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No 8594

Thursday 16 December, 2021

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2022 Calendar



## FESTIVE WONDERLAND



**Volunteers' Christmas extravaganza lights up Seil** ● FULL STORY PAGES 8 & 9

### Flytippers cost Dunollie charity thousands

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Woodland Trust Scotland is considering using CCTV to catch flytippers dumping waste in Dunollie Woods.

Tipping rubbish is illegal - culprits caught could face a fixed penalty notice of £200 or fines up to £40,000 with up to five years in prison for non-payment if the case goes to court.

Work to remove flytipped material and control invasive plants introduced through dumped garden waste has cost the charity over £3,500 this year at Dunollie alone.

The area at the top of Bealach an Righ near the Corran Halls and at Cruachan Crescent has become a hotspot for dumping.

Junk previously hauled out of the woods by clean-up volunteers have included a four cylinder engine, mattresses, a car chassis, office chairs and bikes.

Laura Corbe, who volunteers with work parties and community groups restoring the woodland to a greener space, said: 'It's really important that people stop trashing our woods. Dunollie Wood is a beautiful, accessible, wild green space - we don't have many spaces like that in Oban so we need to look after this one.'

● Turn to page 4 for more.



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OT

# Make a date with Dame Judi

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

National treasure Dame Judi Dench is helping raise funds for Oban Hospice with a home video.

The actress, who is the charity's patron, recorded a special festive message to boost sales of the hospice's 2022 calendar.

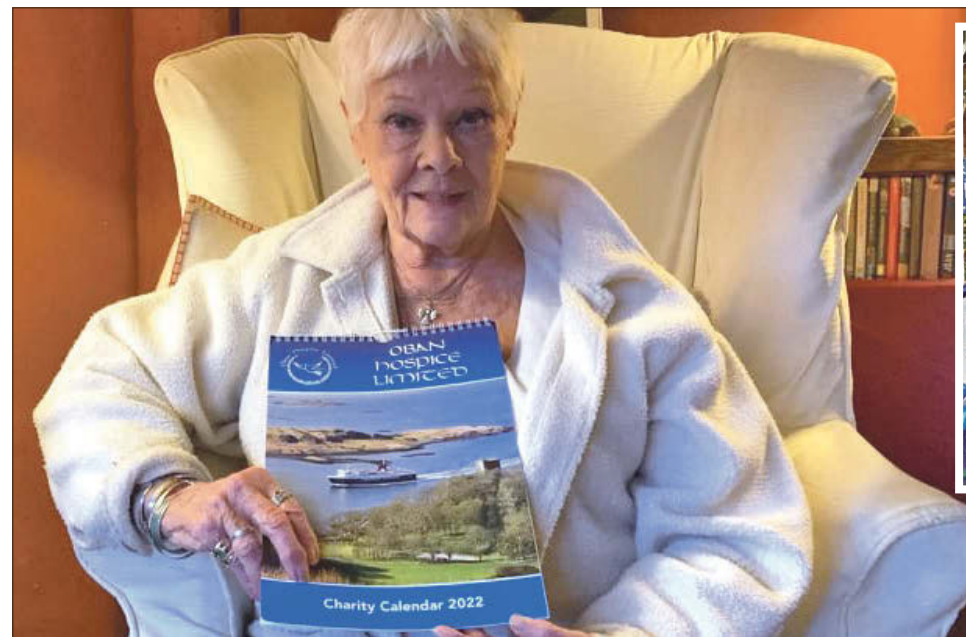
Oban Hospice's David Evans reached out to the actress's PA in an email and said he 'hit the jackpot' when he got a reply.

'I just had a stab at it. I Googled a contact for her and within about three emails back and forwards, Dame Judi had made the video for us. It's a lovely contribution from her as our patron. It's an absolute privilege to have her support,' he said.

David is now planning on sharing the video link to all of Dame Judi's fan pages.

'There are so many people who admire her work and love her that we're hoping they might also be encouraged to buy our calendar,' he added.

In her video message, Dame Judi says: 'Anyone who loves



Oban Hospice patron Dame Judi Dench with the 2022 calendar; and above, one of the images from the calendar, taken by Peter Darling.

Scotland and I'm certainly one of them, if not top of the list, will absolutely love this calendar. I'm patron of Oban Hospice and Peter [Darling] who runs the [hospice's] Dove Centre has brought out this calendar. It makes the most glorious gift for Christmas

and, of course, goes on throughout the whole year.

'If you love Scotland and want to support the hospice, please will you buy one. It costs £9.99 and is worth every penny. Have a very happy Christmas.'

Copies of the calendar have already been winging their

way all over the UK from as far north as Shetland and as south as London since its launch back in August.

You can pick up a copy from The Dove Centre in Stevenson Street and from sponsors' counters at Button Nose Gift Boutique in Airds Crescent, Roxy's Coffee & Tea House in Argyll Square, Amore Hairdressing in George Street and D&A Munn in Breadalbane Street.

The calendar is now available at Benderloch Shop, Connel Village Shop, Grant's

Butcher - Taynuilt, Dunollie Stores, Argyll Wellbeing Hub, Craigard Decor, Hannah's Newsagents, Orsay, Cloud Nine, Bid4Oban, The Sports Shop and Balvicar Stores.

Up to two calendars can also be posted second class within the UK for P&P of £2.75. Email fundraising@obanhospice.org.uk or message Oban Hospice Ltd Facebook page.

Other sponsors are Fred Spreadbury Welding, Highland Fasteners Ltd, Howdens Oban, Morham & Brochie, Stevenson Kennedy, Alan May Electrical, Forteith Refrigeration & Heat Pump

Solutions, and D K Lafferty & Co Ltd. Funds raised will benefit The Dove Centre, which provides a safe and comfortable space for therapies, group sessions and one-to-one support for anyone affected by an illness, including family members and carers. Proceeds also support Càirdeas, an outreach community service providing social and emotional support to people at home who are living with cancer or life-limiting conditions.

Watch Dame Judi's video message at Oban Hospice Ltd Facebook page at [ww.facebook.com/obanhospice](http://ww.facebook.com/obanhospice)

## Rotary members enjoy annual Charter Night at Royal Hotel

The Rotary Club of Oban held its 72nd Annual Charter Night recently under strict Covid guidelines in the Royal Hotel.

The evening was chaired by current club President Kees van Reins and the top table included the President of Campbeltown Rotary Club Pat Healy and her husband Michael, and the President of Mid-Argyll Rotary Club David Renwick, President van Reins' wife Wimmie van Reins, with guest speaker Campbell Cameron, his wife Joy, and Greig MacLeod, Secretary of Mid-Argyll Rotary Club.

Rotarians and guests were entertained by Campbell's keynote speech and music was provided by talented Connel piper Emma Hill.

Grace was said by past president, Ken Moncrieff.

More than £500 was raised during the evening to go to help Dalmally-based charity Mary's Meals.



Oban Rotary President Kees van Reins and Pat Healy, President of Campbeltown Rotary Club; and below, Oban FM's Campbell Cameron was the keynote speaker.



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# Hope hampers fill festive need

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

More than 400 Christmas hampers have been sent out so far by Oban's Hope Kitchen.

Hampers full of everyday staples, festive treats and gifts for adults and children have been delivered to people in Mull, Lorn and the isles.

And it is all thanks to the generosity of well-wishers who responded to this year's hamper appeal, says Hope's service manager Catriona Petit.

Referrals to receive hampers have come from lots of organisations and from people themselves making sure they reach where they are most needed.

'We've had so much support from people this year. We'd like to thank everyone. There is still time for people to let us know where other hampers are needed and would be valued. We don't



want to miss anyone,' said Catriona.

'We've had so many people give us gifts of food and money. Yet again the community has come good to help us,' she added.

This year's hamper distribution was co-ordinated by Louise Murphy who has

done 'an amazing job' said Catriona.

Hope Kitchen will be open all over Christmas - except Monday December 27 and Monday January 3.

'No one needs to be alone this Christmas. We are here and it would be great to see some new faces if there is

anyone who hasn't come through our door yet. It might be someone who is unable to visit family or travel, they can come and see us instead,' said Catriona.

This year's Christmas lunch will be served from noon to 3pm - a feast of sandwiches, soup and cakes. It would be

Getting festive hampers ready for delivery at Hope Kitchen, Oban.

Far left, Louise Murphy and Catriona Petit receive a helping hand from volunteers.

helpful if anyone planning on going along could let Hope know by calling 01631 565730 but it is not essential.

'Christmas is not the best for everyone but we would love to have them come and join us,' added Catriona.

A Carol-oke on Wednesday December 22 from 6pm to 8pm is just one of the many festive alcohol-free activities lined up at Hope.

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## Reduce social contacts before Christmas, urges First Minister

Christmas can go ahead but people should cut back on contact with others as far as possible, says First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

People have been asked to reduce their socialising to a maximum of three households at a time in the run-up to the Christmas because of worries over the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of Covid. Although that advice will not be enforced by law, and does not apply on Christmas Day, people should be sensible and keep gatherings small and safe. Places of worship will be staying open, Ms Sturgeon said during a Covid briefing on Tuesday.

There will be a new legal requirement on businesses and to take measures to minimise the risk of Omicron infection such as avoiding overcrowding and bottlenecks. New guidance will also make it clear that it will be a legal duty that employers will need to enable staff who were working from home at the start of the pandemic to do so again.

For full report, visit [www.obantimes.co.uk](http://www.obantimes.co.uk)

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OT

## Dunbeg pupils make special collection for Hope



Dunbeg Primary School P3/2 pupils, as part of their Global Goals 'Zero Hunger' topic, have been learning about charities, global and local, who support people in need in different ways. After learning about the local charity Hope Kitchen and the vital services that they offer locally, pupils requested that the whole school make a food bank collection. Thanks to the generous support of Dunbeg Primary School families, they made their donation on Thursday. Well done everyone!

# Minister visits Oban home energy project

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Energy minister Michael Matheson has been on a fact-finding mission in Oban.

The minister was visiting Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) which is spending just over £5.7 million on insulating external walls to make its flats more thermal-efficient.

Almost 600 households across Oban and Lorn will benefit once the project is complete, Mr Matheson was told.

ACHA secured more than £2.7m in Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland funding through Argyll & Bute Council and the Scottish Government, with ACHA contributing over £3m from its own resources.

Chief Executive of ACHA Alastair MacGregor said the project has delivered external wall insulation at zero cost to all owners. He added: 'This is one of the best projects ACHA has ever been involved in. Not only does it improve thermal efficiency but it reduces fuel costs and improves the



Neil Donald, Head of OVO Energy Solutions with Cabinet Minister Michael Matheson, Iona MacPhail from Argyll & Bute Council and ACHA chief executive Alastair MacGregor

aesthetic appearance of the buildings. Could I thank everyone from ACHA, Argyll and Bute Council, the Scottish Government and our contractor, OVO Energy Solutions, for their hard work in delivering this project. It was good to be able to show the cabinet minister the benefits of all of us working together.'

Argyll and Bute Council leader Robin Currie said: 'These grants are a great opportunity for people to make their homes warmer and in turn save money on energy costs.'

'This project will provide long-lasting benefits, help-

ing to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emission.'

Mr Matheson said: 'On the day we committed to a further £64m for area-based scheme projects, I was delighted to visit Oban and see for myself how this funding has helped local residents reduce bills and make their homes warmer.'

Head of OVO Energy Solutions Neil Donald said: 'Many households have been able to cut their bills by more than 50 per cent. We look forward to continuing our work with ACHA to create warmer, healthier homes in more local areas and progress the journey to zero carbon living.'

## Flytippers cost Dunollie Woods charity thousands of pounds

Continued from page 1.

'In times like this, people need to be able to enjoy these spaces for their mental and physical wellbeing - we don't want flytippers spoiling it for them.'

Woodland Trust Scotland spokesman George Anderson said: 'We are sick of our woods being used as dumps by selfish people.'

'Householders should be aware that this is a criminal offence. And if a householder hires a tradesman who dumps rubbish illegally, then both parties are legally accountable.'

'If you pay someone to do a bit of work, make sure they will use legal routes to dispose of any waste. A cheap contractor can suddenly become expensive if they earn you a fine.'

'Be assured our staff, volunteers and many of the people who enjoy the woods are on the lookout, and we may deploy cameras to gather evidence.'

'We do not intend to just keep clearing up this mess. We will be pursuing consequences for the culprits.'

In June, The Oban Times reported complaints from people living near Cruachan Crescent who claimed abandoned waste was encouraging flytippers.

Residents said the waste was clogging up the car park right next to the woods and was being added to by others wanting to get rid of scrap bits.

Councillor Elaine Robertson said: 'The Woodland Trust and their local volunteers have to be complimented on the huge

improvements they have made to Dunollie Woods. They have greatly enhanced this valuable amenity ground for the good of the woodland and the benefit of the whole community.'

'I am saddened to hear that they have encountered an issue with flytipping and if the trust feels CCTV will assist in deterring unauthorised refuse being deposited in the Dunollie Woods, then that is a way forward.'

Concern over litter and waste can be reported online at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) or by calling 01546 605514.

To report fly-tipping you can call the Dumb Dumpers Stopleveline on 0300 777 2292. Or fill in the online form at [www.dumbdumpers.scot](http://www.dumbdumpers.scot)

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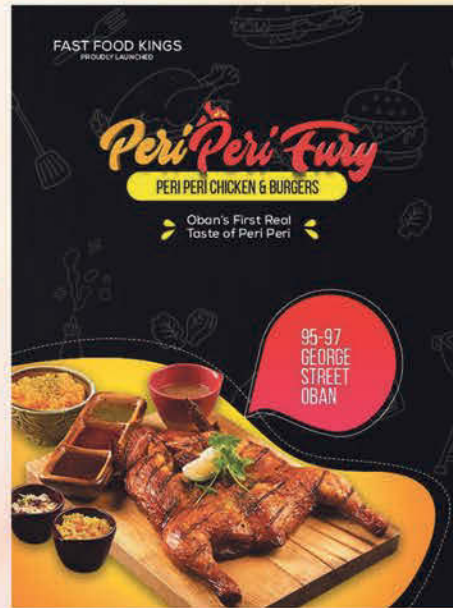
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OT

## Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



I'm still knee deep in Christmas shopping, wrapping paper and decorations as time is flying by much to quickly for me at the moment, but despite this I'm taking the afternoon off to go for afternoon tea with a small group of friends as a Christmas treat and I'm amazed at how many places offer fabulous afternoon teas.

Most cafés and many of the hotels offer wonderful variations of cakes, sandwiches and other treats, making it a delicious way to pass a few hours, eating, drinking and blethering, all of my favourite things to do.

It's also a perfect gift to give, a voucher for afternoon tea, whether it's a takeaway one that the recipient can have at home or a chance to go somewhere nice and enjoy some 'me' time in good company, I can't think of a nicer present.

Food and drink are featuring a lot in my Christmas shopping this year, mainly because it's something everyone enjoys and also because we have so many fabulous

## WHERE IS THIS?



food producers in this area.

A wee visit to Food from Argyll on the Pier, Taste of Argyll, Go Naked Veg or Alba's Kitchen Garden will prove my point, and on top of that there is Oban Food Hub online, all making it easy to build hampers which would please anyone.

Add something nice to drink from Oban Whisky and Fine Wine or The Whisky Shop and you really have the perfect present – not that I'm dropping hints to anyone.

As I say every year, it really is possible to shop for everyone in Oban and be creative about it too.

The photograph last week was taken inside The Lorne on Stevenson Street, and this week's isn't too far away.

# Go wild for Seil's Seed for Life

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Dolphins, otters, sea eagles and seal pups off the Seil coast are all doing their bit to help teenagers go to school in Malawi.

The wildlife, as caught on camera by Sealife Adventure's Jean Ainsley, are in a 2022 fundraising calendar for Seed For Life.

Thanks to other generous contributions covering materials and printing costs, all of the £10 for each calendar sold will go to help the charity pay for school fees of currently 20 teenagers in Bemvu.

The photographs were all snapped through 2021, including colourful puffins on the Treshnish Isles, with most of the images taken from Sealife Adventures' boat.

'A lot of people are doing

Tandem sea eagles featured in Seed for Life's 2022 calendar, caught on camera by Jean Ainsley.



© Sealife Adventures

calendars for charity, so I thought it was a decent idea to do one for a charity based on Seil, local to us. I've done one before for family and friends and that went down well, so here's hoping this one will be just as popular!' said Jean.

Copies of the calendar are available from Balvicar Stores on Seil.

When Seed For Life feeding charity started in 2017, the idea was always to make it a sustainable and self-generating project.

In the past year, the charity's harvest fund has provided top quality seed and fertilizer to 250 farmers for planting. Schools are also now back after Covid restrictions so there have been 1,400 pupils to feed each day.

'They are now planting for the coming year so we are hoping the weather will be kind and give us a good harvest next year,' said Dave Alsop, Seed For Life founder.

Funds have taken a hit because of the pandemic,

so more are needed. More trustees are also being sought, they do not need to be local to Seil.

To find out more about Seed For Life or to order a calendar, you can contact Dave Alsop on 01852 300393 or dave@alsoptransportservices.co.uk

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world where 50.7 per cent of the population live below the poverty line and 25 per cent live in extreme poverty. Secondary school is not free.



Youngsters at a Malawi school wait for lunch to be served.



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# Rockfield Primary run raises fantastic £1,600

Rockfield Primary School staff, parents and pupils gathered together at Oban Rugby Club on Friday October 29 to complete a sponsored 10km run to raise money for the school's Learning Centre.

Rockfield Learning Centre provides a bespoke learning experience for children who have additional and complex support needs.

The run, organised by Learning Centre teachers Mr Ainscough and Mr Garvin raised a massive £1,622.45. The run was supported by the whole school community, as well as attracting donations from the wider community.

As Mr Ainscough explained in a recent Rockfield News video: 'The Learning Centre is such a fantastic place, so well-resourced with staff and equipment, but what we would love to be able to do is enhance every possible opportunity for



Staff, parents and pupils did a fantastic job running in the cold and wet, raising vital cash for the school's Learning Centre.

our children to learn, make progress and to be healthy as they move forward.'

On the day, more than 25 runners, which included staff, parents and pupils, completed the 10k as they ran around the wet and muddy perimeter of the Oban Rugby Club pitches.

Mr Ainscough and Mr Garvin dressed as the 118 runners, and other staff runners included Mrs Martin (Learning Centre outdoor learning teacher), Mrs

Cassells (P7 teacher, along with pupils from her class), Mr Mitchell (Gaelic teacher), Mr Murray (Learning Centre PE teacher) Mrs Bryden and Ms MacIntosh (OHS English teachers). Pupils included children from mainstream classes, and past and present Learning Centre children. Many other staff, parents and pupils supported the event.

There was baking and refreshments organised by P6 and P7 pupils. On the

night some supporters were inspired to join in by walking several laps with the children.

Rockfield head teacher Mrs Fothergill said: 'We are very proud of the children, staff and parents who took part or supported those running. The funds will be used to enhance the children's learning experiences within the Learning Centre. We are very lucky to have such a great staff team who have given up their time to organise this.'

## Going, going, gone... rare Bowmore whisky reaches record sum

Sotheby's has sold an exceptionally rare Islay whisky for £400,000, writes Sandy Neil.

The one-off 51-year-old single malt from Bowmore, the island's oldest distillery, went under the hammer at the first Distillers One of One auction in Edinburgh.

The auction of never-to-be-repeated lots took place at Barnbogle Castle as a ticketed event.

Bowmore Onyx, in a hand-blown black glass vessel inspired by Islay's landscape, contains 1.4 litres of ultra-rare whisky, matured in an American oak refill barrel, which was filled on February 17 1970. This single malt was the first 51-year-old released by the distillery.

The glass bottle was designed by the same expert team at Glasstorm that previously crafted the exclusive Bowmore 1957, which sold at Sotheby's for £363,000.



The one-off Bowmore whisky sold for more than double its reserve price

Before the auction, the reserve estimated for Bowmore Onyx was between £100,000 to £189,000.

The eventual price tag showed just how highly sought after it was, with bidders keen to add it to their collection.

## No change to bin collections over Christmas

Christmas and New Year holidays are at weekends so bin collections will stay as normal over the festive period.

Argyll and Bute Council is reminding people to put out their household waste and recycling as usual on the days that their bins are normally collected.

Tips on things you can do to help reduce the amount of waste going to landfill over this busy time are also being shared.

A council spokesperson said: 'You can put paper, card, cans and plastic bottles/tubs/pots/trays in your recycling bins or bags. Please remember to rinse out the cans and plastics. Many types of Christmas paper and cards can also be recycled. Unfortunately we

can't recycle anything covered in glitter or foil-based paper. If you want to check if the paper is foil, scrunch the paper up. If it springs back, then please put it in the general waste bin.

'Our recycling centres will be closed on December 25 and December 26 and also on January 1 and January 2 but you can find a full list of centres on our website for household rubbish and recycling at [argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://argyll-bute.gov.uk)'

Residents who want to recycle their Christmas trees can also take them to household waste and recycling centres at the end of the season.

You can also download 2022 bin collection calendars from the council website.

'We are very grateful that few

people now request printed calendars - this allows us to direct scarce resources to vital services and saves paper. If you are unable to access the internet, you can check your next bin uplift day by calling 01546 605514 and pressing option two for a 24/7 response. If necessary, you can request one printed calendar for your household by calling 01546 605514 and choosing option three to ask for a printed copy. Please remember, staff are mostly working from home so it may take two to three weeks before someone is in the office to print out a calendar to send it to you,' added a council spokesperson.

Visit [bit.ly/RubbishandRecycling](http://bit.ly/RubbishandRecycling)

## Plans for 90 new homes on Mull

Plans for 90 residential units to be built on the Isle of Mull are set to go before councillors, writes Sandy Neil.

The development, planned by TSL Contractors Ltd, also includes a care home, nursery and commercial unit on a site at the PCC field, northwest of the Isle of Mull Hotel.

It was intended for the applicants to stage a public event on Wednesday December 8,

allowing residents to view the plans. The proposal was due to be discussed at a virtual meeting of Argyll and Bute Council's planning, protective services and licensing committee yesterday, Wednesday December 15.

As the process is only at the proposal of application notice stage, planning permission will not be granted or refused. Councillors only are invited

to give feedback. A council planning officer said: 'The proposals and public consultation event will be advertised. The applicant has also committed to a mail drop in respect of the proposals to all residents in the adjoining Java housing complex.'

'Officers are content that the public consultation proposed is commensurate with the scale and nature of the proposals.'



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OT

# Alice in An Cala Wonderland

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Seil switched on lights at An Cala on Saturday, turning the gardens into a twinkling wonderland.

Alice in Wonderland was the theme for this year's light trail that led about 80 visitors of all ages through a rabbit hole and out into scenes straight from Lewis Carroll's timeless tale.

The Queen of Hearts, grinning Cheshire Cat and the White Rabbit were all there with young Alice, played by Daisy Dugdale, to entertain the excited groups who arrived in pre-booked time slots.

Tweedledum and Tweedledee gave a song and the Jabberwock was defeated to cheers and lots of magic feather waving from the crowd – all in time for tea with the Mad Hatter, the dozy Dormouse and other friends.

As well as Daisy, the cast of players was joined by a crew of other young helpers, including Christy and Ruach Smith, Enid Macaskill and Emma McDougall.

The free evening event was organised by a team of volunteers.

Donations went towards organising more community-run events for Slate Islands children.



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Top left, The Gryphon at An Cala's Alice in Wonderland light trail on Seil.  
Top, Tweedledum and Tweedledee Jan Fraser and Rachel Smith with the Cheshire Cat Jeltje Danhof  
Above, Jeltje Danhof and Mary Freer as the Cheshire Cat and the sleepy Dormouse;  
All photographs: Connie Macaskill.





Above, Connie Macaskill as the White Rabbit and Daisy Dugdale as Alice at An Cala.



An Cala's frightful Jabberwock was a wondrous sight to behold.



Left, Enid Macaskill as the Queen of Heart's henchman. Jan Wolf plays the part of the queen and next to her is Daisy Dugdale as Alice; Right, Wendy Dugdale as The Mad Hatter.



Seil Sound community choir braved the rain to entertain an appreciative crowd outside Ellenabeich's Oyster Bar and Restaurant on Sunday afternoon featuring renditions of many favourite festive tunes and a traditional solo spot for Kneale Smith.

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OT

# Luing Ding Dong time



Santa was a VIP at Luing's Ding Dong celebration on Sunday. Pictured with Santa are Rachael Maclean and Steven McSweeney with Scarlett and Coll.



Ailsa MacLachlan and Aidan McCuish with Lilly meet and season's greet with Santa on Luing

Luing Social Committee gifted some Christmas cheer to the island on Sunday – with a little help from Santa.

The committee members wanted to thank everyone who helped them put on

a lovely festive afternoon. Alison Young, one of the organisers, said the children's party was a great success. Santa brought sackfuls of fun and presents to share. And there was fun for the grown-ups too later

in the day with a seasonal quiz, accompanied by homemade soup and mulled cider at the Atlantic Islands Centre. The joint winning teams were The Cruickshanks and Ailsa's Angels.



Santa dropped into Luing to surprise youngsters at Sunday's Christmas party. Yvonne Youngman with Edwin and Milo were there to see him.



One of the Christmas quiz teams at Luing's Atlantic Islands Centre on Sunday.

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Santa had plenty of presents in his sack when he joined in the fun at Luing's Christmas party for children on Sunday. With Santa are Caragh MacLean and Kyle Gilroy with Emily.



Alison Young and Darren Smith with Daniel and Sophie meet Santa on Luing.



# Argyll's rubbish could be sent elsewhere to be processed

Rubbish could be sent outside Argyll and Bute for disposal when the Scottish Government landfill ban is imposed, a council official has admitted.

But it was added that the possibility of doing so was 'hardly at the top' of the priority list for the authority as it bids to reach net zero carbon emissions.

Peter Leckie, project manager for the council's waste strategy review, addressed the concerns of councillors at a virtual meeting of its policy and resources committee on Thursday December 9.

The council currently sends waste from Helensburgh and Lomond to landfill in Alexandria, in West Dunbartonshire. The landfill ban is due to come in during 2025, having been pushed back from 2021.

Mid Argyll Independent Councillor Douglas Philand asked Mr Leckie about the

transportation of waste when the ban starts.

Mr Leckie replied: 'With the landfill ban coming in 2025, authorities have to move to a system of energy from waste.'

'We don't have the facilities in Argyll and Bute and lack the tonnage required to operate an energy-from-waste system economically. So the only option is for us to send it to energy from waste plants in the central belt, which will have a huge impact.'

He added: 'We are in discussions with the Scottish Government and looking for ways forward. We are asking for support with this transition.'

Councillor Philand then said: 'I am thinking of lorries going into the central belt, and the carbon emissions for them. How are you going to offset that?'

Mr Leckie replied: 'There are



actions we can take, such as shredding materials, so we are looking to mitigate as many trips as possible – not only for CO2 purposes, but for overall costs.'

Kintyre and the Islands Independent Councillor Alastair Redman also voiced

concerns at transporting waste out of the area and the country.

Mr Leckie said: 'We are having to work with the facilities that we have in place. We have an area where we are in charge of our own waste and have facilities in the area.'

'In Helensburgh and Lomond

we send waste to landfill in other areas. It is currently done in Alexandria.'

'When the landfill ban is enforced in 2025, we don't have any energy-from-waste facilities in Argyll and Bute, or in immediate proximity except in the central belt.'

'So we will have to send waste to those facilities, because we lack the sufficient tonnage to maintain such a facility within Argyll and Bute. That is the position as it currently stands.'

The Scottish Government is about to embark on a review of energy from waste in Scotland.

Mr Leckie told the meeting: 'The Scottish Government is on record as saying that it does not want waste going outside of our borders, or to energy-from-waste abroad.'

'But if there is insufficient national capacity we will have to look at options outside the immediate area. I would not

say that is top of the list of things we are considering.'

Council services will also be encouraged to reduce their use of single-use plastic (SUP) products as confirmed by the same Policy and Resources Committee last week.

This policy is being put in place ahead of upcoming Scottish Government legislation which will ban the supply and manufacture of certain types of plastic products in June 2022.

Leader Councillor Robin Currie said: 'Changing our policy on SUP is yet another step we take at preventing waste. We are now asking services to think long and hard about what they are buying and what other options are out there to replace SUP.'

'Preventing waste is better for the planet and saves public money. We can, and must, do it at home and in businesses.'

**A wee reminder.**

**Let's stop the spike.**

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# Continued lack of islanders on CalMac board sparks anger

Hebridean councillors have slammed the Scottish Government for not appointing an island resident to CalMac's board of eight directors.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the Western Isles Council, has expressed disappointment that the Scottish Government has appointed the David MacBrayne Group Board, but 'ignored pleas from councils and stakeholders across the ferry network to address the fundamental gap in user experience of those appointed to that board'.

'Not one single resident of an island served by David MacBrayne Group or its subsidiary CalMac Ferries Limited sits on the company board,' the council said, 'and this opportunity to right this wrong has been passed up by ministers.'

'Instead they have appointed a new chairman and three new non-executive directors with no residential tie to the communities the company serves.'

'At a meeting of the Hebrides Ferry Stakeholder Group (Thursday December 2) community stakeholders supported the call for lived experience of these ferry services be a pre-requisite of any and all future appointments to the Board of David MacBrayne Group.'

The chairman of the council's

## 'An opportunity has been lost to improve decision-making...'

transportation and infrastructure committee, councillor Uisdean Robertson, said: 'The recent failure to address the absence of residents of the islands served by CalMac in the appointment of board members to David MacBrayne Group has caused real anger in our communities.'

'It is little wonder company management are so detached

from the reality of their decisions when they are based at a headquarters in Inverclyde, and those appointed to hold the company to account have limited experience of how the company's actions affect people from Lewis to Arran.'

'Having raised this issue with the transport minister, I had hoped our concern was understood and these vacancies would be filled by islanders. The comhairle will continue to press the case for real and meaningful change in the voice communities have in shaping our lifeline ferry services.'

Chairman of the Independent Ferries Community Board Angus Campbell attended the meeting and shared the frustration, saying: 'The Ferries Community Board firmly believes experience of living on islands and first-hand knowledge of how lifeline ferry services impact on island communities are an essential part of the skill

mix required to undertake these roles. An opportunity has been lost to add knowledge and improve decision-making for both the company and the communities they serve.'

A Scottish Government spokesperson said: 'Scottish ministers are committed to ensuring that island residents and communities' views are represented appropriately and have asked the new chair, as a priority, to consider how this might be achieved. Board members were appointed for their experience and abilities.'

The Scottish Government added it had advertised the recent chair and three non-executive director positions widely, including on the vessels travelling to island communities, and it was pleased to receive a high number of applications.

'Residents of island communities are free to apply to become members of the board if they wish,' it said.

# Nine steps to a safer home this Christmas

A campaign encouraging householders to minimise the risk of a fire this Christmas and throughout the year has been launched by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Latest figures show firefighters attended more than 450 accidental house fires in around one month last winter.

During the same period, accidental house fires claimed the lives of seven people, with 58 casualties. The incidents happened between December 7, 2020 and January 11, 2021.

Deputy Assistant Chief Officer Ali Perry is head of prevention and protection at SFRS. He said: 'Fire is a risk for everyone, but some people are more at risk than others. If you know someone who is over 50 and smokes, and who has either mobility issues or uses medical oxygen or lives alone, please arrange a Home Fire Safety Visit on their behalf.'

'Reaching out to those who are vulnerable can help save lives in our communities.'

A free online self-assessment on the Scottish Fire

and Rescue Service's website is available to everyone in Scotland to find out how safe their property is.

On completion, participants can download a unique report about their home, which gives advice on how to rectify risks and problems.

There are nine steps to a safer home – as participants are asked to consider their use of smoke detectors, cooking in the kitchen, smoking and candles, electrics and heating, emollient creams, medical oxygen, air pressure mattress, night-time routine and fire action plan.

DACO Perry said: 'By walking through the nine steps you can massively reduce the risk of a fire in your house. Taking a few minutes to do the self-assessment and identify the hazards in your own home can help keep you and those around you safe.'

If you know of someone who needs a Home Fire Safety Visit get in touch by calling 0800 0731 999. Or text FIRE to 80800.



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# Possible extra day's holiday for schools

## Queen's platinum jubilee plan approval pending

Schools in Argyll and Bute could enjoy an extra day off next year if plans for a holiday to mark Queen Elizabeth II's platinum jubilee are approved.

Councillors are being recommended to agree an extra holiday for the area on Friday June 3 to celebrate 70 years since Her Majesty's reign began.

The plans would mean pupils would be off for consecutive Fridays, as Friday May 27 is earmarked as a teacher in-service day. The planned holiday for staff and pupils on Monday May 30 would move to Thursday June 2.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority has no exams planned for the proposed holiday date, with the 2022 diet due to finish on Wednesday June 1. A report has also revealed

that the additional cost to the council of paying employees to work on a public holiday has been estimated at £46,000. The authority's policy and resources committee will debate the possibility of the extra holiday today (Thursday December 9).

### 'Any change will require communication...to avoid confusion'

Executive director Kirsty Flanagan said: 'SMT (senior management team) have given consideration to a range of options and have recommended granting an additional public holiday on June 3, 2022 as the best way to accommodate time to celebrate Her Majesty the

Queen's 70 years on the throne.

'Granting another public holiday will align with other organisations who will likely be on holiday. It will also allow staff and their families to participate in the planned three or four-day weekend of commemorative events.

'Schools have a scheduled in-service day for teaching staff on Friday May 27 and a holiday for both staff and pupils on Monday May 30.

'Should the authority grant an additional public holiday they would plan to retain the in-service day for teaching staff on Friday May 27 and move the May 30 holiday to Thursday June 2 and award an additional holiday for teachers and pupils on Friday June 3.

'Any change will require

communication to customers, staff, pupils and their families to avoid confusion over service delivery, though the impact of the national change would likely lead to confusion if it was not adopted.'

Ms Flanagan added: 'The additional cost of paying employees to carry out essential work on a public holiday has been estimated at £46,000. This is based on the average overtime for a public holiday claimed in the month of May, where we already have one public holiday, in the last three years.'

The UK Government recently announced plans for the four-day weekend to mark the Queen's 70 years on the throne - the first time a British monarch has reached such a milestone.

# New Lismore ferry to arrive later this month

The new Lismore ferry is expected to arrive at Port Appin this month and be ready to serve the community once the Passenger Safety Certificate is issued by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

After its sea trials, the vessel was due to leave Pembroke on Monday December 13 to begin its 302 nautical mile journey to its destination. However, due to poor weather conditions, the departure was rescheduled and will wait for a fair weather window. Until then, the current ferry will remain in operation.

Argyll and Bute Council's Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee welcomed the news last week and endorsed the ferry's name, the Lady of Lismore.

Residents and primary school pupils chose the ferry's name through a poll organised by Lismore Community Council. A community event will be held to celebrate the arrival of the new ferry in early January.

Argyll and Bute Councillor Rory Colville, Policy Lead

for Roads and Infrastructure Services, said: 'We wish the Lady of Lismore a safe passage to Port Appin and we await her arrival with great excitement.'

'The old ferry sailed the route for more than three decades and we look forward to the new ferry future-proofing this lifeline service for decades to come.'

The new all-steel vessel, designed by Keel Marine and built by Mainstay Marine Solutions, will have a crew of two and can accommodate 23 passengers all year round with a cruising speed of eight knots.

The new ferry is designed and built to current exacting specifications defined by Maritime and Coastguard Agency. These specifications take account of passenger safety and accessibility requirements. Funding was made available by Transport Scotland.

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OT

# Watchdog to tighten rules on fish farms to protect wild salmon

Protecting Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon is a 'national priority', says Scotland's environmental watchdog SEPA, launching a consultation on wild salmon protection zones and a sea lice exposure threshold.

'Scotland is renowned worldwide for the quality of its rivers, lochs and seas,' explained Terry A'Hearn, chief executive of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). 'Despite this, in nearly 60 per cent of salmon rivers across Scotland, including on the West Coast and Western Isles, salmon populations are in poor conservation status.'

'Whilst the causes of the poor conservation status of wild salmon stocks are complex and believed to be due to a range of different factors rather than a single cause, we know that sea lice from marine



finfish farms can be a significant hazard. The protection of Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon is a national priority which is why, following the Scottish Government confirming SEPA as the lead body responsible for managing the risk to wild salmonids from sea lice from marine finfish farms, we're today launching a consultation on ambitious

proposals for proposed wild salmon protection zones and a sea lice exposure threshold that applies in these zones.

'Over the coming months we look forward to meeting and hearing views from a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in wild salmon, from community and environmental groups to the aquaculture sector itself before

**SEPA has been confirmed as the lead body responsible for managing the risk to wild salmonids from sea lice from marine finfish farms.**

taking a final view in 2022.' SEPA said the Scottish Government has identified 12 high-level pressures on the status of salmon stocks: 'These include different pressures on river habitats, such as loss of trees/shade, man-made barriers to fish migration and impacts on river levels resulting from climate change; exploitation (recreational fishing & commercial sea fisheries); predation; sea lice and disease; escapes; and invasive non-native species (including signal crayfish in Scotland).

'Sea lice from marine finfish farms remains a potentially significant pressure with

scientific evidence being clear that sea lice from open-net pen finfish farms in Scotland can pose a significant risk to wild salmon populations.'

The consultation, which is open until Monday March 14, 2022, focuses on a proposed framework to protect wild salmon populations against harmful increases in sea lice by assessing the risk to wild salmon when determining applications for proposed farms, and increases in the number of fish farmed at existing farms.

Permits for all existing farms that can contribute to infective-stage sea lice in wild salmon protection zones would be changed to include conditions that control the number of juvenile sea lice emanating from the farms, and require sufficient information to calculate the number of juvenile lice hatching on the farms.

## Green light for ferry terminal

Plans for a new terminal building at Port Ellen Ferry Terminal, with more parking and marshalling space, have been announced by CalMac's owner, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL).

Transport Scotland recently approved the findings of a study which identified space constraints at the busy terminal, and CMAL developed a range of options to address the issues.

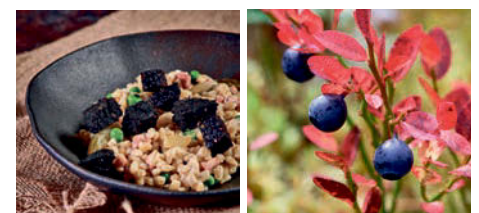
The Port Ellen Terminal Development project has now been established to increase the vehicle marshalling area, increase staff and visitor parking, improve port operations for commercial use, improve passenger access to vessels, and explore the location and size of an area for a proposed new terminal building.

CMAL has appointed engineering consultancy Mott MacDonald to work alongside its in-house civil engineers to develop costs, assess a range of solutions, and recommend a preferred option.

A project reference group has



## SCOTTISH FIELD January



## Happy New Year...

*So that was 2021... Stephen Jardine's Credo...  
The Hebridean Baker recipes... Quiz of the Year...  
Stunning aerial photography... Seafront interiors...  
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# Port Ellen upgrade

been appointed to represent the views of the community, including ferry users, marina users, the fishing community and commercial users. The first reference group meeting was held on Wednesday December 1. Engagement with the wider community, through virtual or in-person events and meetings (depending on Covid guidance), is scheduled for spring.

Paul Colenso, senior civil engineer at CMAL, said: 'We are still in the early, but critical, planning stages of this project. We have identified the need for investment in the infrastructure at Port Ellen. Our proposals will also enhance the ferry passenger and harbour user experience with improved facilities and access.'

'Survey work will begin within the next couple of months. This won't impact ferry services. We're planning comprehensive consultation so all interested parties can engage with the project, and we will be able to share more details on this early next year.'

# Tribute: Barry Dowson-Park

Barry Dowson-Park, an engineer by profession, and his wife Shirley, a public relations specialist, sold their "roses round the door" cottage in Sussex in spring 1999 and bought Foxholes Country Hotel at Lerags by Oban.

With no formal hotel training, they knew what they would want as an hotel guest and so set up an operation that met those desires.

I first stayed with them within a year of their arrival and was immediately struck by the warmth of the welcome, the superb food, accommodation and the friendliness extended to me. Shirley ran front of house arrangements, while Barry, as chef, produced a range of wonderfully cooked dinners with a relaxed professionalism.

Over the next 20 years I stayed at Foxholes every year, sometimes two or three times, as I explored and photographed the Hebrides.

I met other guests who also stayed several times a year, as Barry would tell me when I arrived. And as one of their first guests, Barry told me later that he considered me 'a long-time

regular'.

During these stays I built up a friendship with them both, which I cherish to this day. To arrive at Foxholes, after a 500-mile 'all in the same day' drive from southern England, and be greeted with such warmth and friendliness was like arriving at 'my secret little bit of heaven in

**'To arrive at Foxholes... was like arriving at my secret bit of heaven...'**

the hills'.

Sadly, Shirley died in 2010, but Barry carried on undaunted, tailoring the operation to just his long-time regulars and any other guests recommended to him.

Interestingly, he was descended from Mungo Park, the 18th-century Scottish surgeon who charted the River Niger.

Barry was a quiet and very polite gentleman, who would go the extra mile if one of his guests or staff asked, including running a staff member to Glasgow airport when she needed to fly

home suddenly to New Zealand for a family bereavement. In the last 11 years, my visits to Foxholes were the highlight of my annual trips to the Hebrides. More latterly joined by my wife, Barry excelled in making her stay as comfortable as possible and a rapport was soon created. Our friendship seemed to gain strength and I took a personal interest in all he wanted to do with Foxholes Hotel.

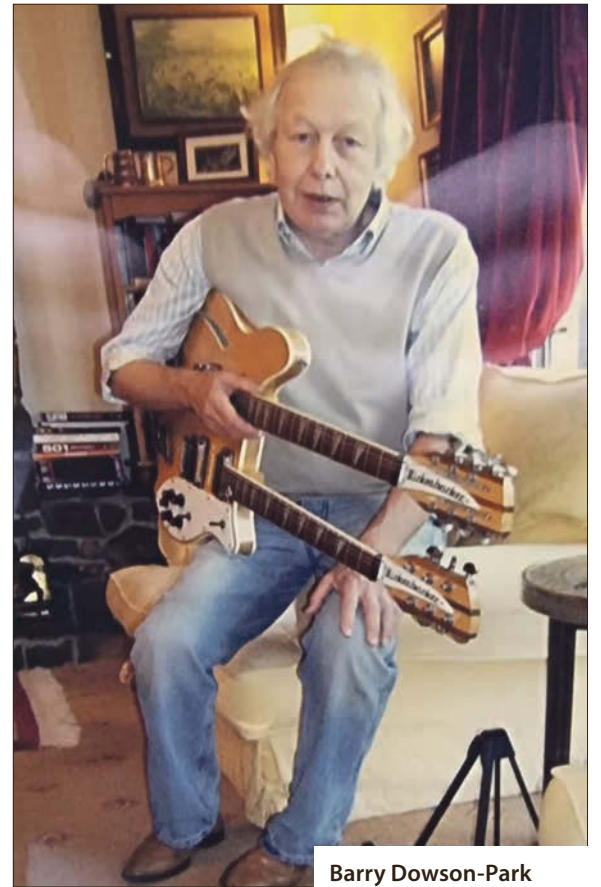
He loved fast cars and owned a Jaguar XKRS, which he used often to run into Oban when purchasing supplies for the hotel.

Unfortunately cancer got a hold of him a few years back but he persevered with a very sanguine attitude to his illness.

Barry died peacefully in his sleep on Monday November 29, aged 76.

For me it is the end of an era, a much enjoyable era in so many ways. He was the hallmark of a good friend as well as a superb hotelier, with a dignity of eye and bearing that one no longer expects to meet, save once or twice in a lifetime.

**Ruari Cumming ARPS**



Barry Dowson-Park

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# BUSINESS NEWS

## Businesses urged to take part in FSB survey

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) is encouraging as many businesses as possible to take part in its new Highlands and Islands Winter Survey, which covers Shetland, Orkney, Western Isles, Highlands, Moray, Argyll and Arran.

The aim of the survey is to give FSB an insight into some of the most important issues that businesses will face in 2022.

FSB's Highlands and Islands development manager David Richardson said: 'The FSB's role as the voice of small businesses is recognised by governments at all levels and it's dependent on the quality of the information that we provide.'

'Surveying is central to this and, recognising that the Highlands and Islands face unique opportunities and challenges, we have already surveyed businesses across the region four times this year.'

### Issues

'Now at the end of the year, we are surveying again to enable us to fully understand key trading conditions in 2021 and to get an insight into some of the most important issues that businesses will face in 2022 – things like costs and staffing.'

'We want to hear from all businesses whether they are doing well, badly or indifferently and recognising that business life in, say, Lochaber is very different to Moray or Shetland.'

'We want as many responses as possible from all areas of the region so that we can give the full local flavour and compare results.'

Business owners interested in taking part in the Winter Survey should visit: [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/fsb-winter/](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/fsb-winter/)

## Islands ideal for electric planes, says consultation on future of air services

Electric planes, air taxis, changing the Air Discount Scheme and a single body operating all council-run airports - just a few ideas in a new Holyrood consultation on the future of aviation in the Highlands and Islands.

The Scottish Government is considering how Scotland can continue to enjoy the economic and social benefits of air travel while meeting its ambitious net-zero targets.

Its goals include 'decarbonising scheduled passenger flights within Scotland by 2040' and getting 'good value' air services in the Highlands and Islands for passengers and the taxpayer. Transport Scotland's online consultation seeks views on achieving those goals, by Friday January 21 2022.

One way, it proposes, is adopting electric aircraft for the Highlands and Islands. 'Norway is aiming for the first regular domestic scheduled flights to be operated with electrified aircraft by 2030,' the consultation says.

'The short distances and low passenger volumes on many scheduled flights within Scotland mean they are ideally suited to early adoption of zero and low emission aircraft.'

'However, as most are operated on a commercial basis, the airlines rather than the Scottish Government decide what aircraft they will use on their routes.'

'One option is for the Scottish Government to buy new zero emission aircraft as they become available on the market, then lease them to the airline(s) operating the routes.'

Another way, it poses, is consolidating airport operators, including Argyll and Bute Council, into a single body.

'Airport services for scheduled passenger air services in the Highlands and Islands are



One proposal would see Oban Airport coming under a single nationwide body.

currently provided by Highlands & Islands Airports Ltd (HIAL), Shetland Islands Council, Orkney Islands Council and Argyll and Bute Council.

'None of the airports operated by these bodies can currently run on a commercial basis and all require subsidy to maintain operations. Having four different airport operators means it is more difficult to achieve economies of scale, for example, through bulk buying of equipment.'

The Scottish Government is also considering the effectiveness of, and improvements to, the Air Discount Scheme.

'Air services have high fixed costs but whether this results in high airfares depends on the number of passengers on the aircraft,' it explains.

'With more passengers each person pays less as the costs are split between them. However, with fewer passengers the cost per person is higher.'

'In the Highlands and Islands even the busier routes have relatively low passenger numbers over which to spread costs.'

'This leads to fares that are higher than what passengers would likely pay on longer, busier routes. The Scottish Government has sought to address the cost of flying in the region through the operation of the Air Discount Scheme.'

The consultation also seeks views on complementing scheduled flights with on-demand air taxis and open charter services.

Councillor Robin Currie, leader of Argyll and Bute Council, urged people to have their say: 'It's absolutely vital our rural and island communities continue to have access to properly funded, reliable and regular air services to connect them to essential support and services.'

Find the survey online at the Scottish Government Consultation Hub.





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# Mull's Creel Seafood Bar is best in the land

## New scheme is helping jobless

A seafood bar on Mull has been named the country's Best Seafood Establishment at The Food Awards Scotland 2021

The Creel Seafood Bar on Fionnphort Pier has been feeding locals and visitors to Mull and Iona with fresh West Coast seafood since 2014.

'This award means the absolute world,' said the Creel Seafood Bar's owner Siobhan Cameron: 'I am so proud of all of our team and can't thank them enough for all of their hard work.'

'My mum and dad passed over the business to me in 2016, and I can't thank them enough for all of the support they have given me.'

'Without their trust and belief in me at the very beginning, we would have never come this far.'

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara tabled a motion in the House of Commons congratulating Siobhan Cameron, and commending 'the hard work of manager Niamh Cowan and all the staff of the Creel Seafood Bar in contributing to this outstanding success'.

The text, sponsored by eight other MPs, also noted: 'The Creel was originally opened in 2014 by Siobhan's mum, Alex and her dad, Andrew, and had it not been for their hard work and determination to build the business in those early years, none of this success would have been possible.'

'Therefore thanks to everyone involved with Creel Seafood Bar, past and present for what they have done to put this small corner of the Isle of Mull on the culinary map of Scotland and [the House] wishes them all the very best for the future.'

'The Food Awards Scotland 2021 recognises the success of local professionals and establishments that continue delivering great flavours and experiences to their customers,' its organisers say.

'The winners are a true reflection of high standard and customer service, as they are chosen by members of the general public, who often have eclectic gastronomic tastes.'



Staff and supporters of The Creel Seafood Bar receive the award. Left to right: staff member Kate Young, manager Niamh Cowan, owner Siobhan Cameron, and friend Lauren Buchanan.



Creel Seafood Bar owner Siobhan Cameron

Unemployed people in Oban and Fort William are being helped into work by a new multi-million pound support scheme.

Job Entry: Targeted Support (JETS) launched in Scotland in January as part of the UK government's response to job losses caused by the Covid pandemic.

Now it has passed the 4,000 jobs mark across Scotland, months ahead of schedule.

The Wise Group works with 38 JobCentres across west and south-west Scotland in partnership with business process outsourcing company Capita to offer advice and support to participants who have been out of work for at least three months.

Already nine customers from Oban JobCentre, and 12 from Fort William JobCentre, have been helped into work and Wise Group chief executive Sean Duffy said: 'JETS has been a hugely successful employability programme which has changed the lives of thousands of people across Scotland.'

'We're incredibly proud of the part we have played in making it such a huge nationwide success across Scotland.'

'More than 40 per cent of participants find work during their six months on the programme, which is a remarkable success rate.'

'The pandemic was disastrous for almost every business sector in the country, costing many thousands of workers their jobs, so it's been great to be part of a collaborative effort to help improve the lives of so many families in Argyll and Bute, as well as further afield.'

JETS participants work with a dedicated employment adviser after being referred to the programme by their JobCentre work coach and receive tailored support and advice on how to get back into work - help with CVs, interview tips and skills and job searching.

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As this year draws to a close, we find ourselves in a far better position than that of a year ago thanks to everyone's hard work and the medical advances that have been made. I would like to take this opportunity to send my best wishes to constituents for a healthy, happy 2022  
**Ian Blackford MSP**  
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OT

# DISTRICT NEWS

OBAN



Ho Ho Ho Santa and his Christmas-mobile.

## Santa's roads ahead for Christmas

Santa is getting geared up for Christmas and has already been spotted cruising round Oban in his brightly lit car, bringing early cheer and sweet treats to youngsters.

The family-fun idea is that of Retrophenia's Wayne and Leanne Johnson who also own The Race Cafe at Barcaldine.

Anyone who would like to help Santa keep stocked up with sweets to give out on his merry road trip can drop them off at Retrophenia in George Street.



Amber Rowan dressed up as a reindeer to meet Santa and Mrs Claus at The View's Christmas party on Sunday December 5.

The Claus Family and Elves at The View's Christmas party



## Party guests Santa and Mrs Claus

Santa and Mrs Claus put in a special guest appearance at The View.

The cheery pair went along to the children's Christmas party where George Noble put on a disco for the afternoon's entertainment.

'All the children loved meeting Santa, and shared their Christmas wishes with him. He'll be keeping watch until Christmas Eve to see if they are naughty or nice.'

'Santa also left a few extra gifts, for any chil-

OBAN

dren who were unable to attend. These can be purchased from The View, and proceeds will be donated to a local charity.

'Santa, Mrs Claus, The Elves and all the team at The View, wish all the wonderful children a very Merry Christmas. We look forward to seeing them all again soon,' said The View's Nicola Wilson.



## Festive turnout for Benderloch crafters



Victory Hall Craft Fair in Benderloch recently drew in a festive crowd. Organiser Riona Strang, above, was delighted by the big turnout supporting

stallholders who brought a seasonal selection of goods and treats to sell. Candy floss was just one of the sweet treats, above left, at the fair held in the village hall.

## Poppy lights idea for Mull

Poppy lights as part of Mull's Remembrance Day celebrations would be supported by the island's community council.

Sarah Pedley took the idea to the last community council Zoom meeting after seeing communities along the North Coast 500 route light up this way with special filters on street lights in towns and villages.

Tobermory, Craginure and Salen could get involved and Tobermory's town clock could

be illuminated and decorated. She told the community council: 'I'm more than happy to pursue it.'

Community council convener Tom Nelson said: 'We could be supportive of that.'

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon suggested the project could be carried out in conjunction with the Christmas lights committee.

There is also the possibility the community council could help with some fundraising for it.

Councillor Devon also suggested CalMac could be approached for financial help.

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# Pupils help hospice sell calendars

Oban High School pupils from S3 have been helping to sell calendars for Oban Hospice and have made £250 so far.

Elsa MacIver, who taught in the school for 37 years and is now secretary to the board of Oban Hospice, contacted administration and IT teacher Anna McDonald asking for help to sell the 2022 calendars.

The pupils worked hard to create a business plan and sell as many calendars as possible. They made posters, order forms and even a sales spreadsheet.

Pupils also visited the Dove Centre in Stevenson Street for a tour of the facilities and found out about the hospice's work.

'The pupils loved this opportunity and found it very moving and interesting hearing about what the hospice offers. The pupils have been going round the school selling the calendars as well as selling them in their own time.'

'So far they have raised over £250 for the hospice, and with more orders for calendars they are hoping to raise a lot more.'

'The selling of the calendars has tied in perfectly with what the pupils have been learning in both administration and business.'

'This has helped them to contextualise their learning and apply it in a real life setting.'

'Moving forward we at Oban High School will be keeping this link with Oban Hospice



and hope to help it with fundraising for years to come.

'The pupils have done an excellent job representing the high school and embodying our vision and values of compassion, respect, ambition and resilience,' said Mrs McDonald.

**Enterprising students at Oban High School have made £250 so far for Oban Hospice by helping sell its calendars.**

## At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



### Absolute treasures!

I was not in the least surprised to read of and hear about the fabulous acclaim for this year's panto at the Corran Halls in Oban by the Spotlight Musical Theatre Group.

Sadly, I was unable to join in the fun and merriment of Treasure Island but I have past experience of Spotlight's productions, and am fortunate to know some of the leading figures in the group, among them notably Steevie Day and his daughter Megan.

For those of you who read last week's review in these pages by Janet Kinghorn, Megan was singled out for her 'dazzling' performance as Jenny Trelawney, an accolade that I'm sure was very well deserved. Young Megan, despite her tender years, is a veteran of many stage shows, including at Oban High School.

I am, of course, being unfair in mentioning the Days especially but they are friends and I am happy to reiterate that the entire company is an estimable group of locals who simply love to perform and entertain. They make a brilliant contribution to the festive celebrations in the Oban area and it was, as Janet stressed in her review, 'fantastic' to see them back after the hiatus of the Covid pandemic.

### Power point

I wrote a couple of weeks ago about the superb Cruachan power station and its astounding success in producing clean, green energy since the mid-1960s. I suggested it might provide a template for the way forward by those trying to find a solution to energy needs and climate change.

So I was pompously pleased to see that power company Drax, which operates the Hollow Mountain station, has launched the second stage of its bid to build another similar 'underground' power plant adjacent to the one near Lochawe.

I'd like to think the brains behind the expansion bid have formed their plans after reading my comments but I suspect they were formulated long before I chipped in my tuppence worth. Still, it's good to realise other, more intelligent people than I am, are thinking along the same lines!

### What do you think?

Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

## OBAN

### Generous gift for Christmas lights

West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) was delighted to be able to make a donation of £1,500 to Oban Community Council to assist in purchasing new Christmas lights for Oban. WHHA chair Gerry Boyle presented the cheque to Marri Malloy, convener of Oban Community Council.



### Dunollie museum makes Christmas delights

Dunollie Museum, Castle and Grounds opened its doors to 378 visitors of all ages for its Christmas event as part of Oban Winter Festival.

This was its biggest off-season activity since 2019. On the first weekend of the festival, children helped to decorate a Christmas tree which was then displayed at St Conan's Kirk's Christmas Tree Festival and on the second weekend Oban Gaelic Choir braved the cold and sang carols for over an hour in the castle grounds.

Hot chocolate was flowing and marshmallows were toasting during both events as families created orange pomanders, Christmas weaves and



children explored Dunollie's historic grounds and ruins in search of a missing reindeer. This was Dunollie's last event of the year although it is planning many more for 2022.

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OT

## LETTERS

**Thanks to those who are going the extra mile**

It was wonderful to see all the festival merriment going on in Seil and on Luing this week.

A huge amount of work will have gone into making these events happen, ensuring everyone, particularly the children, had a good time, and everyone was kept safe.

There is no doubt it's been a difficult year, and events such as Alice in Wonderland in Seil, and the Ding Dong in Luing have helped to make this time of year a little bit special – and normal.

There are so many people in our area going the extra mile to make things better for people, with Hope Kitchen, Seed 4 Life, staff, pupils and parents from Rockfield Primary's learning centre, and the Dove Centre also making it onto the pages of this week's Oban Times for the fabulous work they are doing. And a huge thanks, too, to you our readers who are supporting them.

We have amazing, supportive communities here in Oban and Lorn, so thank you to everyone who is helping to make this Christmas as special as possible, despite the ongoing worry about Covid.

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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**Festival success**

Many thanks for helping to make the Christmas Tree Festival 2021 successful and safe!

Thank you to everyone who took part by entering a tree, helped with the set-up and running of the festival, with advertising, who donated homebaking and who donated raffle prizes.

We had 1,500 visitors arriving in a steady stream over three full days. Feedback was very positive! Many commented that the trees were more inventive, engaging and fun than ever. Voting turnout was very high.

As you will have read, the visitors' favourite tree this year was, by a large margin, the Twelve Knits of Christmas by Pat McLeod and Betty Jamieson. Also popular were the Beaver Choir, When Santa got Stuck up the Orchy, the Fairy Tree and the tree from St Columba's Primary.

The tea stall was busy with visitors enjoying a hot drink and sampling the varied and plentiful cakes and biscuits. Our wonderful homebakers were very generous.

Many visitors also bought raffle tickets. The raffle winners are listed together with the kind donors on the St Conan's and local Facebooks. Together we have raised over £5,000 towards ongoing restoration and improvements.

Amazing trees, lovely festive prizes, excellent homebaking and a lot of hard work from all involved. Thank you!

With best wishes for a very happy Christmas,  
**Liz, Secretary, Friends of St Conan's Kirk.**

**Rockfall thanks**

After the rockfall on Gallanach Road, Argyll and Bute Council agreed to take on the responsibility for dealing with the situation in order to reopen the road and enable me to safely return to my house, just to the south of the rockfall.

I must sincerely thank the council for taking this on and thanks to Malcolm Cullen for keeping me informed about the progress of the planned operation. Also thanks to Roddy MacCuish and Jim Lynch for helping to put the case to the council for speedy action. And finally thanks to the Geo Rope team and Alchemy Construction for their splendid, skilled removal of the potential threat to road and the house, the removal of the boulder on the road and the one barring the way into my garden.

The residents of Kerrera, and all the businesses along the south end of Gallanach are, I'm sure, grateful for the timely reopening of the road.

Well done and many thanks to all involved.  
**Jennifer Shaw, Oban.**

**Fort medical heli pad plans?**

I'm glad that plans for the new Belford hospital seem to be moving along at last, but see no mention of a helicopter landing pad: is there one planned? If not, why not?

I did suggest last year that Lochaber MRT should be moved to where the police station is now, and the police move into the old Belford to get them back into town, but I see that they're moving the town out to the police station!

**Davie Kerr, Onich.**

**Promoting Oban worldwide**

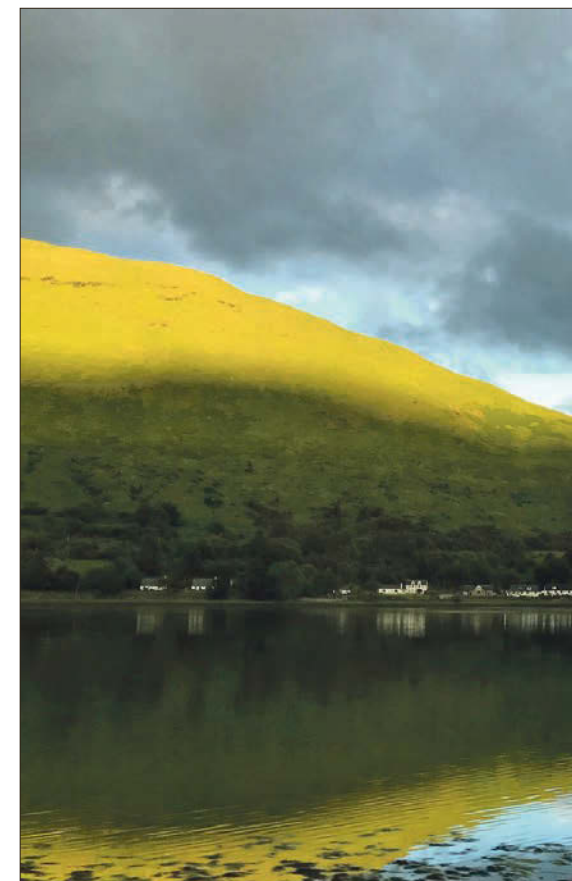
I was pleased to see the report in the Oban Times about the plans to promote Oban as a must-visit destination from 2022 and beyond. The town certainly has much to offer but there's more to attracting visitors than showcasing restaurants, hotels and marine tourism. We need to sell Oban as a beautiful place to visit and unfortunately we're not doing nearly enough.

Once the visitor leaves the seafront and ventures into the hinterland, it's a very different story. Take a walk round the town and anyone with their eyes open will be unable to ignore the litter on the streets, the weeds along the pavements, the filthy and damaged road signs covered in stickers, the rusting broken fences and collapsing walls. To give just one example, the tourist crossing Tweeddale Street to access Jacob's Ladder en route to McCaig's Tower will see rubbish spread around the bins, broken glass on the steps, cans, bottles and carry-out boxes lying around the seats and the rubbish of decades strewn down the bank to the back of the Distillery. But it's when the visitor finally arrives at Oban's crowning glory, McCaig's Tower, that the real horror is unfolded. Rubbish in the car park, scruffy and trodden flower beds, huge muddy puddles, broken glass and the usual carry-out debris on the viewing platform and more of everything tossed over the barrier to litter the bank below. It's not a very good welcome to Oban. 'Keep Oban Beautiful' tries hard to stay positive, but it's certainly not easy!

It's no good blaming the tourists, Covid or the windy weather – it's like this all year round. Many volunteers all over the town get out and about on the streets and beaches with bags and litter-pickers – whatever would the place look like if they decided to give up!

We as a town need to get on and do something about it if Oban's to be taken seriously as a premier tourist attraction. We need education, encouraging signs, more bins and a lot more

## YOUR PICTURE



civic pride! Together we can make a difference!  
**Maurice Wilkins, Keep Oban Beautiful.**

**Appalling decision by board**

Oban Community Council is appalled by the decision of the Harbour Board to accept the officials' report on the future management of Oban Bay. Once again the people of Oban have been let down by officers in Kilmory who have ignored our wishes and our interests.

In public they repeatedly encouraged Oban Community Harbour Development Association (OCHDA), while in fact obstructing their work by failing to provide necessary information in good time, or, in many cases, at all. They were then able to highlight to the board omissions

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or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

## RES



This week's photograph has been sent in by Robert Wrate, who told us: 'As we approach the shortest day of the year this photograph is a reminder of the pleasures we can look forward to when the darkness of another Covid winter is over.' If you have a photograph you'd like to share with us, email a jpeg of no more than 2MB to [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk)

## Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

[ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)



Chan eil teagamh nach eil faclan anns a h-uile cànan a tha nas cudromaiche na chèile agus saoilidh mi gum bi am facal a tha a' ciallachadh "earbsa" àrd air gach liosta! Le gach sluagh sìobhalta an eisimeil sìostam riaghlaidh air choreigin, tha cothromachd beatha na dùthcha gu bhith an crochadh gu mòr air ire na h-earbsa a bhios aig an t-sluagh nan cuid cheannardan. Feumar earbsa aig ire sam bith, ach gu sònraichte aig ire cheannard riaghaltais, a chosnadh tro mhodhan-obrach agus ghniomhan, chan eil dòigh eile air creideas a ghleidheadh agus mòr-chuid a riarachadh.

Sin an seòrsa dùbhlain a tha a' lèireadh Boris Johnson agus a chuid riaghaltais an-dràsta, agus aig àm sgrìobhaidh seo chan eil lasachadh air na h-ionnsaighean air ann am meadhanan na dùthcha agus tha e doirbh faisneachd a dhèanamh air ciamar a dh'fhaodadh cùisean a bhith ann am beagan làithean nuair a bhios sibh a' leughadh a' cholbh seo. Cha do mheall e ach na dh'earb às, tha seanfhacal ag innse dhuinn! Uill saoilidh mi gur ann ainneamh a chithear seanfhacal ris nach aontaichte, ach feumar aideachadh gum bheil buaidh na h-earbsa a chuir luchd-taice Tòraidh ann am Boris Johnson a' bualadh oirnn uile feadh na rìoghachd, 's coma dè an seasamh poiliteigeach a dh'fhaodadh a bhith againn! Sin pàirt de dhileab riaghladh dheamocrataigeach agus anns a' bhitheantas thathas a' coimhead ri dealas phàrtaidhean dùbhlain gus maothachadh a dhèanamh air feallsanachd pàrtaidh riaghlaidh. 'S fhurasta a thuigsinn mar a bhiodh càineadh

agus dùsgadh mì-chliù mu bhuill an riaghaltais na phàirt den iomairt sin, agus abair gum bheil sinn air leithid sin fhaicinn bho chionn ghoirid ann an Westminster!

'S math an airidh cuideachd far am bheil amharas làidir agus fianais a' nochdadh, ach saoilidh mi gum bheil feum air faiceall nach eil a' chuimse nàiseanta air a' chuspair seo tro na meadhanan a' clonadh aire a' mhòr-shluagh bhon chunnart anns am bheil Breatann, agus an saoghal, bho ghalar leantainneach Chovid ann an riochd Omicron. Gun teagamh tha e iomchaidh gun tèid firinn na thachair ann an Sràid Downing aig àm na Nollaige ann an 2020 a rannsachadh gu mionaideach, agus gun tèid briseadh sam bith air riaghailtean a bh' ann aig an àm a pheanasachadh. Ach chan eil tinneas a' dèanamh taghadh neo sgaradh poiliteigeach agus tha e deatamach gun obraich riochdairean gach pàrtaidh còmhla anns an iomairt gus ceannsachadh a thoirt air Omicron, agus seirbheis na slàinte a dhion ann an suidheachadh sam bheil a' bhioras seo a' sgaoileadh aig astar eagallach.

Nuair a bha mi ag èisteachd cuid de na ceistean aig a' choinneimh naidheachd aig a' Phrìomhaire beagan làithean air ais far an robh na h-eòlaichean Pàdraig Vallance agus Crisdean Whitty a' soillearachadh carson a bha iomairtean ùra gan cur an gnìomh ri linn buaidh Omicron, bha mi a' faireachadh agus a' tuigsinn frionas nan eòlaichean. 'S e dìon slàinte an t-sluaigh am prìomh amas, agus an dleasan, a tha mar uallach dhuinn uile!

from the OCHDA proposals, omissions which were down to the council. They then claimed that as a result of the omissions, it would take too long to deliver a Trust Port, while in fact the alternative adopted – a Municipal Port – is a blank sheet of paper. These are the same officials who previously and repeatedly stated that they lacked the expertise to run Oban Harbour.

Furthermore the report to the Harbour Board failed to include, as it should have, an estimate of how much it would cost the council to set up their Municipal Port. We are advised this will be a six-figure sum which could be better spent on other council services. This perverse decision of the Harbour Board must be overturned.

**Oban Community Council.**

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

*'What matters most is offering friendship and kindness to others, connecting with others and being happy.'*

This quotation comes from the newsletter of a charity for very disabled and disadvantaged young people and represents what can be done by those who sometimes are overlooked by society.

The group in question had seen the isolation and loneliness of some people in the community. They translated their concerns into action,

baking for people in a nearby old people's home and giving their time and friendship in a visit. We all have a unique part to play whatever our circumstances or limitations.

Our present problems and hardships have, in so many cases, unleashed a wonderful response enabling neighbours to support each other, delighting in giving, overcoming disabilities to raise money for charities and working to alleviate suffering.

Christians cannot claim a monopoly of charity or good works but certainly any church

community could be the first point of call for anyone who would like to throw off isolation and join with those who are working under God's guidance to make our world a more joyful and satisfying place to live.

The work is often not widely publicised and it is necessary to get involved to find out what is being done, but it can be infinitely rewarding to be part of God's purpose and under His guidance.

**Geoff and Janet Fairbairn, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)**



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# LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

## Hebridean Baker saves the best for last – in Oban

Fiona Scott  
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Hebridean Baker Coinneach MacLeod is heading for Oban where he will complete the last date on his book signing tour at Waterstones on Sunday December 19.

Born and raised on the Isle of Lewis, and inspired by traditional family recipes and homegrown produce, Coinneach rose to fame as the Hebridean Baker on TikTok in 2020.

Since then he has motivated his worldwide followers to bake, forage, learn Gaelic, enjoy a dram or two of whisky and to seek a more wholesome, simple life.

Along with his partner Peter and their Westie Seòras,



Coinneach's aim is to bring the best of the Scottish islands to a worldwide audience.

The Hebridean Baker: Recipes and Wee Stories from the Scottish Islands was

released in September and his signings tour has been a huge success, taking in Edinburgh, St Andrews, Glasgow, Inverness, Jura, Tarbert, Stornoway and 'saving the best

Hebridean Baker Coinneach MacLeod enjoys a wee dram at his island home. Photograph: Euan Anderson.

'til last', Oban.

Speaking to The Oban Times last week Coinneach said: 'It has been amazing to receive thousands of messages from around the world with photographs of them trying out my bakes.

'My Aunt Bellag's duff (clootie dumpling) recipe is definitely a favourite, along with the cocktails and many other of the traditional Hebridean and Scottish recipes in the book.

'It's also been great to hear of so many folk deciding to start learning Gaelic because of reading the stories and say-

ings in the book. It's also great that folk have recognised that some of the photography in the book comes from Clachan Sound and the Isle of Seil and many of the recipes are from my Oban family.'

Over the last month Coinneach has been popping up all over the place.

Appearances on This Morning live from the Isle of Lewis with Holly and Phil, Kirstie Allsopp's Christmas Show and the Chris Evans Virgin Radio Show as well as featuring on the CBS Sunday Breakfast Show across America have all helped to up the profile of the humble Hebridean celebrity.

'It's been a busy few months but I have still had time to spend time back on the island

and excitingly, I have put an offer in on a house back in my home village,' he told The Oban Times.

'Support from the island community has been great - at my book signings folk have been buying 10 books at a time telling me they are Christmas gifts for friends and family around the world.

'Working with island brands such as Harris Distillery, Jura Whisky, Caledonian MacBrayne and Harris Tweed Hebrides has also been amazing.

'Sales have been unbelievable, to see my book ahead of Mary Berry in the charts has been humbling.'

Coinneach will be in Waterstones on Sunday from 1pm.

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# Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I was desperately sorry to hear over the weekend of the passing of Calum Campbell, who was a very well-known and much-loved man to all customers of the Park Bar.

Calum worked in the pub for years but will be remembered fondly for his guest singing appearances with all the bands who played in the Park. Calum probably sang with more musicians than most professional singers have managed in their whole careers!

His staple classics were Spencil Hill, The Portree Kid, and the Kishorn Commandoes – written by one of his favourite folk duos, Gaberlunzie.

I have many great memories of Calum's company, going right back to when I first moved down to Glasgow. If I was playing in the pub on a busy Saturday and the crowd began to get a bit rowdy and close to the equipment or instruments on the stage, I could always rely on Calum arriving side of stage with his arms folded to watch over the punters dancing the night away without a care.

More than once, we would glance at each other and laugh at the scenes unfolding in front of us. He was one of



Calum Campbell

many great characters who make the Park Bar what it is and will be missed terribly.

Fittingly, I happened to pop into the Park Bar the day I heard the news – there was only one place I was heading after 10 days of Covid enforced isolation, I'm sure you will understand!

In the Park that day, I heard of a new band from Skye called Valtos who had just played a sell-out show the previous evening. A number of people who had been were raving about how great it was. Valtos were described to me as a brand new band from Skye who blend traditional music with techno.

Unfortunately, I only heard about the gig after it had happened (news of it obviously hadn't reached me in isolation!) but, by all accounts, it was a great show and it's always lovely to hear of a new band enriching the west coast music scene.

I also managed to catch up with a few members of slightly less new bands for dinner on Sunday! Normally, each year, we have a full blown Christmas night out featuring members of Trail West, Skerryvore, and Tide Lines (among other friends), but clearly that is not possible at the current time – unless you are in Downing Street!

Last year it was cancelled altogether, although, in hindsight, we could perhaps have managed a Christmas quiz with cheese and wine!

This year, due again to rising cases, we had a smaller, more civilised dinner with everyone having tested negative before meeting up.

We always put some money to charity as a group and this time it was Prostate Cancer UK whose ties we each bought and wore on the evening. It was great to see the lads before a quiet week or so in preparation for heading home for Christmas.

# Niteworks ready to release its cinematic new album A' Ghrian

Folk-electronica powerhouse Niteworks is set to release its dramatic new album A' Ghrian on Friday January 14.

The band expertly blur the lines between Scottish traditional, folk and Gaelic music with cutting-edge electronica, creating a unique and exhilarating sound that has seen them rightfully earn a reputation for unapologetic innovation. The new album features an electrifying mix of Gaelic, Scots and English folk songs infused with cinematic electronica.

A' Ghrian [Ah Ghree-un], meaning 'the sun', marks a new dawn for Niteworks as they incorporate English folk and Scots songs into their repertoire for the first time, alongside Gaelic tracks.

This is something that's at the heart of their vision, as drummer Ruairidh Graham explains: 'There is so much value to be found in Scotland's minority languages and cultures that deserve to be presented to mainstream audiences in ways that are

accessible to them. This means the music and culture that goes along with it can be celebrated not just by those who use it, but by a much wider audience that want to enjoy it too.'

The band, comprising Innes Strachan (synth/keys), Allan MacDonald (pipes), Christopher Nicolson (bass) and Ruairidh Graham (drums), grew up together on the Isle of Skye. Their traditional roots, paired with their experiences discovering club culture and electronic music in Glasgow, helped create their folksy electronic sound.

As you might expect, there is an abundance of vocal talent to be found on the new album, including stunning guest vocals from long-time collaborators Sian (Eilidh Cormack, Ceitlin Lilidh and Ellen MacDonald) including a solo vocal from Ellen.

The inimitable tones of celebrated Scottish singers Kathleen MacInnes, Beth Malcolm, Hannah Rarity and Alasdair Whyte also feature.

Ruairidh continued: 'With

this album we've sought to create a more expansive sound that's cinematic in its nature.

'We were partly inspired by our work writing the music for Edinburgh's Hogmanay Fare Well film that reflected on what 2020 had been like for many during the pandemic. The nature of the project required broad expansive sounds, and that led to us going further in that direction through the writing and recording of the album. Our upcoming orchestral concert for Celtic Connections further reinforced our desire to keep down that path. A lot of the material from this album will lend itself well to that show and with the backing of a full orchestra it's going to be really powerful – we still can't quite believe it's happening!'

The band will tour the album with live dates scheduled from this month until the end of 2022, including a sell-out return to Celtic Connections in January.

For more information visit [niteworksband.com](http://niteworksband.com)

## What's on at Oban Cinema



### Friday 17 December

Spider-Man: No Way Home   12A	12:30/16:30/19:45
Clifford The Big Red Dog   PG	16:45
House Of Gucci   15	19:00

### Saturday 18 December

Clifford The Big Red Dog   PG	12:30/14:45
Spider-Man: No Way Home   12A	13:30/16:30/19:45
A Boy Called Christmas   PG	17:00
House Of Gucci   15	19:00

### Sunday 19 December

Clifford The Big Red Dog   PG	12:30/14:45
Spider-Man: No Way Home   12A	13:30/16:30/19:45
A Boy Called Christmas   PG	17:00
House Of Gucci   15	19:00

### Wednesday 22 December (screenings marked with ★ are captioned)

Clifford The Big Red Dog   PG	12:30 ★/14:45
Spider-Man: No Way Home   12A	13:15 ★/16:30 ★/19:45
A Boy Called Christmas   PG	17:00 ★
House Of Gucci   15	19:00 ★

### Thursday 23 December

Clifford The Big Red Dog   PG	12:30/14:45
Spider-Man: No Way Home   12A	13:15/16:30/19:45
A Boy Called Christmas   PG	17:00
House Of Gucci   15	19:00

★Key: HOH - Captions for the hard of hearing.

You're invited to a free community screening of **It's A Wonderful Life** Christmas Eve **5pm** while tickets last!

Mulled wine and mince pies a plenty!

Join our mailing list at [www.obanphoenix.com/mailling-list](http://www.obanphoenix.com/mailling-list)

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

# Colonsay launches for 2022 'gem of a'

by Sandy Neil  
[sneil@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:sneil@obantimes.co.uk)

The Colonsay Book Festival – dubbed a 'literary lock-in' – has announced the line-up for its two-day event in spring 2022.

The award-winning writers and authors appearing at this 'wee gem of a festival on a jewel of an island' on Saturday April 30 and Sunday May 1 next year are confirmed as: Catherine Brown, John D Burns, Karen Campbell, Alex Gray, Andrew O'Hagan, and Robin Robertson.

Robin, from the north-east coast of Scotland, has published eight books of poetry, including *The Long Take*, which won the Walter Scott Prize for historical fiction, and was the first narrative poem to be shortlisted for the Booker Prize. His latest book *Grimoire: New Scottish Folk Tales* has been widely lauded for mixing Scots, English and

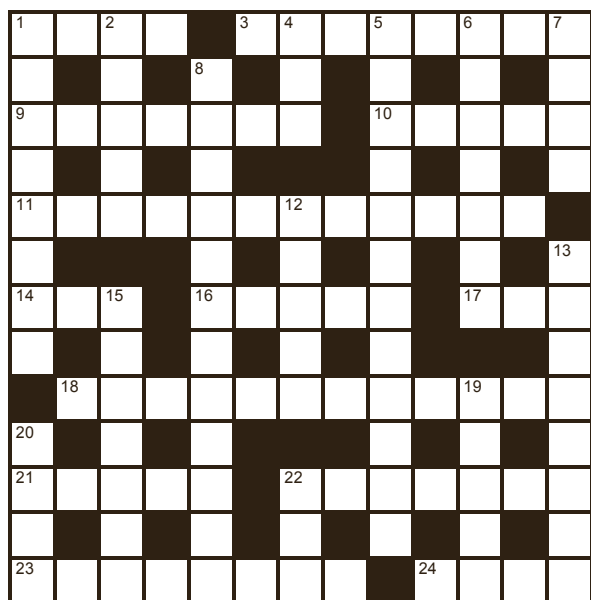


Gaelic to mesmerising effect. Alex Gray is the Sunday Times bestselling author of the Detective William Lorimer series. Born and raised in Glasgow,

she has been awarded the Scottish Association of Writers' Constable and Pitlochry trophies for her crime writing and is the co-founder of the interna-

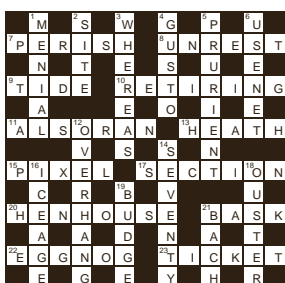
tional Bloody Scotland Crime Writing Festival. Scottish writer Karen Campbell is the author of seven novels, most recently *The Sound of the Hours*, *Rise*

## CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Landlord's call (4)
  - 3 Portuguese one can give a nasty sting (3-2)
  - 9 Core (7)
  - 10 Succeed (5)
  - 11 Moulds for broken parts (7,5)
  - 14 Startled cry (3)
  - 16 Angry (5)
  - 17 Lingerie (3)
  - 18 Therapeutic use of water (12)
  - 21 Warm welcome (5)
  - 22 Landed (3-4)
  - 23 Esteem (8)
  - 24 Withered (4)
- Down**
- 1 Instrumental composition to portray a mood (4,4)
  - 2 Shade of coffee (5)
  - 4 Stubborn beast (3)
  - 5 Outperformer (12)
  - 6 Bath (7)
  - 7 Pond plant (4)
  - 8 Signed for a kill (5,7)
  - 12 Settle down for the night (5)
  - 13 Dark school uniform colour (4,4)
  - 15 Where to put the unlocker! (7)
  - 19 Existing (5)
  - 20 Find fault with the fish (4)
  - 22 Porker (3)

**LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION**



# XpoNorth Tweet pitch is

by Kathie Griffiths  
[kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk)

Mark your calendar and limber up your thumbs as the XpoNorth Tweet Pitch is back for its eighth year on Friday January 21.

The annual XpoNorth Tweet Pitch, produced in association with the Association of Scottish Literary Agents, gives writers from across Scotland the chance to pitch their work to a panel of the country's leading literary agents and publishers.

Writers of all levels and from all genres have the chance to bag a book deal by simply pitching their work in 280 characters or less and tagging #XpoNorth.

Completed work or projects still in development will be considered from writers living and working in Scotland. The only requirement is that the work must be unpublished.

To help aspiring authors pre-

pare for Tweet Pitch, XpoNorth is hosting a 'publishing trends' live webinar with literary agents Robbie Guillory and Lina Langlee tomorrow (Friday December 17) offering writers a chance to explore emerging and best-selling genres in both fiction and non-fiction and what agents are looking for.

On Friday January 7 leading crime writer Alison Belsham and literary agent Jenny Brown will be hosting a how-to-pitch-your-work live webinar giving practical tips on how to get noticed during Tweet Pitch and beyond.

Last year's Tweet Pitch attracted submissions by many hundreds of writers throughout the one-day event, with #XpoNorth appearing in the top five Twitter trends across the UK for the majority of the day.

Success stories from previous years include Leonie Charlton from Glen Lonan, who successfully had her debut story





# s programme festival'

**Andrew O'Hagan, one of the many authors lined up for the Colonsay Book Festival in spring 2022.**

by Faber & Faber in 2020. Further programme details will be released in late January, but early-bird tickets for what promises to be an engaging and thought-provoking weekend are now on sale.

and This is Where I Am, all published by Bloomsbury Circus.

Her previous books include The Twilight Time, After the Fire, Shadowplay and Proof of Life.

Andrew O'Hagan grew up in Ayrshire and has published eight books. He won the Los Angeles Times Prize for Fiction, has written well-known reportage from around the world, and is editor at large of the London Review of Books and of Esquire Magazine.

His plays have been produced by the National Theatre of Scotland and his latest novel, Mayflies, was published

Richard Irvine, co-director of the event, said: 'As one of – if not the – most remote book festivals in the world, we're delighted to be able to once again host such a strong and diverse line-up of authors, particularly after such a grim period of lockdown.'

'Colonsay is such an unspoilt special place, it's the perfect setting to meet and mingle with some of the country's leading writers and hear and talk about life and literature, whether at the event itself, in the pub afterwards, or walking on one of its unspoilt beaches.'

'It's a hugely enjoyable event for visitors, authors and locals alike.'

Now in its ninth year, this annual Hebridean literary celebration has carved a unique niche in Scotland's ever-expanding book festival calendar since its launch in 2012.

The two-day event is conceived and produced entirely by the island's residents, and has previously featured such distinguished writers, poets and authors as Val McDermid, Andrew Greig, Mhairi Hedderwick, AL Kennedy, Jackie Kay, Janice Galloway, Ian Rankin, Alexander McCall Smith and Liz Lochhead, to name but a few.

Tickets are on sale now, with a special early-bird rate available until the end of January 2022. Keep up-to-date with news on the website and via Twitter and Facebook. Tickets for the 2022 Colonsay Book Festival are on sale from [www.colonsaybookfestival.org.uk](http://www.colonsaybookfestival.org.uk)

# s back for authors

**Success stories from previous years include Leonie Charlton from Glen Lonan, who had her debut story Marram published last year by Sandstone Press and is currently working on her second book.**

Photograph: Naomi Thomas

Marram published last year by Sandstone Press and is currently working on her second book. The launch of Tweet Pitch coincides with the release of key publishing sessions from this year's XpoNorth 2021 Creative Industries Conference which are now available to play back on the XpoNorth YouTube channel.

This year's industry sessions included a discussion about life writing that explores how to shape recollections and choose facts when writing a memoir.

Chaired by literary agent Jenny Brown, acclaimed writers Amy Liptrot and Cathy Rentzenbrink talk about how

best to frame a personal story in an original way. In conversation with Marion Sinclair of Publishing Scotland, leading author, historian and broadcaster Professor Kate Williams discusses the joys and challenges of writing historical fact and fiction and offers her unique perspective on the dynamics of bringing history to life for readers, viewers and listeners.

And a panel discussion featuring award-winning medical writer Gavin Francis, geographer and author Fraser MacDonald, and Ed Lake, joint publishing director of Profile Books, talk about the current trends in popular science writing and serious non-fiction, and how to make complex ideas accessible to the general reader.

Talking about the wealth of publishing resources available via XpoNorth, Peter Urpeth, publishing sector specialist advisor at XpoNorth said: 'The

annual Tweet Pitch has become a major date in the calendar of Scottish publishing, and a real celebration and display of the depth, diversity and spirit of writing in Scotland.'

'The day offers writers a chance to kick-start their writing year with a pitch to agents and publishers, and is an opportunity that has been proven, time and time again to work.'

'This year again we are offering two events ahead of the Tweet Pitch offering insights into current publishing trends and how to construct the perfect pitch.'

'Both of these events are relevant for writers planning to Tweet Pitch and for those preparing to pitch their work in more conventional ways to agents and publishers in the year ahead.'

To register to attend the upcoming webinars or to find out more about Tweet Pitch visit [www.xponorth.co.uk](http://www.xponorth.co.uk)

# M' ALBA

## MY ALBA

### DIARDAOIN 16 An Dùbhlachd THURSDAY 16 December

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19.00 Beartas nan Daoine/The Peoples Riches  
19.25 Dàn  
19.30 SpeakGaelic S1 Ep8 Tide dheth/Time off  
20.00 An Là – NEWS  
20.30 Eòrpa/European Current Affairs  
21.00 Sar-Sgeoil-Nineteen Eighty-four  
21.55 Mach a Seo!  
22.30 Freiceadan ÙRA Na Banrigh/The Queen's New Guard  
23.20 Celtic Connections Shorts  
23.25 Transatlantic Sessions: Dluath an Daimh

### DIHAOINE 17 An Dùbhlachd FRIDAY 17 December

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19.00 An Là – NEWS  
19.25 Dàn  
19.30 Machair  
19.55 Fraochy Bay  
20.00 Fianais-Donald John Gillies  
20.30 Dreach Ùr na Nollaig  
21.00 Orain Gaidhlig Beethoven  
22.25 Beethoven: A'Chuirn Ghaidhlig  
23.20 DNA S1

### DISATHAIRNE 18 An Dùbhlachd SATURDAY 18 December

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
17.45 An Là  
18.00 Run-diobhair Cheananais/The Secret of Kells

19.15 Dreach ÙR Na Nollaig  
19.45 Binnes-Na Trads  
20.00 Fianais- Donald John Gillies  
20.30 An Lot/The Croft  
21.00 ALT  
22.00 Freiceadan Ùra na Banrigh/The Queen's New Guard  
22.50 Celtic Connections Shorts  
23.00 Sar-Sgeoil-Nineteen Eighty Four  
00.00 Seoid a'Christmas/Christmas Kitchen Coves

### DIDÒMHNAICH 19 An Dùbhlachd SUNDAY 19 December

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
18.15 An Là  
18.30 Seachd Là / News Review  
19.30 Alleluia/Spiritual praise  
20.00 Eòrpa/European Current Affairs  
20.30 Wild Atlantic Way with Anne London  
21.00 Mach a Seo: Na Fir-chli7  
22.00 Bannan (S7 Ep2)  
22.30 Bannan (S7 Ep3)  
23.00 DNA /Danish Drama  
23.40 Skerryvore

### DILUAIN 20 An Dùbhlachd MONDAY 20 December

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19.00 Fianais Murdo Morrison  
19.30 SpeakGaelic (S1 E10) Ceannachd/Shopping  
20.00 An Là – NEWS  
20.30 Dreach Ùr Na Nollaig  
21.00 Trusadh-Air na Busaichean/On the Buses  
22.00 Bannan (S7 Ep4)

22.30 Bannan (S7 Ep5)  
23.00 Under Canvas/Music from Eden Court  
23.30 Mach a Seo!

### DIMÀIRT 21 An Dùbhlachd TUESDAY 21 December

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19.00 Beartas nan Daoine/The People's Riches  
19.25 Dàn  
19.30 SpeakGaelic S1 Ep9 Biadh & Deoch/Food and Drink  
20.00 An Là – NEWS  
20.30 Wild Atlantic Way-With Anne London  
21.00 Bho Chaoirain Gu Consoles  
22.00 Trusadh-Air na Busaichean/On the Buses  
23.00 Machair  
23.30 Alleluia!

### DICIADAIN 22 An Dùbhlachd WEDNESDAY 22 December

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19.00 Fianais – Donald Macleod  
19.30 SpeakGaelic S1 Ep10: Ceannachd/Shopping  
20.00 An Là  
20.30 An Lot/The Croft  
21.00 Mu Chriochan Hoil (Derick Thomson@100)  
22.00 Scottish Premiership-Hibernian v Aberdeen  
23.45 Belladrum 2020



[BBC.CO.UK/ALBA](http://BBC.CO.UK/ALBA) | [BBC.CO.UK/IPLAYER](http://BBC.CO.UK/IPLAYER)

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# Party time for Mànran

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Supergroup Mànran are throwing a Hogmanay Party at Oban's Corran Halls.

The gig is one of a string of festive gigs the band are performing hot off the heels of their new album ÛRAR.

Oban band Chunks and an all-star ceilidh band will be helping Mànran bring in the New Year.

Killin, Strathpeffer, Stirling and Skye are the other stages where the multi-award-winning trad-rock band will be entertaining audiences with material from ÛRAR alongside a back-catalogue of crowd-pleasers this season.

The well-loved group have spent 11 years at the heart of the trad music scene and released their fourth studio record in October.

The album is the first to feature Oban singer Kim Carnie, who won the Gaelic Singer



of the Year Award at the MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards 2021, and guitarist Aidan Moodie as the latest members of this unstoppable band.

Having been in high de-

mand as a live act across the world with shows in more than 30 countries, the group are looking forward to playing to an Oban audience.

On Spotify alone, their new album ÛRAR has been

streamed over 150,000 times in its first month.

Mànran's accordion player and founding member Gary Innes, who also presents BBC Radio Scotland's longest-running radio show Take The

One of the hottest tickets in town will be to Mànran's special Hogmanay Party at The Corran Halls, Oban.

Floor, said: 'We're delighted to be returning to Oban this festive season and be joined by fans old and new at The Corran Halls.

'We can't wait to play some tried and tested favourites as well as new tracks from our latest album – it's just brilliant to be gigging again and we can't wait to see everyone this festive season.

'The special Hogmanay Party will delight audiences with performances of exciting new music and an array of old favourites. Mànran will also be joined by local band Chunks and an all-star ceilidh band to bring in the New Year alongside a few more local surprises.

'We hope it will be the best Hogmanay party in

Oban. Come along and join in the celebrations!' Vaccine passports will not be required for the show which has a capacity of less than 500.

Catch Mànran at The Corran Halls, Oban on Friday 31 December.

Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/manran-hogmanay-party-live-at-the-corran-halls-oban-tickets>

Mànran will be at Strathpeffer Pavilion on Tuesday December 28, Stirling is sold out and tickets are still available for Killin's McLaren Hall on Thursday December 30.

## CONTACTUS

EMAIL US AT  
editor@obantimes.co.uk  
TELEPHONE  
01631 568000

# WIN £200 WORTH OF SHOPPING

# TROLLEY



# DASH

## COURTESY OF TESCO OBAN

We all spend far too much money over Christmas and New Year, so how great would it be able to fill your shopping trolley COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE in January?! Courtesy of our friends at Tesco in Oban, one lucky reader will win the chance to fill their trolley with up to £200 worth of goods (see T&C's for exclusions). All you have to do is collect 4 tokens over four weeks starting on 9th December, get them to us by 10am Tuesday 11th January and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic trolley dash. What are you waiting for, banish those post-Christmas blues and start collecting your tokens!

All 4 tokens must be sent in a single envelope to Oban Times Trolley Dash 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.

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Winner must be at Tesco, Lochside, Oban, PA34 4HP for 10.30am January 17th. Excludes tobacco, lottery, baby food, non-food items and alcohol. Quantity limited to two per item. The winner will be given a hand held scanner to monitor spend to the value of £200. 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.

#### DIGITAL SUBSCRIBERS

Digital subscribers who have an active subscription covering the period from December 2021, to February 2022, can enter the competition by sending their name, address and email address that they subscribe with to Oban Times Trolley Dash Competition, Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban PA34 4HB by 10am Tuesday January 11. Only one entry per subscription permitted. Entrant must be able to attend the trolley dash in Oban on the January 17, 2022.





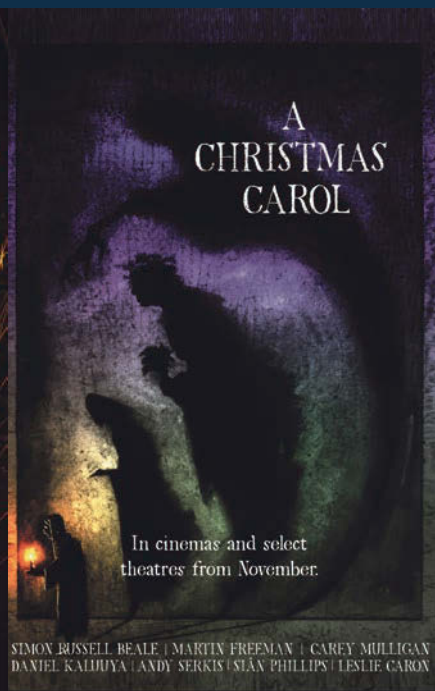
# Coming soon to ObanPhoenix Cinema

Keep up to date with what's on and join our mailing list using the QR code or visit [www.obanphoenix.com/mailling-list](http://www.obanphoenix.com/mailling-list)



## SPIDER-MAN: NO WAY HOME FROM DECEMBER 17

With Spider-Man's identity now revealed, our friendly neighbourhood web-slinger is unmasked and no longer able to separate his normal life as Peter Parker from the high stakes of being a superhero.



## A CHRISTMAS CAROL FROM DECEMBER 26

A Victorian family prepares a paper theatre for a performance of A Christmas Carol. The audience enters the imagination of one of the children and quickly, the cardboard stage transforms to reveal a magical world containing real dancers and stylised sets.



## SPENCER FROM DECEMBER 26

During her Christmas holidays with the royal family at the Sandringham estate in Norfolk, England, Diana Spencer, struggling with mental health problems, decides to end her decade-long marriage to Prince Charles.



## WEST SIDE STORY FROM DECEMBER 31

An adaptation of the 1957 musical, West Side Story explores forbidden love, and the rivalry between the Jets and the Sharks, two teenage street gangs of different ethnic backgrounds.



## MOTHERING SUNDAY FROM DECEMBER 31

On a warm spring day in 1924, housemaid and foundingling Jane Fairchild (Odessa Young) finds herself alone on Mother's Day. Her employers, Mr. and Mrs. Niven (Colin Firth and Olivia Colman), are out and she has the rare chance to spend an afternoon of abandon with her secret lover, Paul (Josh O'Connor), the boy from the manor house nearby who is Jane's long-term love despite the fact that he's engaged to be married to another woman, a childhood friend, and daughter of his parents' friends. But events that neither can foresee will change the course of Jane's life forever.



## THE MATRIX RESURRECTIONS FROM DECEMBER 31

From visionary filmmaker Lana Wachowski comes "The Matrix Resurrections," the long-awaited fourth film in the groundbreaking franchise that redefined a genre. The new film reunites original stars Keanu Reeves and Carrie-Anne Moss in the iconic roles they made famous, Neo and Trinity.



## THE KING'S MAN COMING SOON IN JANUARY 2022

As a collection of history's worst tyrants and criminal masterminds gather to plot a war to wipe out millions, one man must race against time to stop them. Discover the origins of the very first independent intelligence agency in The King's Man, directed by Matthew Vaughn.





*Your personal Christmas messages for 2021*

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our friends,  
neighbours and  
ex-colleagues  
from Bob and Morag  
Miller, Stirling

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our friends and  
neighbours from  
George & Isobel  
Cormack

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our relatives,  
friends & neighbours  
from Addy & Isobel  
Frater, Inveraray

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR**

to all my relatives, friends  
and neighbours from  
Liz Butler, Longsdale.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

from  
Hamish MacMillan,  
Appin

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all my family,  
friends and relatives,  
from Maggie Stewart,  
6 MacCallum Court,  
Dunbeg

**TEDDY  
REFFIN**

would like to wish all  
family, friends and  
neighbours a Merry  
Christmas.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all my friends in  
Lismore, Appin,  
Benderloch, North Connel,  
Connel, Taynult, Loch  
Awe, Dalmally & Oban  
from James MacArthur.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our relatives,  
friends and neighbours  
from Willie and Moira,  
Dervaig.

**EWEN AND  
KATIE MACLEOD**

would like to wish all  
family, friends and  
neighbours a merry  
Christmas and a  
Happy New Year.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our relatives,  
friends and neighbours  
from Ian Campbell and  
family, Pulpit Hill, Oban

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

All at Eadar Glinn Home  
wish families and friends  
a Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year

**SEASONS GREETINGS**

from  
Catherine MacKillop,  
31 Dunmar Court.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our relatives,  
friends & neighbours  
from Mima  
& John McNab,  
Lochaline

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our relatives,  
friends and neighbours  
from Ian  
and Jean Ross

Susan & Wilson,  
7 Breadalbane Mews  
would like to wish all  
our relatives, friends  
& neighbours a  
**Merry Christmas**

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all our family and  
friends from Flora and  
Malcolm MacMillan,  
Glenora.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all my relatives  
and friends  
from John MacVean,  
15 Lynn Court Oban.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

to all my relatives,  
friends & neighbours  
from Peggy McCuish

Ian and Moira MacInnes  
Gleninnes, Croft Road,  
Oban will not be sending  
Christmas cards this year  
but would like to wish  
all relatives, friends and  
neighbours a very Merry  
Christmas and a healthy  
Happy New Year.

**Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year**

from the  
Lord MacLean  
of Bentalla

**Jimmy and Kay  
Harrison**

would like to wish all  
family, friends and  
neighbours a merry  
Christmas a happy and  
healthy New Year.

Christine McKillop would  
like to wish all her family,  
friends, neighbours  
and carers  
**a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year**

**LIZ AND ERIC  
DEVERILL**

Wishes everyone at  
Oban Baptist Church  
and Glencruitten Golf  
Club and all friends  
and family the very  
best of the season





to all our customers



**Oban's 1st Steps  
Day Nursery**

**We wish you all a Wonderful Joy filled Christmas, surrounded by families and friends.**

**As we enter into 2022 we send our best wishes to you all for a safe and exciting New Year**

Don't forget our wonderful nursery is open all year – we offer:

- Full day care for babies, toddlers and children up to the age of 5 years
- We offer wraparound for 3–5 yr old children in our 40 Place Elc unit-3 full days
- Included is a daily lunch and snack - a home cooked nutritionally balanced meal and a mid morning snack of fruit and milk

Term time only at NO additional cost to the parents or 5 daily sessions 9am to 3pm term time.

Please follow our link to enquiries at [www.firststepsoban.co.uk](http://www.firststepsoban.co.uk)

**Croft Road | Oban | Argyll | PA34 5JL Tel: 01631 567491 manager.firststeps@yahoo.co.uk**



**The GRAB Trust**  
GROUP FOR RECYCLING IN ARGYLL & BUTE

From all the Grab Trust Team we would like to wish all our customers, supporters, volunteers and donators a happy Christmas and Jolly New Year.

Lori is closed from 24 December, re-opens 5th January



**B M L P**  
Beaches & Marine Litter Project



**LCRI**  
LORN & OBAN REUSE INITIATIVE



**REVOLVE**  
BRINGING UP STANDARDS IN RE-USE

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[info@grab.org.uk](mailto:info@grab.org.uk)



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**Open 5pm - 9.30pm Mon - Thur. Closed Friday 24th December**  
**Reopen Thursday 6th January**

**Serving fine fish & chips in Lochaber for over 40 years**

Sammy, Anne & Staff Wish all their Customers Very Best Wishes for the Festive Season

# The Oban Times LOCHABER TIMES

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of our readers, who have continued to go to the shops to pick up a copy of their Oban Times or have accessed it via a digital subscription. Thank you also to our wonderful advertisers who have continued to spread their message far and wide through our newspapers and online platforms.

Your loyalty and custom, especially during these challenging times, is very much appreciated. 2021 has not been easy! We have got through it because of the strength of our communities and we have loved reporting on all our local heroes: the NHS and healthcare workers, teachers, carers, delivery teams, transport

hubs, food producers and food banks – the list is endless - and the incredible businesses that were able to stay open and work to the strictest restrictions, to serve the people of our communities. You have all done us so proud. We thank you all and wish you a safe and happy Christmas, and a bright, positive outlook for 2022.

**We would like to remind you of our Christmas/New Year deadlines:**

**Monday 20th December 4pm** For the issue dated Thursday 23rd December

**Monday 27th December 4pm** For the issue dated Thursday 30th December

**Monday 3rd January** For the issue dated Thursday 6th January

**OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON THURSDAY 23RD AND FRIDAY 24TH DECEMBER AND THURSDAY 30TH AND FRIDAY 31ST DECEMBER BUSINESS AS USUAL FROM MONDAY 3RD JANUARY**

To advertise: **01631 568000** or email [adverts@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:adverts@obantimes.co.uk).  
To submit a story: **01631 568000** or email [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk) or reach us via messenger from our Facebook page.



## AROUND THE MARKETS

United Auctions, Oban, Tuesday December 7: sold 735 store cattle and 20 breeding cattle.

Bullocks sold to £1240 for an AAx from Mr R Semple, Dalbhraddan Farm, Southend to average £695.34 while heifers sold to £1500 for the pre-show champion, a LimX from Mr R Currie, Low Dunashery, Tayinloan to average £644.55.

Bullocks sold to 335.50p/kg for a LimX from M/s A & I MacInnes, Ruaig, Tiree to average 236.86p/kg and heifers sold to 543.50p/kg again for the pre-show champion from Low Dunashery to average 225.07p/kg.

Incalf heifers sold to £1300 for a BSx from A H MacDonald, 19 East Hynish, Tiree.

A good show of quality bred cattle was on offer and sold well to a good following of buyers.

Bullocks sold at comparable rates to last year whilst Heifers failed to maintain last year's high values.

At the show prior to the sale, the judge, Mr Hugh Dunlop, Holehouse, made his awards as follows:

Island Bullock:

1st, A & I MacInnes, Ruaig; 2nd, C MacKinnon, Kilkenneth, Tiree; 3rd, K MacKinnon, Parkhouse, Tiree.

Mainland Bullock:

1st & Res Champion, R & J Lines,



Killowcraw; 2nd, A & M Buchanan, Achnaba; 3rd, R & J Lines, Killowcraw.

Island Heifer:

1st, K MacKinnon, Parkhouse; 2nd & 3rd, A & I MacInnes, Ruaig.

Mainland Heifer:

First and Overall Champion, R Currie, Low Dunashery; second, R & J Lines, Killowcraw; third, D Wright, Woodend.

**LEADING LOTS & PRICES PER HEAD**

**BULLOCKS** – AAx - £1240, £995(2), £800, Dalbhraddan Farm. BSx - £960, Kilwhipnach. BRBx - £1050, £1030, Tyree; £995, Dalbhraddan; £990(2),

Strathnafanaig; £990, Low Dunashery; £970, Dallachulish; £955, Tyree; £940, Low Dunashery. CHx - £760(2), Bragleenmore. LIMx - £1220, Killowcraw; £1180, £1150, Achnaba; £1140, £1130(2), £1120, Killowcraw; £1100, Achnacree Beag; £1100(2), Killowcraw; £1100, Achnacree Bay; £1090(2), Uigle; £1090, Achnaba; £1075, Woodend; £1050, Dalbhraddan; £1050, Tyree; £1040, Killowcraw; £1035(2), Barcaldine HF; £1035, Tyree; £1030, Parkhouse; £1030, Ruaig; £1020, Killowcraw; £1020, Ruaig;

**Picture of Champion Heifer calf with breeders Robert and Stuart Currie, Low Dunashery Farm, which was purchased by the judge, Hugh Dunlop, Holehouse for £1,500.**

£1010(3), Low Dunashery; £1010, 4 Kilkenneth; £1010, Barcaldine HF; £1000(3), Tyree. LULx - £800, Slaterich. SALx - £660, Fiart. SIMx - £840, Feall, £835(5), Ballard; £820, 2 Baligrundle. OTH - £960, Strathnafanaig; £830(2), Balure of Shian.

HEIFERS – AAx - £900(2), Dalbhraddan; £820, Ruaig; £800(3), Achnacree-moore; £790, Dalrannoch. BRBx - £1420, Tyree, £1280, Killowcraw; £1160, Lephinchapel; £1060, Dallachulish; £1040, Dalbhraddan; £1020, Ruaig; £1000, Strathnafanaig; £1000, Tyree; £960, Lephinchapel; £930, Strathnafanaig; £900, Lephinchapel. CHx - £1090, £830, Ruaig; £745(8), Cliad. LIMx - £1500, Low Dunashery; £1300, Parkhouse; £1200, £1180, Ruaig; £1130, Achnacree Beag; £1110, Sandaig; £1030, Killowcraw; £1020, Strongorm; £1015, Ruaig; £1005, Dalbhraddan; £1000, Achnaba; £1000, Balligarve. SIMx - £875(2), Ballard; £780, Feall.

**BREEDING CATTLE – INCALF**

**HEIFERS** - £1300, £1200, 19 East Hynish; £1200, Sandaig.

**INCALF COWS** - £1180, Bally-meanach.

**BULLING HEIFERS** - £1000(3), 8 Kilkenneth, Tiree.

**LEADING LOTS & PRICES PER KILO**

**BULLOCKS** – AAx – 280p(2),

Achnacree-moore; 238p(2), Dalrannoch. BSx – 249p, Kilwhipnach; 245p(12), 238p(8), Tayvallich Estates.

BRBx – 307p, 305p, Tyree; 288p,

Low Dunashery; 281p, 276p, Tyree;

273p, 270p(4), Stronacroibh;

269p(2), Strathnafanaig; 266p(2),

Ardachy; 256p, Low Dunashery;

241p, Stronacroibh. CHx – 281p(2),

Bragleenbeg; 268p(2), Bragleenmore;

263p(2), Cliad. LIMx – 336p, Ruaig;

333p, Killowcraw; 325p, Ruaig; 314p,

Achnaba; 312p, Lag-Na-Fhiodhain;

308p(2), Ardachy; 306p(2), Killowcraw;

305p, 304p, Tyree; 304p, Achnacree

Beag; 304p(2), Killowcraw; 296p(2),

Tyree; 296p, Ardachy; 295p,

Killowcraw; 295p, Strongorm; 294p,

Tyree; 294p, Woodend; 293p, Ruaig;

292p(2), Tyree; 292p, Achnaba; 292p(3),

Low Dunashery; 291p(3), Inion;

290p(2), Ardachy; 289p, Ruaig; 288p,

Low Dunashery; 287p, 2 Baligrundle;

286p(2), Ardachy; 283p(2), Low

Dunashery; 283p(2), Barcaldine HF;

283p, Tyree; 281p, 4 Kilkenneth; 280p(2), Kilwhipnach. LRx – 235p(4), Antuim. SALx – 243p(3), Fiart.

SIMx – 270p(6), Ardencaple; 262p(2),

Arileod; 262p, Feall; 259p(8), Inshaig;

258p, 256p(5), Ballard; 243p(9), Cliad.

OTH – 295p, Strathnafanaig.

HEIFERS – AAx – 233p, Ruaig.

BRBx – 455p, Tyree; 372p, Killowcraw;

333p, Tyree; 330p, Lephinchapel; 323p,

Tyree; 295p(2), Lephinchapel; 284p,

Strathnafanaig; 283p, Dallachulish;

282p, Ruaig; 276p, Tyree; 273p,

Lephinchapel; 272p, Strathnafanaig;

270p, 264p(2), Lephinchapel; 256p,

Tyree; 252p, Stronacroibh. CHx – 294p,

Ruaig; 239p(8), Cliad. LIMx – 544p, Low

Dunashery; 376p, Parkhouse; 364p,

323p, Ruaig; 322p, Ardachy; 303p,

Ruaig; 301p, Woodend; 301p, Ruaig;

296p(2), Tyree; 295p(4), Ardachy;

278p, Ruaig; 274p, 273p, Balligarve;

271p, Strathnafanaig; 269p, Ardachy;

267p(2), Inion; 267p, 4 Kilkenneth;

266p, Ruaig; 265p, Achnaba; 264p(5),

Strongorm; 263p, Ruaig; 263p(5),

Low Dunashery; 262p, Ruaig; 260p,

Achnacree Beag; 259p(4), Turnault;

258p, Achnaba; 258p, Tyree; 257p,

Ardchatten; 257p(2), Ruaig; 256p,

Sandaig; 254p, Achuaran; 253p, Ruaig;

253p, Killowcraw; 250p, Balnagown.

SALx – 235p(5), Fiart. SIMx – 267p,

Feall; 249p(2), Ballard; 240p(2), Feall.

Merry Christmas to all our customers

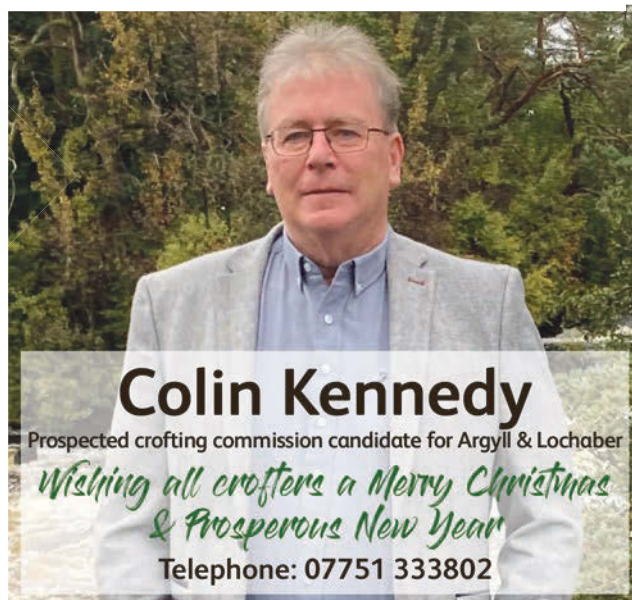


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& Prosperous New Year*

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*We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all seasons greetings and a prosperous New Year, and we thank you for your custom during 2021*

**Slàinte Mhath Dhuibh Uile**



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 Lines open: Mon to Thu 9am- 5pm, Fri 9am- 4pm  
 E-MAIL: adverts@obantimes.co.uk  
 Please remember to give your name, address, postcode and phone number.

# Wishing you a long and happy retirement, Donald

It was the end of an era on Tuesday December 7 as Donald Morrison retired from United Auctions after a career spanning 48 years, serving the West Coast since he was 17 years old.

Having stood down from his auctioneering role in 2018, Donald, who turned 65 in November, will pass on the baton for west coast sales to the existing team of Raymond Kennedy, Peter Wood, Ross Fotheringham, Murray Steel and Derek Anderson who have been in place since 2016.

Donald's last day as a director of Scotland's leading livestock auctioneers will be December 31 but he will continue to be a familiar face at the sale rings at

Stirling, Dalmally, Oban, Islay, Tiree and Uist markets to buy livestock on behalf of farmers and crofters.

During his time at the company as both an employee and board member, Donald has been instrumental in helping to secure the long-term sustainability of the west coast markets.

The crofter's son from South Uist advocated for the company's investments to upgrade the United Auctions-owned Dalmally and Islay marts and the centre at Moleigh near Oban. He also played a major role working with the communities of Tiree and Lochboisdale to ensure their

community marts were built.

Donald was also a key part of the team in securing the reappointment of United Auctions as operators at Oban Livestock Centre.

Ahead of his retirement, Donald conducted a last auction for United Auctions, the sale of farm equipment on behalf of the estate of the late Anne Maclarty. Donald expressed a wish to conduct the sale as Anne was one of the first clients that Donald dealt with, becoming a friend for more than 40 years. Donald thought it only fitting to go out on a high.

To view the video, visit [www.obantimes.co.uk](http://www.obantimes.co.uk)

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George Purves, managing director of United Auctions, right, makes the presentation to Donald in the ring at Oban livestock market following the Christmas calf sale, watched by staff. Photograph: Kevin McGlynn



# Agrimony Ltd

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- Estate Management
- Livestock Records

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e-mail [info@agrimony.co.uk](mailto:info@agrimony.co.uk)

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 Email: [farm.gates@yahoo.com](mailto:farm.gates@yahoo.com)

### MOBILE SHEEP SYSTEM

**ON SALE FROM £1695 + VAT**  
(RRP from £3400 plus VAT)

The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements

**MAIN FEATURES:**

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 8 railed x 970mm high
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- Includes all joining pins/stakes

**OPTION 1**  
 20-foot race, 100-foot holding pen  
**£1950 + VAT**  
 Comes with a 100-foot holding pen and 20-foot race, 2 x 2-foot swing gates and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 150 fully grown sheep (approx)

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 16 foot sheeted race, 2 way shedding gate, galvanised gate, race joiner. 100 foot of penning, will comfortably hold 200-250 fully grown sheep.  
**£2,450 + VAT.**  
 I can sell 10' wide x 5' high available in packs of 10.

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- 2 x 2-foot swing gates



**ALL EQUIPMENT FULL GRANT APPROVED**

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**FROM £2195 + VAT**  
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As standard, our Mobile Cattle System comes with a 60 feet holding pen and 20 feet race, 1 sliding gate and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 45 full grown cattle (approx.)

The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements. Also ideal for TB testing and the cattle sliding gate gives full control of the livestock from outside the race and stops the race from spreading out.

**MAIN FEATURES:**

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 6 railed x 1.75m high
- A funnel is incorporated into the race-way
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- 20-foot race
- 60-foot holding pen. Includes all joining pins/stakes
- Total 200-feet of penning

**PARTS LIST:**

- 10 x 3m (6 railed) cattle hurdles
- 12 x joining pins/stakes
- 1 x sliding gate



**NATIONWIDE DELIVERY**  
**£100 + VAT ON ALL ORDERS OVER**  
**£1500 PLUS VAT.**



# West Coast MOTORS

## WANTED

All types of 4-wheel drive vehicles & pickups, Landrovers, Toyota, Mitsubishi, Kia, Ford and MOT failures, non-runners, etc. Will travel and collect.

**T: 07546 788945**

## WANTED 4X4

All types of 4x4's, Landrover Toyota, Nissan etc. We also buy MOT failures and accident damage vehicles. Anything considered.

**T: 07885 203020 or  
E: gbplantsales@hotmail.co.uk**



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Email: munrosofoban@aol.com  
Web: www.munrosofoban.co.uk



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# S&S SERVICES



SCOTLANDS NO1 DEALER

## S & S Services ensure customers are still on the fastest route to an All-New D-Max

- A worldwide shortage of semiconductors, key components and shipping delays are resulting in longer production lead times
- All-New Isuzu D-Max demand currently outstripping supply
- Customers urged to begin new vehicle discussions with S&S Services as soon as possible

Isuzu UK, along with the entire automotive industry is facing increasingly complex trading conditions because of the worldwide shortage of components, semi-conductors, and key materials, which is having a detrimental impact on vehicle production and availability. Isuzu UK is working hard to meet the high demand from customers for the All-New Isuzu D-Max,

however, the global component shortages and shipping delays are currently resulting in longer lead times than normal. William Brown, Managing Director, Isuzu UK said "The success of the All-New Isuzu D-Max has been both rewarding and challenging, with demand currently outstripping supply. As the pick-up professionals, we are committed to providing the most transparent process possible and

urge any customers who may wish to purchase an Isuzu D-Max in the near future or perhaps later in 2022 to start discussions with your local Isuzu dealer as soon as possible." He added, "Although not impacted as severely as most manufacturers, we are still working tirelessly with the vehicle production facility in Thailand to minimise customer waiting times and we will provide as much information to dealers as we can to ensure our customers are always on the fastest route possible to a new Isuzu D-Max." The All-New Isuzu D-Max, which launched earlier this year, combines smart, bold, and

aggressive styling and improved off-road performance with class-leading safety technology. Not only does it deliver the capability and durability you would expect from an Isuzu pick-up truck, but this tough workhorse has also now added superior levels of comfort, refinement, and next-generation technology. Customers looking to purchase a new Isuzu D-Max are encouraged to begin

discussions with S&S Services to ensure they remain on the fastest route to a new Isuzu D-Max. For more information on the Isuzu D-Max range please call on 01292 880080.



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**Email: gbplantsales@hotmail.co.uk**

Merry Christmas

## WANTED MOTORHOMES

Camper vans and touring caravans  
Any condition or in need of repair  
Immediate payment

**Tel 07703490572**

**or email balgowan4wd@gmail.com**  
**Ask for Robert**

## WANTED MOTOR HOMES

Caravanettes and camper vans, all  
makes and models considered. Also  
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Landrover, Toyota, Isuzu, All single and  
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**07789 138028/ 07487 548703**  
**Email: wanted4x4s@gmail.com**

## WANTED ALL 4X4'S

### All vehicles considered

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all pickups

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**or email balgowan4wd@gmail.com**  
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**Flit wish all their customers a merry Christmas and all the best for 2022.**  
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*Merry Christmas*  
and a  
*Happy New Year*  
from



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*Malcolm and staff would like to wish all their customers and friends a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year*



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our customers

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**Festive Opening Hours**

Closing 9pm Christmas Eve. Closed Christmas day and Boxing day  
Open 7am – 10pm from 27th – 30th dec  
31st dec 7am – 9pm. Closed new years day.  
2nd jan – 10am – 5pm. Monday 3rd January back to normal hours 6am – 10pm

*There for you* Riverside Filling Station Oban Rd, Lochgilthead. Tel 01546 603858



# RECRUITMENT

## IN ASSOCIATION WITH HIJOBS

**Roadworker 1**  
Based on the Isle of Mull Ref: ARB09075  
37 Hours per week  
£19,369 - £19,948  
(Temporary until 29/04/22)  
Closing date: 23rd December 2021

To apply visit our website

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers

**Roadworker 1**  
Based on the Isle of Mull Ref: ARB09074  
37 Hours per week  
£19,369 - £19,948  
(Temporary until 26/08/22)  
Closing date: 23rd December 2021

To apply visit our website

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers

**Roadworker 1**  
Based in Lochgilphead Ref: ARB09103  
37 Hours per week  
£19,369 - £19,948  
(Temporary until 26/08/22)  
Closing date: 24th December 2021

To apply visit our website

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers

**Roadworker 2**  
Based in Lochgilphead Ref: ARB09102  
37 Hours per week  
£20,237 - £21,125  
Closing date: 24th December 2021

To apply visit our website

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers

### Family Coordinator

We are looking to recruit a new Family Co-ordinator to contribute to the effective day to day coordination within our Home-Start Lorn Scheme. The successful candidate will be passionate about early years support for families, have excellent coordination, communication and interpersonal skills and ideally have experience of coordinating and working within a similar service as part of a team.

The post involves regulated work with children and protected adults. PVG Scheme membership is essential.

To apply for this job please send a cover email requesting an application pack to the admin@homestartlorn.org.uk

**Closing date: Monday, January 3rd 2022.**

Hours: Full time (Negotiable),  
35 per week, Mon-Fri.

Salary: £25,293 - £28,359 depending on suitability and experience.



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- Labourers** (Mid Argyll & Oban)
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PART-TIME & FULL time positions.  
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**07464 484581**

[hello@crear.co.uk](mailto:hello@crear.co.uk)

**Oban**

**NHS Highland Estates Department**  
Highland

**Maintenance Plumber/Craftsperson**  
Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban

Applicants should have an appropriate and relevant trades qualification with significant experience in a maintenance environment. Familiarity and use of computerised maintenance systems is desirable and a flexible approach to work is essential as is the willingness to work throughout Argyll & Bute.

The successful candidate will be required to participate on an on-call rota for Lorn and Islands Hospital, which normally will be 1 week in 4. A full current driving licence is essential.

Starting salary is £23,709 per annum – 37.5 hrs per week, rising to £25,982. Payments for on-call are approx £180 per week on call. There is also currently long term retention and recruitment premium attached of approx £3900 per annum (although this is subject to regular review). Annual leave entitlement starts at 27 days, rising to 33 days after 10 years service (+ another 8 days public holidays).

Informal enquiries to: Robert Wright, [robert.wright2@nhs.scot](mailto:robert.wright2@nhs.scot) 01631 789023

Applications can be made on <https://apply.jobs.scot.nhs.uk/> search ref: 079322

[www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk)

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# SCOTTISH FIELD

## January

### OUT NOW!

*Happy New Year...  
So that was 2021...  
Stephen Jardine's Credo...  
The Hebridean Baker recipes...  
Quiz of the Year...  
Stunning aerial photography...  
Seafront interiors...  
Artist Mouse Macpherson...  
A Perth garden...  
Rule, Britannia! writer...  
Book reviews...*



# PUBLIC NOTICES

[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)

**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
21/05333/FUL	Land 55M South of The Braes, Spean Bridge	Change of use of ground to overnight motorhome parking with associated facilities
21/05357/FUL	Land 50M NE of 3 Bayview, Morar	Erection of dwelling and associated services.
21/05462/FUL	Card Factory Unit 3, Tweeddale Apartments, High Street, Fort William, PH33 6EU	Change of Use from Class 1 to Hot Food Takeaway and Class 3 (Restaurant)
21/05519/PIP	Land 630M NW of Torlundy Farm, Torlundy, Fort William, PH33 6SW	Erection of house
21/05520/PIP	Land 570M NW of Torlundy Farm, Torlundy, Fort William, PH33 6SW	Erection of house
21/05524/FUL	Plot 2 to rear of former Filling Station, Onich, Fort William, PH33 6RY	Erection of dwelling
21/05525/FUL	Plot 3 to rear of former Filling Station, Onich, Fort William, PH33 6RY	Erection of house
21/05602/FUL	42 Ben Nevis Drive, Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 6RU	Erect warehouse with office and showroom attached
21/05612/FUL	Land 720M NW of Glenborrodale Castle, Glenborrodale, Acharacle	Formation and maintenance of footpath with associated drainage work
21/05706/FUL	Land North of The Railway Corridor, At Allt Na Criche, near Lochailort	Proposed drainage works and earthworks comprising new bunds and culvert works

**Time period for comments are to be received by 10 January 2022 with the exception for 21/05524/FUL & 21/05525/FUL which will be by 17 January 2022**

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

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**(U1166 GLENMALLIE ROAD(U) & ERRACHT TERRACE(T), CAOL FORT WILLIAM)**  
**(TEMPORARY CLOSURE) ORDER 2022**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that The Highland Council made an Order in terms of Section 14(1) (a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, entitled as above. The Order has been made to allow contractors to provide a safe working space for workers to install new road drainage as part of the Caol & Lochyside Flood Prevention Scheme.

This Order shall come into operation at 0730 hrs on Monday 10th January 2022 and will remain in effect until 1530 hrs on Friday 25th February 2022. Throughout that period, the use by vehicles of the length of road specified in the Schedule hereto except for use by emergency services is prohibited. Pedestrian access will be maintained.

7/12/2021: Richard Porteous, Roads Operations Manager, Highland Council, Carr's Corner Industrial Estate, Fort William

**SCHEDULE**

**U1166 (u) GLENMALLIE ROAD**  
Commencing at a point in line with the east boundary fence of 18 Glenmallee Road, extending in a southerly direction for a distance of 70 metres or thereby.

**U1166 (t) ERRACHT TERRACE**  
Commencing at its junction with the 1166u Glenmallee Road, extending in a north westerly direction for a distance of 97 metres or thereby.

**CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATIONS**

1. Mansfield J G Ltd., 1, 2 & 3 Port Ellen, 0.389ha, Site for a dwelling house (106620)

2. I Fulton, Woodcroft, 0.129ha, purpose, Amenity and garden ground (111623).

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 14/01/22 at [info@crofting.gov.scot](mailto:info@crofting.gov.scot) / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

**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
21/02406/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Garden Ground Of Dunfraoch, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute, PA35 1JE
21/02053/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land Between Willowbank And Tigh Shee, Ardtun, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
21/02420/PP	Temporary change of use of garden ground for siting of caravan for staff accommodation	Port Appin House, Port Appin, Argyll And Bute, PA38 4DE
21/02428/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse with detached garage and installation of septic tank amended house design relative to planning permission 12/02327/PP (Demolition of two agricultural barns and erection of three dwellinghouses)	Plot 1, Lagganmore, Kinliver, Argyll And Bute
21/02425/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of biodisc treatment system and formation of access	Plot 1, Land West Of Lag An Fhiodhain, Achnaba, North Connel, Oban, Argyll And Bute
21/02245/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Plot 3 Land East Of Ard Mhor Guest House, Ardmore Road, Salen, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
21/02094/PP	Erection of 3 self-contained glamping pods	Land North Of Pirmill, Cladich, Dalmally, Argyll And Bute
21/01942/PP	Installation of replacement window and 2 new vents in distillery building with regards to internal works for upgrading visitor facilities	Isle Of Jura Distillery Co, Craighouse, Isle Of Jura, Argyll And Bute, PA60 7XT
21/02244/PP	Erection of short term holiday let cabin	Garden Ground Of Cardhu, Birch Drive, Bowmore, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA43 7JA

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

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)  
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

**Argyll and Bute Council**  
**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (LAUREL ROAD AND DUNCRAGGAN ROAD, OBAN) (SPECIAL EVENT) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2021**

On Monday 13th December 2021, Argyll and Bute Council in exercise of the powers conferred on them by Section 16(A) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, made the above named Order, the effect of which will be that for a temporary period, the following restrictions will apply

**PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**

Name of Road in Oban	Extent of Restriction
Laurel Road	That section which extends from its junction with Ardconnel Road to its junction with Duncraggan Road.
Duncraggan Road	The entire length.

The Order, which is necessary to facilitate the holding of the event, shall have effect when indicated by signs between 2200 hours on Friday the 31st December 2021 and 0030 hours on Saturday the 1st January 2022. Exceptions will apply to vehicles being driven upon the direction or with the permission of a police constable in uniform; an emergency services vehicle; or an authorised vehicle associated with the organisation of the event. Alternative routes via local diversions will be signed in an appropriate manner.

Roads & Infrastructure Services, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD

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**Argyll and Bute Council**  
**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**  
**(A816 SOROBA ROAD, MCCAIG ROAD, JURA ROAD AND SHUNA TERRACE, OBAN) (TEMPORARY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) ORDER 2022**

Argyll and Bute Council give notice that on Tuesday 7th December 2021 they made the above named Order under Section 14(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended. The effect of the Order is to temporarily restrict the waiting of vehicles, prohibit the driving of vehicles and restrict the speed of vehicles on the sections of road as detailed in the schedules below.

The restrictions, which are required because works are being or are proposed to be executed on or near those lengths of road, will be in operation from 0001 hours on Monday 24th day of January 2022 until 2359 hours on Thursday 31st day of March 2022 or until the works are complete, whichever is the earliest. The restrictions will only have effect in relation to such part or parts of the lengths of road as indicated by the appropriate traffic signs.

**SCHEDULE 1 - 10MPH SPEED RESTRICTION**  
The entire length of McCaig Road (U117), from its junction with the Lochgilphead - Oban Road (A816) extending in a generally northerly direction to its junction with Colonsay Terrace (U099), a distance of 890 metres or thereby.

That length of the Lochgilphead to Oban Road (A816) from a point 44 metres or thereby northwest of its junction with McCaig Road (U117) extending in a south easterly direction to a point 125 metres or thereby south east of its junction with McCaig Road, a distance of 169 metres or thereby.

**SCHEDULE 2 - PROHIBITION OF WAITING AT ANY TIME**  
On both sides of the entire length McCaig Road (U117) from its junction with the Lochgilphead - Oban Road (A816) extending in a generally northerly direction to its junction with Colonsay Terrace (U099), a distance of 890 metres or thereby.

On both sides of the entire length of Jura Road (U086) from its junction with McCaig Road (U117) extending in a north westerly direction to its junction with Shuna Terrace (U088), a distance of 120 metres or thereby.

**SCHEDULE 3 - PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC**  
That length of Shuna Terrace (U088) from a point 30 metres or thereby northeast of the extended southeast kerbline of Jura Road (U086) extending in a north easterly direction for a distance of 75 metres or thereby (car parking area).

The Order can be viewed on the Council's website at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/trafficorders](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/trafficorders)  
Roads & Infrastructure Services, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD

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**FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT**  
Peter Donald Kennedy has registered his crofts 1,2&3 Blarmachfoldach Kilmallie and 4,5,6,7&10 Blarmachfoldach Kilmallie on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland. Any person who wishes to challenge the registrations may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 9/8/22. Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration numbers are C8025 & C8031



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

Planning Permission for Erection of a dwellinghouse at Site West Of Tradewinds Lochawe Dalmally Oban Argyll And Bute

**REFERENCE NUMBER: 10/01318/PP**

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

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

Any person who will be affected by the Order and who wishes for an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by a person appointed by the Scottish Ministers, must give notice in writing to The Scottish Ministers, Planning and Architecture Division, Planning Decisions, 2F (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ not later than 13th January 2022.

If no such notice is given by that date the Order will take effect by virtue of the provisions of Section 67(7) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 on 27th January 2022 without being confirmed by The Scottish Ministers.

Date 16th December 2021  
David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.

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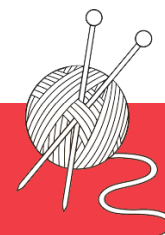
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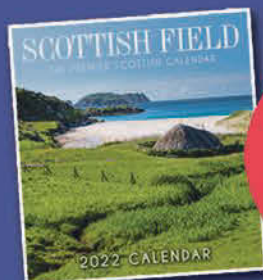
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## BIRTH NOTICE

### LAFFERTY

Fearghas & Natalie (née Graham) are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their twins Finlay Blair & Mirren Ellann on October 28, 2021 at Q.E.H. A little brother and sister for Murray and Gregor. 12th and 13th grandchildren for Dougie & Allison Graham (Oban) and 6th & 7th grandchildren for Joe & Chris Lafferty (Dundee).



### BIRTH

**MACFARLANE - GRAY** - Cameron and Caitlin are delighted to announce the arrival of Cameron Alexander on December 8, 2021 at Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley. A wee brother for Julia and Freya. Fourth grandchild for Cameron and Sine and fifth grandchild for David and Pamela. Thanks to all the hospital staff in Oban and Paisley.

### DEATHS

**CARSON** - Les. Peacefully at home on December 9, 2021, after a short illness borne with his usual strength and dignity. Darling husband and best friend of Lilian, proud dad of Susan, Andrew and their partners and papa of Jamie, Arabelle and Lily and master of his best pal Cruachan. Retired Chief Inspector of Argyll Country & Strathclyde Police. Sadly missed by all who knew him. Funeral service at St. Oran's Church, Connel on Wednesday, December 22 at 12 noon followed by interment at Pennyfuir Cemetery, Oban.

Donations, if desired, to Pancreatic Cancer UK.

**COLTHART** - Catherine (Cathy) of Kinlochlaich Farm, Appin, in her 79th year, passed away peacefully at Lorn and the Islands Hospital on December 12, 2021. Beloved wife of fifty six years to Robin. Loving mother to David, Alasdair, Allan and mother-in-law to Sandra, Marina and Fiona. Devoted Granny to Victoria, Kerry, Robert and Allan, Domhnall Aonghas, Marsaili and Seonaidh and great-granny to Clara. Cathy (née Steele) formerly of Allasdale, Isle of Barra. A funeral service celebrating her life will be held at Appin Parish Church at 1pm on Tuesday, December 28, 2021. Family flowers only please.

**DAVIDSON** - James, formerly of Barranrioch Farm, died peacefully at home in Killin, on December 8, 2021. Dear father of Poppy and Lucy and Grampa to Eilidh and Neave. The funeral service will be held on Friday, December 17 at 12pm at Emslie Collier's chapel of rest at Montrose and thereafter to Brechin cemetery.

**DOWSON-PARK** - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital on November 29, 2021, Barry, husband of the late Shirley, of Foxholes Country Hotel, Lerags, Oban. Funeral service to be held in Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban on Friday, December 17, 2021 at 12.00 noon followed by a private cremation at Cardross Crematorium on Saturday, December 18, 2021. All friends are respectfully invited to attend.

**MACFARLANE** - Peacefully, surrounded by the family, at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 in his 89th year, Donald (Dodo), loving and much loved husband of Elchris and dad of Alastair and Elizabeth. Best friend to Donnie and Ann.

**MACLEOD** - Peter MacLeod of The Wheelhouse, Ganavan, Oban, passed away on December 12, 2021, aged 88 years at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban. Beloved husband of the late Jean Buchanan, and much loved dad of Garry and Lorne, and a devoted grandfather to Calum Peter. Only son of the late Robert and Christina MacLeod, The Schoolhouse, Benderloch. Former RBS bank manager in Tobermory, Kinlochleven, Wick and Oban.

**MORRISON** - Iain. On December 5, 2021, peacefully at the North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple, aged 76 years, formerly of Glenfinnan. The funeral will take place in North Devon but donations in Iain's memory for Prostate Cancer UK may be sent to R.Gist & Son, 18 Castle Street, Torrington EX38 8EZ.

**RUSSELL** - Peacefully at home with his family around him, on Tuesday, December 7, 2021, aged 89 years, Leonard John Russell, beloved husband of Mary Jane, much loved dad of Michael, Mairi, Katherine and Iain, a loving grandad and great grandad. He will be sorely missed by all. May he rest in peace.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**CAMPBELL** - Susan, William, Helen and family would like to thank everyone very much for their kindness and support following the passing of Eddie. A very special husband, dad, grampa, brother, and friend to many. A special appreciation for the Rev Peter Park for his support, Catriona at Hamish Hoeyes, and to all the amazing hospital staff

### MEMORIALS

**BEATON** - Fond memories of my mother, Bella, who passed away on December 19, 2016. Also remembered my father, Veek, who passed away on March 6, 1999, much loved Granny and Granpa. - Hugh, Mary, Lorna and David.

**CAMERON** - In loving memory of Magnus, who passed away December 8, 2020. A dear husband, father and grandfather. Sadly and badly missed by us all. - From Morag and family.

**GALBRAITH** - In loving memory of my dear wife Katherine, who passed away December 17, 2013. Always loved and remembered, we miss you so much. - Your loving husband John and JJ, Paul and Katie.

**GIBSON** - In loving memory of a dear mother, granny and great-granny, Jenny, died December 12, 2003, also remembering loved ones gone before and after. Always loved and remembered. - Tommy, Nellie and family.

**HADDOW** - Paul. December 18, 2016. Loved and missed so much. It wasn't his fault that he had to go. Tell him don't worry and please let him know That I had a man who was one of a kind And he'll always be in my heart and my mind Forever unbreakable. - Jacqueline xxx

**HADDOW** - Remembering our pal Paul, who died December 18, 2016. Never forget the laughs. - Mary and Duncan.

**MACCOLL** - Remembering Charlie, my husband and our Dad, passed away December 16, 2015. Always with us. - Mairi, Fiona and Calum.

**MACINTYRE** - Treasured memories of beloved parents, parents-in-law and grandparents, Archie (Baldy) and Mary (née Boyd) whose anniversaries occur about this time. - Iain, Jane, Caroline and Boyd, Oban and Edinburgh.

**MACKINNON** - Treasured memories of a dear mum, granny and great granny Flora who passed away on December 21, 2015. We think about you always, we think about you still, We have never forgotten and never will, We hold you close within our hearts and there you will remain, To walk with us throughout our lives until we meet again. Lachie, Margaret, Christine, Fiona, Linda, Alastair and all their families.

**MORRISON** - Remembering Mary, who died December 11, 2012 and John, who died December 18, 2015. Always in our thoughts. - Duncan and Mary.

**MUNN** - Treasured memories of Nella, a dear mum, mother-in-law and sister who passed away on December 16, 2020. Those we love can never be more than a thought away, For as long as there's a memory They live in our hearts to stay. - Janice, Donnie and Moira.

**SANDISON** - In memory of our precious son Liam Sandison. Although we're not together Liam, We will never be apart, Because you have that special place, Right here within our hearts Always and forever

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A smile can hide the sadness

A tear will wipe away  
But the heartache of losing you  
will never go away  
- Love Gran, Granda and Jess  
xxx

**SANDISON** - In loving  
memory of our darling  
grandson Liam, died December  
10, 2006, age 4.

As long as the wind blows  
The sun shines  
The rain falls  
We will love you forever.  
- Granny and Granda, Claggan.

**STEELE** - Lovingly  
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always by my side.  
- Nan and family.

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All Welcome

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**CHRISTMAS DAY** 10.15am Christmas Eucharist  
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OT

## SHINTY ROUND-UP

Gareth Evans  
reviews Lochside  
Rovers' season

It was so near but yet so far for Lochside Rovers as their only two defeats, both coming late in the season, meant they were unable to repeat their two-cup haul from 2019.

Gareth Evans, who recently stepped up to the Oban Camanachd manager's role, took time to reflect on a season which opened with a battling draw at home to Bute as Ryan Craig's late leveller cancelled out Lewis Buchanan's early opener.

'We had a young squad at the start of the season and I thought we would do well to finish mid-table,' Gareth said. 'I expected Bute and Ballachulish to be strong and it just so happened we faced both these teams in our first two games.'

'Bute actually came to Oban with a young side and we had a good game with them at Ganavan when a draw was probably a fair result.'

Lochside then came from behind to win 2-1 at Ballachulish before the holders beat the Lochaber seconds 5-1 in the opening round of the HIS Sutherland Cup.

Gareth recalls: 'Our under-14 skipper Alexander MacDonald, a versatile player, got the equaliser against Balla' and Robbie Brown, who joined from Taynuilt, got the winner. The big down-side from that game was a back injury suffered by Chrissie MacMillan. It looked innocuous enough at the time but it turned out to be serious and he is still receiving treatment for it.'

'The Lochaber win was good as we always look to do well in the Sutherland.'

A return to league duty and a 2-1 victory at the Inveraray colts on a wet midweek followed before a strong Lochside team then beat Taynuilt 5-1 in another midweek fixture.

Gareth said: 'We had David Cameron back from rugby and he got the first goal. David is a player who could push for a place in the Oban Camanachd team.' That match against Taynuilt took place on Wednesday 21 July and it was to be the last league fixture Lochside would play.

The HIS Sutherland Cup second round threw up a tough tie at home to the Fort William colts and Lochside had to work hard for their 4-3 victory.

'The Fort William tie and the Bullough Cup Final were probably the best two games of the season. The Fort game was end-to-end with two young teams going for it on a hot day

at Mossfield. I was pleased we won but couldn't have complained if we had lost.'

Lochside's defence of the Bullough Cup opened with a 6-3 victory in Glasgow against the Mid Argyll reserves, aided by Ross Campbell's hat-trick. 'We played Ross at full forward and he did really well. In fact they all did well as GMA had no first team match that weekend so fielded a good physical side against us. Our fitness was good though and saw us over the like as it did a few times during the season.'

September opened with a 2-1 win over on-form Kinlochshiel seconds in the quarter-finals of the HIS Sutherland Cup. Lewis Buchanan and Alexander MacDonald got the goals with Gareth saying: 'There was some drama around the 'Shiel game and we led 2-0 through Lewis Buchanan and Alexander MacDonald before they pulled a goal back with 16 minutes remaining but we got there in the end.'

However the Lovat second team were to prove too strong in the Sutherland semis at Spean Bridge as the Balgate men won 5-0.

Gareth said: 'It still rankles with me that we had to play that tie on the same day as our first team were in the Glasgow Celtic Society Cup semi-finals.'

'We were nine players short for one reason or another and that made it really difficult for us. We had to field so many of our younger players that it really was men against boys. We ended up with young players getting injured during the game and I would have liked to have played the semi-final with the team we had out against Fort William in the earlier round.'

The Bullough semis were more straightforward as lower league Oban Celtic colts were dispatched 10-0 so the season ended with the Bullough Cup Final against the Kyles Athletic reserves. The venue was decided by the toss of a coin which gave the Tighnabraich men home advantage. In the end, it took penalties to separate the sides following a 3-3 draw with Kyles eventually taking the trophy.

Gareth added: 'I think I said at the time that I'd normally be unhappy about losing a game of shinty never mind a final but it was a brilliant game. It's not often Kyles get to play a final on their own pitch and there was a great crowd who created a wonderful atmosphere.'

Young Matthew Sloss was terrific for us that day and he is just one of several younger players coming through the system. Innes Jackson is another brilliant prospect. He is



Gareth Evans, former manager of Lochside Rovers and now the new manager of Oban Camanachd.

so keen and such a good player. Callum MacMillan came in this year. He's only 14 but can be such a hard player in the tackle. Daniel Pearson also broke through and he will get more game time next season.

'Scott Robertson is another who has had a great season. Scott is still young but seems to have been around for years.'

As he prepares for the new season with Oban Camanachd, Gareth had a word for those who helped him with Lochside last season.

'Managing a shinty team is no one-man-band,' he said. 'Tain MacMillan, Duncan MacMillan and Andrew Pearson have been a huge help. I thank them for that and of course wish them well as they manage Lochside next season.'

The managerial changes trigger a new era for both Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers and the preparations start now.

Oban Times Shinty  
Team of the Year

Oban Times shinty reporter Alasdair Bruce has selected his 2021 shinty team of the year.

With so many excellent players to choose from, only those who played most of the season were considered so the likes of Mark MacDonald, Blair Morrison, Thomas Borthwick and Conor Cormack, who would have pushed for a place in the side, weren't considered as injury forced them out during large chunks of the year.

**Stuart MacDonald (Lovat)** It was another season of game-changing goalkeeping from the Lovat's Mr Consistent. Lovat's Camanachd Cup run would have ended against Skye in Portree had it not been for Stuart MacDonald's heroics and he also shone in the semi-final win over Kingussie. Stuart remains Scotland's number one.

**Finlay MacRae (Kinlochshiel)** Finlay MacRae was the rock at the centre of 'Shiel's defence in a season the club will never forget. He defied the odds to recover from a leg injury to play such a crucial role in the Camanachd Cup Final. Finlay is a class act and a fine reader of the game. The 36-year-old's performances were all the more remarkable given the changing nature of Kinlochshiel's defence this season as injury ruled out Conor Cormack, Mark MacDonald and David Falconer for long periods.

**Daniel Cameron (Oban Camanachd)** Oban Camanachd boasted arguably shinty's best defence last season, only losing six goals over 11 games. They weren't always tested to the same extent as in the Premiership but the statistics are still impressive, keeping clean sheets in seven of their 11 matches and only losing one goal in three of the other four matches. Scottish international Daniel Cameron is a leader whose skilful defending has been a key component in the Oban side's back line. Daniel captains this select team.

**Daniel Sloss (Oban Camanachd)** Daniel Sloss is one of shinty's most talented youngsters who can be a mainstay of the Oban Camanachd side for at least another 15 years. He is usually given a man-marking role on the opponents most dangerous forwards which speaks volumes of the trust placed in him.

The Covid pandemic probably robbed him of the opportunity to captain the Scotland U17s at a time when he was already an established Scotland U21 international. **Andrew King (Kyles Athletic)** Andrew King seems to get better with each passing season. He can break up an attack and set up an attack with equal ease. Andrew covers a lot of

ground and has all the attributes of a modern-day defender. **Craig Mainland (Lovat)**

Wing centre is not Craig Mainland's usual position but his displays at buckshee back for Lovat this term merit a place in the team of the year. A tenacious tackler and a clean hitter of the ball who has a keen will to win.

**Donald Nixon (Kinlochshiel)** Donald Nixon is a powerhouse in the 'Shiel midfield, slotting perfectly into the full centre role after switching from wing centre. One of shinty's best shy takers who had forced his way into international recognition before Covid interrupted the game.

**William MacKinnon (Skye Camanachd)** William's versatility has seen him feature in defence, midfield and attack for Alvanee British Aluminium Balliemore Cup winners Skye this season. The 19-year-old came through the youth ranks at Inverness before playing for Skye at under-17 level to follow in his father's footsteps. He is an athlete who is good in the tackle.

**Ruaridh Anderson (Kingussie)** Kingussie play-maker Ruaridh Anderson offers a creative edge to the side, providing opportunities for his fellow forwards. The 21-year-old is an exciting player to watch, he is super-fit and has a fine work ethic, often tracking back to help the midfield and even the defence at times.

**James Falconer (Kingussie)** As shinty's top goalscorer in 2021, James has more than earned his place in the side. He has an electric turn of pace and is a clinical finisher when through on goal. James never gives his marker a minute's peace. **Keith MacRae (Kinlochshiel)** It was a year to remember for Keith MacRae. After battling back from a serious knee injury, he captained Kinlochshiel to their first-ever Camanachd and MacTavish Cup successes. Keith has great close control and scores key goals as his hat-trick in the Scottish Final underlined. His skill and experience would be an asset to any side.

**Craig Morrison (Caberfeidh)** Craig was shinty's top scorer in 2019 and he carried that prowess into the 2021 season, netting 18 times in 12 matches. He isn't always fielded in attack but when he is there, he is a handful for any defence.

**Substitutes**  
**Steven Macdonald (Newtonmore)** It has been a rare trophyless season for Newtonmore first team who are going through a period of transition. However Steven Macdonald's performances in the middle of defence have still been to the usual high standard.

**Alexander Michie (Kingussie)** Kingussie's defensive record is another to be admired, losing just 12 goals in 16 matches. Alexander Michie has been a pivot at the back, covering so much ground at the back with his athletic defending. He is also an excellent penalty taker.

**Lachie Shaw (Fort William)** One of Fort William's talented youngsters, Lachie can fulfil a number of roles. He is a creative player and also a good finisher. Lachie was one of the top players in the National Division in 2019 and is sure to set the Premiership alight next season.

**John MacRae (Kinlochshiel)** John is a strong full forward who enjoys a physical battle. He has an eye for goal but can also pick out a chance for a teammate. John defends from the top of the pitch, never allowing defenders to clear their lines with ease.

**Roddy MacDonald (Kyles Athletic)** Roddy MacDonald scored six goals in 11 games as Kyles lifted the Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup. He is equally at home playing in defence or attack and has maintained a high level of form for a number of seasons now.

Kinlochshiel manager **Johnston Gill** is the outstanding candidate as to manage the side. This year's Camanachd and MacTavish successes mean Johnston has now managed 'Shiel to all four majors during his three terms in charge. He has also had an keen eye on introducing a number of the club's promising youngsters to build the squad size for next season.

Andy MacDonald  
Booking Blow

Oban Celtic's Andy MacDonald will miss the first match of the 2022 shinty season.

MacDonald returned to the Celtic side for the club's final game of the season, an 8-0 win at Aberdour in Mowri Senior League C. However, a yellow card in that game, his first booking of the season, now triggers a one-match suspension for a disciplinary points accumulation.

## Lovat Cup Returns

Possibly the most popular out-of-season shinty clash returns in 2021 as Lovat meet neighbours Beaulieu to contest the Lovat Cup at Balgate on Monday 3 January 2022.

The Lovat Cup wasn't contested in 2021 because of Covid restrictions.

Lovat are holders as Greg Matheson's brace helped them beat Beaulieu 3-1 in 2020 to win the trophy for the fifth successive season.





Oban Ravens in their new team kit

## Ravens fly at Helensburgh

Oban Ravens Ladies Squash Team had their first outing in their new sponsored team kit at the weekend in a friendly competition with Craighelen Ladies Squash Team on Sunday December 5.

Twelve team members travelled to Helensburgh with their coach Colin MacNiven to play the match in a well-attended and very competitive day.

At the end of the event, the Oban Ravens Squash Team came out on top.

Oban Ravens player of the day was awarded to Liz Comer for her performance at the competition.

The team will be travelling far and wide in Scotland next year with competitions already in the pipeline.

Oban Ravens continue to train weekly and are going from strength to strength giving their sponsors great coverage at events throughout the country.

# Mull rally consultation

Mull Rally organisers are carrying out a consultation while next year's event is still 10 months down the road.

Richard Crozier was at the island's community council meeting on Zoom to share early proposals and dates for the 2022 rally which will take place between Thursday October 13 and Sunday October 16.

Next year's rally will be the 50th running of the rally and feedback so far from people is that they want organisers to 'try and mix things up a bit', said Mr Crozier.

Thursday December 30 was originally set as a deadline to hear back from people so all the information can be collated and shaped into proposals – that date has now been extended to Friday January 7.

Residents and businesses on and off the route are invited to have a say by emailing [consult@mullrally.org](mailto:consult@mullrally.org) Community council con-



Mull Rally 2021 winners Daniel Harper and Chris Campbell.

venor Tom Nelson had asked at the meeting how organisers were driving forward the consultation. Word has been put out through the Round and About newsletter on the island and Facebook, he was told. Mr Nelson had questioned whether December 30 gave people enough time.

A change of personnel among organisers means they have their 'L' plates on, community council

members were told. 'It is critical that the island continues to love the rally and vice-versa. We are absolutely committed to that,' added Mr Crozier.

The Mull Rally, a closed-road car rally, started out as the Tour of Mull in 1969. It was the first event on 'mainland' UK to get an Act of Parliament to be able to close public roads. The iconic event is considered as one of

the toughest on the British rally calendar.

To see more details on the rally plans so far go to <https://bit.ly/mullrally22consult>

'It is important to us, as the event organising team, that we understand what implications our proposed event format, road closures and route have on the businesses and residents of Mull,' said the rally's Facebook post on Everything Mull.

## LORN HEALTHY OPTIONS HEALTH TIP

### Feeding negative thoughts

We learn several ways to deal with negative thoughts originating from chronic pain but many are ineffective in the long run.

We think they will rid us of the thoughts but in reality they can feed the problem. We often try one of three common strategies.

**Suffering** – This involves thinking about the same set of thoughts over and over which reinforces a negative neurological circuit. Suffering takes the form of complaining, arguing, blaming, manipulation and gossip.

Those in chronic pain are often so consumed that they endlessly discuss their problems with colleagues, friends and family which unfortunately reinforces negative thought pathways and the release of stress chemicals. Obviously



this can have a detrimental effect upon close relationships.

**Suppressing** – Some will instead choose to suppress their thoughts and emotions which can also be damaging in the long term and takes a lot of energy to keep under wraps. This can lead to a critical 'tipping point' where negative emotions can no longer be suppressed and an irrational, explosive and disproportionate reaction occurs which again can be very difficult for close friends and relatives. Men are often more prone to this strategy utilising the old 'big boys don't cry' approach.

**Masking** – This strategy in-

volves covering up uncomfortable thoughts and emotions by doing something else. This can be very positive in the case of hobbies and interests which are done for the right reasons and encourage alternative positive neurological pathways to improve mental health. However following a passion is different to obsessively pursuing activities to outrun your anxiety. Not so helpful choices are masking with alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, excessive work, gambling or over-eating. These options have significant social and physical consequences.

Next week we will look at the importance of a good night's sleep and the effect it can have upon your pain perception.

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.**

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### Youth results and fixtures

**Oban Saints Youth:** Last Sunday's results – Regional Cup: Under 13s lost 4-3 to East Kilbride. Scoring for Saints were Corey Piper and Tristan Jeffrey.

League: Under 15s won 14-1 against Helensburgh. On target for the Oban side were Rhys Millar (5), Kai McKechnie (2), James Muir

(2), Euan Tosh (3), Owen Lloyd and William MacPherson. The Under-16s had no game

This Sunday's fixtures: Under-13s v Glasgow Athletic; Under-15s no game; Hillwood v Under -16s.

The league takes a two-week break after this with fixtures returning on Sunday January 9.

**Lochnell FC:** St Patrick's Sports Academy 7, Lochnell Under-14s 1. Scorer for Lochnell was Cameron McAllister.



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## Gart are 'coshed' by last gasp Saints' winner

Oban Saints	2
Gartcosh United	1
Central Scottish AFL Premier Division	

Oban Saints' final home fixture of 2021 brought their long-awaited first home Central Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division win of the season.

Last Saturday morning's heavy rain forced a switch of venue from Glencruitten to Oban High School and with it a much-needed change of fortune.

Matty Kelly gave Saints a deserved first-half lead but the home side were pegged back after just two second-half minutes after an excellent turn and shot from former Celtic and Scotland

striker Craig Beattie. This has been an all too familiar story in Saints debut season in the top division in Scottish amateur football. However, spurred on by the large and unusually vocal home support, the D&K Lafferty and MKM Building Supplies sponsored side dug in and bagged the three points when Dene Cassells headed home an 85th minute Gavin Forgivee free-kick.

Gartcosh kicked off in torrential rain attacking the school end and were immediately on the front foot forcing Ruaridh Horne to make a good block to divert a Ross Fisher shot behind for a corner kick. The delivery from Scott Starrs on the right found Craig Beattie but the big central defender couldn't

direct his header on target.

The deadlock was broken in the 33rd minute when Saints broke with pace after repelling another Jordan Murphy long throw. Dene Cassells won the header which was picked up on the edge of the box by Matty Kelly who sent Cammy Hill off on a run up the left. Hill's perfectly weighted pass into Kelly's path was met with crisp finish into the bottom corner past Gartcosh keeper Andrew Barlow's left hand.

Saints' good first half work was undone after just two second-half minutes when cheaply conceded possession was clinically punished by the visitors. David Beaton's clearing header from Jordan Murphy's throw-in was picked up by Daniel



Dene Cassells wheels away after heading home the 85th minute winner.

Match report and photograph: Derek Black

MacCuish on the Saints' right but his flick intended for Matty Kelly was easily read and intercepted by Murphy whose raking ball to the far post found the still up in attack Craig Beattie. Despite now operating as a central defender Beattie has lost none of his striking prowess and, after taking the ball down expertly and turning away from Ruaridh Horne, he slammed an unstoppable shot past Graham Douglas to level the scoring.

Ruaridh Horne's first start of the season came to an end after 65 minutes when he was replaced in the back three by veteran Alex Craik.

Saints' winner came when they were awarded a free kick in the 85th minute after a late challenge by Callum Galloway on Gavin Forgivee. Forgivee, who put in a good midfield shift alongside Myles McAuley and Matty Kelly dusted himself down to take the free-kick from 16 yards inside the visitors' half.

Forgivee's delivery was met perfectly by the head of Dene Cassells whose run dissected Gartcosh central defensive pairing of Stewart Diamond and Craig Beattie to guide the ball past Andrew Barlow and into the unguarded net.

Saints are on their travels this coming Saturday with a trip to North Lanarkshire to face Uddingston Anvil in the fourth round of the West of Scotland Cup. The game will be played at the Matt Busby Sports Centre, Bellshill.

## Excellent start with Sterilgarda Max Racing for John McPhee at Jerez test

For the first tests of the 2022 Moto3 season, held at the end of November on the Andalusian track at Jerez, there were not many pilots on the track.

During the two days of testing, the two new Sterilgarda Max Racing team riders, Oban's John McPhee and Ayumu Sasaki, who had been team mates at Petronas Sprinta Racing, were constant and competitive and did almost 800km overall.

The first day of testing started a little bit late, as the riders



John McPhee in his new Sterilgarda Max Racing team livery

waited to see if the track would dry off completely, after the rain fell throughout the night, whereas on the second day the track was in good condition from the beginning.

John, who rode in the previous three years a completely different bike, rode only the FR 250 GP with the 2021 configuration. Few changes were made to the setting for him, with the aim to adapt at the bike to his driving style.

The team was satisfied with the work done by the two riders, due to the competitive-

ness shown by both John and Ayumu.

The next test for the Sterilgarda Max Racing Team will be in the middle of February, again on the Jerez track, when both riders will have the chance to try the new 2022 Husqvarna.

John said: 'I had a really enjoyable two days in Jerez. It is been fantastic to get to know all of my crew and also my new bike. The first impression could not be better! It is really nice to work with all these guys.'

'The Husqvarna bike is work-

ing really well and it didn't take me long to adapt. I have some ideas to think over the winter to keep me improving. 'Overall they were two very successful days, for which we can go into the winter break happy.'

The Oban Times: 95p

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 16 December, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

<b>16</b>	0343 3.4 1017 1.5 TH 1609 3.6 2222 1.5	<b>18</b>	0454 3.7 1132 1.4 SA 1719 3.8 2333 1.3	<b>20</b>	0010 1.2 0606 3.9 M 1240 1.5 1832 3.8	<b>21</b>	0047 1.2 0641 3.9 TU 1316 1.5 1908 3.7
<b>17</b>	0418 3.5 1056 1.4 F 1643 3.7 2257 1.3	<b>19</b>	0530 3.8 1206 1.4 SU 1755 3.8 ○	<b>21</b>	0047 1.2 0641 3.9 TU 1316 1.5 1908 3.7	<b>22</b>	0122 1.3 0716 3.8 W 1353 1.6 1943 3.6

### OBAN WEATHER

#### Thursday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 7°C to 10°C.

#### Friday

Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 6°C to 10°C.

#### Saturday

Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 5°C to 8°C.

#### Sunday

Light cloud and light winds  
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

### FRIDAY FORECAST

Ardrishaig	-5.35
Campbeltown	-5.30
Crinan	-0.47
Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Lochboisdale	+0.30
Mallaig	+0.25
Portree	+0.55
Tobermory	+0.16
Dover	+5.30

HIGH 9 LOW 6 7 MPH



# LOCHABER TIMES & OBAN TIMES

No 8594

Thursday 16 December, 2021

www.lochabertimes.co.uk

95p

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## WELL DONE, GEMMA!



Tuesday Club's 'ray of sunshine' is all smiles after winning Saltire Summit Award

● FULL STORY PAGE 4

Photograph: Iain Ferguson

### Interpreter from Afghanistan enlists MP's help

A former Afghan interpreter for the British Army who fled the clutches of the Taliban with his immediate family and now lives in local MP Ian Blackford's Ross, Skye and Lochaber constituency, believes the lives of other family members in hiding in the war-torn country are at serious risk.

The man, whose identity has not been disclosed, is one of a number of asylum seekers resettled in Mr Blackford's constituency. He believes his family in Afghanistan are now at enormous risk as a result of his former role.

He told the SNP Westminster Leader: 'Our family members are hidden and struggling to survive. There is no one to look after them. My father-in-law is an elderly and ill man. He needs proper treatment but he is hidden.'

'The others are women who are banned by the Taliban from going out. No jobs, no food for them...the Taliban are going door to door searching for people who worked with the former Afghan government or western countries.'

'I believe my working background as an interpreter causes them a big and serious threat to their life.'

Mr Blackford has demanded the UK Government acts

● Turn to page 8 for more

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LT

# Support helps West Lochaber Hospital Transport project look to the future

by Nic Goddard  
editor@lochabertimes.co.uk

After a challenging year for West Lochaber Hospital Transport Project, with uncertainty about the future of the service, support from the Peregrine Ardnamurchan Charitable Trust (PACT) and Urram mean this valuable service will not just continue but is looking to expand.

The project, which provides transport for residents of Ardnamurchan, Ardgour, Moidart, Morvern and Sunart to attend hospital appointments at Belford and Raigmore hospitals, and provides volunteering opportunities for drivers, had been facing closure due to a lack of funding support.

This much-needed service, which enabled residents to attend appointments when the



lack of public transport links in their area often necessitated overnight stays away from home, has provided more than 200 journeys for patients in the last two years.

Project co-ordinator Jane

Gaze told the Lochaber Times: 'We previously leased a car through Loch Shiel Garage in Acharacle but when the Scottish Government grant ran out this was not sustainable.

'Happily, PACT has gener-

ously provided funding to purchase the vehicle recognising the wide reaching benefits for residents in our communities and their support is invaluable.'

The project has also been

**Elizabeth Duncan, left, who uses the hospital transport service, with volunteer driver Joan Maclver. Both are delighted the service can now continue.**

adopted by Urram, a charity working to provide the best possible care for residents of the peninsulas.

Urram works with NHS Highland, Highland Hospice, Highland Council and other partners to deliver care services and the transport project will be integrated into this.

Urram chairman James Hilder explained: 'We are delighted to be able to continue the Hospital Transport Service as it is a perfect fit for Urram, which recently launched its Helping Hands befriending service.'

'We know that not everyone locally has friends or family

who can help out, so we hope folk will volunteer to do a hospital 'run' or provide a bit of company to folk feeling a bit isolated.'

Ms Gaze added: 'We are delighted to announce that we have also received support from MOWI thanks to the support of its local team nominating us for an award. This will help us to have use of a second car to increase the service even further.'

'Unfortunately we are struggling to meet all requests as we need more volunteer drivers. If you enjoy driving and the company of other people, we'd love to hear from you about volunteering for the project or Helping Hands.'

You can also contact the service through the West Lochaber Hospital Transport Project and Urram Facebook pages or on 07949 216325.

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**Linda Campbell and Joan Black with their invitations to the royal carol service and the souvenir Order of Service.**

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba. photos.

## Lochaber duo enjoy a right royal caroling

As people across the world limber up their vocal chords to sing seasonal hymns and songs to mark Christmas, two Lochaber women have already enjoyed a right royal time caroling alongside international celebrities and dignitaries in Westminster Abbey, writes Iain Ferguson.

Linda Campbell and Joan Black, who both worked tirelessly during lockdown preparing and delivering food to people in the community, were delighted when, as a reward for their efforts, a letter arrived in the post bearing an invite

from HRH the Duchess of Cambridge to attend her 'Together at Christmas' carol concert in London on December 8.

Even with Covid regulations in place, the pair managed to make the trip, taking their place in the congregation, and being able to watch the arrival of the duchess, her husband Prince William and their children, alongside other members of the Royal Family at the beginning of the service and their departure at end.

Linda told the Lochaber Times: 'Covid restrictions

and security were really tight but it was well worth it to see the Royal Family arriving, especially the wee ones.

'We both really enjoyed the service which lasted about an hour and the surroundings were really impressive, but it was absolutely freezing all the time.'

No photography was allowed in the abbey, but during the trip the two Lochaber visitors also managed to take in many of the tourist sights, including a visit to Buckingham Palace to see the changing of the guard.



## Reduce social contacts before Christmas, urges First Minister

Christmas can go ahead but people should cut back on contact with others as far as possible, says First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

People have been asked to reduce their socialising to a maximum of three households at a time in the run-up to the Christmas because of worries over the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of Covid. Although that advice will not be enforced by law, and does not apply on Christmas Day, people should be sensible and keep gatherings small and safe. Places of worship will be staying open, Ms Sturgeon said during a Covid briefing on Tuesday.

There will be a new legal requirement on businesses to take measures to minimise the risk of Omicron infection such as avoiding overcrowding and bottlenecks. New guidance will also make it clear that it will be a legal duty that employers will need to enable staff who were working from home at the start of the pandemic to do so again.

For full report, visit [www.lochabertimes.co.uk](http://www.lochabertimes.co.uk)

# Crazy depicting Fort as 'crime-ridden blackhole', says Baxter

by Mark Entwistle  
[mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk](mailto:mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk)

There was an online backlash this week as irate residents of Fort William hit back after a national daily tabloid newspaper portrayed their town as being in the midst of a worrying crime wave, likening it to places such as Watford and South Africa.

The article in the Scottish Daily Express drew more than 260 comments after a link was posted on a local Lochaber social media page, with many complaining it was just being used as an excuse to attack the SNP government over police numbers.

The article quoted a number of apparent incidents, some alleged, and quoted people criticising the police for apparently not doing enough to combat crime, including rising

youth-related crime, in the town. Among those who took to social media to challenge the claims was Mark Linfield, chairman of Fort William, Inverlochy and Torlundy Community Council.

### It's deeply disappointing the Daily Express and opposition are taking every opportunity to talk Fort William down...

He told the Lochaber Times he was disappointed to read the report and while not denying there have been some incidents recently as reported in the article, he and his fellow community councillors did not believe their area to be particularly worse than any other Highland towns or villages.

'The police are well aware of the anti-social behaviour of groups of youths. Fort William Inverlochy and Torlundy Community Council has voiced our concerns to them,' said Councillor Linfield.

'We do not believe the area deserves to be labelled as a crime hotspot due to a few recent isolated serious incidents.'

Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Andrew Baxter said it was disappointing to see a national newspaper attempt to 'sensationalise' recent incidents in Fort William.

'Of course these are crimes and should be treated seriously. Yes, we have problems from time to time, no area is perfect. But most people's experience is we live in a safe place where crime is relatively low,' he told the Lochaber Times. 'It's crazy to try and paint Fort William

as some sort of crime-ridden black hole where lawlessness roams every street corner. I normally co-operate with journalists but I refused to comment on this occasion.'

Kate Forbes MSP also commented on the article saying: 'At a time when a lot of investment is going into Lochaber, such as Nevis Range, the cinema on the High Street, the advanced manufacturing centre, the marina and, hopefully, a new hospital in the not too distant future, it's deeply disappointing that the Daily Express and the opposition are taking every opportunity to talk Fort William down. Comparisons with South African townships are wildly inaccurate and deeply unhelpful. Whilst the Highlands and Islands is one of the safest places to live, that doesn't mean we get complacent. I am saddened to hear

of these incidents and Police Scotland are monitoring the situation locally.

'If constituents believe more needs to be done to reduce crime in Fort William, I am happy to be contacted and will investigate further, but my mail bag suggests that is not the main concern for the town at this moment in time.'

Asked to comment, a Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'The Highlands and Islands is one of the safest places to live in Scotland. Crimes recorded for 2020-21 showed one of the lowest rates of recorded crime in Scotland.'

'Of the crimes that do occur, the number of these which are solved by police is one of the highest in the country. Anyone who has concerns about crime in their area can speak to a member of their local community policing team.'

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## Award-winner Gemma is Tuesday Club's 'ray of sunshine'

Like getting an early Christmas present, was how Gemma Macleod, right, from Fort William described finding out she had won a Saltire Summit Award for her decade of volunteering, writes Mark Entwistle.



she is one of the main reasons they say they attend the club. They have described Gemma as a 'ray of sunshine' and 'such a kind soul'.

All the ladies nominated her for young volunteer of the year in 2019 and she won an award at Voluntary Actions VOSCARS.

Last Thursday evening Voluntary Action Lochaber (VAL) and the Highland Third Sector interface hosted the awards for young people aged 12-25 across Highland who have made an outstanding contribution to volunteering.

Lochaber constituency MSP Kate Forbes attended as guest speaker.

Gemma, 24, has been volunteering for the Tuesday Social Club in Fort William every week for nine years, latterly while also working full time.

The Tuesday Social Club is a group of senior ladies that meet for tea, cake, games and day trips. Gemma always makes the ladies laugh and smile, and

During lockdown the club had to close, but Gemma went the extra mile and delivered hampers at Christmas to the ladies and stood socially distanced and chatted to them in all weather conditions.

At Easter she delivered gifts and would chat socially distanced, making lockdown more bearable for those who were shielding. Gemma would often be the only person the ladies would see and she always brightened up their isolation.

The ladies enjoyed a special lunch as part of St Andrew's Day, and although last year there were Covid restrictions,

Gemma delivered afternoon tea to every member.

The panel of judges highlighted that Gemma has shown outstanding commitment, especially during the pandemic.

Dani Drummon, volunteer development officer for VAL who hosted the event, said: 'It is clear Gemma has a genuine, caring nature with a passion for volunteering and is an excellent role model and mentor for all young people.'

Giving her reaction to receiving the award, Gemma told the Lochaber Times: 'I didn't know I had been entered and it was a really nice surprise when I heard about it. It was like getting an early Christmas present and everyone was very impressed when they saw it was signed by Nicola Sturgeon. It was also really nice that Kate Forbes congratulated me in person. I am always happy to help out. Everyone is really nice and I enjoy their company. I also join in their activities and must thank them for the support in getting the award.'

## Call for increase in climate change teaching in school

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

There has been a call from Lochaber councillor Denis Rixson and local environmental campaigners to increase the amount of teaching about climate crisis as part of the curriculum in schools.

The comments from Councillor Rixson (Caol and Mallaig) came during a discussion at Friday's meeting of the full Highland Council on the local authority's approach to developing a net zero carbon strategy and action plan.

Councillor after councillor stressed the importance of tackling the climate crisis as a matter of urgency and several referenced the important role young people had to play.

The council has now agreed an 'ambitious approach' to developing a net zero strategy and action plan for the region that will maximise external funding to deliver its climate change targets.

Councillors welcomed feedback on staff and members' attendance at the recent COP26 climate event in Glasgow.

Members also agreed to endorse COSLA's call on the Scottish Government to recognise the vital role local government is playing to tackle climate change and to acknowledge additional external funding is required to fully deliver the council's climate emergency duties. Councillors agreed on Friday

that the council will establish a Net Zero Strategy Group comprising officers working across council services with governance of projects scrutinised by councillors.

Leader of the council Margaret Davidson said: 'Local government is the implementer of this and our role cannot be understated. We need to align what we are doing with national targets and with what is important in Highland.'

'We need a clear action plan

**'I think young people will embrace the idea of learning more...'**

and milestones and I really want to see us engaging more with our young people as well.'

Councillor Rixson said the Highland landscape had suffered from desertification. 'What desertification means is to make a desert and to an extent we have over the last 200 years. It sounds incongruous because the Highlands are anything but dry, but it does worry me,' he added.

He went on to echo the remarks from Councillor Davidson about the critical role young people had to play in any solutions to the climate crisis.

'As an ex-school teacher I absolutely seize on that. I think young people will embrace the idea of learning more about climate change in schools and I endorse what Councillor

Davidson said in that respect.'

His fellow ward member, Councillor Allan Henderson, warned that when some people raised the issue of how much council measures to help address the climate crisis would cost, there was a far greater cost in doing nothing: 'The cost of not doing it will cost us the opportunities that are available for us to take this forward. It [COP26] has highlighted the opportunities things like hydrogen are going to bring to us,' he said.

And council convener, Bill Lobban, did not mince words: 'We should be heading for zero and not net zero. Carbon off-set is just a fudge. It stops us from getting to a zero carbon economy.'

Commenting on the council's plans, Dr Kate Willis from the Lochaber Greens, said the climate and ecological crises needed to be at the heart of the Scottish curriculum, embedded in every subject, because more than anyone else, the young will bear the brunt of the crisis. She added: 'It is essential that the youth of today understand why this is a crisis, what the causes and impacts are, and what the solutions are to tackle it. As a parent with a daughter in year five at Lochaber High, I am very aware that the current curriculum is not educating this generation of secondary students about the climate and ecological crises or equipping them with the skills needed for a sustainable future.'

## WALK OF THE WEEK

Sunday December 19 – Loch Laggan: Stob Coire Dubh (916m, Munro Top) – peak of the black corrie; Carn Liath (1006m, Munro) – grey cairn

A fine walk over two outliers of the Creag Meagaidh group, with great views across Loch Laggan and into Coire Ardair.

The summit of Carn Liath is a gentle rise on a broad ridge running NE for more than 4km to terminate in the crags of Coire a Bhein.

To the N of this ridge there are gentle slopes down to the Glenshirra Forest but to the S, steeper slopes are punctuated



by the crags of Coire nan Gall and Coire Dubh.

S of the summit a broad ridge leads down to Na Cnapanan from where easy access to the path in Coire Ardair can be attained. To the W of this ridge are steep heather slopes into Coire Ardair.

There is an avalanche risk

in these areas. Total distance: 13km, 853m ascent. Daylight permitting the route may be extended to 24km, 1106m ascent. For more detail please visit [www.nevishillwalking.club](http://www.nevishillwalking.club) or the Nevis Hillwalking Club Facebook page.

Please note that walks may change at short notice due to conditions on the day and Covid restrictions.

If you are a keen hill walker and want to know more about our club, participate in walks or are interested in becoming a member, contact us at [enquiries@nevishillwalking.club](mailto:enquiries@nevishillwalking.club).

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## VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

While the situation is certainly much improved this year, and we're all gearing up for a festive period that we can once again share with family and friends, there is a feeling of uncertainty in the air that does feel very familiar from last December.

After an incredibly tough time during the pandemic, the latest Covid variant is having a significant impact on business, especially on hospitality and retail businesses at a time when they hoped for a strong recovery.

Venues are already having to deal with cancellations of planned Christmas parties and our restaurants are reporting an increase in the number of 'no-show' bookings.

We can already see the signs of the impact of the Omicron variant on the economy starting to emerge.

Governments are keen to avoid harming the economy; however, there will clearly be some short-term damage to the sectors least able to bear it, even if the Omicron variant proves to be less of a threat than feared.



The hospitality, and bricks and mortar retail sectors are in need of a bumper festive period after what has been a desperately hard couple of years.

In our businesses it is all about planning and being ready for what is coming next.

We have proved over recent times that our businesses are resilient and nimble when it comes to adapting and learning how best to trade and comply with the guidance.

Let's all support our businesses where we can, and stay safe.

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## Fort man admits extorting £2,000 from his 'vulnerable' uncle

A man who extorted £2,000 from his uncle by pretending to arrange a prostitute for him will be sentenced next month.

Sean McCuish, of Wallace Place, Fort William, appeared at Inverness Sheriff Court on Monday December 13, and admitted a charge of extortion and also possessing a lock-knife.

The 30-year-old had sentence deferred until Thursday January 13 by Sheriff Sara Matheson for a background report and restriction of liberty order assessment. His bail was continued.

Fiscal depute Martina Eastwood told the court that McCuish's uncle, Anthony McCuish, inherited money following the death of his parents.

Mrs Eastwood described Mr McCuish as 'a vulnerable

adult' who had a conversation with his nephew about women on social media in May 2018.

'It led to the accused offering to organise a prostitute. He said he could arrange for a woman to come to his uncle's house for sex for £100.

### He then threatened his uncle with the consequences of non-payment, saying the pimps may shoot him

'There is then an exchange of messages over the next few days during which the price of the prostitute rises, money is required for her travel and then the "pimps" require a deposit, all leading to Mr McCuish transferring money

to his nephew. When no prostitute appears, the accused tells his uncle that the pimps are now angry and that he can still make an appointment with her but further money upfront is required.

'He then threatens his uncle with the consequences of non-payment, saying the pimps have guns and that they may shoot him.

'Overall between July 5 and July 27, 2021, he extorted £2,000 from his uncle,' Mrs Eastwood told the court.

The court heard that when police went to arrest McCuish he was outside his home and had a lock-knife in his pocket.

'He told police it was for cleaning out oil on his bong,' Mrs Eastwood added. Defence solicitor Pauline Chapman reserved her comments until sentencing.

## New headteacher for Skye schools

Highland Council has announced the appointment of a cluster headteacher for schools on Skye and Raasay.

Samantha Muir will be the cluster headteacher for Carbost and Struan Primary Schools.

Mrs Muir has been a part of the Carbost and Struan Primary School cluster since August 2019 working as a class teacher, principal teacher and latterly, acting head teacher.

She came to Skye after teaching in a British International School in Thailand. Prior to this, she taught in primary schools across South Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire.

Whilst raising her daughters, she pursued a career in education and completed the Bachelor of Education as an adult learner.

She commented: 'I am thrilled to be taking up the role of headteacher at Carbost and Struan Primary Schools.

'Both school communities have afforded me a very warm welcome. I am looking forward to working with everyone in giving our children the best possible primary school experience.'

## Council rejects boundary plan

Councillors have made it clear to the Boundary Commission for Scotland they do not support transferring a slice of the Ardnamurchan ward to Argyll

and Bute Council as part of its proposals in the 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies.

The Leader of Highland Council, Councillor Margaret Davidson, has written to the Boundary Commission informing it that members of council had agreed unani-

mously to reject its proposals. Councillor Davidson also called on the Commission to engage with the council to develop proposals which better reflected the needs of the Highlands.

Full story at [www.lochaber-times.co.uk](http://www.lochaber-times.co.uk)

## More than 16,000 council taxpayers to receive £180 fuel payment

More than 16,000 council taxpayers in Highland will benefit from a discretionary £180 payment towards the cost of rising fuel bills.

Councillors on Friday agreed to fund the scheme at today's meeting of full council.

The payment will be made to households in receipt of means-tested council tax reduction by March 2022. It is expected this will benefit around 16,440 council taxpayers in Highland.

Highland has among the highest rates of fuel poverty in Scotland, despite contributing significantly to energy generation.

Councillor Craig Fraser captured the mood of the chamber when he blasted: 'This is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of energy. There's no way we should be in fuel poverty when we

generate the flipping stuff.' Councillor Ian Cockburn agreed that there was a fundamental problem. Councillor Cockburn said that the National Grid is 'the wrong way around', being situated too far away from the power source.

'We've got to change our whole way of thinking regarding energy in this country,' he said.

Indeed, council leader Margaret Davidson said the payment is a 'sticking plaster' and the council will lobby both the UK and Scottish Governments for a fairer system. The council will also ramp up its efforts to fit better heating and insulation across its housing estate.

Councillor Davidson said skyrocketing energy bills are of 'huge importance to so many of our constituents.'

Many members spoke

emotively about the impact on constituents in their own wards. 'It's a perfect storm that will lead to increased debt, increased poverty and a huge impact on people's health and wellbeing,' said Councillor Alasdair Christie.

Councillor Angela MacLean said fuel poverty is now so pronounced in Highland that it does not only affect people on benefits, but also the working poor. She said heat should be a basic right.

'This is not the time to be embarrassed about coming forward,' she added. 'All our bills have gone up - food has gone up, heating has gone up. Nothing has come down. We are all in the same boat.'

The council agreed to fund the £180 payment using just under £1m of the Scottish Government's Winter Support Fund and £1.961m from council reserves.



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# Call for changes to controversial groundworks near iconic lighthouse

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

Ardgour community councillors want to see a number of changes to already constructed controversial groundworks close to the famous Corran Point Lighthouse.

Ardgour Estate is seeking retrospective consent for the footpath which runs from the local war memorial monument to the Sgiath Dhubh footpath, plus retention of a bellmouth and access road to the telecoms mast site at Lismore View and which joins up with the A861 near the lighthouse.

At their monthly meeting last month, community councillors had discussed the matter, while several members of the public raised concerns.

Ewen Maclean, a member of the Maclean family which owns and manages Ardgour Estate, and Shaun Corrigan from Corrigan Contractors which carried out the groundworks, pointed out that the temporary paths created as part of the work were already being used outwith working hours by walkers and cyclists and would be beneficial to the community.

Corran Lighthouse Lodge is



The new bellmouth can clearly be seen to the rear of the lighthouse as viewed from the ferry.

owned by Catherine Collins who bought the Category C listed property in 2017 and she has lodged an objection to the application.

The adjacent Corran Point Lighthouse is also a Category C listed building as are the former lighthouse keepers' dwellings and garden wall.

The lighthouse was built in 1860 by Thomas and David Stevenson, father and uncle to Robert Louis Stevenson, and is still working and operated by the Northern Lighthouse Board.

Ms Collins believes the groundworks have negatively impacted on the setting of the lighthouse.

'The introduction of the sub-

stantial earthworks has created a visual scar on the hillside and has physically changed the landscape form and therefore how the lighthouse is appreciated in the wider landscape,' she told the Lochaber Times recently.

She had told November's community council meeting that she felt the application was 'wholly inadequate' and did not address a number of important issues.

Ms Collins pointed out that while the rectangular construction site and road across the field were part of an essential infrastructure project by SSEN and therefore within the permitted development plan, the altered access to the

monument and the access road from the A861 were not.

Responding, Mr Maclean told the community council that there had always been an access there. 'It is an improved access in terms of safety, although I can see it is a little bit bigger,' he said.

'But the ponticum removed is not natural vegetation to keep.

It creates a better and safer access into what is essentially a farming field. It is a safer access off the road for any farm purposes.

'And I think from the community point of view, the ability to walk through from the ferry to the village without using the main road, apart from one small stretch, is of great benefit.'

Following several site visits, the community council has now informed local authority planners of its official view, telling them it recognises that the retention of the footpath would create a useful addition to the local path network, although as far as it is aware, at present the formed path does not fully link with the pre-existing paths.

'The access road would also allow improved access to the war memorial and access by

car for those unable to climb the current steep access path,' continues the council.

'However, we acknowledge concerns from the community about the retention of the widened access road and in particular the scale of the bellmouth formed during the current works.

'We would suggest a number of measures if the decision is made to allow the access road and bellmouth to remain.

'These include reducing the scale and extent of the current bellmouth while ensuring easy access to the war memorial is maintained; landscaping to soften the current steep edges around the access road; planting of trees and vegetation to reduce the current unsightly visual it has created; and the gating of the access road to prevent unauthorised vehicular access.'

## Blackford demands Johnson resign in No10 Christmas party row

Ross, Skye and Lochaber MP Ian Blackford has demanded Prime Minister Boris Johnson's resignation over reports that a Christmas party was held in Downing Street in breach of lockdown restrictions last year, writes Mark Entwistle.

At Prime Minister's Questions on Wednesday December 8, the SNP Westminster leader said the PM must take the 'only right and moral' step and resign, as outrage continues to build over Number 10 hosting the party.

Warning that 'trust in leadership is a matter of life and death' as the country faces rising cases of the new Omicron variant of Covid, the MP added: 'We are standing on the cliff edge of yet another challenging moment in this pandemic - with Omicron cases rising at a rapid rate.



MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber Ian Blackford.

'Over the coming weeks, tough decisions will again have to be made to save lives and protect our NHS. Trust in leadership is a matter of life and death.

'However, Downing Street wilfully broke the rules and mocked the sacrifices we have all made, shattering the public's trust. The Prime

Minister is responsible for losing the trust of the people. People across this country have followed the rules even when it meant missing friends and family, missing births, missing funerals - missing the chance to be beside a loved one in their dying moments. He can no longer lead on the most pressing issue facing the country.'

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## College merger pledge to see no job losses

The proposed merger of three colleges within the University of Highlands and Islands, including West Highland College (WHC) which has centres in Fort William, Mallaig and Kinlochleven, will not directly result in any compulsory staff redundancies.

A strategic project is currently examining bringing together WHC – which also has centres in Kilchoan, Portree and Broadford – together with Lews Castle College UHI at Stornoway, and North Highland College UHI, to form a new college by January 2023.

The merger plans, which could involve 9,000 students and around 600 staff, follow a detailed options appraisal earlier this year.

As well as a no job loss guarantee and a pledge to work closely with staff and trade unions throughout the process, two other key principles for the merger have been agreed.

These are that the creation of a new college will not result in any centralisation and any savings identified will be reinvested to strengthen the educational offering.



In a joint statement, the three college principals, including WHC's Lydia Rohmer, together with Debbie Murray and Sue Macfarlane, said: 'We have made a clear commitment that there will be no compulsory redundancies and will listen and collaborate with our staff, students and the public throughout the process.

'There is no intention for any form of centralisation, and a key development will be introducing three advisory committees to give voice to all of our local communities.

'The new college board will include the chairperson and vice-chairperson of these local committees. Any savings

identified by the merger will also be reinvested.'

The new college will remain within the university network which has 13 institutions across the Highlands and Islands. A merger partnership board has been formed and a coordinator is being sought to take forward the plans.

The board consists of the principals and board chairpersons of the three colleges, plus staff and student representatives. It is chaired by Dr Michael Foxley, who served as the university's regional lead for Further Education between 2014-2021, and who is also a community councillor on Ardour where he is deputy

chairman of the local community council.

The principals' statement continued: 'Our communities need us to be the best we can be to help them be strong, resilient, thrive and prosper.

'The proposed merger offers us not only an opportunity to ensure we are doing just that but to consider if we can do it smarter and better. In short, it offers all of us a once in a generation opportunity to reimagine and create our own future. We are making ambitious plans to do just that.'

The plans are supported by the university management and the Highlands and Islands Students' Association (HISA).

HISA president Florence Jansen added: 'HISA has been advocating for mergers between our academic partners to improve the student experience for a number of years and are pleased this project is now starting.

'We look forward to a more sustainable and diverse curriculum offer for our students, along with more opportunities for peer support and the potential for investment into infrastructure.'

## Afghan inter MP's help to

Continued from page 1.

immediately to introduce its promised repatriation scheme for Afghan citizens who are facing persecution at the hands of the Taliban.

The lack of support for vulnerable Afghans has also been raised by an international consultant who has been involved with women's groups in Afghanistan since 2002.

A representative of NGO Medica Afghanistan advised Mr Blackford, in relation to a separate case, of the 'terror' of citizens now living under Taliban rule, stating: 'No one has been able to give any concrete help or guidance... there is no transparency or information even to understand what people are to do or how to apply [to be evacuated].'

However, Mr Blackford says when he attempted to contact the Home Office to raise these concerns he was met with a stock response stating that

MPs should check for the latest information at an online government website.

The furious MP said: 'It appears the repatriation scheme for Afghan citizens has still not opened. This is not good enough and breaks promises made to Parliament in August.

**'I have written to the minister pointing out the UK has a moral duty to those Afghan citizens who worked with UK forces'**

'At that time, I expressed serious concerns about the manner of departure from Afghanistan, lack of support for the Afghan government, and the imminent humanitarian crisis.

'The absence of a proper

## Nine steps to a safer home this Christmas

A campaign encouraging householders to minimise the risk of a fire this Christmas and throughout the year has been launched by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Latest figures show firefighters attended more than 450 accidental house fires in around one month last winter.

During the same period, accidental house fires claimed the lives of seven people, with 58 casualties. The incidents happened between December 7, 2020 and January 11, 2021.

Deputy Assistant Chief Officer Ali Perry is head of prevention and protection at SFRS. He said: 'Fire is a risk for everyone, but some people are more at risk than others. If you know someone who is over 50 and smokes, and who has either mobility issues or uses medical oxygen or lives alone, please arrange a Home Fire Safety Visit on their behalf.

'Reaching out to those who are vulnerable can help save lives in our communities.'

A free online self-assessment on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's website is available to everyone in Scotland to find out how safe their property is.

On completion, participants can download a unique report

about their home, which gives advice on how to rectify risks and problems.

There are nine steps to a safer home – as participants are asked to consider their use of smoke detectors, cooking in the kitchen, smoking and candles, electrics and heating, emollient creams, medical oxygen, air pressure mattress, night-time routine and fire action plan.

DACO Perry said: 'By walking through the nine steps you can massively reduce the risk of a fire in your house. Taking a few minutes to do the self-assessment and identify the hazards in your own home can help keep you and those around you safe.'

If you know of someone who needs a Home Fire Safety Visit get in touch by calling 0800 0731 999. Or text FIRE to 80800.

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## Household poverty

Proposals to provide almost £3million to help households in fuel poverty in Highland this winter were approved by members at a recent meeting of full council.

A payment of £180 will be made to around 16,440 eligible Highland households where residents are in receipt of means-tested council tax reduction.

Thirty-three per cent of households in Highland are experiencing fuel poverty compared to the national average of 24 per cent and 22 per cent of all households in Highland are facing extreme fuel poverty, which is nearly double the national average, at 12 per cent.

The significant recent increases in fuel prices will place even greater pressures on an increased number of Highland residents.

On October 29, the Scottish Government announced a £41m Winter Support Fund for low-income families which includes £10m nationally to help

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# Interpreter enlists to save his family

strategy for the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan was a serious failure of leadership and one of the biggest foreign policy disasters of modern times.

'I have written to the minister pointing out that the UK – along with our international partners – has a moral duty to properly discharge its obligations to all those Afghan citizens who worked with UK forces, ensure safe routes for refugee relocation and resettlement, and ensure adequate funding arrangements for local authorities.

'I have demanded that the Tory government stops dragging its heels over this urgent matter.'

**Ian Blackford MP has demanded the UK government steps in and helps the Afghans and their families, many of whom are in danger for their lives.**



# Olds living in fuel to receive support

those struggling to pay their fuel bills. Highland Council is proposing to use an allocation from this fund together with £2m from reserves to mitigate the fuel challenges faced by Highland residents this winter.

Leader of Highland Council, Councillor Margaret

fuel poverty has far reaching impacts, particularly on health and wellbeing, as well as learning, employment and social networks. I would encourage anyone affected by the stark choices of heating or eating, to seek help and support for a number of providers.'

**'This dire situation clearly demonstrates the pressing need for a UK-wide strategic review of our energy supply, market and infrastructure.'**

Davidson, said: 'In the light of the clear concerns about extreme fuel poverty in Highland communities, it is imperative that we take immediate action to relieve some of the worst impacts this winter.'

'In the longer term, this dire situation clearly demonstrates the pressing need for a UK-wide, strategic review of our energy supply, market and infrastructure.'

Depute leader Alasdair Christie added: 'Living with

The Welfare Support Team provides free, impartial and confidential support on fuel insecurity concerns, in addition to offering assistance to check eligibility and submit a claim for all benefits and entitlements. Getting in touch with the Welfare Support Team is the first step to maximising your potential income and managing your money well. They can be contacted by phone on 0800 090 1004 or by email welfare.

support@highland.gov.uk. In addition, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has a specialist team of Energy Advisors who can undertake a range of energy checks which are designed to help with reducing domestic fuel bills. CAB Energy Advisers can be contacted on 01463 237664.

Funding is also available from the Scottish Government, Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Warm Homes Fund for those looking to implement energy efficiency measures within their home such as adding loft, cavity or External Wall Insulation to reduce heat loss and save on annual energy bills. Enquire through [www.highland.gov.uk/energyefficientscotland](http://www.highland.gov.uk/energyefficientscotland) for more information.

Warm Home Discounts equivalent to £140 per annum off household energy bills are available from some energy suppliers for those on low income. Households are advised to contact their energy supplier to check eligibility.

# Highlands and Islands still safe place to live, says top cop

Recently published police performance figures reveal a slight rise in some recorded crime categories during the first half of the year.

Commenting on the figures, divisional commander Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett said the Highland and Islands area continues to be one of the safest places to live in Scotland, but warned the region is not immune to issues faced elsewhere.

'During this period we have seen an increase in serious and common assaults being recorded as well as a rise in fraud,' he said.

'Supporting victims of sexual crime and targeting perpetrators is a priority and we welcome the increase in recorded sexual crimes as confidence in reporting grows.

'However, we know there is still much more to do to improve reporting of traditionally under-reported crimes such as sexual offending.

'The innovative ThatGuy campaign underlines the im-



**Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett.**

portance of this work and we remain committed to taking action against perpetrators.

'The decrease in the number of people killed on our roads is welcome, however road traffic offences continue to be an area of focus as we continue our commitment to improving road safety.'

'To that end, we have recorded an increase in road traffic offences including dangerous and careless driving, drink/drug driving, speeding and seatbelt offences.'

Chief Superintendent Trickett added that comparing statistics is always challenging as there is a unique set of circumstances behind every incident and the different levels of restrictions faced due to Covid will have an impact for some time to come.

He concluded: 'One thing that remains unchanged however, is the commitment from officers and staff to make the Highland and Islands Division a safe place for all.'

The Performance Report was presented at the Scottish Police Authority Policing Performance Committee last Thursday.

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LT

# Glenfinnan bus idea could ignite greener opportunities

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

A new 21st-century visitor centre on the outskirts of Glenfinnan, combined with a park-and-ride shuttle bus service, may be the key to more sustainable tourism for the village and which could bring long-term 'green' benefits for the whole area.

That is the view of local Highland Council ward member, Councillor Allan Henderson, who was giving his thoughts to the Lochaber Times following a recent meeting of the local community council.

Outwith a Covid-impacted year, Glenfinnan can expect to welcome more than 400,000 visitors annually, many desperate to see the Jacobite steam train cross the viaduct as immortalised in the Harry



Potter films. Along with the large numbers visiting the iconic 1745 Rising monument on the nearby shores of Loch Shiel, it means Glenfinnan can

often feel like a village under siege in the summer.

A new community car park has taken much of the pressure off the adjacent National Trust

for Scotland (NTS) car park, as well as providing a welcome financial boost for the community.

However, at this month's community council meeting, NTS, which looks after the 1745 monument site and has a small visitor centre nearby, revealed it has been in discussions with Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) about a proposal that would see additional off-site overflow parking created to cope with the huge number of visitors wanting to stop at Glenfinnan.

The two organisations have been liaising over the currently closed Callop Bridge and boardwalk - these are in need of repairs. It now emerges they have also been discussing expanding off-site overflow parking at the nearby FLS Callop car park site, plus the erection of a message sign to display 'full car parks in Glenfinnan' information and

**The Jacobite steam train draws tens of thousands of visitors each year to Glenfinnan to see it cross the famous viaduct.** Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

a park-and-ride shuttle bus service.

It has been suggested the park-and-ride shuttle bus service could stop at the NTS visitor centre and link with Glenfinnan Station.

Once the Callop Bridge and boardwalk are reopened, the proposed scheme would create an option of walking or cycling from the Callop car park, along the off-road tracks, to the Callop Bridge and into Glenfinnan.

NTS site manager Emily Bryce said she has been in discussion with Colin Simpson, principal officer (Europe, Tourism and Film), from the Transformation and Economy Service in Highland Council, about visitor infrastructure improvements required in high tourist areas in Glenfinnan, Glencoe and Torridon.

And Ms Bryce suggested that the Callop car park expansion and shuttle service could be included in the next round of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (February 2022).

Highland Council has trialled shuttle buses at Glen Nevis and these could be extended to include Glenfinnan.

Ms Bryce said NTS is anticipating a resumption of, and an increase in, bus tours in 2022 and is trying to find ways to accommodate the growing demand.

Councillor Henderson, who knows the area and its issues well, told us that the recent virtual consultation night staged by NTS and the problem-solving idea for coaches floated at the community council meeting, had made him think.

'It really made me think that there are opportunities for change - change to a greener, slower approach while taking the opportunity to capitalise on the popularity of the Glenfinnan area. It may just be that Harry has sprinkled a little fresh magic dust on the slightly dusty old NTS,' he said.

'Using the Callop site while working with Forestry Land Scotland, there is an opportunity to build a 21st-century visitor centre able to convey the full Jacobite history to visitors before sailing them along the Callop river, or walk/cycle for the more active along the forestry track to a reconstructed FLS bridge, opening up the full view of Glenfinnan and the Jacobite rising monument - jobs and tourism working in harmony with less disruption to the actual village.

'The current visitor centre could be leased to the community, capitalising on the Harry Potter phenomenon whether that be small pop-up cafes, or an enlarged restaurant with local arts and crafts at the centre, to try to slow down the frantic pace of Harry Potter magic.

'Combining all this with Glenfinnan's desire to create an active travel route from Fort William, it really would be a win for all - green tourism and a far better experience for all visitors and locals.'

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FINANCE AND DELIVERY ARRANGED

## Public consultation launched over plans for pharmacy at Spean Bridge

MhorHealth Pharmacy intends to submit an application to NHS Highland to open a new pharmacy at Invercauld House in Spean Bridge.

NHS Highland and MhorHealth Pharmacy are now undertaking a joint consultation exercise to seek the views of local people who may be affected by this, or use the pharmacy at its proposed location, to determine whether residents feel they already have adequate access to pharmacy services in the area and to gauge support for the application.

A public consultation questionnaire will be

available on the NHS Highland website. A paper copy can also be posted on request by calling 01463 706886.

The consultation process will last for 90 working days (excluding public holidays) and started on Friday and closes on Thursday April 21. No responses can be accepted after 5pm on the closing date.

All views submitted will be incorporated into a Consultation Analysis Report which will be taken into account by the NHS Highland Pharmacy Practices Committee (PPC) which decides the outcome of an application.



## Armed Forces Community Covenant commended

The work of the Highland Armed Forces and Veterans' Community Covenant Partnership was commended by Highland councillors at a meeting of Highland Council on Friday.

Councillors welcomed the considerable progress being made with partners, across a range of activities, supporting the Armed Forces Community Covenant. They also welcomed the creation of a specific Council Armed Forces Reservist Policy; the council's achievement in being awarded the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award; the introduction of external funding to help community planning partnerships strengthen their relationship with Armed Forces communities; and noted the introduction of the Armed Forces Bill which will establish the Covenant requirements in statute.

# Fort Augustus housing project wins award

A Fort Augustus pilot scheme that acts as a 'stepping stone' between independent living and moving into a care home has won a top prize.

The Highland Council scheme involving the Telford Centre Care Home picked up the top prize for Housing and Regeneration at the 2021 SURF Regeneration awards.

The Telford Centre housing development pilots a new type of house – a flexible, adapted property designed to support residents with increasing care needs to stay at home and live independently for longer, whilst being close enough to the care home to seek support.

People can then either 'step up' and become a resident of the home if their needs increase, or 'step down', back to a mainstream house if their level of need decreases.

The judging panel visited the



development as the tenants were moving in to their new homes to take a look at the new houses and discuss the model with the design team.

Officers from the council's housing development team attended the award ceremony

to collect their prize.

Council leader Councillor Margaret Davidson, said: 'This is a huge accolade and reflects all the hard work of everyone involved from the conception to helping people move into their new homes.'

### The council's winning certificate for the Fort Augustus development.

'Development of adapted houses is not new to the council, but this award-winning pilot takes the fresh step of building the units in the grounds of the Telford Centre Care Home to provide the missing link between living independently and entering a formal care setting.'

'Due to this successful approach, I am sure we will see more, similar housing development across other Highland communities.'

The council worked closely with the NHS and with the local community company, which kindly provided some of the land needed to enlarge the care home garden sufficiently for the six units that were built.

Councillor Davidson added:

'This national recognition really is well deserved.'

'The project has been a splendid example of how partnership working can bring tangible benefits to communities.'

'Most importantly, I am sure the new residents will be very happy spending their first Christmas in their new homes.'

The SURF Awards, run in partnership with the Scottish Government, has been running since 1998.

It provides an opportunity for regeneration projects of all sizes to demonstrate value to funders and partners, support team-building and develop a national profile.

SURF Award winners also receive additional showcase opportunities through SURF activities throughout the following year.

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LT

# £1bn 15-year council capital plan approved

Highland Council has agreed a 15-year capital plan with a £1 billion investment in schools, roads and flood schemes.

At Friday's full meeting of the local authority, budget leader Councillor Alasdair Christie called the medium-term financial plan a 'holistic, inclusive and horizon scanning' vision.

'This is a good news story,' said Councillor Christie. 'It's a £939m investment in education, property and the maintenance and safety of our buildings. It will create jobs and opportunities across Highland.'

Councillor Christie said this was the first time that the council had produced a 15-year vision – made up of five years' firm commitments, five years' indicative spend and five years' showing 'where we want to be'.

However, his administration



colleague Matthew Reiss resigned as vice-chair of corporate resources committee saying it was only 20 per cent affordable.

He added that major infrastructure projects including the Corran ferry, Stromeferry bypass and waste-to-energy plant were all under threat.

Conservative group leader Councillor Andrew Jarvie dubbed the 'long list' the 'long grass'.

Council leader Margaret Davidson insisted that the projects were priorities.

'We need more capital and we're not finding it, so we're asking for help,' she said.

The report states that the

larger capital spends require additional external funding, or a means of becoming self-sustaining.

The state of Highland's roads – and the blame for their condition – continued to divide opinion. Councillor Jarvie said the capital commitment was 'nowhere near good enough.'

He tabled an amendment that the entire capital plan should be delayed for discussion at a special meeting of the council.

Councillors at last week's economy committee heard that 39 per cent of Highland roads needed to be repaired, and the council needed to spend £26m each year for 'steady state' – ie to stop the roads deteriorating further.

The council has committed just £8m in capital from 2023.

'This is nowhere near good enough,' said Councillor Jarvie. 'The £26m should be

sewn into the fabric of the budget. If we can't sustain that we'll continue to decay.'

Councillor Peter Siggers summed it up briefly: 'We can't afford to do half of what we'd like to do and there's no hope of Edinburgh riding to the rescue.'

Councillor Davidson acknowledged that while officers were still combing through the detail, it appeared that the Scottish Government grant to Highland Council represented flat cash. 'If that's the case we need to find savings to invest more in our roads. We can't keep dipping into our reserves. 'Our roads need capital but they also need revenue to rebuild the service,' she said.

SNP and administration members voted together to defeat Mr Jarvie's amendment, and Highland Council's capital plan was agreed.

## Preparations under way for local government elections next year

Preparations are well under way to run the Highland Council local government elections in May next year.

At Friday's meeting of the Highland Council, members agreed the resources required to run the elections which will take place on Thursday May 5.

The total cost of running the 2022 council election is estimated to be £550,000.

This is based on all ordinary expenses to run the election but excludes any potential Covid costs.

For this election, the Scottish Government has put a national framework agreement in place to deliver the printing of the ballots and the electronic counting of the votes.

As the Local Government Boundary proposal for Highland was rejected by Parliament in October, the current council membership and ward boundaries with its 74 members elected across 21

wards and respective three or four members remains unchanged.

The council's current polling scheme which lists the venues used for poll will be used.

However, to minimise disruption to schools and pupils, and as previously agreed, an in-service day for all Highland schools is in place on Thursday May 5 and because of the exam period, no secondary schools will be used as polling stations.

The council says its election team will continue to work closely with the Electoral Management Board, the Scottish Government and The Electoral Commission to ensure compliance with all directions before, during and after the election.

The count will take place electronically in Inverness.

Roadshows are to be held to help those thinking of standing for election understand the role of councillor.



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**BUILT IN**



# BEAR staff nominate Lochaber Mountain Rescue team for donation

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@lochabertimes.co.uk

BEAR Scotland has donated £1,000 on behalf of all its staff to Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team (LMRT).

LMRT attend incidents that are remote from the roadside where the normal emergency services are unable to operate.

It provides rescue services in a wide range of scenarios, from climbers stuck on the north face of Ben Nevis, to canoeists trapped in steep-sided gorges.

LMRT is the sixth charity this year to benefit from BEAR Scotland's focus on supporting local and regional causes across the country, with staff from all areas of the company invited to nom-



inate local charities which are most important to them. BEAR Scotland Operations Supervisor Duncan Crilley

met with Dr Brian Tregaskis, Secretary of LMRT, after the charity received its £1,000 donation.

Dr Tregaskis commented: 'Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team is a registered charity and our team members are

LMRT is the sixth charity this year to benefit from BEAR Scotland's focus on supporting local and regional causes

unpaid volunteers.

'Whilst we do receive some funding from the Scottish Government and charitable organisations, we rely upon donations to meet the significant costs of running the team.

'With over 90 callouts a year, our rescue equipment and clothing suffers real wear and tear.

'This donation will help us to maintain and replace this equipment and contribute

towards the costs of providing training.'

Iain Murray, BEAR Scotland managing director, added: 'Supporting the communities in which we live and work is extremely important to us.

'We're grateful to Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team for the life-saving work that they do, and we're delighted to be able to support them on behalf of all of our staff.'

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# Watchdog to tighten rules on fish farms to protect wild salmon

Protecting Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon is a 'national priority', says Scotland's environmental watchdog SEPA, launching a consultation on wild salmon protection zones and a sea lice exposure threshold.

'Scotland is renowned worldwide for the quality of its rivers, lochs and seas,' explained Terry A'Hearn, chief executive of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). 'Despite this, in nearly 60 per cent of salmon rivers across Scotland, including on the West Coast and Western Isles, salmon populations are in poor conservation status.'

'Whilst the causes of the poor conservation status of wild salmon stocks are complex and believed to be due to a range of different factors rather than a single cause, we know that sea lice from marine



finfish farms can be a significant hazard. The protection of Scotland's wild Atlantic salmon is a national priority which is why, following the Scottish Government confirming SEPA as the lead body responsible for managing the risk to wild salmonids from sea lice from marine finfish farms, we're today launching a consultation on ambitious

proposals for proposed wild salmon protection zones and a sea lice exposure threshold that applies in these zones.

'Over the coming months we look forward to meeting and hearing views from a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in wild salmon, from community and environmental groups to the aquaculture sector itself, before

**SEPA has been confirmed as the lead body responsible for managing the risk to wild salmonids from sea lice from marine finfish farms.**

taking a final view in 2022.' SEPA said the Scottish Government has identified 12 high-level pressures on the status of salmon stocks: 'These include different pressures on river habitats, such as loss of trees/shade, man-made barriers to fish migration and impacts on river levels resulting from climate change; exploitation (recreational fishing and commercial sea fisheries); predation; sea lice and disease; escapes; and invasive non-native species (including signal crayfish in Scotland).

'Sea lice from marine finfish farms remains a potentially significant pressure with

scientific evidence being clear that sea lice from open-net pen finfish farms in Scotland can pose a significant risk to wild salmon populations.'

The consultation, which is open until Monday March 14, 2022, focuses on a proposed framework to protect wild salmon populations against harmful increases in sea lice by assessing the risk to wild salmon when determining applications for proposed farms, and increases in the number of fish farmed at existing farms.

Permits for all existing farms that can contribute to infective-stage sea lice in wild salmon protection zones would be changed to include conditions that control the number of juvenile sea lice emanating from the farms, and require sufficient information to calculate the number of juvenile lice hatching on the farms.

## Reiss resigns amid budget concerns

Councillor Matthew Reiss has announced his resignation as vice chairman of Highland Council's corporate resources committee.

Mr Reiss says the council has failed to grasp the nettle regarding the state of its budget. Central to his concerns is the medium-term financial plan put before council last Thursday – a plan he believes is 80 per cent unaffordable.

The Caithness councillor also objects to a declining future spend on roads, and claims rural Highland is 'neglected' both by the council and the Scottish Government.

'I'm sad to be resigning, but I've watched the storm clouds gathering for some time,' he said. 'Now, in my judgement, it's completely impossible to deliver on our ambitions.'

Mr Reiss wants the council to be more open with the public.

To read Highland Council's Medium Term Financial Plan-Capital Strategy and Capital Programme to 2036/37 visit [www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)



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## SCOTTISH FIELD January



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# Continued lack of islanders on CalMac board sparks anger

## CalMac seeking community views on Uig harbour works

CalMac is hosting a series of public consultation and engagement meetings this week to gather feedback on the proposed temporary changes to timetables during the closure of Uig Harbour, pictured above on Skye. Due to infrastructure upgrades being undertaken by Highland Council, the harbour will be closed for 21 weeks, from Monday September 12 next year until Friday February 3, 2023.

Consultations will be held on the following dates/times and locations: Uig Village Hall: today (Thursday December 16, 11am-1pm); Tarbert Community Centre: today (Thursday December 16),

6-8pm.

Uig, Tarbert and Lochmaddy harbours are all being upgraded to replace life expiry infrastructure and to enable CalMac to deliver an effective service when new vessel 802 is introduced into service.

Operations director Robert Morrison commented: 'The upgrades will deliver many improvements, but the closure of a port means that we have to carefully plan alternative timetables. We recognise that the closure will be challenging for our customers, and for this reason, community views are extremely important. I would encourage people to attend the consultation events and to let us know what they think.'

Hebridean councillors have slammed the Scottish Government for not appointing an island resident to CalMac's board of eight directors.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the Western Isles Council, has expressed disappointment that the Scottish Government has appointed the David MacBrayne Group Board, but 'ignored pleas from councils and stakeholders across the ferry network to address the fundamental gap in user experience of those appointed to that board.'

'Not one single resident of an island served by David MacBrayne Group or its subsidiary CalMac Ferries Limited sits on the company board,' the council said, 'and this opportunity to right this wrong has been passed up by ministers.'

'Instead they have appointed a new chairman and three new non-executive directors with no residential tie to the communities the company serves.'

'At a meeting of the Hebrides Ferry Stakeholder Group (Thursday December 2) community stakeholders supported the call for lived experience of these ferry services be a pre-requisite of any and all future appointments to the Board of David MacBrayne Group.'

The chairman of the council's

**'An opportunity has been lost to improve decision-making...'**

transportation and infrastructure committee, councillor Uisdean Robertson, said: 'The recent failure to address the absence of residents of the islands served by CalMac in the appointment of board members to David MacBrayne Group has caused real anger in our communities.'

'It is little wonder company management are so detached

from the reality of their decisions when they are based at a headquarters in Inverclyde, and those appointed to hold the company to account have limited experience of how the company's actions affect people from Lewis to Arran.'

'Having raised this issue with the transport minister, I had hoped our concern was understood and these vacancies would be filled by islanders. The comhairle will continue to press the case for real and meaningful change in the voice communities have in shaping our lifeline ferry services.'

Chairman of the Independent Ferries Community Board Angus Campbell attended the meeting and shared the frustration, saying: 'The Ferries Community Board firmly believes experience of living on islands and first-hand knowledge of how lifeline ferry services impact on island communities are an essential part of the skill

mix required to undertake these roles. An opportunity has been lost to add knowledge and improve decision-making for both the company and the communities they serve.'

A Scottish Government spokesperson said: 'Scottish ministers are committed to ensuring that island residents and communities' views are represented appropriately and have asked the new chair, as a priority, to consider how this might be achieved. Board members were appointed for their experience and abilities.'

The Scottish Government added it had advertised the recent chair and three non-executive director positions widely, including on the vessels travelling to island communities, and it was pleased to receive a high number of applications.

'Residents of island communities are free to apply to become members of the board if they wish,' it said.

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# DISTRICT NEWS

## Timber movement restrictions

Woodland managers and landowners around Loch Carron and the north of Kyle of Lochalsh are being advised on new measures affecting the movement of timber.

The new restrictions have been put in place because the tree disease *Phytophthora pluvialis* has been found in the area.

Scottish Forestry has introduced a demarcated zone around the infected site at Loch Carron to help avoid the accidental spread of the pathogen.

Within this zone, no-one can move any timber of western hemlock, Douglas fir, tanoak and pine species within or out of the area, without notifying Scottish Forestry in advance.

James Nott, Scottish Forestry's head of tree health, said: 'We've moved quickly to put measures in place to help prevent the spread of this tree disease following the well-established biosecurity protocol used for tree pests and diseases. We are asking woodland owners to check the health of western hemlock and Douglas fir trees.

'Key symptoms to look for are lesions on the stem, branch or roots. Any possible sightings of the symptoms should be notified on the Tree Alert online system immediately.'

*Phytophthora pluvialis* is a fungus-like pathogen which causes needle cast (where needles turn brown and fall off), shoot dieback, and lesions on the stem, branches, and roots.

It was first discovered earlier this year in Devon, Cornwall and Cumbria in England.

Mr Nott added: 'Everyone can play a part in preventing the spread of pests and pathogens by taking simple steps.

'They should clean their shoes, bike tyres and pet's paws before visits. Everyone has a part they can play in protecting our woodlands.'

## Fort museum manager Colleen steps down

After 10 years as manager of West Highland Museum in Fort William, Colleen Barker is heading off to travel the world.

Directors, staff and volunteers bade farewell to Colleen at their recent Christmas night out in the Highland Cinema where she was presented with a number of gifts on behalf of her many friends and colleagues.

Making the presentation, museum trust chairman Ian Peter MacDonald spoke of her commitment and the changes during her tenure, which saw visitor numbers soar from 9,000 to more than 60,000 per year. He said: 'Colleen has been a much-loved member of the museum team for a decade and has made many very positive changes. She certainly deserves a break and to follow her globe-trotting dream.

'With a keen eye for numbers, a hand on every financial opportunity and a wonderful personality that inspires and motivates, Colleen has been key to the museum's extraordinary success in this period.

'However, I am delighted to say that she will be continuing to support the museum as a volunteer whenever she can and will continue to play a valuable role in its work.'

Colleen told the Lochaber Times: 'Though it was very challenging at times, I have thoroughly enjoyed my decade at the museum. Working with Sonja and Vanessa and the many volunteers over the 10 years was the highlight. I look forward to returning next year as a volunteer.'



Friends and colleagues said farewell to Colleen Barker during a night out at Highland Cinema.

## Traffic management as flood protection works continue

As work on the new £11 million flood protection scheme at Caol and Lochyside continues, the Highland Council says it and contractor, RJ McLeod, are working hard to ensure that any disruption for the local community is kept to a minimum.

The new 1.2km flood embankment will run along the shores of Loch Linnhe from the Caledonian Canal embankment to the Caol Spit and an 800m flood wall will be constructed up the side of the River Lochy adjacent to the road and finishing at Soldier's Bridge.

Enhanced environmental benefits to the wider community will be included as part of the works with improved access to the towpath at the Caledonian Canal and improved walking and cycling routes along the length of the scheme

### CAOL

with planting, seating, paths and a play area.

The installation of road drainage and a new water main continues to progress well along Kilmallie Road.

The intention is to complete the current section under the traffic management past Riverside Park and temporarily reinstate the road carriageway to allow the traffic management to be removed for the forthcoming holiday period.

The site will be closed from Christmas Eve until Monday January 10.

On the return to work on January 10 the traffic management will be reinstated for the next phase which will be across the Old School Court junction, again requiring three-way temporary

traffic lights. During these works, the bus stop opposite Old School Court junction will be temporarily relocated.

A temporary bus stop will be installed under a short stretch of traffic management on the week commencing Monday December 20.

As for work along Erracht Terrace and Glenmallie Road, road drainage is required to be installed around the corner of Erracht Terrace / Glenmallie Road.

Work is scheduled to start on this section on Monday January 10 and is expected to last six weeks. A temporary road closure with a diversion via Glendessary Street will be in place but access will be maintained at all times for pedestrians, emergency vehicles and vehicles to/from Caol Spit treatment works.

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# after a decade



Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

## Festive warnings on unscrupulous pet sellers

Highlands and Islands MSP Jamie Halcro Johnston is backing warnings from the UK's top vet that the public should be wary of unscrupulous pet sellers in the run-up to Christmas.

Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss has said the festive season is often a difficult time to settle a pet into a new home and that it was important people researched both the breed of animal they want but also the person selling it.

Mr Halcro Johnston commented: 'Pets bring great joy and companionship to many homes and, for most people, their welfare is paramount.'

'Unfortunately, there are some unscrupulous people out there who see the growth in demand for pets at this time of year as an opportunity to make money regardless of the welfare of the animals concerned.'

'That's why it is so important that, if folk are getting a pet this Christmas, they carefully research both the pet itself – and whether it's suitable for them and their circumstance in the long term – but also who the seller is.'

'Too many don't and that's not good for either the family or the pet itself.'



## Tuesday Club joy as friends meet again

Members of the Tuesday Club in Fort William are pictured sitting down to a colourful Christmas lunch in the West End Muthu Hotel last week, which marked more than just a festive celebration for the group.

This was almost the first occasion for two years that the whole membership had

managed to come together and take full advantage of each other's company. The club usually holds weekly meetings with chat, games and entertainment, but, as with many other organisations, activities have been severely curtailed by the Covid pandemic. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



## Cancer charity effort goes swimmingly for Aileen

### PLOCKTON

Mother-of-three Aileen McGhie from Camus Fearn, Plockton, decided she would like to do something for charity this year.

So the 41-year-old chose to take on the Cold Water Challenge for Cancer Research.

This involved swimming in the sea every day

Aileen McGhie, third from left, was joined by friends on some days and, inset, Aileen McGhie posted photographs of herself online during every day of her Cold Water Challenge.

of November.

Aileen carried this out faithfully and always with her usual happy demeanour, making sure she had someone on shore to take a photo which she could post later.

Wearing her swimming costume, a woolly hat and rubber shoes, she swam whatever the weather, which was often quite horrible. Sometimes she was joined by one or two friends which delighted her.

Aileen has raised more than £2,500 for which she is extremely grateful. She had previously stated that she would like to raise £150.

Aileen chose Cancer Research because in the past few years she has known many people dealing with cancer.

This was a tremendous effort made by Aileen and resulted in a marvellous success.

### LOCHABER

## Christmas church services

Fort William Kilmallie Church will be holding Christmas Eve services in Caol and in Kilmonivaig, both at 6.30pm, plus a watch night service in Duncansburgh at 11.30pm.

There will be a Christmas Day service in Duncansburgh at 11am and, on Boxing Day, which falls on a Sunday, Fort William Kilmallie has one combined service in Corpach at 11am (no services in Duncansburgh or Caol) and Kilmonivaig has a service at 11am.

The craft group which meets in the Fort William Kilmallie (Corpach) hall on Wednesday afternoons has turned some old hymn books which were about to be discarded into angels.

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Glencruitten Church Hall  
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### FORT WILLIAM

Salvation Army Hall,  
Thursday - 3.30pm & 5.30pm, Friday - 9.30am



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LT

## LETTERS

## Time to take responsibility

I don't think many of us reading this week's paper will be able to fully comprehend the sheer terror and anxiety an Afghan refugee is facing, having fled from the Taliban with his immediate family because of his work as an interpreter for the UK Forces, but having been forced to leave members of his extended family, knowing their lives would be at risk.

We agree with Mr Blackford that Boris Johnson's government should immediately make good on its promised repatriation scheme for Afghan citizens who are facing persecution at the hands of the Taliban.

British soldiers' work would have been impossible without Afghan interpreters, who risked their lives, and those of their families, to help. It is not right their families should be left in hiding, fearing for their lives. We urge the government to have compassion this Christmas and do what it can to help.

## Well done, Gemma

We heartily congratulate Fort William volunteer Gemma Macleod who this week received a Saltire Summit Award for her 'outstanding' contribution to volunteering over the past decade.

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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## Festival success

Many thanks for helping to make the Christmas Tree Festival 2021 successful and safe!

Thank you to everyone who took part by entering a tree, helped with the set-up and running of the festival, with advertising, who donated homebaking and who donated raffle prizes.

We had 1,500 visitors arriving in a steady stream over three full days. Feedback was very positive! Many commented that the trees were more inventive, engaging and fun than ever. Voting turnout was very high.

As you will have read, the visitors' favourite tree this year was, by a large margin, the Twelve Knits of Christmas by Pat McLeod and Betty Jamieson. Also popular were the Beaver Choir, When Santa got Stuck up the Orchy, the Fairy Tree and the tree from St Columba's Primary.

The tea stall was busy with visitors enjoying a hot drink and sampling the varied and plentiful cakes and biscuits. Our wonderful homebakers were very generous.

Many visitors also bought raffle tickets. The raffle winners are listed together with the kind donors on the St Conan's and local Facebooks. Together we have raised over £5,000 towards ongoing restoration and improvements.

Amazing trees, lovely festive prizes, excellent homebaking and a lot of hard work from all involved. Thank you!

With best wishes for a very happy Christmas,  
**Liz, Secretary, Friends of St Conan's Kirk.**

## Rockfall thanks

After the rockfall on Gallanch Road, Argyll and Bute Council agreed to take on the responsibility for dealing with the situation in order to reopen the road and enable me to safely return to my house, just to the south of the rockfall.

I must sincerely thank the council for taking this on and thanks to Malcolm Cullen for keeping me informed about the progress of the planned operation. Also thanks to Roddy MacCuish and Jim Lynch for helping to put the case to the council for speedy action. And finally thanks to the Geo Rope team and Alchemy Construction for their splendid, skilled removal of the potential threat to road and the house, the removal of the boulder on the road and the one barring the way into my garden.

The residents of Kerrera, and all the businesses along the south end of Gallanach are, I'm sure, grateful for the timely reopening of the road.

Well done and many thanks to all involved.  
**Jennifer Shaw, Oban.**

## Fort medical heli pad plans?

I'm glad that plans for the new Belford hospital seem to be moving along at last, but see no mention of a helicopter landing pad: is there one planned? If not, why not?

I did suggest last year that Lochaber MRT should be moved to where the police station is now, and the police move into the old Belford to get them back into town, but I see that they're moving the town out to the police station!

**Davie Kerr, Onich.**

## Promoting Oban worldwide

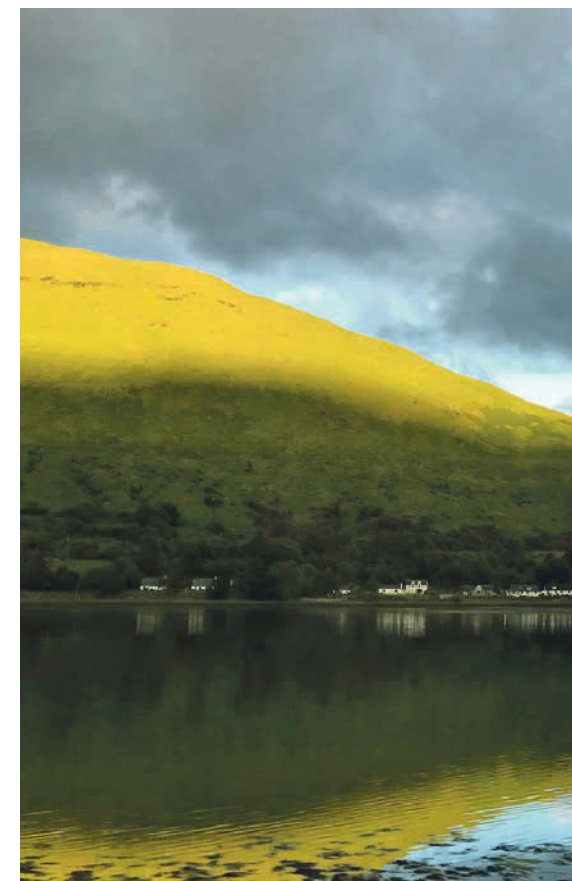
I was pleased to see the report in the Oban Times about the plans to promote Oban as a must-visit destination from 2022 and beyond. The town certainly has much to offer but there's more to attracting visitors than showcasing restaurants, hotels and marine tourism. We need to sell Oban as a beautiful place to visit and unfortunately we're not doing nearly enough.

Once the visitor leaves the seafront and ventures into the hinterland, it's a very different story. Take a walk round the town and anyone with their eyes open will be unable to ignore the litter on the streets, the weeds along the pavements, the filthy and damaged road signs covered in stickers, the rusting broken fences and collapsing walls. To give just one example, the tourist crossing Tweeddale Street to access Jacob's Ladder en route to McCaig's Tower will see rubbish spread around the bins, broken glass on the steps, cans, bottles and carry-out boxes lying around the seats and the rubbish of decades strewn down the bank to the back of the Distillery. But it's when the visitor finally arrives at Oban's crowning glory, McCaig's Tower, that the real horror is unfolded. Rubbish in the car park, scruffy and trodden flower beds, huge muddy puddles, broken glass and the usual carry-out debris on the viewing platform and more of everything tossed over the barrier to litter the bank below. It's not a very good welcome to Oban. 'Keep Oban Beautiful' tries hard to stay positive, but it's certainly not easy!

It's no good blaming the tourists, Covid or the windy weather - it's like this all year round. Many volunteers all over the town get out and about on the streets and beaches with bags and litter-pickers - whatever would the place look like if they decided to give up!

We as a town need to get on and do something about it if Oban's to be taken seriously as a premier tourist attraction. We need education, encouraging signs, more bins and a lot more

## YOUR PICTURE



civic pride! Together we can make a difference!  
**Maurice Wilkins, Keep Oban Beautiful.**

## Appalling decision by board

Oban Community Council is appalled by the decision of the Harbour Board to accept the officials' report on the future management of Oban Bay. Once again the people of Oban have been let down by officers in Kilmory who have ignored our wishes and our interests.

In public they repeatedly encouraged Oban Community Harbour Development Association (OCHDA), while in fact obstructing their work by failing to provide necessary information in good time, or, in many cases, at all. They were then able to highlight to the board omissions

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or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

## RES



This week's photograph has been sent in by Robert Wrate, who told us: 'As we approach the shortest day of the year this photograph is a reminder of the pleasures we can look forward to when the darkness of another Covid winter is over.' If you have a photograph you'd like to share with us, email a jpeg of no more than 2MB to [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk)

## Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

[ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)



Chan eil teagamh nach eil faclan anns a h-uile cànan a tha nas cudromaiche na chèile agus saoilidh mi gum bi am facal a tha a' ciallachadh "earbsa" àrd air gach liosta! Le gach sluagh sìobhalta an eisimeil siostam riaghlaidh air choreigin, tha cothromachd beatha na dùthcha gu bhith an crochadh gu mòr air ire na h-earbsa a bhios aig an t-sluagh nan cuid cheannardan. Feumar earbsa aig ire sam bith, ach gu sònraichte aig ire cheannard riaghaltais, a chosnadh tro mhodhan-obrach agus ghniomhan, chan eil dòigh eile air creideas a ghleidheadh agus mòr-chuid a riarachadh.

Sin an seòrsa dùbhlain a tha a' lèireadh Boris Johnson agus a chuid riaghaltais an-dràsta, agus aig àm sgrìobhaidh seo chan eil lasachadh air na h-ionnsaighean air ann am meadhanan na dùthcha agus tha e doirbh fàisneachd a dhèanamh air ciamar a dh'fhaodadh cùisean a bhith ann am beagan làithean nuair a bhios sibh a' leughadh a' cholbh seo. Cha do mheall e ach na dh'earb às, tha seanfhacal ag innse dhuinn! Uill saoilidh mi gur ann ainneamh a chithear seanfhacal ris nach aontaichte, ach feumar aideachadh gum bheil buaidh na h-earbsa a chuir luchd-taice Tòraidh ann am Boris Johnson a' bualadh oirnn uile feadh na rìoghachd, 's coma dè an seasamh poiliteigeach a dh'fhaodadh a bhith againn! Sin pàirt de dhileab riaghladh dheamocrataigeach agus anns a' bhitheantas thathas a' coimhead ri dealas phàrtaidhean dùbhlain gus maothachadh a dhèanamh air feallsanachd pàrtaidh riaghlaidh. 'S fhurasta a thuigsinn mar a bhiodh càineadh

agus dùsgadh mì-chliù mu bhuill an riaghaltais na phàirt den iomairt sin, agus abair gum bheil sinn air leithid sin fhaicinn bho chionn ghoirid ann an Westminster!

'S math an airidh cuideachd far am bheil amharas làidir agus fianais a' nochdadh, ach saoilidh mi gum bheil feum air faiceall nach eil a' chuimse nàiseanta air a' chuspair seo tro na meadhanan a' clonadh aire a' mhòr-shluagh bhon chunnart anns am bheil Breatann, agus an saoghal, bho ghalar leantainneach Chovid ann an riochd Omicron. Gun teagamh tha e iomchaidh gun tèid firinn na thachair ann an Sràid Downing aig àm na Nollaige ann an 2020 a rannsachadh gu mionaideach, agus gun tèid briseadh sam bith air riaghailtean a bh' ann aig an àm a pheanasachadh. Ach chan eil tinneas a' dèanamh taghadh neo sgaradh poiliteigeach agus tha e deatamach gun obraich riochdairean gach pàrtaidh còmhla anns an iomairt gus ceannsachadh a thoirt air Omicron, agus seirbheis na slàinte a dhion ann an suidheachadh sam bheil a' bhioras seo a' sgaoileadh aig astar eagallach.

Nuair a bha mi ag èisteachd cuid de na ceistean aig a' choinneimh naidheachd aig a' Phrìomhaire beagan làithean air ais far an robh na h-eòlaichean Pàdraig Vallance agus Crisdean Whitty a' soillearachadh carson a bha iomairtean ùra gan cur an gnìomh ri linn buaidh Omicron, bha mi a' faireachadh agus a' tuigsinn frionas nan eòlaichean. 'S e dìon slàinte an t-sluaigh am prìomh amas, agus an dleasan, a tha mar uallach dhuinn uile!

from the OCHDA proposals, omissions which were down to the council. They then claimed that as a result of the omissions, it would take too long to deliver a Trust Port, while in fact the alternative adopted – a Municipal Port - is a blank sheet of paper. These are the same officials who previously and repeatedly stated that they lacked the expertise to run Oban Harbour.

Furthermore the report to the Harbour Board failed to include, as it should have, an estimate of how much it would cost the council to set up their Municipal Port. We are advised this will be a six-figure sum which could be better spent on other council services. This perverse decision of the Harbour Board must be overturned.

**Oban Community Council.**

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

*'What matters most is offering friendship and kindness to others, connecting with others and being happy.'*

This quotation comes from the newsletter of a charity for very disabled and disadvantaged young people and represents what can be done by those who sometimes are overlooked by society.

The group in question had seen the isolation and loneliness of some people in the community. They translated their concerns into action,

baking for people in a nearby old people's home and giving their time and friendship in a visit. We all have a unique part to play whatever our circumstances or limitations.

Our present problems and hardships have, in so many cases, unleashed a wonderful response enabling neighbours to support each other, delighting in giving, overcoming disabilities to raise money for charities and working to alleviate suffering.

Christians cannot claim a monopoly of charity or good works but certainly any church

community could be the first point of call for anyone who would like to throw off isolation and join with those who are working under God's guidance to make our world a more joyful and satisfying place to live.

The work is often not widely publicised and it is necessary to get involved to find out what is being done, but it can be infinitely rewarding to be part of God's purpose and under His guidance.

**Geoff and Janet Fairbairn, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)**



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# Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



I was desperately sorry to hear over the weekend of the passing of Calum Campbell, who was a very well-known and much-loved man to all customers of the Park Bar.

Calum worked in the pub for years but will be remembered fondly for his guest singing appearances with all the bands who played in the Park. Calum probably sang with more musicians than most professional singers have managed in their whole careers!

His staple classics were Spencil Hill, The Portree Kid, and the Kishorn Commandoes – written by one of his favourite folk duos, Gaberlunzie.

I have many great memories of Calum's company, going right back to when I first moved down to Glasgow. If I was playing in the pub on a busy Saturday and the crowd began to get a bit rowdy and close to the equipment or instruments on the stage, I could always rely on Calum arriving side of stage with his arms folded to watch over the punters dancing the night away without a care.

More than once, we would glance at each other and laugh at the scenes unfolding in front of us. He was one of



Calum Campbell

many great characters who make the Park Bar what it is and will be missed terribly.

Fittingly, I happened to pop into the Park Bar the day I heard the news – there was only one place I was heading after 10 days of Covid enforced isolation, I'm sure you will understand!

In the Park that day, I heard of a new band from Skye called Valtos who had just played a sell-out show the previous evening. A number of people who had been were raving about how great it was. Valtos were described to me as a brand new band from Skye who blend traditional music with techno.

Unfortunately, I only heard about the gig after it had happened (news of it obviously hadn't reached me in isolation!) but, by all accounts, it was a great show and it's always lovely to hear of a new band enriching the west coast music scene.

I also managed to catch up with a few members of slightly less new bands for dinner on Sunday! Normally, each year, we have a full blown Christmas night out featuring members of Trail West, Skerryvore, and Tide Lines (among other friends), but clearly that is not possible at the current time – unless you are in Downing Street!

Last year it was cancelled altogether, although, in hindsight, we could perhaps have managed a Christmas quiz with cheese and wine!

This year, due again to rising cases, we had a smaller, more civilised dinner with everyone having tested negative before meeting up.

We always put some money to charity as a group and this time it was Prostate Cancer UK whose ties we each bought and wore on the evening. It was great to see the lads before a quiet week or so in preparation for heading home for Christmas.

# Niteworks ready to release its cinematic new album A' Ghrian

Folk-electronica powerhouse Niteworks is set to release its dramatic new album A' Ghrian on Friday January 14.

The band expertly blur the lines between Scottish traditional, folk and Gaelic music with cutting-edge electronica, creating a unique and exhilarating sound that has seen them rightfully earn a reputation for unapologetic innovation. The new album features an electrifying mix of Gaelic, Scots and English folk songs infused with cinematic electronica.

A' Ghrian [Ah Ghree-un], meaning 'the sun', marks a new dawn for Niteworks as they incorporate English folk and Scots songs into their repertoire for the first time, alongside Gaelic tracks.

This is something that's at the heart of their vision, as drummer Ruairidh Graham explains: "There is so much value to be found in Scotland's minority languages and cultures that deserve to be presented to mainstream audiences in ways that are

accessible to them. This means the music and culture that goes along with it can be celebrated not just by those who use it, but by a much wider audience that want to enjoy it too."

The band, comprising Innes Strachan (synth/keys), Allan MacDonald (pipes), Christopher Nicolson (bass) and Ruairidh Graham (drums), grew up together on the Isle of Skye. Their traditional roots, paired with their experiences discovering club culture and electronic music in Glasgow, helped create their folksy electronic sound.

As you might expect, there is an abundance of vocal talent to be found on the new album, including stunning guest vocals from long-time collaborators Sian (Eilidh Cormack, Ceitlin Lilidh and Ellen MacDonald) including a solo vocal from Ellen.

The inimitable tones of celebrated Scottish singers Kathleen MacInnes, Beth Malcolm, Hannah Rarity and Alasdair Whyte also feature.

Ruairidh continued: "With

this album we've sought to create a more expansive sound that's cinematic in its nature.

"We were partly inspired by our work writing the music for Edinburgh's Hogmanay Fare Well film that reflected on what 2020 had been like for many during the pandemic. The nature of the project required broad expansive sounds, and that led to us going further in that direction through the writing and recording of the album. Our upcoming orchestral concert for Celtic Connections further reinforced our desire to keep down that path. A lot of the material from this album will lend itself well to that show and with the backing of a full orchestra it's going to be really powerful – we still can't quite believe it's happening!"

The band will tour the album with live dates scheduled from this month until the end of 2022, including a sell-out return to Celtic Connections in January.

For more information visit [niteworksband.com](http://niteworksband.com)

## HIGHLAND CINEMA

FRI 17TH - FRI 24TH DEC



**FRIDAY 17TH DECEMBER**  
 A Boy Called Christmas (PG) 10am. Highlands From The Air (U) 10:30am.  
 West Side Story (PG) 12pm, 3:30pm + 7pm.  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm + 7:30pm.

**SATURDAY 18TH DECEMBER**  
 CBeebies Christmas Show (U) 10:30am. Highlands From The Air (U)  
 10:45am. West Side Story (PG) 12pm, 3:30pm + 7pm.  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm + 7:30pm.

**SUNDAY 19TH DECEMBER**  
 A Boy Called Christmas (PG) 10:30am. Highlands From The Air (U) 11am.  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm + 7:30pm.  
 West Side Story (PG) 1pm + 7pm.

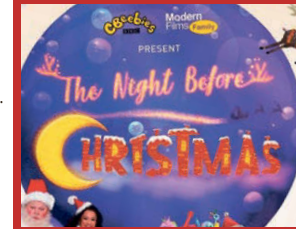
**MONDAY 20TH DECEMBER - ALL SHOWN WITH SUBTITLES**  
 Highlands From The Air (U) 11:15am. West Side Story (PG)  
 (Bairns At The Box Office 11:30am), 3pm + 6:30pm.  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 12:30pm, 4pm + 7:30pm.

**TUESDAY 21ST DECEMBER**  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 12:30pm, 4:10pm + 7:30pm. Highlands  
 From The Air (U) 2:30pm. West Side Story (PG) 3:50pm + 7:15pm.

**WEDNESDAY 22ND DECEMBER**  
 A Boy Called Christmas (PG) 10:30am. Highlands From The Air (U)  
 10:45am. West Side Story (PG) 12pm, 3:30pm + 7pm.  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 1pm, 4:15pm + 7:30pm.

**THURSDAY 23RD DECEMBER**  
 A Boy Called Christmas (PG) 10:30am. CBeebies Christmas Show (U)  
 10:45am. West Side Story (PG) 12:30pm, 3:50pm + 7:15pm. Spider-Man:  
 No Way Home (12a) 1pm, 4:15pm + 7:30pm.

**FRIDAY 24TH DECEMBER - NOT ALL SHOWS ON SALE YET**  
 CBeebies Christmas Show (U) 10:30am. Home Alone (PG) 11:15am.  
 Spider-Man: No Way Home (12a) 12:30pm, 3:45pm + 7:15pm.  
 The Muppet Christmas Carol (U) 1:45pm.  
 It's A Wonderful Life (U) 4pm. The Matrix Resurrections (15) 7pm.



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# School Coordinators create new opportunities for young people

DYW West Highland, hosted by and working with Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, has already made a big local impact in appointing eight new School Coordinators who are based across the nine high schools of the West Highlands (in the Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross areas). Starting earlier in 2021, the school coordinators are based in the local high schools of Lochaber, Kinlochleven, Ardnamurchan, Mallaig, Kilchuimen Academy in Fort Augustus, Portree, Plockton, Ullapool and Gairloch. These part-time positions based in the heart of local communities, in the high schools are a fantastic way to create meaningful connections between education and local employers to help provide work and training opportunities for school pupils.

Speaking about the new school coordinator roles, Frazer Coupland, CEO of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, said, "To see this level of investment for young people in Scotland is very encouraging. We have grown the DYW West Highland team by successfully implementing eight School Coordinator positions within Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross schools and we will now build on this positive news as we look to the future with young people at the heart of what we do."

## Meet the coordinators!

There are eight coordinators based in high schools across the west highlands. Let's meet two of the team based in Lochaber's schools - Gena Maclean from Lochaber High School and Emma Pearce who is based at Mallaig High School.

**Gena Maclean - Lochaber High School**



Born and raised in Fort William, Gena Maclean had worked for the DYW programme for three years before moving into a new targeted role as school coordinator at Lochaber High earlier this year.

Gena really enjoys introducing the pupils to a variety of career sectors through work skills activities with local employers. Employers help the young people to enhance their workplace skills through things like mock interviews, school sector talks and events.

When asked about the best part of her job, Gena was full of praise for the young people and her work with local employers, "Helping the young person is the best thing - finding them a work placement or an apprenticeship that helps them

achieve the career they want is very rewarding." She also really enjoys working with the staff at Lochaber High and employers to help identify opportunities for young people. Gena has recently arranged virtual mock interviews for the whole of 6th year, using 22 employers from a variety of different sectors that the pupils were interested in working in.

Gena has been delighted with the engagement and feedback from local employers - "The local businesses have been great to work with and very supportive, especially for the recent, virtual mock interviews. Without the employers' input, DYW wouldn't exist!"

Gena is already in touch with a wide variety of employers and would encourage anyone thinking about getting involved to get in touch for an informal chat. All employers' help is appreciated when it comes to 'Developing the Young Workforce!'

**Emma Pearce - Mallaig High School**



Based in Mallaig High School, Emma Pearce became a school coordinator earlier this year. Originally from rural Suffolk, Emma trained as a PE teacher, before working in outdoor education at the Outward Bound Scotland for 27 years.

Emma has a real passion for learning and the outdoors, and combines her role with being an active member of Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and works for 'Girls on Hills' providing skills and confidence training to empower people to become independent hill-goers.

Emma enjoys linking employers with teachers and students and creating successful partner-

ships to achieve opportunities for local young people. She's delighted with the reception she's had in her new role, praising the "dedicated and brilliant" staff team at Mallaig High School and the enthusiastic involvement from local employers.

She is looking forward to the opportunities ahead: "I'm excited about ensuring the young people in Mallaig are well prepared for further education and work. I look forward to providing lots of opportunities to young people, their parents and carers, so they can make informed choices about their futures."

Any last comment, Emma? "Yes! Our young people are brilliant! Everyone has a role to play and wants to be part of a thriving community. I'm enjoying doing what I can to help."

If you'd like to work with the DYW School Coordinators to create links between employment and education, contact [info@dywwesthighland.org](mailto:info@dywwesthighland.org) or visit [www.dywesthighland.org](http://www.dywesthighland.org) for more information.

## How can you help in Developing the Young Workforce?

Businesses from all sectors and of all sizes can get involved with DYW in a number of different ways.

There's no rules or big commitment required - you can choose to do what works for you and your business.

Whether it is speaking to young people about your job and experience, hosting a workplace visit, supporting mock interviews, setting a real life business challenge or using your expertise to bring a classroom topic to life - there are lots of ways for businesses to get involved.

Why not contact the DYW West Highland team to have a chat about easy ways your business could get involved to help young people learn more about your world of work?

Email [info@dywwesthighland.org](mailto:info@dywwesthighland.org), call on 01397 705 765, or visit [www.dywesthighland.org](http://www.dywesthighland.org) to find out more.

**Can your business provide work experience placements?**

**Search DYW West Highland or email [info@dywwesthighland.org](mailto:info@dywwesthighland.org)**

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Developing the Young Workforce



LT

## SHINTY ROUND-UP

Gareth Evans  
reviews Lochside  
Rovers' season

It was so near but yet so far for Lochside Rovers as their only two defeats, both coming late in the season, meant they were unable to repeat their two-cup haul from 2019.

Gareth Evans, who recently stepped up to the Oban Camanachd manager's role, took time to reflect on a season which opened with a battling draw at home to Bute as Ryan Craig's late leveller cancelled out Lewis Buchanan's early opener.

'We had a young squad at the start of the season and I thought we would do well to finish mid-table,' Gareth said. 'I expected Bute and Ballachulish to be strong and it just so happened we faced both these teams in our first two games.'

'Bute actually came to Oban with a young side and we had a good game with them at Ganavan when a draw was probably a fair result.'

Lochside then came from behind to win 2-1 at Ballachulish before the holders beat the Lochaber seconds 5-1 in the opening round of the HIS Sutherland Cup.

Gareth recalls: 'Our under-14 skipper Alexander MacDonald, a versatile player, got the equaliser against Balla' and Robbie Brown, who joined from Taynuilt, got the winner. The big down-side from that game was a back injury suffered by Chrissie MacMillan. It looked innocuous enough at the time but it turned out to be serious and he is still receiving treatment for it.'

'The Lochaber win was good as we always look to do well in the Sutherland.'

A return to league duty and a 2-1 victory at the Inveraray colts on a wet midweek followed before a strong Lochside team then beat Taynuilt 5-1 in another midweek fixture.

Gareth said: 'We had David Cameron back from rugby and he got the first goal. David is a player who could push for a place in the Oban Camanachd team.'

That match against Taynuilt took place on Wednesday 21 July and it was to be the last league fixture Lochside would play.

The HIS Sutherland Cup second round threw up a tough tie at home to the Fort William colts and Lochside had to work hard for their 4-3 victory. 'The Fort William tie and the Bullough Cup Final were probably the best two games of the season. The Fort game was end-to-end with two young

teams going for it on a hot day at Mossfield. I was pleased we won but couldn't have complained if we had lost.'

Lochside's defence of the Bullough Cup opened with a 6-3 victory in Glasgow against the Mid Argyll reserves, aided by Ross Campbell's hat-trick. 'We played Ross at full forward and he did really well. In fact they all did well as GMA had no first team match that week-end so fielded a good physical side against us. Our fitness was good though and saw us over the like as it did a few times during the season.'

September opened with a 2-1 win over on-form Kinlochshiel seconds in the quarter-finals of the HIS Sutherland Cup. Lewis Buchanan and Alexander MacDonald got the goals with Gareth saying: 'There was some drama around the 'Shiel game and we led 2-0 through Lewis Buchanan and Alexander MacDonald before they pulled a goal back with 16 minutes remaining but we got there in the end.'

However, the Lovat second team were to prove too strong in the Sutherland semis at Spean Bridge as the Balgates men won 5-0.

Gareth said: 'It still rankles with me that we had to play that tie on the same day as our first team were in the Glasgow Celtic Society Cup semi-finals. We were nine players short for one reason or another and that made it really difficult for us. We had to field so many of our younger players that it really was men against boys. We ended up with young players getting injured during the game and I would have liked to have played the semi-final with the team we had out against Fort William in the earlier round.'

The Bullough semis were more straight forward as lower league Oban Celtic colts were dispatched 10-0 so the season ended with the Bullough Cup Final against the Kyles Athletic reserves. The venue was decided by the toss of a coin which gave the Tighnabraich men home advantage. In the end, it took penalties to separate the sides following a 3-3 draw with Kyles eventually taking the trophy.

Gareth added: 'I think I said at the time that I'd normally be unhappy about losing a game of shinty never mind a final but it was a brilliant game. It's not often Kyles get to play a final on their own pitch and there was a great crowd who created a wonderful atmosphere.'

'Young Matthew Sloss was terrific for us that day and he is just one of several younger players coming through the system. Innes Jackson is another brilliant prospect. He is



Gareth Evans, former manager of Lochside Rovers and now the new manager of Oban Camanachd.

so keen and such a good player. Callum MacMillan came in this year. He's only 14 but can be such a hard player in the tackle. Daniel Pearson also broke through and he will get more game time next season.

'Scott Robertson is another who has had a great season. Scott is still young but seems to have been around for years.' As he prepares for the new season with Oban Camanachd, Gareth has a word for those who helped him with Lochside last season.

'Managing a shinty team is no one-man-band,' he said. 'Tain MacMillan, Duncan MacMillan and Andrew Pearson have been a huge help. I thank them for that and of course wish them well as they manage Lochside next season.'

The managerial changes trigger a new era for both Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers and the preparations start now.

Oban Times Shinty  
Team of the Year

Oban Times shinty reporter Alasdair Bruce has selected his 2021 shinty team of the year.

With so many excellent players to choose from, only those who played most of the season were considered so the likes of Mark MacDonald, Blair Morrison, Thomas Borthwick and Conor Cormack, who would have pushed for a place in the side, weren't considered as injury forced them out during large chunks of the year.

**Stuart MacDonald (Lovat)**  
It was another season of game-changing goalkeeping from the Lovat's Mr Consistent. Lovat's Camanachd Cup run would have ended against Skye in Portree had it not been for Stuart MacDonald's heroics and he also shone in the semi-final win over Kingussie. Stuart remains Scotland's number one.

**Finlay MacRae (Kinlochshiel)**  
Finlay MacRae was the rock at the centre of 'Shiel's defence in a season the club will never forget. He defied the odds to recover from a leg injury to play such a crucial role in the Camanachd Cup Final. Finlay is a class act and a fine reader of the game. The 36-year-old's performances were all the more remarkable given the changing nature of Kinlochshiel's defence this season as injury ruled out Conor Cormack, Mark MacDonald and David Falconer for long periods.

**Daniel Cameron (Oban Camanachd)**  
Oban Camanachd boasted arguably shinty's best defence last season, only losing six goals over 11 games. They weren't always tested to the same extent as in the Premiership but the statistics are still impressive, keeping clean sheets in seven of their 11 matches and only losing one goal in three of the other four matches. Scottish international Daniel Cameron is a leader whose skilful defending has been a key component in the Oban side's back line. Daniel captains this select team.

**Daniel Sloss (Oban Camanachd)**  
Daniel Sloss is one shinty's most talented youngsters who can be a mainstay of the Oban Camanachd side for at least another 15 years. He is usually given a man-marking role on the opponent's most dangerous forwards which speaks volumes of the trust placed in him. The Covid pandemic probably robbed him of the opportunity to captain the Scotland U17s at a time when he was already an established Scotland U21 international.

**Andrew King (Kyles Athletic)**  
Andrew King seems to get better with each passing season. He can break up an attack and set up an attack with equal ease. Andrew covers a lot of ground and has all the attrib-

utes of a modern-day defender.

**Craig Mainland (Lovat)**  
Wing centre is not Craig Mainland's usual position but his displays at buckshee back for Lovat this term merit a place in the team of the year. A tenacious tackler and a clean hitter of the ball who has a keen will to win.

**Donald Nixon (Kinlochshiel)**  
Donald Nixon is a powerhouse in the 'Shiel midfield, slotting perfectly into the full centre role after switching from wing centre. One of shinty's best shy takers who had forced his way into international recognition before Covid interrupted the game.

**William MacKinnon (Skye Camanachd)**  
William's versatility has seen him feature in defence, midfield and attack for Alvanace British Aluminium Balliemore Cup winners Skye this season. The 19-year-old came through the youth ranks at Inverness before playing for Skye at under-17 level to follow in his father's footsteps. He is an athlete who is good in the tackle.

**Ruaridh Anderson (Kingussie)**  
Kingussie play-maker Ruaridh Anderson offers a creative edge to the side, providing opportunities for his fellow forwards. The 21-year-old is an exciting player to watch, he is super-fit and has a fine work ethic, often tracking back to help the midfield and even the defence at times.

**James Falconer (Kingussie)**  
As shinty's top goalscorer in 2021, James has more than earned his place in the side. He has an electric turn of pace and is a clinical finisher when through on goal. James never gives his marker a minute's peace.

**Keith MacRae (Kinlochshiel)**  
It was a year to remember for Keith MacRae. After battling back from a serious knee injury, he captained Kinlochshiel to their first-ever Camanachd and MacTavish Cup successes. Keith has great close control and scores key goals as his hat-trick in the Scottish Final underlined. His skill and experience would be an asset to any side.

**Craig Morrison (Caberfeidh)**  
Craig was shinty's top scorer in 2019 and he carried that prowess into the 2021 season, netting 18 times in 12 matches. He isn't always fielded in attack but when he is there, he is a handful for any defence.

**Substitutes**  
**Steven Macdonald (Newtonmore)**  
It has been a rare trophyless season for Newtonmore first team who are going through a period of transition. However Steven Macdonald's performances in the middle of defence have still been to the usual high standard.

**Alexander Michie (Kingussie)**  
Kingussie's defensive record is another to be admired, losing just 12 goals in 16 matches. Alexander Michie has been a pivot at the back, covering so much ground at the back with his athletic defending. He is also an excellent penalty taker.

**Lachie Shaw (Fort William)**  
One of Fort William's talented youngsters, Lachie can fulfil a number of roles. He is a creative player and also a good finisher. Lachie was one of the top players in the National Division in 2019 and is sure to set the Premiership alight next season.

**John MacRae (Kinlochshiel)**  
John is a strong full forward who enjoys a physical battle. He has an eye for goal but can also pick out a chance for a teammate. John defends from the top of the pitch, never allowing defenders to clear their lines with ease.

**Roddy MacDonald (Kyles Athletic)**  
Roddy MacDonald scored six goals in 11 games as Kyles lifted the Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup. He is equally at home playing in defence or attack and has maintained a high level of form for a number of seasons now.

**Kinglochshiel manager**  
**Johnston Gill** is the outstanding candidate as to manage the side. This year's Camanachd and MacTavish successes mean Johnston has now managed 'Shiel to all four majors during his three terms in charge. He has also had a keen eye on introducing a number of the club's promising youngsters to build the squad size for next season.

**Andy MacDonald booking blow**  
Oban Celtic's Andy MacDonald will miss the first match of the 2022 shinty season. MacDonald returned to the Celtic side for the club's final game of the season, an 8-0 win at Aberdour in Mowri Senior League C. However a yellow card in that game, his first booking of the season, now triggers a one-match suspension for a disciplinary points accumulation.

**Lovatt Cup returns**  
Possibly the most popular out-of-season shinty clash returns in 2021 as Lovat meet neighbours Beaulieu to contest the Lovat Cup at Balgates on Monday 3 January 2022.

The Lovat Cup wasn't contested in 2021 because of Covid restrictions. Lovat are holders as Greg Matheson's brace helped them beat Beaulieu 3-1 in 2020 to win the trophy for the fifth successive season.

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## SLT take five off league leaders St Patrick's FP

Continued from page 48.

move involving Munro and Maclean to widen the gap.

The home side were now the ones looking sluggish and Gillies' aerial prowess was soon seen again as his flick on was gathered by Munro to secure his brace.

Finally, as the clock wound down, Munro secured the hat-trick his Man of the Match performance deserved. Gathering the ball deep in defensive territory, the winger broke from his own half to round the keeper and add the flourish of a final score of 5-1.

Club Secretary Rebecca

Small, said: 'Overall, this was a great performance, probably the best of the season so far.

'With St Pat's being so far ahead in the league, it was vitally important that we sent a message to the rest of the teams in the division as the calendar year winds down and this is a signature result.

'Obviously, we wish St Pat's all the best for the rest of the season and look forward to getting them at the Kinlochleven Astro soon.'

South Lochaber Thistle finish the year with a home game against Westerlands AFC in Kinlochleven on Saturday at 12 noon.

## Heavy defeat for the Fort

Breedon Highland League leaders Fraserburgh did their goal difference a power of good by demolishing Fort William 12-0 with a scintillating display of attacking football.

The Lochaber side, who were put to the sword by some clinical finishing, paid a heavy price for having only one substitute on the bench.

Disappointed Fort caretaker-manager Tommylee Taylor said: 'We were well-organised in the first half and we didn't give them much time and space in the key areas but they upped it a notch or two and piled on the pressure in the second half.'

This Saturday the Fort travel to take on Formartine United.

# Mull rally consultation

Mull Rally organisers are carrying out a consultation while next year's event is still 10 months down the road.

Richard Crozier was at the island's community council meeting on Zoom to share early proposals and dates for the 2022 rally which will take place between Thursday October 13 and Sunday October 16.

Next year's rally will be the 50th running of the rally and feedback so far from people is that they want organisers to 'try and mix things up a bit', said Mr Crozier.

Thursday December 30 was originally set as a deadline to hear back from people so all the information can be collated and shaped into proposals – that date has now been extended to Friday January 7.

Residents and businesses on and off the route are invited to have a say by emailing [consult@mullrally.org](mailto:consult@mullrally.org) Community council con-



Mull Rally 2021 winners Daniel Harper and Chris Campbell.

venor Tom Nelson had asked at the meeting how organisers were driving forward the consultation. Word has been put out through the Round and About newsletter on the island and Facebook, he was told. Mr Nelson had questioned whether December 30 gave people enough time to respond.

A change of personnel among organisers means they have their 'L' plates

on, community council members were told. 'It is critical that the island continues to love the rally and vice-versa. We are absolutely committed to that,' added Mr Crozier.

The Mull Rally, a closed-road car rally, started out as the Tour of Mull in 1969. It was the first event on 'mainland' UK to get an Act of Parliament to be able to close public roads. The event

is considered as one of the toughest on the British rally calendar. To see more details on the plans go to <https://bit.ly/mullrally22consult>.

'It is important to us, as the event organising team, that we understand what implications our proposed event format, road closures and route have on the businesses and residents of Mull,' said the rally's Facebook post on Everything Mull.

## Boxing medal for top of the bill Farquhar

Lochaber Phoenix boxer Farquhar MacRae was not only top of the bill at last week's Highland Boxing Academy Home Show in Inverness he also brought home the winner's trophy against local opponent Frazer MacDonald.

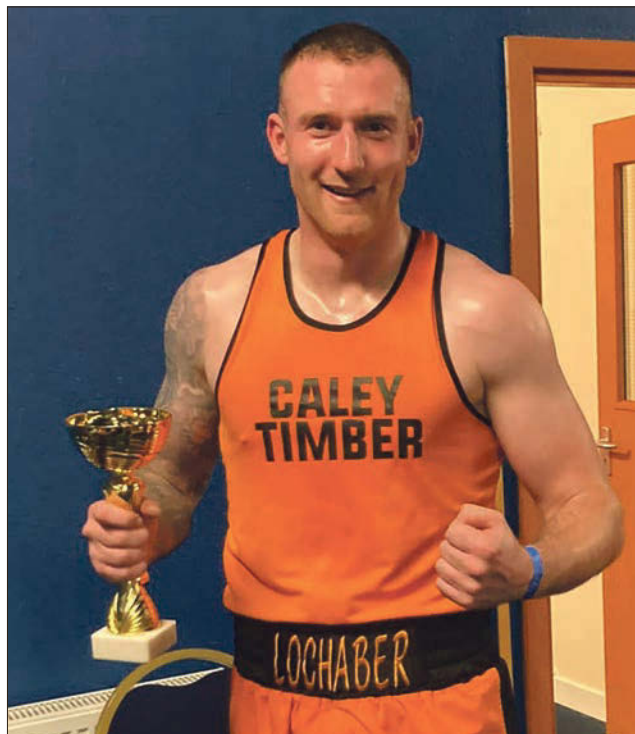
In the first of three, two-minute rounds, Farquhar started at a very fast pace, boxing behind his jab then starting to throw a series of combinations for a really good round.

He started round two where he left off but really started to relax and settle in to the action throwing constant combinations and dominating the rest of the round.

In the third and final round Farquhar started on jab and throwing combinations, delivering punches from all angles and keeping his opponent on the defensive throughout resulting in a unanimous decision on his win from the judges.

Coaches, Vince Lopez and Aidan Donnelly were delighted at the result which was well deserved and reflected the regular hard training in the gym and his willingness to accept advice and direction.

The club's next outing will be in February to the Scottish



Farquhar MacRae with his Highland Home Show trophy.

Novice Championships in Ravenscraig Sports Centre in Greenock.

This will be held over two weekends featuring a number of Lochaber boxers in a range of contests at different ages and weights including Siobhan Duncan who will be representing the club for the second time in the national female competitions.

Each trip is funded by the club at a cost of several hundred pounds per time and any sponsors would be welcome to help give members the best possible opportunity to take part and support their continuing development which has already gained Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club a much-admired reputation throughout the sport.

## Call is out for Lochaber sailing enthusiasts to get on board

Organisers of the Barmouth to Fort William Three Peaks Yacht Race are appealing to sailing enthusiasts from Lochaber to get involved in their event next year.

Sixteen vessels took part in the 2021 event which started from Barmouth on Saturday June 19 and ended in Fort William three days 16 hours and 43 minutes later for the winning team.

Sailors navigated through the difficult waters of the West Coast, passing through nine tidal gates and by numerous islands and headlands. Runners were dropped ashore at Caernarfon, Whitehaven and finally Corpach, where they tackled the summits of Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis, and back.

In 2022 the race will take place on Saturday July 9 and the committee are looking for sailors, runners and a few extra hands on the organisational side of things to help make the event bigger and better than ever.

Rob Howard, from the organising committee, told us: 'Meetings usually take place once a month and in this day and age Zoom meetings mean

it's no longer necessary for committee members to be Barmouth based so we would love to have some Lochaber members join us.

'We also get very few Scottish boats and would love to see more. There are lots of entries from the south coast of England who sail round to



Action from the 2021 Barmouth to Fort William Three Peaks Yacht Race.

Barmouth then have to sail all the way back to the south coast from the finish in Corpach. But sadly, almost no boats come down from Scottish waters and then race 'back, home'.

In total, teams must sail 389 sea miles, cycle 40 miles, and run 55 miles with 16,500 feet of climbing, all within three to four days, and with little or no rest on the way. If the

wind drops teams have to row as well. Competitors last year ranged in age from 23 to 77.

While they are waiting for next year's race to come around the Barmouth to Fort William Three Peaks Yacht Race group are currently indulging in some summer nostalgia and reprising the stories and pictures of last year's event on their Facebook page.

'It was such a disappointment our traditional prize-giving dinner had to be cancelled this year, so in the prevailing spirit of digital sharing we are using our Facebook page to celebrate the achievements of all the teams and give them their trophies virtually,' added Rob.

'We've been busy posting stories, race logs, photos and videos team by team, and there is plenty more to come. You should be able to see it even if you don't normally use Facebook.'

For more information and/or to enter the 2022 event visit [www.threepeaksyachtrace.co.uk](http://www.threepeaksyachtrace.co.uk). Anyone wishing to help on the organisational side should contact Wendy Ponsford by email at [secretary@threepeaksyachtrace.co.uk](mailto:secretary@threepeaksyachtrace.co.uk).



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# Positive performance from Fort William Under 14s

Fort William U14s	1
Portree U14s	3
Friendly fixture	

Fort William Youth Development FC U14s took on a strong Portree FC team in a friendly at Claggan Park last weekend.

The match is believed to be the first Youth's game played there in seven years.

The Portree side were made up largely of U15's players and the size difference was telling.

Both sides played some great football, thanks to a fantastic playing surface which is credit to the hard work that has been put in by a number of local people.

The game was played over three 30-minute sections with Portree taking a 1-0 lead into the first break following a strong run through the Fort

defence and quick snap shot.

In the second 30, both teams were well matched and even with the torrential rain the sides had some great interchanges of passing and some quality movement.

Portree bundled in a late goal in the half making it 2-0 heading into the final 30-minute segment.

Fort pulled a goal back with some great pressure on the Portree defence, leading to a defensive error, and Lex Edgar pounced on the loose ball and smashed it over the keeper into the roof of the net.

Pressure was then piled on Portree by the Fort attack for the remaining 10 minutes of the game but they just couldn't find the goal to draw the game level.

Portree pounced and sent two men through in the final



Fort William FC Under 14 Youth Team. Back row L-R Kady Campbell, Roddy MacInnes, Lewis Luxton, Diezel MacLean, James Clark, Cameron Burns, Sebi Mrazek, Owen O'Hagan. Front row L-R: Cyprian Majsyerek, Jamie Cameron, Thomas MacLean, Lex Edgar, Jack Stephen, Magnus Matheson.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

minute to make it 3-1. Despite remonstrations from the Fort coaches to the referee for an offside call, the goal stood.

Some really positive play from the Fort boys and particularly given the age difference between the two teams they really held their own. Man of the Match performance from Jamie Cameron in midfield.

# Jags go nap in final away fixture of the year

St Patrick's FP 2nds	1
South Lochaber Thistle	3
Greater Glasgow AFL Division One	

South Lochaber Thistle (SLT) ensured that their last away fixture of the year ended in fine style with a thumping victory over table-topping Dumbarton outfit St Patrick's FPs 2nd XI.

Thistle's cup form meant they began the tie 29 points

behind the hosts, albeit with a stonking nine games in hand to make up the deficit.

And, despite the final score, it was the Kinlochleven outfit who began slowest with St Pat's keeping the ball well.

The Jags' bad start in terms of performance then cost them on the scoresheet too when the ball was chipped to the back post and a Pat's player made no mistake with his header.

But SLT are nothing if not

determined. A fine piece of play in the middle of the park saw club veteran and founding father David Forbes continue his recent evergreen form. Shaping a pass superbly, he set up skipper Martin Munro who, as he so often does, drove the ball into the net to equalise from 20 yards.

This goal looked to act as a catalyst for the visitors who fashioned a great chance for striker Archie Gillies but his

selfless decision to pass saw St Pat's able to scramble the danger clear.

Deadlock at the break. Not satisfied with being a provider, Forbes projected Thistle into the lead with a firecracker of a shot from 25 yards to edge the Highlanders ahead 2-1.

Controversy then occurred as the towering midfielder, and magnet for brutal challenges, Andrew Maclean was clattered

to the floor with a shin-high, studs-up challenge. The decision of referee James Gallacher to deem this only a yellow card saw an outraged Barry Macdonald on the sideline, manager Alan Gray whilst on the field to treat the felled midfielder and Maclean himself all also joining the offending St Pat's player in Gallacher's notebook for the vehemence of their protest.

Undeterred, the Jags utilised

this injustice in the best possible way. First, Gillies scored his first goal for SLT. The youngster rounding off an excellent

Continued on page 47.

The Lochaber Times: 95p

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Chain, shackles and buoys all available to purchase

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 16 December, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

<b>16</b>	0343 3.4 1017 1.5 TH 1609 3.6 2222 1.5	<b>18</b>	0454 3.7 1132 1.4 SA 1719 3.8 2333 1.3	<b>20</b>	0010 1.2 0606 3.9 M 1240 1.5 1832 3.8	<b>21</b>	0047 1.2 0641 3.9 TU 1316 1.5 1908 3.7
<b>17</b>	0418 3.5 1056 1.4 F 1643 3.7 2257 1.3	<b>19</b>	0530 3.8 1206 1.4 SU 1755 3.8 O	<b>21</b>	0047 1.2 0641 3.9 TU 1316 1.5 1908 3.7	<b>22</b>	0122 1.3 0716 3.8 W 1353 1.6 1943 3.6

#### FORT WILLIAM WEATHER

<b>Thursday</b> Light cloud and a gentle breeze Temperatures 7°C to 11°C.	<b>Friday</b> Sunny intervals and light winds Temperatures 3°C to 11°C.	<b>Saturday</b> Sunny intervals and light winds Temperatures 5°C to 10°C.	<b>Sunday</b> Sunny intervals and light winds Temperatures 4°C to 9°C.
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#### FRIDAY FORECAST

Ardrishaig	-5.35
Campbeltown	-5.30
Crinan	-0.47
Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Lochboisdale	+0.30
Mallaig	+0.25
Portree	+0.55
Tobermory	+0.16
Dover	+5.30

HIGH 9 LOW 6 4 MPH