

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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### Legend of King Arthur puts Argyll on the map

### Planning your Retirement

Feature on page 12

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### Long-established Oban business goes on market

OBAN chandlery and outdoor clothing business Nancy Blacks has gone up for sale after owner Ian Wallace stated his intention to retire.

The Argyll Square retail business is approaching its 50th year of trading.

Mr Wallace told *The Oban Times*: 'I ran the shop in partnership with Nancy for eight years and then for 23 years on my own.'

'I have enjoyed every minute of it and will be sorry to leave it behind.'

'But I am 66 years old now and I feel the time is right to move on and retire.'

### Princess Royal 'pops in' to Oban

LESS than six months since she visited Oban to help mark the town's 200th anniversary as a Royal burgh, HRH Princess Anne last week returned for an informal visit.

The Princess Royal was one of a party of four who stayed at the four-star Manor House Hotel, last Wednesday. Depute manager Allan McKie told *The Oban Times*: 'She stayed one night and had dinner with us before leaving early the following day. I spoke with her briefly and she was very interested in the hotel and its history.'

It is believed the Princess Royal went on to visit one of the Hebridean islands on Thursday.

### Appin phone 'fried' by lightning bolt

AN APPIN family was left in shock after their house was struck by lightning in the early hours of New Year's Day.

Brian and Claire Jackson and their two young children, who live at Ardnacloch, heard an explosion and smelt burning after the strike at around 3am.

Claire said: 'It was really frightening because we thought the house was on fire.'

'The house was shaking with the thunder and then we heard the explosion.'

The family's BT phonelines were burnt out by the strike but there was no other major damage to the house.



The winning entry in this year's RNLI Photographer of the Year awards came from Sam Jones of Tobermory Lifeboat crew.

## Tobermory's Sam wins top RNLI photo award



Sam Jones - RNLI Photographer of the Year.

'To say that I'm chuffed is an understatement'

A VOLUNTEER member of Tobermory Lifeboat crew has won this year's Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) Photographer of the Year award.

Sam Jones, crew member and press officer at Tobermory lifeboat station, took the shot of the crew during a man overboard training exercise in Bloody Bay in July 2011.

She said: 'It's a huge honour to be named RNLI Photographer of the Year and to say that I'm chuffed is an understatement.'

'My main photographic passion is landscape photography and I

was really drawn to the stunning light that evening, but it's the total focus and concentration of my fellow RNLI volunteers which really makes the image. The light, action and setting all came together.'

Sam added: 'As with many of my crew photos on the lifeboat, it was taken with a long lens which helps me get more natural images as most of the time the guys don't realise that I'm taking photographs.'

Sam is keen to share the honour with her crew mates: 'I'm really pleased that this particular

image featuring my crewmates was chosen. While I always have a small compact camera with me in my 'yellows', I am first and foremost a member of the crew and lifeboat duties come first. I'd like to accept the award on behalf of everyone at Tobermory RNLI - I couldn't have won it without them.'

Rescue footage from Thurso lifeboat won the RNLI Video of the Year. It shows the volunteer crew on the inshore lifeboat rescuing 12 people from rocks after their tour boat got into difficulties in a cave.

## Tourism boost as Oban TIC relocates

### Prominent Esplanade position chosen on main tourist thoroughfare

OBAN is to have a tourist information centre again by the summer after VisitScotland announced it was to move into premises near the town's North Pier.

Taking over the former site of Bennett's, on the corner of the Columba Hotel buildings, the tourist board says it will move in immediately following the completion of internal renovations.

The future of its former site in Argyll Square, the old St Columba's Church, also seems to have been settled. VisitScotland says the Grade-C listed building will be sold, but the Oban office team will continue to be based in the rear of the building until any sale is completed. It will continue to be maintained in the meantime.

The *Oban Times* revealed in November that VisitScotland decided not to return to the Argyll Square premises it vacated last May after repairs, thought to be around £500,000, proved too costly to make a return viable.

VisitScotland's chairman Mike Cantley said: 'This site will provide excellent visibility within the town, particularly given its prominent position on the esplanade which acts as a major

visitor thoroughfare, especially in the busy season.'

Mr Cantley thanked the community for their patience during the past few months and paid tribute to CalMac for its 'outstanding support' in offering temporary accommodation.

News of a new home for tourist information has been welcomed by Oban and Lorn Tourism Association. Its chairwoman, Linda Battison, said: 'The old Bennett's building is a perfect location, with good access to parking and in a high profile location.'

'The right thing to do was to take slightly longer than maybe we would have liked and find the best solution. We're delighted with the decision.'

Oban councillor and Argyll and Bute Council's tourism spokesperson Neil Mackay, said: 'The importance to sustain and improve the visitor experience is absolutely crucial for Oban, Lorn and the Islands.'

'We should always remember that there are plenty places that would like to and are actively attempting to 'pinch' our tourism status of being Scotland's jewel in crown.'

## £1.8 million of CHORD cash to ease Oban town centre's traffic flow woes

A PLAN to spend £1.84million to ease the congestion on Oban's roads has been given the go-ahead as the first lot of funding from the £6.9million CHORD project is released.

The funding has been agreed by the executive committee of Argyll

and Bute Council. The plan outlines a reconfiguration of the bay, which includes pontoons at the North Pier, which would provide facilities for cruise ship tenders.

The CHORD project stated these would be flexible so that if/when

North Pier extension works happen, the facilities could be relocated.

There is also a plan to alter traffic flow in congested areas.

Improvements

The Oban High School access road will be relocated to alleviate

problems on Soroba Road, while there will be improvements to parking;

pedestrian crossings; footpaths and cycling provision in partnership with Transport Scotland.

In terms of public transport, there will be detailed sign improvements;

provision of real time information and journey planning and better bus shelters and taxi ranks.

Argyll and Bute Council said the plans were subject to final sign off by the CHORD project board.

Councillor Duncan MacIntyre,

chairman of the Oban CHORD project board, said it marked a 'major milestone' in the overall programme.

He added: 'These projects will assist economic growth and consolidate Oban's position as the main town and harbour in the West Highlands.'



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### Oban police chief resists call for 3D accident cameras

CLOSING Argyll roads for long periods of time following serious accidents could be avoided after imaging technology is considered at highest Scottish government levels, *The Oban Times* can reveal.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell is urging that 3D scanner technology, already purchased by many police forces across Europe, should be considered for his constituency.

The cameras record accident sites in minute detail allowing roads to be opened in less than one third of the time currently taken.

However, Oban Police chief inspector Brian Auld said Strathclyde Police is not yet convinced by the system's accuracy.

Mr Russell has written to the justice secretary asking that Strathclyde

Police begin trialling the technology in Argyll.

He told *The Oban Times* said: 'I want to ensure Strathclyde Police start to experiment with the technology as soon as possible. I have asked that a pilot phase of the technology is used in Argyll. This would be a first step in dealing with the main arteries that are closed all too often for too long.'

The cost of a single 3D camera is £64,000. Mr Russell added: 'I have been contacted by families of those involved in accidents, those who are caught in traffic jams for hours on end and those who have had to add hundreds of miles to their trip through Argyll because of road closures. All of them want some sort of resolution to this situation.'

'This 3D technology does two things: it preserves the dignity of those caught up in the accident, their friends and family and speeds up the time it takes to re-open the road by making a clear and accurate image of the whole crash site. These images truly preserve the scene as it was at the time of police attending the accident.'

Evidence

Digital images of the site can then be viewed on a computer screen, allowing investigators to take measurements of where vehicles are in relation to each other and examine evidence.

The MSP said: 'At present an accident site in Argyll can be closed for up to eight hours as painstaking investigation is undertaken in minute detail by officers who have to

travel from all over Strathclyde. The police are quite rightly dedicated to carrying out detailed investigations while getting the road open quickly after an accident. This equipment could be an appropriate solution.'

Chief inspector Auld told *The Oban Times*: 'We will look at any technology that will lessen the impact road crashes have on communities but as it stands our best asset is still our accident investigation officers.'

'We are yet to be convinced that this system would be better than the skill sets possessed by our officers.'

Investigated

'All serious road crashes will be thoroughly and robustly investigated so that if it results in a fatality, the police can tell the families what happened and lessons can be learned to avoid repeat incidents.'

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# New Crofting Commission draws on Skye knowledge

## Further six places to be filled following result of first crofting elections in March

**REPORT**  
 by  
**STEPHEN NORRIS**  
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*“Today marks another historic moment - when Scotland's crofters get a seat at the table to make decisions that affect their future.”*

**Environment Minister Stewart Stevenson**

THE ISLE of Skye has claimed two of the three Scottish Government appointments on the newly democratised Crofting Commission - and both are from Sleaf.

Working crofter Susan Walker, from Camuscross, and vet William Swann, from Ardvassar, will take their places alongside Sandy Cross, a qualified investment manager and landlord of a 1,600-hectare crofting estate on Shetland.

The trio will be joined on the board by six democratically elected members following the first crofting elections in March 12.

Ms Walker has been an active crofter for three decades, producing much of the family food on a two-acre croft. She is the co-author of 'The State of Crofting in Camuscross', an academic report on crofting in her local township, and writes articles for the press on crofting matters.

Ms Walker is also a director of Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative, the local community trust dedicated to boost social and economic activity through sustainable initiatives.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'I feel I can bring [to the new commission] a vision for crofting and how important it is to keep people on the land and keep communities viable in fragile areas.'

member of Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Environment Minister Stewart Stevenson said: 'I am delighted to announce the appointment of Susan, William and Sandy who will bring a great deal of knowledge, experience and drive to the Crofting Commission at this very important time for crofting. The Scottish Government wants to give crofters a voice to determine their own future and these first Crofting Commission elections is a solid step down that road. Today marks another historic moment - when Scotland's crofters get a seat at the table to make decisions that affect their future.'

He added: 'The Scottish Government believes crofts that are occupied and worked can be the biggest contribution to the sustainable economic growth and development of our crofting communities. Having an effective regulator is a vital part of achieving that aim.' Postal ballot papers will be issued on February 27. Deadline for returning candidate nomination papers and application papers for proxy and absent votes is Thursday January 26.

The count of votes will take place on March 16. The Crofting Commission officially replaces the current Crofters Commission, all government appointees, on April 1.

'Some people have rather forgotten what crofting was set up for. It is just as relevant now as ever and will become even more relevant as time goes on.'

Mr Swann, who was brought up on a small moorland hill farm on the Isle of Man and kept native Manx Loughton sheep, has extensive international experience in community development.

A respected oil painter who often includes crofting landscapes in his work, Mr Swann is also a current board



Isle of Skye crofter Susan Walker from Camuscross is one of three people from crofting backgrounds to have been appointed to a revamped Crofting Commission. She states that her main aim is to keep people on the land and keep communities viable in fragile areas.

## Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

LOT MHAIREANN AIR COGAIS NA RÌOGHACHD! Sin mar a mhinich am briteamh an ionnsaigh bhàsmhor a thug gràis de dheugairean geala air an òganach dubh Steaphan Lawrence ann an Lunnainn ochd bliadhna deug air ais. Chaidh dithis aca a dhèidh mu dheireadh thall agus nach b' uasal a ghiùlain pàrantan agus teaghlach Steaphan iad fhèin fa chomhair an t-saoghail anns na meadhanan. Thàinig cùisean chun na h-ìre seo ri linn na spàirn leantainn a rinn iadsan fad nam bliadhnaichean gun cùime a' rannsachadh a' chroin ged nach robh poilis a' MhÈT a' nochdadh adhartas sam bith.

Gu mì-fhortanach, tha gràin-cinnidh fhathast na chuspair ro bhitheanta as na naidheachdan. 'S e cùis-mhaslachaidh a th'ann nuair a chluinnear cuideigin ga thaisbeanadh fhèin mar Bhreatannach a' cur sìos gu guineach air co-chreutair air sgàth dath craicinn is gun ghuth air gun dòcha gun d' rugadh 's gun d' thogadh an neach sin san dùthaich seo le làn chòraichean Breatannach. Ach 's e agalachaiche buileach gum bheil an dearbh rud a' tachairt a thaobh dhaoinè geala le cultar eadar-dhealichte leithid taisgealich agus tha an aon nìmh fhathast a' nochdadh a thaobh na Gàidhlig! Tha e doirbh a bhith cinnteach mun ìre gum bheil an fheadhainn a tha a' cur an aghaidh na Gàidhlig mothachail gum bheil iad aig an aon àm a' dèanamh tàire air an t-sluagh dam buin an cànan, ach 's e drochaid glè ghoirid a' t'eadar an cuid càinidh agus gràin-cinnidh.

Glè thric, 's ann air seirbheisean foghlaim a thèid coire nuair a nochdas lochd am measg a' mhòr-shluaigh agus e air fhàgail orrasan a tha an urra ri oideachadh òigridh gun do dh'fhàillig iad air dhòigh air choreigin. Tha poilis Lunnainn a' dèanamh oidhirp mhòr gus leasachadh a thoirt air iomhaigh cinealtas bunaitich a dh'fhàg rannsachadh orra bho chionn deugnachadh bhliadhnaichean, ach tha slighe aca ri dhòl fhathast. Tha buidhnean eile aig am bheil an aon seòrsa dùbhlhan ach nach eil air adhartas susbainteach sam bith a nochdadh fhathast agus dh'fheumte a ràdh nach eil saoghal spòrs air cus eisimpleir a thoirt a bharrachd. An rud a ch'ann leanabh 's e ni an leanabh agus tha inbhich pait chò dualach eisimpleir a leantainn, gu h-àraid nuair a tha iad cruinn ann an dòrbh.

Chan eil teagamh nach coir clann a theagasg a thaobh còraichean co-ionann gach cinneadh is cultar, ach ged is e buil a labhras 's e an gnìomh daonnan a dhearbhas. Nach bu mhath adhartas an aghaidh gràin-cinnidh ann an 2012!

THE MURDER of Stephen Lawrence is a scar on the national conscience and to our continuing shame racism is a regular reality in Britain.

This is not uniquely targeted at coloured people and thousands suffer daily bullying and abuse of their language and culture. As the Metropolitan Police makes progress to cure 'institutional racism' a major campaign should be launched to promote the genuine 'diversity dividend' of multi-culturalism.

Education is important but leading by example is also critical.

Ailean Caimbeul (Allan Campbell)  
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## Easdale RIB Rendezvous aims for second success

THE ISLANDS of Seil and Easdale will host the Easdale Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) Rendezvous during the first weekend in May.

The success of the inaugural event last year has encouraged organisers to aim for an annual date on their social calendar.

Argyll and Bute Councillor Louise Glen-Lee welcomed the initiative as offering something a bit different to the social scene in coastal Argyll.

'It's not every day you see these fast, powerful machines all in one place at the same time. It is a welcome addition to the west coast's sea calendar,' she said.

She added: 'Last year the Easdale RIB Rendezvous brought more than 45 RIBs to the area for a great family weekend. Local boat tour company Seafari Adventures co-ordinate the RIBs while community-trust Eilean Eisdèal provide the safe harbour. The event brings a welcome boost to local restaurants and accommodation providers throughout the area. I understand people are coming from all over the country to attend the event which further promotes Argyll's superb marine tourism potential.'

## MSP backs Argyll storm aid actions

COMMUNITIES, volunteers and emergency services in Argyll have been praised by the county's MSP for pulling together during the storms on January 3.

But Michael Russell has slammed mobile phone providers for 'letting everyone down' and has demanded an upgrade to the service in his constituency.

During one of the worst storms to hit the region in recent years, gusts of up to 100mph, accelerated by a meteorological phenomenon called 'sting jet', damaged many buildings and infrastructure and caused trees and foliage to fall onto key roads, making them impassable.

Mr Russell, who lives in rural Argyll, said: 'I commend everyone who helped keep the area moving during and after this exceptional weather.'

'There was a real community effort from volunteers, emergency services and workers who pulled out all the stops to make sure all were safe and well. When there was a problem it was dealt with quickly and efficiently. We witnessed some horrific scenes throughout the area.'

However, part of the problem in communicating issues was lack of mobile phone reception, he claimed.

# Police say stranded Ben Ledi walker's actions were 'inexcusable'

Killin Mountain Rescue take 10 hours to aid man who travelled 'light'



Conditions on Scotland's mountains can change quickly and the upper slopes of Ben Ledi were treacherous. Killin Mountain Rescue team members found themselves waist deep in snow.

POLICE have criticised a man who became stranded on Ben Ledi, near Callander, last week after he took almost no equipment, describing his actions as 'inexcusable'.

It took Killin Mountain Rescue 10 hours to rescue the man, who had decided to 'travel light', failing to take a compass, map, extra clothing or even food.

He quickly became stuck when encountering whiteout conditions. Luckily, he was able to text his wife for help.

She contacted the police who, in turn, alerted Killin Mountain Rescue.

Conditions towards the upper slopes were treacherous and team members found themselves waist deep in snow. Regular contact was made with the man, who had dug a snow hole to shelter, by phone and text. It took the mountain rescue team five hours to reach the man as conditions were poor. The man was warmed up and walked off the hill with help from the team. He was finally down off the hill 10 hours after the alarm was raised.

Central Scotland Police's chief inspector Kevin Findlater said: 'This man had been complacent and took little notice of the approaching conditions. Anyone who climbs the hills should always be prepared and pay close attention to the weather forecasts and the weather conditions. The weather at the bottom can be very different to the conditions at the summit. It is irrelevant whether you have climbed the hill numerous times or once. You still need to be properly equipped and you still need to pay close attention to changing weather conditions. It is just fortunate that this man was found safe and well. However he has put his own life at risk and that of other people who were out looking for him.'

Inspector Findlater has now urged locals to ensure they prepare for all conditions when attempting ascents.

He said: 'To go up the hills at this time of the year and not to be properly equipped or prepared for extreme conditions is inexcusable.'

'It is playing with people's lives and this should not be taken lightly.'

## Mull businesses may bid for finance-raising initiative

Three-month consultation underway

COMPANIES on the Isle of Mull will, as of this week, be consulted on whether they would like to vote for a finance-raising initiative that would pay for improvements to the island.

The island is following in the footsteps of other areas, including Oban, by taking advantage of the Business Improvement District (BID), a government-backed scheme that would see island businesses collectively contribute towards local projects.

The reason for the consultation, which will last for around three months, will be to inform businesses of what a BID scheme will mean for the island and its businesses.

Although there is a steering committee set up to drive the project, others will be asked to get involved during the consultation.

Sian Scott, project manager of MI BID, the working title for the island's BID project, said: 'We are going to contact businesses in the tourism sector initially because on Mull and Iona tourism is everyone's business. This is a really exciting project and I am looking forward

to starting the new year with something new and challenging. Over the past four or five years Mull has become a key UK destination, especially for its wildlife and the Balamory effect. But in the last year things have got a bit harder and we will be one of the last islands to get Road Equivalent Tariff (RET). In this challenging economic environment we need to stay ahead of the game and build on the success of previous years, if we are to compete with other destinations.'

Following the end of the consultation, a business plan will be formed and discussed before businesses go to a ballot on whether they would like a BID on the island.

It is anticipated that this ballot would be held in the early months of 2013.

'It is at the early stages,' said Sian. 'But we are keen to find out what people would like to do, so we can form an accurate business plan. We have arranged some informal workshops, meetings and presentations for the next three months because we need to get round to people ASAP.'

## Man lost overboard off Isle of Lewis

A MAN died after being lost overboard from a French fishing vessel north west of the Isle of Lewis.

The alarm was raised by the boat *Jean Claude Coulon II* early on Sunday morning, when the vessel was 50 miles north west off the Butt of Lewis.

The coastguard rescue

helicopter at Stornoway was scrambled and found the missing man.

The helicopter guided the fishing boat to the scene but the man was found to have died before he could be reached.

Carol Collins, watch manager at Stornoway coastguard, said: 'The fisherman was recovered

by the crew of the fishing vessel. The vessel then made its way to Stornoway where it was met by the appropriate authorities.

'The casualty has been pronounced deceased by a medic on scene.'

Communications were conducted with the assistance of the French Coastguard.

## Argylls train at French urban centre

THE ARGYLL and Sutherland Highlanders, 5th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (5 SCOTS), have been training at the Centre d'Entraînement aux Actions en Zone Urbaine (CENZUB) - a French urban warfare training facility, with the French 152nd Infantry Regiment.

Officer Commanding A Company 5 SCOTS, Major Neil Brown said: '5 SCOTS and 152nd Infantry Regiment (152 IR) exchanged different methods of military tactics used by the two armies to make it easier for both formations to train and ultimately serve in future conflicts together.'

Private Jim Hall, a member of 5 SCOTS, said: 'We exchanged tactics with the French and used their Giat Famas assault rifle the standard weapon used by the French Army.'

CENZUB, the largest urban warfare training facility in Europe, cost £100 million to build, with construction still ongoing.

## Lochaber Poppy Appeal success 'a fantastic result'



Lochaber's 2011 poppy appeal raised nearly £7,500 - an increase of more than £1,600 on the previous year's total. PoppyScotland, a charity which helps wounded service personnel and their families as well as the dependants of those killed in action, organised the poppy sales and the collection of donations. Area organiser Mark McCann said the total was 'a fantastic result'. He said: 'I would like to thank all who so generously contributed to this year's appeal - outlets, sellers, distributors, Legion members, all three cadet forces and most of all the general public.' Mr McCann is pictured receiving empty collection tins from Royal Bank of Scotland assistant manager Janet Richardson and worker Audrey Dennison, who counted the contents.

## Police swamped with calls as storm hits Argyll and Bute

POLICE in Argyll and Bute received a total of 248 calls from the public on Tuesday of last week when storms raged across the county.

At a time of year when the average would be around 60 calls, reports of storm damage and road blocks accounted for the huge increase in incidents.

## Schools invited to take part in awards

SCHOOLS in the West Highlands and islands are being invited to enter the Scottish Education Awards 2012.

The awards are linked to the Curriculum for Excellence programme and recognise dedication and commitment of teaching staff and education supporters.

Details of the nomination categories and criteria are at <http://www.scottisheducation-awards.org.uk>.

A major highlight of the Scottish education calendar, the award ceremony will take place at the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow on Tuesday June 12.

## Strontian driver in car but not driving

A STRONTIAN pensioner has denied driving his car in the village while nearly twice the legal alcohol limit.

James Cameron, of 12 Dalmhor, pled not guilty to drink driving on the A861 outside Strontian post office and other roads in Strontian on October 22.

Defence solicitor Hamish Melrose said Cameron admitted getting into his car, but had not driven anywhere.

The 70-year-old is due to stand trial at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 2.

## Tourism event at Fort William

VISITSCOTLAND and the Outdoor Capital of the UK are to host a tourism industry event at the Moorings Hotel, Banavie, Fort William, on January 24.

The free event incorporates workshops and offers businesses time to discuss opportunities, issues and priorities for their individual enterprises and for Lochaber as a destination.

Details at <http://www.event-brite.co.uk/event/2634476791>.

## Suspected drink driver at Ardfern

A MAN has been charged with allegedly drink driving after being stopped by police near Ardfern.

The man is due to appear at Oban Sheriff Court.

**NEWSDESK**  
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# Oban cinema group re-focuses on Easter weekend opening

WORK to re-open Oban's cinema is progressing apace, although the opening date has had to be pushed back another few weeks.

It is now hoped Oban Phoenix Cinema will re-open by Easter weekend, following the successful conclusion of an asbestos safety report which

has cleared the building of any possible dangers. Redecoration can now restart in earnest and one of the company's directors, Mikey McManus, says locals will start noticing the difference in the building soon.

'It's full steam ahead now,' he said. 'We will be working on new doors, new signs and a new

foyer, so there will be noticeable changes to the building soon.

'As part of that, we're planning two community work involvement days in the cinema to help remove carpets and other items in preparation for the new floor and seats.'

There was more good news, with confirmation that the new

cinema will be digital, following grants of £25,000 from the Crerar Hotel chain and £35,000 from Creative Scotland.

Fundraising continues though, with the not-for-profit group determined to refurbish the cinema to the highest possible standard.

The first fundraiser of the new

year will be a special movie-themed Zumba event at Atlantis this Saturday.

Larni Wright has donated her time to host the event, while the hall space has been donated by Atlantis, meaning every penny of the entry fee goes towards the cinema.

Held from 7pm to 9pm, a

number of special routines have been devised to go along with music from *Saturday Night Fever*, *Austin Powers* and *Footloose*, among other films.

For more information, contact Atlantis or email Larni at larnicals1919@hotmail.com.

There will also be a bring and buy sale at the Corran

Halls on Saturday January 28, giving locals a chance to trade off those unwanted Christmas presents or just clear some room for the coming year. Running from noon to 4pm, there will be a bouncy castle and face painting. To book a table, call the 07557 905414 or email info@obanphoenixcinema.co.uk.

## Mull aims for arts excellence

AMBITION plans to further build Mull's burgeoning reputation for the arts by turning the island into a centre of excellence have been revealed.

Comar is being established jointly by the committees of An Tobar and Mull Theatre after months of planning to not only attract more funding, but to develop artists' opportunities and bookings.

A long term project, the initial goals are modest, attract more funding and consolidate current position for the pair.

However, looking towards 2013 and beyond, Comar's objective is to take Mull's talents not just to the rest of Argyll and Bute, but to Scotland and the UK as a whole by using the considerable talents on the island.

Other plans include developing creative workshops, education programmes and specialist schemes for youth theatre, music and dance.

It is thought that the model is the first of its kind to be tried in Scotland.

Comar's chairman is Norman Quirk, the vice chairman of Mull Theatre, whose pedigree in the arts is undisputed as a former executive director of Scottish Ballet.

He believes the development of the not-for-profit organisation is a major step forward.

He said: 'We're bringing An Tobar and Mull Theatre together really to get the best synergy between the organisations. Our goal is to be a centre of excellence for the arts.'

'What we hope to do is make it greater than the sum of its two parts, working for the benefit of the arts on Mull, throughout Argyll and Bute and the rest of Scotland. It will take full advantage of the exceptional skill base we have between the organisations.'

'We are absolutely excited about it. It's not about saving money, it's about creating something good, growing it and being positive.'

There won't, however, be any great changes to the way An Tobar or Mull Theatre are run. Mr Quirk said: 'Both will maintain their trading names and their own identities. If it isn't broke, don't fix it. Comar will effectively be invisible to most people.'

Comar has recently finished advertising for a new chief executive to help drive the organisation forward, particularly with regards funding applications and publicity. It is hoped an appointment can be made by the end of March.

Mr Quirk accepts that the plan is ambitious, but quite deliberately so. He said: 'It is ambitious, but if you don't aim for the stars you don't reach the moon.'

'We're the first organisation like this in Creative Scotland's area. We want to be in there, showing the way and proving this model can work.'

## Demolished Dunbeg homes were too expensive to repair

FOUR houses built in Dunbeg less than 20 years ago have been demolished after they were deemed too expensive to repair.

The one-bedroom bungalows in Kirk Road came down just before Christmas after moisture built up inside the structures, making them damp and uninhabitable.

Built in 1992 by Lorn Housing Association, the decision to demolish was taken by its successor, West Highland Housing Association.

The association's operations manager Graeme Bruce explained: 'We were having problems with damp and over the past year we have moved our tenants into other homes.'

'Following an investigation into the extent of the damage we realised we had a major problem on our hands and that the homes were beyond economical repair.'

Mr Bruce refuted claims the site was unsuitable for housing in the first place, adding that the site was not the problem.

He said: 'These houses were one of the early timber frame structures, built to the standard at the time, but building technology has moved on, as have the types of materials we can use.'

## Two arrested following Mull serious assault

A 29-YEAR-old man required hospital treatment to serious facial injuries following an alleged serious assault in Main Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

The man was one of a group of three victims of the alleged incident on December 29, for which two men, aged 30 and 41, have been charged.

The 30 year old faces a serious assault charge, while the 41-year-old has been charged with two counts of assault.

## Argyll MP calls for 'weatherproof' power system

LAST week's power cuts across Argyll and Bute, caused by severe weather, has prompted a call for better preventative measures to be taken.

Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid praised the engineers who worked tirelessly for days in challenging conditions to restore supplies following last week's strong winds.

But, with more adverse weather forecast, he is to call for the Scottish Affairs Select Committee to mount an inquiry into how the country's electricity network could be made more resilient.

## Golf course death

THE BODY of Oban man Martin Brownlow was found at Glencruitten Golf Course last week by a dog walker.

Oban Police, who said there were no suspicious circumstances surrounding the death of the 47 year old, were called to the golf course at 3.12pm last Wednesday and the area was cordoned off for almost four hours.

## Pub chain renews interest in town

PUB chain JD Wetherspoon has renewed its interest in opening a premises in Oban, *The Oban Times* has learned.

A spokesperson said: 'We are as keen as ever to open a pub in Oban and we are currently looking for a suitable site.'

'The company has more than 50 pubs across Scotland and we feel being in Oban would be a great addition.'

## Drug search arrests

FURTHER drugs searches in Oban over the past fortnight have resulted in the arrest of three people.

In Shore Street, a quantity of diazepam was recovered from the premises occupied by a 47-year-old woman on December 29 and at another Shore Street address last Friday, dealer-sized amounts of heroin and ecstasy were seized from the property occupied by a 32-year-old man.

On Monday, in MacDougall Court, police recovered a quantity of heroin from the premises occupied by a 37-year-old female.

# Pothole patch-up prompts call for more roads scrutiny

## Engineer speaks out over 'sub-standard' repairs

AN EXPERIENCED roads engineer says Argyll and Bute Council must be more accountable for its roadworks after seeing four separate patchwork repairs in as many weeks outside his home.

Willie Barnett, who runs Alba Transport, said he was 'more disappointed than angry' about what he deemed sub-standard repairs to an ever-expanding pothole on the South Shian road at Tralee, near Benderloch.

But he fears his own local example is just one of many throughout Argyll and has called for more scrutiny of the cash-strapped roads department.

His call follows an announcement from the department that it is expecting to receive less than half of the funding it needs from this year's budget to maintain the roads network in its current state.

Mr Barnett said: 'There needs to be more accountability on public spending. Are we getting

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT** by Euan Paterson epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

best value for our money and are contractors under enough scrutiny for the work they do? 'The public needs to be reassured, particularly in these tough financial times.'

The permanent pothole repair of roads in South Shian started on Tuesday but three previous repairs were done to at least one section of the road on December 13, 15 and 30.

Mr Barnett, who has 30 years' experience in his industry, claimed his own car had a damaged windscreen and a broken spring as a result of the road conditions and said others had experienced similar problems. A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said it was normal to repair potholes using hot bitumen direct from a quarry but as these quarries were closed

over Christmas and New Year, cold tar was used as a stop-gap. The recent South Shian repair work on December 30 had been carried out with cold tar because of the wet conditions and the council admitted this would not have any longevity.

She added: 'We aim to, wherever possible and practical, permanently repair pothole defects on a one-time visit but this is not always possible.'

'The road network is formally inspected in accordance with the Council Asset Management Plan and repaired accordingly.'

'The condition of the road network is such that in bad weather a pothole can literally appear overnight and we rely on local people and community councils to inform us of such defects outwith the formal route inspection regime.'

'You can report road faults on 01546 605514 or use our online form at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/contact-us>.'

## Oban paedophile secretly filmed visitors in bathroom

A PAEDOPHILE from Oban gathered 276 images and 28 videos of children as well as taking secret images of people in his home.

Ian Kirkpatrick, aged 50, whose address in court was given as c/o Greenock Prison, appeared from custody at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday, having previously admitted to five charges, one of collecting indecent images of children, and four of taking images of people using the bathroom in his mother's house - three of teenagers and one of a woman.

The former gardener/handyman showed no emotion as Procurator Fiscal David Glancy spent half an hour reading the circumstances of the case.

Kirkpatrick's activities were first discovered in January 2010, shortly after he moved out of the home he shared with his mother to live with a partner near Ganavan.

**Alarmed and upset** His mother started to clean his bedroom and discovered pictures of naked children.

Mr Glancy said: 'She was both alarmed, disturbed and upset at what she found.'

The police were contacted, sparking an enquiry that would last more than 18 months.

As a result, four computers were recovered, as well as a number of hard disks and memory sticks.

During a search of his mother's property, Kirkpatrick

was discovered emerging from a cupboard. In it, access was found to the loft, which he had converted into a 'den'. Kirkpatrick had fashioned holes looking both towards the town and over a nearby playpark. A telescope was also found here.

There was a vent in the floor, converted from an extractor to allow a view of the bathroom below. It was here Kirkpatrick trained his camera on unsuspecting visitors to his mother's house, taking 186 photographs in addition to the 276 found on his computer.

Mr Glancy said his victims felt 'violated, angry and disgusted' at Kirkpatrick actions.

Sentence was deferred until February 6 for reports.



Roads engineer Willie Barnett shows a spade-full of 'scalplings' that have come out of the pothole at Tralee. 16\_1027ead01



Oban High School teacher Murray Hamilton tries out the gym equipment as Atlantis Leisure's Nick Wesley and Donna Smith look on. 16\_1029ym01

## Gym donates to school

ATLANTIS Leisure has donated its old gym equipment to Oban High School, ahead of the open day of its refurbished gym this Saturday.

The Oban centre's manager Nick Wesley and youth leader Donna Smith made the official handover to Oban High School PE teacher Murray Hamilton on Monday.

Murray said: 'This is

a brilliant opportunity for us to link in with the community but the real winners in all of this are the pupils.'

Nick added: 'We are proud to be able to donate this equipment following the full refurbishment of our gym. Donna's connection with the high school, as our youth leader, was instrumental in arranging the deal.'

## Charities gain £5,000 from Hogmanay family party

TWO CHARITIES are to benefit from nearly £5,000 raised at this year's family Hogmanay event in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls.

Oban 365, the charity that organised the party, said it had received very positive feedback from its maiden event and was looking forward to a similarly successful celebration next year.

The fundraising total of £4,497.50 will now be split between the Anthony Nolan Trust and Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease.

Ian MacInnes of Oban 365 said: 'I would like to thank everyone who attended the event and Amanda MacPhail and staff at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls who worked tirelessly to ensure the event ran smoothly.'

'I would also like to thank the local businesses who so generously sponsored the event and covered costs, enabling us to donate all the proceeds to charity.'

## Clothes shop thieves jailed for 60 days

THIEVES who duped an Oban shopkeeper into leaving his store unattended after asking him to fetch a plaster for a bleeding hand have been given jail sentences at Oban Sheriff Court.

Oban couple Steven Kelly, of Room 4, Donmor Lodge, and Patricia McGuire, of Room 1, Kerrera Flats, both pled guilty on Monday to stealing items from Guise Clothing (formerly the Jean Shop) on Argyle Square on December 29 last year.

After being asked to help McGuire, the

shopkeeper left the shop floor unattended long enough for the pair to grab clothing and leave. Kelly admitted taking a shirt and McGuire a sweater - items worth £45 each. On checking the shop's CCTV, police questioned McGuire at home but while they were there, Kelly arrived with the stolen shirt in his possession.

Sheriff Douglas Small commented on the pair's long list of previous convictions before sentencing each of them to 60 days in prison.

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**BARRA**

THREE Barra families shone at Barra and Watersay Island Produce Show competitions throughout the year, showing their skill at arts, crafts and cooking.

In total, 77 took part in what was the first full year of competitions at the show, with competitors picking up points at each show.

Eight of the nine prizes were taken by members of the same three families - showing they will be the ones to beat in 2012.

The competitions were: Handmade Valentines Card, Mothers Day Menu using Fair Trade and local ingredients, Decorated egg, boiled or brown, Vegetable Animal, Poster for the Show, 1 Lettuce, Item made of Shell, Garden Flowers in a Mug, Three Fruit Muffins, Hallowe'en Lantern, Four Scones and Christmas Tree Decoration.

Eoligarry School took the competition to heart and organised its own league tables, with pupils from the school taking second and third in both the pre-school to P4 and P5/P6 categories.

The winners were: Pre-school to P4: 1 Jayde Brannigan, 320 points; 2 Finlay MacQuarrie, 205 points; 3 Joanna MacNeil, 150 points. P5/P6: 1 Skye Brannigan, 365 points; 2 Grace MacQuarrie, 210 points; 3 Abaigeal MacNeil, 145 points.

Adults: 1 Merian MacNeil, 265 points; 2 Nick Brannigan, 260 points; 3 Marie Brannigan, 220 points.

A show spokesperson said: 'These competitions could not have taken place without the sponsors so we would very much like to thank them all for their support.'

'They are Barratlantic Limited, Scottish Co-op Membership, Croft 32, Gàradh a' Bhàgh a' Tuath, Isle of Barra Beach Hotel, Croit na h-Aibhne, Aurora Shellfish, MacMillian Motors, Clearwater Paddling, Tangusdale Beach Cottages and Tiger Aspect.'

'We would also like to thank all the judges throughout the year, many of whom were pounced upon at last minute.'

'The mini competitions will be running at the island markets throughout 2012 and we are looking forward to seeing all the fantastic entries.'

TELEVISION audiences rejoiced last week when the *Island Parish* returned to Barra for a second series.

The first episode started with a bombshell as Father Roddy delivered the news he was leaving.

The *Island Parish*, which follows the story of Father John Paul MacKinnon in his second year on the island, airs on Monday nights and is repeated on BBC HD on Wednesdays and BBC2 on Thursdays.

BARRAFEST 2012 will this year start on July 27, with three days of music starting at 6pm.

**STRACHUR**

A STRACHUR gardener who built the first public garden in Vancouver, Canada, has been honoured in the city.

John Montgomery has been formally recognised in a plaque ceremony as the creator of the first public garden of both Stanley Park and the City of Vancouver.

The Rock Garden which he had created in the city's world renowned Stanley Park had flourished for 50



John Montgomery in his Stanley Park garden.

years until portions slowly became abandoned and eventually disappeared into the surrounding forest.

The story of the Rock Garden remained lost and forgotten until it was unexpectedly re-discovered in 2000 by Chris Hay, a descendent of John Montgomery, while researching family history.

John Montgomery was born in Strachur on March 24 1844. As a young man he moved to Peebles where, with his wife Barbara, they raised a large family of nine children.

With four of their children having immigrated, John, his wife and two younger daughters soon contemplated it as well and on June 18 1908 set sail from Glasgow to Montreal where they continued on by train to Vancouver.

Montgomery visited nearby Stanley Park regularly and at age 65 applied for a position as a park gardener. As an established master gardener, John's skills were soon recognised in his hiring by the Vancouver Park Board.

In 1911 excavations began in the park for a new large refreshment pavilion building to fill the growing needs of its visitors. For the following nine years until his death on March 15, 1920, he created an extensive rock garden that stretched for almost a mile from Pipeline Road to Coal Harbour.

After years of research and lobbying by both the city and Vancouver Park Board, which manages Stanley Park, a motion was passed by the Park Board on July 11 2011 to formally recognise the Rock Garden as a historical site of the City of Vancouver.

This was followed by a celebration on October 23 for the 100th birthday of both the pavilion and its surrounding Rock Garden.

**ISLAY**

SINCE late December 2011, Islay has experienced three severe gales, with the most recent being last Tuesday night, with storm force winds gusting to 100mph.

Properties on the island subjected to the fierce winds and storm surge from a high tide have suffered considerable damage, with many house roofs stripped of slates or parts of roofs broken through, leaving homes and community buildings open to the elements.

Several cars parked in the villages were damaged by slates falling from roofs.

In Port Ellen, much of the village was affected, with part of the sea wall having collapsed, and the council-owned Ramsay Hall in Port Ellen lost a large part of its roof, which will require extensive repairs.

There have been several reports of collapses of agricultural sheds, with many sheds having skylights blown out. A number of trees were blown down, temporarily blocking roads and access tracks.

Large heaps of seaweed and beach pebbles were thrown up onto shore-side roads, but have now been cleared by the council or by local farmers.

Telephone services, both landline and mobile, have been disrupted for several days, and the Rhinns of Islay has been without electricity supply from the Tuesday evening until the time of writing - midday on Thursday January 5th - despite efforts by SSE/Hydro Electric to restore the service to all households.

Severe thunderstorms and intense hail showers contributed to the power-line damage.

With the clean-up operations underway, many local people are finding it difficult to contact

insurers and to find a contractor able to undertake repairs to their properties.

ISLAY Gaelic Choir (Còisir Ghàidhlig Ile) will hold its first practice for 2012 season at 7.30pm in Bowmore Village Hall on January 12.

New or returning members are welcome and now is a good time to join as the choir - mixed voice, ladies and male voices - will be starting work on the 2012 National Mòd prescribed pieces.

On January 19 the choir's AGM, postponed from December 8 as a result of severe weather, will be held in Bowmore Hall at 7.30pm.

PORT Ellen Primary School is pleased to announce the appointment of Maureen MacDonald as head teacher.

Mrs MacDonald has been acting head teacher in recent months and the school is delighted her post is now confirmed.

**TIREE**

THE TIREE Association will hold its annual Burns Supper at Ralston Community Hall, Paisley, on Saturday January 28 from 7.30pm.

**APPIN**

STRATH of Appin's Gaelic Medium Unit is holding an open day at the school on Wednesday, January 18.

The fun morning for children of pre-school age is open to everyone and will offer lots of fun, free activities.

**GLENUIG**

LOCAL man Donald MacIsaac will address Comann Eachraidh Muideart (Moidart Local History Group) on the history of Smirisbury, a township near Genuig, at its next meeting on February 13.

The evening in Genuig Hall starts at 7.30pm. Everyone welcome.

**BERNERAY**

BERNERAY Week 2012 will be held from July 13 to 21, organisers have announced.

The event, the showpiece of the Hebridean island's year, will have a similar format to 2011.

Highlights will include the Berneray 10k race, Sports Day on the Machair, a treasure hunt and a traditional music, song and dance concert.

**LOCH SUNART**

A WEBSITE giving users the chance to experience a virtual underwater journey through Loch Sunart in Ardnamurchan has been launched.

The Scottish Natural Heritage web page shows photographs, videos and data from a number of surveys carried out on the loch during 2011. SNH hope it will help people understand an environment few will get to see first hand.

The see the results, visit [http://www.snh.gov.uk/\\_mpa/](http://www.snh.gov.uk/_mpa/).

**LUSS**

BYLAWS banning the public consumption of alcohol in Luss will come into force this month.

Argyll and Bute Council has confirmed that, from January 19, it will be an offence to be in possession of an open container of alcohol within the village.

The addition to the county's existing bylaws, which do not affect people on their own property, were approved by justice secretary Kenny MacAskill, last week.

He said: 'Public drinking is

often a nuisance and can greatly hamper the quality of life for residents in a particular area.

'All local authorities in Scotland already have such bylaws in force and that demonstrates how seriously local authorities are tackling the problem of reducing the nuisance and disorder commonly associated with public drinking.'

'I will continue to support other councils that come forward with similar bylaw proposals for designated places.'

**LISMORE**

ISLANDERS donated generously to the 2011 communal Christmas card as well as supporting the Holly Tea held in Lismore Hall in December.

As a result the Edinburgh Sick Kids Friends' Foundation will

receive £305 from the Holly Tea and £376 from the Christmas card. Thanks to Anna Stewart, Ina MacColl, Beth Campbell and Denise Willis for their hard work.

THE PRIMARY school children took charge of the local card post and raised £145 for school funds.

BETH Campbell opened the Lismore café for two days at New Year and drew the raffle she had been running which raised £400 - £360 of which went to Oban High School Hostel and £40 to Lismore Primary School.

The winners were Ina MacColl and Vance Cass.

Beth will be opening the café at various dates in the winter and details can be found on [www.isleoffisomore.com](http://www.isleoffisomore.com).

THE WEATHER continues to be the only topic of conversation as islanders battle high winds, power cuts, electrical storms and ferry cancellations.

The damage to infrastructure continues, trees are falling in normal winds as the sodden ground no longer holds them, and stock suffer greatly as fields fast become quagmires.

At New Year those without functioning phone lines sorely missed the calls from family and friends so long taken for granted.

CONGRATULATIONS to Robbie Smith who, despite a recent serious illness, was looking robust at his 60th birthday party in Lismore Hall where friends and family gathered in great numbers to celebrate both his birthday and his return to health.

**BARCALDINE**



Barcaldine Primary School children with their prizewinning posters.

**Success in road safety competition**

CHILDREN from Barcaldine Primary School have won recognition in this year's Road Safety Competition run by Argyll and Bute Council.

In what was a very commendable effort by the children, five out of 21 children were selected as prizewinners and there were more than 1,500 entries.

Shona McKenzie in primary six came second in her category and Abi MacCorquodale in primary two also came second in her category.

Both girls received £20 Amazon vouchers as their prize. Ben MacCorquodale received a fourth in his primary two category and won a £10 voucher

for Amazon. Jenny McIntyre in primary seven and Eilidh Munro in primary six both received Highly Recommended in their categories.

BARCALDINE Primary School hosted its annual community night at the Scottish Sealife Sanctuary.

There was singing and instrument playing by many of the schoolchildren - new and old - and the audience was completely engaged.

They even joined in on several occasions. Many of the children's enterprising handicrafts were on sale and an impressive £150 was raised for school funds.

**EIGG**

**Breeder praises island's initiative**

THE ISLE of Eigg has won praise for showing how remote communities can become more self-sufficient - from a rare and native sheep breeder in Leicestershire.

Cathy Cassie of CassieFlocks told islanders on their community website: 'Your Green Island initiative is fantastic. I really admire you all for what you are doing.'

Ms Cassie also said she 'would love' to publish an article about Eigg in the

Hebridean Sheep Society yearbook.

Islander Kathleen Millar has kept a small flock of the animals on her croft at Howlin for five years and has published an article on them.

Kathleen told *The Oban Times*: 'They are very hardy and well suited to cope with all the elements. Hopefully in the future Eigg will market its own lamb then everyone can taste for themselves just how good Hebridean meat is.'



Eigg's Hebridean sheep: interest from Leicestershire.



The grey trigger fish found at Sanna, Ardnamurchan.

**Rare grey trigger fish found on Ardnamurchan beach**

A RARE visitor to Scotland's coastal waters has been found on an Ardnamurchan beach.

The specimen, believed to be a grey trigger fish, was discovered on grass behind the beach near the mouth of the Sanna Burn.

Violent winter storms preceded the find.

If the identification is correct, the fish is a long way from home.

**ARDNAMURCHAN**

The species is normally found along the western coast of Africa, from the Mediterranean southwards, and along the eastern seaboard of the Americas, from Nova Scotia to Argentina.

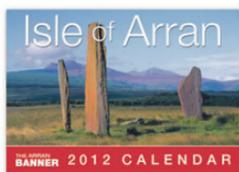
Reports of the fish being present in British waters, alive or dead, are rare. A specimen is

recorded as being washed up on Lewis in 2000.

Local man Jon Haylett said: 'Quite why it was on the grass remains a mystery, though it was probably put there by a passer-by.'

'Our local fishermen should watch out for live specimens as it has a reputation for attacking people, the bite being very painful. It is also very good to eat.'

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**SLEAT**

'REPEAT photography: changing views of the crofting landscape over time' will be the theme at the next meeting of Comunn Eachdraidh Shlèite (Sleat Local History Society) in the Conference Room/Seomar Cruinneachaidh at Sabhal Mor Ostaig on Wednesday February 15. Society members and friends are encouraged to dig out old photos and take some new ones ahead of the event.

**DUROR AND KENTALLEN**

DUROR AND Kentallen Art Club will hold the latest of its weekly winter sessions in the community centre next Wednesday between 10am and 12pm.

The informal group of local enthusiasts welcomes everyone - just bring your own materials and enjoy painting and drawing with others.

To cover hall hire charges, each session costs £2, including refreshments.

**GLENGARRY**

GLENGARRY Community Hall should become a gathering place for local people in the event of a major power failure, according to local man Neil Stewart.

Mr Stewart, from Invergarry, came up with the idea after an appeal was made for items for possible inclusion on the community council agenda.

He said: 'I would like to suggest that we purchase an emergency standby generator for the hall so that, in the event of a major power failure, the hall could become the hub of the community where people could gather to keep warm, have something warm to eat and drink as well as communicate and be updated.'

Newsdesk 01631 568000

# Cairndow plan gets go ahead despite council planners' advice

VICTORY was won by the people of Cairndow as residents overcame planners in their fight to build a sustainable future for their fragile rural community on the shores of Loch Fyne.

Despite planners recommending the application to build a residential and commercial development be refused, Argyll and Bute councillors voted with the people and granted outline planning permission.

A project that aims to ensure people continue to work and live in Cairndow, the mixed development features 16 houses, seven commercial units and a childcare centre on land adjacent to Ardkinglas Sawmill, Clachan.

Phase one of an overall masterplan for the area at the tip of Loch Fyne, the planning application was submitted by Ardkinglas Estate, which owns the 30-hectare site. More than 150 people signed a petition in support of the application which many believe will revive the rural community.

But addressing a meeting of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee of Argyll and Bute Council, planning officials said the masterplan failed to provide enough detail about future development.

But upon hearing the level of public support for the development, councillors granted outline planning permission with conditions.

David Sumsion, owner of Ardkinglas Estate, welcomed the decision and thanked local people for their support.

'I am very grateful to the 155 people that put their names to a petition in support. It is fantastic. I didn't expect so many people to do so,' he said. 'Also thank you to the councillors of the committee who voted unanimously in favour of the development; it is quite unusual to have that level of support.'

Mr Sumsion added: 'Argyll, in order to survive, needs to increase its employed population and that really is the basic aim behind this development.'

## Ballachulish racial attack is denied

A FORT William father and son have denied carrying out a racially motivated attack on a man in Ballachulish.

William Plunkett, aged 26, pled not guilty to assaulting the man by headbutting him at Cormorant Cottage, Lettermore, on October 31. Ronald Plunkett, aged 57, denied making a racially aggravated comment to the man during the incident.

The pair, both of 56 Lochaber Road, are due to stand trial at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 2.

## Court ruling boosts Argyll charities

CHARITIES in Argyll and Bute are set to benefit from a court ruling that ordered the Lloyds Banking Group to meet an obligation to fund its eponymous charity.

The Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland won an action against the banking group to force it to honour a pledge to share one per cent of its pre-tax profits on an annual basis.

Last year, the foundation made 11 grant awards to charities in Argyll in Bute, totalling £55,241.

Mary Craig OBE, the foundation's chief executive, said: 'This is great news for Scotland's hard-pressed charities at a time when many are struggling.'

## Caol man denies offences against former girlfriend

A CAOL man has denied hitting his then-girlfriend on the head in his house.

Appearing from custody, Lee Murray, of 72 Glenkingie Street, pled not guilty to seizing the woman by the body causing her to lose her balance, and striking her on the head and hand to her injury.

The alleged incidents happened between November 7 and 10.

The trial is due to be held at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 2.

Meanwhile, 24-year-old Murray and his current partner, Karena Hutton, aged 28, of 32 Carn Dearg, Claggan, deny making offensive gestures to the same woman outside her home on January 2.

Murray also denied breaching a bail order not to approach the woman or her house.

The pair are due to stand trial on March 12.

## Plockton at Hogmanay

LARGE crowds watched the annual Plockton bonfire and fireworks display on Hogmanay.

The dance afterwards in the village hall raised more than £2,000 for the 'Computers for Africa' appeal run by Pat and Terry Heavisdale.

Meanwhile, the annual Christmas raffle held by Plockton Hotel saw the first prize of £300 won by 83-year-old Miss Jem MacLennan of Harbour Street, Plockton.

# Call for speed cut on A830

## Grieving father finds another car crash on killer road

CALLS have been made for 30mph advisory speed limit signs to be installed at dangerous corners on a killer Lochaber road.

Safety campaigner John Bryden is demanding action after he came across another accident on a notorious stretch of the A830 last Wednesday.

A Toyota RAV 4x4 had overturned and smashed into rocks around three miles east of Mr Bryden's home at Craiglea, Lochailort.

Mr Bryden told *The Oban Times*: 'When I reached the car there was no sign of activity but the ignition light was still on, which I felt was really strange.'

'I checked to see if there was anybody there, but the car was empty. If anybody had been in the passenger seat, they would have been killed or badly injured.'

Mr Bryden, who has reported the crash to Transport Scotland, believes lack of grip on the road, not speed, was the main factor - and called for action to warn motorists of the danger.

He said: 'They need to tell people what actual speed they should be doing, which is no more than 30mph.'

'They did that on the big sweeping corner on the new road before Arisaig - and the same thing is needed on the stretch east of Lochailort.'

'This was a low speed impact - if the car had been doing 50mph it would have been more badly damaged and would have gone down the embankment.'

Area Commander of Police David Bushell confirmed a single vehicle collision had taken place on the A830 around three miles west of Glenfinnan. The male driver suffered minor injuries and was taken to the Belford Hospital. He told *The*

**REPORT**  
by STEPHEN NORRIS  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

**"If anyone had been in the passenger seat, they would have been killed."**

John Bryden

*Oban Times*: 'Police inquiries are ongoing into the cause of this collision. The weather was wet at the time, and the accident was on those corners which have been the subject of a fair bit of discussion. However, it is too early at the moment to speculate on the cause.'

Asked about the 30mph proposal, he said: 'Transport Scotland is going to be looking at variable speed warning signs around that area and the camera safety partnership will be looking at measuring vehicle speed into those bends.'

'From that, we would hope those speeds would be reduced. People need to drive to the conditions prevailing at the time.'

The crash scene was only half a mile from where Mr Bryden and wife Jan's teenage daughter Kirsty and friend Roddy MacInnes died after their car plunged off the road into Loch Eilt in September 2010.

Since then, the bereaved couple and local residents have campaigned for safety improvements to the four-mile stretch east of Lochailort.

At a public meeting in Arisaig in November, road and police chiefs outlined what steps were being taken to improve the road's bleak accident record.

A further public meeting was promised for early this year.



The accident scene west of Lochailort last Wednesday.

# Easdale's biggest event listed as a world 'must see'

## Lonely Planet guide book boost for island economy

EASDALE Island's World Stone Skimming Championship has been named in the Lonely Planet's latest guide book - as an easy way to become a world champion.

The island's top attraction is listed alongside some of the world's most unique sports, including Finland's Wife Carrying championships, Canada's Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament and The World Beard and Moustache Championship, USA, in the Best in Travel guide for 2012.

It lists the 'must see' spots for the year, and the recommendation of Easdale's biggest event could be a major boost for the

island's economy. However, it describes the tournament as 'requiring only slightly more talent than rock, paper, scissors'.

*The Oban Times* has now invited the author of the recommendation to prove his mastery of the sport and enter this year's World Championships on September 23.

Donald Melville, one of the World Championships' four main organisers, welcomes the listing and has joined *The Oban Times* in extending an invite to Lonely Planet to see if they can set a world record on their first attempt.

Joking aside, he believes the

listing is a major boon to the event, which already attracts hundreds of entrants from every corner of the globe.

Donald said: 'It's a great boost for the competition and a great accolade. It shows this is a serious event and properly run. 'Anything that gives us more publicity and keeps us in people's minds can only be a good thing.'

Turning back to *The Oban Times* invite, he said: 'I think that's a great idea. There's a lot more to winning the World Championship than just throwing a stone - it's certainly more skilful than rock, paper scissors!'

'We'd be delighted to welcome the author along and show them what it's all about.'

Lonely Planet's Tom Hall, who contributed to the book, said: 'This is the definitive collection of Lonely Planet's must-see spots for 2012. They make the cut because either they have something special going on next year, there's a lot of buzz about the place or because we are tipping it as an up-and-coming destination that you should visit before the crowds get there.'

Of our invite, Lonely Planet said: 'The author of the article lives in America but we have passed on the invite.'

## Former Oban man jailed for 407 days on eight charges

A FORMER Oban man who spent Christmas and New Year in police custody following a string of offences has been sentenced to a total of 407 days in prison.

Stewart Scott, aged 30, whose address was given in court as 16 Fairy Hill, Port Erin, Isle of

Man, had pled guilty to a total of eight offences at Oban Sheriff Court and on Monday appeared on a deferred sentence.

On October 22 last year Scott was seen driving a car while disqualified and without insurance.

Then on Christmas Eve he

stole a mobile phone and a debit card from a handbag while at a house party in Miller Road and was seen trying to break into a car in Campbell Crescent.

After being bailed at Oban Sheriff Court on December 28, he stole a car on Hogmanay and also took a car to a plastic bag

with documents relating to the vehicle owner's work, as well as keys to their workplace and home.

Describing his actions as 'a catalogue of criminal offences', Sheriff Douglas Small also banned Scott from driving for three years.

## Mull family donates ferry painting to CalMac



Chris James, left, with Caledonian MacBrayne's regional manager, Oban, Ian Fox at the handover of the historic oil painting on Saturday. 15\_102calmac1

A PAINTING depicting the historic handover of the Oban-Mull ferry run from the MV *Lochearn* to the MV *Columbia* was this week gifted to Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) by Tobermory's Chris James.

The giant oil painting, by former art teacher Ian G Orchardson, shows the arrival of the *Columbia* into Oban Bay in 1964, significant as it was the first ferry to allow the movement of vehicles to the islands without the use of a winch.

The arrival of the MV *Columbia* effectively heralded the beginning of mainstream tourism to the islands, making transportation of the family car not only much easier, but much quicker.

Painted from a photograph in 1979, the large picture has been placed in the foyer of CalMac's Oban terminal. The painting has been loaned to CalMac on a long-term basis.

CalMac's regional manager Ian Fox said: 'This picture marks the start of tourism proper to the islands and is a terrific addition to the terminal.'

## Third sector grants available

COMMUNITY groups and organisations are being encouraged to apply for Argyll and Bute Council's 2012 third sector grants.

The closing date for completed applications is Friday February 24.

Almost 120 community groups and organisations across Argyll and Bute benefited from the council's £219,000 third sector grants programme in 2011.

Those grants supported a broad range of groups and events, helping people with health issues, young people, elderly people, victims of crime and people with debt

and transportation problems. Councillor Rory Colville, Argyll and Bute's third sector spokesperson, said: 'These are challenging times for third sector organisations and they should explore as many fundraising and income generating opportunities as they can as council and other grant funding is being squeezed. This year we are particularly keen to encourage new groups with fresh ideas to apply for the grants and I would urge anyone who has an idea to talk it through with, and seek assistance from, the council's community development and social enterprise teams.'

## New discoveries on the history of St Kilda

AN EARLY Christian cross-incised stone and other exciting new discoveries about the human history of St Kilda will be revealed to the public later this month.

In an illustrated talk at An Lanntair in Stornoway, Ian Parker will tell how field staff from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) and the National Trust for Scotland found the stone between two cottages on The Street, Hirta.

It had been used latterly as the cover slab of a drain.

Mr Parker will detail results of four years of archaeological work on the remote island chain,

describing how for the very first time, satellite and digital technology were used to map traces of human occupation dating from prehistory to the present day.

By far the most numerous structures uncovered were cleits, a type of multi-purpose drystone storehouse, unique to St Kilda.

**Recorded**  
On Hirta alone, the main island, more than 1,400 built over several centuries were mapped and recorded.

Also on Hirta in the Village Bay site, very early field systems - possibly prehistoric - were revealed among the crofts' cultivation strips.

The team also spent eight

days camping on Boreray accompanied by a group of seabird researchers.

Up until the early 20th century, St Kildans summered on the rocky outcrop fowling and plucking sheep wool, staying in bothies and storing the catch in cleits.

The survey team mapped an extensive field system including cultivation terraces and crude stone dwellings - proving early St Kildan farmers settled on Boreray to eke out a living.

The January 31 event is the first in a packed programme for 2012 organised by The Islands Book Trust.

The presentation at An Lanntair will start at 7.30pm

## Drink drive woman who crashed into road sign is fined and banned

A WOMAN, who had previously been banned for 10 years for drink driving, crashed into a road sign on the A82 through Fort William has been banned from driving for another 18 months.

Two witnesses saw Margaret MacDonald stagger to her car in Middle Street after midnight on September 19 and drive away.

Seconds later, witnesses saw the car mount the central reservation on the town bypass, smash into a 40mph speed limit sign, then drive on despite being damaged.

Police later stopped MacDonald on the A82 at Corran.

The 52-year-old 'smelled strongly of

alcohol' and was 'unsteady on her feet', Fort William Sheriff Court heard.

MacDonald refused to provide a breath specimen, claiming poor health prevented her from doing so. She claimed she had not been drinking, saying strong medication made her stagger.

MacDonald, of 37 Hillcrest Drive, Alloa, pled guilty to driving without due care and attention, failing to stop after an accident and failing to provide breath specimens.

After hearing MacDonald had previously been banned for 10 years for drink driving, Sheriff Douglas Small also fined her £750.



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Man found dead on South Uist roadside

POLICE inquiries are underway after a 49-year-old man was found dead at the side of a South Uist road on Tuesday morning. Officers received a call at around 9.47am saying that a man's body was lying next to the A865 at Ardmore. The death is currently being treated as unexplained. The road was closed and diversions were put in place to allow investigators full access to the scene. Police are appealing to anyone who may have seen the man walking in the area in the hours before he died. He is described as wearing black trousers and a grey speckled woolen jumper. He was approximately 5ft 7in, of stocky build and had dark, greying hair. Anyone with information is urged to contact

Theatre group auditions for Oliver!

THEATRE group Lochaber Showstoppers is looking for talented local youngsters to play Oliver, the Artful Dodger, orphans andurchins in its next musical production, Oliver! Boys and girls from Primary six upwards are invited to an audition workshop at the Nevis Centre Studio from 2pm-4.30pm on Sunday. Director Susan Munro will explain audition requirements and the rehearsal and performance commitment needed. All audition material will be taught on the day. Adults and secondary school-age children wanting to join should come along on Monday at 7.30pm. Committee member Clare Brewer said: 'Showstoppers want to do a musical that focuses on the very talented junior members in the company, so we're sure Oliver! will give them a chance to truly shine.' Oliver! opens on May 17 for three nights and a matinee performance as part of global celebrations to mark the bicentenary of Charles Dickens' birth. Showstoppers' staged 'A Christmas Carol' last month. For more information phone 07737 321299.

NEWSDESKS 01631 568000 01397 703003



Robust clash of the ash at Glenfinnan

Around 40 Glenfinnan residents - almost half the population - turned out for the annual shinty match on Saturday to bring in the old Scots New Year. A roaring fire pitchside and warming drinks - helped keep the cold and rain at bay as spectators and players of all ages enjoyed a robust encounter between Glenfinnan 'A' and Glenfinnan 'Stripes'. See full report and photos, back page. 20\_102fnnan06

Pupils focus in on £5,000 film project

MALLAIG Primary School pupils are beginning work on their own short film this week after scooping a £5,000 grant from First Light, a production company enabling young people to work with industry professionals on digital media projects. The as yet unnamed film, co-ordinated by Knoydart-based Sam Firth of Tiny Spark Productions, will see 15 Mallaig children aged between seven and 12 make a documentary about things unique to where they live. Likely themes include industry, history and the local community. First Light principles mean the children must come up with all the ideas and be involved throughout the production process, from drawing storyboards and writing scripts to directing and lighting. The youngsters enjoyed the 1963 film 'Snow' by Geoffrey Jones and are keen to create a similar collage of images from past and present using music, rhythm and poetry. Delighted Class teacher Fiona MacKellaig told The Oban Times: 'We are absolutely delighted and really excited and looking forward to the project beginning this week. The children are definitely

Act now on home care

LOCHABER councillor Bren Gormley has written to Highland Council's social work director Bill Alexander seeking 'urgent and vigorous action' to address recent failures in home care services. The move follows last week's revelations that disabled Fort William pensioner Madeleine MacCallum was left in her pyjamas twice over the festive period because no one turned up to dress her. Speaking before yesterday's housing and social work committee meeting, Councillor Gormley said essential changes to the service had been 'in large part successful' but 'localised weaknesses' remain. In his letter, Councillor Gormley states many people 'seem reluctant' to raise concerns over poor care. He told The Oban Times people are left for hours waiting for a service that might or might not arrive when a simple 'phone call would

New target market for Harris Tweed

INDUSTRY leaders Harris Tweed Hebrides (HTH) has kicked off 2012 by naming South Korea as a new target market. Shawbost-based HTH has accepted an invitation from United Kingdom Trade International to take part in a high-profile promotion of luxury goods at the British Embassy in Seoul in March. HTH chairman Brian Wilson said the event would provide 'an excellent platform' for a further advance into the Korean market.

'Misleading' ferries plan under fire

Provost, Stòras slam survey

COMMUNITY representatives from Lochaber and the Uists have accused the Scottish Government of ignoring vital evidence from a survey on whether Oban or Mallaig should become South Uist's mainland port under its ferries plan for 2013-19. Postal questionnaires on ferry services sent to the island's 790 households produced 209 responses for the Scottish Ferries Review - but eyebrows were raised when Transport Scotland's draft plan, published on December 21, said findings showed while 42 per cent of residents in South Uist were not satisfied with Oban as their mainland port, 52 per cent were. No further statistics were forthcoming, and the apparent division of opinion produced a recommendation that the shorter Mallaig-Lochboisdale crossing be sidelined meantime. Controversially, no mention was made of overwhelming support for the link at packed public meetings on the Uists organised by the Comhairle (Western Isles Council), which also backed the Mallaig proposal in its evidence. Crucially however, the survey also found that 83 per cent of the Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service through a 1,500 name petition and numerous public meetings and has gained support from the communities of Barra, Benbecula and North Uist through Comhairle nan Eilean Siar sponsored public meetings. In a strongly-worded letter to Colin Grieve of Transport Scotland's Ferries Division, Provost of Lochaber Allan Henderson said: 'On the preferred option to the Outer Isles, Mallaig to Lochboisdale, it was not the only wish of the local communities to make Mallaig to Lochboisdale the principal route. The clear desire was for three principal routes - Oban to Barra, Mallaig to Lochboisdale and Uig to Lochmaddy. 'Can you clearly demonstrate what question in the household survey of South Uist was able to allow you to form the conclusion that 52 per cent wished to retain Oban as their main ferry terminal? Will it stand up to scrutiny? Were non-returns taken as being supportive of the status quo?' No comment had been received from Transport Scotland as The Oban Times went to press.

Race on to commission boats

HIGHLAND Council is racing to commission two local ferries to run between Lochacarron and the south shore amid fears the A890 could be closed for months. The road has been shut since December 22 after tonnes of rock twice crashed down from the unstable cliff near Stromeferry. Fifty six pupils from Applecross and Lochacarron have been travelling to Plockton High School by train since Monday as efforts to engineer a solution continue. Plockton man Calum Mackenzie's seal trips boat Sula Mhor, and the Isle of Skye Ferry's MV Glenachulish, which runs between Glenelg and Kylerhea on Skye in summer, are currently undergoing trials alongside slipways at north and south Strome. The 61-passenger Sula Mhor needs Maritime and Coastguard Agency approval to run over the winter. Inspectors 'sounded positive' when they looked over the boat on Monday, sources said. The 12-passenger, six-vehicle capacity Glenachulish would operate on the 600-metre, five-minute Strome crossing and the Sula Mhor to and from Plockton.

Long-term loss of Vodafone signal angers customers throughout Lorn

VODAFONE customers have been quick to express their anger at the company's helpline following last week's prolonged signal outage in the Oban and Lorn area. More than 100 complaints More than 100 of the network's customers contacted The Oban Times in the wake of the longest of a batch of recent outages, which stretch back as far as mid-December. However, the lack of a signal from January 3 to last Friday afternoon took a back seat to the variety of responses customers were given to their complaints, from being told their SIM card was too old, to buildings were interfering and even that there was no problem at all. Vodafone have now apologised for the outage, but not before the network asked The Oban Times to ask affected readers for their account numbers so they could investigate the complaints. That, too, prompted anger from the network's customers. Storm damage Last week's problems started on Tuesday, January 3, when high winds caused power outages, knocking out various mobile phone masts across the area. While a number of networks were affected by the weather, most had been restored within two days. Vodafone's service in



Bonawe's Ronnie Campbell, who was given one reason for his Vodafone problems - and his wife another. 15\_102ronnie1

the Oban area, however, was out until Friday afternoon. Many took to The Oban Times' Facebook page to express their concerns. Among those affected was Ronnie and Jayne Campbell, Bonawe. Ronnie has a business contract with Vodafone, his wife is on a personal account. Both were given different reasons for the outage; Ronnie was told his SIM card was too old, while Jayne was informed that her phone was the problem. 'Don't phone again' Ronnie was also told not to phone again. He said: 'I wasn't even phoning with a complaint, I just wanted to find out when the problem would be resolved. They insisted there was no problem. Every time I asked when, they changed

the subject. 'Finally, they told me not to phone back as they had done as much 'troubleshooting' as they could.' When contacted about the complaints, Vodafone's press office initially said they could not investigate the variety of complaints until The Oban Times had individual account numbers to pass on to them. However, readers were unhappy to pass on details, saying Vodafone could easily investigate the complaints by postcode. Furthermore, a number of customers had been sent SureSignal boxes for free by Vodafone as way of remedy, but the press office said that was not ordinary practice. A spokesperson for Vodafone said: 'We're sorry that the information our customers received wasn't always consistent. I will feed this back to the relevant teams to see if we can make improvements here. 'We apologise for the difficulties caused by the extreme weather but we always act as quickly as possible to make repairs - the last thing we want is for our customers not to be able to use the network. 'However, delays can occur when there are several problems in the same area and weather conditions are already hampering engineering repairs.' Meanwhile, Argyll and Bute MP, Mike Russell has called on mobile phone providers to provide an 'equitable service with the rest of the country. 'I am inviting people to contact me to tell me of their experiences of mobile phone provision, or lack of. 'I will then present a strong case to providers for a much improved service.'

Vodafone logo and text: 'A little sample of what you said: Jenny Low - I phoned to complain and was given a £15 credit. Today I phoned again and was first told the network was fine and my SIM card was to blame! I told the guy I already knew the signal was down so don't lie to me! He offered me sure signal for £25 (it's meant to be £50) I told him it wasn't my fault I didn't have a signal so he agreed to send me it for free, but take the £15 credit off my account. At this point I learned the credit wasn't meant to make my bill cheaper but so I had more to spend on data and calls, which I get free with my package anyway! Useless Duncan Campbell - I have called or emailed Vodafone a lot over the past few years and the majority of the time I have been in contact with them the customer service has been good. I guess its how you speak or word your email to them. Then again some people just like a good moan!

Audrey I Paterson - More irritating than the fact that there is no network coverage is the lack of information/denials/suggestions that my SIM is to blame! Do they think we don't talk to each other in this neck of the woods? Lindsay MacLean - Vodafone told me last night there are no issues in PA34 and it may be due to buildings or interference! Needless to say I told them that was incorrect and it's been on and off for most of December. They will not provide me with a Sure Signal box nor give me any line rental credit. Not impressed. Fiona MacPhee - Have just called up Vodafone to complain that we have had no signal the last four days, they never offered me money off my next bill like they have done some, but they are sending us out a Sure Signal box for free this normally costs £50! Mark Aitkenhead - I'm without signal yet again. that has been four days now and I use my phone for the coastguard emergency services. How can this carry on for so long. They are about to lose another customer. Jayne Egan - Lochgoilhead was out for 14 days. This was part of my Vodafone email reply 'Please note that the terms and conditions of the contract mean the line rental you pay is for the airtime and minutes of your contract. Whilst service may have been interrupted these minutes are still available for you to use when service resumes. We are not obliged to give credits for times when service is unavailable' JoJo Aitkenhead - I have been emailing Vodafone and they told me the same, they blamed it on my SIM card and my phone, said it is nothing to do with them. I have emailed them again saying if they still expect me to pay my bill I will be sending a letter of complaint and cancelling my contract. I have now got signal up behind hospital but am not going to let this go. Vodafone are useless! Michael McInnes - I'm changing network Sally Weaser - What seems to be the most common thing is that their response to enquiry is soooo inconsistent. This just serves to frustrate even more. There should be a standard compensation across the board as well. Alison McLennan - Bridge of Orchy has had no Vodafone signal for over three weeks!

Crofting convener decision on hold

NO DECISION will be taken on choosing the first convener of the reformed Crofting Commission until after the March 16 crofting elections, the Scottish Government has confirmed. The new body, which will have nine board members, six elected by crofters and three appointed by government, will officially replace the current Crofters Commission, who are all government appointees, on April 1. Ministers could allow the board to select a convener, but speculation has been growing in crofting circles that the government will appoint the chair to oversee radical changes on how the industry is run. However, there is no guarantee the elected members will be enthusiastic about reforms which have strong regulation at their heart - raising the possibility they could be slowed or even blocked under a convener of the same thinking. Asked to clarify the government's stance, a spokeswoman told The Oban Times this week: 'The Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 allows Ministers to delegate to the Crofting Commission the duty to select a member to chair the commission, the 'convener'. The convener may be either an elected member or an appointed member. It is important that the convener of the Crofting Commission enjoys a good working relationship with the Minister with responsibility for crofting. 'A decision on whether or not to delegate the duty to select a member to chair the Commission will not be taken until after the elections.' New legislation, The Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, seeks to end crofting's decline by tackling neglect, absenteeism and profiteering in croft land through a crofting register and tougher rules on residency. The Crofting Commission will be able to terminate a tenancy or re-let a croft should the occupier fail in his duties, while grazings committees must report such failures to the commission. The SNP government aims to make it much easier for young people to enter crofting and ensure productive land is put to good use. The new crofting register will be based on the Ordnance Survey map and will cover individual crofts and common grazings. The current system does not make use of plans. Any changes to a croft's status, including transfer of title or tenancy, apportionment, de-crofting or resumption (a landlord seeking to re-possess a croft) will trigger a first registration. Applicants will have to bear the cost and failure to register such events will become an offence. Postal ballot papers will be issued to all crofters entitled to vote on February 27. Deadline for returning candidate nomination papers and application papers for proxy and absent votes is Thursday January 26. The count of votes will take place on March 16. See Slat's crofting appointees, page 2.

Advertisement for The Oban Times E-edition. Text: 'Get an E-edition of The Oban Times delivered to your inbox on the day of publication. www.obantimes.co.uk/digital'. Image shows a hand pointing at a tablet displaying the newspaper's digital edition.

**Police hunt tool thieves**

POLICE in Lochaber are investigating thefts from industrial premises in Fort William over the weekend. On Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, a secure compound and a portable office at West Highland Gas were broken into and a cash box, gas heaters, gas bottles and golf clubs stolen, while diesel was taken from two large goods vehicles at Lochaber Aggregates. Elsewhere, a large number of power tools, including drills, saws, a nail gun, chop saw and router were stolen from the Campbell Homes building site, at Riverside, Lochyside. Police believe the crimes may be linked and ask anyone with information to contact 01397 702361 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

**Bid to name new Plockton school extension after Hamilton family**

EDUCATION, culture and sport committee councillors will today in Inverness be asked to agree that the new extension to Plockton High School be named 'The Hamilton Wing' in recognition of the benevolence of the Hamilton family. Members are also expected to approve the outright purchase of a disabled access mini-bus to replace the existing vehicle at Lochaber High School at a cost of £48,000.



'Sore feet' waits patiently in Gordon Square on Monday for building work to start on Fort William's new retail/hotel development.

**Work due to start on hotel, shops and pub**

CONSTRUCTION of the £8million redevelopment of the former Grand Hotel/MacTavish's Kitchens site in Fort William was due to start this week, following demolition and site clearance work before New Year. And in a boost for the Lochaber capital, it has emerged that businesses in the new complex should be trading by mid-summer. The ground floor will host health and beauty retailer Superdrug, outdoor clothing shop

Cotswold Outdoor and a JD Wetherspoon restaurant/pub. A 60-room Travelodge will occupy the upper floors. Director of developers Ashford Property Group Andrew Smith was hopeful construction work on the retail part of the project would take no longer than six months. He told *The Oban Times*: 'It's full steam ahead now. Hopefully we'll get early completion for the retail element, by around

June, which would allow them to start fitting out the shops. That would take six to eight weeks, so the retailers would be open by August.' West Midlands-based Anglo Holt Construction will carry out the 20,000 square foot project next to the refurbished Gordon Square and West Highland Way start/finish point. The old Grand Hotel was demolished in December, with work stopping for the festive period.

**Group goes public with spending wishlist**

FORT Augustus and Invermoriston Community Company (FAICC) volunteers will this week complete local delivery of a booklet detailing feedback to its consultation on spending priorities for the future. Every local household will receive a copy of the findings, which will guide FAICC's funding decisions until 2017. The company receives around £100,000 community benefit per annum from the nearby Falck Renewables Millennium Wind Farm and the Scottish Hydro Glendoe Community Fund. Since 2009, it has awarded grants to local initiatives qualifying under categories including health and wellbeing, regeneration and housing, transport, heritage and culture, education and life-long learning and environment. More than £117,000 has been paid out so far on projects including resurfacing the tennis courts, floodlighting at Kilchumen Academy's MUGA pitch and a new car park surface for the church hall. Funding was also provided for the senior citizens lunch club in Fort Augustus and travel bursaries to enable students to return

By STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk home from college during term time. However, as cash balances increased, it was decided to seek the community's views on how the accumulating windfall should be distributed in future. Some 125 people returned completed questionnaires, 128 took part in community interviews and around 60 attended four 'open house' events up to November last year. FAICC chairperson Harry Whiteside told *The Oban Times* hydro and wind farm community benefit payments were £97,000 in 2010 and £124,526 in 2011. He said: 'There's a lot of money building up and we needed to look at the strategic direction we want it to go in. We needed to know what the community wanted us to do. The response to the consultation exceeded all expectations and showed that there is an enormous sense of pride and wellbeing in the community. However, the majority of residents share the nationwide concerns created by the current economic climate - services and supports for older people, lack of

employment opportunities and things to do for young people, and the high cost of rural living - energy, fuel and transport.' She added: 'Their response will shape our strategic planning for the next five years. We have got a policy that we put 20 per cent of income away annually to cover the period when the wind farm payments end after 25 years. And once the [Glendoe] dam is operational we will see income increase significantly.' At their latest award meeting on December 15, FAICC directors disbursed another £20,000, including £10,000 to the Telford Centre for the elderly in Fort Augustus and £6,600 to the school's tech department for computer-aided engineering design equipment. A senior citizens' lunch club pilot in the Glen Moriston Arms received £1,800. FAICC recently bought Fort Augustus village hall from Highland Council for a nominal sum of £1 and invested £20,000 to secure a £72,000 LEADER grant for the building's refurbishment and a new kitchen extension. It has also taken £13,300 of shares in the new Beinnean Wind Farm Co-operative.



Ticket to success: Sonia Cameron, left, and Mallaig Station employee Anne Cameron were delighted with the award.

**Mallaig on track with gold award**

MALLAIG railway station has won gold status in a new Keep Scotland Beautiful awards scheme. The environmental charity ranked Mallaig as one of Scotland's best after inspecting all 346 stations in the country since July. Performance was gauged on issues ranging from clearing litter to recycling, waste management and community links. Mallaig benefited from colourful hanging baskets and planters, maintained by ScotRail's voluntary station adopter for Mallaig station Sonia Cameron. Sonia said: 'I am overwhelmed and delighted to hear that Mallaig has received this gold status. It comes as a lovely surprise. I look after 14 hanging baskets and seven tubs at the station, with the help of an automatic watering system installed last year. I know the work is appreciated by ScotRail's customers and we regularly see tourists posing for photographs with the plants in summer, which is very pleasing.' ScotRail managing director Steve Montgomery was 'delighted' at Mallaig's high rating. He said: 'Our stations score

highly in surveys of customer satisfaction and we look forward to the future involvement of Keep Scotland Beautiful in helping to raise standards even further.' KSB chief executive Derek Robertson said: 'Overall, we found the Scottish stations to be clean and welcoming and a credit to the staff who care for them, and we are committed to this campaign on station standards.' Assessments to bronze, silver or gold status were available in Keep Scotland Beautiful's first Tidy Station Standards programme. A plaque will be displayed at all stations meeting KSB standards.

**Brae Lochaber Jacobite group on the march again**

BRAE Lochaber 'rebels' are looking to follow their Jacobite week of last August with an even bigger and better spectacle in 2012. The 2011 event proved a colourful addition to the summer calendar around Spean Bridge and Roy Bridge. Crowds watched Jacobite group Na Fir Dileas (The Loyal Men), march to Highbridge (near Spean Bridge) with Jacobite standards. The march came 266 years after the first skirmish at the same spot between Hanoverian troops and local Jacobite forces. Local man Peter Wilson, who arranged the event, said everyone was in favour of a repeat this year. He told *The Oban Times*: 'All sorts of things have been suggested, including a Jacobite-themed fair in Spean Bridge or Roy Bridge, and even a re-enactment of the skirmish of 1745. It is such a dramatic event in local history, which over the

years has tended to be forgotten. I should be grateful if anyone who would like to take part or who has any suggestions for the event to contact me.' Last year several businesses and restaurants flew Prince Charlie's red and white standard - banned after the 1745 conflict - which had been handcrafted by Colette Strachan of Roy Bridge. Local restaurants served Jacobite-style food and distillers Drambuie, whose whisky is based on a recipe from Prince Charlie, donated a large bottle, which was raffled. Demand for the flags is expected to be even greater this year. Access to Highbridge, where a small band of clansmen led by Major Donald Macdonnell of Tirindish caused two companies of Government troops to flee, is now easier thanks to a new path built to the bridge. Peter Wilson can be contacted via 01397 712398 or wpeterwilson@aol.com.



Deenn Strachan and mum Collette, from Roy Bridge, fly a Jacobite flag last August.

**Sheriff defers sentence after hearing Corpach sex offender has breached payback order**

A CORPACH teenager sentenced to 120 hours of community service in July after admitting having sex with his then 14-year-old girlfriend has failed to carry out any of his punishment. Robert Elder, of 16 Hillview Drive, admitted breaching the community payback order, claiming ill health

left him unable to work. Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentencing the 19-year-old at Fort William Sheriff Court until February 1 for reports. Elder previously pled guilty to having sex on repeated occasions with the girl at 26 Mamore Road, Kinlochleven, and 24 Nairn Crescent

and 5 Nevis Bank Apartments, both Fort William between April 1 2009 and June 10 2010. He also admitted sending grossly indecent, obscene or menacing messages via Facebook to another girl, aged 13, between October 1 and October 31 2010. He was placed on the sex offender register for 18 months.

**Man walks free as drink drive trial collapses**

A TRIAL against a man accused of driving in Glencoe while nearly four times the legal alcohol limit collapsed after the Crown ruled there was not enough evidence for a conviction. Bernard McEnhill's car was found by a passing police officer in a ditch having hit a telegraph pole outside the Glencoe Independent Hostel on July 30 last year. Constable Joseph Newsom traced Mr McEnhill to the hostel and found the accused with glazed eyes and 'smelling of intoxicants'. Giving evidence at Fort William Sheriff Court, Constable Newsom said the 57-year-old admitted drinking and being behind the wheel earlier in the evening. But it came to light the officer breathalysed Mr McEnhill and

of view to report the incident, but due to circumstances beyond our control it has not led to a conviction.' Mr McEnhill had been on a weekend visit to Lochaber with his two nephews, both of whom gave evidence. Mr McEnhill drove the trio to the Clachaig Inn where they had 'a few drinks'. Mr McEnhill left before his nephews and made his own way back to the hostel where he was found asleep by Constable Newsom two hours later. A barmaid from the Clachaig Inn was unable to identify Mr McEnhill as being at the pub on the night. Mr McEnhill, of 12 Cochrane Street, Barrhead, pled not guilty to drink driving on an unclassified road in Glencoe on July 30. He also denied driving without due care and attention and failing to report the accident.

**Man caught carrying cocaine**

A CAOL man has been fined £300 after a bag of cocaine was found in his trousers while he was being searched by a police officer. Andrew Donaldson was taken into custody following fights involving a number of people at a family birthday party at Caol Community Centre on April 10. After being taken to Fort William Police Station, the 49-year-old was searched at the charge bar where a plastic bag containing around £30 worth of the class 'A' drug fell out from his trouser leg. Donaldson, of 12 Strone Pace, told Fort William Sheriff Court he had 'no idea' how the drugs got into his trousers. 'There was a bit of stramash at the centre', he said. 'There

was a lot of pushing and shoving, so it could have come from there. In my eyes, that's about the only place it could have come from. I don't do drugs. I've never done drugs.' Constable Malcolm Lawson, who found the bag, said: 'While I was patting him down I noticed a small plastic bag which appeared to fall down Mr Donaldson's left trouser leg. I picked it up and he immediately denied the item was his.' Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said Donaldson's reaction suggested he knew the drugs were there. Sheriff Douglas Small agreed, saying: 'I am satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt the accused had knowledge the drug was in his possession.'

**Record rainfall deluge recorded in Plockton**

PLOCKTON recorded 12 inches of rain during December - the highest in any month for many years. The deluge meant Lochalsh had 75 inches of rain during 2011, compared with 43 inches in 2010. However, that total paled in comparison with Achnagart in Glen Shiel which saw 152 inches and Fort William's 115 inches. Plockton only had one dry day during December and only 18 without rain between September 1 and Hogmanay, when 37 inches of rain fell.

**Fight costs Caol teenager £630**

A FIGHT with two brothers at the BA Club in Fort William has cost a Caol teenager £630. Rhys Donnelly had been at a charity Hallowe'en disco at the venue when the incidents occurred on October 28. Fort William Sheriff Court heard there was 'bad feeling' between the 17-year-old and Alan Mathers, who was also at the event. The pair started fighting in the toilets before being split up. Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said Donnelly was thrown out and met Sean Mathers outside. The pair started fighting and Mathers was left needing three stitches to a cut on his lip. Donnelly, of Tigh A Chladaich, Glenmallee Road, pled guilty to repeatedly punching Sean Mathers on the head and knocking him to the ground to his injury. He also admitted fighting and struggling with Alan Mathers, refusing to desist and causing a breach of the peace.

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**£100 tax return penalty warning as deadline looms**

HM REVENUE and Customs (HMRC) is reminding anyone who has not yet sent in their 2010/11 Self Assessment tax return that they risk facing a £100 penalty.

And Tuesday January 31 2012 is also the deadline for paying any tax you owe for the 2010/11 tax year.

Every year around 629,000 people file a self assessment return in Scotland.

If you are still to submit your 2010/11 return you must send it online and you need to do so by the January 31 deadline. If you send HMRC an online return after this date, or you file a paper return, you will receive a £100 penalty – even if you have no tax to pay or you pay your tax on time.

Should you be completing an online return for the first time, you will first need to register for online filing at [www.hmrc.gov.uk/online](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/online). You will immediately get a user ID and an activation code will be posted to you. Once you have activated your account, you can complete your tax return online. But all this will take time.

It is important that you register now if you need to, because it can take up to 10 days to receive your activation code – and time is running out. Those who have filed online before should check that they still have their user ID and password. It can also take up to 10 days to get a replacement, so don't leave it to the last minute.

Stephen Banyard of HMRC said: 'Missing the January 31 deadline will mean that Self Assessment taxpayers will face penalties. And we don't want them to – we want the tax returns, not the penalties. We want people to file online and on-time and avoid facing a completely avoidable penalty.'

For help and advice on completing a return visit [www.hmrc.gov.uk/sa](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/sa) or call the Self Assessment helpline on 0845 9000 444.

**Cattle meet rising trade at Stirling**

UNITED Auctions sold 1,388 store cattle and 78 cast cows at Stirling last Wednesday when a brisk trade resulted in rising prices.

Bullocks averaged 197.06p (+8.76p) and sold to 245.9p per kg for a 366kg Charolais cross from Calton and £1,370 for a 629 kg Limousin cross from Wolfhill.

Heifers averaged 202.26p (+13.92p) and sold to 239.5p per kg for a 380kg Limousin cross from Townhead of Arngibbon and £1,270 for a 672kg Limousin cross from Shieldhill. Forward cattle averaged 172.44p and sold to 183.6p per kg for a Simmental cross from Dalnask and £1,165 for a Limousin cross from Sauchie Mains while cast cows averaged 123.14p and sold to 180.5p and £1,375 for a Limousin cross from Quixwood.

**Oban businesses urged to sign up for flagship procurement portal**

BUSINESSES in Oban are being urged to get themselves noticed if they want to access public sector contracts up for grabs in the region.

Public Contract Scotland (PCS) – The Scottish Government's flagship procurement portal – has launched Supplier Finder to help buyers find suppliers, their goods, works or services more

easily. PCS advertises contracts for more than 650 public sector organisations such as councils, NHS, police, universities and colleges – a market worth £9 billion per annum.

Since the portal was launched in 2008, 13,432 businesses in Oban and surrounding areas have registered on the PCS portal – 37 per cent of these

have a turnover of less than £1 million and employ one to four employees – with 7,214 number of contract opportunities advertised by the region's public sector organisations.

The Scottish Government says the Supplier Finder improves the matchmaking procurement process, helping buyers quickly source relevant suppliers for

low value, low risk quotations. It also helps build a picture of particular local supply markets before a buyer starts a formal tendering process.

In order to get noticed, businesses in Oban are being encouraged to update their profile on the PCS portal.

Businesses which have uploaded their logos, website

addresses, used keywords to describe their goods and services and highlighted which regions in Scotland they would like to sell into, stand a better chance of being selected for quotations.

**Quotes**  
In addition, businesses which complete a Supplier Finder profile are more likely to be included in a Quick Quote – an

online request for competitive quotes for low-value contracts where an advert is not required.

The capability to build an accurate picture of suppliers able to supply their local public sector is central to the Scottish Government's key agenda of creating an environment for sustainable local economic growth.

Gary Robinson, from the Scottish Government procurement directorate, said: 'If businesses in Oban want to access these opportunities it's vital they sign up to PCS and promote what it is they do and where they are able to deliver their goods or services.'  
For further details visit [www.publicsectorcontracts.gov.uk](http://www.publicsectorcontracts.gov.uk).



Neil Morrison, left, and Calum Maclean with their own blend, Isle of Mull Whisky.

**Island whisky targets brand awareness after 'solid' year**

ISLE of Mull Whisky is hoping to dramatically boost its growth in 2012 after a strong first year of trading.

Established by friends Neil Morrison and Calum Maclean in August 2010, the blended whisky has quickly found a firm foothold in the market.

Keen not to rest on their laurels, the business is to target building its export and on-trade sales in the coming 12 months.

Neil said: 'We have had a solid year this year, gradually increasing online sales and we now aim to increase our activity to create awareness of the brand and, in turn, create more of a demand for the product.'

'In the world of whisky production, Scotland is a hugely important place to showcase a brand, not least from the tourism point of view.'

'In getting further influential brands behind our premium quality product, 2012 is set to be a good year.'

**Goals**  
To help meet their goals, Isle of Mull will target licensed premises and retailers across the UK. They have also enlisted the support of a PR firm to help expand the brand and support sales strategy.

Emphasis will also be put on increasing online activity - where the business primarily

carried out its business over the past year - and develop partnership opportunities with retail and lifestyle brands with similar focus.

Neil and Calum have been friends since childhood and combine running Isle of Mull whisky with their own careers. Neil owns Macgochans in Tobermory, while Calum works in the offshore oil industry.

They decided to start the company during a night out, when they decided there was a gap in the market for a decent quality blend.

The whisky is now distilled and bottled at Speyside distillery, Gordon and MacPhail, in Elgin.

**Business is 'grooming' for local entrepreneur**

AN ENTERPRISING local business woman has realised a long term dream by setting up her own animal grooming business.

Claws 'N' Paws was set up in Oban by Julie Grove, who started working with dogs and cats when she was a teenager, helping out at a kennel before progressing to breeding dogs and showing them.

**Advice and support**  
Having moved to the area, Julie – who also runs a bed and breakfast in the town with her husband – did some research and quickly realised there was a need for an additional dog and cat groomer in the area.

The local Business Gateway team provided advice and support to help get her started with the grooming business.

Julie said: 'The service I received was always prompt, professional and very friendly. It was such a help having an advisor, Nicky Archibald, who I could speak to about my business plan and to get help working through the cash flow.'



Julie Grove embraced her love of cats and dogs to set up her own successful business.

'Thanks to Nicky, I didn't feel I was alone through the process, which was very comforting and I know I can contact Business Gateway for ongoing support

as and when I need it.' Julie's clients are treated to a five star session once their owners have left their pets at the specially adapted premises she and her

husband have created next to their home.

Dogs are washed, nails and ears cleaned before being groomed, styled and walked before they are ready to be collected by their owners.

'Grooming is very important for a pet's health and it provides an opportunity to check the skin and coat as well as the general condition of the animal,' said Julie.

'There's a lot involved with many breeds requiring different styles. Not all owners have the time to do it or know how to groom their pet properly.'

To support her practical know-how, Julie completed a City and Guilds course in dog handling and grooming, for which she won an award.

Julie says she is delighted with the progress she has made and is seeing a high percentage of repeat business.

'It is a very rewarding job which I love and I know it wouldn't have been possible without the support Business Gateway has given me.'

**Charles Kennedy MP is guest as Fort William Chamber of Commerce hosts first fundraiser**

FORT William Chamber of Commerce held its first fundraising event at the Moorings Hotel, Banavie, when a range of local issues were discussed.

With more than 110 members and business colleagues attending a lunch, the event was hailed as an important milestone in the chamber's development.

Guest speaker, The Right Honourable Charles Kennedy MP was presented with an honorary membership of the chamber, a hamper with local produce and the first 2012 Fort William Chamber calendar.

He told the gathering: 'I am delighted to see so many businesses represented at today's meeting. The Fort William Chamber is now a significant voice for the businesses of Lochaber.'

A lively question and answer session, facilitated by Scott Donald of Kearney Donald Partnership followed the lunch, which was sponsored by Stewart Leitch of the Moorings Hotel. During his responses, Charles

Kennedy welcomed the Scottish Government's decision to match the UK Coalition's £50 million investment in the Caledonian sleeper service.

Provost Henderson raised the question of support for the Mallaig to Lochboisdale ferry

service and Alastair Ferguson highlighted the importance of improvements to the A82.

Blair Allan, Lochaber Housing Association Property Services, sponsor of the table wines, thanked all businesses for contributing to the excellent

raffle, which produced some entertaining moments as Carol Hawkes of Hotscot drew her own ticket, Steve Bracken, Marine Harvest drew his side of smoked salmon and Linda Johnstone her own West Coast Podiatry footwear voucher.

Steve Ham for the Underwater Centre thanked Charles for his interesting and challenging speech.

Closing the function, chairman Robert Hawkes of Hotscot thanked everyone for their support, energy and enthusiasm, which has enabled the Chamber to grow steadily in membership numbers and in activity.

The chamber now has 78 members and is becoming a strong voice for the businesses of Lochaber.

Membership forms can be found on the chamber website at [www.fortwilliamchamber.co.uk](http://www.fortwilliamchamber.co.uk). The chamber's next meeting is due to be held in Ben Nevis Distillery on January 26 at 12.30pm.



Charles Kennedy MP addresses Fort William Chamber of Commerce in the Moorings Hotel.

**Practical help, advice and support for new and growing businesses**

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**Is your business ready for the New Year?**

SMALL businesses are being encouraged to take advantage of the January break to review their business, with help from Argyll and Bute Council's Business Gateway team.

The off-season is a good time for a seasonal business to take stock of what worked well last year and what needs to change for the year ahead.

Business Gateway can help with that process.

Neil Mackay, Argyll and Bute Council's spokesperson for enterprise, energy, culture and tourism, said: 'The local Business Gateway team can help a seasonal business use this quieter time productively in developing plans for the coming year.'

'Good planning now can really help a business get off to a good start with marketing as the season approaches.'

Business Gateway can

offer free, practical advice on a wide range of topics, from inspiration with ideas for new marketing, suggestions for managing bills and invoices to help ease cash flow or support with taking on an employee.

The local Business Gateway advisers are all experienced business mentors and have spent time in the commercial world, both in management positions and running their own business.

**Interactive**

Business Gateway also offers a wealth of useful information and interactive tools at [www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com), plus free workshops to help entrepreneurs boost their business skills, covering a wide range of topics from business planning to website building and book-keeping. To find out more visit [www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com) or contact the local office on 01546 605459.

**This month:**

Make sure you have submitted your Self Assessment Tax Return to HMRC by January 31 2012.

Visit [www.bgateway.com](http://www.bgateway.com) to find out about the free business skills workshops taking place in Argyll in February/March.

Make time for planning. Set realistic goals and work out what you need to do to achieve them.

Review your last year's sales. Not everything will sell well for you, or profitably, so drop what doesn't work.

Decide what your business needs most. Could a new piece of equipment or an extra pair of hands help?

Get networking. Talking to other businesspeople is great for generating new ideas, refining old ones and making contacts to help your business.

**Texel ewes sell to £155 at Stirling prime sheep sale**

UNITED Auctions sold 3,506 prime sheep including 2,555 hogs averaging 204p/kg and 951 ewes and rams at Stirling last Thursday when trade rose by almost 7p per kilo on the previous week.

Beltex lambs from Luckenburn sold to £109 and 237p per kilo, while Texel crosses from Mill of Montague sold to £104.

The same home also sold Charolais to £102. Texel ewes and Suffolk ewes from Ayton sold to £155 and £127.50 respectively while Castley Mill sold Beltex ewes to £102.

Connachan sold Cross ewes to £92.50 and Blackfaces to £80.50. Kilwinnet sold east Texel rams to £117.50.

**Scottish car sales figures fall nearly five per cent**

NEW CAR registrations in Scotland dropped by 4.85 per cent to 166,877 last year compared to 175,383 in 2010 new figures have revealed.

Douglas Robertson, chief executive of the Scottish Motor Trade Association, said that given the current economic situation, we should not be too disappointed. He said: '2012 is going to be another difficult year but we are aware there will be a significant number of new models becoming available during the year. This, together with improved fuel efficiency, should help to encourage consumers into showrooms. We also anticipate Government action to assist consumers with financing.'

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Quintet Zambra aim is to bring more unusual as well as the familiar repertoire to audiences

## Quintet Zambra to play St John's Cathedral

THE OBAN Music Society begins the second half of their 2011/2012 season with a recital by Quintet Zambra on Sunday, January 15 at 3pm in St John's Cathedral, Oban.

aim is to bring more unusual as well as the familiar repertoire for Wood Quintet to audiences across the United Kingdom. To this end they are playing music by Mozart, Taffanel, Ibert, Arnold, Dvorak and Hallam.

studying for Masters Degrees, having all won awards in their individual instrumental practice and as a quintet, the prestigious Mary D Adams prize for Chamber Music at RSAMD.

venues in the county over a six day period. As well as being accomplished chamber musicians they are also to be seen performing in such distinguished orchestras as RSNO, SCO, BBCSCO, and the BBC and Liverpool Philharmonic.

Quintet Zambra is described as 'a dynamic group whose

They are all Graduates of the RSAMD and either have or are

Their visit to Oban is part of the Argyll and Bute Concert Tours programme visiting other

A great selection of music fol-

## Lochaber Gold comes to Celtic Connections

THE HUGE successful 'Lochaber Gold' concert in the Nevis Centre last September is to be repeated at Celtic Connections in Glasgow.

### Lochaber's finest

Lochaber's finest musicians, including Gary Innes, Angus Grant and Fergie MacDonald will again take the stage - this time at The Old Fruit Market next Friday.

The evening will be a mix of music and repartee, with former Chancellor Alasdair Darling's chief advisor and Lochaber girl Catherine MacLeod interviewing, among others, former Celtic legend John Hartson.

John, who is married to Spean

Bridge girl Sarah MacManus, defied all odds to recover from testicular cancer and will speak on how will to survive helped him beat the disease.

Strathclyde Police Pipe Band, led by Pipe Major Duncan Nicolson from Caol, will open and close the show, which begins at 9pm.

Musical director Gary Innes told *The Oban Times*: 'I think it's great that a celebration of all that makes Lochaber special is one of the highlights at the biggest traditional music festival in the world.'

'It promises to be a wonderful night for all those involved, whether they are performing or in the audience.'

## Full house for first night of the year at Fort William box club

FORT WILLIAM Accordion and Fiddle Club held its first session of the year on January 3 at the usual venue, the Railway Club in Inverlochy.

### Full house

To a full house, chairman Alastair MacDonald welcomed guest artist, accordionist Craig MacFadyen from Oban, who was accompanied by his father, the well-known Hector MacFadyen on second accordion and Kevin McGlynn on drums.

A great selection of music fol-

lowed as the trio, supported by local visiting instrumentalists, entertained in fine style.

Supporting accordionists were Heekie Henderson of Fort William, Tom Cruikshanks from Inverness, Andrew MacDonald and Ruari Edmond.

On fiddle were Deirdre Ann MacDonald, young Carys Bilton and Liam Stewart Stevenson.

Ross MacPherson of Connel, by Oban, is guest at the club's next social evening on February 7.

**gig argyll guide** your essential guide to live music in argyll

Friday 13th January > Charity Shop Challenge Theme  
Markie Dans Night & Disco feat DJ Steevo  
Best dressed wins a prize! 9.30pm

Saturday 14th January > Live Music with Jon McIntosh  
Markie Dans 9.30pm

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Burns Club of Oban Admission to this year's

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Alternatively ring Roy Wood 01631 562042 or Ken Oxland 01631 566010

Oban Music Society

**Concert**

Sunday 15th January 3.00p.m. St John's Cathedral

Quintet Zambra (Flute:Oboe:Clarinet:Horn and Bassoon) playing Mozart, Taffanel, Arnold, Ibert, Dvorak and Hallam. Non members welcome, tickets at the door £10 (£8), students free.

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The roofless Ramsay Hall in Port Ellen, Isle of Islay

## Islay's Ramsay Hall is victim of violent storm

IT IS not known how long Port Ellen's iconic Ramsay Hall will be closed after its distinguishable roof was torn off by stormy weather last week.

Argyll and Bute Council said this week that it was too early to say when it could repair the hall, which hosts a number of community

events. Following the storm, the council said its priority had been to make the building safe.

A council spokeswoman added: 'We are taking steps to make sure the building is protected from further damage. We are speaking with our insurers to agree a way forward to fix the damage.'

## Sinclair trio first-foots the Isle of Skye club

A strong and lively west coast sound played superbly

THE 2012 first-foots to the Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club were The Sileas Sinclair Trio, who had travelled from Argyll to entertain club members assembled on the first Thursday of January in the Royal Hotel, Portree.

Before the trio took over the stage, several local players stepped up to get audience feet tapping and were ably compered by club chairman and M.C., Jim Campbell.

On piano accordions were Aly 'K' MacPherson, John MacGilvary and John Cameron. Drumming was provided by Donald John Campbell and Jock Davidson with John Cameron also assisting on keyboards.

It was then time for the guests to play for their supper, which they did in fine style. The trio comprised of Sileas Sinclair leading on piano accordion,

Deirdre MacDonald on fiddle and Ryan McGlynn on drums producing a strong and lively west coast sound for the appreciative audience.

Their programme had variety throughout with many well known tunes and some not so well known but all arranged and played superbly.

Fiddle solos from Deirdre MacDonald were greatly appreciated as were the inclusion of tunes from fine composers such as Jerry Holland and Sharon Shannon.

In all, it was a great night of music for the first club night of the year. The next club night will be held in the Royal Hotel, Portree on Thursday 2nd February, when special guests will be Archie MacPhee and the Bogroy Band.

John Grundy



Ryan McGlynn, Deirdre MacDonald and Sileas Sinclair in full flow in the Royal Hotel, Portree.

## Kilmartin House Museum to bring history to life for island children throughout the west

PUPILS on the isles of Coll, Tiree, Jura and Gigha will dive into their respective island's past this spring, thanks to Kilmartin House Museum.

A team from the museum

will bring with them a host of activities and replica artefacts from each island's past.

Pupils will also work with local artists as part of an exciting project to bring

the isles' history to life in an engaging and interesting way.

Education officer at the Kilmartin House Museum, Kate Moody, said: 'We are really excited about visiting

these islands as they have lots of fantastic sites and monuments which tell us a great deal about how our ancestors lived and worked there. As part of our visit we plan to take the children

out to some of the sites, show them replicas of some of the tools and equipment their ancestors would have used and explain why it is important to protect the unique archaeology of the

islands.' Each of the schools will create an artwork that will represent the children's understanding of their island's history and its importance today.

Kilmartin House Museum is asking artists from each of the isles to get in touch with them if they are interested in taking part and working with their local school on the project.

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

**bonnie babies** competition 2012

## The Oban Times Bonnie Babies Competition 2012

We'll soon be printing photographs of the most loveable babies from the west coast for a number of weeks. This time, it will be up to you, our readers, to decide who wins the title of Bonniest Baby and a fantastic prize! Full details will be announced later this month.

### How to enter

We are now open for entries! Bonnie Babies 2012 is open to babies and toddlers born on or after April 12, 2009. You can enter a child by posting us a photograph along with a signed entry coupon (see left) to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies Entry, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Please make sure you write the name of the child, date of birth and a contact telephone number on the back of the photo. Should you wish for your photo to be returned, please also enclose a stamped addressed envelope. We will do our best to return your photo but please make a copy just in case.

After you have entered your child into the competition, look out every week in The Oban Times to see when your baby appears. The closing date for entries will be announced in a future issue. You can find all the competition rules and terms and conditions online at [www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies](http://www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies) or call 01631 568 000.

**Swan Lake**

Ballet West

Corran Halls, Oban  
Fri 20th January 7:30pm  
Sat 21st January 7:30pm  
Tickets £10 / £8 (concessions)  
Box office 01631 567333

## COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

**Highlands & Islands Music & Dance Festival**

SOUP LUNCH  
Saturday 21 January  
12 noon - 2pm  
Guide Hall, Oban  
Baking Stall, Raffle  
£3 adults, £2 children

**R.S.S.P.C.C. (Children First)**

COFFEE MORNING  
Regent Hotel, Oban  
Saturday 14th January  
10.30 - 12  
£3 each

To advertise in the

**WHAT'S ON COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD**

Telephone: **01631 568000**

Lorn Garden Club  
Lotta Leahy will be telling us all about Dry Stone Dykes  
So do come along to St John's Cathedral Hall, Oban (entrance from lane at rear)  
On Tuesday 17th January  
At 7.15 for 7.30pm  
Refreshments to follow, including home baking  
Visitors and new members are always very welcome  
For further information contact Marie on 01631 564107

**Thursday January 19th at 7.p.m.**

**The Lochnell Arms North Connel**

Oban and District Classic Vehicle Club extends an invitation to all to a talk by Eilidh Campbell on her field role with local charity Mary's Meals in alleviating hunger in the Third World.

**Advertise in the Community Notice Board for just £14.95 (plus VAT)**

This section is available to charitable organisations with a charity number. All AGM's will be placed on the Public Notice Page. Please ask for details

ENTRY FORM

Child's name.....

Child's date of birth.....

Tel: .....

Address: .....

Name of parent/guardian.....

Signature of parent/guardian .....

I agree to all terms and conditions applied to this competition .....

Please post to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies Entry, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

Terms & conditions: The Oban Times Bonnie Babies 2012 competition is open to babies and toddlers born on or after April 12, 2009. Only one entry per child. Entrants, and their families entering on their behalf, must live in the area of Argyll and the west Highlands and Islands. By entering the competition and by filling in the parental consent form that is provided with your entry, you - the parent or guardian - consent to the reproduction of your child's photograph in The Oban Times Bonnie Babies features in the paper and online and in any other related Oban Times Bonnie Babies promotions. If you do not wish for your child's photo to appear in the newspaper or online then you should not enter the competition. The Oban Times cannot take responsibility for the safe delivery and safe return of the entrant's photograph. Photos posted in without an enclosed stamped addressed envelope will not be returned. Poor quality photographs, which are out of focus, difficult to see the child's face, ripped, torn or folded, will not be accepted as an entry and will be returned to the sender providing a stamped addressed envelope is supplied by the entrant. By sending us your photograph, you agree that Wyvex Media Ltd and The Oban Times have the right to publish the images and details of the entrant without payment for the purpose of promoting The Oban Times Bonnie Babies campaign (s). The winner must be willing to take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. Photocopied entry forms will not be accepted.



# Not your normal nine to five

Euan Paterson speaks to a young man from Argyll who has achieved his ambition - aged 26

HAVING reached his professional ambition by the age of 26, it would be fair to say that pilot Stephen Cooper is a high flyer.

The former Oban High School pupil began his flying career out of Connel airfield but has experienced a speedy ascent through the ranks to become a Boeing 767 pilot with British Airways.

And asked if being a pilot on one of the world's premier airlines is as good as it sounds, the 26 year old is frank in his response.

'As an employee it's easy for me to become cynical about the job and pick out negative aspects, but really there is nothing I don't like about my job.'

'I consider myself very lucky to be able to do something, that for some, was their childhood dream.'

Having responsibility for hundreds of people on each flight, Stephen is often thrown into high-pressure situations, whether it is flying a visual approach into the Bahamas, coming out of cloud at 100 feet in wind and rain into the world's busiest international airport, or dealing with technical issues.

Stephen said he thrives on these situations but also admits that spending time off on the beach and walking around Manhattan are pretty good perks of the job!

'The best part of my job is the constant surprises. Even days when things don't exactly go to plan,' he said.

'There are plenty of operational challenges and stresses working as an airline pilot. It is very important to maintain discipline every day while at work, particularly on long flights through the night when your body is fighting to stay awake.'

'Stressful situations can manifest themselves out of the blue and generally happen all at once or when time is more critical. That is why it's imperative to use quieter periods throughout flights to think ahead about potential issues that may arise, for example when crossing remote areas like the Atlantic or Africa.'

A self-confessed aircraft geek, Stephen demonstrated an interest in planes from a very young age sketching planes from different eras on an A3 notebook, noting each plane's vital statistics.

But it wasn't until he was 16 years old flying off on a family holiday to Majorca that the flying bug really bit.

'It suddenly dawned on me that people actually fly aeroplanes for a living.'

'My first enquiries were aimed at my careers advisors, who

although they knew the basic roles of an airline pilot, they weren't able to help create a meaningful plan. I then started searching for contacts who were already in the industry in one way or another, in order to gain some direction.

'The best thing I did was speak to John McGilvery of Connel who flew out of Oban Airfield. He would give me advice, put me in touch with people who could help me further and take me up in his plane on lunch trips to Plockton with Frank Walton.'

**"It suddenly dawned on me that people actually fly aeroplanes for a living."**

**pilot Stephen Cooper**

Once qualified, Stephen started off working for BMI, flying regional jets around Europe before moving to Thomas Cook, flying the Boeing 757 on holiday routes out of Glasgow. As competition at British Airways is so tough, it took Stephen two attempts to get into the company but is now flying the airline's Boeing 767s on long and short haul routes.

Asked if he had any advice for budding flyers, Stephen said: 'The academic qualifications are not too prescriptive. The bottom line is good Standard Grades with a good grasp of maths and physics. It's not until you apply to the training schools or direct to the airlines (see British Airways - Future Pilot Program) that you then get assessed on attributes that are essential for the role of a pilot i.e. communication skills, hand-eye co-ordination, numerical/verbal reasoning, spatial awareness, decision making and the ability to work effectively in a team, amongst other things. There are various schools and schemes throughout the UK and Europe that could give you the opportunity to fly for an airline.'

'If anyone is interested and wants to know any further information, please feel free to contact me at [stephen.cooper@ba.com](mailto:stephen.cooper@ba.com).'

Despite his various technical and navigational tasks on board aircraft, Stephen insists it is just as important to say goodbye to all passengers, help people with their bags and chat to people in the terminal.

It seems you can take the boy out of Argyll but you can't take Argyll out of the boy.



The author believes that the myth of the sword in the stone is based on a real inauguration ceremony that took place in Dalriada

## Researcher believes Camelot characters are based on real 6th century figures

### Theory could bring millions to the area

THE LEGEND of Arthur could put Argyll on the map and bring in millions to the area.

That's according to a researcher who believes the legendary Camelot characters are based on real historical figures alive in 6th Century Argyll.

Scottish advocate Adam Ardrey has already set out in his book 'Finding Merlin' that the legendary Arthur was in fact Arthur Mac Aedan, son of King Aedean of Dalriada. Now he has gathered evidence suggesting that the Isle of Iona is the mystical Avalon, where Arthur was taken after he was injured in battle, and he is urging Argyll and Bute Council to develop a historical trail to tap into the market for 'King Arthur' tourism.

'The Arthurian legend is the foundation myth of the Western world and has worldwide tourism potential,' he said. 'Carmarthen makes millions out of its association with Merlin. In Cornwall, Devon and parts of Somerset, the foundation of their tourism is Arthur and Merlin. There is a big market out there, from America, Germany, Australia.'

Yet he believes the evidence for locating the captivating characters, places and stories of Camelot on the west coast of Scotland is much more substantial than these places traditionally associated with them.

He said: 'I have contacted the council to suggest they consider an Arthur History Trail akin to the Nimian Trail established recently in southwest Scotland. They do not have to believe that I am right about Arthur. Even if I'm wrong - and I don't believe I am - the matter of Arthur will boost local tourism no end.'

'The councillors of Inverness don't care whether there is a Loch Ness Monster because the fiction brings a lot of money to their area.'

He also hopes local schoolchildren will be able to test his evidence through a school project and is in discussions with education officials. Mr Ardrey stumbled upon the first piece of his jigsaw while researching his family history in the area - research which linked his surname to hillforts near Connel and at Dunardry in Mid Argyll.

Mr Ardrey believes the myth of the sword in the stone is based on a real inauguration ceremony when Arthur was made a war-

lord at Dunadd Fort, Mid Argyll, standing in the stone footprint at its summit and receiving a sword as a token of his new authority. Over time, the story became embellished by medieval writers, as their readers were as fond of enchantment as movie-goers are today: 'You add in romance, and special effects - except they didn't have special effects so they added magic. People like glamour - he was made a king.'

Camelot became associated with the area around Glastonbury in Somerset, he believes, as the earliest medieval writers to document its history were paid by the wealthy Glastonbury Abbey - keen to enhance its reputation and secure its place on the pilgrim trail.

But the evidence Mr Ardrey has gathered suggests Camelot was in fact the land around Dunadd and Arthur's most famous battle, the Battle of Badon, took place nearby in an area now known as Badden.

His latest work now suggests an 'Arthur Trail' could stretch all the way up the west coast to Iona - where he has located the legendary island of Avalon. According to the legend, Arthur was taken there by nine mysterious women, clothed in black hoods, after the Battle of Camlann, which in Mr Ardrey's thesis, took place at Camelon near Falkirk.

With scraps of information about Avalon, its location and the meaning of its name, he said Iona is a perfect fit, while the ladies in black hoods may be an associated with the later nunnery on the isle. He said: 'There is not a single, solitary book that identifies a sensible Avalon, still less one that gets anything to do with an Arthur. We have got an Arthur whose relatives were buried there, who lived in a place near there, near to Merlin and near to where he took a sword from the stone. Avalon was the island that is Iona.'

Argyll and Bute Council has not seized the idea of a history trail, and attempting to unseat those areas traditionally associated with Arthur and Camelot, and with a tourist infrastructure built on the myth, will be no mean feat. Yet Mr Ardrey's work and his forthcoming book will certainly give food for thought to a local tourist industry, always looking for ways to entice new audiences to Argyll.



Is the real Camelot close to Dunadd in Mid Argyll with its legendary footprint in the rock?



The legend of King Arthur has been the basis of numerous films, many of which could be far removed from reality



Stephen Cooper - 'The best part of my job is the constant surprises. Even days when things don't exactly go to plan.'



# Planning your Retirement

If you're planning ahead for your retirement, you'll be more than aware that there's more to think about than just your leaving party.

Everything from getting the most out of your pension to how you'll spend all the extra spare time you'll have will be running through your mind - never mind where you'll go for your first retirement holiday!

Thankfully, whatever it is you seek, there are options aplenty.

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Abbeyfield Carradale, part of a worldwide movement founded in the early 1960's, was opened in June 1985. It provides care for seven residents in a modern building and is run by a team of volunteers.

There are seven members on the Executive Committee who look after finance and fabric and a further eight members serve on a House Committee and look after the welfare of the residents and staff.

The staff comprises of a Housekeeper with two relief Housekeepers, cleaner and gardener/general handyman.

The rent covers all expenses and meals are provided daily. Each resident has their own room which is equipped with an en-suite toilet and wash hand basin.

In addition to the main kitchen, residents have access to their own kitchen and a laundry room is also provided.

Over the last 26 years, 48 residents have benefitted from the care and companionship provided.

Stuart Irvine, who has been involved with Abbeyfield for over 32 years says, "thousands of people in many countries, have enjoyed the care and companionship provided. For a leaflet telephone 01583 431278 or visit [www.abbeyfield.com](http://www.abbeyfield.com).

**ITS NEVER TOO LATE TOO EXERCISE!**

As we journey through life, it's great to become older and wiser but why not also become fitter into the bargain?

Life can be a tough and lonely old business but here at Energie Fitness, we are committed to empowering you to transform your life for the better. There is a lot of research that tells us that the benefits to our health by starting to become more active are as high in our 50's, 60's and 70's as they are in earlier years. Of course, we are not trying to turn you into Olympic athletes, but it is nice to know your improvement gains achieved can be substantial.

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At Energie Fitness, we have a passion for amazing results and we can help you achieve the goals that you desire. It is important as we get older, especially for women, that we exercise our bones through resistance training to combat the effects of osteoporosis and we can offer you a tailor made programme guaranteed to bring you results.

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A friendly, relaxed group of garden enthusiasts from beginners to professionals.

Monthly meetings from September to April 3rd Tuesday of the month in St John's Lower Hall  
Doors open 7 for 7.30pm  
Interesting illustrated talks, home baking and discussion

**LORN GARDEN CLUB**

Gardening is an excellent activity for all ages but especially for those who have retired from work and have more time available to devote to their gardens. It provides fresh air, good exercise and endless interest as the garden changes with the seasons. Most would say a garden will never be finished and there are constant challenges and new skills to learn from growing vegetables to seed saving and plant propagation.

Joining together with other enthusiasts to discuss successes and failures and learning from one another is also very satisfying.

Lorn Garden Club is a relaxed and friendly group ranging in age and experience. Beginners are always very welcome.

We meet from September to April on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the Lower Hall of St John's Cathedral with a varied evening programme of interesting speakers, followed by home baking and discussion. In the summer we arrange a programme of garden visits and walks. In recent years we have also organized an annual Garden Fete in the beautiful setting of Ardmaddy Castle Garden where it seems the sun always shines.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 17th January when Lotta Leahy will share her experiences of dry stone dykes, followed by 21st February with a Chelsea Show Garden designer and then on 20th March with a talk entitled Heather Blether.

**New Tai Chi beginners classes**

starts all on Thursday 12th January

Tai Chi movement classes in Appin 3.30 to 4.30 pm, Port Appin Village Hall

Tai Chi movement classes 5.30 to 6.30 Church of Scotland Centre, Glencruitten Rd

Tai Chi form class 7.45 to 9.00 pm.

For more info contact  
Susanne Lim McCordell 07979860754  
or email: [susannemccordell@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:susannemccordell@hotmail.co.uk)



**Home Start** VOLUNTEERS WANTED IN ARGYLL

Support and Friendship for Families

Do you have parenting experience and a few hours a week to spare?

We are looking for volunteers to visit families all over Argyll. Sometimes simply being a friend can make all the difference.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 01586 551140 for Mid Argyll, Jura, Islay, Kintyre, Cowal & Bute (MAJIK) or 01631 566749 for the Oban area.

**HOME-START**

Home-Start is the UK's leading family support charity. We support thousands of parents who are struggling to cope. Our families need support for many reasons including post-natal illness, disability, bereavement, the illness of a parent or child, or social isolation.

Home-Start is looking for volunteers to visit families all over Argyll. Real people with real parenting experience can make a huge difference to families struggling to cope.

Even if you only have a few hours a week to spare we would love to hear from you.

Home-Start provides support, friendship and practical help to families, helping to provide the best possible start for their children.

We don't need super nannies, we need real people like you.

Training is provided together with any expenses.

MAJIK are also seeking volunteers to become trustees on their management board. The commitment is as above and currently the board meets once a month in Tarbert (will drop to bi-monthly) all out of pocket expenses paid.

For further information about Home-Start services in - Mid Argyll, Jura, Islay, Kintyre, Cowal & Bute (MAJIK) call 01586 551140  
Oban Area call 01631 566749

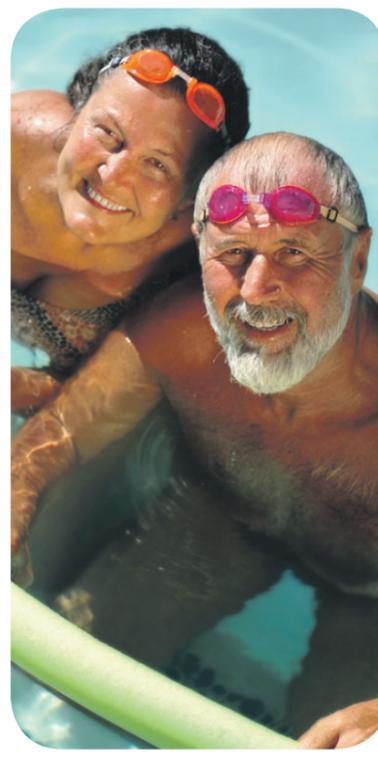


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Looking after your finances is important throughout your life, especially when you are planning to retire. Many people have made a point of saving money all their lives, often in different types of investments like pensions and ISAs, aiming to rely on these investments to provide a comfortable income for their future.

Pensions in particular regularly make up a large proportion of retirement income and the expertise of a financial adviser can help you understand the different ways you can access your benefits and which options are suitable for you. Some decisions about pension benefits can be irreversible, so knowing you've made the right choice is vital for peace of mind. The rules about how you can take your pension benefits have changed recently and the range of products available has widened. Whilst this is good news for consumers, it can also lead to greater confusion.

How you decide to take income from your pensions, or any other investments you may have, will depend on your personal circumstances and objectives, as well as your investment risk profile. A professional adviser will be able to guide you through the options available and recommend a suitable strategy for you.

The value of investments can fall and you may get back less than you invested.

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**INVITATION TO TENDER FOR Four Year Chainsaw Framework Contract**  
 (501 / 13 / 01) available at Lochaber FD office Procurement.services@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or tel - 01397 702184.  
 Closing date 30th January 2012 @ 13.00hrs  
 Details available from David McPhie DP Forester on 0799 054 1304 or david.mcphie@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

**MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 FERRY TERMINAL UPGRADE: KENNA CRAIG**  
 Notice is hereby given that Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of the ferry terminal upgrade at:

Description	Latitude	Longitude
Location	Co-ordinates	Co-ordinates
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(WGS84)  
 Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Kennacraig Ferry Terminal Building, West Loch Tarbert, Argyll & Bute. Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, quoting reference: FKB/A1323  
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**MACARTHUR STEWART**  
 Visit our website at www.macarthurstewart.co.uk  
**OBAN OFFICE (01631) 562215**  
 7 ARGYLL SQUARE, OBAN, ARGYLL, PA34 4AZ  
 Top Floor Flat overlooking Argyll Square. Lounge/kitchen area, bathroom, two bedrooms and box room.  
 In need of some work. Ideal for first time buyer or buy to let market.  
**OFFERS OVER £72,000**

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To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk  
**Argyll & Bute COUNCIL**  
**FOR LEASE**  
**SITE 15A CRANNOG LANE, LOCHAVULLIN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, OBAN**  
 Site 15A is an industrial site located within the Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, at the top end of Crannog Lane. The site is fenced and extends to 515 square metres or thereby. Offers over £4,380 per annum are invited. Closing date for offers is Friday 10th February 2012. For further information: Estates Office, Blairvadach, Helensburgh G84 8ND Tel: 01436-658957

**TO LET**  
**Brand New Studio Apartments with fitted kitchens**  
 In Central Oban  
 £435 pcm  
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Want to let your holiday property? We'll give you more bookings, less hassle  
 Achieve as many as 47 bookings a year  
 FREE property inspection & letting consultation  
 EXPERT photos & advertising  
 Call today for your FREE owners pack  
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**SYKES cottages**

**HOLIDAY COTTAGES WANTED**  
**ONLY 15% AGENCY COMMISSION (FIXED & GUARANTEED)**  
 \* Payment in advance  
 \* Flexible owner bookings  
 \* Sales lines open 7 days/week  
 For details and an Owner Information Pack please contact Karen McWilliams  
**01665 721 241**  
 Email: karen@scottish-cottages.co.uk www.scottish-cottages.co.uk

**TO LET 2 bedroom flat**  
 Fully furnished, Oban, immediate entry, no DSS, £550pcm + bills.  
**Telephone 07789515826 or 07769738479**

**Two bedroom flat in a good tenement in Campbelltown available now. £300 pcm + council tax. References and deposit required. Phone 01848 200364.**  
 Landlord reg. 33590/130/19520

**0800 081 8989**  
**ADRIAN FLUX**

To find out more about living and working in argyll & bute visit us @ www.argyll-bute.gov.uk  
**Argyll & Bute COUNCIL**

**PLANNING**  
 These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 -17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
11/02275/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank	Land South East of Penmore House Dervaig Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Dervaig
11/02317/PP	Formation of access road (retrospective)	Land North West of Inverfolla Cottage Appin Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Ledaij
11/02402/PP	Erection of replacement wood clad office including changing facilities.	Roar Park Linne Marine Dallers Appin Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Ledaij
11/02472/PP	Installation of ground mounted solar panels.	Rowanree Cottage Blackmill Bay Isle of Luing Oban Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Balvicar
11/02491/PP	Erection of a private music studio to rear of existing cottage	Carnie Cottage Isle of Lisimore Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 5UG	Sub Post Office Lisimore
11/02514/PPP	Site for the erection of new housing development comprising of 4 affordable flats and 7 dwellings	Land North East of 1 Hayfield Glenshellach Road Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4QJ	Oban Area Office
11/02554/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank.	Ardnamir Cullipool Isle of Luing Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4UD	Sub Post Office Cullipool
11/02582/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Plot 1 Land North West of Roan Cottage Bunnassan Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Bunnassan Isle of Mull
11/02583/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse and installation of septic tank.	Plot 2 Land North West of Roan Cottage Bunnassan Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Bunnassan Isle of Mull
12/00017/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Land North West Of Camus Fearna Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4BA	Sub Post Office Ledaij

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
11/02388/PP	Erection of extension	Tobermory Harbour Association Office Taigh Solais Tobermory Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA75 6NR	Tobermory Area Office
11/02537/PP	Change of use from Class 1(e) shop to part Class 1(e) shop and part Class 3 cafe including minor internal alterations	Islebury Bakery 26 Main Street Tobermory Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute	Tobermory Area Office

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 -17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardrishaig PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
11/01870/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse.	Plot 3 Avonagroy Bowmore Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
11/02287/PP	Formation of disabled access ramp with handrails at the front entrance and replacement of existing entrance door and windows with hardwood replacements of the same style and finish as existing.	Port Askaig Post Office Port Askaig Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA46 7RB	Sub Post Office Port Askaig

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
12/00013/PP	Increase in roof ridge level (amended design to planning permission 10/01858/PP - Conversion of former stone store to picture framing workshop).	Islay House Bridgend Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA44 7PA	Sub Post Office Bridgend
12/00014/LIB	Increase in roof ridge level (amended design to planning permission 10/01857/LIB - Incorporation of remains of former stone store into new picture framing workshop).	Islay House Bridgend Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute PA44 7PA	Sub Post Office Bridgend

Argyll and Bute Council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk  
 The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8ST.  
 A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.  
 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.

**KAMES FISH FARMING LIMITED MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT**

Kames Fish Farming Limited is looking for a confident, capable individual, who seeks variety and responsibility, and wants to play an integral part in the on-going development of our established and expanding business.

The successful applicant will produce monthly management accounts, budgets and financial forecasting and assist in the preparation of our annual statutory accounts.

You must have an excellent working knowledge of Word, Excel and Sage Line 50. Experience with Sage Forecasting would be an advantage. You must have ICAS/ACCA/CA Qualifications, or equivalent, with a proven track record in management/project accounts, and the ability and aptitude to learn and develop within this role.

This post would suit someone who is hands on, has an eye for detail plus excellent written and communication skills, and the ability to multi-task and to work to strict deadlines.

The generous package on offer will reflect the successful candidate's experience.

For further information, please contact  
The Company Secretary, Kames Fish Farming Limited, Kilmelford, by Oban PA34 4XA  
Email: fish@kames.co.uk

**Project Administrator**  
Fixed term appointment for 1 year  
£19,203 - £22,126 (pay award pending)

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION for MARINE SCIENCE

We are seeking an enthusiastic individual who enjoys a challenge. The successful candidate will work on our European scientific KnowSeas project. The ideal candidate will be an experienced administrator who has worked in a similar environment with excellent communication and interpersonal skills. You will have general accounting and project management skills and able to work under pressure.

The KnowSeas project is supported by the European Commission under the Environment (including climate change) Theme of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development

For further information and to apply for this position online, go to: www.smi.ac.uk Alternatively, please write to: Human Resources, Project Administrator (Job Ref: D20/11.DB), The Scottish Association for Marine Science, Scottish Marine Institute, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QA or e-mail recruitment@sams.ac.uk  
Closing date: Thursday 26th January 2012

SAMS is a registered Scottish charity (SC 009206), has an equal opportunities policy and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

**ACHA**  
Argyll community housing association

**IT Officer** Mid Argyll  
Salary Grade 6 (£25,400 - £29,554)  
35 hours per week

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk;  
Tel 01546 605859 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 20th January 2012  
Interviews for this post will be held in Lochgilphead on 2nd February 2012

**THE GREEN WELLY STOP**

**Retail and Food & Beverage Team Leaders**

We are looking for two dynamic people one to help run our Retail Departments and one for Food & Beverage.

Excellent leadership, customer care skills and previous experience are necessary. Full time salaried positions.  
Contact main office for an application form on 01838 400271 or e-mail mail@thegreenwellystop.co.uk  
Closing date 31st January 2012  
Also recruiting general staff for 2012 season

**Argyllshire advertiser**  
Incorporating Campbelltown Courier

**PART-TIME ADVERTISING/ ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT**

**LOCHGILPHEAD OFFICE**

A part-time vacancy exists for a responsible, self motivated person able to work on own initiative to assist in the smooth running of our Lochgilphead office.

The duties will include dealing with customers, advising and assisting them with their advertising requirements, answering the telephone and carrying out other related general administration functions as required. Training will be given.

The 16 hours per week will be as follows:  
Monday: 10a.m. - 4p.m.  
Tuesday: 10a.m. - 5p.m.  
Wednesday: 10a.m. - 12.30p.m.  
Thursday: office closed  
Friday: 10a.m. - 12.30p.m.

A full current driving licence is essential.  
Please apply by email with C.V. and full contact details to: all@obantimes.co.uk  
Closing date: Monday 16th January

**Estate Maintenance Person/Deer Stalker needed for West Coast Highland Sporting Estate**

Applicant must have extensive maintenance experience and good working knowledge of engines, experience with sea boats, chainsaws, diggers and mowers. Would suit couple.

Apply with CV for details to: p.millais@hotmail.co.uk

**Oban Times RECRUITMENT**

**RSPB** a million voices for nature

**Islay Community Information and Tourism Officer**  
£15,300 - £17,000 pa Islay of Islay

**Colonsay Community Information and Tourism Officer**  
£15,300 - £17,000 pa Islay of Colonsay

We are looking for enthusiastic and dynamic people to work for the RSPB on two six month projects on Islay and on Colonsay. This is an exciting opportunity to promote Islay's and Colonsay's amazing wildlife and rich heritage.

Main duties will include enthusing people about the islands through guided walks and talks providing information and interpretation about the islands, their wildlife and wildlife watching opportunities. If you are a good communicator, are passionate about wildlife and have the ability to deliver this enthusiasm to visitors, this is the post for you. A flexible approach to work is required, as are excellent organisational and presentation skills and a sound knowledge of birds and other wildlife.

Closing date: 5 February 2012.  
Interview date: To be confirmed  
For further information and an application form, please visit our website.  
www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies

**MACLEOD**  
MACLEOD CONSTRUCTION LTD

**REQUIRE**

**HGV Drivers for Low-loader / Flat / Tipper Work**

Clean Driving Licence essential  
APPLICATIONS IN WRITING, OR C.V., TO:-  
MR HARRY ROSS  
MACLEOD CONSTRUCTION LTD  
KILMORY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE  
LOCHGILPHEAD, PA31 8RR  
E-mail - harry@mkmacleod.co.uk

**McKINVEN & COLVILLE Ltd**  
BUILDING CONTRACTORS

Due to additional workload we are looking for the following staff:-

**Workshop Supervisor**  
**Apprentice Joiner/s**  
**Apprentice Electrician**  
**General Labourers** (Driving licence preferred)

All terms and conditions shall be discussed at interview stage.

All applicants please note what post they are interested in and send or Email appropriate CVs to:-  
Mr B Colville, McKinven & Colville Ltd, Unit 2 Snipefield Ind Est, Campbelltown, Argyll, PA28 6SY or info@mckinvenandcolville.com

**marineharvest**  
excellence in seafood

**ELECTRICIAN POSTS**

**Electrical Installations Manager (1 post)**  
**Electricians/Skilled Fitters (2 posts)**

Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd currently has vacancies for multi skilled and self-motivated Electricians within our Production areas across the West Coast of Scotland including the Outer Hebrides. Our operations are within some of Scotland's most remote and beautiful areas and all three roles will be based within key locations, either in or North West of Fort William. However, we are also interested to hear from individuals who may wish to live and work within the Western Isles.

Electrical Installations Manager (£30,000 - £36,000 per annum) - We are looking for a confident and hands on individual who can oversee a range of electrical installations and other related work. As Manager of this concise team the successful candidate will be required to work with external suppliers and contractors to provide the most cost effective and efficient solutions for our Farming Operations.

Electricians/Skilled Fitters (£20,000 - £28,000 per annum) - We are looking for qualified Electricians who would enjoy working in marine conditions and being part of a small team within a larger Farming Organisation.

In both roles the successful candidates will be required to carry out all planned preventative and reactive electrical work and ensure that all plant and equipment is maintained to the highest possible efficiencies. In addition they will be required to install and maintain underwater lighting, feed systems and other plant equipment required both on and off shore. They will also have to investigate all possible areas for improved plant utilisation and output and undertake specific industry training on feed systems and other key equipment.

We are seeking applications from individuals who hold the following qualifications and skills profile:

- IEE 16th Edition
- Inspection, Testing and Certification of Electrical Installations
- Hold a current SJIB Grade Card
- Experience of working PLC's, Diesel generator sets
- Practical knowledge of computerised feeding systems
- Ability to read and understand Schematic diagrams

It is also a requirement to have a good degree of computer literacy and knowledge of automatic feeding systems and /or automated food processing equipment is advantageous.

In return the successful candidate will benefit from an attractive salary package, including bonus.

If you feel you have the necessary skills for one of these challenging roles, please submit an application in writing with details of relevant experience, by the closing date of Friday 27th January 2012 to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Business Resources Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William PH33 7PT.

**ACHA**  
Argyll community housing association

**Customer Services Assistant**  
**Lochgilphead**  
17.5 hours per week (Job Share)  
(Wed pm., Thur, Fri)  
Salary Grade 7 (£15,646 - £17,385) (pro rata)

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk;  
Tel 01546 605 859 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

Closing Date for applications:  
12 noon on Friday 27th January 2012  
Interviews for this post will be held February 2012  
Previous applicants need not apply

**The Princess Royal Trust for Carers**  
North Argyll Carers Centre

North Argyll Carers Centre is a value-based charity, which supports those who look after a family member or friend due to illness, disability, frailty or addiction on an unpaid basis. We provide information and advice as well as practical and emotional support through our Carers' Centres. The organisation is seeking to recruit the following:

**Outreach Support Worker**  
30 hours per week - £15,690

Fixed Term for one year subject to continuation funding

This is a new and innovative post which requires a highly motivated individual who understands issues affecting carers. You will work across the Islands and remote areas in North Argyll identifying hidden carers in particular older carers with particular focus on the Scottish Government's Reshaping Care for Older People Programme.

For an application pack or more information contact the Carers' Centre on 01631 564422 or Email: ruth@northargyllcarers.org.uk

Successful applicants will be required to join the PVG Scheme. Use of car and a clean driving license essential.

North Argyll Carers Centre's commitment to Equal Opportunities is reflected in our selection process.

The post is fixed term for 1 year.  
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY 3rd February 2012 at 12 noon  
Interview date 15th February 2012  
Registered Charity no: SC040902

**DUNOLLIE HOUSE, OBAN**

**WANTED**

1) A rather special person, able to combine the twin roles of facilities assistant, dealing with clan visitors from all over the world, some catering, and working with volunteers at Dunollie House; along with the more practical duties of a housekeeper. Hours flexible, but likely to involve some evening & weekend events; approx. 30 hrs. per week.

2) garden contractor able to deal with grass cutting and general garden maintenance on hourly "as required" basis. Please quote terms.

3) Gardening enthusiast, willing to devote voluntary time to tending and restoring Victorian garden, in return for having a large vegetable patch available for own personal use.

Contact Mike Robertson, Estate Factor, on mjr@dunol.co.uk

**Canna House Gardener**  
Canna, Inner Hebrides  
Salary £15,580, accommodation may be available

The National Trust for Scotland is looking for an enthusiastic individual to take on the responsibility for the completion of a 5-year restoration project of the 0.8ha walled garden around Canna House, including conservation and enhancement of the Garden's plant collection (in particular the fruit, vegetable and Lepidoptera interest of the garden) as well as to undertake the ongoing practical maintenance of the garden.

To be successful in this post, you will be committed to working in a heritage garden context and be self-motivated and capable of living and working in a remote rural environment and within a very small community.

For full job details and information about how to apply, go to www.nts.org.uk and click on the "Vacancies" tab. Closing date 30 January 2012. Interviews are likely to take place on 14 February at Balnain House in Inverness.

Visit us at www.nts.org.uk

The National Trust for Scotland for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410

**ACHA**  
Argyll community housing association

**ACHA - Putting Tenants First.**  
We are on target to create homes and places across Argyll & Bute where people want to live.  
Can you help us achieve that vision?

**Head of Repairs Business Development**  
Salary Grade 3 (£42882-£47170 per annum)  
Location: Argyll, Scotland  
35 hours per week, permanent contract  
Starting salary £42882 with increases dependant on performance

This is an exciting and challenging new post created to enable us to fundamentally change and improve our service to our tenants and other customers, and to develop a subsidiary maintenance company.

This will enable us to bring all responsive repairs activity in house through the development of an internally managed in house repairs team function, with the future potential to expand this to wider capital and cyclical works.

This role, and our vision, means you need to be ready to break new ground in restructuring the service delivery models currently in place. The job will be challenging and varied. You will need strong leadership skills, the ability to think strategically and be focused on achieving effective resource management across a wide geographical area, and providing excellence in the quality of the services you deliver.

This will involve a primary early objective of establishing a viable business plan. After the planning stages, this will involve the set-up and ongoing management of our subsidiary maintenance company (including reporting to the subsidiary Board). This will mean acting as 'contractor' for our routine maintenance services.

Previous commercial experience of developing and delivering a large scale response and planned repairs service and setting up a similar subsidiary company would be advantageous.

ACHA welcomes applications from all sections of the community and is committed to promoting equal opportunities.

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk ;  
Tel 01546 605859 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk  
Closing Date: Friday 27th January 2012  
Interviews for this post will be held in Inveraray on Monday 13th February 2012

**Flexible person with wide ranging interests required.**  
Live-in position, assisting wheelchair-bound female with all aspects of her daily life on a job share/ rota basis with existing carer.  
Driver essential. Plenty of spare time during the day.  
Annexe accommodation.  
Island situation.  
Please reply to Sarah Hobhouse 07850 230000

**Versatile Manager Required**  
For **Caravan and Camping Park** (West of Scotland)  
Previous similar experience required  
Accounting/book-keeping knowledge useful  
e-mail: westcoastcamping@gmail.com

**Book keeper & Payroll Manager**  
for about 10 hours a month.  
£9.50 ph.  
Oban area.  
E-mail Marc at marconix@hetnet.nl

**Electrician with relevant qualifications**  
Immediate start  
Temporary contract  
Archie Houston  
Electrical, Campbelltown  
Tel: 01586 552963 / 07979383140

**HOWDENS JOINERY CO.**  
MAKING SPACE MORE VALUABLE

**FORT WILLIAM**

Howdens Joinery has built up a reputation that builders can trust.

We supply kitchens and joinery products directly to the trade and we are looking for the following:

**TELESALES/ BUSINESS DEVELOPER**

Working on the telephone and at the trade counter you will promote and sell the company's range of products and services with objectives of achieving and exceeding individual, depot and company sales targets, maintaining and growing existing business and following up leads. You will be organised in order to fulfil admin duties efficiently (filing, liaising with credit control, cash and banking). You will be required to help out in the depot as required.

Applicants should be passionate, positive, self motivated and target driven with excellent interpersonal and communication skills.

44 hours a week (Mon - Sat)  
£14,000 per annum & bonus  
Closing date: 27/01/2012  
Please phone 01397 703355  
Or Email fort.william@howdens.com to request an application pack.

**The Underwater Centre, Fort William**

**DIVE SUPPORT ENGINEER (MECHANICAL)**  
Must be Time Served Mechanic/Fitter or equivalent preferably with experience of diving systems

**TRAINEE DIVE SUPPORT TECHNICIAN**  
To assist in the repair and maintenance of diving equipment. Must have mechanical/technical background/interests.

Applications and CVs to:  
Human Resources Department  
Crannog Concept Limited, Marine Walk  
Carmichael Way, Fort William PH33 6FF  
Tel: 01397 707120 or e-mail HR@theunderwatercentre.co.uk

**Town Centre Manager**  
£26753 - £30129 (pro rata) Campbelltown Ref: DVE000073  
17.5 hrs per week (Temporary - Maternity Cover)  
01546 604041

Closing Date: 27 January 2012.  
To apply visit our website

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

**Female Carers Required: Rural Location in Cowal**

Applicants must be 18+ as you will be providing personal care and working occasional nights. Experience and references required. Applicants should be capable of dealing with a 25 year old female who requires 24hr personal care. One full time, live in, carer also required. Would suit someone with no ties. Own room with en-suite. Duties will involve all aspects of care. Own transport is essential. Successful applicants are required to provide a disclosure. Disclosure expense will be met by applicant. Immediate start. Email your CV including a photograph to: mailto:cranbreh.jobs@btinternet.com

www.westcoastclassifieds.co.uk

NOW ONLINE

Advertise your unwanted items in either The Oban Times, Campbeltown Courier or Argyllshire Advertiser and your ad will also appear online at www.westcoastclassifieds.co.uk.

BICYCLES

BOYS BIKE Boys football bike, is less than 1yr old, well used but in good condition. Would suit 4-6yr old, £45 Telephone 07925 253879.

MONOBLOCK BRICKS

700 approx, good condition, £20 Telephone 01631 569564.

CLOTHES, SHOES AND ACCESSORIES

LADIES WALKING BOOTS brand new, never worn. Ladies size 6 light blue suede ankle boots. Lovely comfortable boots. Cost me new £35, £25 Telephone 07776 251610.

CROOKS

WALKING STICKS, 2 handmade walking sticks with horn handles plus 1 with wooden handle. Price is for all 3, £15 Telephone 01567 820521.

BOOKS

BOX SET A Song of Ice and Fire, parts one to four, two read, three brand new, £20 Telephone 07760 326857.

BUILDING / DIY

BRASS DIMMER SWITCH new, 2 way push dimmer switch, 1 x 400w. Brushed brass finish, £3 Telephone 01631 770311.

LOFT LADDER 3 section aluminium folding loft ladder with hand rail and fixings. V good condition,

DOMESTIC APPLIANCES

BOSSCH FOOD PROCESSOR (German model)with bowl for mixing (whisker, beater & dough hook), blades for chopping, slicing and grating. Liquidiser/jug blender, £35 Telephone 01631 710110.

FREEZER 3 Drawer, £40

Telephone 01631 564691.

ZANUSSIDISHWASHER,

not used and need the space. Slight crack on handle but does not affect cycle, £45 Telephone 07925 253879.

DOMESTIC PETS

COLLIE PUPS ready now, three dogs, three bitches, both parents good workers, Telephone 01972 510321daytime or 01972 510286 evening.

GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPPIES

2 males & 1 female, ready now. KC reg. Genuine forever homes only. Parents have excellent temperaments, will make great pets, £550 Telephone 01586 553979.

HALF SIAMESE KITTENS friendly tabby boys and ginger girl. Blue

eyed beauties used to dogs and children, ready now. Tortie siamese mum, £50 Telephone 01880 760358/207 or 07791 310908.

LABRADOR PUPS

Kennel registered Labrador pups for sale, one chocolate bitch, two yellow dogs and a bitch, reared in family home, both parents have been hip scored, ready from January 20. Deposit secures pup, £450 Telephone 01496 840637.

FIREWOOD

WOOD BRIQUETTES 10, 15kg bags of compressed sawdust briquettes. Clean, efficient, reliable alternative to burning logs. Ideal for stoves, £40 Telephone 07988 763254.

FURNITURE

3 PIECE SUITE Sage Green Leather, very good condition, £2000ono Telephone 01631 564734.

CORNER UNIT Alba pine corner unit. Glass lattice door on top half and two solid doors on the bottom. Very good condition, £49.95 Telephone 01631 569564.

G PLAN SIDEBBOARD 5ft 6in wooden sideboard, teak and oak effect. 4 drawers, 2 sliding doors. Good condition, Bridgend, Lochgilphead, £45 Telephone 01546 600119.

PINE DOUBLE BED good condition with fixed head board for sale. Will sell with or without mattress. Viewing/Collection North Connell, £49.00 Telephone 01631 710040.

SIDEBBOARD 6 drawers, light wood, £35 Telephone 01631 564691.

SINGLE DIVAN BED Single divan bed (3') with wooden headboard and drawers. One of a pair, £35 Telephone 01866 822390.

SINGLE FOLD AWAY GUEST BED good condition, quick sale, can deliver in Campbeltown. Phone in evenings, £30 Telephone 01586 551520.

TWO SEAT TABLE & CHAIRS

excellent condition, £35 Telephone 01631 562779 or 07765 874092.

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

TV/VIDEO COMBI DVD PLAYER 14" Toshiba TV/Video Combi, Samsung DVD player, Echostar digital box, all with remotes and 1 scart lead, £40 Telephone 01631 710523.

VENTURER 15" LCD TV

silver, requires digibox for use with freeview. Can be used as a monitor for PC, £12 Telephone 01631 770311.

HOME FURNISHINGS

IKEA KINGSIZE DUVET COVER heavy quality

GARDEN

FLYMO EASIREEL VISION COMPACT hardly used mower for sale. Buyer must be able to collect from Ballachulish, £45 Telephone 01855 811524.

GLASS GREEN HOUSE

14 x 8ft, extras included

£800 ono, was £1000 last year. Telephone 01546 600045.

HOBBIES AND CRAFTS

CARD MAKING ACCESSORIES Crateful of transfers for all occasions ,gems cards etc all still in packs, £49.99 Telephone 01631 720369.

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BIRTHS



**WOTHERSPOON**  
Kenneth and Lorraine (née Fraser) are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their daughter Millie, on December 17, 2011 at the Princess Royal Maternity, Glasgow. First granddaughter for Margaret Wotherspoon and fourth grandchild for Iain and Cathy Fraser. With special thanks to all staff at the Princess Royal and Oban Maternity Unit.

ENGAGEMENTS

**THOMAS - IRVINE**  
Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of David Hywel, son of David Thomas, Spain and Carlin Murray, Alloway, to Kim Elizabeth, daughter of the late Iain and Jean Irvine, Tighnabruich.

MARRIAGES

**NISBET-MACEACHEN**  
Both families have the pleasure of announcing the marriage on December 28, 2011, in Edinburgh of James, son of Mrs Sheila Nisbet, Musselburgh and Jacqueline Anne, daughter of David and Jean Maceachen, Oban.

SILVER WEDDINGS

**BORSCHEL-WEATHERALL**  
At Kilmore and Oban Church of Scotland on January 9, 1987 by the late Rev Duncan Capewell, Carine to Wolfgang, Giessen, Germany.

GOLDEN WEDDING

**BLACK - DUKE**  
Hughie to Helen on January 13, 1962. With love and Congratulations from all the family.

DEATHS

**BILTON** - On January 1, 2012, Fred (of Balvicar, formerly of Durham City), passed away, aged 78 years, loving husband of Nora, dad to Margaret and Caroline, grampy, uncle and father-in-law. Funeral has taken place.

**CAMPBELL** - Suddenly at home on Tuesday January 10, 2012, aged 71 years, Angus, beloved husband of Elsie, much loved dad of Fiona, Derek and Innes and a loving Papa. Very sadly missed. Funeral will take place from The Free High Church, Oban on Friday January 13, at 1 pm, thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Retiring collection / donations if desired for British Heart Foundation.

**FARQUHARSON** - Ronald (née MacIntyre) who passed away at home, aged 68 years. Beloved mother and gaga, much loved and sorely missed by all. Service will be at Inverness Crematorium at 1.30pm on 16/01/12 Memorial service in Strontian at a later date.

**MACCALLUM** - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban after a brave fight on January 8, 2012, Fergus aged 35 years, very dearly loved son of Jimmy and Daphne, brother of Andrina, Archie and Betty, brother-in-law, uncle and nephew and friend to many. A service to celebrate his life will take place at Muckkairn Parish Church, Tainuill on Saturday, January 14 at 13.30hrs. No flowers please. Retiring collection to Fergus's chosen charities.

**MACDONALD** - Peacefully at Dunaros Hospital, on January 1, 2012 in his 96th year, Calum MacDonald, Tobermory Isle of Mull. Beloved brother of Margaret. Sadly missed.

**MACLEAN** - Suddenly at the Southern General Hospital, Glasgow, on January 9, 2012, Charles MacLean (Jnr); son of May and Charlie, Dunbeg, and brother of James and Donald, father, uncle and grandpa. Funeral service will be held in Lochgilphead Parish Church on Tuesday, January 17 at 12noon, thereafter to Achnabreac Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Donations to Leukaemia Research & British Heart Foundation. No Black Ties - Casual Dress please. "Simply the Best"

**MEARS** - On January 5, 2012, peacefully after a long illness, Margaret (Bunty) Mears, (née Smart), in her 74th year, beloved wife of the late Colin and much loved mother of Gordon, dear mother-in-law of Moira and dearly loved gran of Lisa and Fiona. Funeral service was held on January 11, at Cardross Crematorium.

**PATERSON** - At home with his family on December 31, 2011, William (Anchor Bill) much loved husband of the late Maimie, dearest father of Shirley and Niven and a dear papa to Alan and Jamie-Anne. A funeral service took place on Wednesday January 11, 2012 at Clark Memorial Church, Largs followed by a Cremation Service at Greenock Crematorium.

**PAYNE** - Patricia of Cinnait, Corpach, widow of the late Mac Payne, died peacefully on Tuesday January 3, 2012 in the Belford Hospital after a short illness. Beloved mother to Brian, Ann, Cathy, Robert and Sue, grandmother to Richard, Jill, Tracey, Karen, Graeme, Calum, Cairistie, Chris, Gemma, Thomas and MacGregor and great grandmother to Bob, Amelia, Jack, Matthew, Luciana, Sebastian, Charlie, Edith, Holly and Joe. Well loved and sadly missed by all. Funeral service to be held 12 noon Saturday, January 14 at St Andrews Church. Family flowers only, donations at the church or to McLellan Funeral Directors, for the Step Down Ward, Belford Hospital

**WHYTE** - Peacefully at the Southern General on December 3, 2011, Aileen Fiona, aged 47 years, of Bunanuisge, Bowmore, beloved daughter of Iain and Maimie and dear sister of Alasdair, Marie and Duncan. Interred in Bowmore, Ilay on January 9, 2012. Very sorely missed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**BIRNIE** - The family would like to thank most sincerely, relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind support and expressions of sympathy, cards, flowers, telephone calls and visits following the sad loss of their mother Margaret. Special thanks to Mike McFall and staff for thoughtfulness and professionalism, Rev R Corbett for comforting service and Fay Haughton and staff at Caol Community Centre. Thanks also to all who paid their respects at the church and graveside. The collection raised £425.31 for Highland Hospice.

**MARR** - Ronnie, Sandra and Karen would like to thank friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy shown to us following our sad loss. Sincere thanks to the carers from Saga and Willow-view, and the district nurses all of whom looked after Mary so well allowing her to remain at home over the past 4 years. Also to the staff of Ward B for their care and kindness in her last 2 days. Special thanks to Rev. Dugald Cameron for his kind words and comforting service and D & A Munn for their efficient funeral

arrangements. Also thanks to Soroba House for their buffet refreshments and to all who paid their respects at the church and graveside.

**REDFERN** - Elizabeth and Joan wish to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their overwhelming kindness and support in their sad loss of Willie. Special thanks to Andrew and Jean for all their visits and help. Grateful thanks to Drs Wilmington, Calder Massie and Henderson, Katrina Flannigan, Respiratory Nurse Specialist, district nurses and Abbeyfield for wonderful and caring attention. To Rev Dr Malcolm Kinnear for his comforting service and kindness during Willie's illness and Melville Paton for the beautiful music at the church. Thanks to Mike McFall for efficient funeral arrangements and all who attended church and graveside and to Maria and staff at Onich Hotel for catering. The sum of £900 was donated at church for Breatheasy Oban.

**WILSON** - Louise would like to thank all concerned for their kind support, assistance, cards, letters and calls following the sad loss of her partner, Ted Chance. Special thanks to everyone at Easdale Medical Practice for their dedicated care and attention, Annie Loughlin for a lovely service, those who attended and donated generously to Riding for the Disabled and Cancer Research and lastly the Oyster Bar for their hospitality and refreshments.

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Working towards a time when every person in Scotland has equal and ready access to the best information, treatment and care for cancer  
West of Scotland Fundraising Office  
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Business Park, Clydebank G81 2DR  
Tel 0808 100 6000  
In memory of Dawn Joyce

**FOR THE BLIND CHILDREN OF SCOTLAND'S ACADEMIC TUITION AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL IN EDINBURGH**  
Please give your financial support by donation, deed of covenant or legacy  
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CRC Scotland spends more on research than any other organisation  
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Donations always gratefully accepted  
Please contact David Mudie (Treasurer)  
Oban Hospice Ltd  
The Croft  
Kilmore

**MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE**  
Oban & Lorn Fundraising Branch  
Donations always gratefully accepted  
Please contact Mrs Lillian Kermode  
Tynwald, Glenburn,  
Soroba Road, Oban  
01631 571009

GRADUATIONS



Thea Auckland-Child, BSc (Hons) has recently obtained an MSc with distinction in Speech and Language Therapy from the University of Reading. Thea is the granddaughter of the late Margaret and Ron Child of Stru-mhor, Connel, and the daughter of Stewart Child and Mary Auckland.



Claire MacLeod graduated with a Degree of Bachelor of Nursing (adult) from Glasgow Caledonian University, youngest daughter of Hugh and Doreen MacLeod, Benderloch. Claire is now working at Gartnavel General Hospital, Glasgow.

MEMORIALS

**BRIGHTMORE** - In loving memory of my dear father, Eric who died January 8, 2009 and my dear mother, Mary, who died January 21, 2000. Loved and remembered everyday.

- Catherine, John, Clair and John, Corpach.  
**CAMERON** - Precious memories of our dear father, Duncan who died January 6, 2003. Forever in our thoughts.

- Irene, Junie, Catherine-Anne and families.  
**CAMERON** - In loving memory of our mother, mother-in-law and devoted granny, Katie Ann, who passed away on January 4, 2006 and our father Dugald Angus, who passed away January 11, 2011. Months and years may go by

But not a day we don't think of you  
Deep in our hearts your memory is kept forever.  
- From all families, Fort William & Ardnamurchan.

**CAMPBELL** - In loving memory of Chrissie, who died January 12, 2004, a dearly loved wife, mum, gran and sister.  
Always loved, never forgotten  
We often think of bygone days when we were all together  
The family chain is broken now  
But memories will live forever  
To us she has not gone away  
Nor has she travelled far  
Just entered God's eternal home and left the gate ajar.  
Sadly missed.

- By Duncan and all the family.  
**CRUICKSHANK** - Treasured memories of Jimmy, loving husband, father and grandfather, who passed away so suddenly on January 15, 1999. Greatly loved, missed and remembered always.

- By his wife Kate, sons Iain and Dougie and their families in Tobermory and Fort William.

**ASSOCIATED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, OBAN**  
Campbell Street Church  
Sunday 15 January 2012  
11 am and 6.30 pm.  
Phone-in 'Worship Link' available  
Rev. Archie McPhail  
MA, MTh  
(01631) 567076  
All welcome

**SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION**  
Sunday 15 January 2012  
Epiphany 2  
St John's Cathedral, Oban  
Holy Communion..... 08.00  
Sung Eucharist..... 10.15  
Sunday School and Crèche  
Loop System  
Large Print Hymn Books  
All Welcome  
Norman MacCallum,  
Provost.  
(01631) 562323  
St Columba, Gruline, Mull  
Holy Eucharist..... 11.00  
St Columba,  
Bishop's House, Iona  
Holy Eucharist..... 10.00

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TEL: 01631 563123 / 565269

**EVANS** - In loving memory of a dear mother, granny and great granny Cathie (née Moyes). Loved and remembered always.

Nigel, Hazel, David, Gareth and Kaitlyn.  
**GILLIES** - In loving memory of Johan Gillies, died January 10, 2010, a loving mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great grandmother. Also loved ones gone before.

- Hamish, Joan and family, Caol.  
**HAY** - Treasured memories of Jimmy, a loving and much loved son, brother and uncle who died January 10, 1998.

Precious memories keep you near  
As time unfolds another year  
Forever loved  
Mum, Donald, Anthea, Iain and families.  
**MACGILLIVRAY** - In loving memory of my dear mother May, (née Wilson), who died January 10, 1995.

Remembering you is easy  
We do it everyday  
It's the pain of losing you  
That never goes away  
A thousand words won't bring you back  
We know because we've tried  
Neither will a million tears  
We know because we've cried.

- Inserted by her loving son Jim and Helen.  
**MACIVER** - In loving memory of dear Duncan, who died January 12, 2007. Remembered with love. From Chrissie and Rob, Colin and Jocelyn.

**MACKINNON** - In loving memory of Neil Kennedy MacKinnon, Balmulloch, Isle of Tiree, who passed away suddenly on January 14, 2006.

Sorely missed  
Flora, Jeanette and family.  
**MACMILLAN** - In fond and loving memory of our dear son, Mark, who died January 14, 1991 aged 15 years.  
The hardest thing in life to bear  
Is to want your child and he's not there  
With tears in our eyes we whisper low  
We love you Mark and miss you so.

- Love you always Dad and Mum, Ballachulish xx.  
**MACMILLAN** - Treasured memories of my dear brother Mark. Those we love don't go away  
They walk beside us every day  
Sadly missed.  
- Iain, Frances, Lucy and Cara xx

**MACMILLAN** - Cousin Mark, January 14, 1991. So sorely missed.  
- Lynne and family.  
**MACMILLAN** - Mark Love and miss you.  
- Jane xxx  
**MACMILLAN** - In loving memory of Mark, died January 14, 1991 aged 15. Always loved, never forgotten.

- From Maureen and Andrew, Oban.  
**MORRISON** - In loving memory of Johnny, died January 3, 2008, dear husband, father and grandpa of Catherine, John, Karen, Alan and families.  
Forever in my thoughts Mum.

**STODDART** - In loving memory of our dear brother Malcolm Livingstone, died January 10, 1972. Always in our thoughts.  
- Inserted by family, Glasgow.

**TESTER** - Remembering our dear dad Rober (Bobby) Tester, died January 6, 1995. Also remembering our dear mum Mairi Ann (Nan).  
Aig Fois  
- Alasdair, Sandra, Joan and families.

**YOUNG** - Flora, January 9, 2005.  
A dear mum and granny.  
RIP  
- Catriona, Callum, Lorna and Iona x

Thought for the Week

JESUS told the disciples to love each other as he loved them.

If they had torn themselves apart over fears and doubts, or over failing to spot Judas' plan, the church wouldn't have got started. Peter, who would have lost any election on the basis of his denials, had a powerful vision which made him realise he had to accept people his religion had always told him to avoid. We all find ourselves in situations we wouldn't choose, but we have to keep going. A well known passage in Ecclesiastes tells us there's a time to seek and a time to lose. We need to let go more often and keep seeking the right way forward.

Writing about the parable of sheep and goats, painter and theologian Jan Richardson says Jesus assures us that our greatest sin lies not in having the wrong theology or refusing to believe as others would have us believe or failing to take him to a place he has never gone. Our

sin lies in neglecting to recognize and respond to him where he already is. Jesus gets awfully specific in telling us where we can find him - where there's lack of food, lack of water, lack of hospitality, lack of clothing, lack of health, lack of freedom. Christ chooses these places, and waits for us to show up.

It's tempting to hold back in case too much is expected, instead of doing the most we can and then drawing the line. If we helped once, we can't say 'That's ok then. I needn't bother anymore.' If we failed to help, we don't have to think, 'I'm done for.' We can't do everything but we can often do more than we realise. One of the most frequent instructions in the Bible is not to worry, so let's look forward and keep trying to get our priorities right.

Rev Liz Gibson  
Glenorchy & Innishael  
linked with Strathfillan



Around 19 birds have so far been found, with most having been found dead

Islanders asked to watch for oiled birds washed ashore

WILDLIFE officers are appealing to people living in the islands to keep an eye out for dead or floundering birds after a number washed up covered in oil.

Around 19 birds have so far been found, with more than half having been found dead.

**Western Isles**  
The initial warning was raised by the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMRL) last Tuesday, when a handful of birds were found.  
However, Stornoway's RSPB officer, Marin Scott, has since dealt with more, but the source of the oil has not been found in the Western Isles.  
The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) were notified but searches re-

vealed no obvious source.  
A spokesperson for the Coastguard said: 'We contacted our team in Lochboisdale but there was no evidence of a leak.'

'We can find oil at sea where someone has dumped something over the side. Birds can also get oiled miles from the land and come in with difficulties, so it's not always attributable.  
'At the time we've had these reports of oiled birds, we've also had a sustained period of strong winds. As a result, this oil could have come from anywhere.  
'However, we are keeping a close eye on it.'

Anyone who finds a bird in distress should contact the SSPCA on 03000 999 999.

Oban Concern for Palestine Group plans ahead for 2012

AFTER another active year in 2011, the Oban Concern for Palestine Group is planning its activities for this coming year.

**Highlights**  
One of the highlights of 2011 for the Group was a public meeting in May when a very inspiring talk was given by Daoud Nassar a farmer in the West Bank in Palestine. Despite severe encroachment on his land by Israeli settlers with illegal settlements and the destruction of 250 of his ancient olive trees Daoud shares a very welcome attitude of refusing to be an enemy. To that effect, he has created on his land the 'Tent of Nations' where Christians, Muslims and Jews can come together in peace.

During the latter part of last year the Group had stalls of Palestinian goods for sale at The Ardmaddy fete, The Oban Games and the two Christmas Fayres run by Argyll Animal Aid and the Young Enterprise Initiative. These all raised useful funds and, more importantly, were a focus to explain the role of the group

in working for peace and justice in that troubled area.  
The Oban Concern for Palestine group was set up in November 2008 and now has over 40 members. The Group aims to reach across the two cultures, Israel and Palestine, in the name of justice.

The Group's next public meeting will be on Sunday, January 29 at 7.30 in the Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban when local member, David Mitchell, who was in the Middle East a year ago as a peace observer, will be introducing two 30 minute DVDs.

One of them is entitled 'Constructing Peace - Resisting the occupation on the ground' and is produced by the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions. The other one is 'Dreams Deferred - The Struggle for Peace and Justice in Israel and Palestine' and there will be time for discussion and questions.  
Those wanting to join the group or who want more information should contact Graeme Pagan Neaveton Oban PA34 5TY 01631 563737. neaveton@tiscali.co.uk

Scottish Hydro Griffen windfarm boosts Birks Cinema group fund by £100,000

JUST weeks remain for the Friends of the Birks Cinema group to raise the remaining £360,000 required to revive Aberfeldy's cinema.

However, the group are confident of reaching their goal, having just received a £100,000 boost from the Scottish Hydro Griffin wind farm community fund.

With 80 per cent of the £1.8million needed to rebuild and modernise the building, which the group hope to turn into a hub for the arts and culture for the whole of Highland Perthshire, alongside the Birnam Arts Centre and Ptilochry Festival Theatre.

The last big push is now underway to raise the rest of the funds by the end of the month, with a number

of funding applications lodged with organisations such as the Volant Trust and the Balraig Foundation.

**Appeal**  
A final direct mail appeal has been sent to members this week, while a large number of corporations, local businesses and individuals have been asked for assistance.  
The latest measure is the cinema's association with the Weather Lottery, with a percentage of each ticket going towards the fund.

Charlotte Flower, chairperson of the Friends of the Birks Cinema charity, said: 'We are delighted to learn that our application to the Scottish Hydro Griffin Community Fund has been successful. A significant award such as this will play a very

important part in meeting our target at the end of January to secure the match funding awarded in June 2010 from Scotland's Rural Development Program.

'Our plans to revive the Birks building into a state-of-the-art modern cinema continue and we hope to provide residents and visitors with a first class facility to be proud of.'

The group has seen 'fantastic' support from the local community and further afield. It's membership has increased by over 50 per cent to over 420 members. In total, 26 sponsored seats have been sold.

A link to the Friends of the Birks Cinema's Weather Lottery can be found on our Facebook page.

STOP PRESS - STOP PRESS - STOP PRESS

Scallop diver missing off Mull

A SEARCH for a missing scallop diver was underway to the north of Tobermory as *The Oban Times* went to press.

The diver was operating from the vessel *Atlantia* at the entrance to the Sound of Mull late on Tuesday afternoon when he was reported missing.

Tobermory Lifeboat, local vessels, the coastguard helicopter and coastal search teams were launched.

Argyll and Bute council tax rate remains frozen

COUNCIL tax will be frozen for another year in Argyll and Bute.

All 32 councils in Scotland have confirmed, in principle, to accept the Scottish Government's funding offer for next year to freeze council tax for 2012-2013.

That means a household in the average council tax band will have saved more than £500 by the end of 2012-2013 as a result of the council tax freeze since 2007-2008.

As a percentage of income, households with the lowest income gain the most from the council tax freeze.

This funding would also see police and teacher numbers maintained.

Finance secretary John Swinney said: 'We work closely with local government to deliver better outcomes for people and communities across Scotland.'

'Despite the most dramatic reduction in public spending ever imposed on Scotland by the UK Government, over the next three years, local government will receive a larger share of Scottish Government funds than in 2007-08.'

Oban Gaelic Choir back on song

OBAN Gaelic Choir will resume its weekly practices on Monday January 16 in Oban Pipe Band Hall, Shore Street.

The practices begin at 7.30pm and new members are welcome.

Police appeal after laptop theft

POLICE are appealing for witnesses to the theft of a black Tiny laptop from the Great Western Hotel in Oban.

The theft, which occurred between 6pm on December 28 and 11.30am on December 30, was made after the culprit smashed a ground floor window to gain access.

Anyone with any information regarding the theft is urged to contact PC Charles Masterson on 01631 510 500.

BT confirms landline faults due to bad weather

BT HAS confirmed some individual properties have lost landline phone connections throughout Argyll and Bute as a result of the recent stormy weather.

Work is underway to fix reported problems, which can sometimes involve the erection of five telegraph poles to restore connection to just 10 properties.

The spokesperson said: 'If you have a problem, contact your service provider in the first instance, don't presume we know about it.'

Water monitoring contracts awarded

ARGYLL and Bute and Highland councils will continue to collect shellfish and water samples for the Food Standards Agency in their areas.

Meanwhile, Hallmark Meat Hygiene Ltd will collect samples in the Western Isles, while SAMS will continue its phytoplankton monitoring programme across Scotland.

The contracts were awarded after a tendering exercise, started last August.

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# Veteran wins man of the match award

## Glenfinnan 'A' are Old New Year champions

REPORT BY  
**STEPHEN NORRIS**  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

GLENFINNAN 'A' defeated Glenfinnan 'Stripes' in the village's annual 'Old New Year' shinty challenge match on Saturday.

And it was a community celebration as much as a sporting event as players and supporters gathered at the playing field under the famous railway viaduct over the river Finnan.

Players included primary school age children and 79 year-old Calum MacFarlane-Barrow, who defied his 'venerable veteran' status to turn in a fine

performance and take the man of the match award.

Recent contests to mark the arrival of the old Scots New Year on January 12 were played in ice and snow.

But mud and puddles proved the biggest hazard on Saturday as the teams wore wellies or work boots to cope with the conditions.

Glenfinnan 'A' took the initiative from the start and soon opened the scoring when Calum MacFarlane Barrow showed remarkable fleetness of foot to score from close range.

With Farquhar MacRae a telling presence in midfield, 'A' continued to dominate and

### SHINTY

doubled their lead when Blair Stewart fired home shortly before the break.

Referee Tearlach MacFarlane – brother of Calum and his senior by a year – was keeping a close eye on proceedings, but the game was being played in a fine spirit and his intervention was rarely required.

The Stripes, playing in Glenfinnan's traditional purple and white and led by Iain MacFarlane, pressed hard to cut the deficit.

But the outcome was put beyond doubt when Nico MacFarlane-Glasgow, aged 10, prodded home to give 'A' a 3-0 advantage.

Tearlach allowed the Stripes a few extra minutes to score a goal, but the 'A' team's defence stood firm and in fading light the match ended with handshakes all round.

'A' captain Colm O'Rua had no doubt of the identity of their match winner.

'We could not have done it without Calum MacFarlane – he was our star player up front,' he said. 'It was a wonderful day for young and old alike - it is important that we keep this New Year tradition alive.'



Winning captain Colm O'Rua, left, is congratulated by Stripes captain Iain MacFarlane. 20\_102fnnan01

## Father defeats son in family final

LOCHABER Squash Club's championships at Lochaber Leisure Centre on Friday night saw some high calibre squash as father and son Bruce and Alan Love battled it out in the handicapped section final.

In a masterclass of a match with long rallies and quality play, Alan raced into a 2-0 lead, but gradually Bruce's technical mastery began to tell and he eventually overcame his son's speed and agility to take the next three games for a narrow 3-2 win.

### SQUASH

Bruce had won through in the semi-finals with a 3-0 win over Murdo Murray, while Alan Love came out on top 3-1 against Rah Douglas after a hard fought contest.

The plate semi-final between Alan Ross and Andy Rodgers showed varied shot play with Alan winning 3-1 and going straight on to win a blistering final against Andy Bilton 3-1.



Lochaber Squash Club trophy winners Allan Ross (plate), Bruce Love (handicap) and Alan Love (handicap runner-up) with referee Neil Worsdal, second left, presenting. 20\_102sqush01



Iain MacFarlane clears despite a robust challenge from veteran Calum MacFarlane-Barrow. 20\_102fnnan04

## Thompson on top in Sutherlands Grove winter league race

### CYCLING

WEST HIGHLAND Wheelers staged the fourth round of their Alpine Bikes-sponsored winter league at Sutherlands Grove, Barcaldine on Sunday.

The joint event, kindly hosted by Nick Charlton and the North Argyll Cycle Club, saw 37 riders from along the west coast battle through mud and tricky roots on a technical course.

The conditions entirely suited Ben Thompson who finished first, two minutes ahead of Liam Moynihan. Ruari Watt was eking out a good lead at the end of the first lap at the head of the field but was one of a number of riders who suffered a puncture.

Ben Cathro took time out from his downhill training to try out his first XC race of the season, but found the blistering pace of the pack far too uncomfortable.

Lachlan Blair finished strongly as first junior with Marian Austin taking the ladies race. Thanks go to Nick, NACC, Colleen and Fiona for the event and timing. Next event is scheduled for Glen Loy on the 29th Jan.

Results:  
2-lap race: 1 Ben Thompson 57.27; 2 Liam Moynihan 59.31; 3 Mike Bossard 59.58; 4 Chris Bell 1.00.12; 5 Tom Smith 1.00.59; 6 Ruari Watt 1.04.07; 7 Lachlan Blair 1.05.28 (1st Junior); 8 Robert Hyde 1.07.58; 9 James Tullie 1.10.18; 10 Ewan Thorburn 1.10.50; 11 Alastair MacLennan 1.11.08; 12 John Shirley 1.12.22; 13 Gavin Blainey 1.12.58; 14 Tim Brand 1.12.46; 15 Jesse Wigman 1.12.58; 16 Chris Wolfe 1.13.27; 17 Ben Cathro 1.13.51; 18 Davy Gunn 1.15.37; 19 Roddy Wells 1.20.43; 20 Tom MacMahon (2nd Junior) 1.20.58; 21 Andrew Foggo 1.24.38; 22 Tom Adams 1.24.58; 23 Steve Bradley 1.27.01; 24 Neil Wright 1.31.05; 25 Brian Barbour 1.36.27; 25 Doug Little 1.36.27; 27 Marian Austin 1.44.04 (1st Lady); 28 Andy Dale 1.44.06.

Short race 1 lap: 1 Johnny Henshaw 48.01; 2 Peter Martin 51.18; 3 Brych Martin 51.22 1st Junior; 4 Kevin Whitehead 51.36; 5 Kim Cameron 57.38; 6 Amanda Henderson 58.43; 7 Gregor Linfield 1.05.44 (2nd Junior).



Lachlan Blair posted a strong performance at Barcaldine to come in as first junior.

## Wee Rangers at Claggan on Saturday

### FOOTBALL

FORT WILLIAM have a great chance to move closer to third-bottom Brora Rangers when the Sutherland side come calling to Claggan Park on Saturday.

Postponements because of bad weather mean Fort have been unable to play a home game since the 2-2 draw with Strathspey Thistle on November 5.

But prospects look better for this weekend and Danny Conlon's men will be keen to get back to winning ways following their 4-0 defeat at Buckie last Saturday.

Three goals in arrears at the break after strikes from Scott, Chisholm and Macrae, Fort came much more into things in the second half.

Sean Ellis rattled the crossbar with a stunning 40-yard free kick on the hour mark only for Jonathan Hewitt to blaze the rebound high over.

Fort keeper Gray saved brilliantly from Scott before Ellis hit the bar again with another 40-yard rocket of a free kick with 14 minutes left.

Mackinnon made it four for Buckie with an injury-time header.

## Lochaber Leisure stay on top

### INDOOR FOOTBALL

LOCHABER Leisure maintained their five-point lead at the top of the Ali Young Premier League at the Nevis Centre with a comfortable 3-0 win over bottom club Bayern Bru.

Goon Squad kept up the pressure in second with a 5-2 win against Livercaol, who slip back to eighth.

TNF United scored a fine 4-0 victory over HWE No-stars to go third on goal difference from Ballachulish, who look capable of mounting a serious title challenge after defeating Steaua Sookabreast 6-1.

Elsewhere, The Granite House edged out AA Young 2-1 to improve their standing, while Achintore FC got the better of Stoke City 6-4 in a ten-goal thriller.

## Winter series

### ATHLETICS

SKYE AND Lochalsh Running Club will stage the third race in its winter series next Saturday, January 21.

The Glenmore race and fun run will start from the shinty clubhouse in Portree at 12noon. Registration is from 11.30am.

## Rugby at Lossie

### RUGBY

LOCHABER Rugby Club travel to RAF Lossiemouth on Saturday looking to complete a brace of league wins over the Moray side.

The Lochaber men ran out 43-3 winners at Banavie when the teams last met in October.

## No winners

### FOOTBALL

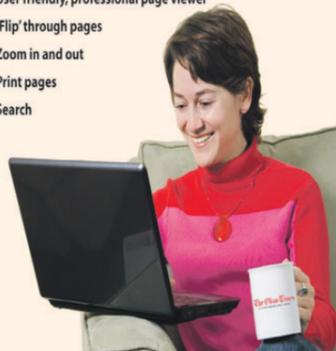
THERE were no winners in the Fort William FC lotto draw on Saturday. Numbers were 12-16-19. The jackpot goes up to £200 this week.

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**WIN £1450**

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

- Mrs L MacDonald Tayvallich, Lochgilphead
- C Cameron Braemore Place, Fort William

### All you have to do

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

### Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

### Competition Rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

# Spot the SHINTY BALL Competition



I enclose £1 for 20 crosses (tick box)  The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

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## Green Machine climbs up the league table

### Debut try for Tommy as Oban Lorne defeat Strathaven

RBS West Division 2  
**Oban Lorne 27**  
**Strathaven 19**

DEBUTANT Tommy Sutherland scored his first try for Oban Lorne, as his new team climbed off the bottom of the table.

The Green Machine welcomed Strathaven to Glencruitten last Saturday and were buoyed by the inclusion of prop Sutherland, as well as returns to the first team for David Hunter, Alex Cadzow and Angus Munro.

Oban made the better start and were controlling the game with an impressive display from stand-off Cadzow.

The home side were rewarded with the first try of the afternoon as a result of some good forward play close to the line, resulting in captain Struan Smith touching down from close range. Angus MacCallum converted to lead 7-0.

With the home side growing in confidence it wasn't long until the lead was extended. Oban's Corrie Louw picked the ball up from a ruck only a few metres from the line and offloaded to

Jamie MacMillan, who made no mistake of finishing the move off. MacCallum again converted to give a score of 14-0.

Strathaven worked themselves back into the game with some good passing along the backline. They were rewarded before half-time with their first try of the afternoon to narrow the score to 14-5.

Oban made a couple of half-time changes with Crawford Brown and Maurice Flynn replacing Darrell Williams and Malcolm Downie.

The lead was extended shortly into the first half with a straightforward penalty from the hosts. Strathaven, aided with an inconsistent Oban set piece, then put intense pressure on the Oban tryline.

The away side were eventually rewarded with a penalty try for Oban players consistently being offside. The visitors were now within touching distance at 17-12.

But after Sutherland scored his first try for the club with 10 minutes remaining, the game

was all but over. The away side did score another converted try towards the end of the game but MacCallum made sure Oban had the final say with a late penalty to deny the visitors the losing bonus point.

The win lifts Oban up to ninth place in West Division 2 with a game in hand over the teams above them.

The Green Machine travels to Cumbernauld next week, where a win would see them climb again to seventh position. Oban's next home game is scheduled for the January 21 against Strathendrick.

Oban Lorne mini-rugby will restart for 2012 next Sunday, January 15, between 1 - 2pm at the clubhouse.

Oban Lorne: M. Downie, D. Williams, T. Sutherland, MacMillan, D. Hunter, C. Ferris, S. Smith ©, C. Louw, C. Wright, A. Cadzow, A. Munro, A. MacCallum, C. Smith, A. Wright, C. MacLachlan. Subs: M. Flynn, C. Brown.

#### RUGBY



Oban Saints' Ryan Campbell takes on Dynamo midfielder Gavin Brady during Saturday's Scottish Cup tie. 07\_102saints1

## Saints struggle in Scottish Cup tie

Scottish Amateur Cup  
4th Round  
**Oban Saints 1**  
**Dynamo EK 1**

THIS 4th round cup tie eventually got under way at the fourth time of asking after the game was switched to Oban when the parks in East Kilbride were declared unplayable due to the recent bad weather.

However, this was a game the Oban side will want to forget as they turned in a lacklustre performance against a far from full strength Dynamo side with the game ending in a 1-1 draw.

It was evident that the teams hadn't played for seven weeks due to the postponements and festive holidays as the players looked very rusty, but this should not be used as an excuse for

a dismal performance from the home side. Saints got off to the perfect start with a goal in the 10th minute when Donald Campbell fed the ball wide to Ross Maitland who sped past his marker before firing a great cross into the box for Craig MacEwan to head past Dynamo keeper Kevin Cassidy.

This should have been the signal for the home side to take the game to the visitors, but they never did that, allowing Dynamo too much space and time on the ball. The East Kilbride front men Stuart Kyle and Stephen Russell were causing the Saints rearward some problems with their clever play. It was no surprise when the visitors equalised in the 39th minute when a long throw

caught out the Saints defence with Gavin Brady nipping in to send a looping header over Graham Douglas and into the net - a bad goal for Saints to lose. The second half was almost all one way traffic, but Saints couldn't find a way through a resilient Dynamo defence, well marshalled by the experienced Gerry Burn.

Saints pushed hard and created several good chances, the best falling to Donald Campbell but he pulled his shot past the post. The visitors were hanging on as the game drew to a close, but try as they might Saints could not score the goal that would surely have won the game. They now face a tricky replay in East Kilbride. Manager Iain Jackson was

#### FOOTBALL

not happy with the performance or the result and he will be having words with his players at training this week.

He said: 'This was an ideal opportunity for us to progress into the last 64 of the competition when the match was switched to Oban.'

'We didn't put enough into the game and got exactly what we deserved - nothing, and unless we improve greatly this Saturday then we'll be out of the Scottish Cup.'

Saturday's replay will take place Kirktonholme, East Kilbride, kick-off 1.30pm. Extra time and penalties, if required, to see who goes through to the 5th round.

## Oban heat of Sports Hall Athletics to be held next weekend

#### ATHLETICS

SPORTS Hall Athletics will once again be promoted in Argyll this winter with the local competition for the Oban area being held at Atlantis Leisure next Saturday, January 21.

This version of indoor athletics provides an opportunity for young people to try running, jumping and throwing activities as their first step into athletics.

The Oban competition is the third of four area events being held in Argyll this winter and is promoted jointly by Argyll and Bute Local Athletics Partnership and Mid Argyll Athletic Club. Qualifiers from the area competitions will be invited to take part in the Argyll Sports Hall Athletics final to be held on February 25 at Atlantis Leisure in Oban with successful athletes from the Campbeltown, Oban, Lochgilphead and Mull contests taking part.

The first local area competition was held in Tobermory in early December and the Mid Argyll event takes place this Sunday, followed on Saturday, January 21 by the Oban event at Atlantis Leisure. The Kintyre contest will take place at Campbeltown Grammar School on Sunday, January 29. The organisers have been fortunate to secure a Communities 2014 Lottery Grant to help fund the competitions.

Youngsters are reminded that the Oban contest at Atlantis on Saturday, 21st, starts at 12.30pm with entries on the day from noon.

There will be competition for five age groups starting from Under 9s up to Under 17s for both boys and girls. There will be awards for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th overall in each age category. Age is taken as on the September 1, 2011 and an entry fee of £2 per competitor will be levied.

Successful athletes will qualify to compete in the Argyll Final to be held at Atlantis Leisure in Oban on February 25.

## Saints' youth team fixtures and results

#### YOUTH FOOTBALL

SATURDAY'S result: Under 15s 0, Allander Colts 3. This weekend's fixtures: Under 13s v Clydebank BC; Morton BC v Under 14s; Under 15s v Kilpatrick; Strathleven v Under 16s.

## Carpet Fitters lay it on the line

#### INDOOR FOOTBALL

LATEST scores from the Atlantis Leisure Indoor League: Carpet Fitters 5, RM Builders 0; Oban Times 26, Hotels 0; Oban High School 21, Oban Electrics 2; Atlantis 9, Emergency Services 1.

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Carpet Fitters	5	5	0	0	15
Oban Times	5	4	0	1	12
Atlantis	4	3	0	1	9
RM Builders	4	2	0	2	6
High School	4	1	0	3	3
Emergency	4	1	0	3	3
Hotels	4	1	0	3	3
Oban Electrics	4	0	0	4	0



Alex Cadzow ploughs his way through Strathaven's defence during Oban Lorne's 27-19 home win at Glencruitten on Saturday. 07\_102oblorne1



Oban Camanachd played their annual Over 30s v Under 30s match at Mossfield Stadium last Saturday. The game ended in a 2-2 draw. Scoring for the 'Old Boys' were David MacCuish and old Gussie Campbell while Andrew MacCuish netted both goals for the 'Young Guns'. A sporting encounter was well handled by referee Billy Wotherspoon. 07\_102shiny1

## Weather

**Thursday** Sunny.  
Winds moderate, north westerly  
Temperatures 2°C to 7°C

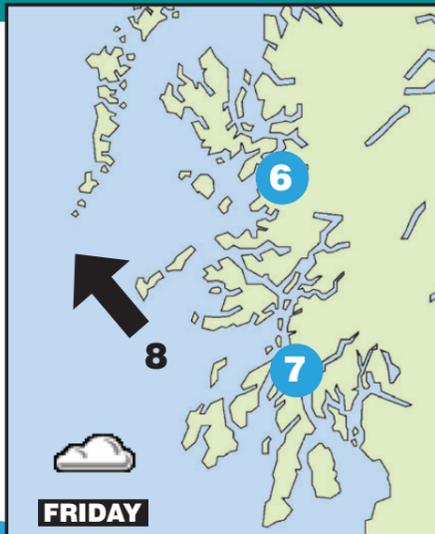
**Friday** Cloudy  
Winds light, south easterly  
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

**Weekend** Heavy rain.

**Outlook** Winds moderate, south easterly  
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.

**Ferry Crossings/Sea States**

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate  
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



## Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, January 12, 2012** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am		pm	
Thur	01.21	0.7	07.22	4.0
Fri	01.59	0.8	07.58	4.0
Sat	02.40	0.8	08.38	3.8
Sun	03.26	1.0	09.22	3.7
Mon	04.19	1.2	10.15	3.4
Tues	05.24	1.3	11.25	3.2
Wed	00.17	3.1	06.39	1.5

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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# **The following pages are from the Fort William (Northern) Edition of The Oban Times.**

The Oban Times prints two editions of the paper. There is the main edition as well as the Fort William (Northern) Edition.

Sometimes pages that appear in the Fort William edition do not appear in the main edition (and vice versa).

As an electronic subscriber you get the main edition plus the pages that appear in the Northern edition.

# The Oban Times

FORT WILLIAM & LOCHABER EDITION

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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## Legend of King Arthur puts Argyll on the map

## Planning your Retirement

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### Man found dead on South Uist roadside

POLICE inquiries are underway after a 49-year-old man was found dead at the side of a South Uist road on Tuesday morning. Officers received a call at around 9.47am saying that a man's body was lying next to the A865 at Ardmore. The death is currently being treated as unexplained. The road was closed and diversions were put in place to allow investigators full access to the scene. Police are appealing to anyone who may have seen the man walking in the area in the hours before he died. He is described as wearing black trousers and a grey speckled woollen jumper. He was approximately 5ft 7in, of stocky build and had dark, greying hair. Anyone with information is urged to contact police on 01851 702222.

### Theatre group auditions for Oliver!

THEATRE group Lochaber Showstoppers is looking for talented local youngsters to play Oliver, the Artful Dodger, orphans and urchins in its next musical production, Oliver! Boys and girls from Primary six upwards are invited to an audition workshop at the Nevis Centre Studio from 2pm-4.30pm on Sunday. Director Susan Munro will explain audition requirements and the rehearsal and performance commitment needed. All audition material will be taught on the day. Adults and secondary school-age children wanting to join should come along on Monday at 7.30pm. Committee member Clare Brewer said: 'Showstoppers want to do a musical that focuses on the very talented junior members in the company, so we're sure Oliver! will give them a chance to truly shine.' Oliver! opens on May 17 for three nights and a matinee performance as part of global celebrations to mark the bicentenary of Charles Dickens' birth. Showstoppers staged 'A Christmas Carol' last month. For more information phone 07737 321299.



### Robust clash of the ash at Glenfinnan

Around 40 Glenfinnan residents – almost half the population – turned out for the annual shinty match on Saturday to bring in the old Scots New Year. A roaring fire pitched and warming drams – for those over 18 of course – helped keep the cold and rain at bay as spectators and players of all ages enjoyed a robust encounter between Glenfinnan 'A' and Glenfinnan 'Stripes'. See full report and photos, back page. 20\_102finnan06

### Pupils focus in on £5,000 film project

MALLAIG Primary School pupils are beginning work on their own short film this week after scooping a £5,000 grant from First Light, a production company enabling young people to work with industry professionals on digital media projects. The as yet unnamed film, co-ordinated by Knoydart-based Sam Firth of Tiny Spark Productions, will see 15 Mallaig children aged between seven and 12 make a documentary about things unique to where they live. Likely themes include industry, history and the local community. First Light principles mean the children must come up with all the ideas and be involved throughout the production process, from drawing storyboards and writing scripts to directing and lighting. The youngsters enjoyed the 1963 film 'Snow' by Geoffrey Jones and are keen to create a similar collage of images from past and present using music, rhythm and poetry. Delighted Class teacher Fiona MacKellaigh told *The Oban Times*: 'We are absolutely delighted and really excited and looking forward to the project beginning this week. The children are definitely going to include something about the railway.' Sam Firth said: 'We are hoping that by engaging the young people with the economic issues of the area they will be empowered to think about the future of their community and their involvement in it.' Mallaig Primary was chosen because the children do not normally have access to a cinema or any cultural activities, First Light said.

### Act now on home care

LOCHABER councillor Bren Gormley has written to Highland Council's social work director Bill Alexander seeking 'urgent and vigorous action' to address recent failures in home care services. The move follows last week's revelations that disabled Fort William pensioner Madeleine MacCallum was left in her pyjamas twice over the festive period because no one turned up to dress her. Speaking before yesterday's housing and social work committee meeting, Councillor Gormley said: 'The service had been 'in large part successful' but 'localised weaknesses' remain. In his letter, Councillor Gormley states many people 'seem reluctant' to raise concerns over poor care. He told *The Oban Times* people are left for hours waiting for a service that might or might not arrive when a simple 'phone call would make all the difference'. A Highland Council spokesman said problems were not due to cutbacks in funding nor the introduction of new four-day shift rotas. He said: 'We deeply regret the distress that this failure has caused to older people and their families at this sensitive time of the year. Actions have and are being taken to provide additional support so we can once again provide a service our clients should expect.'

### New target market for Harris Tweed

INDUSTRY leaders Harris Tweed Hebrides (HTH) has kicked off 2012 by naming South Korea as a new target market. Shawbost-based HTH has accepted an invitation from United Kingdom Trade International to take part in a high-profile promotion of luxury goods at the British Embassy in Seoul in March. HTH chairman Brian Wilson said the event would provide 'an excellent platform' for a further advance into the Korean market.

## 'Misleading' ferries plan under fire

Provost, Stòras slam survey

By STEPHEN NORRIS [snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:snorris@obantimes.co.uk) COMMUNITY representatives from Lochaber and the Uists have accused the Scottish Government of ignoring vital evidence from a survey on whether Oban or Mallaig should become South Uist's mainland port under its ferries plan for 2013-19. Postal questionnaires on ferry services sent to the island's 790 households produced 209 responses for the Scottish Ferries Review – but eyebrows were raised when Transport Scotland's draft plan, published on December 21, said findings showed while 42 per cent of residents in South Uist were not satisfied with Oban as their mainland port, 52 per cent were. 'No further statistics were forthcoming, and the apparent division of opinion produced a recommendation that the shorter Mallaig-Lochboisdale crossing be sidelined meantime. Controversially, no mention was made of overwhelming support for the link at packed public meetings on the Uists organised by the Comhairle (Western Isles Council), which also backed the Mallaig proposal in its evidence. Crucially however, the survey also found that 83 per cent of South Uist respondents would use the ferry more if the crossing was shorter (to Mallaig is almost three hours less than to Oban) and 51 per cent if the harbour, or route, was different. The scores on both questions were by far the highest of any from the islands - yet neither was mentioned in the document as positive reasons for considering the Mallaig to Lochboisdale service. Huw Francis, chief executive of community landlords Stòras Uibhist, said the plan ignored the aspirations of South Uist people and was based on 'misleading statistical analysis from a vague questionnaire'. He told *The Oban Times*: 'It appears that a hugely expensive and drawn out study has been conducted to justify the plans of officials and Ministers based in Edinburgh, and not to identify the needs and expectations of island residents so that ferry services can be improved for the social and economic benefit of islands residents and Scotland as a whole. The South Uist community has repeatedly expressed its desire for the re-introduction of the Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service through a 1,500 name petition and numerous public meetings and has gained support from the communities of Barra, Benbecula and North Uist through Comhairle nan Eilean Siar sponsored public meetings.' In a strongly-worded letter to Colin Grieve of Transport Scotland's Ferries Division, Provost of Lochaber Allan Henderson said: 'On the preferred option to the Outer Isles, Mallaig to Lochboisdale, it was not the only wish of the local communities to make Mallaig to Lochboisdale the principal route. The clear desire was for three principal routes - Oban to Barra, Mallaig to Lochboisdale and Uig to Lochmaddy. 'Can you clearly demonstrate what question in the household survey of South Uist was able to allow you to form the conclusion that 52 per cent wished to retain Oban as their main ferry terminal? Will it stand up to scrutiny? Were non-returns taken as being supportive of the status quo?' No comment had been received from Transport Scotland as *The Oban Times* went to press.

### Race on to commission boats

HIGHLAND Council is racing to commission two local ferries to run between Lochcarron and the south shore amid fears the A890 could be closed for months. The road has been shut since December 22 after tonnes of rock twice crashed down from the unstable cliff near Stromeferry. Fifty six pupils from Applecross and Lochcarron have been travelling to Plockton High School by train since Monday as efforts to engineer a solution continue. Plockton man Calum Mackenzie's seal trips boat *Sula Mhor*, and the Isle of Skye Ferry's *MV Glenachulish*, which runs between Glenelg and Kylerhea on Skye in summer, are currently undergoing trials alongside slipways at north and south Strome. The 61-passenger *Sula Mhor* needs Maritime and Coastguard Agency approval to run over the winter. Inspectors 'sounded positive' when they looked over the boat on Monday, sources said. The 12-passenger, six-vehicle capacity *Glenachulish* would operate on the 600-metre, five-minute Strome crossing and the *Sula Mhor* to and from Plockton.

## Crofting convener decision on hold

NO DECISION will be taken on choosing the first convener of the reformed Crofting Commission until after the March 16 crofting elections, the Scottish Government has confirmed. The new body, which will have nine board members, six elected by crofters and three appointed by government, will officially replace the current Crofters Commission, who are all government appointees, on April 1. Ministers could allow the board to select a convener, but speculation has been growing in crofting circles that the government will appoint the chair to oversee radical changes on how the industry is run. However, there is no guarantee the elected members will be enthusiastic about reforms which have strong regulation at their heart - raising the possibility they could be slowed or even blocked under a convener of the same thinking. Asked to clarify the government's stance, a spokeswoman told *The Oban Times* this week: 'The Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 allows

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Ministers to delegate to the Crofting Commission the duty to select a member to chair the commission, the 'convener'. The convener may be either an elected member or an appointed member. It is important that the convener of the Crofting Commission enjoys a good working relationship with the Minister with responsibility for crofting. 'A decision on whether or not to delegate the duty to select a member to chair the Commission will not be taken until after the elections.' New legislation, The Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, seeks to end crofting's decline by tackling neglect, absenteeism and profiteering in croft land through a crofting register and tougher rules on residency. The Crofting Commission will be able to terminate a tenancy or re-let a croft should the occupier fail in his duties, while grazings committees must

report such failures to the commission. The SNP government aims to make it much easier for young people to enter crofting and ensure productive land is put to good use. The new crofting register will be based on the Ordnance Survey map and will cover individual crofts and common grazings. The current system does not make use of plans. Any changes to a croft's status, including transfer of title or tenancy, apportionment, de-crofting or resumption (a landlord seeking to re-possess a croft) will trigger a first registration. Applicants will have to bear the cost and failure to register such events will become an offence. Postal ballot papers will be issued to all crofters entitled to vote on February 27. Deadline for returning candidate nomination papers and application papers for proxy and absent votes is Thursday January 26. The count of votes will take place on March 16. See Sleat's crofting appointees, page 2.



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**Police hunt tool thieves**

POLICE in Lochaber are investigating thefts from industrial premises in Fort William over the weekend. On Ben Nevis Industrial Estate, a secure compound and a portable office at West Highland Gas were broken into and a cash box, gas heaters, gas bottles and golf clubs stolen, while diesel was taken from two large goods vehicles at Lochaber Aggregates. Elsewhere, a large number of power tools, including drills, saws, a nail gun, chop saw and router were stolen from the Campbell Homes building site, at Riverside, Lochside. Police believe the crimes may be linked and ask anyone with information to contact 01397 702361 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

**Bid to name new Plockton school extension after Hamilton family**

EDUCATION, culture and sport committee councillors will today in Inverness be asked to agree that the new extension to Plockton High School be named 'The Hamilton Wing' in recognition of the benevolence of the Hamilton family. Members are also expected to approve the outright purchase of a disabled access mini-bus to replace the existing vehicle at Lochaber High School at a cost of £48,000.



'Sore feet' waits patiently in Gordon Square on Monday for building work to start on Fort William's new retail/hotel development.

**Work due to start on hotel, shops and pub**

CONSTRUCTION of the £8million redevelopment of the former Grand Hotel/MacTavish's Kitchens site in Fort William was due to start this week, following demolition and site clearance work before New Year. And in a boost for the Lochaber capital, it has emerged that businesses in the new complex should be trading by mid-summer. The ground floor will host health and beauty retailer Superdrug, outdoor clothing shop

Cotswold Outdoor and a JD Wetherspoon restaurant/pub. A 60-room Travelodge will occupy the upper floors. Director of developers Ashford Property Group Andrew Smith was hopeful construction work on the retail part of the project would take no longer than six months. He told *The Oban Times*: 'It's full steam ahead now. Hopefully we'll get early completion for the retail element, by around

June, which would allow them to start fitting out the shops. That would take six to eight weeks, so the retailers would be open by August.' West Midlands-based Anglo Holt Construction will carry out the 20,000 square foot project next to the refurbished Gordon Square and West Highland Way start/finish point. The old Grand Hotel was demolished in December, with work stopping for the festive period.

**Group goes public with spending wishlist**

FORT Augustus and Invermoriston Community Company (FAICC) volunteers will this week complete local delivery of a booklet detailing feedback to its consultation on spending priorities for the future. Every local household will receive a copy of the findings, which will guide FAICC's funding decisions until 2017. The company receives around £100,000 community benefit per annum from the nearby Falck Renewables Millennium Wind Farm and the Scottish Hydro Glendoe Community Fund. Since 2009, it has awarded grants to local initiatives qualifying under categories including health and wellbeing, regeneration and housing, transport, heritage and culture, education and life-long learning and environment. More than £117,000 has been paid out so far on projects including resurfacing the tennis courts, floodlighting at Kilchumen Academy's MUGA pitch and a new car park surface for the church hall. Funding was also provided for the senior citizens lunch club in Fort Augustus and travel bursaries to enable students to return

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home from college during term time. However, as cash balances increased, it was decided to seek the community's views on how the accumulating windfall should be distributed in future. Some 125 people returned completed questionnaires, 128 took part in community interviews and around 60 attended four 'open house' events up to November last year. FAICC chairperson Harry Whiteside told *The Oban Times* hydro and wind farm community benefit payments were £97,000 in 2010 and £124,526 in 2011. He said: 'There's a lot of money building up and we needed to look at the strategic direction we want it to go in. We needed to know what the community wanted us to do. The response to the consultation exceeded all expectations and showed that there is an enormous sense of pride and wellbeing in the community. However, the majority of residents share the nationwide concerns created by the current economic climate - services and supports for older people, lack of

employment opportunities and things to do for young people, and the high cost of rural living - energy, fuel and transport.' She added: 'Their response will shape our strategic planning for the next five years. We have got a policy that we put 20 per cent of income away annually to cover the period when the wind farm payments end after 25 years. And once the [Glendoe] dam is operational we will see income increase significantly.' At their latest award meeting on December 15, FAICC directors disbursed another £20,000, including £10,000 to the Telford Centre for the elderly in Fort Augustus and £6,600 to the school's tech department for computer-aided engineering design equipment. A senior citizens' lunch club pilot in the Glen Moriston Arms received £1,800. FAICC recently bought Fort Augustus village hall from Highland Council for a nominal sum of £1 and invested £20,000 to secure a £72,000 LEADER grant for the building's refurbishment and a new kitchen extension. It has also taken £13,300 of shares in the new Beinnan Wind Farm Co-operative.



Ticket to success: Sonia Cameron, left, and Mallaig Station employee Anne Cameron were delighted with the award.

**Mallaig on track with gold award**

MALLAIG railway station has won gold status in a new Keep Scotland Beautiful awards scheme. The environmental charity ranked Mallaig as one of Scotland's best after inspecting all 346 stations in the country since July. Performance was gauged on issues ranging from clearing litter to recycling, waste management and community links. Mallaig benefited from colourful hanging baskets and planters, maintained by ScotRail's voluntary station adopter for Mallaig station Sonia Cameron. Sonia said:

'I am overwhelmed and delighted to hear that Mallaig has received this gold status. It comes as a lovely surprise. I look after 14 hanging baskets and seven tubs at the station, with the help of an automatic watering system installed last year. I know the work is appreciated by ScotRail's customers and we regularly see tourists posing for photographs with the plants in summer, which is very pleasing.' ScotRail managing director Steve Montgomery was 'delighted' at Mallaig's high rating. He said: 'Our stations score

highly in surveys of customer satisfaction and we look forward to the future involvement of Keep Scotland Beautiful in helping to raise standards even further.' KSB chief executive Derek Robertson said: 'Overall, we found the Scottish stations to be clean and welcoming and a credit to the staff who care for them, and we are committed to this campaign on station standards.' Assessments to bronze, silver or gold status were available in Keep Scotland Beautiful's first Tidy Station Standards programme. A plaque will be displayed at all stations meeting KSB standards.

**Brae Lochaber Jacobite group on the march again**

BRAE Lochaber 'rebels' are looking to follow their Jacobite week of last August with an even bigger and better spectacle in 2012. The 2011 event proved a colourful addition to the summer calendar around Spean Bridge and Roy Bridge. Crowds watched Jacobite group Na Fir Dileas (The Loyal Men), march to Highbridge (near Spean Bridge) with Jacobite standards. The march came 266 years after the first skirmish at the same spot between Hanoverian troops and local Jacobite forces. Local man Peter Wilson, who arranged the event, said everyone was in favour of a repeat this year. He told *The Oban Times*: 'All sorts of things have been suggested, including a Jacobite-themed fair in Spean Bridge or Roy Bridge, and even a re-enactment of the skirmish of 1745. It is such a dramatic event in local history, which over the

years has tended to be forgotten. I should be grateful if anyone who would like to take part or who has any suggestions for the event to contact me.' Last year several businesses and restaurants flew Prince Charlie's red and white standard - banned after the 1745 conflict - which had been handcrafted by Colette Strachan of Roy Bridge. Local restaurants served Jacobite-style food and distillers Drambuie, whose whisky is based on a recipe from Prince Charlie, donated a large bottle, which was raffled. Demand for the flags is expected to be even greater this year. Access to Highbridge, where a small band of clansmen led by Major Donald Macdonell of Tìrindris caused two companies of Government troops to flee, is now easier thanks to a new path built to the bridge. Peter Wilson can be contacted via 01397 712398 or wpeterwilson@aol.com.



Deenn Strachan and mum Collette, from Roy Bridge, fly a Jacobite flag last August.

**Man walks free as drink drive trial collapses**

A TRIAL against a man accused of driving in Glencoe while nearly four times the legal alcohol limit collapsed after the Crown ruled there was not enough evidence for a conviction. Bernard McEnhill's car was found by a passing police officer in a ditch having hit a telegraph pole outside the Glencoe Independent Hostel on July 30 last year. Constable Joseph Newsom traced Mr McEnhill to the hostel and found the accused with glazed eyes and 'smelling of intoxicants'. Giving evidence at Fort William Sheriff Court, Constable Newsom said the 57-year-old admitted drinking and being behind the wheel earlier in the evening. But it came to light the officer breathalysed Mr McEnhill and

By RICHARD HADDOCK rhaddock@obantimes.co.uk

of view to report the incident, but due to circumstances beyond our control it has not led to a conviction. Mr McEnhill had been on a weekend visit to Lochaber with his two nephews, both of whom gave evidence. Mr McEnhill drove the trio to the Clachaig Inn where they had 'a few drinks'. Mr McEnhill left before his nephews and made his own way back to the hostel where he was found asleep by Constable Newsom two hours later. A barmaid from the Clachaig Inn was unable to identify Mr McEnhill as being at the pub on the night. Mr McEnhill, of 12 Cochrane Street, Barrhead, pled not guilty to drink driving on an unclassified road in Glencoe on July 30. He also denied driving without due care and attention and failing to report the accident.

**Man caught carrying cocaine**

A CAOL man has been fined £300 after a bag of cocaine was found in his trousers while he was being searched by a police officer. Andrew Donaldson was taken into custody following fights involving a number of people at a family birthday party at Caol Community Centre on April 10. After being taken to Fort William Police Station, the 49-year-old was searched at the charge bar where a plastic bag containing around £30 worth of the class 'A' drug fell out from his trouser leg. Donaldson, of 12 Strone Pace, told Fort William Sheriff Court he had 'no idea' how the drugs got into his trousers. 'There was a bit of stramash at the centre,' he said. 'There

was a lot of pushing and shoving, so it could have come from there. In my eyes, that's about the only place it could have come from. I don't do drugs. I've never done drugs.' Constable Malcolm Lawson, who found the bag, said: 'While I was patting him down I noticed a small plastic bag which appeared to fall down Mr Donaldson's left trouser leg. I picked it up and he immediately denied the item was his.' Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said Donaldson's reaction suggested he knew the drugs were there. Sheriff Douglas Small agreed, saying: 'I am satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt the accused had knowledge the drug was in his possession.'

**Sheriff defers sentence after hearing Corpach sex offender has breached payback order**

A CORPACH teenager sentenced to 120 hours of community service in July after admitting having sex with his then 14-year-old girlfriend has failed to carry out any of his punishment. Robert Elder, of 16 Hillview Drive, admitted breaching the community payback order, claiming ill health

and 5 Nevis Bank Apartments, both Fort William between April 1 2009 and June 10 2010. He also admitted sending grossly indecent, obscene or menacing messages via Facebook to another girl, aged 13, between October 1 and October 31 2010. He was placed on the sex offender register for 18 months. Elder previously pled guilty to having sex on repeated occasions with the girl at 26 Mamore Road, Kinlochleven, and 24 Nairn Crescent

for 18 months.

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**Record rainfall deluge recorded in Plockton**

PLOCKTON recorded 12 inches of rain during December - the highest in any month for many years. The deluge meant Lochalsh had 75 inches of rain during 2011, compared with 43 inches in 2010. However, that total paled in comparison with Achnagart in Glen Shiel which saw 152 inches and Fort William's 115 inches. Plockton only had one dry day during December and only 18 without rain between September 1 and Hogmanay, when 37 inches of rain fell.

**Fight costs Caol teenager £630**

A FIGHT with two brothers at the BA Club in Fort William has cost a Caol teenager £630. Rhys Donnelly had been at a charity Hallowe'en disco at the venue when the incidents occurred on October 28. Fort William Sheriff Court heard there was 'bad feeling' between the 17-year-old and Alan Mathers, who was also at the event. The pair started fighting in the toilets before being split up. Procurator Fiscal Alison Wylie said Donnelly was thrown out and met Sean Mathers outside. The pair started fighting and Mathers was left needing three stitches to a cut on his lip. Donnelly, of Tigh A Chladaich, Glenmallee Road, pled guilty to repeatedly punching Sean Mathers on the head and knocking him to the ground to his injury. He also admitted fighting and struggling with Alan Mathers, refusing to desist and causing a breach of the peace.

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FW

**Long-established Oban business goes on market**

OBAN chandlery and outdoor clothing business Nancy Blacks has gone up for sale after owner Ian Wallace stated his intention to retire.

The Argyll Square retail business is approaching its 50th year of trading.

Mr Wallace told *The Oban Times*: 'I ran the shop in partnership with Nancy for eight years and then for 23 years on my own.'

'I have enjoyed every minute of it and will be sorry to leave it behind.'

'But I am 66 years old now and I feel the time is right to move on and retire.'

**Princess Royal 'pops in' to Oban**

LESS than six months since she visited Oban to help mark the town's 200th anniversary as a Royal burgh, HRH Princess Anne last week returned for an informal visit.

The Princess Royal was one of a party of four who stayed at the four-star Manor House Hotel, last Wednesday. Depute manager Allan McKie told *The Oban Times*: 'She stayed one night and had dinner with us before leaving early the following day. I spoke with her briefly and she was very interested in the hotel and its history.'

It is believed the Princess Royal went on to visit one of the Hebridean islands on Thursday.

**Appin phone 'fried' by lightning bolt**

AN APPIN family was left in shock after their house was struck by lightning in the early hours of New Year's Day.

Brian and Claire Jackson and their two young children, who live at Ardnacloch, heard an explosion and smelt burning after the strike at around 3am.

Claire said: 'It was really frightening because we thought the house was on fire.'

'The house was shaking with the thunder and then we heard the explosion.'

The family's BT phonelines were burnt out by the strike but there was no other major damage to the house.



The winning entry in this year's RNLI Photographer of the Year awards came from Sam Jones of Tobermory Lifeboat crew.

**Tobermory's Sam wins top RNLI photo award**



Sam Jones - RNLI Photographer of the Year.

'To say that I'm chuffed is an understatement'

A VOLUNTEER member of Tobermory Lifeboat crew has won this year's Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) Photographer of the Year award.

Sam Jones, crew member and press officer at Tobermory lifeboat station, took the shot of the crew during a man overboard training exercise in Bloody Bay in July 2011.

She said: 'It's a huge honour to be named RNLI Photographer of the Year and to say that I'm chuffed is an understatement.'

'My main photographic passion is landscape photography and I

was really drawn to the stunning light that evening, but it's the total focus and concentration of my fellow RNLI volunteers which really makes the image. The light, action and setting all came together.'

Sam added: 'As with many of my crew photos on the lifeboat, it was taken with a long lens which helps me get more natural images as most of the time the guys don't realise that I'm taking photographs.'

Sam is keen to share the honour with her crew mates: 'I'm really pleased that this particular

image featuring my crewmates was chosen. While I always have a small compact camera with me in my 'yellows', I am first and foremost a member of the crew and lifeboat duties come first. I'd like to accept the award on behalf of everyone at Tobermory RNLI - I couldn't have won it without them.'

Rescue footage from Thurso lifeboat won the RNLI Video of the Year. It shows the volunteer crew on the inshore lifeboat rescuing 12 people from rocks after their tour boat got into difficulties in a cave.

**Tourism boost as Oban TIC relocates**

Prominent Esplanade position chosen on main tourist thoroughfare

OBAN is to have a tourist information centre again by the summer after VisitScotland announced it was to move into premises near the town's North Pier.

Taking over the former site of Bennett's, on the corner of the Columba Hotel buildings, the tourist board says it will move in immediately following the completion of internal renovations.

The future of its former site in Argyll Square, the old St Columba's Church, also seems to have been settled. VisitScotland say the Grade-C listed building will be sold, but the Oban office team will continue to be based in the rear of the building until any sale is completed. It will continue to be maintained in the meantime.

*The Oban Times* revealed in November that VisitScotland decided not to return to the Argyll Square premises it vacated last May after repairs, thought to be around £500,000, proved too costly to make a return viable.

VisitScotland's chairman Mike Cantley said: 'This site will provide excellent visibility within the town, particularly given its prominent position on the esplanade which acts as a major

visitor thoroughfare, especially in the busy season.'

Mr Cantley thanked the community for their patience during the past few months and paid tribute to CalMac for its 'outstanding support' in offering temporary accommodation.

Newspaper information has been welcomed by Oban and Lorn Tourism Association. Its chairwoman, Linda Battison, said: 'The old Bennett's building is a perfect location, with good access to parking and in a high profile location.'

'The right thing to do was to take slightly longer than maybe we would have liked and find the best solution. We're delighted with the decision.'

Oban Councillor and Argyll and Bute Council's tourism spokesperson Neil Mackay, said: 'The importance to sustain and improve the visitor experience is absolutely crucial for Oban, Lorn and the Islands.'

'We should always remember that there are plenty of places that would like to and are actively attempting to 'pinch' our tourism status of being Scotland's jewel in crown.'

**NEWSDESKS**  
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**£1.8 million of CHORD cash to ease Oban town centre's traffic flow woes**

A PLAN to spend £1.84million to ease the congestion on Oban's roads has been given the go-ahead as the first lot of funding from the £6.9million CHORD project is released.

The funding has been agreed by the executive committee of Argyll

and Bute Council. The plan outlines a reconfiguration of the bay, which includes pontoons at the North Pier, which would provide facilities for cruise ship tenders.

The CHORD project stated these would be flexible so that if/when

North Pier extension works happen, the facilities could be relocated.

There is also a plan to alter traffic flow in congested areas.

**Improvements**  
The Oban High School access road will be relocated to alleviate

problems on Soroba Road, while there will be improvements to parking; pedestrian crossings; footpaths and cycling provision in partnership with Transport Scotland.

In terms of public transport, there will be detailed sign improvements;

provision of real time information and journey planning and better bus shelters and taxi ranks.

Argyll and Bute Council said the plans were subject to final sign off by the CHORD project board.

Chairman of the Oban CHORD project board, said it marked a 'major milestone' in the overall programme.

He added: 'These projects will assist economic growth and consolidate Oban's position as the main town and harbour in the West Highlands.'

**Long-term loss of Vodafone signal angers customers throughout Lorn**

VODAFONE customers have been quick to express their anger at the company's helpline following last week's prolonged signal outage in the Oban and Lorn area.

**More than 100 complaints**  
More than 100 of the network's customers contacted *The Oban Times* in the wake of the longest of a batch of recent outages, which stretch back as far as mid-December.

However, the lack of a signal from January 3 to last Friday afternoon took a back seat to the variety of responses customers were given to their complaints, from being told their SIM card was too old, to buildings were interfering and even that there was no problem at all.

Vodafone have now apologised for the outage, but not before the network asked *The Oban Times* to ask affected readers for their account numbers so they could investigate the complaints.

That, too, prompted anger from the network's customers.

**Storm damage**  
Last week's problems started on Tuesday, January 3, when high winds caused power outages, knocking out various mobile phone masts across the area.

While a number of networks were affected by the weather, most had been restored within two days. Vodafone's service in



Bonawe's Ronnie Campbell, who was given one reason for his Vodafone problems - and his wife another. 15\_0220nnnie1

the Oban area, however, was out until Friday afternoon.

Many took to *The Oban Times*' Facebook page to express their concerns.

Among those affected was Ronnie and Jayne Campbell, Bonawe. Ronnie has a business contract with Vodafone, his wife is on a personal account.

Both were given different reasons for the outage; Ronnie was

told his SIM card was too old, while Jayne was informed that her phone was the problem.

**'Don't phone again'**  
Ronnie was also told not to phone again.

He said: 'I wasn't even phoning with a complaint, I just wanted to find out when the problem would be resolved. They insisted there was no problem. Every time I asked when, they changed

the subject.

'Finally, they told me not to phone back as they had done as much 'troubleshooting' as they could.'

When contacted about the complaints, Vodafone's press office initially said they could not investigate the variety of complaints until *The Oban Times* had individual account numbers to pass on to them.

However, readers were unhappy to pass on details, saying Vodafone could easily investigate the complaints by postcode.

Furthermore, a number of customers had been sent SureSignal boxes for free by Vodafone as way of remedy, but the press office said that was not ordinary practice.

A spokesperson for Vodafone said: 'We're sorry that the information our customers received wasn't always consistent.'

'I will feed this back to the relevant teams to see if we can make improvements here.'

'We apologise for the difficulties caused by the extreme weather but we always act as quickly as possible to make repairs - the last thing we want is for our customers not to be able to use the network.'

'However, delays can occur when there are several problems in the same area and weather conditions are already hampering engineering repairs.'

Meanwhile, Argyll and Bute MP, Mike Russell has called on mobile phone providers to provide an 'equitable service with the rest of the country.'

'I am inviting people to contact me to tell me of their experiences of mobile phone provision, or lack of.'

'I will then present a strong case to providers for a much improved service.'



**A little sample of what you said:**

**Jenny Low** - I phoned to complain and was given a £15 credit. Today I phoned again and was first told the network was fine and my SIM card was to blame! I told the guy I already knew the signal was down so don't lie to me! He offered me sure signal for £25 (it's meant to be £50) I told him it wasn't my fault I didn't have a signal so he agreed to send me it for free, but take the £15 credit off my account. At this point I learned the credit wasn't meant to make my bill cheaper but so I had more to spend on data and calls, which I get free with my package anyway! Useless

**Duncan Campbell** - I have called or emailed Vodafone a lot over the past few years and the majority of the time I have been in contact with them the customer service has been good. I guess it's how you speak or word your email to them. Then again some people just like a good moan!

**Audrey I Paterson** - More irritating than the fact that there is no network coverage is the lack of information/denials/suggestions that my SIM is to blame! Do they think we don't talk to each other in this neck of the woods?

**Lindsay MacLean** - Vodafone told me last night there are no issues in PA34 and it may be due to buildings or interference! Needless to say I told them that was incorrect and it's been on and off for most of December. They will not provide me with a Sure Signal box nor give me any line rental credit. Not impressed.

**Fiona MacPhee** - Have just called up Vodafone to complain that we have had no signal the last four days, they never offered me money off my next bill like they have done some, but they are sending us out a Sure Signal box for free this normally costs £50!

**Mark Aitkenhead** - I'm without signal yet again. That has been four days now and I use my phone for the coastguard emergency services. How can this carry on for so long. They are about to lose another customer.

**Jayne Egan** - Lochgoilhead was out for 14 days. This was part of my Vodafone email

reply 'Please note that the terms and conditions of the contract mean the line rental you pay is for the airtime and minutes of your contract. Whilst service may have been interrupted these minutes are still available for you to use when service resumes. We are not obliged to give credits for times when service is unavailable'

**JoJo Aitkenhead** - I have been emailing Vodafone and they told me the same, they blamed it on my SIM card and my phone, said it is nothing to do with them. I have emailed them again saying if they still expect me to pay my bill I will be sending a letter of complaint and cancelling my contract. I have now got signal up behind hospital but am not going to let this go. Vodafone are useless!

**Michael McInnes** - I'm changing network

**Sally Weaser** - What seems to be the most common thing is that their response to enquiry is soooo inconsistent. This just serves to frustrate even more. There should be a standard compensation across the board as well.

**Alison McLennan** - Bridge of Orchy has had no Vodafone signal for over three weeks!

**Oban police resists call for 3D cameras**

CLOSING Argyll roads for long periods of time following serious accidents could be avoided after imaging technology is considered at highest Scottish government levels, *The Oban Times* can reveal.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell is urging that 3D scanner technology, already purchased by many police forces across Europe, should be considered for his constituency.

The cameras record accident sites in minute detail allowing roads to be opened in less than one third of the time currently taken.

However, Oban Police chief inspector Brian Auld said Strathclyde Police is not yet convinced by the system's accuracy.

that Strathclyde Police begin trialling the technology in Argyll.

He told *The Oban Times* said: 'I want to ensure Strathclyde Police start to experiment with the technology as soon as possible. I have asked that a pilot phase of the technology is used in Argyll. This would be a first step in dealing with the main arteries that are closed all too often for too long.'

The cost of a single 3D camera is £64,000. Mr Russell added: 'I have been contacted by families of those involved in accidents, those who are caught in traffic jams for hours on end and those who have had to add hundreds of miles to their trip through Argyll because of road closures.'

All of them want some sort of resolution to this situation. 'This 3D technology does

two things: it preserves the dignity of those caught up in the accident, their friends and family and speeds up the time it takes to re-open the road by making a clear and accurate image of the whole crash site. These images truly preserve the scene as it was at the time of police attending the accident.'

**Evidence**  
Digital images of the site can then be viewed on a computer screen, allowing investigators to take measurements of where vehicles are in relation to each other and examine evidence.

The MSP said: 'At present an accident site in Argyll can be closed for up to eight hours as painstaking investigation is undertaken in minute detail by officers who have to travel from all over Strathclyde. The police are quite rightly dedicated to carrying out detailed

investigations while getting the road open quickly after an accident. This equipment could be an appropriate solution.'

Chief inspector Auld told *The Oban Times*: 'We will look at any technology that will lessen the impact road crashes have on communities but as it stands our best asset is still our accident investigation officers.'

'We are yet to be convinced that this system would be better than the skill sets possessed by our officers.'

**Investigated**  
'All serious road crashes will be thoroughly and robustly investigated so that if it results in a fatality, the police can tell the families what happened and lessons can be learned to avoid repeat incidents.'

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# Oban cinema group re-focuses on Easter weekend opening

WORK to re-open Oban's cinema is progressing apace, although the opening date has had to be pushed back another few weeks.

It is now hoped Oban Phoenix Cinema will re-open by Easter weekend, following the successful conclusion of an asbestos safety report which

has cleared the building of any possible dangers. Redecoration can now restart in earnest and one of the company's directors, Mikey McManus, says locals will start noticing the difference in the building soon.

'It's full steam ahead now,' he said. 'We will be working on new doors, new signs and a new

foyer, so there will be noticeable changes to the building soon.

'As part of that, we're planning two community work involvement days in the cinema to help remove carpets and other items in preparation for the new floor and seats.'

There was more good news, with confirmation that the new

cinema will be digital, following grants of £25,000 from the Crerar Hotel chain and £35,000 from Creative Scotland.

Fundraising continues though, with the not-for-profit group determined to refurbish the cinema to the highest possible standard.

The first fundraiser of the new

year will be a special movie-themed Zumba event at Atlantis this Saturday.

Larni Wright has donated her time to host the event, while the hall space has been donated by Atlantis, meaning every penny of the entry fee goes towards the cinema.

Held from 7pm to 9pm, a

number of special routines have been devised to go along with music from *Saturday Night Fever*, *Austin Powers* and *Footloose*, among other films.

For more information, contact Atlantis or email Larni at larnicals1919@hotmail.com.

There will also be a bring and buy sale at the Corran

Halls on Saturday January 28, giving locals a chance to trade off those unwanted Christmas presents or just clear some room for the coming year. Running from noon to 4pm, there will be a bouncy castle and face painting. To book a table, call the 07557 905414 or email info@obanphoenixcinema.co.uk.

## Mull aims for arts excellence

AMBITIOUS plans to further build Mull's burgeoning reputation for the arts by turning the island into a centre of excellence have been revealed.

Comar is being established jointly by the committees of An Tobar and Mull Theatre after months of planning to not only attract more funding, but to develop artists' opportunities and bookings.

A long term project, the initial goals are modest, attract more funding and consolidate current position for the pair.

However, looking towards 2013 and beyond, Comar's objective is to take Mull's talents not just to the rest of Argyll and Bute, but to Scotland and the UK as a whole by using the considerable talents on the island.

Other plans include developing creative workshops, education programmes and specialist schemes for youth theatre, music and dance.

It is thought that the model is the first of its kind to be tried in Scotland.

Comar's chairman is Norman Quirk, the vice chairman of Mull Theatre, whose pedigree in the arts is undisputed as a former executive director of Scottish Ballet.

He believes the development of the not-for-profit organisation is a major step forward.

He said: 'We're bringing An Tobar and Mull Theatre together really to get the best synergy between the organisations. Our goal is to be a centre of excellence for the arts.'

'What we hope to do is make it greater than the sum of its two parts, working for the benefit of the arts on Mull, throughout Argyll and Bute and the rest of Scotland. It will take full advantage of the exceptional skill base we have between the organisations.'

'We are absolutely excited about it. It's not about saving money, it's about creating something good, growing it and being positive.'

There won't, however, be any great changes to the way An Tobar or Mull Theatre are run. Mr Quirk said: 'Both will maintain their trading names and their own identities. If it isn't broke, don't fix it. Comar will effectively be invisible to most people.'

Comar has recently finished advertising for a new chief executive to help drive the organisation forward, particularly with regards funding applications and publicity. It is hoped an appointment can be made by the end of March.

Mr Quirk accepts that the plan is ambitious, but quite deliberately so. He said: 'It is ambitious, but if you don't aim for the stars you don't reach the moon.'

'We're the first organisation like this in Creative Scotland's area. We want to be in there, showing the way and proving this model can work.'

## Demolished Dunbeg homes were too expensive to repair

FOUR houses built in Dunbeg less than 20 years ago have been demolished after they were deemed too expensive to repair.

The one-bedroom bungalows in Kirk Road came down just before Christmas after moisture built up inside the structures, making them damp and uninhabitable.

Built in 1992 by Lorn Housing Association, the decision to demolish was taken by its successor, West Highland Housing Association.

The association's operations manager Graeme Bruce explained: 'We were having problems with damp and over the past year we have moved our tenants into other homes.'

'Following an investigation into the extent of the damage we realised we had a major problem on our hands and that the homes were beyond economical repair.'

Mr Bruce refuted claims the site was unsuitable for housing in the first place, adding that the site was not the problem.

He said: 'These houses were one of the early timber frame structures, built to the standard at the time, but building technology has moved on, as have the types of materials we can use.'

## Two arrested following Mull serious assault

A 29-YEAR-old man required hospital treatment to serious facial injuries following an alleged serious assault in Main Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

The man was one of a group of three victims of the alleged incident on December 29, for which two men, aged 30 and 41, have been charged.

The 30 year old faces a serious assault charge, while the 41-year-old has been charged with two counts of assault.

## Argyll MP calls for 'weatherproof' power system

LAST week's power cuts across Argyll and Bute, caused by severe weather, has prompted a call for better preventative measures to be taken.

Argyll and Bute MP Alan Reid praised the engineers who worked tirelessly for days in challenging conditions to restore supplies following last week's strong winds.

But, with more adverse weather forecast, he is to call for the Scottish Affairs Select Committee to mount an inquiry into how the country's electricity network could be made more resilient.

## Golf course death

THE BODY of Oban man Martin Brownlow was found at Glencruitten Golf Course last week by a dog walker.

Oban Police, who said there were no suspicious circumstances surrounding the death of the 47 year old, were called to the golf course at 3.12pm last Wednesday and the area was cordoned off for almost four hours.

## Pub chain renews interest in town

PUB chain JD Wetherspoon has renewed its interest in opening a premises in Oban, *The Oban Times* has learned.

A spokesperson said: 'We are as keen as ever to open a pub in Oban and we are currently looking for a suitable site.'

'The company has more than 50 pubs across Scotland and we feel being in Oban would be a great addition.'

## Drug search arrests

FURTHER drugs searches in Oban over the past fortnight have resulted in the arrest of three people.

In Shore Street, a quantity of diazepam was recovered from the premises occupied by a 47-year-old woman on December 29 and at another Shore Street address last Friday, dealer-sized amounts of heroin and ecstasy were seized from the property occupied by a 32-year-old man.

On Monday, in MacDougall Court, police recovered a quantity of heroin from the premises occupied by a 37-year-old female.

# Pothole patch-up prompts call for more roads scrutiny

## Engineer speaks out over 'sub-standard' repairs

AN EXPERIENCED roads engineer says Argyll and Bute Council must be more accountable for its roadworks after seeing four separate patchwork repairs in as many weeks outside his home.

Willie Barnett, who runs Alba Transport, said he was 'more disappointed than angry' about what he deemed sub-standard repairs to an ever-expanding pothole on the South Shian road at Tralee, near Benderloch.

But he fears his own local example is just one of many throughout Argyll and has called for more scrutiny of the cash-strapped roads department.

His call follows an announcement from the department that it is expecting to receive less than half of the funding it needs from this year's budget to maintain the roads network in its current state.

Mr Barnett said: 'There needs to be more accountability on public spending. Are we getting

**EXCLUSIVE REPORT** by Euan Paterson epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

best value for our money and are contractors under enough scrutiny for the work they do? 'The public needs to be reassured, particularly in these tough financial times.'

The permanent pothole repair of roads in South Shian started on Tuesday but three previous repairs were done to at least one section of the road on December 13, 15 and 30.

Mr Barnett, who has 30 years' experience in his industry, claimed his own car had a damaged windscreen and a broken spring as a result of the road conditions and said others had experienced similar problems. A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute Council said it was normal to repair potholes using hot bitumen direct from a quarry but as these quarries were closed

over Christmas and New Year, cold tar was used as a stop-gap. The recent South Shian repair work on December 30 had been carried out with cold tar because of the wet conditions and the council admitted this would not have any longevity.

She added: 'We aim to, wherever possible and practical, permanently repair pothole defects on a one-time visit but this is not always possible.'

'The road network is formally inspected in accordance with the Council Asset Management Plan and repaired accordingly.'

'The condition of the road network is such that in bad weather a pothole can literally appear overnight and we rely on local people and community councils to inform us of such defects outwith the formal route inspection regime.'

'You can report road faults on 01546 605514 or use our online form at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/contact-us>.'



Roads engineer Willie Barnett shows a spade-full of 'scalplings' that have come out of the pothole at Tralee. 16\_1027ead01

## Oban paedophile secretly filmed visitors in bathroom

A PAEDOPHILE from Oban gathered 276 images and 28 videos of children as well as taking secret images of people in his home.

Ian Kirkpatrick, aged 50, whose address in court was given as c/o Greenock Prison, appeared from custody at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday, having previously admitted to five charges, one of collecting indecent images of children, and four of taking images of people using the bathroom in his mother's house - three of teenagers and one of a woman.

The former gardener/handyman showed no emotion as Procurator Fiscal David Glancy spent half an hour reading the circumstances of the case.

Kirkpatrick's activities were first discovered in January 2010, shortly after he moved out of the home he shared with his mother to live with a partner near Ganavan.

**Alarmed and upset** His mother started to clean his bedroom and discovered pictures of naked children.

Mr Glancy said: 'She was both alarmed, disturbed and upset at what she found.'

The police were contacted, sparking an enquiry that would last more than 18 months.

As a result, four computers were recovered, as well as a number of hard disks and memory sticks.

During a search of his mother's property, Kirkpatrick

was discovered emerging from a cupboard. In it, access was found to the loft, which he had converted into a 'den'. Kirkpatrick had fashioned holes looking both towards the town and over a nearby playpark. A telescope was also found here.

There was a vent in the floor, converted from an extractor to allow a view of the bathroom below. It was here Kirkpatrick trained his camera on unsuspecting visitors to his mother's house, taking 186 photographs in addition to the 276 found on his computer.

Mr Glancy said his victims felt 'violated, angry and disgusted' at Kirkpatrick actions.

Sentence was deferred until February 6 for reports.



Oban High School teacher Murray Hamilton tries out the gym equipment as Atlantis Leisure's Nick Wesley and Donna Smith look on. 16\_1029ym01

## Gym donates to school

ATLANTIS Leisure has donated its old gym equipment to Oban High School, ahead of the open day of its refurbished gym this Saturday.

The Oban centre's manager Nick Wesley and youth leader Donna Smith made the official handover to Oban High School PE teacher Murray Hamilton on Monday.

Murray said: 'This is

a brilliant opportunity for us to link in with the community but the real winners in all of this are the pupils.'

Nick added: 'We are proud to be able to donate this equipment following the full refurbishment of our gym. Donna's connection with the high school, as our youth leader, was instrumental in arranging the deal.'

## Charities gain £5,000 from Hogmanay family party

TWO CHARITIES are to benefit from nearly £5,000 raised at this year's family Hogmanay event in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls.

Oban 365, the charity that organised the party, said it had received very positive feedback from its maiden event and was looking forward to a similarly successful celebration next year.

The fundraising total of £4,497.50 will now be split between the Anthony Nolan Trust and Argyll Beats Cardiovascular Disease.

Ian MacInnes of Oban 365 said: 'I would like to thank everyone who attended the event and Amanda MacPhail and staff at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls who worked tirelessly to ensure the event ran smoothly.'

'I would also like to thank the local businesses who so generously sponsored the event and covered costs, enabling us to donate all the proceeds to charity.'

## Clothes shop thieves jailed for 60 days

THIEVES who duped an Oban shopkeeper left the shop floor unattended long enough for the pair to grab clothing and leave. Kelly admitted taking a shirt and McGuire a sweater - items worth £45 each.

On checking the shop's CCTV, police questioned McGuire at home but while they were there, Kelly arrived with the stolen shirt in his possession.

Sheriff Douglas Small commented on the pair's long list of previous convictions before sentencing each of them to 60 days in prison.

After being asked to help McGuire, the

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# Green Machine climbs up the league table

## Debut try for Tommy as Oban Lorne defeat Strathaven

RBS West Division 2  
**Oban Lorne 27**  
**Strathaven 19**

DEBUTANT Tommy Sutherland scored his first try for Oban Lorne, as his new team climbed off the bottom of the table.

The Green Machine welcomed Strathaven to Glencruitten last Saturday and were buoyed by the inclusion of prop Sutherland, as well as returns to the first team for David Hunter, Alex Cadzow and Angus Munro.

Oban made the better start and were controlling the game with an impressive display from stand-off Cadzow.

The home side were rewarded with the first try of the afternoon as a result of some good forward play close to the line, resulting in captain Struan Smith touching down from close range. Angus MacCallum converted to lead 7-0.

With the home side growing in confidence it wasn't long until the lead was extended. Oban's Corrie Louw picked the ball up from a ruck only a few metres from the line and offloaded to

Jamie MacMillan, who made no mistake of finishing the move off. MacCallum again converted to give a score of 14-0.

Strathaven worked themselves back into the game with some good passing along the backline. They were rewarded before half-time with their first try of the afternoon to narrow the score to 14-5.

Oban made a couple of half-time changes with Crawford Brown and Maurice Flynn replacing Darrell Williams and Malcolm Downie.

The lead was extended shortly into the first half with a straightforward penalty from the hosts. Strathaven, aided with an inconsistent Oban set piece, then put intense pressure on the Oban tryline.

The away side were eventually rewarded with a penalty try for Oban players consistently being offside. The visitors were now within touching distance at 17-12.

But after Sutherland scored his first try for the club with 10 minutes remaining, the game

was all but over.

The away side did score another converted try towards the end of the game but MacCallum made sure Oban had the final say with a late penalty to deny the visitors the losing bonus point.

The win lifts Oban up to ninth place in West Division 2 with a game in hand over the teams above them.

The Green Machine travels to Cumbernauld next week, where a win would see them climb again to seventh position.

Oban's next home game is scheduled for the January 21 against Strathendrick.

Oban Lorne mini-rugby will restart for 2012 next Sunday, January 15, between 1 - 2pm at the clubhouse.

Oban Lorne: M. Downie, D. Williams, T. Sutherland, MacMillan, D. Hunter, C. Ferris, S. Smith, C. Louw, C. Wright, A. Cadzow, A. Munro, A. MacCallum, C. Smith, A. Wright, C. MacLachlan. Subs: M. Flynn, C. Brown.

**RUGBY**



Oban Saints' Ryan Campbell takes on Dynamo midfielder Gavin Brady during Saturday's Scottish Cup tie. 07\_02saints1

## Saints struggle in Scottish Cup tie

Scottish Amateur Cup  
4th Round  
**Oban Saints 1**  
**Dynamo EK 1**

THIS 4th round cup tie eventually got under way at the fourth time of asking after the game was switched to Oban when the parks in East Kilbride were declared unplayable due to the recent bad weather.

However, this was a game the Oban side will want to forget as they turned in a lacklustre performance against a far from full strength Dynamo side with the game ending in a 1-1 draw.

It was evident that the teams hadn't played for seven weeks due to the postponements and festive holidays as the players looked very rusty, but this should not be used as an excuse for

a dismal performance from the home side.

Saints got off to the perfect start with a goal in the 10th minute when Donald Campbell fed the ball wide to Ross Maitland who sped past his marker before firing a great cross into the box for Craig MacEwan to head past Dynamo keeper Kevin Cassidy.

This should have been the signal for the home side to take the game to the visitors, but they never did that, allowing Dynamo too much space and time on the ball.

The East Kilbride front men Stuart Kyle and Stephen Russell were causing the Saints rearguard some problems with their clever play.

It was no surprise when the visitors equalised in the 39th minute when a long throw

caught out the Saints defence with Gavin Brady nipping in to send a looping header over Graham Douglas and into the net - a bad goal for Saints to lose.

The second half was almost all one way traffic, but Saints couldn't find a way through a resilient Dynamo defence, well marshalled by the experienced Gerry Burn.

Saints pushed hard and created several good chances, the best falling to Donald Campbell but he pulled his shot past the post.

The visitors were hanging on as the game drew to a close, but try as they might Saints could not score the goal that would surely have won the game.

They now face a tricky replay in East Kilbride. Manager Iain Jackson was

**FOOTBALL**

not happy with the performance or the result and he will be having words with his players at training this week.

He said: 'This was an ideal opportunity for us to progress into the last 64 of the competition when the match was switched to Oban.

'We didn't put enough into the game and got exactly what we deserved - nothing, and unless we improve greatly this Saturday then we'll be out of the Scottish Cup.'

Saturday's replay will take place in East Kilbride, kick-off 1.30pm. Extra time and penalties, if required, will be used to see who goes through to the 5th round.

## Oban heat of Sports Hall Athletics to be held next weekend

**ATHLETICS**

SPORTS Hall Athletics will once again be promoted in Argyll this winter with the local competition for the Oban area being held at Atlantis Leisure next Saturday, January 21.

This version of indoor athletics provides an opportunity for young people to try running, jumping and throwing activities as their first step into athletics.

The Oban competition is the third of four area events being held in Argyll this winter and is promoted jointly by Argyll and Bute Local Athletics Partnership and Mid Argyll Athletic Club. Qualifiers from the area competitions will be invited to take part in the Argyll Sports Hall Athletics final to be held on February 25 at Atlantis Leisure in Oban with successful athletes from the Campbelltown, Oban, Lochgilphead and Mull contests taking part.

The first local area competition was held in Tobermory in early December and the Mid Argyll event takes place this Sunday, followed on Saturday, January 21 by the Oban event at Atlantis Leisure. The Kintyre contest will take place at Campbelltown Grammar School on Sunday, January 29. The organisers have been fortunate to secure a Communities 2014 Lottery Grant to help fund the competitions.

Youngsters are reminded that the Oban contest at Atlantis on Saturday, 21st, starts at 12.30pm with entries on the day from noon.

There will be competition for five age groups starting from Under 9s up to Under 17s for both boys and girls. There will be awards for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th overall in each age category. Age is taken as on the September 1, 2011 and an entry fee of £2 per competitor will be levied.

Successful athletes will qualify to compete in the Argyll Final to be held at Atlantis Leisure in Oban on February 25.

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## Saints' youth team fixtures and results

**YOUTH FOOTBALL**

SATURDAY'S results: Under 15s 0, Allander Colts 3.

This weekend's fixtures: Under 13s v Clydebank BC; Morton BC v Under 14s; Under 15s v Kilpatrick; Strathleven v Under 16s.

## Carpet Fitters lay it on the line

**INDOOR FOOTBALL**

LATEST scores from the Atlantis Leisure Indoor League: Carpet Fitters 5, RM Builders 0; Oban Times 26, Hotels 0; Oban High School 21, Oban Electrics 2; Atlantis 9, Emergency Services 1.

Team	P	W	D	L	Pts
Carpet Fitters	5	5	0	0	15
Oban Times	5	4	0	1	12
Atlantis	4	3	0	1	9
RM Builders	4	2	0	2	6
High School	4	1	0	3	3
Emergency	4	1	0	3	3
Hotels	4	1	0	3	3
Oban Electrics	4	0	0	4	0



Alex Cadzow ploughs his way through Strathaven's defence during Oban Lorne's 27-19 home win at Glencruitten on Saturday. 07\_02oblorne1



Oban Camanachd played their annual Over 30s v Under 30s match at Mossfield Stadium last Saturday. The game ended in a 2-2 draw. Scoring for the 'Old Boys' were David MacCuish and old Gussie Campbell while Andrew MacCuish netted both goals for the 'Young Guns'. A sporting encounter was well handled by referee Billy Wotherspoon. 07\_02shinty1

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**All you have to do**

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

**Easy to enter**

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

**Competition Rules**

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company.

The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of The Oban Times Limited, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

**WIN £1450**

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

Mrs L MacDonald  
Tayvallich, Lochgilphead

C Cameron  
Braemore Place, Fort William

**Spot the SHINTY BALL Competition**

I enclose £1 for 20 crosses (tick box)  The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Name .....

Address .....

..... Tel No. ....

Please tape your £1 coin here

## Veteran wins man of the match award

### Glenfinnan 'A' are Old New Year champions

**REPORT BY STEPHEN NORRIS**  
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

GLENFINNAN 'A' defeated Glenfinnan 'Stripes' in the village's annual 'Old New Year' shinty challenge match on Saturday.

And it was a community celebration as much as a sporting event as players and supporters gathered at the playing field under the famous railway viaduct over the river Finnan.

Players included primary school age children and 79 year-old Calum MacFarlane-Barrow, who defied his 'venerable veteran' status to turn in a fine

performance and take the man of the match award. Recent contests to mark the arrival of the old Scots New Year on January 12 were played in ice and snow.

But mud and puddles proved the biggest hazard on Saturday as the teams wore wellies or work boots to cope with the conditions.

Glenfinnan 'A' took the initiative from the start and soon opened the scoring when Calum MacFarlane Barrow showed remarkable fleetness of foot to score from close range.

With Farquhar MacRae a telling presence in midfield, 'A' continued to dominate and

#### SHINTY

doubled their lead when Blair Stewart fired home shortly before the break.

Referee Tearlach MacFarlane – brother of Calum and his senior by a year – was keeping a close eye on proceedings, but the game was being played in a fine spirit and his intervention was rarely required.

The Stripes, playing in Glenfinnan's traditional purple and white and led by Iain MacFarlane, pressed hard to cut the deficit.

But the outcome was put beyond doubt when Nico MacFarlane-Glasgow, aged 10, prodded home to give 'A' a 3-0 advantage.

Tearlach allowed the Stripes a few extra minutes to score a goal, but the 'A' team's defence stood firm and in fading light the match ended with handshakes all round.

'A' captain Colm O'Rua had no doubt of the identity of their match winner.

'We could not have done it without Calum MacFarlane – he was our star player up front,' he said. 'It was a wonderful day for young and old alike – it is important that we keep this New Year tradition alive.'



Iain MacFarlane clears despite a robust challenge from veteran Calum MacFarlane-Barrow. 20\_022finnan04



Winning captain Colm O'Rua, left, is congratulated by Stripes captain Iain MacFarlane. 20\_022finnan01

## Father defeats son in family final

LOCHABER Squash Club's championships at Lochaber Leisure Centre on Friday night saw some high calibre squash as father and son Bruce and Alan Love battled it out in the handicapped section final.

In a masterclass of a match with long rallies and quality play, Alan raced into a 2-0 lead, but gradually Bruce's technical mastery began to tell and he eventually overcame his son's speed and agility to take the next three games for a narrow 3-2 win.

#### SQUASH

Bruce had won through in the semi-finals with a 3-0 win over Murdo Murray, while Alan Love came out on top 3-1 against Rah Douglas after a hard fought contest.

The plate semi-final between Alan Ross and Andy Rodgers showed varied shot play with Alan winning 3-1 and going straight on to win a blistering final against Andy Bilton 3-1.



Lochaber Squash Club trophy winners Allan Ross (plate), Bruce Love (handicap) and Alan Love (handicap runner-up) with referee Neil Worsdall, second left, presenting. 20\_022squash01

## Thompson on top in Sutherlands Grove winter league race

#### CYCLING

WEST HIGHLAND Wheelers staged the fourth round of their Alpine Bikes-sponsored winter league at Sutherlands Grove, Barcaldine on Sunday.

The joint event, kindly hosted by Nick Charlton and the North Argyll Cycle Club, saw 37 riders from along the west coast battle through mud and tricky roots on a technical course.

The conditions entirely suited Ben Thompson who finished first, two minutes ahead of Liam Moynihan. Ruari Watt was eking out a good lead at the end of the first lap at the head of the field but was one of a number of riders who suffered a puncture.

Ben Cathro took time out from his downhill training to try out his first XC race of the season, but found the blistering pace of the pack far too uncomfortable.

Lachlan Blair finished strongly as first junior with Marian Austin taking the ladies race. Thanks go to Nick, NACC, Colleen and Fiona for the event and timing. Next event is scheduled for Glen Loy on the 29th Jan.

Results:  
2-lap race: 1 Ben Thompson 57.27; 2 Liam Moynihan 59.31; 3 Mike Bossard 59.58; 4 Chris Bell 1.00.12; 5 Tom Smith 1.00.59; 6 Ruari Watt 1.04.07; 7 Lachlan Blair 1.05.28 (1st Junior); 8 Robert Hyde 1.07.58; 9 James Tullie 1.10.18; 10 Ewan Thorburn 1.10.50; 11 Alastair MacLennan 1.11.08; 12 John Shirley 1.12.22; 13 Gavin Blainey 1.12.58; 14 Tim Brand 1.12.46; 15 Jesse Wigman 1.12.58; 16 Chris Wolfe 1.13.27; 17 Ben Cathro 1.13.51; 18 Davy Gunn 1.15.37; 19 Roddy Wells 1.20.43; 20 Tom MacMahon (2nd Junior) 1.20.58; 21 Andrew Foggo 1.24.38; 22 Tom Adams 1.24.58; 23 Steve Bradley 1.27.01; 24 Neil Wright 1.31.05; 25 Brian Barbour 1.36.27; 25 Doug Little 1.36.27; 27 Marian Austin 1.44.04 (1st Lady); 28 Andy Dale 1.44.06.

Short race 1 lap: 1 Johnny Henshaw 48.01; 2 Peter Martin 51.18; 3 Brych Martin 51.22 1st Junior; 4 Kevin Whitehead 51.36; 5 Kim Cameron 57.38; 6 Amanda Henderson 58.43; 7 Gregor Linfield 1.05.44 (2nd Junior).



Lachlan Blair posted a strong performance at Barcaldine to come in as first junior.

## Wee Rangers at Claggan on Saturday

#### FOOTBALL

FORT WILLIAM have a great chance to move closer to third-bottom Brora Rangers when the Sutherland side come calling to Claggan Park on Saturday.

Postponements because of bad weather mean Fort have been unable to play a home game since the 2-2 draw with Strathspey Thistle on November 5.

But prospects look better for this weekend and Danny Conlon's men will be keen to get back to winning ways following their 4-0 defeat at Buckie last Saturday.

Three goals in arrears at the break after strikes from Scott, Chisholm and Macrae, Fort came much more into things in the second half.

Sean Ellis rattled the crossbar with a stunning 40-yard free kick on the hour mark only for Jonathan Hewitt to blaze the rebound high over.

Fort keeper Gray saved brilliantly from Scott before Ellis hit the bar again with another 40-yard rocket of a free kick with 14 minutes left.

Mackinnon made it four for Buckie with an injury-time header.

## Lochaber Leisure stay on top

#### INDOOR FOOTBALL

LOCHABER Leisure maintained their five-point lead at the top of the Ali Young Premier League at the Nevis Centre with a comfortable 3-0 win over bottom club Bayern Bru.

Goon Squad kept up the pressure in second with a 5-2 win against Livercaol, who slip back to eighth.

TNF United scored a fine 4-0 victory over HWE No-stars to go third on goal difference from Ballachulish, who look capable of mounting a serious title challenge after defeating Steaua Sookabrest 6-1.

Elsewhere, The Granite House edged out AA Young 2-1 to improve their standing, while Achintore FC got the better of Stroke City 6-4 in a ten-goal thriller.

## Winter series

#### ATHLETICS

SKYE AND Lochalsh Running Club will stage the third race in its winter series next Saturday, January 21.

The Glenmore race and fun run will start from the shinty clubhouse in Portree at 12noon. Registration is from 11.30am.

## Rugby at Lossie

#### RUGBY

LOCHABER Rugby Club travel to RAF Lossiemouth on Saturday looking to complete a brace of league wins over the Moray side.

The Lochaber men ran out 43-3 winners at Banavie when the teams last met in October.

## No winners

#### FOOTBALL

THERE were no winners in the Fort William FC lotto draw on Saturday. Numbers were 12-16-19. The jackpot goes up to £200 this week.

## Weather

**Thursday** Sunny.  
Winds moderate, north westerly  
Temperatures 2°C to 7°C

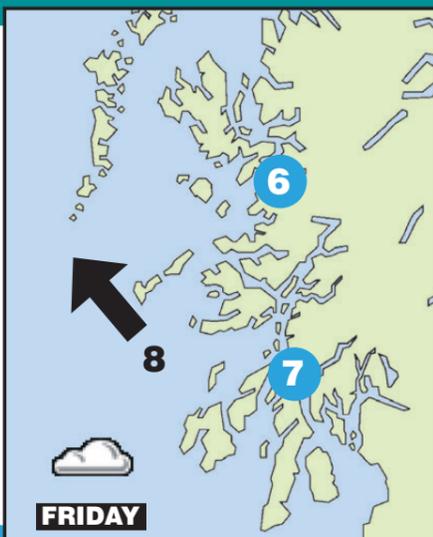
**Friday** Cloudy  
Winds light, south easterly  
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

**Weekend** Heavy rain.

**Outlook** Winds moderate, south easterly  
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.

**Ferry Crossings/Sea States**

Oban to Barra/South Uist Moderate  
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate  
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate



## Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, January 12, 2012** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am	pm
Thur	01.21 0.7 07.22 4.0 13.56 1.1 19.44 3.8	
Fri	01.59 0.8 07.58 4.0 14.32 1.1 20.21 3.7	
Sat	02.40 0.8 08.38 3.8 15.13 1.2 21.03 3.5	
Sun	03.26 1.0 09.22 3.7 16.01 1.4 21.51 3.3	
Mon	04.19 1.2 10.15 3.4 17.03 1.6 22.51 3.2	
Tues	05.24 1.3 11.25 3.2 18.18 1.7 ** **	
Wed	00.17 3.1 06.39 1.5 13.11 3.1 19.38 1.7	

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Dover	+5.30
Islay Port Ellen	2.00		
Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Mallaig	+0.25		

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