Highland Council escape from the revenue raising that has already been agreed in previous budgets.'

'And I am disappointed that we are being asked to stump up when there is still no capital commitment to fund replacement ferries that are so desperately needed.'

He then appealed to the SNP group to 'actually act as an opposition' and vote against the savings proposals, adding: 'I also appeal to my fellow Lochaber councillors who are members of the administration to actually say enough is enough.'

On proposing his amendment, Councillor Allan explained that freezing the price of pre-booked tickets would support local people

and Lochaber's rural economy at a time when the region was still reeling from the impact of Covid and other economic issues.

Councillor Allan Henderson, Independent, Caol and Mallaig Ward, said increases in ferry fares were due to the council not keeping in touch with the rate of inflation and now having to play catch-up.

And he warned: 'The alternatives are much worse than this.'

The increases will mean drive-up fares for a car will now reach £10, with a single ticket in the discounted book of tickets costing £2.64.

Councillor Baxter told the Lochaber Times this week he 'absolutely' stood by his scathing comments.

'This will hit lots of people – those on this side of the Corran Narrows and those on the peninsula who don't have a need to buy a whole book of pre-paid tickets,' he said.

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– hill of the sheepfold

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# Councillor Thompson announces resignation

by Mark Entwistle  
[mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk)

Caol and Mallaig councillor  
Ben Thompson has announced  
his resignation from the  
Highland Council.

Mr Thompson was first  
elected in a by-election in 2014,  
making this his second term in  
the council.

Chairman of the housing  
and property committee and  
an active voice on planning,  
pensions, finance and climate  
change, Mr Thompson is also  
a member of the Lochaber area  
committee and an outspoken  
advocate of local decision  
making.

He will attend tomorrow's  
meeting of the full council  
before stepping down officially  
on November 12.

An independent councillor,  
Mr Thompson, described it as  
a very difficult decision.



'It has been a huge privilege  
to represent Lochaber for the  
past seven and a half years,' he  
said.

'It's a challenging but  
rewarding role and everyone  
should think about having a  
go at it.

'There is an election in May

and it was on my mind wheth-  
er I should continue after that  
date. An opportunity has now  
come up that means I have  
had to make the decision a few  
months early.

'This advance notice  
hopefully gives would-be  
candidates the time to con-  
sider standing, as well as some  
encouragement.

'I know Lochaber has many  
great potential councillors  
out there and I am happy to  
support any independent candi-  
date with advice before they  
take the plunge.'

Reflecting on his seven  
years with the council, Mr  
Thompson said there was  
much he was proud of.

In particular, he highlighted  
the delivery of new school

**Councillor Ben Thompson  
said he is happy to support  
any independent candidate  
with advice before they  
take the plunge.** Photograph: Iain  
Ferguson, alba.photos.

buildings and moving  
Invergarry Primary School  
children 'out of the decrepit  
ancient portacabins they were  
in'.

Mr Thompson has been  
involved in several campaigns  
to improve the Lochaber  
infrastructure including  
securing planning permission  
for a retail development in  
Fort William, replacing the  
Soldier's Bridge and delivering  
20mph zones in the town's  
residential areas.

He said the recruitment of  
countryside rangers has been  
of great benefit in protecting  
beauty spots and managing  
sustainable tourism in the  
area and he welcomed the  
building of new social housing  
with environmentally-friendly  
heating systems.

However, Mr Thompson said  
there is still much to do.

He called for improved  
transport links around the  
A82, a replacement of the  
Corran Ferry and the opening  
of the new Belford Hospital  
and STEM centre on the Blar.

Continuing a theme he often  
raised, the Lochaber member

called on the council to 'halt  
the ongoing centralisation of  
decision making and resources  
away from Lochaber commu-  
nities and make sure Lochaber  
and Highland get a fair share  
of government spending'.

In terms of local democracy,  
land reform is a key issue and  
Mr Thompson wants to reduce  
what he called 'the monopoly  
control of usable or developa-  
ble land in Lochaber'.

'That is only a small part  
of the list of challenges to get  
stuck into,' he said.

Mr Thompson offered his  
thanks to councillors Allan  
Henderson and Denis Rixson,  
as well as his ward colleagues,  
saying it had been a privilege  
to work with them.

Council leader Margaret  
Davidson said she was  
immensely sad to lose Mr  
Thompson from the council.

'Ben has been a great local  
councillor and achieved much  
in Lochaber,' she added.

'This past year he has taken  
on the role of housing and  
property chairman and he and  
the staff have brought forward  
some outstanding work on  
property rationalisation and  
our housing delivery plans.

'He has a gentle, fair and  
innovative mind at committee.

'He will be missed, but we all  
wish him very well in his new  
job.'

## Government minister tours local colle

Plans to turn the West  
Highlands into a new pow-  
erhouse for education and  
economy based on science  
and technology came one step  
closer last week, writes Mark  
Entwistle.

Jamie Hepburn, Minister for  
Higher and Further Education,  
Youth Employment and  
Training, visited West  
Highland College UHI's new  
manufacturing centre at Fort  
William on Friday.

Mr Hepburn was a spe-  
cial preview guest at the  
Advancing Manufacturing  
Centre (AMC) which will offer  
free technology and expertise  
to businesses when it officially  
opens its doors this month.

The minister, who was  
visiting the college for the  
first time in his new role, was  
shown a range of innovative  
technology before meeting  
construction students and



joined an online college school  
link class to speak with pupils  
studying business.

Mr Hepburn was welcomed  
by Lydia Rohmer, principal  
and chief executive, Derek  
Lewis, chairman of the board  
of management and David  
Campbell, project director for  
STEM.

Any small or medium-sized  
business needing access to  
machinery and software such  
as 3D printing, scanning and

machining at zero cost can get  
support from AMC and the  
college.

A team of experienced  
engineers and technicians  
can offer equipment and help  
with training and research to  
provide business solutions, in-  
spire entrepreneurs and bring  
ideas to life.

The centre is one of 12 pro-  
jects in the national Advancing  
Manufacturing Challenge  
Fund network, which is a



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# Move to alleviate teacher housing crisis on islands

Highland Council has moved to solve a housing crisis on Rum and Eigg which is affecting accommodation for the islands' teachers, writes Mark Entwistle.

Last week's online meeting of the full council discussed a report that flagged up the issue, stating that the existing teacher accommodation was 'not fit for purpose'.

Councillors heard the situation had implications for future education services on the islands so it is intended that the local authority will build additional housing on Rum to accommodate education staff on the island and explore housing options on Eigg.

This is consistent with the requirements of the Islands (Scotland) Act and the National Islands Plan. There is a commitment in principle from the Scottish Government



to provide grant funding of up to £100,000 per housing unit and £14,000 per unit from the council's landbank fund, with the balance of funding through prudential borrowing which will resolve the situation on Rum.

Rent income from properties would be expected to cover additional borrowing costs meaning there would be no net

impact on the council's revenue budget from the project. A solution for Eigg is also being taken forward.

A firm costing and timetable for the projects are being developed as a priority and councillors agreed the projects in principle with the detail and progress to be taken through the Housing and Property Committee.

Highland Council elected members heard there are problems concerning staff accommodation for teachers on Rum, pictured, and Eigg.

Caol and Mallaig ward councillor Denis Rixson, Lib Dem, gave his thanks to the council's chief executive Donna Manson and officers for their recent visit to the Small Isles and Knoydart.

'I am glad to see the proposals she has advanced. We have got a statutory obligation to make sure we discharge our education obligations in our most distant islands, expensive though that can be.

'Recommendation Six accepts that and I welcome it. The children on Rum have had a very difficult year and we need housing for a teacher and a nursery teacher.'



Work has started on the A82 repairs at Kiachnish Bridge.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

## Minimum disruption as bridge repairs begin

A £960,000 project to carry out essential scour repairs on the A82 Kiachnish Bridge near Fort William got under way on Monday, writes Fiona Scott.

Bear Scotland say there will be minimum impact on road users while the work, the majority of which will take place within the watercourse, is carried out.

The proposed works will ensure the structure, which was built in 1933, remains safe for years to come and are expected to take approximately three months to complete.

Specialist teams will be carrying out various activities

within the watercourse, particularly around the bridge abutments and piers. The work will also see some debris cleared at the southern span of the bridge so the river can flow more uniformly.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West Representative said: 'Our teams will do all they can to complete the project as quickly and safely as possible and whilst no traffic management is envisaged, we do encourage all road users to plan their journeys in advance by checking Traffic Scotland for the latest journey information.'

## Appeal for witnesses after woman knocked down in Fort

Road policing officers in Fort William are appealing for witnesses following a serious crash in the town on Friday afternoon.

A 56-year-old woman was struck by a car on the A82 at North Road, outside the Fort William Retail Park, around 2.10pm.

She was transferred to the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in Glasgow, where she is being treated for serious injuries.

The road re-opened around 5.35pm.

Constable Ben Cruickshank

from the Highland and Islands Road Policing Unit said: 'The road was closed for more than three hours to allow for a collision investigation to be carried out.'

'We are looking for anyone who witnessed the crash or has dashcam footage from the area at the time to get in touch via 101 quoting reference number 1974 of 29 October 2021.'

# College's Advanced Manufacturing Centre

Jamie Hepburn MSP with lecturer Claire Thomson in the college construction workshop. Photograph: Iain Ferguson.

partnership between the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. It is part funded by the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Fund.

AMC is the first move in a major plan to open a new £20m centre for science, technology, health and engineering in Fort William, next to the proposed site of the new Belford Hospital.

The STEM centre will provide a regional innovation hub to level up skills, training and work-based learning opportunities.

Ms Rohmer commented: 'As COP26 begins, we welcome the opportunity to show

the minister our vision for a future which will create a step change in access to green, digital and health skills for our young people and help strengthen our rural, coastal and island communities in the West Highlands.

'There are currently no specialist education and training facilities for STEM or specialist clinical health or related disciplines and life sciences in the West Highlands and young people and businesses are forced to leave our communities to get access to skills and training in these areas.

'With strong support from our strategic partners, including the University of the Highlands and Islands, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, NHS Highland, Highland Council and the Scottish Funding Council as well as our business commu-

nity, we're forging ahead with our plans for our STEM Centre to provide much-needed local skills and opportunities as part of our commitment to create an empowered and sustainable future economy for the rural Highland and Island communities and businesses we serve.'

David Campbell, project director for STEM at West Highland College UHI, added: 'With AMC and the planned STEM centre which will also incorporate digital and health, we will have everything in place to deliver excellent localised learning, providing employers access to the workforce they need.'

'Our plan will attract new investment and talent and allow everyone the chance to develop rewarding careers without the need to leave homes and families.'

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CITY PLUMBING

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## VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Housing is one of the key issues affecting member businesses in Lochaber Chamber of Commerce.

After consultation with members, we have commissioned an independent research company, 56 Degree Insight, to undertake an analysis of the housing needs of our community.

We all think we know what the problems are, and we've all heard stories of people struggling to find accommodation, but housing policy needs more than anecdotal evidence and we've been urging all local businesses to give us their views to create a robust assessment of our housing situation.

As we head towards the final weeks of the Lochaber Housing Need Analysis, we owe a debt of thanks to those businesses who have completed the questionnaire and those who have fed back to us – there is clearly a lot of thought being put into many of the responses.

We are very appreciative of the time you have taken to assist in our analysis, which we are doing with the support of The Highland Council and local businesses.



We would like to urge those businesses who have not yet participated to please fill in your questionnaire and return it. If, for any reason, you do not have a copy of the questionnaire or have misplaced yours, please email membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk and we will send you a new one.

Once we have gathered the data, this report will be used to inform the decision-making around housing policy in our area and will play a key part in making sure we get the homes we need for our growing community. Thank you.

For more information on the work of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce and to find out how membership could help you, visit our website at [www.lochaberchamber.co.uk](http://www.lochaberchamber.co.uk)

**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
email us at [fort@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:fort@obantimes.co.uk)

# COP26 will not diminish local policing, vows chief

The senior officer for Highlands and Islands police has assured Lochaber residents they will receive the 'same high standard of service', despite the fact a number of local officers are joining others from across Scotland in Glasgow for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), writes Mark Entwistle.

Giving the regular monthly police briefing for Kilmallie Community Council's monthly meeting last week, PC Paige MacDonald said all of the country's forces were gearing up for COP26.

And she added: 'There's a few going from Fort William, so there's a lot of work around that.'

Asked to comment, Police Scotland said it could not confirm the exact numbers of its officers being deployed from each division to cover



**Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett has said if locals need an emergency response from Lochaber police, they will receive it.**

COP26 – which started on Sunday – due to operational reasons.

However, Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett, Divisional Commander for Highland and Islands Division, speaking ahead of last Sunday's start of COP26, told the Lochaber Times: 'A considerable part of our planning for COP26 has been to ensure that the communities of Scotland

continue to receive the same high standard of service from policing they have come to expect.

'Policing, so often the service of first and last resort, will never step away from people in crisis.

'There are pressures which exist across many other services, agencies and sectors, and when the health service, local authorities and other key partners come under

significant strain, demand is diverted to policing. However, Police Scotland prioritises emergency 999 calls and these are answered within less than 10 seconds, on average. Our non-emergency response times continue to be affected by high demand.

'While an event the size of COP26 places considerable demands on policing, we already have contingencies in place and are taking steps to boost those over the coming weeks.'

And Chief Superintendent Trickett added: 'Although there is potential for further disruption should pressure on other agencies and services persist and become more acute, particularly as the country prepares for COP26, I can reassure the public that if they need an emergency response from us they will get it.'

## Morvern does COP26

Community groups in Morvern have pulled together an impressive array of events to coincide with the COP26 UN climate conference in Glasgow.

Morvern does COP26 got under way on Monday with a seed collection session as an introduction to the seed collecting competition which will run for the duration.

The idea started with climate change conversations within the community which were initiated by Stephen Hardy, a local Scottish Wildlife Trust ranger.

Veronique Walraven from Morvern Community Trust continued: 'These conversations covered a wide range of subjects, however, we wanted to give them more visibility so we decided we would ask different groups to organise an event during COP26 so that we could create our own COP.'

'It is a showcase of all the exciting projects that are already taking place and it will highlight the issues we as a community need to address.'

All events are free, although some might ask for a small donation. Morvern Does COP26 has been put together in a short amount of time with no budget.

**Thursday November 4:**  
Talk by Annabel Lawrence about the Mission Blue project and the importance of Hope Spots, 7.30pm, Lochaline Village Hall.

**Friday November 5:**

■ Fridays for Future, event for high school pupils. Afternoon, Lochaline.

**Saturday November 6:**

■ Pond Project at Lochaline Primary School. Come and see the work being done to improve biodiversity at the nature garden and maybe even lend a hand to build the new nature pond, 11am, Lochaline Primary School.

■ Messy Church 'Caring for God's Creation'. Everyone Welcome 2-4pm, venue TBC.

**Sunday November 7:**

■ Village and shoreline clean up, organised by Morvern Community Council, 11am, meet outside the Hub.

■ 'Caring for Creation' COP26 themed worship, noon, Kiel Church.

**Monday November 8:**

■ Herbal Walk with Clare Holohan. Please wear sturdy footwear and dress for the weather. Donations for charity. 10am, Ardtornish Estate yard.

■ Drop in and learn about native oyster monitoring with Annabel Lawrence, 11am-1pm, Lochaline Pontoons.

**Tuesday November 9:**

■ Nature walk up the Black Glen led by Scottish Wildlife Trust Ranger Steve Hardy, with Donald Kennedy. Please wear sturdy footwear and dress for the weather. 11am, Acharn/Rahoy nature reserve car park.

■ A conversation around climate issues: A faith perspective led by Rev Donald McCorkindale, 7pm, [www.aksm.org.uk/cop26](http://www.aksm.org.uk/cop26)

**Wednesday November 10:**

■ Distillery tour and net zero talks for buildings and beyond by Amy Stammers and Sally Semple, 3pm, Nc'nean Distillery.

■ Talk by archaeologist Jennie Robertson: Land Use in Morvern: A Historical Perspective, 7.30pm, Lochaline Village Hall. Organised by Morvern Heritage Society.

■ COP26 themed evening prayers. 10pm, [www.fb.me/AKSMparishes](http://www.fb.me/AKSMparishes).

**Thursday November 11:**

■ Knit and Natter – Bring your knitting and come along for a good natter. 10.30am, Café L.A.

■ This week's Lochaline Toddlers session will focus on the natural environment. 12.30pm, Achnaha Community Wood.

**Friday November 12:**

■ Morvern COP26 Gathering. Our final event with short presentations about current and planned environmental projects in Morvern, performances from local musicians, time for conversations, tea and cakes and Nc'nean whisky cocktails. The winner of the seed collection competition will be announced. 7.30pm, Lochaline Village Hall.



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# Fort's Matthew rolls up his sleeve at South Pole for jag

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Fort William man Matthew Phillips made a little bit of history when he became one of a handful of people to have their Covid jabs at the furthest point south.

The 39-year-old, who works as Winter Station Leader at the British Antarctic Survey's remote Rothera Research Station, made sure he was indoors when he rolled up his sleeve for his Covid jab, delivered to him at the South Pole where temperatures can plunge as low as -34°C.

Matthew was one of 23 team members who had the life-saving Astra Zeneca vaccine flown over 9,000 miles to them by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

And Matthew said: 'We're the last Brits to get our Covid



**Matthew at the British Antarctic Survey's remote Rothera Research Station. Inset: getting his jab.**

the station population and the Antarctic Covid-free.'

Antarctica has been Covid-free since Chile was forced to evacuate staff from its base last December after 36 people tested positive.

The medical supplies were flown from RAF Brize Norton, in Oxfordshire, to Dakar, Senegal and on to the Falkland Islands. From there, a tiny Twin Otter plane performed the final leg and was the first aircraft to reach the Rothera research team for 205 days.

Matthew added: 'I believe we are the final British Overseas territory to receive the vaccine. We must also represent the most complicated logistical challenge to get jabs in arms.'

Matthew has not been home to Fort William since setting sail from the UK aboard the RRS James Clark Ross boat on November 4 last year – reaching the Rothera outpost on Christmas Eve.

This was the sixth winter the former Edinburgh-born bar manager has spent in Antarctica, having fallen in love with the world's most southerly continent.

Matthew added: 'I think it's potentially the most extreme environment on the planet, short of throwing yourself into a volcano. It's not as dangerous as it used to be in the days of Scott and Amundsen but there's still a real sense of adventure to it.'

'The lowest temperature I've encountered in my time here at Rothera is -32°C. The biggest temperature swing I've seen here in a 24-hour period

is from -28 to +1. We don't see the sun for around two months in winter – most of June and July. But the winter sky can be absolutely incredible.'

The number of scientists based at Rothera reaches 160 over the summer months meaning as winter station leader, Matthew is busy handling the logistics of keeping the base running, ordering supplies and organising rotas.

Global Health minister Wendy Morton commented: 'The transport of vaccines to the ends of the earth shows our commitment to the people who live and work in the UK's overseas territories.'

'The government has supported the territories with vaccines and medical equipment through the pandemic. It has been an enormous logistical effort, of which the UK can be proud.'

**A wee reminder.**

**Let's stop the spike.**

NHSinform.scot/testing

LT

## Gaelic information session in Fort William

Anyone interested in learning more about the Gaelic language and lifestyle is invited to go along to the Nevis Centre in Fort William on Saturday November 6.

Due to the rising enthusiasm for Gaelic Networked Communities in Scotland, the Moray Language Centre will be holding an information session starting 10.30am and finishing at 1pm.

A warm welcome awaits all those interested in Gaelic and its future.

High on the agenda for the session will be an in-depth explanation and discussion on Gaelic lifestyle centres, with particular emphasis on their importance to Gaelic Networked Communities.

There will also be a guest

speaker who is a grandmother and is helping to raise her grandchildren to be Gaelic speakers.

'Anyone thinking about coming along to the session would do well to remember, that regardless of whether you are a fluent Gaelic speaker or have no Gaelic whatsoever or even somewhere in between, just come along and see for yourself what is on offer,' said Finlay Macleod from the Moray Language Centre.

'Even if at this time you think you have no Gaelic interests, you may surprise yourself and find you do indeed have one.'

More information about the session can be obtained by contacting Finlay at finlaymlc@btinternet.com or telephone 01542 836322.

## Bookbug sessions are back

High Life Highland has welcomed back scores of parents and their young children to libraries for the return of Bookbug.

The early years programme

aims to inspire a love of stories, songs and rhymes from birth, supporting children's language, learning and social skills. Visit [www.highlifehighland.com/libraries](http://www.highlifehighland.com/libraries)

# Ardgour brewery wins major award

A Lochaber lockdown start-up is raising a glass this week after winning gold in its first competition, writes Fiona Scott.

Ardgour Ales opened its doors just last year but the new microbrewery is already making its mark.

Its Gobhar Reamhar stout lifted the top Gold award for Cask Strong Beer at the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Scotland Independent Beer Awards 2021, hosted this year at the Bolton Beer Festival in a joint judging event with the SIBA North West Region.

Brewer Fergus Stokes also secured silver in the Overall Champion Cask Beer Award, meaning he will take the Gobhar Reamhar - the Fat Goat in Gaelic - to the national finals to fight it out with rivals from the rest of the UK. The finals will take place at the



Fergus Stokes, left, receives his Silver Overall Champion Award from event sponsor Murphy and Son Limited.

BeerX UK event in Liverpool in March 2022.

The SIBA Independent Beer Awards are run by and for brewers and are judged by fellow brewers from elsewhere in the UK, as well other representatives from the industry and expert beer judges - making these the much-coveted 'brewers' choice' awards in Scotland.

Fergus said: 'We are surprised and delighted at such a great result for our first time out.'

'It's so rewarding to have our commitment to creating high quality and distinctive beers

recognised so early in our journey.'

Ardgour Ales sits on the shores of Loch Linnhe near the Corran Ferry and looking across to Ben Nevis. When Fergus and Lizzy Stokes bought the crumbling manse in 2012, it was with a view to starting a business that would bring great beer to Scotland's wild west.

'Renovating the house and self-building the brewery have taken some time,' said Fergus.

'From excavating a site and installing drainage to three phase electrics, plumbing to insulation and epoxy floors,

this has been a big project.'

In 2019 a 5 Barrel Brewery arrived on a self drive lorry and by the following autumn test brewing was under way for an initial range of cask and bottled ales based around the goats - na gobhair - of Ardgour - Aird Ghobhar.

In a unique twist to the microbrewery model, Fergus and Lizzy also bake fresh bread for the village and turn stone-baked pizzeria on Friday nights drawing customers from far and wide.

Lizzy said: 'Ardgour lost its village shop a few years ago and we're also without our local pub at the moment because of a fire. So creating a new little hub for the village has been as important to us as making the beer.'

And it appears locals agree as Fergus was applauded on to the Corran Ferry by the crew on his return from the competition.

## Councillors unanimously agree to licence Highland SEVs

Sex entertainment venues (SEVs) in the Highlands will soon be required to hold a licence following a decision by the council's licensing committee.

Councillors were unanimously in favour of licensing SEVs and will now take steps towards implementing the regime from January 1 2023.

There is currently only one SEV operating in the Highlands, the Private Eyes Gentleman's Club in Inverness.

While venues could operate without a licence, the council decision aims to create better safeguards for SEV workers.

Last week's decision was made following a public consultation which attracted 442 replies from individuals and organisations, with 64 per cent supporting the introduction of licences.

People in favour feel it would reduce the exploitation of SEV workers and encourage better

working conditions. They also say it would help diversify nightlife in the Highlands and bring the area in line with other areas of Scotland.

Committee chairman Andrew Jarvie told members he believed they should be proactive on this issue.

'Looking at everything, and the holes in the existing licensing regime, I think there should be a licence,' he said.

'The convincing argument for myself is that the current regime for alcohol only looks at alcohol and not at the treatment of employees.

'We may only have one SEV now, but if two or three applications come in we can't retrospectively introduce a licence. So we need to be proactive, not reactive, on this.'

Councillor Duncan MacPherson said the strong response to the public consultation vindicated the committee's decision to seek their views.

'It demonstrates that people are concerned about having SEVs near schools and near vulnerable groups and about the exploitation of women and trafficking.'

He added: 'It's important that we as a committee know what goes on and can vet the people who are organising these because it's an area the underground likes to operate from.'

The public consultation highlighted that areas with places of worship, family leisure centres, schools, youth clubs and residential areas were not suitable for SEVs.

As a result, the council will provide a future licensing committee with a map showing areas where sex entertainment venues should - and should not - operate.

Officers will also come back to the committee with a draft policy and application forms for consideration.

## SCOTTISH FIELD

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## Council leader to visit Ardnamurchan

Highland Council leader Margaret Davidson, right, says she intends visiting Ardnamurchan in the near future, just a week after a councillor raised concerns about the state of the area's roads and signs.



of the road repairs needed and the lack of passing places? And I would advise they better take a map because without it they may not reach their destination,' he asked.

Councillor Davidson was replying to a verbal question from Inverness South ward councillor Duncan Macpherson, who also lodged a written question for Thursday's full council meeting.

Councillor Macpherson told fellow members: 'Places like Ardnamurchan, Caithness and Sutherland feel like they've been neglected and forgotten about after seeing the roads crumbling after years of underfunding and where visitors can barely read the road signs.'

'So when will the leader and chief executive of this council visit the community in Kilchoan and drive to the Ardnamurchan lighthouse and see for themselves the extent

Councillor Davidson replied: 'I intend to be on the Ardnamurchan peninsula very soon.'

Councillor Macpherson's written question – which the Lochaber Times had reported on last week – asked if the local authority ruling administration would consider enacting a boundary change that would allow Ardnamurchan to revert back to Argyll and Bute control.

In a written reply, Councillor Davidson told Councillor Macpherson: 'The Ardnamurchan peninsula has been well represented by elected members for many years, as I am sure you were informed on your recent visit.'

# Do not feed deer, community urged

by Fiona Scott  
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Residents and visitors in Kinlochleven are being strongly urged not to feed deer following increasing reports of attacks on humans and dogs in the village.

Kinlochleven Community Trust, Community Council and Jahama Highland Estates are currently working with NatureScot to proactively deal with this issue through raising awareness of the dangers.

In a statement to the Lochaber Times, the Kinlochleven Community Trust Board said: 'The trust is actively taking an interest in the current situation involving the feeding of the deer population within the village as we are concerned about the health and safety of our community and the deer themselves.'



Deer are appearing more regularly in public spaces in Kinlochleven.

A petition calling for action has gathered more than 200 signatures, while the trust has received numerous emails and calls from worried community members who have witnessed property damage and found significant evidence through ecological surveying that the number of deer are having a negative impact on the local flora and forest regeneration. 'As such, we are working

with residents, other local landowners, the police and NatureScot to look at possible solutions to the situation,' continued the statement. 'It is becoming increasingly apparent that the current position will not be improved until the residents that are feeding the deer stop this behaviour. They are wild animals and should be treated accordingly. Domesticating them is affect-

tively putting them at risk by feeding them an inappropriate diet, encouraging them to live in urban environments and reducing their fear of humans.' NatureScot has issued similar guidance and is encouraging local deer managers and deer management groups to get involved to reduce the negative impacts of deer on public areas and gardens.

## Over 50?

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Flu is serious. In Scotland, thousands of people are hospitalised with flu. This winter our immunity may be lower than usual. So it's more important than ever to get the flu vaccine.

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LT

# New project connects artists with schools across Skye and Lochalsh

The value of art in school classrooms is being celebrated in schools across Skye and Lochalsh.

Funded by Creative Scotland's Youth Art Access Fund, a new project connects local artists with Kyle, Plockton, Kyleakin, Auchtertyre, Loch Duich and Glenelg primary schools, with a special exhibition at the Old Bakehouse at Create in Kyle.

Running from now until March, and with the exhibition open from November 3 to November 10, ATLAS Arts says it is thrilled to be supporting the making of new artworks in the six local schools through five local artists.

The project sees Balmacara-based artists Sarah Longley and Isabel McLeish working with Kyle and Auchtertyre primary schools respectively. Malcolm Mackenzie, who

lives in Plockton, will work with their primary school, and Kirkton-based Rebecca Collins with both Loch Duich and Glenelg primary schools. They are joined by Irene Blair, of Breakish, who is working with Kyleakin primary.

Each artist is leading child-led workshops across primary one to primary seven, supporting learning through making and playing, allowing creativity and fun to flourish, and focusing on wellbeing and confidence building for the future.

The artists are developing different projects in line with the interests of each class, including mural making, printing, publication making, outdoor learning, painting and sculptures made from recycled materials.

Sarah Longley, one of the five



Artist Sarah Longley with the children at Kyle Primary School. Photograph: Sarah Longley.



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artists, said: "The Art in Schools project with ATLAS Arts is vitally important, showing just how much children need more art at a primary level.

"Too often art is seen as a frivolous add-on. It is so much more than that.

"It is a way of communicating, a form of self-expression, and it helps children make sense of the world around them. I hope the programme will lead to greater investment in art education in the Highlands. If a love of art is nurtured in a child it will last a lifetime."

On the project so far, Jennifer Skene-Maclean, headteacher of Kyle and Kyleakin primaries, said the children at Kyle Primary School have thoroughly enjoyed working with Ms Longley on this project.

"They have been inspired to think and create, while taking into account the natural beauty of the landscape and community around them.

"It's wonderful to see them becoming young artists," she added.

Ms Longley will also be hosting The Kaleidoscope Exhibition, featuring work from the Art in Schools' project, which will be taking place in the Old Bakehouse at Create in Kyle, from November 3 to



Kyle Primary School pupils working on the collaborative 'Kaleidoscope' painting. Photograph: Sarah Longley.

**'Too often art is seen as a frivolous add-on. It is so much more than that.'**

November 10, from 10.30am to 5pm. On Thursday November 4, the exhibition will open from 10.30am till 8pm.

This exhibition will include art produced by children at home during the lockdown via Ms Longley and other pieces from Kyle Community Trust's summer workshops and Kyleakin connections.

ATLAS Arts director Ainslie Roddick explained: 'It would

be so great as a legacy of this project to see more funding for visiting artists and art teaching implemented across Skye and Lochalsh. We have an abundance of brilliant artists and schools who see immeasurable benefits in working with them. Everyone we've worked with in this project has said how great it's been, just the simple act of having an artist in the school over an extended time.

"It gives teachers and children time to imagine and connect in new ways and to focus on children's wellbeing and sense of self.

"Thank you so much to the brilliant teachers, artists and pupils for their support."

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# Housing association pauses new homes to review appeal findings

Lochaber Housing Association (LHA) says it does not intend to progress its proposed 18-home new development at Glenkingie Terrace in Caol until it has reviewed the findings in a recent statement by the Scottish Government Reporter concerning the controversial project.

The Lochaber Times recently reported on the decision by Reporter Trevor Croft to uphold the LHA's appeal against the refusal of its planning application by Highland Council planning committee.

LHA also proposes to have further consultation with the community council and the wider community to discuss future development at the site.

In an update on its current development programme, LHA states: 'The Reporter, appointed by the Scottish Government, subsequently found in favour of the appeal, subject to 14 conditions and



the planning permission will lapse on the expiration of a period of three years from the date of the decision notice.

'The findings verify that the association did work to resolve the issues highlighted by objectors and that the remaining concerns are not considered "material" by the Reporter.

'However, the association

does not intend to progress the development until it has had the opportunity to review the findings in the statement made by the Reporter and proposes to have further consultation with the community council and the wider community to discuss future development at the site.'

The statement also references

How the new houses being built by Lochaber Housing Association will look.

how difficult the past 18 months of the pandemic have been, bringing with it many different challenges. One of these is a reduction in the number of affordable homes built in Scotland during 2020 due to the impact of lockdown. The number of housing association completions was down overall by 33 per cent.

The Scottish Government has set out in its Housing to 2040 vision on its ambition for 'everyone to have a safe, good quality and affordable home that meets their needs in the place they want to be'.

LHA says in line with that vision, it is pleased to report it has recently repurposed

the former Highland Council offices at Fulton House, in Fort William's Gordon Square, into 12 new one and two-bed properties.

LHA has also completed 20 flats at Tigh Aran, at Spean Bridge, but says that, 'frustratingly', the handover to the new tenants has been significantly delayed due to complexities and challenges around gaining consents for services and roads.

'This is extremely disappointing and inconvenient for our prospective tenants and every effort is being made by our contractor, consultants and agencies involved to resolve the situation,' said the LHA.

The association said recognising the increase in housing demand locally and the difficulty for essential workers to secure accommodation in Lochaber, it has approached various partners, such as Police Scotland and

NHS Highland, to discuss the provision of housing options for permanent and temporary staff in Lochaber.

The association is now considering models of provision such as market rents, low-cost home ownership, management of accommodation and leasing of properties and will be discussing with local employers on how it can best develop and deliver these options.

An example LHA gives of how the association says it is being progressive in its delivery of housing in Lochaber is the establishment of a joint working arrangement in 2019 with the Link Group to develop a 23-acre site at Upper Achintore, Fort William.

The site will be developed by Link in a series of phases with the first phase providing 19 units for mid-market rent, 55 for social rent and eight new supply shared equity scheme properties.

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LT

# All set for A Write Highland

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Excitement is building as Mallaig gets set to hold its popular book festival, A Write Highland Hoolie, after the Covid pandemic scuppered last year's literary weekend.

Based in the West Highland Hotel, the festival opens with a free dram on Friday November 12 for those attending the opening event which will see Paul Murton chatting about his latest book, *The Highlands*, with musicians Duncan Chisholm and Hamish Napier.

Chisholm and Napier will also be playing in the bar after dinner on Friday night, while Saturday's musicians are Ingrid Henderson and Iain MacFarlane of Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band fame.

Authors appearing are Chris Brookmyre, Donald S Murray, Gillie Basan, E S Thomson, Myrtle Simpson, Polly Pullar,



Clockwise from above: author and broadcaster Paul Murton who will be chatting about his latest book, *The Highlands*; the first woman to ski across Greenland, Polar Medal-winner Myrtle Simpson, will be at the festival; as will popular crime writer Chris Brookmyre; while Argyll-based author Alan Windram will be taking part in the schools' programme.

Leonie Charlton and Tom Bowser.

Vivian French and Alan Windram will be at Mallaig Primary School, with the aim

of assembling as many pupils, including those from the Small Isles, as possible.

Brookmyre and Murray will be holding events - Murray's

in Gaelic - at the local high school and there will be a special workshop, too, for senior English pupils with Vivian French, Lee Randall and



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# and Hoolie

literary agent Jenny Brown. This year's theme for the festival's schools art and writing competitions is The Lighthouse, to celebrate Murray's latest book - For the Safety of All: A Story of Scotland's Lighthouses.

The Hoolie ends on Sunday afternoon with lively entertainment for primary children with competition judge Alan Windram and a splendid tea party.

Festival co-founder and chairperson Polly Pullar told the Lochaber Times: 'We are delighted we are able to hold a live festival again this year. We have always felt that our unique event would not lend itself to a virtual model as it is so dependent on the craic, camaraderie and general atmosphere that we have achieved on past occasions.'

'This is why our loyal supporters return. A wonderful eclectic mix of authors and books, fabulous music and

superb food, all under one roof.

'This year we have expanded our remit greatly into the local schools. We have a wonderful new arm of the festival - the Hoolie School of Music Sessions for some of Mallaig High School's senior music students.

'This inaugural event, with Duncan Chisholm and Hamish Napier, is something we hope to continue on into the future. We strongly feel that traditional music is something else we really want to encourage.

'During this special two-hour session, the musicians will help the pupils to compose their own tune. What a wonderful experience this is going to be.

'For our younger pupils, we have Hoolie Hoolies where authors - this year, Vivian French and Alan Windram - hold events in the primary school.'

## Knoydart pub buyout group boosted by £219,000 from UK Government

Plans for a community buyout of The Forge Pub in Knoydart received a further boost last week when it was awarded £219,096 as part of Chancellor Rishi Sunak's UK budget, writes Fiona Scott.

The package has been awarded directly to The Old Forge Community Benefit Society, formed by a group of residents, from the UK Government's Community Ownership Fund established to empower communities to own and manage treasured community assets.

Welcoming the news of this most recent funding, Scottish Conservative MSP for the Highlands and Islands region Jamie Halcro Johnston said: 'This funding is a wonderful boost from the UK Government to a very deserving local project.'

'The people of Knoydart have worked extremely hard to save their pub and I look forward to seeing the benefits that The Old Forge will bring to the area.



The Old Forge pub on Knoydart.

Photograph: Mark Harris.

'This investment shows the support and security even the remotest communities in Scotland gain from being part of a strong United Kingdom.'

Last month the society announced it had been awarded £508,000 through the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) to support the purchase and redevelopment of the pub, while a further £256,035 has been

raised through a community share offer.

The venue, Britain's remotest pub, is on the market for offers over £425,000, but that figure does not include the owner's asking price for goodwill of the business.

This additional funding will help enable the residents to buy The Old Forge and redevelop the pub in a sustainable

way and boost tourism to the area.

The society will be launching a crowdfund campaign shortly to meet any additional costs.

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# End of an era as church holds

The church of St Munda's Glencoe which held its last service recently after 140 years of welcoming worshippers.



by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

For almost a century and a half, Glencoe: St Munda's Church has welcomed worshippers and witnessed family and social events involving the community.

But that era has come to a close with the final service of worship being held at the church on Sunday October 24.

Reverend Richard Baxter, who is currently acting as Interim Moderator of Glencoe: St Munda's, said it was a sad occasion for the members of the congregation as the building had now reached the end of its life as an active place of worship. But many could reflect on good memories of family events, social occasions and services there over the years.

Members of the congregation were joined by members of Lochaber Presbytery and friends. Presbytery Moderator Reverend Anthony Jones led the service and Reverend Baxter was the preacher.

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# Churches last service before closing

The church, located in Ballachulish, has served the congregation for 140 years. However, that is only a short fragment of the 1,400-year history of Christian worship and witness in the area, going back to the mission of Fintan Munda, a younger contemporary of Columba.

For most of that time, not only was there no building, but the parish church was on Lismore.

Like all of the presbyteries across Scotland, Lochaber is seeing major changes which will impact all of its congregations in one way or another.

Nationally, the Church of Scotland recognises that it has many more buildings than it can realistically maintain and many are unfit for purpose in the 21st century. The reducing number of ministers also affects the number of buildings that can be retained.

For Glencoe: St Munda's, the long-term plan is that at the next vacancy in either Duror and Glencoe: St Munda's or Nether Lochaber and

**'It is always sad when a place with so many memories attached has to close...However, we have struggled for too many years to maintain more buildings than our congregation can support or our minister serve.'**

Kinlochleven, the four congregations will join together in a single South Lochaber charge, with one minister and several places of worship.

In the meantime, the St Munda's congregation is continuing as a congregation without a building and will be using either community halls or other churches, as appropriate.

Their worship and witness to the community will continue



The Reverend Richard Baxter.

and will have much in common with the pattern of the earlier history of St Munda's.

Across the Presbytery, its share of the total national number of ministers is 5.5 posts and reaching that will be a sig-

nificant challenge, according to Reverend Baxter. At present there are seven ministers in post - one in North West Lochaber, one in Ardgour, Kingairloch, Strontian and Morvern, two in Fort William

Kilmallie and Kilmonivaig, one in Duror and Glencoe: St Munda's, one in Kinlochleven and Nether Lochaber, and one in Fort Augustus and Glengarry. Ardnamurchan and Acharacle is vacant and will not be calling a new minister.

Reverend Baxter explained that the Presbytery has not yet decided how to meet this requirement on ministry numbers and what that means for which buildings it will need for its future mission.

All buildings are currently under review and across Scotland many communities will be in the same situation as Glencoe: St Munda's as buildings valued and loved by their communities nevertheless fall out of use and future worship and mission needs are planned for.

Asked how he felt about the need for changes such as these, Reverend Baxter told the Lochaber Times: 'It is always sad when a place with so many memories attached has to close and I understand those feelings, especially of those who

have worked for and supported the worship of St Munda's over many years.

'However, we have struggled for too many years to maintain more buildings than our congregations can support or our ministers serve. God doesn't live in buildings but in the hearts and minds of the people who serve Him.

'We have to be realistic and plan for a future where we are far more flexible and our patterns change from those we have known in the past.

'That will mean some places with services on a rotational basis, others where some services are covered by members of the congregation, places where worship is at a time other than Sunday morning and perhaps streaming services from one church to several others.

'All of that is about building a church that meets 21st century needs. The change is painful but we have a God who is with us in all situations and we trust He will guide the steps we are taking.'

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# Ardgour Community Council holds October meeting

On-going efforts to cut down noise from the BSW sawmill at Corpach and problems stemming from a lack of public toilets were among the items discussed at Ardgour Community Council's (ACC) October meeting.

Community councillors attending were Samantha Thomson, chairperson; Claire Bennett-Levy, secretary; Louise White; Tricia Kennedy; Elizabeth Carmichael and Lyndsay Boyd.

Others attending were Ewen Maclean, Ardgour Estate; Dougie Robertson, Highland Ferries; Christine MacColl, Boyd Bros; Councillor Allan Henderson and two members of public.

■ Ardgour Glensanda Fund (AGF): Councillor Elizabeth Carmichael encouraged everyone to become members of AGF and attend the meeting on November 10. Details have been added to the Facebook page and are available from the ACC secretary.

■ Ardgour walks: Discussion about names for local walks. Councillor Tricia Kennedy will discuss with Fiona



The Inn at Ardgour.

Maclean and feed back at the November meeting. Ewen Maclean, Ardgour Estate, will send estate logo to Councillor Kennedy for inclusion on signs.

■ Electric vehicle charging points: Investigations are continuing into this with Highland Council and Hitrans.

■ Consultations: Since the last meeting, responses have been submitted to Gaelic Medium Catchment for Acharacle Primary School and Sallachan Woodland Creation consultations.

■ Councillors' update: Councillor Thomson noted

the sad passing of Councillor Ian Ramon and expressed condolences on behalf of ACC. It was noted a by-election will take place in December.

■ Police update: Councillor Claire Bennett-Levy, secretary, shared details from the police newsletter. PC MacIvor expressed thanks to local coast-guard teams for their response to recent incidents. Two tyres have been stolen from a trailer in Kingairloch.

There is a relatively low crime rate in the area but PC MacIvor advised against complacency as days get shorter. Advice on securing your home is availa-

ble from [www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information](http://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information)

■ Annat Industrial Estate: BSW: Councillor Thomson gave an update on the BSW sawmill. Residents have been advised that the mill will run until 1am during the current week. Two acoustic barriers have been installed and another is due to be installed this month. Councillor Thomson said residents have noticed an improvement following the work done. Regarding Boyd Bros, Councillor Claire Bennett-Levy advised of an update from SEPA noting improved practices with carbon loading and noted that the material is not classed as waste as it is used elsewhere in the steel industry.

■ Urram update: Councillor Elizabeth Carmichael advised appointments have been confirmed. The project manager will be Louise White and the

befriending co-ordinator is Natalie Rodgers.

■ Public toilets: Councillor Tricia Kennedy noted toilets at the inn are closed due to the fire and there are concerns people have been using behind the inn as a toilet. Councillor Thomson noted the pierhead toilets are also closed. Highland councillor Allan Henderson advised contact with Highland Council to request temporary toilets. Councillor Kennedy is to contact the inn to check plans for reopening toilets, then contact Highland Council if required.

■ Questions from the public: Councillor Claire Bennett-Levy shared email questions from two members of the public expressing concern about storage planned at Camusnagaul ferry terminal. Main concerns are the building being used as a toilet or attracting rubbish and questions about whether there is a need for a replacement. There were no concerns about the proposed bike shelter.

Dougie Robertson, Highland Ferries, advised that there was a requirement for storage at Camusnagaul. The proposal

is for Highland Council to supply a container which will be painted green and will be secure. Mr Robertson advised the storage was essential for the operation of the ferry and noted there has not been any vandalism of the existing shed and he hasn't noticed it being used as a toilet.

Mr Robertson confirmed there can be no storage on the Fort William side as it would restrict access. ACC members agreed there was no need to object.

■ Applications for funding: Agreement of £290 to Ardgour and Kingairloch Parish Church towards the harvest festival celebration at Treslaig Hall. Some tickets are still available for anyone who wishes to attend. Councillor Thomson noted the ACC members not affiliated to Ardgour or Treslaig Hall are discussing support for the halls. It is planned to contact hall committees to discuss this and any decision will be shared at the November meeting.

■ Date of next meeting: Thursday November 11 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

## Butternut squash soup

A pumpkin shell filled with scrumptious soup

Syn FREE

Takes 45 minutes

Serves 4

### Ingredients

Low-calorie cooking spray

1 onion, diced

1 medium butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and cut into wedges

1 small potato, peeled and quartered

2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

900ml hot vegetable stock

Fat-free natural fromage frais, to serve



### Method

Spray a large non-stick pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a low heat. Add the onion and cook for 1-2 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Increase the heat to medium, add the butternut squash and potato and cook for 2 minutes. Add the garlic and season lightly. Pour in the stock and simmer for 25 minutes, or until everything is tender and cooked through.

Using a hand blender or food processor, blend the mixture until smooth. Transfer the soup to a hollowed-out pumpkin (or a large serving bowl!) and top with a swirl of fromage frais and the sliced chillies.

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# DISTRICT NEWS

## PLOCKTON

### Community council

Plockton and District Community Council met in Plockton Hall on October 11.

Chairman David McGhie resigned from the council because of health problems. Vice chairman James Krisp will act as chairman until the next meeting.

Among the items discussed were:

**Housing:** Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association has requested a meeting with the community council to discuss possible house sites in Plockton.

**Village skips:** These will be available on October 30.

**Septic tank at Rhu:** No progress has been made, despite promises from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

**Pot holes:** Lack of staff has delayed any work being done.

**14 Harbour Street:** The community council was pleased work has finally started on renovating this council house. It should be finished in February.

Next meeting: Monday November 8.

### Mink appear for the first time

Mink have appeared in Plockton for the first time. People with hens are concerned.

### Deaths

Recent deaths in the area include Davie McColl, Avernish; Linda Stewart, Kyle; Pat Burnett, Kyle; Davie Fraser, Kilmorack, well-known in Plockton; Jacqueline Allan, formerly of Kyle; and Janet Jones, Plockton. Sympathy is expressed to relatives.

### 80th birthday celebrations

Congratulations to Dr Iain Matheson, 28 Harbour Street, Plockton, who celebrated his 80th birthday on October 20. Dr Matheson's milestone means there are now 21 octogenarians and eight nonogenarians in Plockton.

## WESTERN ISLES

### Norwegian ambassador is guest of Comhairle

Norwegian Ambassador Wegger Chr. Strømme was the guest of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar recently when he and his wife visited the Western Isles.

As well as tourism potential and population retention, one of the important topics for discussion was Norway's interest in the ScotWind Offshore Wind Leasing Round where a major Norwegian developer has shown interest in sites around the Outer Hebrides.

The Ambassador was interested to hear of the early engagement which has taken place between the comhairle and the Norwegian company. In particular, he was pleased to learn of the comhairle's memorandum of understanding approach where the developer commits to a range of innovative and transformational investments across the island supply chain and community.

Commenting on this aspect of the visit, comhairle leader Roddie Mackay said: 'There is a clear affinity between the maritime communities of Norway and the Outer Hebrides.

'Both rely on fishing and tourism and both face transformational opportunities through the energy transition. Ambassador Strømme, his government and his energy sector will be powerful partners for the Outer Hebrides as together we embrace the green revolution in the North Atlantic.'

Na h-Eileanan an Iar MSP Alasdair Allan also met with the ambassador during his visit and commented: 'It was a pleasure to meet with the Norwegian ambassador in Lewis during his visit to the Western Isles. It was also a chance to meet up with some of the island's small Norwegian community. Norway and Scotland are alike in many ways, as the ambassador observed, and I was delighted to discuss issues relating to the culture and economy of the Western Isles with Mr and Mrs Strømme.'



Norwegian Ambassador, Wegger Chr. Strømme, left, meets MSP Alasdair Allan during a visit to the Western Isles.

## Children invited to get switched-on for poetry competition

### UPPER ACHINTORE

Upper Achintore youngsters are being invited to put pen to paper for the chance to switch on their community Christmas tree lights.

This year's tree comes courtesy of Alistair Macgregor and the Upper Achintore

Regeneration Group has organised a grand switch-on for Friday December 3, followed by a live concert by Lochaber Wind Band.

Group chairman Mark Linfield said: 'It will be an open-air event and everyone is welcome. We advise, given the virus is still around, that those attending take precautions as necessary.'

The group is asking all nursery/primary school age children who live in Upper Achintore to compose a poem of at least four lines and including the words 'in Upper Achintore on Christmas Day'. A parent/guardian should then post the entry in the comments column on the Upper Achintore Regeneration Group Facebook page along with the author's forename and age - no child's photographs or contact details please as this is a public page that anyone can see.

Alternatively, the poem can be emailed to the group secretary at uarg19@aol.com.

The poems will be judged by Lochaber children's author Barry Hutchison who, taking age into account, will choose the winner and three runners up.

All four will receive a gift, courtesy of Highland Council Housing, with the author of the winning poem also having the honour



Upper Achintore children at a previous Christmas lights switch-on. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

of switching on the Christmas lights. The deadline for submission of entries is 5pm on Friday November 26.

'We look forward to seeing our youngsters' creative poetic compositions,' added Mark.

The group will livestream the event to its Facebook Page and will arrange for photographs to be taken for the Lochaber Times.

## Council confirms Platinum Jubilee public holiday

An additional public holiday on Friday June 3 2022 was approved at a meeting of The Highland Council last Thursday.

The extra holiday is to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee - 70 years on the throne - in line with UK Government arrangements. There will be no change to the council's

existing public holidays. Highland Council offices and schools will be closed with minimal service provision on June 3.

A request will be made to the Scottish Government for the council to reduce the number of teaching days to accommodate the additional public holiday.

# Lochaber Life

Beatha Lochabair

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## Fergus and Fabian earn their fundraising stripes with Tiger Day event at St Bride's Primary School

ONICH

Two thoughtful and enterprising boys from St Bride's Primary School in Onich recently raised more than £100 to help endangered tigers and support the work of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Primary six pupil Fergus Strachan felt compelled to act after reading about the declining numbers of tigers living in the wild and the threats they face in their natural habitats.

He enlisted the help of his friend Fabian Grieve and together they approached teachers at St Bride's to ask if they could hold a 'Tiger Day' fundraiser.

Delighted that the boys wanted to help such an important cause, staff at the school gave their fundraising initiative the green light.

The boys made flyers and posters to advertise their special day and spoke at assembly to explain to the other children in the school why they felt it was important to raise money to help endangered tigers.

Fergus and Fabian planned all the events themselves and the pupils at St Bride's had a super afternoon of tiger-based fun.



Fabian Grieve and Fergus Strachan.

The boys made 'pin the tail on the tiger' and 'guess the tiger's birthday' games and held a tiger drawing competition for the school.

The children all paid to wear non-uniform clothes for the day and Fergus sold some of his National Geographic magazines to raise funds.

All their hard work paid off and Tiger Day at St Bride's raised £101.60.

The school has used that money to adopt a tiger through the WWF and to support the important conservation work it does.

There was fun and games for everyone at the Tiger Day fundraiser at St Bride's Primary School.



## Highland wedding for Highland Soap boss

Archie MacDonald and his wife Tilly, formerly Seccombe, were all smiles after their wedding at St Mary and St Finnan RC Church, Glenfinnan on Saturday October 23. Father Roddy Johnston celebrated the service.

Archie is a director of The Highland Soap

Co. His new wife works for Storm, a model agency.

Archie lives in Spean Bridge, where the couple now intend to make their home. The reception and dance, attended by 165 guests, was held in a marquee at Archie's parents home – Roshven House, Lochailort.

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# LETTERS

## Councillor stepping down

We were saddened to hear Councillor Ben Thompson was stepping down from his role as Caol and Mallaig councillor as of November 12.

Councillor Thompson has been serving these communities for seven years as an independent councillor and has been an outspoken advocate for local decision making.

With the next election scheduled for May 2022, now is the time for prospective candidates to seriously consider standing to represent their community and Councillor Thompson has generously offered his support and advice to any independent candidate before they take the plunge and throw their hat into the ring.

We wish Ben all the best in his new job.

## Kate Forbes attends COP26

Kate Forbes has been attending COP26 in Glasgow and was delighted to meet Bertrand Piccard – the Swiss explorer, environmentalist and chairman of Solar Impulse – on her first day.

Make sure you pick up a copy of the Lochaber Times for a more in-depth look at what has been happening at the conference.

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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## Ferry error

Firstly, I would like to correct an error in your article regarding the MV Utne in last week's edition. Rather than carrying 'four times as many' cars and passengers than the Coruisk she replaces, she has a lower capacity.

Rather than a typical full load of 35 cars for the Coruisk, it is anticipated the Utne will carry 34. Rather than carrying the Coruisk's 250 passengers, the Utne will carry 195, or perhaps a few more if extra seats can be squeezed in. The Utne is also slower and crossing times will lengthen by around five minutes.

The key benefit the Utne offers is an improved winter timetable, by running additional services at the beginning and the end of the day in addition to those operated by the Isle of Mull. We have long campaigned for this 'island focused' service and to finally have it delivered is fantastic news for the island.

This small seven-year-old second-hand ferry is not a panacea. It enables some shuffling of vessels in summer that brings benefits to other routes and will improve our winter service. But the summer congestion we have suffered this year – resulting in islanders being unable to travel off the island unless they book weeks in advance – will only worsen.

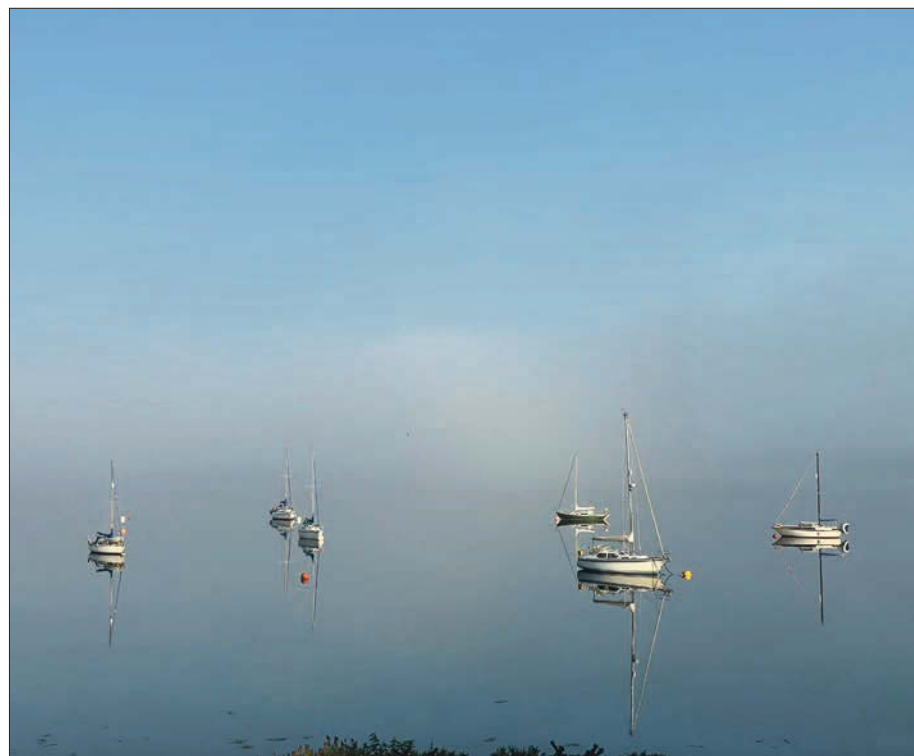
It is difficult not to compare the Utne with the catamaran we tried to persuade CMAL to purchase, but was ultimately rejected on spurious grounds.

The catamaran was far more capable, being able to operate to any port in the network; the Utne is only certified for Mull, Armadale and the Clyde. The catamaran was far bigger and would have fixed our summer congestion problem - 80 car spaces rather than 34. The catamaran was faster and better suited to Craignure pier; the passenger access system would have fitted, unlike the Utne. It would have been able to cope with worse weather - four metre waves as compared with the Utne's 2.5. All round, the catamaran was far better value for money.

She would also have had a much bigger impact on network-wide resilience by entirely releasing the MV Isle of Mull in winter, giving CalMac a spare vessel. The Utne, by comparison, is far too small to operate the Mull service on her own, so the Isle of Mull has to stay on the route alongside her. This also means that should the Isle of Mull be used for emergency relief service, which is now more likely, Mull will be left with one under-sized and weather-vulnerable vessel.

The decision to buy the Utne but not the catamaran is as baffling as it is frustrating. But the

## YOUR PICTURES



As summer turns to autumn, we are resurrecting our weekly slot to show off our readers fantastic photographs of the region.

After all the rain this month, we thought you might appreciate Connel reader Sharon Kill's beautiful photo-

graph of West Connel Moorings in the morning mist.

We'd love for you to send us your photographs for publication. If you have one you would like to share, please email the jpeg to editor@obantimes.co.uk or send it via our Facebook page.

Utne does offer significant winter benefits and we welcome them.

The summer, however, can only get worse with the introduction of the Utne.

There is a solution to that, however. As well as taking a ferry from the Norwegian ferry system, government should take a lesson too. Many Norwegian ferries operate 18 or 20 hours per day. Thanks to having small crews that live ashore rather than on the vessel, they can operate shift systems that enable far more crossings over a longer operating day.


Like Norway, we could have sailings from 6am till midnight. Not only would that give us far more opportunities to travel, it would go a long way to overcoming the very small capacity of the Utne.

We have written to Transport Minister Graeme Dey to urge that the Utne follows a Norwegian-style crewing regime so that the full potential of this vessel can be felt. We very much hope the answer is positive.

Joe Reade, Chairman, Mull & Iona Ferry Committee.

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## Oban police station

I was astonished by the recent exchange in the Scottish Parliament between Donald Cameron MSP and Scottish Government minister Keith Brown MSP.

In 2019, the Police Federation described Oban police station as being by far the worst they had come across.

This is a damning indictment and embarrassing for those who are proud of Oban, especially its helpful police personnel.

One would think the Scottish Government would wish to help rectify such an important part of the infrastructure of Oban for residents and those who come on holiday.

Minister Brown's response was negative. Perhaps he doesn't realise the importance of Oban to the Highlands and Islands, but it is imperative he does so soon.

**Councillor Jamie McGrigor.**

## Classic shinty final

Two weeks ago I travelled to Tighnabruaich and watched an enthralling Bullough Cup Final between Kyles Athletic and Lochside Rovers.

Although we did not get the result we wanted, credit goes to both teams for such an entertaining final.

Thanks go to Kyles Athletic for the preparations and getting the playing field in such good condition.

Thanks also to councillor Roddy McCuish and shinty development officer Les Kinvig for their contribution and to Alec MacNaughton for presenting the cup and medals.

The teams produced one of the best Bullough Cup finals in recent years and while our young Lochside team came up short, the players and management team did Oban Camanachd Club proud.

Finally, the lack of interest shown by the Camanachd Association should not come as any surprise to any of us involved in shinty in the south.

Nevertheless, it should not detract from a terrific final played in the right spirit and so much young talent on view augurs well for the future of shinty.

**Nigel Evans, Oban Camanachd.**

## Fit for the job?

It was interesting to note that Craig Harrow has called on Blair Allen to stand down as a Highland councillor, as he now lives in the central belt.

Personally I think that where he lives is less

relevant than whether he is actually doing the job. Unfortunately Mr Allen, like so many of our other elected councillors, seem to believe that the role simply requires them to turn up to full council meetings in Inverness every couple of months – currently being made so much easier for them since there isn't even any travel involved.

Too many councillors take the (minimum) £16,994 per annum for five years, but never make themselves available for contact to their constituents.

I have lost count of how many times I have written to all four of my elected Ward 21 councillors, either personally or on behalf of Acharacle Community Council, and to date, I haven't yet received a single reply from Mr Allen – not once.

I can count on the fingers of one hand how often Niall McLean has replied or made contact.

It really is about time that we all stopped voting according to whether someone is a 'nice' person, a 'decent bloke' or 'highly regarded' in their working life and considered instead whether they have the interest, capacity and time to undertake the role for which they are paid, by us.

**Joanne Matheson, Acharacle.**

## Caol housing decision

Regardless of the merits of the Scottish Ministers' decision to overturn the Highland Council planning committee's decision, there is a fundamental unfairness in the appeals procedure when the council has to prepare its own defence/response to the appeal without the benefit of input and expertise from its own highly-skilled and qualified planning staff – as they had already recommended that the application be approved.

In instances such as this, the local authority should be allocated Scottish Government funding to engage professional planning consultants to prepare a case to defend the planning committee's decision.

**Ken Johnston, Fort William.**

# GETINTOUCH

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## Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

[ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)



Mun àm a bhios sibh a' leughadh seo saoilidh mi gum bi aire mhòran de shluagh an t-saoghail air co-labhairt COP 26 ann an Glaschu, is tuigse a' fàs nach eil dùthaich neo duine nach eil dol a dh'fhaireachadh buaidh blàthachadh na cruinne. An seo an Alba tha sinn mothachail air tiormachd mhi-chumanta tron t-samhradh, agus leithid nan tuiltean millteach a chunnacas anns na crìochan bho chionn bheagan làithean. Nochd fios iongantach bhon chompanaidh aiseig Caledonian Mac a' Bhruithainn gum b' fheudar còrr air sia mìle seòladh de shoithichean na companaidh a chur dheth anns na naodh mìosan mu dheireadh, agus bha droch shìde na mhàthair-adhbhar dha mòran den trioblaid.

Tha seanfhacal ag ràdh gur e goirteas a chinn fhèin is dorra do gach neach, agus saoilidh mi gur ann mar sin a tha mòran againn air a bhith a thaobh blàthachadh na cruinne, agus sinn a' faireachadh gur e dùbhlán a tha seo a tha ùine romhainn fhathast agus an urra ri ceannardan poilitigeach agus ghniomhachasan eadar-nàiseanta a leasachadh. Ged a tha dleastanasan oirnn uile a thaobh na h-àrainneachd bidh gun teagamh a' bhuaidh as motha an urra ris a' bheagan leis a' chumhachd as motha! A dh'aindeoin fianais luchd-iomairt fad bhliadhnaichean chan eil iad fhathast air buaidh gu leòr a thoirt air feallsanachd agus modhan-obrach gus stad a thoirt air milleadh gnàth aimsire na cruinne. Chan e a-mhàin gum bheil uimhir a' meas seo mar uallach chuideigin eile, tha cuid de na daoine as cumhachdaiche san

t-saoghal a' dol às àicheadh gum bheil blàthachadh na cruinne idir a' gabhail àite! Mo bheannachd air na ceatharnaich a chuir ùine agus astair mhòra às an dèidh gus fianais a thogail a' caismeachd tro mheadhan Ghlaschu fa chomhair luchd-poilitigs agus cheannardan an t-saoghail. Bidh cuid nach toir spèis sam bith dha leithid de dh'iomairt, ach 's fhiach cuimhneachadh gun tog clachan beaga càrn mòr, agus 's iomadh adhartas ann an siobhaltachd an t-saoghail a bha an urra ri daoine a thog fianais agus a rinn spàirn airson leasachadh.

Abair gum bheil ceannardan air a bhith dripeil, is cruinneachadh an G20 san Ròimh dìreach beagan làithean ron cho-labhairt aimsire COP 26 ann an Glaschu, agus 's dòcha gum biodh e nàdarra dhuinn uile a bhith air ar misneachadh a' faicinn nan riaghladairean cumhachdach sin a' cuimseachadh aire air Sluagh, Saoghal, agus Soirbheachas. (People, Planet, and Prosperity!) Ach mar a tha seanfhacal eile ga chur cho ealanta, ged 's e beul a labhras 's e gnìomh a dhearbhas, agus bha e car mi-chneasta mar eisimpleir a bhith a' faicinn a' Chinn-suidhe Biden a' siubhal tron Ròimh le ochdad 's a còig carbad agus a' mhòr-chuid dhiubh sin air an giùlan à Ameireagaidh a dh'aon ghnòthaich! Cha bhiodh duine ag àicheadh dìon iomchaidh dha, ach nach saoilidh gum biodh carbadan freagarrach rim faotainn air mòr-thìr na Roinn Eòrpa seach a bhith a' gànrachadh na h-iarmailt le itealain ag aiseag chàraichean air ais 's air adhart thar a' Chuan an Iar!

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Jesus said: 'Let the little children come to me and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.' Luke 18:16

But he also warned against people who are like wolves in sheep's clothing in Matthew 7:15-20.

Most children begin life trusting those around them, and some of us continue to do so, believing in the inherent goodness of people, despite evidence to the contrary.

I've always been a trusting, perhaps naive, person but after some hard lessons, I thought I had eventually learned to be more cautious, until last week when I fell for a telephone scam call, supposedly from Amazon. Thanks to the quick action of

my bank, a considerable amount of money was rescued from being transferred to some obscure bank account. I am a few days older and, hopefully, considerably wiser, but still firmly believe, as the Iona Community puts it, 'We affirm God's goodness at the heart of all humanity, planted more deeply than all that is wrong'. We must never lose that precious childlike trust, but at the same time be aware of the darker side of life. We need not fear if we combine common sense with trust in God, whose love for all his children is unshakable. 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight. Proverbs 3:5-6.

**Reverend Joyce Watson, Isle of Iona.**



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# Glasgow Letter

**ROBERT ROBERTSON**

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



COP26 got off to an exciting start this week when President Joe Biden's motorcade drove straight down Argyle Street and past the famous Islay Inn and Park Bar.

As world leaders' collective willpower to reverse climate change is under the spotlight this week, I must commend President Biden. I have never had the willpower to go past these pubs without popping in!

I wrote last week about some of the interesting events surrounding COP26. This week, at the time of writing, myself and Ali Turner from Tide Lines are getting ready to head to the Renfrew Ferry for a short performance as part of the Extreme Hangout fringe event. I will review this next week.

The cold autumn wind that can be felt channelling up the Clyde is an indication that it is also the time of year for the annual gatherings of the Kindred Associations in the city.

After a two-year hiatus forced on everyone by coronavirus, I have some good news and some bad news on that front.

The good news concerns the Tiree Association which will go ahead with its 121st gathering a full 20 months after its 120th. The concert will take place on Thursday November 18 at 7.30pm in Kingsborough Gardens Sanctuary, 79 Hyndland Road, G12 9JE.

The evening will be chaired by Ian Lamont and there is a fantastic line-up of performances including Mary Ann Kennedy, Jamie MacDonald,

President Biden travelling down Argyle Street.



Kaitlin Ross, John Joe MacNeil, and Kathryn Callender.

The following evening, Friday November 19, the Gathering Dance will be held in the Glasgow University Union with music from Gunna Sound.

Due to venue policy, a vaccine passport will be required for all those attending the dance in the GU.

Tickets for each event are £10 and must be pre-booked by contacting the Tiree Association either on Facebook, via email at [thetireeassociation@gmail.com](mailto:thetireeassociation@gmail.com), or via text to 07763 126309.

All essential Covid-19 procedures will be followed to ensure a safe event and attendees are encouraged to take a lateral flow test prior to attending.

The bad news, with regards association gatherings, is that the Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association will unfortunately not be going ahead with their annual event this month.

This is particularly bad news for me because I was

looking forward to singing at it! However, every association committee knows their own audience better than anyone and the decision to wait one more year before hosting another gathering is, therefore, absolutely correct and understandable.

Rather than Covid concerns, it is instead worries over traffic disruption and potential demonstrations caused by COP26 that has led to the cancellation of the Glasgow Lewis and Harris Association gathering, with major road closures planned only streets away from the proposed venue for the evening.

As a substitute to the main event, the association will be taking a dip into the archives and providing access to a recording of a previous year's gathering.

Little did President Biden know as he was driven down Argyle Street, the havoc he was causing for the Gaelic community in Glasgow!

# Oban Music Society concert features 'exceptional' duo

The Gaia Duo will perform for Oban Music Society at its next concert this Sunday, November 7 at 3pm.

GAIA are an award-winning violin and cello duo, comprising two of Scotland's most distinguished chamber musicians, Katrina Lee and Alice Allen.

'The Gaia Duo are exceptional and we are very lucky to be included on their tour of Scotland,' said Oban Music Society member Molly Adams.

'They are a multi award-winning cello and violin duo performing both early music and a great array of contemporary music, also promoting the work of female composers.'

The concert's programme comprises Arcangelo Corelli's Sonata for Violin and Cello 15' Op.5 No.9, Ravel's Duo for



The Gaia Duo are touring Lochgilphead, Oban and Portree this November.

Violin and Cello 30', Rebecca Clarke's Lullaby/Grotesque 5.5' and Sally Beamish's Stone, Salt and Sky 25' - a GAIA Commission. Tickets are £10 at the door. The day before, Saturday November 6 at 2.30pm, the duo will perform for Mid Argyll Arts Association at Kilmory Castle in Lochgilphead.

After the Oban concert,

they will move on to Skye for a performance in Portree's St Columba's Church on Tuesday November 9.

Alice and Katrina are co-founders of the Scottish Freelancers Ensemble, formed as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic, helping the community of freelance musicians support each other to keep its art alive.

# HIGHLAND CINEMA

FRI 5TH - THUR 11TH NOV



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**FRIDAY 5TH NOVEMBER**  
Ron's Gone Wrong (PG) 10:45am. Highlands From The Air (U) 11am.  
Eternals (12a) 12:15pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm. Dune (12a) 1:15pm.  
No Time To Die (12a) 4:35pm. The French Dispatch (15) 8pm.

**SATURDAY 6TH NOVEMBER**  
Ron's Gone Wrong (PG) 10:45am. Highlands From The Air (U) 11am.  
Eternals (12a) 12:15pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm. Dune (12a) 1:15pm.  
No Time To Die (12a) 4:35pm. The French Dispatch (15) 8pm.

**SUNDAY 7TH NOVEMBER**  
Highlands From The Air (U) 10:45am. Eternals (12a) 12pm, 3:30pm + 7pm.  
No Time To Die (12a) 11am. Alan Bennell: Gardening In Scotland Talk (U) 2:30pm. The French Dispatch (15) 5:20pm + 8pm.

**MONDAY 8TH NOVEMBER**  
The French Dispatch (15) 10:45am + 8pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 11am.  
Eternals (12a) 12:15pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm. Dune (12a) 1:20pm.  
No Time To Die (12a) 4:35pm.

**TUESDAY 9TH NOVEMBER**  
Eternals (12a) 1pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm. No Time To Die (12a) 4:35pm.  
The French Dispatch (15) 8pm.

**WEDNESDAY 10TH NOVEMBER**  
The French Dispatch (15) 10:45am + 8pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 11am.  
Eternals (12a) 12:15pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm. No Time To Die (12a) 1:15pm.  
Dune (12a) 4:45pm.

**THURSDAY 11TH NOVEMBER**  
The French Dispatch (15) 10:45am + 8pm. Highlands From The Air (U) 11am.  
Eternals (12a) 12:15pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm. Dune (12a) 1:20pm.  
No Time To Die (12a) 4:35pm.



FILM SYNOPSIS, TRAILERS, TICKETS AND TO SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER:  
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## Dive back into the deep end with Lochaber Ideas Week

Hurrah! Lochaber Ideas Week 2021 is back! Lochaber Chamber of Commerce's week of inspirational business events will return to celebrate business inspiration in Lochaber from the 15th to 19th November.

Now in its seventh year (after a two-year break due to Covid), Lochaber Ideas Week is well established as a favourite fixture in the local business and community calendar.

While this year's event will be a slimmed-down, Covid-safe version of the business week, the schedule is full of events that focus on key themes of growth, sustainability and innovation for the area.

This year's events (except those noted) will be held at the spacious and centrally located Ben Nevis Distillery in the shadow of Ben Nevis.

Tourism and aquaculture are two major industries driving growth in Lochaber and it's fitting that we celebrate and explore developments in both sectors this Ideas Week.. Sustainability and innovation are the heart of both sectors and we're delighted to welcome a range of expert speakers to explore key areas for delegates.

We'll also present the chance to see behind the scenes in one of our longest established local businesses - BSW Timber - on a special tour hosted by Lochaber Ideas Week. This is your chance to find out more about what goes on at the sawmill and see their innovations in action. If you've always wanted to have a look around, now is your chance but booking is essential.

There will also be the chance to find out more about the latest opportunities for businesses in the new 'Advancing Manufacturing Centre' in Ocean Frontier, Fort William. If you think manufacturing isn't for you, come along and be inspired by the wide range of work they can help with - for free!

While we're presenting a slimmed-down version of Ideas Week this year, we're delighted to be able to offer events that will inspire and inform our business community and get us back in the swing of sociable, in-person events. Remember you don't have to be a Chamber member to come along to Ideas Week events. This week is about bringing our business and wider community together and we look forward to seeing you there!

# Ideas worth celebrating!

**Lochaber Ideas Week brings you a fantastic selection of events that are mostly free-to-attend that make up an inclusive and engaging week of ideas worth celebrating! Come and join us - you never know where those ideas might take you...**

## Monday 15th November

To celebrate the official opening of West Highland College UHI's Advancing Manufacturing Centre, we will be inviting our Premium Members to a special drop-in session from 1500 - 1900, where we will be hosted at the new centre and given an opportunity to speak to the experts about ways this facility can help improve and enhance business.

## Tuesday 16th November

**DYW Schools Event** - Learn about the future of manufacturing and what Lochaber has to offer at a special event with the Advancing Manufacturing Centre.

## Wednesday 17th November

**Aquaculture Day presented in collaboration with the Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre.**

Join us for a day celebrating innovation in this key growth industry for Lochaber. The programme is targeted towards sector professionals interested in aquaculture innovations for sustainability, training and recruiting for tomorrow's aquaculture sector. Book your free tickets here.

## Thursday 18th November

**Tourism Day** - A chance to celebrate the resilience and inspiration of Lochaber's biggest industry. Sustainability will be key to the future of tourism and we'll consider what we can all do now to make sure we're ready for the future.

What have we learned from the challenges of the last 18 months and what future trends will shape the visitor economy of tomorrow? Come along to join the discussion and hear from inspiring speakers.

If you're in tourism, you do not want to miss out on this day packed full of food for thought. Book your free ticket here.

## Friday 19th November

**Tour of BSW Timber** - open to all, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce will host this great opportunity to see behind the scenes at one of Lochaber's biggest and busiest businesses. Booking essential. 9am and 1pm tours - maximum of 30 people on each tour.

**Advancing Manufacturing Centre Open Day:** come along and find out more about the range of state-of-the-art facilities that could turn your business dreams into a reality! See a 3-D printer in action, and explore the possibilities on offer for free at this fantastic new facility for business in the west Highlands.

**Ideas Week Gala Dinner** - paid event. Always a great night out! Get dressed up and join the celebrations at our Lochaber Ideas Week Gala Dinner featuring fabulous local food and drink in a sumptuous seven-course taster menu, and fantastic after-dinner entertainment.

It's been quite a while since we could all get together, so don't miss the chance to don your glad-rags and enjoy a sociable night out with your fellow Chamber members! Tickets cost £80 (+VAT) per person and £640 (+VAT) per business table. Early booking is recommended as numbers are limited.

All events are free to attend, except those noted. Find out more about events and book your tickets at the events section on [www.lochaberchamber.co.uk](http://www.lochaberchamber.co.uk)



# Lochaber Ideas Week

## What's on at a glance

### Tues 18 Nov DYW Schools Event

Learn about the future of manufacturing and what Lochaber has to offer at a special event with Developing the Young Workforce and the Advancing Manufacturing Centre.

### Wed 17 Nov Aquaculture Day

Join us for a day celebrating innovation and inspiration in this key growth industry for Lochaber. The day will focus on innovations for sustainability, training and recruiting for the future of aquaculture.

### Thur 18 Nov Tourism Day

A look at what's happening and what's on the horizon for the visitor economy. Sustainability will be key to the future of tourism and we'll consider what we can all do now to make sure we're ready for the future. Come along to join the discussion and hear from inspiring speakers.



### Fri 19 Nov Advancing Manufacturing Centre Open Day

Find out more about the range of state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities and support that could turn your business dreams into a reality!

### Fri 19 Nov Tours of BSW Timber

Join Lochaber Chamber of Commerce for an informative look behind the scenes at one of Lochaber's biggest and busiest businesses. Booking essential 9am & 1pm

### Fri 19 Nov Ideas Week Gala Dinner

Dress to impress and enjoy a well-deserved night out at the grand finale of Ideas Week. We'll enjoy a sumptuous seven-course taster menu featuring the best of local food and drink, followed by fantastic after-dinner entertainment.

## Develop your leadership skills right here in Lochaber!

When it comes to business success, we know it's all about leadership. The ability to lead individuals and teams to success is arguably the most important skill a manager can possess.

But when you live and work in a rural Highland location, what is the most effective way to develop your staff's leadership potential and skills?

Following the popularity of our business skills seminars, we surveyed local businesses and developed the 'One Lochaber' Leadership Programme' to provide a bespoke one-year accredited course to help develop the next generation of business leaders within organisations - right here in Lochaber. Successful delegates receive a Chartered Management Institute (CMI) Level 5 Award in Leadership and Management.

There are many benefits of the One Lochaber Leadership Programme - the flexible style makes it easy to fit in with work, the small group style creates a friendly, informal learning environment with personal attention from tutors; plus there's no expensive and time-consuming travel and accommodation costs.

For more information on all the ways that Lochaber Chamber of Commerce can help your business, visit [www.lochaberchamber.co.uk](http://www.lochaberchamber.co.uk)

See our Events page at [www.lochaberchamber.co.uk](http://www.lochaberchamber.co.uk) for more details on all events and how to book.

# Lochaber Life

Beatha Lochabair

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QUALITY CARE SINCE 1923

# Iron therapy event a heavyweight success

Sunshine, showers and strongmen marked a great day of action at the inaugural Iron Therapy competition for novices in the sport.

Organised by award-winning Lochaber strongman Stuart Whyte, eight competitors vied for top places in a series of events at his new Iron Therapy gym on the Ben Nevis Estate.

Starting indoors with a log lift of a metal log on a pole, the action then moved outside with the medley event comprising carrying a granite block a set distance, dropping it and retuning for a weighted beer keg, then heavy sack, all against the clock.

Returning inside, muscles were straining at the deadlift, lifting two heavy weights on a bar from ground to waist height, holding it there for a set time and repeating as often as possible within a specified time.

The van lift saw competitors



Competitors and organisers of the Iron Therapy competition, back row, left to right, Ryan Campbell, Stuart Whyte, Tom Baillie, Darren Whyte, Eban van Wyk, Ryan Wylie, Brian Gerrard and Ronnie Agnew. Front row, left to right, Andrew Taylor, second, Calum Morrison, third, and James Haplin, first. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

local company NewCo by its rear wheels and holding it aloft under the careful eye of the timekeeper.

The wet weather saw one of the signature events move

inside, lifting large stones and dropping them over a bar, a slippery task on the smooth globes at the best of times, but worse when rain soaked.

Overall first-placed James Haplin from Renfrewshire came top in all events other than the van lift which was won by second placed Andrew Taylor from Fraserburgh, with local athletes close behind.

Stuart Whyte said: 'I am delighted the event went so well and everyone seemed to enjoy taking part.'

'Thanks to them all for coming and making the competition very good-natured with competitors encouraging each other as they took part.'

'It was great to get back in action after a long period of lockdown, when everyone was really missing taking part in their sports and in many cases not even being able to follow their usual training routines.'

'For many this was a great strain on their mental as well as physical health, which is partly what this event was all about, with the collection from today going to Lochaber Hope and Lochaber Mindfit.'

'I wasn't able to take part myself but still enjoyed organising it and timekeeping at each stage.'

Good mental health through exercise is the ethos behind Stuart's new gym which is also reflected in its Iron Therapy title with the strongman competition being its first event.

Stuart hopes to make this a regular on the 'Strongman' circuit, expanding into bigger local venues.



Overall winner James Haplin competes in the stone lift.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Tom Baillie takes part in the van lift. Photograph: Iain Ferguson.

More photographs at [www.lochabertimes.co.uk](http://www.lochabertimes.co.uk)

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## SHINTY ROUND-UP

A shinty season like no other drew to a close on Saturday October 30.

**Mowi Senior League A  
Glenurquhart P Kilmallie P**

A mixture of injuries, suspensions and prior commitments meant Kilmallie were unable to field a team for their 1pm throw-up against Glenurquhart at Blairbeg.

The postponement means Kilmallie duo Innes Blackhall and Stuart Callison will now carry suspensions into the 2022 shinty season. Blackhall will miss the first three matches of the new season, whilst Callison is out of the opening two games.

Kilmallie manager Martin Stewart said: 'We only had seven players available and Michael [Rodger] was the only one of them who is an established first team player. It would be asking too much of our younger players to call them up for a game at Glenurquhart.'

Martin Stewart will reflect on the 2021 shinty season in next week's Oban Times and Lochaber Times.

**Kinlochshiel P Lochaber P**

With two cup wins, Kinlochshiel claimed the title of shinty's most successful team this season and they had hoped to display the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup and the cottages.com MacTavish Cup in front of their supporters ahead of their meeting with Lochaber at Rèaraig.

However, heavy rain during the week led to a postponement 48 hours ahead of throw-up.

Paul MacRae, Ali Nixon and

Donald Nixon are amongst the Kinlochshiel players who will benefit from the break as they take time to recover from injury, whilst manager Johnston Gill will take time to consider his future.

Lochaber's Barry MacDonald must now wait until next season to serve his four match suspension.

**Mowi Senior League B  
Lovat P Caberfeidh P**

Lovat and Caberfeidh were to meet for the second successive Saturday, this time at Balgate.

Caberfeidh were 8-1 victors a week earlier but Lovat were unable to field a side this time around. The postponement has repercussions for some suspended players. Lovat's Callum Cruden missed out on the chance to serve the second game of his three-match suspension so his ban carries into next season. However, Lorne MacKay served the final game of a two-game ban, which saw him miss the Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup Final, last weekend so is now free to play. Caberfeidh's Connor MacGregor was left disappointed as the final match of his four-game ban will carry into next season.

**Mowi North League B  
Newtonmore 3 Inverness 1**

The Newtonmore colts came from a goal down to maintain their unbeaten league record, defeating the Inverness first team 3-1 at the Eilan.

Inverness hit the front on 25 minutes through Steven Bellshaw but Craig Macleod drew Newtonmore level five minutes before the break.



**Beaulieu Under-17s booked their place in the MacTavish Cup final with a 3-1 win over Fort William at the weekend.** Photograph: Neil Paterson.

Second half strikes from Tristan Ross on 56 minutes and Brodie MacBean on 71 minutes made the final score 3-1.

**Kingussie P Lovat P**

The Lovat seconds were unable to fulfil their fixture with the Kingussie seconds at the Dell.

**Mowi South League A  
Bute 3 Col Glen 2**

Bute marked an historic day for the club with an exciting 3-2 derby win over Col Glen in their 12.30pm throw-up at the Meadows.

It was the day Bute held a ceremony to officially mark the transfer of deeds for their pitch, the Meadows, gifted to them by the Mount Stuart Trust earlier this year.

The proposal to transfer ownership stemmed from negotiations on the renewal of the ground lease from the Mount Stuart Trust to the club when both parties agreed the

best way forward would be to transfer ownership.

Mount Stuart Trust generously offered to do so at no cost to Bute and included the wider Meadows area, subject to the ongoing tenancy of Argyll and Bute Council.

The club currently boasts one of shinty's best clubhouses and this new ownership of the pitches and surrounding land will allow the club to further develop its ambitions for this important island resource.

Speaking ahead of the handover, Sophie Crichton-Stuart from the Mount Stuart Trust said: 'Working closely with the team at Bute Shinty Club, we are delighted to officially mark the handover of ownership of the playing pitches. Recognising the importance of the role of shinty and the club in island life and acknowledging the facilities as an invaluable resource for

the wider community, it gives me great pleasure to know this new ownership will allow the club to realise its ambitions for the Meadows and I look forward to visiting for a shinty match or other future events.'

Bute Shinty and Amateur Athletic Club chairman Barry Martin added: 'This gift of the Meadows pitches will have a huge impact for Isle of Bute Shinty Club. We are very much a community club with our clubhouse used for a huge range of events from yoga classes to Irish dancing, weddings and funerals. Many will also be aware of the key role the club plays in hosting the annual agricultural show and Highland Games and this transfer of ownership will allow us to move on and start to plan much-needed storage for the agricultural society/ Highland Games.

'The club is grateful for the

generous support and advice provided by Elaine Campbell of Wm. Skelton and Co, Solicitors. In marking the handover today, we are also recognising the many years of service of volunteer Margaret Whitelaw whose post match catering has fed many a team and its supporters over the years.'

When play got under way James Hamilton threatened to spoil the celebrations when he gave Col Glen the lead on three minutes.

Leon MacMillan equalised on 15 minutes but Auryn Kerr put Col Glen back in front on the stroke of half-time. Bute levelled for a second time through Craig MacKay three minutes after the re-start.

Ryan Craig struck on the hour with what proved to be the game's winning goal.

**Mowi South League B  
Aberdour P Kyles Athletic P**

The Kyles Athletic second team were unable to field a team for their trip to Silversands to face the Aberdour second team.

**Glasgow Mid Argyll P Bute P**

The clash between the Glasgow Mid Argyll reserves and the Bute reserves at Peterson Park was postponed as the visitors were unable to raise a team.

**Mowi Central League  
Ardnamurchan 2 Kilmory 2**

Euan Gilmour's goal a couple of minutes from time gave Kilmory a share of the points with Ardnamurchan following their 2-2 draw at Strontian.

Both teams fielded a number of young players and the first half looked like it would end goal-less before James Baxter popped up on the stroke of half-time to give Kilmory a 1-0 interval lead.

Freddie Patterson drew

## New project hopes to secure future of caman making

A new partnership aimed at securing the future production of camans has been welcomed by shinty clubs.

Currently made by a small number of independent carpenters, caman production has been identified as a critically endangered craft.

The Camanachd Association is to work with Inverness College UHI to address the issue, implementing modern business processes to develop a manufacturers' co-operative. The five-month initiative has received funding from the Scottish Government's innovation voucher scheme which encourages collaborations between organisations, businesses and academia.

Reserves and lack of matches has meant most local clubs have managed this season but all are aware of the problem and have been warned by Inverness-based Tanera Camans that wait times may be lengthy.

Martin Stewart from Killmallee



**Caman production has been identified as a critically endangered craft.**

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Shinty Club told the Lochaber Times: 'We will be keeping a close eye on the situation obviously, but fingers crossed the Camanachd Association can help get something sorted.'

Leading the project at Inverness

College UHI business and management lecturer David Jack explained: 'As caman making is a critically endangered craft, the Camanachd Association is looking for innovative ways to make the manufacturing process more sus-

tainable. The caman project is part of a wider collaboration between the University of the Highlands and Islands and the Camanachd Association. The two organisations have signed a memorandum of understanding to work together to explore opportunities around volunteering, work experience, education and training, coaching and community awareness.

'Our main goal will be to support caman makers to work together so they can share expertise, ideas and realise the benefits of greater co-operation.'

Derek Keir, chief executive officer of the Camanachd Association, said: 'This project is a fantastic example of our partnership plans with the University of the Highlands and Islands and highlights the benefits of partnership working to grow the support network for shinty and our respective communities.'

'Shinty is the cornerstone of many

Highland communities and the caman making support project is just one way our communities are going to be able to reap the benefits of our new academic partnership with the university.

'We also hope to progress work to include further exchange of expertise as well as a greater connection to teacher training in the Highlands and Islands.'

Dr Iain Morrison, University of the Highlands and Islands' Dean of Students, added: 'The caman project is a great example of the synergies that exist in this new relationship.'

'We share similar geography, socio-cultural roots and a strong desire to support communities across the Highlands and Islands. Our partnership is inherent in the success of our communities and our communities are fundamental to our strategy and operation, so we are proud to be working closely with Scotland's most iconic team sport.'

Ardnamurchan level with 20 minutes remaining and gave the hosts the lead with his second goal of the game on 81 minutes.

Kilmory were not to be denied though and Euan Gilmour scored a couple of minutes from time to earn the visitors a share of the points.

It was a good season for Ardnamurchan who only failed to play one fixture.

Kilmory look forward to next season to further test their developing squad.

**Glenorchy P Oban Celtic P**

The Oban Celtic second team were unable to gather a team to play Glenorchy at the Mart Park.

**MacTavish Juvenile Cup – semi-final**

**Beauly U17 3 Fort William U17 1**

Beauly U17s are through to the MacTavish Cup Final after beating Fort William U17s 3-1 in their 2pm throw-up at the Dell.

This last-four tie was originally scheduled for Craighard, Invergarry, but an unplayable pitch led to a midweek switch to Kingussie.

Beauly's Euan Maccormick and Fort William's Craig MacDonald were key players.

Beauly forward Callum MacIver gave his side the lead after just 20 seconds of the throw-up.

Beauly created chances to increase their lead, but Jack Kearney in the Fort William goal was in excellent form, making several good saves.

Fort William equalised on 57 minutes when the ball came to Rhys Kennedy who slotted it by keeper Lennox Stewart to make it 1-1. Beauly regained the lead almost straight from the re-start when Fort William failed to clear a ball from Finlay 'Stork' MacLennan and Scott Cameron took advantage to score. It was now Fort William's turn to press, but Beauly defended well and added a third goal on 70 minutes.

Charlie MacRae, Fraser MacPherson and Finlay MacLennan combined to find Torrin Cairns who slammed the ball high past keeper Kearney to make it 3-1.

Beauly deserved their victory as they had more of the play,

but Fort William keeper Jack Kearney deserves credit for several outstanding stops.

The Dell pitch was in immaculate condition given the recent rain, with the drainage system working well. It did, not surprisingly, get heavy towards the end with several players suffering from cramp. Beauly U17s, coached by Beauly first team co-managers Gregor McCormick and Niall MacLennan, will now play Kingussie U17s, who were 3-2 winners over Skye Camanachd U17s in their semi-final, in this year's MacTavish Cup Final.

Following a toss of the coin, it was confirmed the final will be held at Braeview Park, Beauly, on Saturday November 13., throw-up time to be confirmed.

**Coaching course in Fort William**

The Camanachd Association will be running a shinty foundation coaching course at An Aird, Fort William, on Saturday November 6 from 10am till 4pm.

Anyone interested should email [ronald.ross@shinty.com](mailto:ronald.ross@shinty.com)

**Glengarry school shinty success**

Glengarry Shinty Club has held its first shinty sessions at Kilchuimen Academy.

With the support of Kilchuimen Academy, Ronald Ross from The Camanachd Association and Glengarry Shinty Club coach Elaine Cameron, 60 children from primary one to third year had a great time playing the game.

It is hoped these sessions will continue for a few more weeks with the addition of a lunchtime shinty club run by senior pupils and overseen by staff. It is also hoped to have school teams entering competitions next year. Support from Cruise Loch Ness - Debi and Ronald, Glendoe Estate and The Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation allowed the purchase of 20 shinty helmets, 20 camans, 36 shinty balls and portable goals meaning every child in the community has the chance to play shinty.

Kilchuimen Academy is the eighth secondary school to sign up to the Camanachd Association's School of Shinty programme.

# Let's hear it for the girls

Lochnell Football Club celebrated Sports Scotland's 'Active Girls Day' in style on Saturday by staging their first ever girls football festival.

Despite the unavoidable withdrawal of some teams there was still a healthy turnout with teams representing Lochgilphead Red Star and South Lochaber Thistle joining the hosts to play a series of closely contested games. These featured play of the highest standard and some outstanding goals, demonstrating the increasing popularity of girls football in Argyll and Lochaber.

Each participant received a commemorative medal for their efforts, and the hope now is that similar events take place on a regular basis to further promote competitive football for girls across the region.



South Lochaber Thistle Under-15 girls with coach Roman Tot.



Left: Action from Lochgilphead Red Star versus South Lochaber Thistle.



Action from Lochnell v South Lochaber Thistle.

# For the record, Dr Finlay's done it again

Only two weeks after breaking his own course record to win the Scottish Hill Running Championship, Fort William endurance runner Finlay Wild is back on the winning trail.

The Lochaber GP backed up his victory at Dingwall with a win in the North District Hill Race Championships at Meall a' Bhuachaille above Loch Morlich on Saturday October 23. This is a 14km long race with more than 2,000 feet of climb.

High winds made conditions difficult on top of the hills and long ridges. Finlay was with the pack in the forest stage but was first off the summit of Meall a' Bhuachaille with a 50 metre lead.

This was a much closer encounter than two weeks previously, with English fell running champion Billy Cartwright, Matlock, and Eoin Lennon of Carnethy close behind. However, the Lochaber Athletics Club member built



Lochaber Athletics Club member Finlay Wild at the Meall a' Bhuachaille hill race. Photograph: Jim Payne Photos.

up a lead to finish two minutes ahead of Cartwright, beating his own course record by seven seconds in 59 minutes and 53 seconds.

The record was also broken in the women's race by Nichola

Jackson, Keswick Athletic Club, who finished in 73 minutes 54 seconds, pushed all the way by some outstanding runners.

Other leading Lochaber runners were Alan Ross in

12th place in 1:11:31; Stuart Crutchfield, 16th, in 1:11:56; Callum Fraser, 18th, in 1:12:49; Simon Drysdale, 25th, in 1:14:40; Angus Cameron, 34th, in 1:18:50; Alfie Bentley, 37th, in 1:20:34; Iain Foggo, 56th, in 1:26:15; Donald Lamont, 58th, 1:26:45; Pete Conway, 62nd, 1:27:40, and Kenny McIntyre, 77th, 1:33:50.

First Lochaber woman was Amy Disher in 97th place in 1:42:21. Second Lochaber woman was Kathleen Cameron in 1:49:25.

Other Lochaber runners were Jim Treasurer 1:54:20, Claire Treasurer 1:57:27 and Shelley MacGillivray 1:59:13.

Next up is the winter league starting on Sunday November 7 with the Cow Hill race starting at the Braveheart car park followed by cross country action in the North cross country league, November 13, and Evanton and District cross country championship events, December 4, at Gordonstoun.



Rhys Kennedy equalises for Fort William during his team's MacTavish Cup semi-final against Beauly.

Photograph: Neil Paterson.

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# Lochaber rugby star Kate sets sights on world cup

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

As a youngster, Katie Dougan could be found running about Lochaber Rugby Club's Banavie pitch enjoying playing mini rugby, despite not being from what would be called a traditional rugby family.

The same could not be said now, with both her parents in Fort William and younger sister the biggest supporters of the 26-year-old Scotland player.

And the family will be hoping Katie, who normally plies her rugby with Hillhead Jordanhill, can add to her 14 caps with a few more in next year's Women's Rugby World Cup in Auckland, New Zealand.

Katie, a former pupil at Lochaber High School, returned to the sport when she began studying at the University of Edinburgh, where she gained a degree in Environmental Geoscience.

She won her first Scotland cap two years later in the 2015 Six Nations match against Italy. After eight appearances off the bench, she earned her first start in the final match of the 2017 Six Nations against Italy, which Scotland won.

Two weeks before her full Scotland cap, Katie made her Scotland Women U20 debut against the RAF in February



Lochaber's Katie Dougan in action as the Scotland squad warms up before a Women's Six Nations tie last year between Scotland and France at Scotstoun Stadium, in Glasgow.

Photograph: Bill Murray/SNS Group.

2015. She also spent a summer season in 2018 playing for St Albert RFC in Canada. The most recent of her 14 international caps came in this year's Rugby World Cup qualifiers when she came off the bench in the first game against Italy.

Edging out Ireland in the final minutes of their last qualifier meant the Scottish team made it through to the qualifying repechage tournament

in January in Dubai. Before that, however, this month sees the Scottish women run out in front of a home crowd for the first time in two years when they take on Japan at Edinburgh Rugby's new DAM Health Stadium on Sunday November 14.

Katie told the Lochaber Times: 'We went into the qualifiers knowing we had to come first or second but play-

ing Italy in our first game was probably the toughest match. It was at 3pm and the heat was ridiculous.'

'It maybe was that we hadn't quite acclimatised to the heat at that point. But to still come second was fantastic and means we are still in the fight with a chance to go to a world cup for the first time since 2010.'

Katie laughs when I ask if

she ever expected to be playing at international level when she first started playing as a youngster.

'It was a pal at school who was always trying to convince me to come along to training at Lochaber and I was like 'nah, I'm just not interested', but I finally gave in and went along and thought it was great fun. But I didn't expect to go quite so far, until I was playing at university surrounded by players and coaches who had played for Scotland and realised it might be a possibility for me to do the same,' she explained.

Despite a few games in the second or back row, Katie has always played at prop. A dynamic player in the loose who likes to run with ball in hand, she admits to once having had a fancy for the number 10 berth.

She got her chance for 20 minutes in the semi-final of a Scottish cup after four games in as many days saw injuries racking up.

'But apart from that 20-minute stint, I've always played at prop - so yeah, I'm a prop.'

Katie says the standard among the national squad is continually improving as more investment has significantly boosted the women's game.

'That has helped push everyone on. Even from just when I got my first cap till

now, the standard of squad has got so much better. And it's fantastic all our games are now broadcast on BBC Alba which is attracting more young girls into the sport,' she told the Lochaber Times.

Dougan will be spending the rest of the current season playing for Gloucester-Hartpury Women's Rugby Football Club based in Gloucester - the unified women's team of Gloucester Rugby and Hartpury University RFC.

'I was there for the two seasons prior to the pandemic and really enjoyed it. Hopefully, it will let me challenge myself and push myself on by playing week in and week out against players from all over the globe.'

Katie could be described as a semi-pro thanks to her stint at Gloucester-Hartpury, but says she will need to try and supplement her income through coaching.

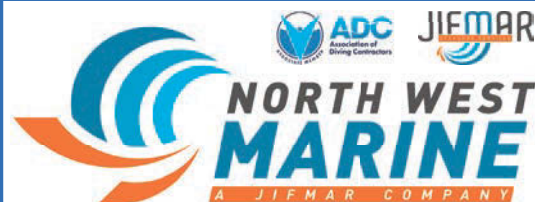
'There's not much money involved so a bit of a coaching might let me scrape by,' she laughed, before agreeing the dream would be to turn fully professional at some stage.

'Definitely, if that opportunity presented itself, I'd certainly grab it.'



The Lochaber Times: 95p

## ● IRON THERAPY EVENT A HEAVYWEIGHT SUCCESS – PAGE 41



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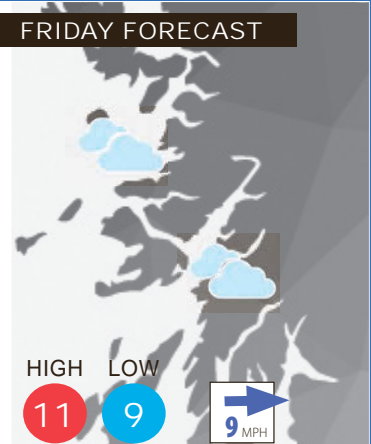
<b>4</b> 0500 4.0	<b>6</b> 0015 0.6	<b>8</b> 0138 0.7	<b>10</b> 0319 1.2
TH 1711 4.3	SA 0609 4.2	M 0731 4.0	W 0914 3.5
● 2339 0.7	SA 1230 0.4	M 1405 0.8	W 1600 1.4
	1826 4.3	1949 3.7	2135 3.0
<b>5</b> 0533 4.1	<b>7</b> 0055 0.6	<b>9</b> 0225 0.9	<b>11</b> 0422 1.4
F 1146 0.5	SU 0648 4.1	TU 0818 3.8	TH 1032 3.3
F 1748 4.3	SU 1316 0.6	TU 1459 1.1	TH 1711 1.6
	1907 4.1	2037 3.4	2320 2.8

<b>Ardrishaig</b> -5.35	<b>Campbeltown</b> -5.30	<b>Crinan</b> -0.47	<b>Islay Port Ellen</b> 2.00	<b>Lochboisdale</b> +0.30	<b>Mallaig</b> +0.25	<b>Portree</b> +0.55	<b>Tobermory</b> +0.16	<b>Dover</b> +5.30
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**FORT WILLIAM WEATHER**

<b>Thursday</b> Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 7°C to 8°C.	<b>Friday</b> Light rain and a gentle breeze Temperatures 9°C to 11°C.	<b>Saturday</b> Heavy rain and a moderate breeze Temperatures 8°C to 12°C.	<b>Sunday</b> Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.
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**FRIDAY FORECAST**



HIGH 11 LOW 9 9 MPH