

The Oban Times

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OUT NOW the 2014 Oban Index

Human remains in Arrochar linked to missing student

HUMAN remains discovered in Arrochar could be those of missing student Yulia Solodyankina, Police Scotland has confirmed.

The remains were discovered by hill walkers in Succoth Forest, near the A83, last Thursday afternoon. Police Scotland said on Tuesday it could be two weeks before the body decomposed body was formally identified but confirmed the discovery was being linked to the search for Ms Solodyankina.

The 22-year-old was studying for a physics degree at Edinburgh University when she was reported missing on June 12 last year.

She was last seen at Buchanan Bus Station in Glasgow at around 4.55pm on Friday June 7 from where it is believed she boarded a bus to Argyll or the Highlands.

Enquiries about the student were made in Ardrishaig, Oban and Campbeltann at the time of her disappearance.

Police Scotland had earlier confirmed the remains did not belong to Edinburgh woman Suzanne Pilley, who disappeared in May 2010.

David Gilroy, her former partner who was convicted of her murder, was understood to have dumped her body somewhere near the Rest and Be Thankful, a few miles away from Arrochar.

Music festival comes of age

THE CELTIC Connections music festival, which starts today (Thursday), has 'come of age' in its 21st year, according to its artistic director, Tayntim man Donald Shaw.

Among the headlines at the Glasgow event are Del Amriti, who will play their first UK show since 2002.

But there is, as ever, a healthy Highland flavour to the programme and another highlight will be Three: Outside the Box on Sunday night.

The concert features award-winning Three accordion teacher Gordon Connell and former pupils who went on to form some of the country's favourite traditional bands, including Skipinnish, Gunna Sound, Skerryvore and Trail West.

Skipinnish's own concert on January 24 sold out before the festival began.



Lucy Hyam, who becomes the first woman to serve on Oban Lifeboat in its 42-year history, is welcomed to the station by coxswain John Hill. 16 JANUARY 2014

Oban lifeboat's first lady raring to go

AFTER a 42-year wait, Oban Lifeboat Station has finally welcomed its first female crew member - and she's raring to go.

At just 23, Lucy Hyam is also the youngest member of the crew for the Mora Edith MacDonald, but that hasn't stopped her fitting right into the team - who have even painted her locker pink to welcome her on board.

Now she's waiting for her first shift after transferring from her hometown station in Cromer, Norfolk, moving to Oban primarily to study marine science at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunbeg.

Speaking to *The Oban Times*, Lucy, who is also working as a swimming instructor at Atlantis Leisure, said: 'The guys have been lovely. I feel like I've landed on my feet here. Everyone has been great.'

'Being the first girl hasn't been a dramatic overhaul. I sometimes catch the guys watching their Ps and Qs when I'm about, and they've painted my locker pink - although there is a practical reason for that. If someone else picked up my gear by accident they wouldn't fit into it because I'm so tiny.'

Lucy always seems to have been destined to work on the water. Her father used to work as a commercial diver, passing on his passion for the sea. She started volunteering as a beach lifeguard at the age of 17 before making the move into the Royal National Lifeboat Institution three years ago, starting her training as a crew member in 2012.

The move to Oban has meant a period of retraining, which means Lucy hasn't been out on a short yet, but she's now poised and ready to go.

Billy Forreth, operations manager at the Lifeboat station, said: 'Lucy's been a breath of fresh air. We're delighted to welcome her on board and hope she enjoys her time here.'

Coxswain John Hill added: 'Lucy's been really good for the station and she fitted in really well. We're delighted to welcome her here.'

Investors can buy a minimum of 200 shares and a maximum of 20,000 at £1 per share to become members of the newly-formed

Island Energy Community Benefit Society (IECBS). Wind project officer Lindy MacLellan said: 'This is a huge project for Islay Energy Trust and for the island. It has taken years and years of hard work. It is the first income generating project we have taken to this stage and I hope it won't be the last.'

The total cost of the windpower project is more than £1.2 million and applications have been made to the Big Lottery for £180,000 to cover the costs of grid upgrades, and to the Scottish Government's Renewable Energy Investment Fund for any additional funding needed after the share offer closes on March 31.

The turbine, which will be in place for 20 years, is estimated to yield a community fund of around £80,000 per annum, with funds being made available for developing other renewables

projects and awarding grants to island groups and charities. Jenni Minto, secretary of IECBS, said: 'The share offer is an exciting opportunity for the many people who know and love the islands of Islay, Jura and Colonsay to make a social investment in a locally-owned project which will generate benefits for these communities.'

'The more money raised through the share offer, the less that will have to be borrowed from the banks.'

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Islanders urged to help raise wind turbine cash

Islay, Jura and Colonsay projects to benefit from community fund

ISLANDERS are being asked to help raise £750,000 to construct a community wind turbine that promises tens of thousands of pounds a year for community projects on Islay, Jura and Colonsay.

The Islay Community Wind Project, led by Islay Energy Trust (IET), will be one of the first community-owned wind power projects in Scotland to be part-financed through a so-called community benefit society share offer.

Launched on Tuesday evening at Islay High School, the share offer aims to raise up to £750,000 to build the 330kW wind turbine on Scottish Natural Heritage land at Castlehill, Islay.

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Pay increase for councillors

COUNCILLORS are set to receive a pay increase after the Scottish Government approved increases of 1 per cent for the current financial year and a further 1 per cent for next year.

An amendment to the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) laid before parliament last month and passed on Monday, will see councillor pay increases become effective from February 18.

Dawnfresh fish farm decision due

THE NET result of a planning application to establish a new fish farm on Loch Etive is set to be heard in the Corran Halls in Oban at the end of the month.

Meanwhile the developer behind the application for the 10-cage farm, Dawnfresh, reported worsening losses for the 2012/13 financial year.

The pre-tax loss for that period of £5.05million was worse than the £3.99million reported in the

previous financial year. Sales were up though, increasing by 5.2 per cent year on year to £40.2million, with exports of £4million largely responsible.

Expand Dawnfresh wants to build the farm consisting of 10 80-metre pens in Loch Etive to expand the export side of the business.

Backers say the development will bring increased security to those already employed by Dawnfresh in the area, but critics say pollution, a lack of any new jobs and possible harm to indigenous wildlife, as reasons it shouldn't be approved.

The special planning hearing to determine the outcome of the application is currently scheduled for January 29 at 9.30am.

Owner, Alastair Salvesson, who visited residents including a councillor in the Ardschattan

area last year in a bid to win support for the Loch Etive farm application, has invested £7.5million into the company's facilities over the past three years with a view to doubling the size of the business by 2016.

The number of people employed by Dawnfresh at its sites across Scotland and Northern Ireland fell from 506 to 418 in the last financial year.

Increase in Cruchan production

THE SCOTTISH Government has paved the way for an increase in energy production at Cruchan Power Station.

An intention to expand pumped storage at 'the hollow mountain' had already been mooted but this has now been formalised within the govern-

ment's Proposed National Planning Framework 3, published on Tuesday. Planning Minister Derek Mackay announced the Cruchan project as one of two new national developments, adding hydro power was key to the government meeting its renewable energy targets.

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Join us at Dollar Academy

Dollar Academy is a day and boarding school for boys and girls aged five to eighteen.

Our entry assessments for all year groups will take place the week commencing 20th January.

Contact us for more information: registrar@dollaracademy.org.uk 01259 742 511

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Hockey star turns out for Oban High School

A SCOTTISH hockey international will be at Oban High tomorrow (Friday) to present the school with a special award for its promotion of health and wellbeing.

Holly Cram, who has more than 100 caps for Scotland and Great Britain, will present head teacher Peter Bain with a plaque from Game on Scotland, the education programme of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Murray Hamilton, head of PE at Oban High, said: 'We are trying to raise awareness of health and wellbeing and are using the Commonwealth Games as a vehicle for that.'

The presentation will take place at a morning assembly. Afterwards Holly will put the school's hockey girls through their paces, then hold a question and answer session with the young sports coaches.

Ed Sheeran jammed in Aberfeldy's Breadalbane Arms with the Victorian Trout Conspiracy at the weekend.

Ed on song in Aberfeldy

CULT singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran casually dropped himself into a 10-piece punk ska band playing at Aberfeldy's Breadalbane Arms last week.

Victorian Trout Conspiracy were initially unaware of who their star guest was, after he offered to jam with the band during their performance there at the weekend. But they quickly became aware of his star pedigree, and the red-haired musician picked up the tambourine to take part in their set. He then played a few of his own songs to the awestruck crowd at the pub, some of whom filmed the performance, which is now on YouTube.

Victorian Trout Conspiracy guitarist Phil Ramsay said: 'Had no idea who he was but turns out he's pure famous.'

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A reminder that returns should be submitted to HMRC on-line by January 31st 2014

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Man admits acts of public indecency

A MAN twice committed acts of public indecency at Bridge of Orchy railway station, in full view of railway workers and members of the public.

In the dock at Oban Sheriff Court last week, Steven McColl, aged 53, who lives in a static caravan in the station car park, admitted acts of public indecency at the station on both July 11 and August 28 last year, when he exposed himself and committed a sexual act.

Maintenance work was taking place on the railway at the time and on the first occasion McColl was seen by a worker to be sitting on a bench on the platform. He had a mobile phone in his left hand and did not stop what he was doing with his right when a witness approached.

The witness walked towards and past him and McColl made no attempt to hide himself or hide what he was doing, prosecutor fiscal Eoin McGinty told the court. The witness telephoned colleagues working nearby to tell them what was happening.

"At first they thought he was joking," said Mr McGinty, but they had binoculars with them and discovered that he wasn't.

The West Highland Way runs alongside the station and two hillwalkers also saw McColl. Police were called and members of the British Transport Police attended.

On the second occasion McColl was seen to commit the same act, this time at the top of the station near to the underpass.

He was seen by three railway workers and one of them reported that a group of four members of the public walked by them discussing what they had just seen. The police attended and McColl was arrested and taken to Oban Police Station.

Sheriff Douglas Small called for background reports and deferred sentence to February 3. McColl's defence agent contended that there was a medical background and that a psychiatric report was being prepared on behalf of the defence.

Trust plans power overhaul

COMMUNITY landowner the Knoydart Foundation is hoping an overhaul of its hydroelectric scheme will produce more electricity.

Surveys found a pipe at the dam was narrower than the one to carry water to the turbine house meaning less power than expected was being generated. Development manager Angela Williams said improving the pipe size would boost output.

Meanwhile, a new data monitoring system to measure power produced against electricity used is proving invaluable at peak times. Previously, demand in Inverie during the festive season could outstrip supply - but thanks to the new system all the lights stayed on.



The giant vehicles make their way through Duror on the A828 after their journey north resumes. Photograph courtesy of Peter McCorquodale.

Giant Glensanda shovel convoy blocks road

A TWO-day journey got off to a bumpy start at the end of last week as two large pieces of machinery being removed from Glensanda quarry blocked the A828 near Barcaldine.

The two Caterpillar Wheeled Shovels, which are used for moving stone onto barges, were

being returned to Glasgow when the incident happened. The vehicles were coming out of the Rhugh Garbh entrance on the back of Cadzow Heavy Haulage lorries on Friday morning and heading north towards Ballachulish to avoid weight limits at the start of a two-day journey

to the city. The A828 was closed for a couple of hours as a result of the problem and heavy traffic built up in both directions.

The machinery replacement is part of a period of investment for Glensanda which has seen the arrival of several pieces of new equipment.

Concern over Sleat water repair delay

Islanders depending on tankers as loch filtration system fails

THE SLEAT area of Skye is depending on tankers for its water supply - despite the wettest winter in years.

Filtration problems have led to water from Loch Carmichael becoming contaminated with sediment and debris, forcing Scottish Water to haul in supplies from Kyle. The loch became the area's only supply source under a shake-up of the water distribution network three years ago.

Sleat Community Council chairman Roddy Murray told The Oban Times: "Tankers are travelling 20 miles to Brae Ord, discharging their load of water into the system then going back again. This has been happening every day for the past eight or nine weeks. "We are very concerned. It is okay at the moment but if there's a fall of

snow, if the road is icy or if there's a road accident, the tankers might not get through and we would have a problem.

"We have the Gaelic college here as the economic driver of these parts, and tourism, and anything that might interrupt the water supply is a source of concern to us - as well as costing taxpayers a fortune." He added: "When can we expect to have this resolved?"

Water quality problems have been an issue since Scottish Water changed Sleat's water distribution system in 2011, said Mr Murray. The much-vaunted revamp saw Carmichael replace waterworks at three other lochs, including the bigger and deeper Loch Dougal, which served Tarskavaig and Stonefield, to become the peninsula's only source of mains

water. Sleat also had to rely on tankers during a period of heavy rain last winter after the filtration system failed.

Mr Murray said: "Carmichael is only one fifth of the size of Loch Dougal. It is very shallow and very silted and cannot deliver what has been promised by Scottish Water. "When they changed the system it cost an enormous amount of money. They have been promising us a new filtration system all this time but we are back exactly in the same position as a year ago. "In August they put one filter in, but that has made no square whatsoever. We are back to square one."

A Scottish Water spokesman said: "We are upgrading the existing pre-treatment process at the works - by removing larger naturally

occurring particles within the raw water. "The new units will be housed inside a small extension to the building. This project is due to start on site this summer and will enable successful treatment during periods of extreme weather.

"We apologise for the length of time it has taken to devise a permanent fix to the issues with the pre-filtration. This is because of a need for the design to be completed which we are fully confident will provide adequate pre-filtration even in poor weather conditions."

He added: "Scottish Water undertook investigations into the capacity of Loch Carmichael which confirmed that it is more than adequate for the current needs, the expected demand from the proposed Kilbeg development and to allow for future growth."

Mull Lines

A NEW Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) fundraising group has been set up in Tobermory to help the local lifeboat save lives at sea.

The small group of volunteers will take responsibility for organising Tobermory's annual lifeboat day in August. They also plan to hold fundraising events around the island in conjunction with the Ross of Mull branch.

Caroline MacInnes, steering group secretary, said: "The lifeboat is at the heart of the community, not only in Tobermory but across Mull. Raising funds or attending an event in aid of the RNLI is a very real way to help our local volunteers crew to save lives at sea.

"We're looking for volunteers to join us. Even if you can only spare an hour here

or there, we'd love to hear from you." If you are unable to volunteer to join the fundraising group, you can still help raise funds for the RNLI through a little retail therapy.

When shopping with Amazon follow the link to the online retailer through the RNLI website and the charity will receive five per cent of any purchase you make.

The fundraising group has asked that all RNLI collection boxes are returned to the lifeboat station in January. If anyone is unable to deliver their box to Tobermory, please call the station on 01688 302143 to arrange collection.

If you'd like to get involved with the new fundraising group, please contact Caroline MacInnes on 01688 302371 or mac.ronelva@btinternet.com.

TRAFFIC management will be in place on the Isle of Mull as Scottish Water starts one of the biggest projects it has ever carried out in the Hebrides.

An area between Salen and Craignure will be affected by the work and motorists are warned to allow extra travelling time getting to and from the ferry terminal.

Work will be carried out at night to minimise disruption. It will take place from January 20 until January 31, Monday to Friday, between 8pm and 5.30am. Temporary traffic lights will be in place.

Joanna Peebles, Scottish Water's communities team manager, said: "We will do everything possible to minimise any disruption or inconvenience to people in the area where we will be working. We will ensure that we keep our customers

informed and apologise in advance for any inconvenience but we are sure that our customers will appreciate any short-term disruption will be far outweighed by the long-term benefits this substantial investment in this part of Mull will deliver."

The £5.7 million project will provide clearer, fresher drinking water to customers in the Craignure area and enable growth and meet demand during peak summer months in the Tobermory area. It is expected to take about 18 months to complete.

Scottish Water recently completed a temporary upgrade to the filtration process at Craignure Water Treatment Works, which is helping to provide better quality drinking water in the area in the interim.



Jane Traynor is presented with flowers by acting chief inspector Alistair Davidson while colleagues Alison Robertson, left, and Joyce Hall, right, look on.

TOBERMORY Police Station has lost one of its most valued members of staff - after 36 years of service.

Jane Traynor, 57, worked as the station assistant for all of those years, starting with Strathclyde Police before transferring to Police Scotland.

But the station's public corner, along with dozens of others across Scotland, has recently closed as part of cost cutting measures by Police Scotland.

Jane said: "I'm sad to be leaving. I'll really miss my colleagues and miss the job. But I have funny memories - there was a lot of humour over the years. "It was a really busy wee office,

particularly in the summer with tourists, although the interaction with the public lessened as call centres were brought in.

"My job wasn't just dealing with people as they came in though. I was kept busy with police reports and other things too."

Jane received gifts from her colleagues in Oban and Mull and was presented with a bouquet of flowers from acting chief inspector Alistair Davidson.

She added: "I'm really grateful and really touched that I got such a nice send off."

Jane now plans to put her feet up on a month long holiday to Australia before catching up with friends on her return.



Leanne McLellan serves up a meal for her father Robbie McLellan.

YOUNGSTERS on Iona took over the kitchen during the festive season to prepare a Christmas feast fit for a king.

The schoolchildren worked with Andy Haworth, from the Argyll Hotel, to gather vegetables, peel and prepare them.

The older pupils were trained in silver service by Mr Haworth and a total of 45 parents and staff were invited to Christmas dinner.

The children went to the kitchens of

Isla McInnes with her homemade cakes.

Iona Abbey to work with Anja Jardine to prepare German Christmas breads and puddings for the feast.

Katharine Elviss, acting head teacher, said: "I felt it was important for the children to learn the value of what their parents usually do for them around this time of year."

"Everyone had a lot of fun and learned a great deal. We were very grateful to Mr Haworth and The Argyll Hotel for hosting such a novel event."

THE COMMUNITY trust on Mull is seeking a long term lease of forestry land following the successful trial of a self-storage facility.

The operation, at the gantry site just outside Craignure, provides a 'much needed' facility for islanders as well as generating 'modest returns' for operators Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT).

Murray Finch, MICT general manager, said: "As well as self-storage, MESS also operates the furniture sale from the gantry site, something which is

increasingly popular with residents and helps with our objective of diversion of waste from landfill. "The self-storage facility was established in 2011 and MICT has been leasing the site on a year to year basis from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS). Mr Finch added: "MICT has approached FCS to discuss a longer term lease, hopefully at lower cost."

MICT is applying under the National Forest Land Scheme, a process intended to make forestry land available to community groups.

THE GOVERNMENT body which protects nature in Scotland is considering what action to take about pine martens on Mull.

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) have produced a draft report on the creatures, believed to have arrived on the island around September 2010.

The report is not yet public while SNH officials consider the findings.

The animals, which are afforded legal protection, have caused concern on the island since they were introduced by unknown members of the public.

Pine Martens are about the size of a domestic cat, prey on birds and are

infamous for killing chickens. The topic has been raised at Mull Community Council on many occasions. Community councillor Bert Lettich said: "They are killers. They eat we have enough things with sharp beaks and sharp claws on Mull already without adding anymore."

"Anyone who has free range hens is bound to be concerned."

Dave Steen, Mull's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds officer, also previously expressed concern over the introduction as there is no evidence the animals ever occurred historically on Mull.

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Mull boat jobs boost

A MULL company has placed an order for another workboat - creating a further 13 jobs for the island economy when it is delivered.

Inverlussa Marine Services will bring its tally of vessels to five when the new boat arrives in January 2015.

The firm has a big presence in the fish farming sector at the moment but Ben Wilson, operations director with Inverlussa, said it was keeping an "open mind" as to where the new boat would be deployed. He said: "It is another vessel to offer customers and it goes along with our strategy to expand. With there being an additional boat, we will need a lot of extra crew."

"Depending on what contract it is used for there could be 12 crew and another shore manager. This will be our fifth vessel which tips us into needing more backup ashore." The new 27.5-metre, general-purpose workboat is being built by Macduff Shipyards Limited, which also delivered Inverlussa's last vessel in May 2012. The boat will be capable of operating

coastal cargo, civil engineering and renewable energy support, fish farm service work, and general towing work.

It will be capable of carrying 120 tonnes of deck cargo and will also have a dry hold plus facilities for cargo fuel and water transfer.

A 146-tonne-metre combined knuckle telescopic deck crane will enhance the vessel's varied capabilities.

A spokesman for the shipyard said it was 'very pleased' to receive this repeat order from Inverlussa, and was 'looking forward to working with them again'.

Advertisement for Oban Stove Centre. Text: 'OBAN STOVE CENTRE Come in and see us. COMPLETE IN HOUSE FITTING SERVICE HETAS. Old Crafters Yard, Soroba Rd, Oban, Argyll, PA344HU. Tel: 01631564790 Fax: 01631562919 info@obanstovecentre.co.uk'

Lorry driver admits careless driving

A LORRY driver suffered 'life-threatening, life-changing' injuries because of another driver's loss of attention. Their HGVs collided head-on, blocking the busy A85 in Connel on July 13 2012 as emergency services battled to free both men from their cabs.

Since then each man has undergone numerous operations and treatment.

Last Tuesday Thomas McLean, age 56, of 12 Eppistone Road, Whitburn, admitted driving carelessly on the A85 in Connel, by crossing into the opposing carriageway and colliding with an oncoming vehicle causing damage to both vehicles and injuring the other driver and his passenger.

McLean was driving towards Oban on his way to deliver goods to the Co-operative store on

Mull. As he entered the 40mph limit in Connel and negotiated a slight left hand bend his lorry crossed into the opposing lane. The passenger said he saw the driver of the oncoming lorry, David McNiven, with a colleague as a passenger, was confronted with the Co-op lorry in his lane travelling towards him. He braked heavily to try and prevent the head-on collision. Both drivers were trapped in their cabs.

'The passenger said he saw the driver of the oncoming vehicle [McLean] was bending over, towards the passenger side of the cab, protractor fiscal from McGinty said.

McLean denied this, claiming he had moved out because of a 'spooked animal' at the roadside.

Mr McGinty told the court

'Mr McNiven [driver of the other lorry] suffered life-threatening, life-changing injuries; a compound fracture of the lower leg, which needed several operations. The driver of the oncoming lorry, David McNiven, with a colleague as a passenger, managed to get out of the cab himself but suffered cuts, which needed stitches.'

The road was closed for a considerable amount of time with the police helicopter taking aerial photographs of the scene.

'A picture speaks a thousand words,' said the fiscal as he handed the photographic evidence to Sheriff Douglas Small, drawing his attention to the lengthy skid marks from the braking lorry driven by Mr MacNiven, and the much shorter ones of the Co-op lorry driven by McLean.

McLean's agent, Jane Thomson, said that he too had suffered

severe injuries, a badly broken ankle and plates had only just been removed from his leg; he also suffered nerve damage to his legs and now walked with a fractured skull, cheekbones and vertebrae. His passenger managed to get out of the cab himself but suffered cuts, which needed stitches.'

McLean was to have stood trial for driving dangerously but had pled guilty to careless driving.

Sheriff Douglas Small fined him £600 and disqualified him for one year.

He said: 'You pled guilty to a considerably reduced charge of driving carelessly and I have to sentence you accordingly.

'No sentence I can impose would compensate for the considerable stress and injury caused by this accident, which you maintain was caused by your loss of attention caused by a spooked animal.'



Both drivers had to be cut from their cabs after the head-on collision which closed the A85 at Connel in July 2012. Photograph copyright Police Scotland.

Hope for crash victim after 18 months of hell

HE SUFFERS from flashbacks and nightmares throughout the basis but David MacNiven says he can now at least get on with his life, following the conclusion of last week's court case.

On Friday, July 13, 2012 the lorry he was driving was involved in a head-on collision caused by a Co-op lorry driven by Whitburn man Thomas McLean.

David was taken to Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban before being driven by ambulance to the Southern General, Glasgow - the journey was the final transfer for Oban ambulance man, and friend of David, John Barbour before his retirement.

Despite losing a lot of blood, suffering brain injuries, fracturing his skull, chest bone, vertebrae, neck and almost losing his leg completely, David maintained consciousness throughout his ordeal until the hospital transfer.

That awareness has allowed David to fully appreciate what the emergency services did for him that day but has also given him vivid and unwelcome flashbacks of the incident.

'The flashbacks of the accident

are so clear. I get them every night. I see the lorry coming towards me and I remember the impact, a big bang, glass flying about the cab as if in slow motion and the sound of metal crunching.

'Little things, like a glass getting smashed, brings it all back.'

His wife Michelle said: 'After the accident it didn't even cross my mind that he could have died, because he was conscious the whole time.

'I only realised how serious it could have been when the doctor came out to tell me: 'He's going to make it.'

'The first thing David said to me was: 'You better cancel our holiday'. He hadn't lost his sense of humour.

Last Tuesday McLean, who also suffered injuries from the crash, pled guilty to a reduced charge of careless driving and was fined £600.

David believes the punishment did not fit the crime but, as he marked his 45th birthday last Thursday, is now more concerned with getting his own life back on track.

Drawn out legal proceedings have hampered his plan: David, who worked as an overhead telecons engineer for his brother's company, JAM Drilling, has been unable to work but could not sign on for state benefits while his compensation claim awaited the court's verdict.

'I was going round in circles,' said David. 'If my brother hadn't

kept me on the payroll I would have lost my house. I would not have had an income. It's crazy how it works.

'I just want to get on with my recovery now.'

'It is a relief to have the whole incident brought to a close. Even though I was the victim, the court case was like a noose around my neck because it seemed to drag on so long.'

Because of David's severe leg injuries, walking around Tesco feels like a marathon and none of the plethora of pain killers he has tried have had the desired effect.

But with the support of his wife Michelle and children Laura and David, he is determined to get better.

David said: 'You have to think positively and just get on with it.

'In the Southern General there was a guy in my ward who had been in a motorcycle accident. He had broken both ankles and felt so sorry for himself.

'The doctors were trying to get him up on crutches but he just wouldn't do it.

'I thought, there's no way I'm going to be like that.'

an aerial view taken from the police helicopter shows how badly damaged the vehicles were.



An aerial view taken from the police helicopter shows how badly damaged the vehicles were. Photograph copyright Police Scotland.

Oban girl stars in Swan Lake tour

A 16-YEAR-old Oban girl will star in Ballet West's upcoming tour of Swan Lake - performing in her home town before heading off across the country.

Meroula Henderson, through the Ballet West outreach programme and joined the first year of the full-time course in September 2013, after leaving Oban High School.

The 16-date tour of Swan Lake will open in the Corran Halls on January 24 and 25. It will then take in 12 venues around Scotland through February, finishing in Pitlochry on March 1.

Using Tchaikovsky's score and an adaptation of the original choreography by Daniel Job, the dancers will tell the story of the love of a young man for the cursed Odette, who is destined to spend her life as a swan, unless true love can release her from the spell of the evil Von Rothbart.

The production will feature most of the Ballet West dancers who competed in the Genie International Ballet Competition in Glasgow last year as well as guest artist Duncan Saul.

Duncan graduated from Ballet West and has worked with Dortmund Ballet, Dortmund Opera, Ballet Hagen and Vienna Festival since he left in 2011.

Performances are 7.30pm on January 24 and 25.



Sara-Maria Smith will play the principal role in Swan Lake.

Workshops to tackle population decline

POPULATION problems across Argyll and Bute are to be tackled at new workshops after the region saw a drop of 3,000 residents over the past 10 years.

Officials are now warning the declining population could have consequences for public services - including health, education and employment in the area, and may also impact on government funding allocated to Argyll and Bute in future.

Even Oban, Lorn and the Isles, which is currently seeing a rise in the number of residents, is facing problems 'as its population is ageing. Now those who live in the area are being invited to share ideas on how to address population issues at a series of public events, organised by Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

Barry McEwan, chairman of Argyll and Bute CPP Management Committee, said: 'Tackling population decline is

our number one priority. Argyll and Bute's economic success over the next 10 years will be built on a growing population.

'I would really urge people to come along to these local events. We want to hear people's views on this critical issue.'

There will be a workshop held in An Talla, Tiree at 2pm on February 1, Craignure Village Hall, Mull at 1.30pm and 7pm on February 10 and Oban's Corran Halls at 2pm on February 4. There will also be a

public question time in Oban at 6.30pm the same day.

There is also an online survey at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/cpp-questionnaire, to give people an opportunity to identify what needs to change to attract more people to stay in the area and move in to the area.

To book a place and submit a question to the panel please contact 01631 567944 or communitydevelopment@argyll-bute.gov.uk.

Official opening of Oban's Gaelic language centre

FURAN, Oban's Gaelic Language Centre, will be officially opened tomorrow (Friday) by Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell.

The centre, which has been running since the end of last summer, is a celebration of the Gaelic language, history and culture in the local area.

Interactive workshops involving the language are due to be held at the centre and will be available to communities throughout Argyll and Bute.

Lorn Lines

A QUIZ organised to raise money for Dalnally Primary School had to be cancelled after a poor turnout from residents.

The quiz was last year hailed a success, with 11 teams competing. But last Saturday evening Dalnally Community Hall was decidedly quiet. School hall committee member Graeme MacKechnie said: 'Community events are usually very well supported.'

The hall committee met on Monday night to discuss the low turnout and find out whether the school wanted to run the quiz on another night. Just a few weeks ago the hall saw one of its largest audiences as hundreds of tickets for a Skerryvore gig sold out a month in advance.

AT THE last meeting of the Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society, John Macfarlane entertained and enlightened the group with a fascinating talk on early Christian sites in Muckairn.

The next meeting of the society is on Friday January 17, when Neil Horne will talk about St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe.

MEMBERS of Oban Speakers Club got the new year off to a good start last Thursday with three enjoyable speeches.

The surprise package of the evening was by Nick Maclean who was making his maiden speech to the club and chose 'Dartmoor Prison'. He gave an excellent talk on the place and his own experience of working there. The other two speakers were Guido Facendola who spoke on 'McCaig's Tower' and Bill Leech on 'Penny Black Two-penny Blue'.

The speakers and their immediate critics were introduced by Frank Walton. The topics session was under the control of Eamonn Arthur who brought light-hearted replies on subjects from 'Messing about on boats' to 'Concorde' from Alec Clark, Jim Fraser, Peter Mills, Willie Melville, Roy Wood and John Maclean. Timekeeper for the evening was Tom Clegg and a kind and humorous general evaluation was done by Martin Wilson.

Police files

THE DRIVER of a van which left the road on the back road between Connel and Oban has been accused of drink driving. Police received a report of a van off the road near Ardconnell Farm, Connel, last Saturday at around 10.50pm. A 26-year-old man is the subject of a report to the procurator fiscal.

THE REAR window of a black Vauxhall Corsa, parked in Scalpay Terrace, Soroba, Oban was smashed overnight between Saturday and Sunday last week.

The incident would have happened at some point after 10.45pm and Oban Police are keen to speak to anyone who may know anything about the vandalism.

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Community cash hopes for Barra turbine

BARRA'S community-owned wind turbine is set to be commissioned next month, with the potential to generate up to £100,000 for island causes and projects.

Installed at the most north westerly point of Barra at Ghob Sgarabhal, it is hoped the 900kw turbine will be one of the most productive in western Europe. The £2.2million project has already benefited the island economy through according to Coimhearsnachd Bharraigh agus Bhatarsaid's lead on the project, Euan Scott.

He said: 'By using local companies

and individuals where possible, the project has not only built capacity on the island but also maximised the economic benefit to the local community during construction phase.

'The turbine, when commissioned, will provide revenue for years to Government subsidies.

Practical needs on the island such as providing funding towards building an all-weather sports pitch or supporting social and respite services for the elderly and providing grants for young people so they can more easily travel to events and courses on the mainland.

'The community as a whole will have a say on how it wants to see the money spent emphasising the fact the wind turbine is a community owned and managed asset.'

Funding for the project came from Triodos Bank NV and Scottish Government.

Triodos Bank's Norrie Cruickshank said: 'The Barra and Vatersay project is just the sort of development that Triodos Bank loves to get behind when it can. It demonstrates so strongly that collective ownership can deliver tangible benefits for the community.'

3G pitch price review on cards

CHARGES for all-weather 3G sports pitches throughout Argyll are being reconsidered by the local authority after inconsistencies between towns have been revealed.

Oban's two amateur football clubs have criticised the cost of the all-weather pitch hire in their town, which is more than double the fee in Helensburgh.

Oban Saints and Oban Athletic both say it is unfair that footballers in Oban must pay £36.25 per hour - £112.50 per match - including changing facilities, while those in Helensburgh pay £23 per hour, although this charge does not include use of changing facilities. To hire the pitch at the Aquilum in Campbelltown costs £47.90 per hour, not including changing facilities.

Argyll and Bute Council now says it will review the charges but claims fees across the county are below the Scottish average.

Oban Athletic manager Calum Fox said: 'Oban Community Pitch is an excellent facility for people, young and old. However, I have been bemused and disappointed by the running and cost of this facility compared to like-for-like facilities in Helensburgh and Campbelltown.'

'The main concern is the rip-off raw deal prices we pay in Oban.

'How can the council justify

ripping off the people of Oban, particularly as the prices go under review each year?'

Oban Saints secretary David Buchanan said: 'It seems strange that the cost of pitches throughout Argyll is so different.'

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'Currently there is no common charging policy in the council's fees and charges schedule for the six all-weather pitches in the county.'

'The current charging arrangements have developed historically on a case-by-case basis related to local circumstances on which each individual facility was developed and the charging arrangements which were in operation at the time the pitch opened.'

'The community letting processes and charges are currently under review.'

Oban Saints' opponents last Saturday, Dennistoun, play at Whitehill Secondary School on a 3G pitch, newer than its equivalent in Oban. Glasgow City Council charges £24 per hour, including changing facilities.

At Inverclyde Council's Battery Park 3G astroturf in Greenock teams pay a similar fee to that in Oban - £12 with changing rooms - but this comes down to £90 per match, including changing, if block-booked.



Fort William school party boosts hospice shop

Above, shop supervisor Maggie Wilson handed over the proceeds of their Christmas party to the Highland Hospice shop in Fort William last Thursday. Below, shop supervisor Maggie Wilson accepts a cheque for £70 from P7 pupil Kerry Watson. Ms Wilson said: 'I would like to thank the kids for their generous donation. All the money we raise stays in the Highlands for Highland Hospice.'

Residents raise concerns over poor Acharaacle mobile phone reception

CONCERNS have been expressed about the worsening mobile phone reception in Acharaacle.

Residents have approached Acharaacle Community Council chairman Hugh MacPherson about the increasingly intermittent signal in and around the west Lochaber village.

Mr MacPherson told *The Oban Times* the issue would be discussed at the next community council meeting on February 4. He said: 'This really needs to be addressed. The signal has deteriorated considerably in the last six months.'

'You used to be able to get a service right through Acharaacle but now it is very patchy.'

'I have had two or three members of the public approach me to ask how we could get an improvement in the signal.'

Mr MacPherson said restoring good mobile phone coverage was particularly important at a time when an emergency responder team was being set up in Acharaacle.

Once the minimum five or six people signed up, the Scottish Ambulance Service will provide training.

Mr MacPherson said: 'We have got a core of people who are very interested in doing it and it's just a matter of getting it up and running.'

Oban Sheriff Court

A WOMAN'S 18th birthday celebrations ended with her handbagging her boyfriend, punching a policeman in the face and kicking him in the testicles.

Oban Sheriff Court heard that it took a police pepper spray to subdue her.

Jacinta Black, aged 18, and her partner Paul Carmichael, 26, both of 10E Miller Road, Oban, both pled guilty last Wednesday to committing a breach of the peace on George Street, Oban, on November 3 last year.

Black also admitting assaulting a policeman by repeatedly punching him on his head and kicking him.

Prosecutor fiscal Eoin McGinty said the pair were so drunk they did not notice a police car had pulled up near by.

The officers' attention had been drawn to two women and a man arguing; Carmichael and Black walked away and he then seized her by the throat and pushed her against the shore-front railings. She fought back, swinging her hands and hitting him about the head and body.

Police separated the pair, only to have Black turn on them.

Jane Thomson, agent for Carmichael, said he had taken part in a darts contest earlier and had drunk far more than he did normally.

Black's agent Edward Thornton said: 'It was her 18th birthday. They had gone out to celebrate and both had had far, far, too much to drink'. So much so that initially Black did not realise they were police officers and had thought members of the public had taken hold of them.

'She was fined £150 for committing a breach of the peace with Black receiving the further £225 fine for assaulting the policeman.'

Small, who called for a social report on Cornelius as to his suitability to undertake a rehabilitation drug treatment and testing order.

Cornelius will appear before the court again on February 4.

OBAN Sheriff Court has heard a saga of domestic abuse which led to a man being sent to jail.

Pavel Kuznicki's history of abuse was such that police had installed an alarm in the Oban home of an ex-partner and her children. She had taken action on November 19 last year, the court heard on Tuesday last week.

Kuznicki admitted acting in a threatening or abusive manner at the property, repeatedly kicking and hitting her, attempting to force entry and shouting and swearing leaving the family in a state of fear.

He had used a key to open the door but found a safety chain in place. He tried to force his way in and the police alarm was activated. He left before officers arrived.

'The family was brought back to Oban Police Office, police having such concern about the volatility of the accused', said prosecutor Eoin McGinty. 'The man went to the police station himself and had been in custody since then.'

Kuznicki's defence agent said the 34-year-old now accepted that the relationship with his ex-partner was over and that he now had to move on.

Sheriff Small sentenced him to 145 days in prison, reduced by 49 days for the time already spent in custody.

'There is no other sentence I can impose but custody', said Sheriff Small. 'Any repeat of this type of conduct will inevitably result in longer terms of imprisonment.'

The Sheriff also made Kuznicki subject to a non-harassment order of 18 months.

Post Office council members sought

RESIDENTS of the west Highlands and islands are being sought to sit on a new advisory council - shaping the future of the Post Office.

The council will meet three times a year from March 2014, and membership will be on a voluntary basis. Applications close on January 31. To apply visit www.corporate.postoffice.co.uk/advisory or call 0800 013 0198.

Science grants

APPLICATIONS for £240,000 worth of funding for science projects are now being accepted.

The Talking Science grants will fund activities across the west coasts of Scotland and will particularly help get roadshows and hands-on science workshops to rural areas.

Barcaldine firm completes Maltese pen project

A BARCALDINE-based aquaculture supply firm has successfully completed a major fish farm project in Malta.

Fusion Marine fulfilled a €300,000 pen order for a bass and bream farming operation for leading Maltese fish farming company Pisciculture Marine De Matte Ltd, widely known as P2M. The firm installed 19 Oceanflex and five

Aquaflex pens at its farm site on the north side of the Mediterranean island.

In a project supported by the European Fisheries Fund (EFF), P2M has completely refurbished and upgraded its farm site by replacing old rubber pens with a modern ultra-tough Fusion Marine polyethylene constructed farming system.

These 60m Oceanflex and 40m Aquaflex three-ring pens are ideal for exposed farming locations, with their durable and flexible construction designed to withstand extreme weather conditions. Anton Borg of P2M said: 'The containment and health of our stock is our number one priority and this is why we opted for Fusion Marine pens, which have a proven track record

for their toughness and versatility'. Stephen Divers, managing director of Fusion Marine, said: 'The specialised design and engineering techniques used in the fabrication of our pens ensures the provision of an extremely tough and secure containment system whilst at the same time providing an excellent operational platform for fish farm personnel.'

Advocacy service on lookout for Argyll volunteers

OBAN volunteers are needed to help other people in the area who find it difficult to get their voices heard.

Lomond and Argyll Advocacy Service is looking for people who want to make a real difference to the lives of others by joining their local advocacy team. Some people, especially those with

difficulties arising from disability or ill health, can find it difficult to speak up for themselves or get their views listened to. Advocates are independent from health and social work services and can help people uphold their rights and ensure their voice is heard. Ailsa McCrae, team leader, said: 'Demand for independent advocacy across Argyll

and Bute is higher than ever. We are looking for volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds with a range of different skills and experience. Many of the people who use our service are isolated and sometimes have no one in their life who isn't paid to be there. Volunteers spend time getting to know people so they are in a good position to help people

express their views'. Lomond and Argyll Advocacy Service operates across Argyll and Bute and offers a free and confidential service to adults with learning disabilities who use mental health services or those over the age of 65.

Contact 01846 606056 or argyll@laas.org.uk to find out more.

Blaze highlights importance of smoke alarms

A FIRE chief has highlighted the importance of smoke alarms after six people were rescued from a blaze in Portree early last Thursday morning.

Five residents required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation following the fire on the first floor of a two-storey block of flats in Crauchan Place.

Firefighters from Portree, Uig and Staffin in breathing apparatus extinguished the blaze.

The incident commander, Kyle station manager Alistair Jupp, said: 'The fact that the properties had working smoke alarms almost certainly prevented a more serious incident.'

'The residents were awakened by the alarms and began to make their way out. Our crews had to rescue six people from the building, but it could have been very different if they had not been given early warning by the alarm.'

Mr Jupp urged as many householders as possible to sign up for a free home fire safety visit.

Blaze highlights importance of smoke alarms

A FIRST-time drug offender was warned of the danger he was getting into when he appeared before Sheriff Douglas Small on Tuesday last week.

Ross McKillop, aged 21, of 13 Crean Gardens, Oban, admitting possessing cocaine on September 8 last year.

Oban Sheriff Court heard that police stopped him for drinking in the street and it was discovered subsequently that he had 0.9g of cocaine in his pocket.

Defence agent Jane Thomson said McKillop had bought the drug while at a concert in Glasgow. 'This is essentially a blip', she said.

Sheriff Small fined him £300 and warned him that cocaine was highly addictive, adding: 'For goodness sake, Mr McKillop, don't take this drug or any illicit drug.'

GEORGE Hugh Hendry, aged 66, of 2D Scalpay Terrace, Soroba, pled guilty to threatening and abusive behaviour at Oban Police Station on December 4 last year after an incident at his home address.

When he appeared before Oban Sheriff Court on Monday because he was deferred for six months for good behaviour.

MARGARET Ashley McGuire, aged 49, of Room 14, Shore Street Flats, Oban, admitted behaving in a threatening and abusive manner, repeatedly banging on windows and swearing and shouting at Solas, Albany Street, Oban, when she appeared before the town's sheriff court last Tuesday.

The incident happened on December 5 last year, and in her defence the court heard she had recently suffered a bereavement.

Sheriff Douglas Small deferred sentence for six months for her to be of good behaviour.

JASON Walford, aged 39, of 2 Benvulcan Lane, Oban, was fined £450 and had eight penalty points added to his driving licence when he appeared before Oban Sheriff Court last week.

He admitted driving carelessly on the A816 near to Kilmelford, on June 6 last year, when he overtook two other vehicles at a blind bend in the road whereby he was not able to check oncoming traffic.

One of the cars turned out to be an unmarked police car. Walford told the court that he had only intended to overtake one car but the lead vehicle, a minibus, slowed and he was unable to get back into the carriage.

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Appeal to stand for community council election

WESTERN Isles Council (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar) is seeking nominations for the election of four new members to North Harris and Lochboisdale community councils.

Nomination papers are available from council offices in Stornoway, Tarbert, and Benbecula and must be delivered to the returning officer at these offices no later than 4pm on Wednesday January 22.

Everyone aged 16 years or more and whose names are included on the electoral register are eligible to seek election.

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Mr Jupp urged as many householders as possible to sign up for a free home fire safety visit.

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Morvern Lines

A FEW weeks back I wrote about a Lochaline woman who died while attempting to save her infant son's life during a snow storm when she was travelling through Morvern a century or more ago.

Since my account was published, Mr Cameron Wilson, Lochaline, who is one of the very few people living in the parish who can trace his Morvern ancestry back to the 1750s, has given me a different version.

According to his great grandmother, Mrs Catherine MacIntyre (1866-1960) nee Cameron, whose husband James was Lochaline's tailor, the mother and her son were in the vicinity of the house near Loch Ternan when they were trapped in the snow. Due to the ferocity of the storm the inhabitants were unaware of their presence until next morning when they heard the child crying.

It is the child's mother who is said to have hunted the old house and her face that often appears at the window. The building is now looked after by the Scottish Mountain Bothy Association.

Mrs MacIntyre was one of a diminishing race of seanchaidhs and story tellers who had for centuries carried on the traditions of Highland Scotland, and would have heard the story first hand.

Her accurate recall and pride in the past, greatly assisted Dr Philip Gaskell when he was writing 'Morvern Transformed' which was published in 1968 by Cambridge University Press. Her grand-daughter, Mrs May Wilson, who died in September 2013, was equally blessed and so the torch was passed.



Mr and Mrs James Macintyre of Lochaline.

THERE has been a lot in the national press recently about a tragic accident at Lochalort during which a woman was seriously injured by a deer.

An incident involving a stag attacking two people in the same area almost a hundred and ten years ago to the day, made legal history and created wide interest at the time. The circumstances were as follows.

On December 28 1903 Mr and Mrs MacInally, described as hawkers, took Mrs Head, the owner of Inverlochy Estate, to court saying they had been attacked and injured by a stag.

In their evidence the hawkers swore that the stag, which had been imported from Hertfordshire for stock purposes and had both horns sawn off for the journey, went to their tent at midnight, attacked them and tossed them over some nearby rocks. Although Mrs Head's defence agent produced evidence that the hawkers had been drinking and fighting amongst themselves for days before and suggested they had caused their own injuries, Sheriff Davidson awarded them £5 each compensation and half the expenses of the trial.

ALTHOUGH the Removal of the Sex Disqualification Act of 1919 enabled women to be summoned for jury duty in Scotland, it was not until the 7th of May 1921 that one appeared in an Argyllshire Court for the first time.

The early records for Inverness-shire are silent about women jurors except for an extraordinary case held in Lochaber in the 17th century when a man was tried in the parish of Kilmacchallag by an all female jury.

The saga was collected by Sheriff Alexander Nicolson (1827-1893), Sheriff-Substitute of Greenock who is chiefly remembered for his revision of the Gaelic Bible and his collection of Gaelic Proverbs published in 1881.

The story is that a man was tried at that place by a jury of women for stealing a horse and was acquitted while the horse was condemned to be hanged!

The man had been tried before for stealing the same animal and was admonished, but he was so good to it and the horse liked him so well, that he ran away from his proper master and returned to the thief.

The Parish of Kilmacchallag is no longer known, if indeed there had ever been such a place, but Cha tugadh 'an Cille-mo-cheallag breith 'bu chloaine - no worse judgment was given in Kilmacchallag, became a fine old poetical-legal saying in the Highlands.

The tale is mentioned by Iain 'Lom' MacDonald of Keppoch the famous Gaelic bard of Lochaber who was present at the Battle of Inverlochy in 1645 in his song 'Oran do Shiùl Dughail'. 'Like the people of old, in the parish of Kilmacchallag, who sentenced the horse at the court; as bad a law as ever was in Britain, which upheld the thief, and saved him from the mangling stone.'

Iain Thornber iain.thornber@btinternet.com.



Philippino children thank Oban for typhoon support

CHILDREN from a small town in the Philippines have thanked Oban residents for their generosity in the wake of a devastating typhoon.

Almost £2,000 has been sent following an appeal from Oban woman Tess Campbell, who was in Lawaan, Eastern Samar, when Typhoon Haiyan, known locally as Typhoon Yolanda, struck.

Tess' daughter Margaret and friend Ann Rowan organised fundraising events and collected donations to give the children who had been left with nothing a Christmas.

The money provided presents including school supplies for the youngsters. Communication is still an issue and Margaret hasn't heard from her mum since before Christmas as there is still no operational phone or internet in Lawaan.

Ann said: 'We want to thank all the local businesses who donated and supported our fundraising and also all the individuals who donated and took part in the events.'

Car sharing club's urgent appeal for new members

A WEST Lochaber car sharing scheme needs more people to sign up to break even - despite doubling its membership since starting up three years ago.

West Wheels Car Club now has 45 members from the Small Isles, Knoydart and Mallaig, Arisaig and Morar, including 20 regular users.

The club runs three cars, two based at Mallaig Harbour and one at Arisaig Marine, which members can book for an hour to a few days.

The 'new idea in car ownership' is designed to cut personal transport costs as well as the carbon footprint associated with car manufacture and usage.

West Wheels director Sue Holland said the 'steady increase' in members was a welcome trend but revealed that £8,000 would still be needed in 2014-15 to keep the club going.

That figure is substantially down on previous years, leading to hopes that in future West Wheels can operate on a stand-alone basis.

Ms Holland, from the Isle of Eigg, told *The Oban Times*: 'Funding is there for the first few years but there is an expectation that we will become independent and the fear is that if usage does not go up we will not be able to continue.'

'We have funding in place until March 31. We are very optimistic and the indication is that our bid will go through. It is half the funding we got last year so we are going in the right direction. We hope to increase membership and use in 2014.'

She added: 'Half the carbon emissions associated with car ownership in the manufacture of the vehicle.'

'We are hoping that people on the mainland won't buy a second car and use our car club instead. It is also much cheaper if you are on the islands and don't use a car that often.'

West Wheels is a member of Carplus, which manages cash applications from car clubs across the country on behalf of funding body Transport Scotland. The national charity bills its objective as 'planning a rethink in car use'.

Caol man in court dock twice in the same day

A CAOL man avoided facing a jury on a drugs supply charge after his not guilty plea was accepted by the Crown.

But oil rig worker John Hutton, 3 Strone Place, was back in the dock at Fort William Sheriff Court the same afternoon pleading guilty to assault in a separate incident.

Hutton, 31, and Jenah Elder, 19 Torlundy Road, Caol, were accused of supplying class B drug, methylcathinone - a form of MCAT - to another or others between November 1 2011 and February 21 2012.

The pair appeared after 663 grams of the stimulant drug worth just under £2,000 was found at 22-year-old Elder's then home at 1 Poloma, Claggan on February 21, 2012.

But procurator fiscal Alison Wylie accepted Hutton's not guilty plea and allowed Elder to plead guilty to a reduced charge of possession of the drug following private negotiations with the two defence lawyers, which lasted two hours.

The trial was called off following the agreement being reached.

Minutes later Hutton returned to the dock and admitted assaulting John MacLean after a night out on June 30 last year. He pled guilty to repeatedly punching Mr MacLean on the head and body as he was getting into a taxi on Fort William High Street.

Defending, Gerry Sweeney said Mr MacLean had made sexual remarks about Hutton's then girlfriend in a nightclub earlier that night. He told the court the assault was due to an 'over indulgence of alcohol' and the two men remain friends.

He added: 'Personal apologies have been made.' Fining Hutton £350, Sheriff Noel McPartin said: 'It's just not justifiable at all, not even slightly, to assault someone because of what they may have said and from what I've heard in the narrative it was not a minor incident.'

Distillery buys island hotel

THE OWNER of Bowmore Distillery on Islay has confirmed it has bought The Harbour Inn in the village.

Rumour about the purchase had been rife over the festive period but this week Morrison Bowmore Distillers announced it had purchased the establishment, which has seven rooms and an award-winning restaurant.

Bowmore Distillery's Visitor Centre already runs self catering cottages in the village. Visitor Centre operations and development manager Anne Kinnes said: 'This is a very exciting time for us, growing our business to include a hotel, and we are looking forward to the opportunity of welcoming guests to experience our world class service on Islay.'

Gleneuchar has been transformed into boutique B&B Greystones by Mark and Suzanne McPhillips, who were interested to find out about the history of the building.

Suzanne said: 'We were recently contacted by a group of midwives and staff who used to work here, when it was Oban's maternity hospital and named Gleneuchar.'

'The midwives visited us just before Christmas and regaled us with stories of the hospital days.'

Gleneuchar was Oban's ma-



Gleneuchar's former midwives, from left, Elizabeth Carson, Ursula Campbell, Eileen Clarke, Kirsteen Gillespie, Betty Macintyre, Catherine Hart, Liz Crawford, Margaret Robertson and Mary Turnbull.

Midwives enjoy trip down memory lane at Oban's former maternity unit

MIDWIVES from Oban's former maternity hospital recently made a trip back in time to visit their old workplace.

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Gleneuchar was Oban's ma-

terunity unit for 40 years before closing in 1995. The last baby born in the facility was Robert Johnson.

Baby Robert was transported to the new £17.5 million Lorn and Islands District General Hospital three days after his birth, along with two expectant mums.

A sign hanging from the side of the hospital, 'Goodbye Gleneuchar' bade farewell to the tiny bundle and balloons hung from the windows. Patients from the West Highland, the McKelvie and the County hospitals all also transferred to the new facility and Ryan Turner was the first baby to arrive in the new hospital, weighing in at 8.6lb.

Gleneuchar was Oban's ma-

Rescue team find body

LOCHABER Mountain Rescue Team found the body of a male climber on Saturday.

Police believe the man is missing climber Michael O'Grady from Northern Ireland, who was reported overdue on January 6.

The team located Mr O'Grady, 64, in the Corruar area to the west of Ben Alder. He was last seen leaving Loch Ossian Youth Hostel at Corruar on December 22, intending to walk to Cultra Bothy on Ben Alder. Police said there would appear to be no suspicious circumstances.

The national charity bills its objective as 'planning a rethink in car use'.

Trio deny stealing debit card

THREE Fort William women have denied stealing a debit card and using it to withdraw money from an ATM numerous times.

Rhianydd Strang, Janice Duncan and Hayley Duncan, all of 9 Argyll Terrace, are accused of stealing a Bank of Scotland debit card and PIN number and using them to withdraw cash from the ATM at Spar, Grange Road on seven occasions between December 5 2012 and January 7 2013.

A further hearing will be held at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 4.

Oxfam proceeds to double

THE OBAN branch of Oxfam is calling on the town's residents to donate their unwanted items as every pound raised throughout January, February and March will be doubled thanks to the UK government.

The initiative is part of Oxfam's Mother Appeal to raise money and help women around the world lift their families out of poverty for good.

Running until Mother's Day, March 30, the appeal encourages people to celebrate motherhood the world over and hopes to raise more than £10 million.

Man verbally abused former partner

A KINLOCHLEVEN man has been fined after verbally abusing his former partner.

Jiri Krcchov, 38 Foyers Road, earlier admitted behaving in a threatening and abusive manner by telling his ex he would destroy her and smash her face in on December 16.

Sheriff Noel McPartin fined the 38-year-old £65 at Fort William Sheriff Court.

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Gleneuchar was Oban's ma-



Auctioneer Donald Morrison gets the bidding underway.

CHILDREN at Rockfield Primary School have been on a journey into Scotland's agricultural past, with the help of some special guests.

Over the past term two classes from Rockfield Primary School have been on a journey into the 1700s, following the journey of a drover from Oban to the market in Crieff.

SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Will your child be five years of age before 28 February 2015? Yes? Then it's time to enrol them for school.

The next school session starts on 19 August 2014. Children who will be five on or before 28 February 2015 are eligible to be enrolled for Primary 1. Enrolment will take place week commencing 27 January 2014.

Although you may wish that your child attends a school other than your local primary school, you must, in the first instance, enrol your child at the local primary school and then make a placing request to the Area Education, Culture and Sport Office.

Placing requests are not required for Gaelic Medium education or for those eligible to attend a denominational school.

| When to enrol your child? | Where | What to bring |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 3.00pm 27 January - 31 January 2014 | Local Primary School | Child's birth certificate |

Am bi an leanabh agaih coig bliadhna a dh'aois ro 28 Gearran 2015? Bidh? Ma-thà, tha an t-àm ann an clàrachadh airson na sgoile.

Bidh an aith sheisean sgoile a' toiseachadh air 19 Lùnastal 2014. Faodaidh clann a bhios coig air no ro an 28 Gearran 2015 a bhith air an clàrachadh airson P1. Bidh an t-seachdain chlàrachaidh a' toiseachadh air 27 Faoilleach 2014.

Ma tha sibh airson 's gun tèid an leanabh agaih gu sgoil eile seach a' bhun-sgoil ionadail, feumaidh sibh an clàrachadh aig a' bhun-sgoil ionadail an toiseach, agus iarrtas a chur a-steach às dèidh sin gu Oifis Foghlaim, Cultair agus Spòrs na Sgìre.

Chan eil feum air iarrtas airson àite-sgoile airson Foghlam Tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig no dhàibhsan a tha a' aith air roghainn airson sgoil buidhne.

| Cuin a chlàras sibh an leanabh agaih? | Cùite | Dà bheir sibh leibh? |
|--|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 3.00f 27 Faoilleach - 31 Faoilleach 2013 | A' Bhun-sgoil Ionadail | Teisteanas breith an leanabh |

CAN YOU HELP HIM BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE?

By committing time to the Children's Panel you can improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people in your area. You don't need experience or qualifications. We particularly encourage applications from men as men are under-represented on the Children's Panel in Argyll & Bute. For more information please visit childrenspanelscotland.org or contact Fiona McCallum at fiona.mccallum@argyll-bute.gov.uk or on 01546 604392 for an application pack. The deadline for receipt of completed applications is Monday 20th January 2014.

JOIN THE CHILDREN'S PANEL. IT'S LIFE CHANGING.

CARRADALE

A NEW slipway is to be built at Carradale Harbour after the funding of £157,000 was announced.

Carradale Harbour Group received the money from Fisheries Local Action Group for Argyll and Ayrshire, Marine Harvest Limited and East Kintyre Wind Farm Trust.

Michael Russell MSP for Argyll and Bute said: 'I am absolutely delighted that the Carradale Harbour Group have been awarded these grants.

'This is recognition of the hard work put in by all the group and their determination to improve Carradale for the local community. The new slip at Carradale will be a huge boost and contribute to the overall regeneration of the harbour car park area.

'I wish the members all the best in their future work as they incorporate as a limited company.'

FORT WILLIAM

IT WAS a 'snappy' start to Fort William WRI's 2014 programme at the first meeting on the new year.

The evening passed in a flash as Iain Ferguson of the Write Image, helped (or hindered?) by the comments and questions from his enthusiastic audience, spoke about his life as a professional photographer and the changes in photographic technology in that time.

Illustrating his talk with cameras from his own collection, he spoke of the start of his photographic interest at the age of eight when he first got his simple 'point and click' film camera up to his most recent all 'singing and dancing' digital purchase.

Always to the forefront of technology, Iain was one of the first newspaper photographers to download his pictures directly to the newsroom via the telephone wires.

The advances, in less than 20 years, are difficult to grasp by those who are familiar with film photography but today's instant access to all national and international events via I-phones and the internet is taken for granted by the younger generation.

The speaker was thanked for his interesting and informative talk by Phyllis Knox.

The winner of the competition for an animal photograph was Cathie Hamilton, second was Angela Lee.

The raffle winner was Joan Sherry.

The next meeting is on February 3 when members will be given a conducted tour of the new fire station on the Blar Mhor. Members are asked to meet there for 7.15pm. The competition is 'An Edible Valentine Treat'.

DUNVEGAN

DUNVEGAN Community Trust will meet tonight (Thursday) in the community hall at 7.30pm. Everyone welcome.



The schoolgirls place the new bedding. Photograph by Ron Allan.

Ancient healing stones ceremony

THE ANCIENT ceremony of the bedding of St Fillan's Healing Stones took place in the Old Mill by the Falls of Dochart in Kilmartin.

Held on January 5, traditionally Christmas Eve in the Julian calendar, the event began with the collection of straw and weeds freshly collected from the

river to replace the old bedding materials, which were thrown back into the river.

The ceremony dates back to the 8th century and is performed every year. Attended by locals and visitors, the ceremony was performed by local school children Emily Fraser, Olivia Ridgwell, Ellie Ridgwell and

Stacey Riddell and managed by Franny Morrison, Old Mill Project manager.

The mill runs a charity shop on the ground floor managed by volunteers, who offer information for visitors.

The mill wheel is in good condition but the lade is damaged and plans are in place to repair it

so that visitors will soon be able to view the wheel at work.

Eventually it will be used for electricity generation. The Healing Stones are displayed on the first floor along with local arts and crafts. The stones may be handled for healing purposes by appointment under supervision.

INVERGARRY

INVERGARRY Community Council has given its broad backing to a giant hydro scheme in the Great Glen near the village.

Scottish and Southern Electric won approval from Scottish Ministers last month for its £800 million pumped storage project at Coire Glas at Loch Lochy.

Some tourism businesses interests had expressed concerns about construction traffic and visual impacts - but the community council felt local employment was the number one priority.

Secretary Marigold MacLennan said after the meeting: 'It will create jobs and apprenticeships will come out of it for the young ones. We have had hydro schemes before and got the benefit. We represent both sides of the community but the overall view is that everybody seems to be quite happy about it.'

The 600MW plant will use surplus power from wind farms to pump water up from the loch to a reservoir. The stored water is then released through turbines to provide power to the

Curator Malcolm Poole is urging anyone with photographs, medals and trophies to loan them to the museum for display.

He said: 'We want to draw attention to sporting events that happened here. At one time there were several football teams in Mallaig, as well as one in Morar and one in Arisraig.

'But it can be any sport, maybe someone has pictures of unofficial golf courses that were in the area or some old trophies and medals. Really we want memories of things that happened here that a lot of people aren't aware of.'

Anyone with information or items can phone 01687 462085 or drop in to the centre on Station Road.

KNOYDART

THE KNOYDART Foundation is planning a series of events this year to celebrate the 15th anniversary of its community buyout of Knoydart Estate.

Suggestions so far from people include a book festival, music events, food events and a 10k run.

STRATHRYE

A NEW 3.5 km cycle path is to be built between Strathrye and Kingshouse after the Scottish Government announced it would provide £750,000 worth of funding.

The funding will be allocated to Strathryn Scotland which will work with Loch Lomond and the Trochass National Park and Forestry Commission Scotland to construct the path. Loch Lomond and the

Trossachs National Park will also provide match funding for the new path between the two villages. Keith Brown, transport minister, said: 'This new cycle path which will provide a traffic-free route between the communities of Strathrye and Kingshouse. It will allow residents the opportunity to walk and cycle as part of their everyday journeys and provide access to existing routes in the surrounding areas.'

Fiona Logan, chief executive of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, said: 'This important community and tourism route is something that our community has long campaigned for.'

'Thanks to the Scottish Government, Strathryn and ongoing support from the National Park and Forestry Commission Scotland, the route now provides a community link with safe cycling access for local children and other activities. This new link now paves the way for further economic investment with potential new campsites and local businesses providing recreation facilities.'

GLENDARUEL

AN ARGYLL theatre company has joined forces with Kilmadon Primary School to put Glendaruel on the map by creating an online visitor centre.

The Walking Youth Theatre is leading the Glen of the Red River project with the school and has hosted a series of workshops to create the heritage portal.

The website was officially launched last month and features a host of information on the area, which aims to encourage both those who live there and visitors to explore the beautiful glen.

Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, through the All Our Stories scheme, the company has been working with pupils to explore, record local stories and record the history of the glen that connects Glendaruel and Colntreave. Visitors to the site can enjoy the Red River Rap video, which covers 10,000 years of life in the great glen and why people came to the area. It is still being worked on and the children plan to add more information to it as people begin to discover the project.

Sadie Dixon-Spain, founder of The Walking Theatre Company and the Youth Walking Theatre Company, said: 'It has been an extraordinary adventure. Using their own history to capture the children's imagination and to see them create a powerful response in the website has been a joy.'

People can visit the website at www.GlenOfTheRedRiver.com.

KILCHREHAN

THE INAUGURAL meeting of Avich and Kilchrehan Community Council took place last Wednesday, with a welcome by Iain Jackson on behalf of the returning officer.

The members of the community council are: Alan O'Grain (convener), Peta Burton-Smith (minute secretary), Gela Rose (treasurer), John Fleming, Marilyn Henderson, Christine Metcalfe, and Fiona Strathairn.

TARBERT

TARBERT Film Club began the new year by screening a new production of William Shakespeare's classic 'Much Ado About Nothing' in the Templars Hall.

A low-budget re-telling of what is hailed as one of Shakespeare's best comedies, the film has been shot in black and white at director Joss Whedon's home. Although the scene has moved from 16th Century Sicily to 20th Century California the director has remained true to the original text.



John Alan Gillies tried to rescue the baby porpoise after a high tide washed it ashore.

RAASAY

A BABY porpoise had to be rescued after it washed up on the shore on the Isle of Raasay. Resident John Alan Gillies and his daughter Fiona found the four-foot long animal while out walking.

Mr Gillies carried the porpoise to the slip so it could be lowered into deep water but later the same day islanders Andrew Gillies and Gordon Kerr found the animal stranded again.

Mr Kerr stripped off his underwear and swam out into deep waters with the porpoise to help it get back to open sea.

It is thought that an exceptionally high tide washed the animal ashore.

SHOOTING parties are being welcomed to Raasay following the Scottish government's decision to grant Raasay Crofters Association (RCA) a five-year lease on the island's sporting rights last September. RCA committee member Andrew Gillies said visitors so far included two groups for woodcock shooting and one for red deer stag stalking.

Two more parties will arrive later this month to shoot between the season closes on February 15. Another group has booked to shoot woodcock, he said. Raasay's red deer herd numbers around 200.

MALLAIG

STAFF at Mallaig Heritage Centre are looking for photographs and memorabilia regarding sport in West Lochaber.

The items will form part of a new exhibition to mark the 20th Commonwealth Games in Glasgow from July 23 to August 3.



Volunteers get training in the use of the new defibrillators.

COLONSAY

A TRAINING day was recently held for residents of Colonsay to learn how to use the new defibrillators that were paid for thanks to local fundraising.

The Colonsay Medical Equipment Fund had raised more than £2,800 over the past year to purchase two community defibrillators for the islands of Colonsay and for Oronsay.

The cost of these was equally met by support from the British Heart Foundation and they now sit at the pier shed on Colonsay and beside the priory in Oronsay. In the event of an emergency they can be easily accessed by the public. Island GP Dr David Binnie

There was a good cross section of residents in attendance, including Royal Society for the Protection of Birds volunteers from Oronsay and the head teacher and pupils from Kilchattan school.

The Colonsay Medical Equipment Fund has been managed by a small group of residents and has been in existence for more than 10 years, with the purpose of raising funds to provide extra medical equipment for the island. It has provided a variety of items for use in the surgery, including a resuscitation trolley, ECG machine, spirometer for respiratory disorders, physiotherapy ultrasound and defibrillator.



Monster pothole: Concerns are growing as a hole on the Kilchoan-Sonachan road gets bigger every day. Photograph courtesy of a Kilchoan Diary

Concern grows over Kilchoan pothole

KILCHOAN residents have been swerving to avoid a massive pothole recently. The 'monster pothole', as it has been dubbed by locals was discovered last week and can be found on the Kilchoan-Sonachan road. It is almost

invisible during heavy rain or in the dark and is growing deeper and wider every day. Concerns about the pothole were raised at West Ardnarnachan's Community Council meeting last Tuesday.

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THE JANUARY meeting of the Tainuill branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute held on Wednesday January 8 in the village hall was opened by president Jessie Servant who welcomed 17 members and wished everyone good wishes for the coming year.

The presentation this month was a talk on tips and tricks on photography, accompanied by a slide show illustrating wonderful photographs by Kevin McGlynn.

Tainuill members plus two visitors gained a great deal of information on how to improve their photography skills in all areas of picture taking and camera use.

A vote of thanks to Kevin for such a lovely evening was given by Jane Gillies.

A splendid tea was provided by hostesses for the evening Stella Huntingford and Jane Gillies.

Competitions: Photograph of a sport (mounted on A5): 1 Jessie MacFarlane; 2 Tracey Sage.

Three Chery: Buns 1 Ann Sutherland; 2 Doreen Penswick; 3 Stella Huntingford.

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New sheriff to take charge at Fort William court

A STRAIGHT-talking law man will take charge of court cases in Fort William from early next month.

Sheriff Richard Davidson will preside over the town's sheriff court from February 3 and will also sit part-time on the bench in Portree.

Survey highlights importance of Harry Potter connection

GLENFINNAN Visitor Centre should capitalise more on Harry Potter fans visiting the viaduct nearby, a survey has revealed.

The arches structure became famous after the Hogwarts Express steamed over it in three of the film series.

Now a National Trust for Scotland study has found the viaduct is equally as popular with visitors as the monument built to mark the raising of Bonnie Prince Charlie's standard in 1745.



Glenfinnan residents didn't let hail dampen their spirits before the game. 20.0334m9y01

Shinty match marks old Scots New Year

GLENFINNAN residents celebrated the old Scots New Year with their traditional shinty game on Saturday.

Around 20 adults and children gathered at the viaduct field for a light-hearted match despite heavy hail and a muddy field.

The locals were split into two teams with 'Glenfinnan 1' scoring four goals against

'Glenfinnan 2' who scored two. A fire fought against the hail beside the pitch and warming drams and wine were handed out to the adults as spectators huddled together to watch the game.

Local fiddler Iain MacFarlane said: 'This year we played Glenfinnan versus Glenfinnan. It was good fun despite the horrible

weather. Everyone had fun - and no one was injured.'

The Glenfinnan community traditionally celebrates the old New Year's Day on the Saturday closest to the date.

January 1 became January 13 when the Gregorian calendar replaced the Julian calendar in 1752.

Communities to be linked to new super-fast broadband

SLOW internet connections will soon be a thing of the past for eight Lochaber communities after it emerged they are to be connected to high speed fibre broadband.

Argdour, Corpach, Ballachulish, Duror, Kinlochleven, Onich, Spean Bridge and Strontian will all receive the service by the end of the year.

The villages are among over 600 places across the UK included in a programme of works just published by contractors BT Openreach.

Homes and businesses will be hooked up to the new super-fast network in one of two ways - fibre to the cabinet (FTTC), or fibre to the premises (FTTP).

FTTC, a fibre and copper connection to an exchange in the street, will deliver download speeds of up to 80megabits a second and upload speeds of up to 20MB/s. FTTP, a more expensive all-fibre cable, will be even faster with download speeds of up to 300MB/s and upload speeds of 30 MB/s.

The upgrade is part of a partnership project to revolutionise communications across the north of Scotland being led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and delivered by BT. The Scottish Government broadband fund and HIE are contributing £126m towards the £146m project, with the remainder coming from BT.

Stuart Robertson, HIE director of digital Highlands and Islands for HIE, said without public funding the region would have been left behind.

He said: 'Commercial rollout taking place across the UK would have reached no more than one in five premises in the Highlands and Islands. But as a result of this project, many communities across

Lochaber can look forward to the arrival of next generation broadband from later in 2014.'

Glencoe IT consultant Simon Meldrum, who splits his work between home and London, said tourism businesses would be among those to benefit.

However, Mr Meldrum believes some customers could lose out because broadband speeds would be slowed by the length of cable to the new network.

He said: 'If you live two or three miles up the glen there will be a degradation of signal from the cabinet to the home.'

Woman gored by stag moved out of intensive care

A WOMAN gored by a stag in Lochaber last month is out of intensive care at the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow.

Dr Kate Stone was taken off sedation following a second operation on her windpipe last Tuesday and has been moved to the high dependency unit.

The animal ran towards the 44-year-old early on December 30 when she was on a short break with friends at Lochailort. She was taken to the Belford Hospital in Fort William before being airlifted to Glasgow. She was placed in an induced

coma on Hogmanay following the first operation to repair her trachea.

Signs are Dr Stone will make a steady recovery. She has slowly been regaining consciousness and becoming more active in terms of communicating with doctors and her family.

NEWSDESK 01631 568000

Advertisement for 'Bonnie Babies' competition 2014. Includes a photo of a baby and a form to enter the competition. The form asks for child's name, date of birth, parent/guardian name, and address. It also includes a section for 'How to enter' and 'Terms & conditions'.

Advertisement for 'Blocked Drain?' by Abel Drainage & Groundworks. It offers drain and septic tank surveys, installations, and repairs. Contact number: 01369 840367. Website: www.aandbel.co.uk.

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Advertisement for 'Half Price' digital edition of The Oban Times. It offers a 50% discount on the digital edition. Website: www.obantimes.co.uk/digital.

Advertisement for 'Oban, Lorn and the Isles - A Good Place to Live Work and Play?'. It promotes the area and offers a questionnaire. Website: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/cpp-questionnaire.

Advertisement to follow the newspaper on Facebook. Website: www.facebook.com/obantimes.

Large advertisement for the digital edition of The Oban Times. It offers a 50% discount on the digital edition every week plus a free gift. Website: www.obantimes.co.uk/digital.

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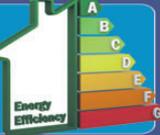
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Call slip up led to rescue delay

AN INCOMPLETE Mayday radio call led to the rescue of a crew from a sinking fishing boat off Harris being delayed by 45 minutes, investigators have found.

The three crew aboard the *Achieve* were being unaware the vessel was going down because an alarm in the fish hold had been disconnected, a Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) report also said.

Lewis fisherman Norman Macleod died from hypothermia after the creel boat foundered off Taransay on February 21 last year.

The 30-year-old skipper and another crew member hailed Mr Macleod aboard a liferaft after he had jumped from the vessel as it sank below him.

But the 20 minutes he spent in the 4°C water meant efforts to save the 46-year-old at Stornoway hospital failed.

The MAIB said the skipper's unfamiliarity with the boat's digital selective calling (DSC) and 'incorrect understanding' of another emergency distress call system, the Manoverboard Guardian, meant he preferred voice contact with the coastguard.

Sinking

But the watch operator misheard the vessel's name, *Accord* and the skipper had no time to correct the misunderstanding as the *Achieve* was sinking 'very rapidly'.

It was only when it became clear that no vessel by the name of *Accord* was in distress that the search for the *Achieve* began.

The report concluded the boat began taking on water after 'a heavy slam' sprung a plank below her watertight.

There were no warning lights in the wheelhouse to warn the crew that the pump had automatically started working.

It said: 'Had the hold bilge alarm been functional, it should have alerted the crew almost as soon as the flooding started. The crew could then have taken steps to prevent further flooding, or at least raised a distress call much earlier.'

Liferaft

However, the MAIB congratulated the skipper for ensuring there was a serviced and working liferaft on board as fishing vessels under 10m registered length were not required to carry one.

It added: 'Further, his timely action in releasing the liferaft, kicking it clear when it was about to be snagged in the net, cutting it free as it was drawn towards the propeller and helping one of his crewmen into the raft, were all commendable.'

'His diligence and presence of mind might have saved his own life and that of his crewman.'

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Stephanie Parsons: pregnancy means she has had to step down as coxswain. Donnie Nicolson: leading the 100-mile Row St Kilda to Skye charity expedition.

The larch skiff under repair at Broadford: she will be in the water by early April.



It's all smiles at Caol Lunch Club before the food arrives. 20_1031unch01

Lunch club serves up a winner

THE CHIPS were down for Caol Lunch Club when it closed in 2011 under Highland Council outbacks - but now the vital service is going from strength to strength.

Initially run by volunteers after the council pulled out, the club became the responsibility of Lochaber Action on Disability (LAD) in November last year.

'Since then the average number of elderly, vulnerable and disabled people sitting down at Caol Community Centre for a craic and a hot two-course meal has risen from 30 to 35.

The club is a great way of countering loneliness and isolation through meeting new friends, LAD manager Laura Cheetham said.

'If somebody is alone at home they can become reclusive, especially if they are not very good at walking,' she said.

'They might not see anybody and close in on themselves so we are trying to bring them back out into the community.'

LAD runs the club in partnership with the Lochaber District Lunch Club committee, with support from Highland Council and Caol Community Centre.

Committee chairman Dougie MacLachlan said: 'We are all working together and so far it has been very successful.'

Baby news leaves crew expecting new coxswain

Rower forced to pull out of 100-mile St Kilda to Skye charity event

AN AMBITIOUS attempt to row 100-miles from St Kilda to Skye for charity has lost a key crew member - because she is expecting a baby.

Stephanie Parsons was due to be coxswain aboard an 18-foot wooden larch skiff for the potentially perilous journey back to Portree this summer.

But the skilled rower had to pull out after learning her baby was due on May 9 - just when the boat could be in the water.

Stephanie, who was captain of Anglia Ruskin University rowing club in Cambridge before she moved to Portree, told *The Oban Times*: 'I would like to have been the coxswain but I will carry on coaching them.'

'I will be watching for them very nervously and I would rather be in the boat with them than on land biting my nails.'

Three other girls, Rosie McDavid and Cathryn Baillie from Portree, and Gill Housley from Carbot, have agreed to take Stephanie's place.

Row St Kilda to Skye

EXCLUSIVE REPORT BY STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

Expedition leader Donnie Nicolson, who will be one of eight Skymen behind the oars, said: 'Our three replacement coxswains have never been in a boat before, never rowed and never coxed.'

'The challenge now is not only getting the boat ready but training up the three girls in time for departure.'

The skiff is currently undergoing refurbishment at Iain MacLean's boatyard in Broadford.

Mr Nicolson said: 'We are waiting for a delivery of timber so we can progress things. We are hoping to have her ready by springtime, ideally March or early April at the latest.'

'We want to be ready for the beginning of May as historically that's when we can get some cracking weather.'

'If we don't get good conditions

then we will just wait for a weather window. The priority now for the crew is just to get on the water.'

Both skiff and crew will be taken out to St Kilda on the foredeck of the expedition's support vessel, the Portree fishing boat the *Dunan Star*.

The non-stop row back to Portree is expected to take two days.

The attempt is being undertaken in aid of the RNLI and Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers.

One of the young carers has christened the boat but organisers are not revealing the name until repairs are nearing completion.

Meanwhile, Mr Nicolson has tracked down the great-grandson of Thomas Orr, the man who built the skiff at Greenock in the 1890s.

Repeated phone calls to Thomas Orr Kirk in Florida met with no response.

Mr Nicolson wrote to Mr Kirk before Christmas but so far no reply has been received.

Curtain up on island war project

GAELIC arts agency Prospect nan Ealan (PNE) is to assist five Western Isles communities commemorate the centenary of the Great War through a new project.

Gairm nan Gàidheal 'Call of the Gael' will explore the involvement of islanders in the conflict through drama, music, song and exhibitions.

Professional theatre practitioners are working with local people to produce scripts for five new plays, each to be staged at a different location.

The first will be performed in Harris in March followed by North Uist, Barra, Point and Stornoway.

The writers involved include D S Murray, Iain Macrae, Alison Lang, Chrissie Ross and North Uist Gaelic Centre.

PNE chairwoman Cathy MacDonald said: 'This ambitious project in the five different island communities is being supported by people from these communities, many of whom have a direct connection with the horror that unfolded in 1914.'

'All parts of the United Kingdom suffered but few sacrificed as many as the islands. We hope to be able to reflect its impact and draw on the great reservoir of creative material the Great War produced.'

PNE plans to take the plays to communities across Scotland including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness, Oban and Skye, later in the year.

Man denies reversing car at pedestrians

A BALLACHULISH man has denied reversing his car at speed towards pedestrians in the village on two consecutive days.

Ray Chisholm of Allanbrook, Lettermore, is accused of driving dangerously towards Sandra Michie outside her home at Lochside Cottages, Ballachulish on July 10 last year.

The 45-year-old faces a second charge of driving without due care and attention and reversing towards Mrs Michie, her husband Kenneth Michie and another woman at the same location the following day.

Chisholm is due to stand trial at Fort William Sheriff Court on February 3.

Welcome drop in fire deaths as safety message hits home

WORK to educate the public on fire safety appears to be paying dividends in the Highlands, a new report has revealed.

Figures released in a new three year plan for Fire and Rescue in the Highlands show just one person died in fires in 2012-13 compared with nine the previous year, while fire casualties were down from 69 to 49.

The total number of fires, both deliberate and accidental, also fell from 561 to 400, while 'good intent' false alarms dropped from 601 to 516.

The only types of call outs to increase, according to the local operational assessment, were accidental building fires in buildings other than homes, road traffic collisions and malicious false alarms.

Scott Hay, local senior officer for Fire and Rescue Highland welcomed the big reduction

in loss of life and injuries. He told *The Oban Times*: 'It's been unbelievable. We've had a special emphasis on prevention and protection and we're now starting to see the benefits of that.'

'We're getting so much benefit from working with people on fire safety education and finding ways to prevent fires. We want that to continue as much as possible in the next three years.'

However, Mr Hay admitted much work remained to be done to reduce the road accident rate in the Highlands, which is the highest in Scotland and three times the national average.

He said: 'The number of crashes could be for a number of reasons, it's hard to say. It could be wet roads, the sheer number of people using the roads, particularly in the summer, and in some cases it could be that

people go too fast on certain roads.'

'This is a beautiful part of the world and there might be a feeling that when there's an open road in front of someone they just want to open the car up and go too fast.'

'We're doing everything we can to lower this figure. We have a zero tolerance policy and ideally would like not to see any accidents at all and I would urge everyone to drive to the road conditions.'

The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Highland 2014-2017 comes from a Scotland-wide initiative to reduce the number of fires and accidents across the country, broken down into area divisions.

The public is invited to submit their views online via the feedback form at www.fireScotland.gov.uk.

Fund boost could see Lochaber Geopark back on world stage

THE BODY promoting Lochaber's unique landscapes and rock formations has been through a financial lifeline.

And the £37,000 funding from Scottish Ministers could mean Lochaber Geopark regaining its place on the world stage.

In 2011, the voluntary group lost the coveted Unesco geopark status because it could not afford a project

officer - a key requirement of the designation.

Its membership of the European and Global Geopark Networks also lapsed, leaving North West Highlands and Shetland as Scotland's only Unesco-accredited geoparks.

But now Lochaber looks set to rejoin the ranks in 2015 by employing full-time staff to run

day-to-day operations and draw up a business plan detailing a future without government hand-outs.

Lochaber Geopark director David Findlay told *The Oban Times*: 'We will be allowed back in again because we have one of the best geological areas on the planet.'

'This is great news for Lochaber Geopark and ends the immediate uncertainty of short term funding

to enable the geopark to find a mechanism to provide long term sustainability.

'I will then be in a position to make a reaplication to the European and Global Geopark Networks to renew its membership and regain the UNESCO accolade, for the wonderful and outstanding landscape and geological heritage of Lochaber.'

Ministers have also requested that Lochaber Geopark join forces with North West and Shetland to find ways to share some activities and cut costs, Mr Findlay said.

Lochaber's geological wonders include Ardanmurchan's volcanic rings and the Parallel Roads in Glen Roy, the former shorelines of lochs formed during different ice ages.

Thousands back online campaign against excessive delivery charges

By EMMA CRICHTON A LOCHABER woman campaigning online to end excessive delivery charges in the north has gained the support of more than 20,000 people.

Jacky Cooper's page on a social networking site is calling on retailers and couriers to stop charging inflated prices and refusing to post products to the Highlands and Islands - and users have flocked to the site to discuss their experiences.

Ms Cooper, from Ballachulish, launched her crusade on January 5 after becoming frustrated with companies not delivering to her area. Over 1,300 people signed up within 24 hours and support has been rocketing ever since.

Ms Cooper, who works in Ballachulish Co-op, set up the page after browsing an online auction site and noticed yet another seller who would not post to the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'I was incensed as this had happened so many times previously.'

In addition to this I had an experience with [an online retailer] before Christmas where at checkout, they would not post perfume to my postcode, even though they stated it was available to the UK mainland.

'I was so surprised how the numbers 'liking' the page started to increase from the moment the page was launched. It just shows the strength of feeling on this subject, not only from



Jacky Cooper: 20,000 people are now backing her online campaign.

people in the Highlands and Islands but also in other Scottish areas too.'

She added: 'I have encouraged contributors to share their stories, both good and bad.'

'This has shown us many examples of how the Highland area, and even Scotland more generally, is penalised

for being at the northern end of the UK. What I always say is that London is as far away from Scotland as Scotland is from London.'

One common problem for online buyers appears to be suppliers suggesting the Highlands is not part of mainland Scotland and charging excessive rates as a result.

Grace Malcolm posted on the campaign page: 'I live in postcode PA23 and I was asked for £20 as I live in Scotland offshore. I live in Dumfries.'

Other posters complained of companies charging three times the normal delivery rate or refusing to deliver to anywhere in the Highlands and Islands.

Sabine Weiten from the Isle of Lewis said: 'I wanted to order flat packed cardboard boxes as packing material. Picked a Scottish company which said free delivery.'

'Found out that they wanted over £60 for delivery to the Isle of Lewis.'

Katie Balmor-Cowell from Moray said she was quoted £65 to deliver a bed from Glasgow despite the eBay seller advertising free post and packaging.

Sir Robert Smith, the MP for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire, lodged a petition at Westminster last year on the issue.

He heads the 'Fair Delivery Scotland' campaign to end excessive delivery surcharges and compel retailers to be upfront about charges.

Ballie West Presents Swan Lake Corran Halls Friday 24 January & Saturday 25 January 2014 7.30pm | £14.00, Conc. £12.00 Tel: 01631 567333

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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Pitch pricing could be costly mistake

FOR A generation that faces an obesity epidemic, it is easy to understand the frustration over the availability and cost of local authority-owned sports pitches.

The benefits of an active lifestyle on physical and mental health are well documented.

So, if it becomes too difficult - or too expensive - to take part in organised sport, then we are surely denying ourselves something precious.

Argyll and Bute Council will see its charges are in line with other areas of Scotland, lower than the Scottish average in fact.

This could be a dangerous safety net, however, as each county has its own needs and requirements and sports teams in Argyll could be the first to vote with their feet.

Threats of a pitch boycott sum up frustrations in Oban, which pays the highest charge of all the towns in the county.

But even if the council makes charges more uniform across the board, it is unlikely to be cheaper for everyone.

GLASGOW LETTER

Local associations

AS I INDICATED last week, Clydebank and District Highlander's Association and Glasgow Skye Association are underway with their 2014 syllabus.

Both were rewarded with good attendances showing that patrons were pleased to get life back to normality after the festive period.

Gaelic singers at Clydebank were Catriona Fair, Rhona Morrison and Alasdair Whyte with Beth Street, from Helensburgh, making an excellent concert debut as the new Gaelic singer.

In a concert chaired by Alasdair MacCuish, Robert Wood was the piper and Archie Gardner the accordionist with Kirsteen Grant as accompanist.

In what is now a traditional event on its calendar, the start of each new year, the Skye Association held its family ceilidh in Crawford Hall, Gordon MacKeever was in fine voice leading the singing and as well as the customary quiz the fine attendance enjoyed the fine fayre for which its ladies' committee is renowned.

Ceilidh with a difference
AS PART of the build up to the Commonwealth Games, Cal Gael is organising a ceilidh evening in the original format of storytelling, singing and dancing with artists from different backgrounds taking part.

This should be a fun evening for all the family and will take place at Cal Gael, 15 Fair Street, Govan, G51 2TS with free admission.

Junior piping competition
THE 2014 Junior Piping Competition at the National Piping Centre will take place on Saturday February 22 with three categories for competitors.

Category A is for juniors 15 to 17 years, Category B, novice under 15 years and Category C, chanter.

Entries will be accepted on a first come basis, with only 30 allowed in each category and must be submitted by Friday 9th Feb. For further information of the requirements for each category contact Clare Lynas at clarys@pipingcentre.co.uk.

Funding opportunity
BORD na Gàidhlig is inviting applications for available funding which can be used to help projects which encourage and increase the learning and use of Gaelic.

The closing date for applications is February 14. Further information is available on the BORD na Gàidhlig website or by phoning 01463 225454.

Oban High School
WAS YOUR time at Oban High School the best days of your life?



Oban railway station demolition

Jim Donn of Aberdeen submitted this week's flashback photograph which features Oban's old railway station in the process of being demolished adjacent to the new station. The old station was quite a building, and the front doubled as a cinema in the film 'The Eye of the Needle' starring Donald Sutherland mand the late La Brette. Prints or emails must be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone wishing prints returned must supply a stamped addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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Scandalous pitch pricing

Sir,
I am writing in regards to the pitch is an excellent facility for Oban as many people, young and old, use it at nights and weekends for a variety of sports.

However, I have been bemused and disappointed by the running and cost of this facility compared to like-for-like facilities in Helensburgh and Campbelltown, the main concern is the rip-off, real prices we pay in Oban.

For a match in Oban we pay up to £120 for two hours, which is very expensive compared to Campbelltown and Helensburgh.

Two appointments engineers to phone me during specified hours and one appointment for a visit were all missed, though I waited in for them.

Then on January 3 an advisor offered to refer the matter to a manager. Next day the engineers arrived and the lines were repaired.

Hopefully BT and Open Reach will note Colonsay's experience, and ensure that their communication channels remain open for booking emergency repairs, even in holiday periods.

They might even consider sending engineers to remote areas by helicopter, as the power companies do.

Angela Skrimshire, Athadh nan Geadh, Isle of Colonsay.

Absurd renewable energy proposals

Sir,
I can only assume by the absurdity of his renewable energy proposals for Scotland that David Pollard - *The Oban Times*, Letters, January 9 - is either a beneficiary of the wind subsidies gray train or a deluded 'green'.

He glories in the fact that so much electricity was recently produced by wind turbines in Germany that the price was less than nothing.

But that is exactly why wind energy is so useless as a component of any economic and sustainable energy policy. It is unreliable and uncontrollable. It produces energy when it is not needed and fails to produce it when it is needed.

Mr Pollard's tongue must have been firmly planted in his cheek when he then said that we have seen electricity prices double as a result of still being dependent on fossil fuel power stations.

It is difficult to conceive that anyone would make such a statement and believe it, but just in case, here is a simple fact for him to consider; wind energy is the most expensive of all forms of generation...in spite of what the vested interests will tell us.

The next claim is even more ridiculous; that Scotland could not only become self sufficient in renewable electricity but could export massive amounts.

When Scotland reaches this energy utopia which Mr Pollard envisages, I wonder what he proposes we will use for base load supply which will still be needed for all the times when the wind is not blowing or is blowing too hard, which is most of the time.

And our surplus wind energy, when we have to export, will be worth the same as Germany's

was last month.

As the foremost energy economist Professor Dieter Helm pointed out to the Commons Select Committee in November, renewables such as wind and solar cannot play anything other than a minor role in any energy supply policy.

Alan Thomson, Kilcamb Padlock, Stronachan.

Anger over Port Appin outfall pipe

Sir,
The following is a copy of a letter sent to Michael Russell, Argyll and Bute MSP:

'I am astonished in this day and age Scottish Water should propose a sewage outfall pipe that is sometimes visible in such an environmentally important location as the main beach at Port Appin (planning application 13/02276/PP, Septic Tank West of the Port Appin outfall pipe).

'I am also less impressed that their application should have been timed just before Christmas with a closure date of December 26, in that the details of the application in *The Oban Times* said nothing about this outfall pipe, that completely inadequate neighbour notification was given, and that no public consultation whatsoever was undertaken, the inevitable result being that the closure date was passed before the residents knew anything about it!'

'I ask that you use your best endeavours to have this outfall pipe kept permanently out of sight.'

Geoff White, Hazelwood, Port Appin.

Bag-packing fundraiser thanks

Sir,
Many thanks for your excellent coverage of our recent two-day bag-packing event at Morrisons supermarket in Fort William.

As you reported, The Rotary Club of Lochaber raised almost £4,000 over the two-day run up to Christmas and I would be grateful if, through *The Oban Times*, I could extend our thanks to the customers of Morrisons for their tremendous generosity and support.

It was great to work with the helpful checkout operators and we are also appreciative of Donald McWhirter, store manager, giving us the opportunity and his colleague Margaret Laidlaw for the detailed arrangements.

Those who kindly donated cash to their support were most grateful to be used for local charities and worthwhile causes.

We have no administrative overheads and every penny raised will be put to good use, much of it through our £200 monthly give-away that any organisation can apply for through our website.

I would also like to thank the friends and families of Rotary Club members who gave their time, at a busy time of year, to help with the bag packing.

Without their support we would not have achieved this magnificent four figure sum!

To the public of Lochaber, we extend our grateful thanks and our best wishes for a happy and healthy 2014 during which the club will continue its ethos of community service.

John Rosie, President of The Rotary Club of Lochaber.

Thank you from SCAA

Sir,
As we start a new year, may I take this opportunity to thank all your readers who have helped to keep Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance flying into 2014.

Since launching seven months ago, the country's only charity funded air ambulance helicopter has responded to nearly 200 emergency calls right across Scotland - many of them to people in need in your area.

Communities, businesses and individuals have all helped raise and donate vital funds and we thank them sincerely as they have played a crucial role in allowing us to fly to the aid of those who needed medical help quickly or to be moved to hospitals rapidly.

We simply could not have flown so many missions without their help and everyone at SCAA wants to let them know how much we value their support.

The charity also wants to convey the thanks and good wishes of all our 'passengers' who certainly would not be in such good shape today if it were not for the kind heartedness of your readers.

Every day more volunteers come forward to help us in a wide variety of different ways. And their support is invaluable.

In order to keep the professional life-saving pilot and paramedic crew airborne, SCAA needs a separate - but equally important - crew of volunteers in your area to take on fundraising and promotional tasks, bringing the amazing work of this vital charity to a wider audience.

I hope readers will continue to support us as we only succeed with them behind us. Gavin J Davey OBE, chief executive, Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance.

'Britain's Greatest Generation'

Sir,
Award-winning history documentary company Testimony Films is making a new documentary series for BBC2 paying tribute to Britain's Greatest Generation.

We want to hear from men and women in their late 80s, 90s and 100s who have vivid and interesting stories to tell from their past.

Are your children or grandchildren fascinated by your tales of the past?

If so we would love to talk to you about your story. If you would like to share your memories please telephone Pete, Emily or Sara on 0117 925 8589 or email pete.vance@testimonyfilms.com.

Testimony Films, 12 Great George Street, Bristol, BS1 5RH.



Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

IS BUAINÈ NA gach nì an nàire! Chan eil teagamh nach e fìor dhroch tòiseachadh dha Bhliadhna 'nì a bh' aig Feachd Plores a' Mhet ann an Lunnainn agus tha am-bàire agam gun tor e tìme mhòr dhaibh an cùil a choshadh air ais.

Gu dearb, canaidh cùil gum mair an lot air an ainm nach nach bi cùilme air iomadh gaisge a dh' fhadhadh là a chur as a dhèidh! Mar a tha sean fhacl eile ga chur, cha leighis athreascas breuas. Tughadh dume ciallach sam bhith an taimalt a bhios air an còr air dà fhichead mìle nàiche a dh' agair aig a' Mhet ri linn 'm' mar a tha an tìbe, a tha cho deamachadh dha Fheadh ann a bhith a' luibhair seirbhis dha còr seachd mìleann duine, air fùlang cho mòr ri linn gnòmh beagan de dh' fheadhann.

'S e feallsnachd a' Mhet 'dion ionnsaigh air cuoir, làn-àire dha luchd-fulang cuoir, agus obair sàr phroifeisnachd. Ged a bhios a' mhòr-chuid den luchd-obrach a' leantainn na poileasaidh sin cho dèileas 's is urrainn dhaibh, chan eil teagamh nach do thrèag an constabul Cè Wallis sin gu tur. Cha ghabh an fhianais-bhrèige aige dìon agus soillidh mi gum bi mòran a' beachdachadh air mar a thachradh nam b' ann air cuideigin bochd a bhiodh na breagan gan cur, is gu nàdarra bidh amharas ann mu cho tric 's a dh' fhadhadh a leithid tachairt. Ach mar a bhios a' bhuic-buidheann a' dèanamh, bh' ann poileasaidh a' dìon an cùil fhèin.

Mar a thuirr Iar-Chòiseanair a' Mhet 's eil d'fhàidh d' mhuinntir Lunnainn a cho-dhùin gum deach an suidheachadh le Mark Duggan a kilmiseachadh anns an dòigh a dh' aig a' Mhet cho bhliadhnaichean a bhith nas cruaidhe air daoine nach eil geal agus cha b' e d'aine geal a bh' ann am Mark Duggan, agus agus an t-sìth a dh'ion fheadhann air leth faicteallach bh' thaobh a' phoileasaidh ann coimearsachd dam buineadh Duggan.

Dh'fhàidh air gach taobh! Ach chan eil gubh air modh ionnsachadh dha luchd-poileitags lafarra, àrdanach mar Andrew Mitchell, Mura b' e cho mhòr-dhaibh 's a bh' ann, bh' ann cuideigin seò seo ri sheachadh!

LONDON'S Metropolitan Police is having a bad start to 2014. Every professional organisation defends the actions of its members in the delivery of their service. The Met is no different and will naturally stand by its officers until they are irrefutably proven guilty of misconduct.

Keith Wallis has done enormous damage to the Met at a time when it requires such infinite care in its focus on community relations following the Mark Duggan inquiry.

Andrew Mitchell, whose arrogance caused so much trouble, might also benefit from some interpersonal skills and courtesy training!

Ailean Caimbeul (Allan Campbell)
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

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YOUR LETTERS

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The editor also reserves the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime telephone number is also required for verification.

Anonymous letters will not be published without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

Please write or fax to Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001. Email editor@obantimes.co.uk.

PRESS POLICY

WE AT The Oban Times do our utmost to make sure that all our reports are fair, accurate and balanced, but we accept that, on occasion, mistakes can occur in the hectic process of producing the biggest local newspaper in the West Highlands.

It is the policy of The Oban Times Group to correct any errors in print. If you find an error of fact on our pages please write to The Editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB giving your daytime telephone number where possible. This statement of policy will appear on this page every week along with any corrections or clarifications.

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The views expressed in The Oban Times are not necessarily those of this newspaper.

OWNING an animal, whether you are buying one for the first time or have had them for years, can be a big task with lots of work involved.

Pets need lots of care, love and attention, the volume of which can be a shock for new owners, but The Oban Times will help make owning your new animal just magic with this handy guide.

If you are getting an animal for the first time preparation is key. You need to have everything from bowls to beds before your new pet arrives.

Thankfully there are lots of pet stores on the west coast of Scotland providing high quality items, which will ensure the comfort and safety of your pet.

Pets need lots of time devoted to them and if you find this a problem you could take advantage of professional pet sitting services for when you're away from home for short periods, perhaps for work.

However, if you plan on having a longer holiday and are unable to take your pet with you booking them into a kennel is usually the best idea.

The best way to ensure your pet stays in good health is to research the correct care for your animal. However, accidents do happen and if your pet does get injured you will need to take them to the vet.

Depending on what has happened to your pet the bill for bringing them back to full health can be expensive so to avoid being out of pocket taking out a pet insurance policy is advised.

Of course the vet isn't just for when things go

wrong. Your animal will need to visit for routine vaccinations and to ensure they generally remain in good health.

Just like humans, your pet needs plenty of exercise. This will keep them in good health and ensure they live a longer life.

Dogs need at least a daily walk, hamsters need out in their exercise balls and birds should get out of their cage and be allowed to stretch their wings.

If you are unable to provide your pet with the exercise they need you may wish to reconsider the purchase. However, if you will only be held up in work occasionally employing a dog walker could be a good idea.

Training your animal is also important whether they are young or old. Importantly, training isn't just for dogs. You can train any animal by giving them a treat when they achieve a goal. If you are struggling to train your pet there are classes available.

Grooming your pet on a regular basis is also important. Whether you have a cat, dog or horse, grooming is an essential part of their routine to avoid discomfort.

If you are unable to carry this out yourself there are grooming services, which are happy to take care of this aspect of your animal's well-being for you. Many also operate on a mobile basis and will visit your home if required.

Lastly your new pet should never be bored, get them lots of toys and play with them regularly. Remember, the more time you spend with your pet the more rewarding the experience will be.

animal magic



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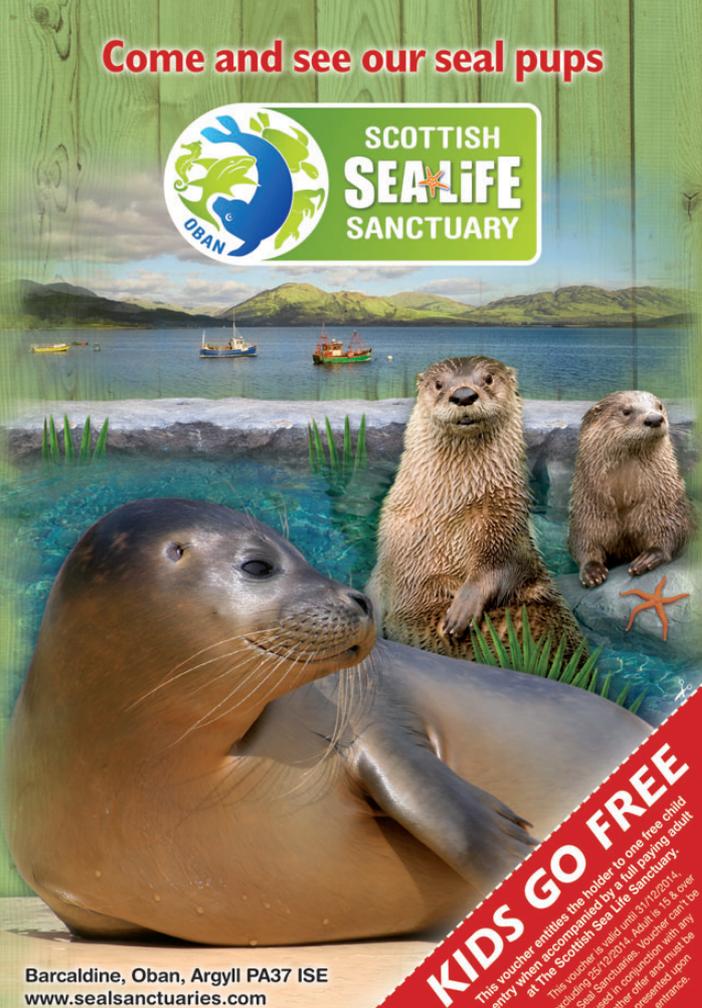
CATS AND DOGS LOOKING FOR HOMES

| | |
|---|---|
|  BENNIE Bengal cross. Must be an only cat, needs a lot of space in a rural area. Is neutered. |  BUFFY Very nice semi-fluffy boy. Has been here for 2 years now. Is neutered. |
|  OLLIE Very sweet girl. Will be spayed before rehoming. |  CASPER Nice, friendly boy. Needs an indoor home. Is neutered. |
|  SEAMUS Sweet wee boy around 10 weeks old. Will need neutering at 6 months. |  CHARLIE Nice Persian boy, but needs some body experienced with this breed. Rehomed or foster home. Is neutered. |
|  DIZZY Has been here for around 3 years and is bored! Is spayed. |  FERGUS Wee boy around 12 weeks old. Nice wee soul, still a bit shy but getting there. Needs neutering at 6 months. |
|  CAMMIE A bit shy but getting better. Is neutered. |  BILLY 6/7 year old Jack Russell boy. Not used to children, loves exercise! |
|  EVIE Very nice natured girl. 1 year old. |  MISSY Friendly and affectionate Staffie girl. Is spayed and used to children. 2 years old. |

Dog enquiries please phone Jean on 01631 566406
Cat enquiries please phone Pat on 01852 300362
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THE YOUNGEST resident of Iona was the star of the school's Christmas play - at only two months of age. Eilidh McInnes had the audience going 'aaahh' in her role as the baby Jesus while pupils from Iona Primary School performed 'The Conversion of Mrs Scrooge' to a packed house. Iona residents filled the hall as the children made them laugh with their many jokes and managed to help everyone forget their troubles of rotten weather and having no water and regular power cuts.

Abundance of musicians perform at Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club

A CAPACITY audience and an abundance of musicians of all ages ensured a great start to 2014 for the Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club.

To start the evening last Thursday it was a first visit for primary school members of Skye and Lochalsh Traditional Music Group with their tutor, fiddler Laura Harrington of Carbost.

The 10 fiddlers and two cellists played a lovely version of Fairy Lullaby which included two vocal verses and delighted the audience, before going on to play a polka.

One of the group, Elsa

Galbraith, in a first for the club, played a solo cello set and young Emily Voisey gave a fiddle solo.

To complete the group's participation, four secondary pupils along with Laura treated the club to some lively tunes.

Congratulations to the group on providing such great entertainment.

Unusually fiddlers outnumbered box players on the night and Caerina Campbell on fiddle, accompanied by John Cameron on piano, played the beautiful slow air, Cluny Castle, followed by The Royal Scots Polka and



The Burns Brothers Trio of Nicky McMichan, Gary Sutherland and John Burns in action.

Crossing the Minch.

Later Caerina was joined on stage by Laura Harrington for an unrehearsed fiddle duet of sparkling Shetland reels which wowed the audience.

Other musicians during the evening were Donald John Campbell on drums, on accordions David Morton, John MacGilvary and John Cameron and yet another fiddler, Lyes Oussaiden

of Edinbane.

The eagerly awaited guest band for the evening was to be the Burns Brothers Trio, with accordionists George and John Burns and drummer Nicky McMichan.

Unfortunately because of work commitments, George Burns was unable to appear but he was ably substituted at short notice by accordionist Gary Sutherland.

This trio, all respected bandleaders, launched into a well balanced programme of lively jigs, reels and marches interspersed with flowing waltzes and an excellent continental number, to delight a happy audience and ending a great night of music.

The club look forward to Thursday, February 6 to a visit from The Andy Kain Trio.

- John Grundy.

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

bonnie babies

competition 2014

in association with **The co-operative membership**

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of Co-op vouchers to be won!

£500 1st place

£150 2nd place

£100 3rd place

How the competition works

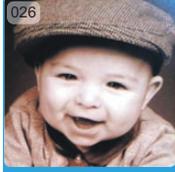
The Oban Times Bonnie Babies competition is back for 2014. Enter your little bundle of joy today for your chance to win a whopping £500 worth of vouchers to spend at The Co-operative!

Plus, this year we will have £150 of vouchers for a second place winner and £100 vouchers for third place. The Co-operative Group is the UK's largest mutual business owned by nearly eight million members. It is the UK's fifth largest food retailer operating across the country with almost 2,800 local, convenience and medium sized stores. Visit www.co-operative.coop.

The competition will take place in weekly groups where readers are asked to vote for that week's bonniest baby. For example, if your child is in group one and gets the most votes out of all the entries in that issue they will be entered into the grand finale. The baby who has the most votes from the grand finale, held early 2014, will be crowned the Bonniest Baby of 2014. It doesn't matter which round your baby appears in, you can keep voting every week from the date your child appears until the voting deadline, which we will announce in a future issue.

We won't count the votes to decide who goes into the grand finale until the voting deadline has been reached. Full details online at www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies.

ENTER YOUR BABY TODAY! See page 7 or enter online at www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|
|  David MacPherson 5 months Taynuilt |  Joshua James Graham 7 months Oban |  Zachary Smith 17 months Isle of Tiree |  Bobbie Campbell 6 months Isle of Tiree |  Charlie Randle 17 months North Connel |  Toby Acton 11 months Taynuilt |  Lacey May Walford 9 months Oban |
|  Maria Catherine June Saunders 19 months Dalmally |  Owen MacGarvey 13 months Glasgow |  David Christopher Michael Warham 1 month Oban |  Nathan Adam 1 month Clachan Seil |  Charlie Vick 23 months Taynuilt |  Lewis Bruce Aitken 1 month Oban |  Alice Shiona Campbell 8 months Oban |

Vote for Group Two's finalist!

How to vote

Readers can vote for their favourite baby by text or by post, using the coupon provided on this page. You can vote for as many babies as many times as you like until we announce the closing date to register your votes. Just make sure you quote the number stated on the child's photograph when voting.

By text:

To vote by text, **text the word BABY followed by a space then the three digit number stated on the top left hand side of the child's photograph to 88010.**

Text messages cost **£1** plus one message at standard network rate. The voting deadline will be announced in a future issue.

By coupon:

Complete the voting form provided on this page and send it to The Oban Times, Bonnie Babies VOTE, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB. Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. The voting deadline will be announced in a future issue.



Example text.
DON'T FORGET TO PUT IN A SPACE.

VOTING COUPON The Oban Times A WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

I would like to vote for:

Baby number*:

Baby's name:

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

*Baby number must be supplied. This can be found at the top left of each baby photograph.

Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted and will not count as one vote.

You may send in multiple voting coupons in one envelope.



Terms & conditions: The winner must be willing to take part in publicity. Photocopied voting coupons will not be accepted. Text messages cost £1 plus one message at standard network rate. The deadline to receive votes by will be announced in a future issue and on The Oban Times website. One text counts as one vote. One coupon counts as one vote. The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. Voters must be aged 16 or over and must have the bill payer's permission. Full terms and conditions at www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies. Customer services: 01631 556000.

Lions Club Charity Ceilidh a roaring success

A CEILIDH showcasing a wide array of talent in the Oban area has raised £700 for children's charity CHAS.

Organised by Oban and Lorn Lions Club, the sell-out evening held in the town's Royal Hotel saw performances from singers, dancers and musicians. Cool an Aire had been scheduled to play for the ceilidh but had to cancel at the 11th hour, arranging a specially assembled four-piece from Oban High School's traditional music programme to take their place.

The youngsters did not disappoint, as they played

a mix of songs and dance band tunes.

Oban High School pipers James Divers and Kate MacPherson opened proceedings and there was a performance from Lorn-based ladies choir Sequence.

Stars of the show were the girls from the Adele Askew School of Dance, who combined their Highland dancing skills with modern pop music to produce a more contemporary choreography.

Oban and Lorn Lions chose CHAS as the beneficiary, as the charity operates a home service in Oban and Fort William.



The ladies of Sequence choir, conducted by Janet Fergusson. 16_033has04



Oban High School pipers James Divers and Kate MacPherson opened proceedings. 16_033has01



The dancers from the Adele Askew School of Dance. 16_033has03

Evening of tunes enjoyed at Argyllshire Gathering Halls

AROUND 60 people packed into the Argyllshire Gathering Halls last week for a night of tunes from Oban Accordian and Fiddle Club.

The night was kicked off by Michael Garvin on accordian before Alec Ross and Rhuaridh Morrison took to the stage.

Three youngsters, Shannon Rogers, Emma McPhee and Calum Garvin then got the crowd going with their tunes. Fort William's Alec Maclean and Calum MacColl also took their turn entertaining before the highlight

of the night - special guests The Colin Garvin Trio.

Dunoon's David Gracie along with Colin Garvin and Alan Irvine, both from Livingston, had feet tapping.

Charlie and Neil Kirkpatrick took to the stage on accordian before Hector MacFadyen, Seamus MacArthur, Seamus Garvin helped round off the evening in style.

The club's next event is the annual dance on February 7 in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls with entertainment from the Robert Nairn Trio. The night starts at 7.30pm.



Special guests on the night were The Colin Garvin Trio. From left, David Gracie, Colin Garvin and Alan Irvine. 16_033fide01

The Movern Players' 'Twelfth Night' highly successful



Above, Kay Malcolm as Maria and Linda Martin as Toby Belch act the part. Photo: Andrew Taylor.

The Movern Players staged two highly successful performances of Twelfth Night on January 4-5. A total of 110 spectators enjoyed Shakespeare's comedy play in and around Ardtornish Big House, near Lochaline.



THE BRITISH military's newest helicopter visited Oban Airport last week during a series of trials.

An AugustaWestland AW159 Wildcat, the MOD's next generation of helicopter, stopped at the airport for refuelling on its way north.

The helicopter will serve in the battlefield utility, search and rescue and anti-surface warfare roles for the British Army and the Royal Navy. It is scheduled to enter service with the army this year and navy next year.

Malt of the Month
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Lagavulin 16 year old
THE ICONIC Lagavulin 16 year old has featured in books and on screen and is a status symbol for celebrities, executives and public figures. But the relevant affordability of this famous bottle means anyone can - and perhaps should - loosen the purse strings to sample this amber nectar. The Lagavulin 16 year old is a peaty whisky. There's no getting away from that fact. But even if you are not fond of the Islay form of usage, it is worth giving this mysterious character a try. The dram you get it will be enough for anyone who fancies the rugged, peaty nature of an Islay malt, typically one from the south end near Port Ellen. But add a touch of water and the complexity of the Lagavulin is more easily appreciated. With a detection of sweet vanilla in the nosing, the Lagavulin has a surprisingly gentle finish in comparison to its island brothers and it is at this stage that its class shines through. Such is the mixture of tastes and smells, it is difficult to detect them all before the dram is gently massaging your throat. Because of its complexity, the Lagavulin is definitely a dram to try more than once. Even the most highly-trained palates will have to deploy Sherlock-like investigation tactics to work this one out.

Alexander MacPhail
Send your events to whatson@obantimes.co.uk.

what's on THE OBAN TIMES FREE EVENT LISTING

- THURSDAY - January 16**
Sale at United Auctions, Stirling Agricultural Centre, Stirling.
9.30am, Ramblers Scotland Kinlochleven walk, meet Oban's Longsdale car park at 8am, Fort William Woolen Mill at 8.30am or Glencoe Village car park at 9am.
1.30pm, Mull Musical Minds, An Rath, Craignure, Mull.
7pm, Gaelic conversation group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban.
7.30pm, The Hour of the Wolf, An Tobar, Tobeornoy, Mull.
- FRIDAY - January 17**
7.30pm, Gaelic pub quiz, Theatre Bar, Corran Halls, Oban.
7.30pm, Isle of Mull Bird Club Meeting, Craignure, Mull.
- SATURDAY - January 18**
9am, Avalanche Awareness Training, Glencoe Mountain.
11am, Gaelic conversation group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban.
2.30pm, Appin Historical Society, Port Appin Village Hall.
3pm, Isle of Mull Bird Club Big Bird Count, Mull.
7.30pm, Family whisky drive, Salen Church, Mull.
7.45pm, Ceilidh, Taynult Village Hall.
9pm, Robert Carmichael, The Clacha Inn, Glencoe.
- SUNDAY - January 19**
World Snow Day, Glencoe Mountain.
10am, Ramblers Scotland Ardnamurchan walk, meet Oban's Longsdale Road car park at 7.30am, Fort William Woolen Mill at 8.10am or Corran Ferry slipway for 8.45am sailing.
3pm, Maxwell String Quartet, St John's Cathedral, Oban.
7pm, Home-Start Lorn Burns' Supper, Waterford Restaurant, Oban.
- MONDAY - January 20**
4.30pm, Lecture by John Swinney, UHI Executive Office, Inverness.
7.30pm, Lochaber National History Society, Nevis Suite, Alexandra Hotel, Fort William.
7.30pm, Isle of Mull Torsay Gardening Club Meeting, Craignure Hall, Mull.
- TUESDAY - January 21**
6pm, Exhibition opening of Sightseers, An Tobar, Tobeornoy, Mull.
- WEDNESDAY - January 22**
7.30pm, Netherlorn Piping Society, Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban.
- THURSDAY - January 23**
10am, Ramblers Scotland Tyndrum walk, meet Fort William Woolen Mill at 8.45am, Oban's Longsdale Road car park at 9am or Glencoe Village car park at 9.20am.
7pm, Gaelic conversation group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban.
- FRIDAY - January 24**
7.30pm, Ballet West's Swan Lake, Corran Halls, Oban.
- SATURDAY - January 25**
9.10am, Ramblers Scotland Glen Etive walk, meet Oban's Longsdale Road car park at 7.50am, Fort William Woolen Mill at 8.15am or Glencoe Village car park at 8.50am.
11am, Gaelic conversation group, Furan Gaelic Centre, Corran Halls, Oban.
World Mince and Tatties Championship, Mishish Hotel, Tobeornoy, Mull.
7pm, Burns tribute night, The Clacha Inn, Glencoe.
7pm, Burns Supper, Derriagh Hall, Mull.
7pm, Fox Night, Penninghatch Hall, Mull.
7.30pm, Ballet West's Swan Lake, Corran Halls, Oban.

| | | |
|--|------------|------------------------|
| Moshi Monsters | Thurs 16th | 18.30 (screen 2) |
| The Railway Man | Thurs 16th | 18.00 |
| Last Vegas | Thurs 16th | 21.00 |
| | Fri 17th | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| | Sat 18th | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| | Sun 19th | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| | Mon 20th | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| | Tues 21st | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| | Wed 22nd | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| | Thurs 23rd | 19.00 (screen 2) |
| The Secret Life of Walter Mitty | Fri 17th | 17.30 |
| | Sat 18th | 21.00 |
| | Sun 19th | 15.30 |
| | Mon 20th | 21.00 |
| | Tues 21st | 17.30 |
| | Wed 22nd | 21.00 |
| | Thurs 23rd | 17.30 |
| Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom | Fri 17th | 20.30 |
| | Sat 18th | 17.30 |
| | Sun 19th | 18.30 |
| | Mon 20th | 17.30 |
| | Tues 21st | 20.30 |
| | Wed 22nd | 17.30 |
| | Thurs 23rd | 20.30 |
| Walking with Dinosaurs 3D | Sat 18th | 12.30 (3D), 15.00 (3D) |
| | Sun 19th | 13.00 (3D) |

Moshi Monsters (U)
Join Katsumo, Poppet, Mr. Snoodle, and the other Moshi Monsters in action-packed, song-filled new episode. Together they must stop evil Dr. Strongglove and his incompetent Glump-sackick Filliphs from publishing the recently discovered Great Moshling Egg.

The Railway Man (15)
Eric Lomax was one of thousands of Allied prisoners of war forced to work on the construction of the Thai/Burma railway during WW2. His experiences after the secret radio he built to bring news and hope to his colleagues was discovered, but his traumatised self shut off from the world.

Last Vegas (12A)
Billy (Michael Douglas), Paddy (Robert De Niro), Archie (Morgan Freeman) and Sam (Kevin Kline) have been best friends since childhood. So when Billy, the group's sworn bachelor, finally proposes to his thirty-something (of course) girlfriend, the four head to Las Vegas with a plan to stop getting their age-and-revive-their-play-days. However, upon arriving, they must stop evil Dr. Strongglove and his incompetent Glump-sackick Filliphs from publishing the recently discovered Great Moshling Egg.

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty (PG)
Ben Stiller directs and stars in THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY. James Thurber's classic story of a day-dreamer who escapes his unremarkable life by disappearing into a world of fantasies filled with heroism, romance and action. When his job along with that of his co-worker (Kristen Wiig) are threatened, Walter takes action in the real world embarking on a global journey that turns into an odyssey.

Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom (12A)
A chronicle of Nelson Mandela's life journey from his childhood in a rural village through to his inauguration as the first democratically elected president of South Africa. MANDELA is the thrilling story of an ordinary man who rose to the challenge of his times and triumphed - an intimate portrait of the making of a modern icon.

Walking with Dinosaurs 3D (U)
For the first time in movie history, audiences will truly see and feel what it was like when dinosaurs roamed the Earth. 'Walking with Dinosaurs' is the ultimate immersive experience, utilizing state-of-the-art 3D to put audiences in the middle of a thrilling and epic prehistoric world, where an underdog dinosaur triumphs to become a hero for the ages.

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Saturday 18 January 2.30pm
www.appinhistoricalsociety.co.uk

An Comunn Gaidhealach MEUR CHRUACHAIN (Ruachan Branch)
CEILIDH IN TAYNULT VILLAGE HALL SATURDAY, 18th January 2014 at 7.45 p.m.
Oban Gaelic Choir conducted by Steilas Sinclair,
Pupils from the Oban High School/Traditional Music School, Piper Euan Dewar and dancers from The Adele Askew School of Dance
Fear an Taighe - Rev. Dugald Cameron

NETHERLORN PIPING SOCIETY
Guest Player **GORDON McCREADY** (formerly of Fife's Marshall Montgomery Pipe Band) supported by pupils of Angus MacColl
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Entry: Adults £3, Children Free

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Friday 7th February 2014
7.30pm - late
Argyllshire Gathering Hall
Tickets: £12
Includes Tea, Sandwiches and Home baking
For Tickets Contact
01631 566077 or 07978 520792 or Oban Music Shop

ANNUAL SKYE CEILIDH
West End Hotel, Ft William
Sat February 15th @ 7.30pm
Calum Ross, Catriona Fair, Donald Murray, Maggie MacDonnell, Kuruzidh MacDiarmid
Fear an Taighe: Alan Campbell
Music: Ales MacPherson
Admission £10

Burns Club of Oban
Admission to this year's
BURNS SUPPER
On 24th January
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John MacLean 01631 565519 or Ken Oxlard 01631 566010

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WIN tickets to The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show 2014

5 pairs of tickets to be won

The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show returns to Scotland in February and The Oban Times has teamed up with the organisers to give five lucky readers a chance to win a pair of tickets to Scotland's largest exhibition.

Open from 10am - 6pm from Thursday, February 6 until Sunday, February 9 at the SECC, Glasgow, visitors can explore the impressive range of caravans, motorhomes, holiday homes and luxury lodges on show, whilst stocking up on all the latest accessories for their next adventure. Families can enjoy an adventure zone with lots of activities for kids of all ages including a bungee trampoline, mini-pirate ship, climbing wall, face painting and more.

Visit www.caravanshowscotland.com or call the ticket hotline on 0844 395 4000.

For your chance to win a pair of tickets simply answer this easy question, complete the coupon and post it to **Wyvex Media, SCMH Competition, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.** Entries must be submitted by **12noon, Thursday January 23, 2014.**

Q: In which city is the Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show 2014 held?

A. Glasgow B. Edinburgh C. Aberdeen

Answer
Name
Address
Postcode
Telephone..... Email

Terms and conditions: The prize is as stated. No cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Photocopied entries will not be accepted. The winner may be asked to take part in publicity and may appear in a Wyvex Media publication and website. This competition is not open to Wyvex Media and associated company employees and their families. The prize is not transferable or redeemable for cash equivalent. Tickets will be posted to the winners nearer the date of the event.

Caravans & CAMPING

The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome and Holiday Home Show 2014 is heading to the SECC in Glasgow from Thursday February 6 to Sunday February 9.

The show, which is open from 10am until 6pm each day, is expected to be a record breaker with over 160 exhibitors showcasing their latest models and ranges.

With exclusive offers and deals, visitors can explore the impressive range of motorhomes, caravans, holiday homes and luxury lodges on show, while stocking up on all the latest accessories.

Caravan Club celebrity member and Scottish TV personality, Gail Porter, will officially open the show on Caravan Club day, February 6, from stand 122.

Gail will tell visitors at Scotland's largest exhibition about her own love for caravanning and how, as a mother, she takes her daughter on caravanning holidays because it gives them quality time together.

Not only will visitors be able to see what's on offer but the Caravan Club experts will also be on site offering practical maneuvering and towing sessions, open to experienced motorhomers and caravanners, as well as first timers who have never driven a seven metre long motorhome or reversed a four berth caravan. Visitors just need to bring along their drivers licence to take part.



Sponsoring this year's show is BC Motorhomes Ayr, who will be bringing a wide range of motorhomes for sale and for those who want to try before they buy there will also be a selection of motorhomes available for hire.

Jamie Taylor, show director, said: 'There's a fantastic buzz around the show already this year with more exhibitors on board than ever before.'

'Having such a personable ambassador such as Gail adds to the excitement and I know both our regular visitors and those visiting for the first time will share my enthusiasm in seeing Gail on our opening day.'

'This year we've also got lots of new features and exhibitors including the stylish and iconic Airstream range on show.'

'We welcome the return of Compass Caravans who will be launching their new range and for those looking for something smaller, Freedom Caravans will be bringing their unique two and three berth caravans.'

'Also on display for the first time will be Logspan, who will be showcasing their fabulous Finnish made BBQ Huts and Grill Houses.'

Jamie added: 'Caravanning is such a great option for families looking to get away throughout the year and we've also added a fun packed family adventure zone to keep the whole family entertained during their visit to the show.'

With visitors spending hours at the show, the free adventure zone will include lots of activities for kids of all ages including



a bungee trampoline, mini-pirate ship, climbing wall, face painting and a special 'I'm a caravanner, get me out of here' feature from Amazonia.

A farmer's market will also feature so the whole family can enjoy a great day out and buyers can take time out to decide before making that special purchase.

Advance tickets cost £8.50 for adults or £7.50 for seniors and are available until February 4. Tickets purchased on the door are £11 for adults or £10 for seniors. Children aged 16 and under go free.

For more information and to book tickets visit www.caravanshowscotland.com or call the ticket hotline on 0844 395 4000. Follow the show on Twitter and Facebook where you will find all the latest news.



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Call goes out to Argyll birdwatchers

ARGYLL volunteers are needed to help the RSPB carry out the nation's biggest annual garden birdwatch.

One hour is spent with eyes to the skies on January 25 and 26 to count the different types and number of feathered visitors.

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch last year saw 1,607 take part from Argyll. The most common garden visitor was named as the chaffinch - with an average of nine spotted at any one time.

Since its launch in 1979, the Big Garden Birdwatch has provided RSPB Scotland with information about changes in numbers of garden birds in winter, helping alert conservationists to any worrying declines.

Louise Smith of RSPB Scotland said: "These are birds that really count on us. At this time

of year in particular they come to our gardens for help - with food, water and shelter.

"People all across Scotland help give them a home by providing these things and the Big Garden Birdwatch allows us to check what impact their help is having."

Other wildlife

This year, for the first time, participants are being asked to log some of the other wildlife they see in their gardens too.

RSPB Scotland wants to know whether people ever see deer, squirrels, badgers, hedgehogs, frogs or toads to help build an overall picture of how important our gardens are for giving all types of wildlife a home.

Visit www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch and www.rspb.org.uk/schoolswatch to find out how to take part at home or at school.

Skye has airport ambition

REPORT by EMMA CRICHTON fori@obantimes.co.uk

CAMPAIGNERS for a new Skye airport are preparing to launch a cash bid to the Scottish Government amid growing confidence that their plans could take off.

The move comes after potential draft designs for buildings to service the former airfield at Ashaig were unveiled at a meeting on the island last week. The blueprints were drawn up by University of Highlands and Islands architectural technology students as part of their course.

FlySkye, the group lobbying for the resumption of commercial flights to and from the old airport at Ashaig, met with the students at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in Sleat to view the designs.

Highland councillors Hamish Fraser, Drew Millar and Ian Renwick also attended, along with Ronald Robertson and Neil MacRae from Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) and Stuart MacPherson from Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Ian Blackford, one of the founders of FlySkye told *The Oban Times*: "Everyone was very impressed with the quality of work the students produced. They came with details of the building's exterior, interior and projected costs. The meeting



Vision of the future: one of the designs showing how Ashaig airport could look once it becomes operational.

had good attendance and the great thing I've noticed is that everyone is working together to take this forward, there's no competing and going in different directions which is quite common up in the Highlands and Islands."

The designs are draft plans of how the airport building and grounds could look if the campaign is successful. The student's final blueprints will be available later in the year.

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig principal Boyd Robertson said: "We

believe there is an irrefutable case for the restoration of air services to and from Skye and being able to demonstrate how the facilities might look will assist us in presenting the case to government and public agencies. Having discussed the draft plans with the students we look forward to seeing the completed plans in May of this year."

FlySkye members are now confident that they have a strong case to take to the government this spring. Mr Blackford added: "We now have a detailed proposi-

tion for the government. We can answer all of their questions and the answers make it very difficult not to accept. If they say no that's it for us so we want to make it quite compelling. "Nothing in life is guaranteed but I think there is a very good chance we can make this work."

Clr Hamish Fraser expressed his continued support of the plans and praised the work of the students. He said: "I was very impressed with the work the students have

done and this could be the infrastructure used if the new airport ever comes to be in place. "We, the councillors, are behind any moves to make this happen and it's good that the students have had a live project to work on."

"We are keen to get this up and running and the students have been very helpful in making that happen. "We really need the Scottish Government to provide funding for this because it's just not an option for the council, we don't

have that kind of money to hand. It's on our wish list but not in the budget plans. It's just not possible for us at this stage with the way the economy is."

The honours students, based at Inverness College have been using the potential new airport as a live project for their Advanced Professional Practice module. If the initiative goes ahead, the students' designs may be used to create a new terminal building, maintenance hangar for a Twin Otter-size aircraft, road links, parking and landscaping.

Lochaber to benefit from appointment

THE NEW chief executive officer of Lochaber's volunteering support organisation is being tipped to bring further success to the area's third sector.

Voluntary Action Lochaber (VAL) has appointed Alasdair Nicholson MBE to the role of advising and supporting local charities and non-profit organisations.

Mr Nicholson, originally from Morvern and a former Lochaber High School pupil, was awarded an MBE in 2011 for services to the voluntary sector in the Western Isles and was a founding director of Voluntary Action Scotland.

He was also chairman of the housing committee on Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar, and a founding member of the Scottish Crofters Foundation.

Mr Nicholson said: "I hope to build on the work of my predecessor Janis McDonald and the agency partnerships already established."

"Having been brought up and attended school in the area and with existing local family connections I feel it is like renewing special ties with the area and wider community. "I have particular interest in seeing a strong enterprising community and in community ownership at all levels to help create more economic and social



New VAL chief, Alasdair Nicholson.

development opportunities for people."

Gerald McIntyre, chairman of VAL, said: "The board is delighted to welcome Alasdair as our new chief executive officer, following the recent return of Janis McDonald to the Central Belt to take up a national charity post. Alasdair impressed with his extensive experience and knowledge of the third sector and his considerable success in various social enterprise projects. "We know that he will continue to build on these successes and we look forward to him starting with us in early February."

Families charity starts up in Mid Argyll

A CHARITY that supports young families throughout Mid Argyll has opened a base in Tarbert.

Home Start MAJIK (Mid Argyll, Jura, Islay and Kintyre) recently opened the Tarbert office and employed a worker to support families in the village which have at least one child under the age of five.

The charity works by sending its volunteers to visit families for up to three hours per week, offering friendship, support and advice. Volunteers spend qual-

ity time with both parents and children.

Eleanor Sloan, the new co-ordinator for Tarbert, said: "It is a really informal service about friendship."

"It is about someone being there to help you."

The charity, which helps families across Argyll and Bute, is currently recruiting volunteers. Ms Sloan added: "We are always looking for volunteers and the only requirement is that they have a child or have experience raising a child."

Pipe band CD sales reach 1,000 mark

COPIES of Inveraray and District Pipe Band's CD have been flying off the shelves, with 1,000 copies sold since it went on sale last month. The Grade 1 pipe band released the double CD in December, which features the entire performance of its sell out pre-world's Ascension concert last year.



Fort William Accordion and Fiddle Club started the new year in style at their first meeting of 2014. The musicians met last Tuesday evening at the Railway Club, Inverlochry and the venue reached capacity as people piled in to listen. Royal National Mod gold medalist Robert Robertson (back left) sang and played the accordion along with guest artist Robert Naim (middle), who both joined in with a club stramash at the end of the evening.

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Spotlight on road safety

Above: Argyll youngsters brushed up on road safety - thanks to a poster competition backed by the local police. Fifteen primary schools, several of them island-based, took part in the contest which was devised by Constable Alex Wright of Oban Police. 1022wenty03

Molly wins place in Indian Chef of the Year final

A Fort William woman is through to the finals of the Indian Chef of the Year competition at the second time of asking. Malaya (Molly) Roy, born in Assam, India, was selected from 1,500 entrants worldwide. Molly loves to cook and follows her mother's secret recipes. 1022wenty01

Ardoran Marine at boat show

Right: Colin Robertson of Ardoran Marine, Oban, with Miss Flower of Scotland, Tracy Hamilton-Dow, on the Heron Suzuki stand at the London Boat Show. 1022wenty02

Golden wedding couple

A well-known North Connel couple celebrated their golden wedding just ahead of New Year at a quiet family lunch in the Lochneil Arms Hotel. Donald and Cora Morrison, of Barvas Cottage, were married at Coldsden in Surrey on December 30 1943 when Lewis-born Donald was serving as a radio operator on the cable laying vessel *Monarch*. 1022wenty06

Coll Pantomime Players take stage with Aladdin

The Coll Pantomime Players in their costumes after a performance of Aladdin in Coll Community Hall, Arinagour. 1022wenty05

Heather's design a winner

An Arisaig Primary School pupil is 'top of the pops' with her classmates. Heather Cameron, 11, of Morrach, Arisaig, beat hundreds of entrants to win top prize in a competition by Highland Council. Her prize, a CD player, can be attached to the school computer and shared by her classmates. 1022wenty04

The Oban Times & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Motors & Drivetimes

NEW FORESTER NAMED 'MID RANGE SUV OF THE YEAR'

Judges praise on-road driving characteristics and off-road ability

Subaru UK's best-selling model, the Subaru Forester, has this week been named 'Mid Range SUV of the Year' by 4x4 Magazine.

Subjecting the new Forester to a wide range of tests both on- and off-road, 4x4 Magazine awarded the Forester with class honours in one of the hardest-fought categories in its annual '4x4 of the Year' issue.

Commenting on the Forester's victory, Nigel Fryatt, Editor of 4x4 Magazine, said: "Subaru's latest Forester impressed us both on and off road. This version is fresh, good-looking and a great drive. It has 'good for its class' approach and departure angles and with the automatically controlled X-Mode system, the Forester maintains its competent off-road ability and bad weather credentials. That it is also great to drive on the road is the bonus that grabbed the class victory."

The all-new Forester went on sale in the UK in May and builds on the model's established reputation as a tough, likeable and highly capable SUV. At the same time, the new Forester offers improved performance, safety and efficiency and a more spacious and better appointed cabin.



Sales of the Forester are up 75% year on year against 2012. The petrol turbo XT has been in particularly high demand among the Subaru faithful - bucking the trend for strong diesel SUV sales - with its 240ps 2.0-litre turbocharged direct-injection petrol engine and clever X-Mode hill decent system. The new model is also available with Subaru's latest 2.0-litre petrol and diesel Boxer engines, with all versions featuring Subaru's trademark symmetrical All-wheel drive as standard.

Paul Tunncliffe, Managing Director of Subaru UK, commented: "We are delighted with this recognition. The Forester has always been popular with owners who need a car that is highly accomplished off-road but also entertaining on it, and the decision by 4x4 Magazine's expert judges is testament to the car's varied abilities. Customers should also take comfort from our enviable reputation for reliability and durability, five-year, 100,000-mile warranty and rock-solid safety credentials." To find out more about the Subaru Forester, visit www.subaru.co.uk.



Ford wins Police Scotland contract

Ford has won the first contract to supply vehicles to Police Scotland, the newly unified Scottish police force.

Police Scotland placed their first vehicle order comprising of 124 Ford Focus and 58 Ford Transit Custom models.

Police Scotland was established in April 2013 and is the second largest force in the UK after the Metropolitan Police, responsible for policing an area of 28,000 square miles. This order for new Ford vehicles boosts their total fleet size to 3,500.

"We chose from vehicles approved by the National Association of Police Fleet Managers and after evaluation of the whole-life costs of the various models available, Ford won the contract," said Tony Chalk, Police Scotland transport manager. "The creation of Police Scotland has meant the centralisation of all purchasing for the police across the country, which improves standardisation and helps to reduce costs."

Terry Adams, Ford's direct sales manager, said: "From the production line the Ford vehicles are sent to our 'one-stop shop' facility, Ford SVP, in Essex, where they are stripped and equipped to the force's requirements - everything from livery, sirens and blue lights through to specialised equipment - and then they are delivered to the customer ready for action."

"Ford has supplied vehicles to the various regional police forces across Scotland for many years, and we welcome the opportunity and benefits offered by the centralised purchasing decisions."

Ford Focus and Ford Transit Custom models help make up a 3,500-strong Scottish Police force fleet

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| 13 Reg Subaru BRZ SE | £22,495 |
| 13 Reg Subaru Forester XE CVT | £23,495 |
| 63 Reg Subaru Forester XC D | £24,495 |

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Official 4x4 magazine's 'SUV of the Year' award. Subaru UK's best-selling model, the Subaru Forester, has this week been named 'Mid Range SUV of the Year' by 4x4 Magazine. Subjecting the new Forester to a wide range of tests both on- and off-road, 4x4 Magazine awarded the Forester with class honours in one of the hardest-fought categories in its annual '4x4 of the Year' issue. Commenting on the Forester's victory, Nigel Fryatt, Editor of 4x4 Magazine, said: "Subaru's latest Forester impressed us both on and off road. This version is fresh, good-looking and a great drive. It has 'good for its class' approach and departure angles and with the automatically controlled X-Mode system, the Forester maintains its competent off-road ability and bad weather credentials. That it is also great to drive on the road is the bonus that grabbed the class victory." 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Argyll & Bute Council

PLANNING
These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, Monday to Friday 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. 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 |
|-------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| 13/02797/PP | Erection of detached building to form 2 cavity buildings. | Luchambull Kennels and Cattery Bute PA37 1SF | Sub Post Office Leasing |
| 13/02780/UB | Internal and external alterations including formation of new windows and door openings, removal of existing flue and installation of new flue to accommodate wood burning stove. | Cathalichy House Glenlochar Road of Mull Argyll and Bute PA32 6JN | Sub Post Office Anso Isle of Mull |
| 13/02921/PP | Refurbishment and change of use of existing two storey stone built shed into professional office and studio accommodation. | 21 Main Street Tobarney Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA37 6NJ | Tobarney Area Office |
| 13/02922/UB | Refurbishment to include internal and external alterations of existing two storey stone built shed into professional office and studio accommodation. | 21 Main Street Tobarney Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA37 6NJ | Tobarney Area Office |

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at Whitegates Office, Whitegates Road, Lochgilbladd, PH31 8JY, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times 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 |
|-------------|---|--|--|
| 13/02833/PP | Erection of 15 wind turbines of up to 170m in height to include including permanent foundations, associated hardstanding and electrical transformer buildings; construction of approximately 12.5km of new track and widening and upgrading of existing access tracks and road junctions; erection of electrical substation and control building and temporary construction compound; erection of one permanent and two temporary anemometry masts up to 80m in height; and associated ancillary development. | Anchored Windfarm Approx 6.5km North West of Inverary and 1.5km East of Loch Awe Argyll and Bute | Sub Post Office Inverary Sub Post Office Dalachish Sub Post Office Taysait |

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00-17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 67 Chalmers Street Ardaraigh PA30 8DX, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times 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 (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

| Ref | Proposal | Site Address | Location of Plans |
|-------------|--|---|---|
| 13/02792/UB | Internal and external alterations, erection of new shop entrance, rear extension to the existing store and installation of 2 heat pump compressor units. | Post Office Craighoune Isle of Jura Argyll and Bute | Sub Post Office Craighoune Isle of Jura |

Argyll and Bute Council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://planning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Whitegates Office Whitegates Road Lochgilbladd PA31 8JY.

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.

www.highland.gov.uk

Highland Council
Council Chamber
Castlehill

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

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9:30 am. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH13 5EL and online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk>.

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

| Reference Number | Development Address | Proposed Description |
|------------------|--|---|
| 13/04563/FUL | Ben Nevis Footpath Fort William | Erection of carport |
| 13/04676/FUL | Land North of 8 Canon Gillies Place, Arisaig | Erection of 3 no dwellings |
| 13/04693/FUL | Unit 3, 98 - 104 High Street Fort William | Change of use from class 1 retail and subdivision of unit 3, 98-104 High Street, Fort William to form 1 or 2 class 3 (food and drink) units |
| 13/04711/FUL | Scamadale, Arisaig | Construction of micro hydro scheme (15kw) |
| 13/04786/FUL | Plot 1 Land 250m NW of Stockmans Cottage Achnabobane, Spean Bridge | Erection of dwelling |
| 13/04838/LBC | Tigh-A-Bruach Carbin Road Kinlochleven | Replace sliding sash timber windows and installation of LPG fired central heating system with internal boiler and external LPG storage tank |
| 13/04840/FUL | Glencoe Mountain Rescue Centre, Glencoe, Ballachulish | Single storey extension to Mountain Rescue Building |
| 13/04849/FUL | Am Laimhig Portuairk, Kilchoan Acharacle | Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new dwelling |

Time period for comments is 14 days. 13/04838/LBC is 21 days.
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
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Clare Slipper has become NFU Scotland's first full-time parliamentary officer.

Clare appointed to new NFU Scotland post

First full-time parliamentary officer

AHEAD of a landmark year in Scottish politics, NFU Scotland has appointed 23-year-old Clare Slipper as its first full-time parliamentary officer.

With a first-class honours degree in politics and sociology and two years of experience with a public affairs and lobbying organisation, Clare takes up post in a year that will bring a referendum on Scottish independence, European elections, land and tenancy reform debates and key decisions on CAP reform implementation in Scotland.

Commenting on Clare's appointment, NFU Scotland chief

executive Scott Walker said: 'The timing of Clare's appointment as our first full-time Parliamentary Officer could not have been better.'

'With a first-class honours degree in politics and sociology and two years of experience with a public affairs and lobbying organisation, Clare takes up post in a year that will bring a referendum on Scottish independence, European elections, land and tenancy reform debates and key decisions on CAP reform implementation in Scotland.'

Commenting on Clare's appointment, NFU Scotland chief

Westminster or Brussels - and this appointment will build on our activity and allow us to fine-tune our political messages.

'Getting the ear of politicians and influencing policy is at the core of NFU Scotland's role but it is an area where there is a lot of competition from individuals and other organisations.

'NFUS has a solid reputation with parliamentarians in the professional way that we conduct our business and having Clare fully committed to parliamentary work will help ensure that Scotland's farmers' voices continue to be heard.'

Market reports

CALEDONIAN Marts sold 276 live cattle at their weekly primrose stock sale, comprising 17 bullocks and heifers, 18 young bulls, nine OTM clean and cast cows and bulls last Thursday.

Forty-five bullocks averaged 222.5p per kilo and sold to 255.5p per kilo, 60kg Limousin from Bute Estate, Balerno or to £1,704 per head for 780kg Charolais, Captree Farm, Thornhill.

Seventy-two heifers averaged 228p per kilo and sold to 255.5p per kilo, 565kgs Limousin, from Knockhouse Farm, Dunfermline or to £1,602 per head for 720kg Limousin from Wester Carnmuirs Farm, Larbert.

Twenty-three butchers cattle sold in excess of 240p per kilo to average 244.5p per kilo and sold to 251.5p per kilo, 490kg Blonde Heifer, Easterton Farm, Kirkintilloch.

Eighteen young bulls sold to 226.5p per kilo 655kg Limousin, Cowford Farm, Lanark or to £1,523 per head for 710kg Limousin, Mains of Blairdrummond. Nine OTM clean cattle sold to 200.5p per kg for 575kg Limousin Bullock, Machrie Farm, Southend.

Also forward were 141 Cast Cows, Bulls and OTM Cattle, Belgian Blue cow sold to £1,315 from Mx Campbell, Meikle Seggie, Friesian Cow to £915 from M's Orr, Kaemur Farm. Cows sold dearer on the week to a ringside of 12 buyers.

Dairy Cow averaged 97.1p beef cows averaged

121.3p. Leading Prices: Cows: Lim - 150p, £1005 Newton of Logierath, 144p £1145 Keirsbeath, 165p £1255 Casthill, 125p £1175 Knockhouse, 150p £1245 Glenhead, 164p £1265 Newbigging of Ceres, 152p £1205 Greenyards, Fri - £805 Carnell, 114p £805 Blairmains, 117p £745 High Cattadale, 120p £895 Kaemur, 111p £915 Gartentruach, Cont - 130p £1125 Blairmains, 134p £945 Meikle Camoquhill, BB - 152p £1085 Knockhouse, 150p £1315 Meikle Seggie, Sim - 153p £1255 Westwoodlane, AA - 130p £955 Midtown, BDA - 165p £1255 Easterton, High - £385 Darnoghe, AA - 130p £955 Midtown, Jersey - £435 Airtirrykerse.

Cast Bulls: Lim - £1200 Upper Inchwood, AA - £1035 Gelan View, Laing - £1275 Woodend, Char - £1235 Balleen, Otm Clean: Fri - 130p £1172 High Cattadale, 164p £1030 Gartmillan, Lim - 201p £1152 Machriebeg. Also forward were 18 Calves and Sticks, Fri Sticks - £400, £220 Graysale, Fri Calves - £65 Barbeth, £112 & £90 Carnell.

CALEDONIAN Marts had on offer 1,247 Prime Hoggets and 520 Cast Ewes and tups at its Stirling sale last Tuesday.

Prime Hoggets sold to 231p for 40kg Beltes's from JG & K Graham, Easterton and to £99.50 (twice) for 48kg Beltes from JB Guthrie, Cull-

burn and 46kg Beltes from DS & RC Taylor, Easter Ochtermuthill to average 190.68p (£2.35p on the week).

Leading Prices: Belt - 229p Easterton, £97.50 Cullburn; Belt x - 227p Rowantree Hill, £96 Easter Ochtermuthill; Cont - 225p Newbigging Farm, £95.50 Rowantree Hill; Tex - £92p Meikle Seggie, £97 Strain Farms Ltd, Tex x - 201p Wester Kelt Farm, £93.50 Bowshill; Suff - £191p Dollarbank; £92 Harlaw Farm; Suff x - 189p Newton Farm, £91.50 Leuchars Lodge; Chev - £199p, £79 Greenland Farm; BF - 189p, £75.50 Rowantree Hill; Cross - 193p, £81 Kimmighallen; Mule - 185p Glenalmond Estate, £78 Easterton Farm. Also forward were 520 Cast Ewes and Tups, Export Ewes, 224 averaged £51.16 selling to £70 for Cheviots from R Downie, Newton.

Leading Prices: Chev - £62 Roseneath, Chev x - £60 Pyreton Cottage; BF - £54 Roseneath Home Farm; BF x - £52 Dalchira.

Heavy Ewes, 250 averaged £71.90 (+£5.26) selling to £109 for Texels from S Greenhill, Leuchars Lodge. Leading Prices: Belt - £107 & £100 Cullburn; Suff - £98 Harlaw; Tex - £94 Bennie; HB - £92 Newton; Tex x - £91 Riverview; Char - £86 Greenraig; Mule - £70 Hillcroft; Cross - £69 Bennie; Tups, 46 averaged £71.73 (-£10.95) selling to £125 for BFL from W Adam & Son, Shankhead. Leading Prices: BFL - £124

West Kirkton; Tex - £112 Bennie; Suff - £109 West Kelt; Cross - £109 Bennie; Char - £105 Shankhead; BF - £59 Bennie, stringinguo3

UNITED Auctions sold 5,762 prime sheep including 3,665 lambs and 2,097 ewes and rams at its Stirling sale last Thursday.

Lamb's Easter Buchyvie (SuffX) Easter Buchyvie (SuffX) £82.50, Harvismailling (TexX) £100, Ewes Texes (TexX) £95, Redthorn (Cont) £73; Newhouse of Glamis (Chev) £84; Milton (Male) £76.50; Comochan (BF) £78; Colavoulin (BTex) £104; Carby Croft (Zwar) £71.

Lamb's Faughill (Suff) £92; Meikle Camoquill (SuffX) £92; Harvismailling (TexX) £129; Farnmouth (TexX) £10p; Penston (Cont) £74; Faughill (Chev) £90p; Yorkston (Male) £75p; Colavoulin (BTex) £93p; Dunruchan (BF) £87p; Redthorn (Chev) £77.50; Carby Croft (Zwar) £61p.

Ewes Newton of Collesse (Suff) £90.50; Wheatfield (TexX) £110.50; Meadowbank (Male) £55.50; Stobshiel (Chev) £77.50; Glenhead (BF) £47.50; Priestfield (HB) £78.50; Newhouse of Glamis (BFL) £78; Newton of Logierath (BTex) £78.50; Wheatfield (X) £80.50; Meadowbank (Chev/Mule) £69.50; Rams Luss Estates (Suff) £95.50; Stobshiel (Chev) £78.50; Rotmell (BF) £62.50; Luss Estates (BFL) £80.50; Colavoulin (Tex) £120.50.

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House prices to jump 7% in Scotland in 2014

RICS annual housing market forecast
House prices in Scotland will see an increase of seven percent over the course of next year, while the cost of renting a home should rise by a further 2%. This growth is being driven by the acute imbalance between rising buyer demand and inactive supply, with new instructions close to stagnation.

Although significant challenges remain to achieving a sustainable economic recovery, 2014 may well see the nascent pick-up in activity gather pace and this will be reflected in the housing market.

A rise in activity is also expected following the introduction of Help to Buy in Scotland last year. With the shortage of homes coming onto the market a key factor behind the price rises, some comfort may be drawn from a likely jump in new starts in Scotland over the next year. In 2014

house starts are predicted to rise to 16,400 mark, compared to 14,730 this year and around 13,343 in 2012. While this is an encouraging trend, it is still insufficient to meet the projections for more rapid population growth.

'This year we have seen house prices beginning to rise across Scotland and next year we expect to see more of the same. We expect all areas of the country to see price increases, however, putting the improving economic picture to one side, this is largely down to the fact that buyer numbers considerably outweigh the amount of homes on the market. While the number of new homes being built is now on the rise, it still won't be anywhere near enough to meet demand and we expect the problem of insufficient supply of housing stock to be the main driver behind price increases over the next twelve months.'

Sarah Speirs, Director RICS Scotland

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SSF offer a training and personal development programme designed around your strengths and aspirations, occupational health support, subsidised gym membership, bonus scheme and pension plan. Candidates must be committed to ongoing community engagement. Minimum required skills include a track record of achievement, advanced skippers ticket and full, clean drivers licence. Competitive salary will be dependant on experience. Housing and relocation support will also be available for this position.

If you'd like to know more about SSF please refer to our website www.scottishseafarms.com. To informally enquire about the role itself please Email john.rea@scottishseafarms.com. Role description and application forms can be obtained by contacting Claire Scott on 01786 445521 or claire.scott@scottishseafarms.com. Applications should be accompanied by extensive cover letter.

Closing date: Friday 31st January 2014



Trainee Manager Corphach - Fort William

This exciting opportunity has arisen for an enthusiastic and motivated sales person to work alongside our current Store Manager to develop and expand our business.

Main duties will include the management of the store and it's small team of staff. In addition, you will be responsible for selling our full range of products direct to farmers throughout the Western Highlands, Argyll and Western Isles.

Candidates will be able to demonstrate excellent organisational and customer service skills. Agricultural knowledge and sales experience would be advantageous, however a trainee position may be considered.

To apply for this position, please send your C.V and covering letter to Miss Gillian Badenoch, HR Administrator, Harbro Ltd, Markethill, Turriff, AB53 4PA. **No agencies. Closing date 31st January 2014.**



Roadworkers - Kyle of Lochalsh/ Corphach Fort William/Oban/Inveraray

Vacancies have arisen in our Kyle of Lochalsh, Fort William, Oban and Inveraray depots for Roadworkers. Preferably you should be an experienced roadworker with the necessary skills to carry out various road maintenance operations, training can be provided if necessary. You should have, as a minimum, an LGV Class 2 licence (HGV2) and be prepared to participate in our winter and emergency response service on a standby/rota basis.

For a job description, person specification and application form please contact Gareth Hutchinson on 01738 449600 or Ghutchinson@beerscotland.co.uk

Closing date is 28th January 2014.



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Carr Gomm is a national charity and not-for-profit company. The main focus is Supported Living - supporting people to lead their lives, access services and achieve their hopes and dreams.

SUPPORT ASSISTANTS - ISLAY

Full-Time & Part-Time: £13,684 - £15,284 pa (pro rata)
Relief: 7.02 plus paid annual leave

We are recruiting two full-time & part-time Support Assistant vacancies in our overnight response team in Islay.

Support Work covers the whole range of tasks to help people live in their own homes safely, to follow their interests, develop friendships and deal with health issues. If you believe that everyone has a right to live the life they want, we would like to meet you. You may be experienced and be looking to develop your career, or you may be new to this work and have the right personal qualities to build on. Either way, this is a chance to help people to make a real change to their lives.

As our services deliver throughout Argyll & Bute, car use is desirable, with mileage and travel time between visits paid.

Carr Gomm has opportunities for Relief Support Assistants across Argyll & Bute based in the following areas: Helensburgh, Dunoon, Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Oban, Rothesay, as well as the Isle of Mull and Isle of Islay. If you are flexible and looking to work on an ad-hoc basis, we would love to hear from you, regardless of how many hours you can spare.

As our services deliver throughout Argyll & Bute, car use is desirable, with mileage and travel time between visits paid.

Please quote job reference number 388 when applying for this post (or 301 for Relief).

We offer competitive terms and conditions including: pension, enhanced annual leave and sickness, and training opportunities. We aim to provide services and recruit staff without discrimination.

For an application pack visit our website: www.carrgomm.org, e-mail: recruitment@carrgomm.org, Tel: 0131 659 4770, or contact Carr Gomm, SPACE, 11 Harewood Road, Edinburgh EH16 4NT.
Closing Date: Noon, Monday 3rd February 2014

A company limited by guarantee in Scotland: SC 236436
Scottish charity: SC 033491



Carr Gomm is a national charity and not-for-profit company. The main focus is Supported Living - supporting people to lead their lives, access services and achieve their hopes and dreams.

SUPPORT ASSISTANTS - CAMPBELTOWN

Full-Time & Part-Time: £13,684 - £15,284 pa (pro rata)
Relief: 7.02 plus paid annual leave

We are recruiting two full-time & part-time Support Assistant vacancies in our homecare and housing support services in Campbeltown.

Support Work covers the whole range of tasks to help people live in their own homes safely, to follow their interests, develop friendships and deal with health issues. If you believe that everyone has a right to live the life they want, we would like to meet you. You may be experienced and be looking to develop your career, or you may be new to this work and have the right personal qualities to build on. Either way, this is a chance to help people to make a real change to their lives.

As our services deliver throughout Argyll & Bute, car use is desirable, with mileage and travel time between visits paid.

Carr Gomm has opportunities for Relief Support Assistants across Argyll & Bute based in the following areas: Helensburgh, Dunoon, Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Oban, Rothesay, as well as the Isle of Mull and Isle of Islay. If you are flexible and looking to work on an ad-hoc basis, we would love to hear from you, regardless of how many hours you can spare.

As our services deliver throughout Argyll & Bute, car use is desirable, with mileage and travel time between visits paid.

Please quote job reference number 392 when applying for this post (or 301 for Relief).

We offer competitive terms and conditions including: pension, enhanced annual leave and sickness, and training opportunities. We aim to provide services and recruit staff without discrimination.

For an application pack visit our website: www.carrgomm.org, e-mail: recruitment@carrgomm.org, Tel: 0131 659 4770, or contact Carr Gomm, SPACE, 11 Harewood Road, Edinburgh EH16 4NT.
Closing Date: Noon, Monday 3rd February 2014

A company limited by guarantee in Scotland: SC 236436
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We are seeking Marine Operative's within our Mull site. Candidates will be enthusiastic, self-motivated and be able to demonstrate prior experience in working within small, focused teams. Day to day duties will include fish welfare, sampling, grading and moving of the fish, site maintenance, net changing and boat handling. Previous aquaculture experience is desirable for this post; the company can offer further development and training opportunities through in-house training and also by external training providers. Preference will also be given to those candidates who can offer transferable, related skills and qualifications.

In return, the Company offers a comprehensive pay and benefits package including entry into the Company pension scheme. A full, clean driving licence is also essential.

For an application form and job description, please contact: [Angela Gibson HR Officer](mailto:Angela.Gibson@scottishsalmon.com), The Scottish Salmon Company, Ardninglas Estate, Cairnrow, Argyll, PA28 8BH, Tel. No. 01499 600 430 Email: angela.gibson@scottishsalmon.com
Closing date for applications: 5pm Friday 31st January 2014
Visit our website at www.scottishsalmon.com



Supporting People & Communities

Carr Gomm is a national charity providing quality care and support across Scotland since 1997.

SUPPORT ASSISTANTS - OBAN, MULL & LOCHGILPHEAD

Full-Time & Part-Time: £13,684 - £15,284 pa (pro rata)
Relief: 7.02 plus paid annual leave

Please quote your preferred locality and job reference number 387 when applying for this vacancy

We are recruiting for full-time & part-time Support Assistant vacancies based in our Oban & Lochgilphead homecare and housing support services, and our Overnight Response team on the Isle of Mull.

Support Work covers the whole range of tasks to help people live in their own homes safely, to follow their interests, develop friendships and deal with health issues. If you believe that everyone has a right to live the life they want, we would like to meet you. You may be experienced and be looking to develop your career, or you may be new to this work and have the right personal qualities to build on. Either way, this is a chance to help people to make a real change to their lives.

Carr Gomm also has opportunities for Relief Support Assistants across Argyll & Bute based in the following areas: Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Oban, Lochaber as well as the Isle of Mull and Isle of Islay. Our services include: overnight response, care at home (days) and housing support (including support of homeless people). If you are flexible and looking to work on an ad-hoc basis, we would love to hear from you, regardless of how many hours you can spare. Please quote job reference number 301 when applying for Relief work

SOCIAL CARE CALL HANDLER - OBAN/LOCHGILPHEAD

Social Work Emergency Service

Full-Time: £15,670 - £16,314 pa

Please quote job reference number 389 when applying for this vacancy

This is an exciting opportunity to be involved in our social work emergency service which providing out of hours cover in Argyll & Bute.

Based in Oban you will be responsible for responding to all calls which are received by the Social Work Emergency Service outwith normal office hours. You will require to listen carefully, establish the nature of the problem and decide on the required action.

You will have excellent communication skills and be confident to liaise with a variety of people, internal and external to the organisation, working with a professional manner at all times. You will be computer literate with knowledge and experience of the Microsoft Office and the ability to learn new systems.

As our services deliver throughout Argyll & Bute, car use is desirable, with mileage and travel time between visits paid.

We offer competitive terms and conditions including: pension, enhanced annual leave and sickness, and training opportunities. We aim to provide services and recruit staff without discrimination. For an application pack visit our website: www.carrgomm.org, e-mail: recruitment@carrgomm.org, Tel: 0131 659 4770, or contact Carr Gomm, SPACE, 11 Harewood Road, Edinburgh EH16 4NT.
Closing Date: Noon, Monday 27th January 2014




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Salary - £17,454 - £22,144 plus overtime/alarm payments

Marine Harvest's new recirculation unit at its Lochailort site is now operational and will produce 5 million smolts to meet the increased demand as a result of recent expansion in seawater sites and 6 million parr for stocking freshwater loch on-growing sites.

We are looking to recruit additional hatchery technicians for the unit. The roles are focused upon care of the eggs prior to hatching and also effective fish husbandry of the fry and smolts. Applications would be particularly welcome from candidates who have some experience in freshwater operations.

The chosen applicants will be part of a large team so must be self-motivated and have good communication skills. Beyond the nature of the role, the post holders would be expected to undertake overtime as required in order to accommodate the business needs of the Unit. The rota is currently 7 days on/7 days off.

A driving license is essential.

If you would like to apply for one of these roles, please submit an application in writing with details of work experience, by the closing date of the 24th January 2014 to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Limited, Business Resources Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William PH33 7PT.

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HOUSING ASSISTANTS
35 hours per week. Salary: £14,097 - £15,669.

The project provides housing management support to our services in Oban. Ensuring all areas are kept to a high standard of cleanliness, you will also support vulnerable people referred to the service. Administration duties will include the collection of accommodation service charges. You will be able to facilitate flat inspections and manage inventories, controlling secure entry, managing repairs and maintaining health & safety within the building.

We are also recruiting Relief Workers in Oban and Campbeltown. £7.7k p/w.

To apply, please visit www.btha.org.uk
Closing date: 5pm, Thursday 23 January 2014.

Completed forms can be emailed to recruitment@btha.org.uk or sent by post to Blue Triangle (Glasgow) Housing Association, 2nd Floor, 100 Berkeley Street, Glasgow G3 7HU quoting ref OBANHAS0114.

A Registered Scottish Charity No SC212856

www.btha.org.uk

INVERARAY CASTLE SEASONAL STAFF REQUIRED

Full/Part-Time GUIDES/CASHIERS TEAROOM/GIFT SHOP

For further information, please apply to: Mrs J Young, Castle Manager
Inveraray Castle, INVERARAY PA32 8XF
E-Mail - manager@inveraray-castle.com

affinitytrust

2 SUPPORT MANAGER VACANCIES

IN OBAN & ACROSS ARGYLL & BUTE

Starting Salary £25,176 per annum

Affinity Trust is a registered UK and Scottish charity that supports individuals with a variety of needs to lead independent, dynamic and fulfilling lives. Within Argyll & Bute we currently support a range of people with learning disabilities and/or mental health support needs as well as individuals with autism and aspergers.

Due to continued growth and development we are currently seeking to recruit 2 highly motivated Support Managers, one to be based in Oban and the other to work across Argyll & Bute with the base open for discussion. There will be travelling required for both roles and applicants must hold a full UK driving licence.

Affinity Trust is dedicated to offering support for individuals in their own homes, providing a safe secure environment whilst maximising opportunities within the community.

You will be responsible for managing and motivating team members to deliver quality and values driven services in accordance with legislation, regulatory standards and contractual requirements. You will also be responsible for ensuring that the needs and aspirations of people supported are being met and that this can be evidenced.

The successful applicants will be registered with SSSC or be willing to meet the requirements for SSSC registration as a manager. Some management experience in supported living services or experience in managing support for individuals with support needs is desirable.

For an application pack, or to find out more about what we do, contact us on 01631 571311 or admin@affinitytrust.org

All appointments will be subject to a PVG enhanced disclosure check. Affinity Trust are an equal opportunities employer.

Closing Date: 30th January 2014

NORTH WEST MARINE DIVING & MARINE SPECIALISTS

Civil Engineer

You will be a recently qualified graduate civil engineer or civil engineering technician keen to develop your skills assisting on a range of marine projects. Responsibilities will include reviewing tender documentation, engineering drawings, bill of quantities and providing a design component for new tenders. You will also be required to develop site H&S and environmental plans, risk assessments and method statements. liaise with client engineers and site managers and attend site meetings. Ideally you will be experienced in the use of CAD software and have had practical site based experience. A clean current driving licence is essential. Salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications and candidates will need to be locally based or willing to relocate to Oban.

If interested please send your CV to **The Business Services Manager, North West Marine Ltd, 7e Giellangall Road, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HG or email to jobs@northwestmarine.co.uk or call 01631 585652.**

Argyllhomes FOR ALL

Safety & Plant Manager

Salary £26,311 to £30,507

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a full time Safety and Plant Manager based in our Helensburgh or Oban offices. Applicants must hold a relevant qualification in Health and Safety and have extensive experience in construction or housing maintenance environments.

Closing Date: 12 noon on Friday 31st January 2014
For further information about this post or for an informal chat please contact
J Forbes Managing Director on 01546 605899 or email john.forbes@acha.co.uk

To apply visit our website at www.acha.co.uk/recruitment
If you are unable to access the website contact the Recruitment Team:
Tel 01546 605817 or email recruitment@acha.co.uk

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is the largest independent distributor in the UK supplying 29 types of fuel and lubricants to the domestic, industrial, agricultural and commercial sectors.

There is a vacancy for a Field Sales Representative to cover the districts which will involve visiting existing and potential customers throughout the designated area of responsibility, in order to maximise sales, build and strengthen business relationships - as well as extending the company's customer base within the Commercial, Domestic, Industrial and Agricultural markets.

Please visit our website www.certasenergy.co.uk (reference 113) or send your CV to recruitment@certasenergy.co.uk

We deliver access to justice by providing the people, buildings and technology to support the operations of the Courts and the Office of the Public Guardian.

Scottish Court Service

Administration Officer - Part time

Permanent
Campbeltown Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Court
£15,500 to £18,840 pro rata

Take this important role, and you will undertake a wide range of administrative duties, including processing incoming mail, creating records, preparing files for court hearings, and undertaking financial calculations.

Focused on providing a high quality and sympathetic service to our diverse court users, you will have a flexible approach to working as part of a team. Your enthusiasm for gaining new skills will make you stand out.

We offer an interesting work environment, 25 days holiday entitlement, 11.5 days public and privilege holidays and a civil service pension. Training is provided and there are a variety of opportunities for career progression.

If you are interested in this challenging and rewarding opportunity, you may apply online at www.scotcourts.gov.uk/you_and_us/recruitment
The closing date for the post is 30 January 2014.
Interviews will be held on 7 February 2014.

The Scottish Court Service is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974). This permits us to ask applicants details of both spent and unspent convictions, along with details of any formal cautions that you may have. All successful applicants will require a standard level Disclosure check completed before employment can commence.

www.scotcourts.gov.uk

POSITION OF GARDENER

An enthusiastic and experienced gardener is sought to maintain and develop the 10-acre garden at Conaglen House in the West Highlands.

The garden consists of lawns, herbaceous areas, rosecut flower beds, herb garden, vegetable poly-tunnel, bog garden and established woodland. The successful candidate will be self motivated, hands-on and demonstrate good horticultural knowledge.

A competitive salary and benefits package is offered, including accommodation in a three-bedroom cottage.

The employer may consider a couple for this role, incorporating other maintenance duties, depending on the skill set of the parties.

A full job description is available on request.

Please apply, including a full CV to: **Conaglen Estate Factor, C/o Arnyhoulan Lodge, Conaglen Estate, Ardgour, PH33 7AH**
dmosgrove@broadlandproperties.co.uk
www.conaglen.co.uk

Environment Outreach Worker

Oban Phoenix Cinema

20 hours per week, £16380 pro rata

This newly created position of Environment Outreach Worker will give you the opportunity to join a growing, successful charity, social enterprise in Oban.

We are looking for a highly motivated individual with good working knowledge of Energy Saving practice with excellent interpersonal/communication skills able to fit into a small team in our busy community owned cinema. Closing date 28th January.

Contact Oban Phoenix 562905 or email admin@obanphoenix.com

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e-mail - ll@macleod.co.uk

Hydroplan

Water & power engineering

Project Engineer/Manager

Hydroplan are established and experienced engineering and environmental consultants, specialising in the consenting, design and construction of small to medium hydro schemes.

Due to increasing demand, we are expanding our team and are looking for the following people:

- Project Manager
- Assistant Project Engineer

Both roles will be based in our Fort William or Loch Lomond office. For the right candidate we will offer a competitive salary and a relocation allowance if required.

You will need to have a practical "hands on" approach, be well organised and have excellent communication skills.

For more information on the above roles, please visit www.hydroplan.co.uk. If you are interested in these positions, please send your CV to Audrey Jones at ajones@hydroplan.co.uk by the 27th January 2014

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Required due to retirement, no previous sales experience necessary as training will be provided, a car and mobile are essential.

Dychem sell Industrial and Maintenance Chemicals B2B territory established over 30 years, you must be practical, personable and able to make existing and new calls to potential customers.

Package to include basic, car allowance and commission OTE circa £20,000

Please email cv to dychemltd@aol.com or phone 01582723861 for an application form

Local newspapers and their websites are the number one choice for local jobs.

43% of people only consider jobs in their local area.

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

Classroom Assistant

£14,453 - £15,311 (Pro rata) Salen Primary School, Mull Ref: CME01439
5hrs per week

Classroom Assistant (Temporary)

£14,453 - £15,311 (Pro rata) Rhanahoe Primary School Ref: CME01288
15hrs per week
9am to 12pm, Monday to Fridays on a term time basis.

Clerical Assistant

£14,453 - £15,311 (Pro rata) Salen Primary School, Mull Ref: CME01434
22.75hrs per week

01546 604334

Closing date: 31 January 2014.
To apply visit our website www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

AUCHNACRAIG ESTATE ISLE OF MULL

A cattleman is required to take responsibility for a renowned Highland cattle fold on the Island of Mull in Argyll, either as employee or contractor.

As the position is not full time, income can be enhanced by holiday house work on the estate (including general maintenance, gardening, cleaning and changeovers etc) all of which may be available for the successful applicant and/or their partner.

The successful applicant will be required to live on the property where a house will be provided. He or she will have previous experience with cattle, be responsible and self-motivated and able to work with minimum supervision.

Please apply in writing and in confidence to Richard de Klee, 23 Stafford Street, Edinburgh EH3 7BJ

www.westcoastclassifieds.co.uk
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Advertise your unwanted items in either The Oban Times, Campbelltown Courier or Argyllshire Advertiser and your ad will also appear online at www.westcoastclassifieds.co.uk. Simply use the coupons on this page or visit the website and input your details there

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTABLES

MODEL FOR SALE days gone Scammell six wheeler van (Pickfords), £5 post free. Telephone 01369 706726.

MODEL FOR SALE Corgi Leyland open top "Queen Mary" double deck bus, £16 post free. Telephone 01369 706726.

MODEL FOR SALE Brit-bus Scania Metropolitan double deck bus, £16 post free. Telephone 01369 706726.

AUDIO EQUIPMENT
 APPLE IPOD NANO 6TH GENERATION metallic green, 8Gb. Perfect condition, complete with USB cable. Holds up to 2000 songs, £49 Telephone 01631 720751.

COMPUTERS AND GAMES
 DESKTOP COMPUTER Dell Dimension 5000, Windows XP 3GB Ram, 1GB Graphics card, 19" flatscreen monitor, 146GB hard drive. All in one Epson Printer, Microsoft Word 2007, Adobe CS2. £250 Telephone 01546 606337.

DOMESTIC APPLIANCES
 BEKO DOUBLE OVEN COOKER 4 metal hotplates, top oven with grill. Main fan oven never used, 60cm wide, £49 Telephone 01631 730606.

BABY EQUIPMENT
 BABY CAR SEAT Mothercare in excellent condition, black with the giraffe trim, suitable for birth to 13kg (12-15months), £35 Telephone 01631 730606.

BABY REVERSAL MIRROR that allows you to see your baby in their rear seated car seat, excellent condition, £8 Telephone 01631 730606.

COSATTO BABY CHANGING TABLE cream with concealed baby bath. Compartments and shelves for storage underneath. Excellent condition, £25 Telephone 07795 180964.

TRAVEL COT Babystart Travel Cot only used once, flat packed with cover. Excellent condition. Can deliver to Oban/Comel areas, £20 Telephone 07796 198799.

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 APPROX 400 TONNES of building stone plus slate. Telephone 07535 202615.

BALLACHULISH SLATES FOR SALE large quantity located in Onich. Still on roof, buyer removes. OFFERS Telephone 01499 302623 or 07795 589067.

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 CAR CHARGER for automatic (Homebase) retail £30 sell for, £20 Telephone 01631 563127.

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MOTORHOME WATER HOSE REEL (used once) good condition, £15 Telephone 07970 544042.

CARS AND CAR PARTS UNDER £250
 SPARE TYRE for Volvo 560, 2001. To find out size telephone, £10 Telephone 01631 563127.

DOMESTIC PETS
 FARM REARED DOG AND BITCH not working due to lack of time, free to good homes. Telephone 01631 770229 Bobby Campbell.

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 GARAGE SALE at Newhouse, Tayinloan, Tarbert, Argyll (4 miles north of Tayinloan) on Saturday 25th January from 10am - 1pm Telephone 01880 740552.

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 FISHING REEL Omni lightweight spinning reel RX35, £10 Telephone 07928 946492.

FISHING REEL Garcia Mitchell 324 fishing reel with spool, £25 Telephone 07928 946492.

FISHING REEL Garcia fishing reel Cardinal 656 BW in good condition, £32 Telephone 07928 946492.

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 HARD BODIED PRAM looking for a second hand hard bodied pram, if interested in selling or please. Telephone 07919 465787.

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PERSONALS
 HAPPY 30TH CRAIG LOVE MUM, DAD AND ALL THE FAMILY xx

Thank You Jack Degnan would like to thank most sincerely the pupils, parents and colleagues of Rockfield Primary and all friends and colleagues elsewhere for the lovely gifts, cards and kind words on the occasion of his retirement.

Oban Times PERSONALS
 Oban Times PERSONALS

LOCAL services

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BIRTHS

TINDAL-PETRIE - To Graham and Sara, Isle of Iona on January 10, 2014, Ruby Ellen, a sister for Roan and Erin.

ENGAGEMENTS

JACKSON - TELFER - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Sarah, daughter of John and Yvonne Jackson, Appin and Torquil Jack, son of Torquil and Morg Telfer, Oban, on Christmas Day 2013.

WEIR-SANDERSON

Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Michael, son of Martin and Maire Weir, Camus na h-Àrda, Fort William to Chloe, daughter of Mrs Patricia Moore and the late Lawrence Sanderson, Colchester, Essex.

GOLDEN WEDDINGS

MARTIN-HARVEY - At Highland Parish Church, Campbellton, on January 17, 1964, by the late Rev. J. Hood, Billy to Margaret.

DEATHS

FRASER - At St. Michael's Hospital, Linlithgow on January 3, 2014, Alex Fraser (Shand), son of the late Alexander and Helen Fraser, loving husband of the late Elizabeth and a dear brother and uncle.

GREEN-Euan Joseph Mathew, in Helensburgh on Boxing Day 2013. Aged 26. Friend of mother, son. Funeral service: Clydebank Crematorium on Friday, January 17, 2014 at 2pm. Memorial Service: Lismore Parish Church on Monday, January 20, 2014 at 1pm.

MACNEILL - The family of the late Flora Macneill of Donations at Euan's request to RNL and the Samaritans.

HALLIDAY - Peacefully, at her daughters home in Fort William, Netta Halliday aged 88 years, beloved wife of the late Thomas (Hal) Halliday, much loved mum of May and Jim, cherished Nannie of eleven grand-children and great-grandchildren.

MACNEILL - The family of the late Flora Macneill of Donations at Euan's request to RNL and the Samaritans.

MACQUARIE - Adie and family would like to thank everyone who supported them during their sad loss of Jess. Particular thanks to the staff in wards A and B, Lorn and Inness Hospital, the unfailing care and attention of the Doctors and surgery staff at Sales Surgery and the staff of Mull and Iona Community Hospital, Craignue and Jessie's home carers. Special thanks to Rev 1 Paton for a beautiful and comforting service, thanks also to the Church Office Bearers. Sincere thanks to Billy John, formerly of 2 Dunmar Court, Oban, beloved husband of the late Mary (Monty) and loving father and papa to Catriona, Jim, Rachel and Mark.

MACLEOD - Peacefully in the care of the Highland Hospice, Inverness on Thursday, January 9, 2014. Calum Alasdair MacLeod, 9 MacLeod Place, Dingwall (formerly of Cairnrigg, Harris and Oban), husband of Sheila (Baddy), father of Donald and Kirsty and 'Bampa' of Eilidh and Anna. A funeral service will be held on Friday, January 17, 2014 at 12 noon in Castle Street Church of Scotland, Dingwall followed by a cremation at Inverness Crematorium at 1.30pm. Family flowers only - donations can be made at both services for the Highland Hospice and Macmillan Nurses. Enquiries to D Gunn, Funeral Home, Blackwell Street, Dingwall. Tel 01349 863951

MACLENNAN - Peacefully at Lister House, Fife on January 7, 2014, in his 87th year, Donald John, formerly of 2 Dunmar Court, Oban, beloved husband of the late Mary (Monty) and loving father and papa to Catriona, Jim, Rachel and Mark.

MACLEOD - Peacefully in the care of the Highland Hospice, Inverness on Thursday, January 9, 2014. Calum Alasdair MacLeod, 9 MacLeod Place, Dingwall (formerly of Cairnrigg, Harris and Oban), husband of Sheila (Baddy), father of Donald and Kirsty and 'Bampa' of Eilidh and Anna. A funeral service will be held on Friday, January 17, 2014 at 12 noon in Castle Street Church of Scotland, Dingwall followed by a cremation at Inverness Crematorium at 1.30pm. Family flowers only - donations can be made at both services for the Highland Hospice and Macmillan Nurses. Enquiries to D Gunn, Funeral Home, Blackwell Street, Dingwall. Tel 01349 863951

MATHESON - Following the sad loss of Molly, Ruby, John and families would like to thank all their family and friends for their kind words and expressions of sympathy. Our special thanks to the Rev Robert Brookes for a lovely service and to those who paid their last respects at the church and graveside. A retiring collection of £1544 will be donated to Rheumatoid Arthritis Research Scotland (Arthritis UK).

MEMORIALS

BRODIE - In ever loving memory of my dear sister Cathie who died January 19, 2012. No one can ever keep you near as time unfolds another year. - Amy

Rev Charles Tongue, organist Ella Gill, accordionist Campbell Brown, Ricky Clark, Scott of John McEldan. Funeral Directors, Sontahan Hotel, and all medical staff and carers for their devotion and dedication to Kate. Finally, thank you to everyone who paid their last respects at the church and graveside, and generously donated the sum of £491.29 to the Kilchoan Nurses Fund.

MACKAY - Pat and all the family of the late Lorne Mackay would like to thank family and friends, the Ardfern community and beyond for their overwhelming kindness and support during this sad time. Cards, letters, flowers and the most thoughtful gifts of food and wonderful home baking were greatly appreciated.

MACDONALD - In memory of the late Mrs. Fionna Macdonald, who passed away on January 19, 1973. Remembered also Donald Brown, a loving father and grandfather who passed away January 19, 1973. Loved and remembered everyday by the family.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of our dear brother, who died on January 21, 2009. Gone but not forgotten. - Mamie and Charlie, Inverness, Kathleen and Wally, Farnborough, and families.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of a much missed mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Nancy, who passed away on January 16, 2013. - All the family, Oban, Three and Glasgow.

MACMILLAN - In loving memory of Mark, died January 14, 1991, aged 15. Gone but not forgotten. - Andrew, Maureen and Andrew

MACMILLAN - Mark. Miss you always. - Love you, Jane xxx

MACMILLAN - Our cousin Mark who died January 14, 1991, aged 15. Always and forever missed. - Lynne and family.

MACMILLAN - In loving memory of our dear brother, who died on January 21, 2009. Gone but not forgotten. - Mamie and Charlie, Inverness, Kathleen and Wally, Farnborough, and families.

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MACMILLAN - In loving memory of a much missed mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Nancy, who passed away on January 16, 2013. - All the family, Oban, Three and Glasgow.

CAMPBELL - In memory of a loving mum and gran Marion who died January 17, 1997. Memories are a gift to treasure Ours of you will last forever - Lorne, Kathy, Alasdair, Christine and family.

CLARK - In loving memory of Angus Ross Clark, a much loved husband, father, father-in-law and adoring grandpa, who passed away on January 19, 2009. He lives on forever within our hearts.

CLARK - In loving memory of our dear brother, who died on January 21, 2009. Gone but not forgotten. - Mamie and Charlie, Inverness, Kathleen and Wally, Farnborough, and families.

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

DOW - In loving memory of a much loved dad and grandpa. Sadly missed. - James, Laura, Jamie and Christopher.

GALBRAITH - In loving memory of George of Langraith, and of Doroisingall, Dervaig, Mum who died 20 January, 1995. - Brenda and family.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of our dear brother and uncle Willie, who died on January 21, 2009. Gone but not forgotten. - Mamie and Charlie, Inverness, Kathleen and Wally, Farnborough, and families.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of a much missed mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Nancy, who passed away on January 16, 2013. - All the family, Oban, Three and Glasgow.

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MACMILLAN - Mark. Miss you always. - Love you, Jane xxx

MACMILLAN - Our cousin Mark who died January 14, 1991, aged 15. Always and forever missed. - Lynne and family.

MACRAY - Treasured memories of Len, much loved husband, dad, and grandpa who passed away January 18, 2003. We miss you more than words can say. Loved and remembered everyday. - Love Kate and families

MACMILLAN - In loving memory of John (Clink) Macmillan, who died January 10, 2013. Sadly missed by all the family.

SCOTT - In loving memory of my darling wife Pauline, who passed away so suddenly on January 21, 2013. Loved and remembered every day. - Keith.

STODDART - In loving memory of our dear brother Malcolm Livingston, died January 10, 1972. Fondly remembered always. - From brothers and sisters, Glasgow.

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CHURCH NOTICES

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Sunday 19 January 2014 Epiphany 2

St John's Cathedral, Oban Holy Communion 08:00

St James, Ardchrecknish, Cladich Holy Eucharist 15:00

St Columba, Gruline, Mull Service in Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 11:00

St Columba, Bishop's House, Iona Holy Eucharist 09:30

Thought for the week

Creativity for 2014

The first time I was ever asked to write a prayer I was terrified. How could I possibly do that? But someone encouraged me and I managed. I kept going, and I'm still learning. My first attempt to knit socks since I was at school resulted in a slightly odd first one and a better second one. Still just as warm, and I'm still knitting, making fewer mistakes, but still learning. A child trying to knit once said, "I thought this was supposed to be relaxing!" I tried to explain that it might be relaxing once you've got the hang of it. Just like riding a bike isn't easy to start with. Even when you get good at it you can still fall off. But you can try more difficult manoeuvres and often you'll succeed and feel good. Knitting plain and put needs perseverance but once you've got the hang of it you're off. Too often we think we have to be perfect at things before we can do them. Doing them has to come first. Like life, we may get glimpses of perfection but it's the living, being and doing

Sweet success at Port Appin pudding night

A PUDDING night in Port Appin Village Hall was heralded a sweet success as a full hall of guests was treated to fantastic entertainment. The event, organised by Appin Parish Church and Appin's drama group, Nippa, saw tables drowned in desserts as guests enjoyed the treats, as well as some traditional music. The Piper Emma Law opened the programme and Peter Sinclair



Pupils' winning performances will be on BBC Alba

ROCKFIELD Primary School pupils Calum Garvin and Calum McLuckie can be seen in winning form on BBC Alba next week, on the Gleastu quiz show. The Calums, both P6 pupils, travelled to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig,



Calum McLuckie and Calum Garvin can be seen winning the Gleastu trophy they are pictured with here on BBC Alba this coming Monday.

Calum McLuckie and Calum Garvin can be seen winning the Gleastu trophy they are pictured with here on BBC Alba this coming Monday.

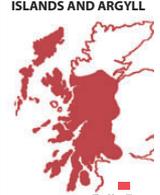
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GRADUATIONS



Kristina Anne MacQueen recently graduated with a BSc in Adult Nursing from Caledonian University Glasgow. Kristina is the younger daughter of Neil and Julie MacQueen, Luing, and the granddaughter of Hugh and Ann MacQueen, Luing and Christina Chapman, and the late Ronald Chapman Oban. Kristina is a former pupil of Luing Primary and Oban High School.



Leyla Williams, Oban recently graduated from Glasgow Caledonian University with BA Honours in Business and Finance. Daughter of Kerry Crawford, Oban and Spike Williams, Oban, granddaughter of Morag & John Milken, Oban and Eileen & the late Arfon Williams, Anglesey, Wales. Leyla has taken up a post at Argyll Community Housing Association.



John Robert Kennedy graduated Campbellville University, Kentucky, USA. Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Marketing emphasis. John is the eldest son of Catherine and John Kennedy, Castleton, Lochcraighead, Oban and the late Christina MacVicar Lochcraighead and Danny and the late Aya Kennedy Inveraray. John was also awarded NCCA All American player and Academic All Conference for the second straight year.



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Saints march into 6th round of the Scottish Cup

'We could have gone in at half time three or four goals to the good'

Fosters Scottish Amateur Cup 5th Round
Dennistoun Vale 0 Oban Saints 1
 SAINTS travelled to the central belt to take on Glasgow Saturday Morning League team Dennistoun Vale in the 5th Round of the Scottish Amateur Cup and it took a penalty 10 minutes from time to book a place in the last 32 for the Oban side.

The tournament started back in November with more than 650 teams in the competition.

The Oban side have done well in the Scottish Cup in recent years reaching the quarter finals on two occasions and been in the last 16 numerous times.

A few years back Saturday Morning League teams used to be the whipping boys of the Scottish Cup, but not any more as the Oban side had to fight all the way for this narrow win.

In saying that, Saints hit the bar, the post twice, had two goals disallowed for offside, missed a good scoring chance and played the better football on the day, but credit to Vale for putting up stern opposition.

Saints were without Mattie Rippon, who was suspended and Craig MacEwan who will be out of action for several weeks after being injured in a snowboarding accident while on holiday.

The game was played on an excellent 3G pitch at Whitehill School and it was the home side who started the better of the two teams, but gradually

the Oban boys got a foothold in the game and Donnie Campbell came close with a free kick that squirmed annoyingly past the post.

Two minutes later Saints had the ball in the net when Lewis Cameron slid a great pass through to Allan MacKay who slotted the ball home, but the referee blew for offside - it must have been a tight decision.

Vale looked a decent side and were passing the ball about well and came close when Stephen Grant fired over the bar from the edge of the box.

As the half wore on the Saints central midfield of Myles McAuley, Paul Kerr and Donnie Campbell started to run the show.

Snapped
 Davie McArthur came close with a good effort then Donnie Campbell fired a great shot from fully 30 yards that smacked against the crossbar with the keeper stranded. What a goal that would have been!

Saints had a great chance to take the lead when a mistake in the heart of the Vale defence allowed Lewis Cameron a clear run in on goals, but the young striker couldn't get the ball out from between his feet and a good opportunity was missed.

Lewis then combined with Allan MacKay to set up Donnie Campbell but Donnie's effort crashed against the upright before being scrambled clear.

The home side were under a

constant pressure as the half drew to a close but credit to them, they were defending well.

Just before the interval Saints created another two good chances, the first when Allan MacKay crossed for Myles McAuley at the far post but again luck was out for the Oban side when Myles' header came back off the post, then Donnie Campbell fed in Allan MacKay, but his shot flew past the upright.

Referee John Quinn from Motherwell, who had a good game, then blew for the half time interval.

Manager Iain Jackson was delighted with the first half performance, the only thing missing was a goal. His side had created plenty of chances while restricting Vale to very few.

The second half started with the visitors on top, but again the Vale boys were defending well as keeper John Cassidy who made a great save from a Dene Cassells shot.

Saints had the ball in the net for the second time when Davie McArthur sent Allan MacKay clear but this time the visitor's front man looked well offside and the goal was chalked off.

Dennistoun made a couple of substitutions which made them more of an attacking force as the half wore on and the Saints defence set up of Mac MacCallum, Alex Craik and Jamie Graham had to be on their toes.

The visitors made a couple changes themselves to freshen

FOOTBALL
 things up with Colin Tindall and Roy McLuckie coming on for Davie McArthur and Dene Cassells.

The game was more evenly balanced as the clock ran down out for the Oban side with both teams going all out for a goal that would probably prove to be the winner.

With 10 minutes remaining the deadlock was broken when the visitors made progress up the left where Allan MacKay and Donnie Campbell set up Lewis Cameron who spotted Colin Tindall bursting into the box. Lewis played a perfect pass through to his colleague who knocked the ball past Vale central defender Gavin MacLean who brought him down leaving the referee no option but to point to the spot. Allan MacKay stepped up and drilled the ball home much to the delight of the Oban contingent.

With nothing to lose Vale pushed more men forward in an attempt to get a goal back and created a couple of chances but nothing that troubled Saints keeper Daniel Cassells too much.

With Vale pushing forward it meant they were leaving space at the back and both Allan MacKay and Donnie Campbell had good chances but they failed to hit the back of the net so the game ended in a narrow 1-0 win for the visitors.

Manager Iain Jackson was de-



Allan MacKay slotted home the penalty that put Oban Saints through to the 6th round of the Scottish Amateur Cup to face either Thorn Athletic or Drumchapel Amateurs.

lighted. He said: 'Although the score was only 1-0 we played some good football today, especially in the first half, but failed to find the net. If we had taken our chances we could have gone in at the interval three or four goals to the good.'

'As time wore on in the second half I thought it was going to be one of those days, but thankfully

we got the goal that proved to be the winner.

'Credit to Dennistoun they were a decent side and made us fight all the way, but I thought we were the better team and fully deserved to go through to the last 32 of the competition albeit by the narrowest of margins.'

Saints now face the winners of the Thorn Athletic v

Drumchapel Amateurs match in the 6th round. This game is scheduled to be played in Oban on Saturday January 25.

This weekend Saints return to league action when they travel to Clydebank to take on Kilmow Union. The match will be played at John Browns with a 2pm kick-off with referee James Gallagher in charge.

Gravel Sprint restored

RALLYING
 AFTER a break of 10 years Mull Car Club has been able to reinstate its rally time trial, formerly known as the Gravel Sprint.

The club has been granted use of private land at Glemgrom, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Nelson, and will run the competition there on Saturday, March 29.

The rally stage will be approximately 1.3 miles long and competitors will have the chance to complete six runs during the day.

The difference between a rally and a rally time trial is that it is a driver only competition. No navigators are allowed.

John Clayton from the club said: 'In the past when we ran events we had great support from the local community, many having never marshalled before or used a hand held radio, but all did a fantastic job to make the event safe.'

'We need a radio point on nearly every bend to comply with the regulations and together with marshals we will probably need approximately 30 people to man the stage.'

Meanwhile, Mull has been confirmed as one of four rounds in the new SACC Rally Time Trial Championship.

The Championship will be managed by the Scottish Association of Car Clubs (SACC) and initially there will be four events throughout the year: Mull, Fort Augustus (Highland Car Club), Coneyhatch (Stonehaven and District Car Club) and Skye.

Old New Year shoot at Benderloch

SHOOTING
 LORN Clay Target Club fired off the new year last Saturday with their annual Old New Year competition at Benderloch.

A rare dry and calm day greeted more than 40 shooters from around the region, including competitors who had travelled from clubs in Tobermory, Cairndow and Dunoon, all looking to win something from a prize table brimming under the weight of many bottles of whisky.

High Gun was Paul Chalmers with a score of 50/47, second place was Derek Street with 49/46 and third was Eric MacAlister on 49/43.

Regular practise nights are held on Thursday evenings, starting Thursday, April 10 at 7pm. New members welcome.

Oban Saints youths results and fixtures

YOUTH FOOTBALL
 LAST weekend's results: Broomhill Sports Club 2, Under 13s 4, Saints goalkeepers were Keir MacLean (2), Scott Mossman and Sol Smith. Dumbarton United v Under 14s postponed; Under 15s v Helensburgh postponed; Under 17s 2, Milngavie 10, 2, Scoring for Saints were Allan Buchanan and Stewart Twort.

Next weekend's fixtures: Campbelltown Pupils Youth v Under 13s; Under 14s v Dumbarton Riverside; Goldenhill v Under 15s; Ardencaple v Under 17s.

Islay Golf Club

GOLF
 JANUARY Medal played Sunday January 5 1st C. Davey 87, 144 7th 2nd D. Johnston 85-7 = 8th 3rd A. Holsyske 85 = 5-80 C.S.S 73

Winter League played January 12 1st A.Livingstone 35 Pts, 2nd N.Carmichael 32 Pts, 3rd R.MacIntyre 31 Pts, C.S.S 72

Lorne disappointing despite away win

RBS West Division 2 Strathaven 0 Oban Lorne 30
 A SCRAPPY and ill-disciplined performance overshadowed Lorne's away win for Oban Lorne on their travels.

Lorne made the long trip to Strathaven on Saturday to take on the side bottom of the league. With the home side recording only one point in their 12 matches this season, the visitors were expecting a landslide win.

But an under-par performance and an inability to convert more scoring opportunities left coach Corrie Louw frustrated.

The men in green had welcomed stand off Colin Thwaites into the side, meaning Alex Lawson moved to fullback.

There was also an Oban Lorne debut for 18-year-old Ailsair Forthgerrig who started at hooker.

Oban knew that they were going to dominate in almost every aspect of the game and this seemed to be the case in the opening minutes. Strathaven's young side failed to match

to the physicality of the Oban team.

Yet, despite a number of line breaks, the home side stood firm in defence.

Oban finally breached the home try line on 15 minutes when Thwaites touched down with a break from the 22. This was shortly followed with a powerful finish from centre Cameron Smith.

Sin binned
 But in an incident that was set the tone of the match, Craig Wright was sin binned on 30 minutes after retaliating to a Strathaven defender taking the Oban centre out off the ball. Both players were to spend the next 10 minutes on the side line.

Oban Lorne completely dominated in possession, territory and impressed in both the scrum and lineout but failed to finish off several try scoring chances.

Two further tries from Graham MacEachan and Struan Smith gave a laboured 20 - 0 halftime lead. With other teams putting over 100 points over Strathaven so far this season, Oban knew

RUGBY
 they had underperformed.

But the second half was a scrappy affair with ill-discipline creeping in from both sides.

An early try from Andy MacDougall increased Oban's lead to 25-0 but much to the visitors' disbelief, centre Callum MacLachlan was then sent off for a powerful tackle on a Strathaven centre, that the referee deemed to be dangerous. Post-match this red card was rescinded and replaced with a yellow card.

Oban scored their sixth try with the last play of the game. Full back Alex Lawson dived over in the corner to finish off a very disappointing performance for Oban Lorne, despite the 30-0 win.

The Green Machine will have to improve for the visit of Strathendrick to Glenruthen this Saturday, kick off at 2pm.

Oban Mini Rugby restarts this week from 11-12 pm at Glenruthen. All players from P4-7 welcome.

Key shinty dates

- SHINTY**
- THE Camanachd Association has today announced the key dates for shinty in 2014 including the season start date and the Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup Final.
 - The dates for 2014 are as follows: Season start March 1.
 - MacTavish Cup Final - June 14 at Bught Park, Inverness
 - A&K Parcels Celtic Cup Final - June 28 at Old Anniesland, Glasgow
 - Ballemore Cup Final - July 12 - Venue the Aberdeen Considine
 - Sutherland Cup Final - July 19 - Venue the Artemis Macaulay Cup Final
 - August 23 at Mossfield Park, Oban
 - Bullough Cup Final - August 30 - Venue the Strathearn Cup Final
 - August 30 - Venue the Women's Valerie's Scottish Camanachd Cup and Marine Harvest Challenge Cup Finals
 - September 6 - Venue the Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup Final - September 13 at Bught Park, Inverness
 - Marine Harvest Senior Shinty/Hurling Internationals: Scotland v Ireland, Home Test - October 18 at Bught Park, Inverness. Away Test - October 25 in Ireland, venue tbc.



Mark Dawson, left, receives his runner-up award from driver Marino Franchitti.

Mark aims to go one better this season

AFTER securing second place in the Scottish Motor Racing Club's Scottish Sport and Saloon Cars Championship, Oban racer Mark Dawson is aiming to go one better this year.

The championship was run over 15 rounds at Knockhill Racing Circuit in 2013 but Mark, who now lives in Edinburgh, narrowly lost the title in the last lap of a thrilling final race last October.

He received awards for his B1 class victory and his overall second place from racing driver Marino Franchitti, brother of former IndyCar Series champion Dario.

Both Franchitti brothers were at the awards ceremony in Edinburgh, along with Paul Di Resta, who drove in Formula One last season.

Mark, who is backed by Oban business Dawson's Estate Agents and Hamilton-based Donald Storrer Group, first competed in the champion-

MOTOR RACING

ship in his Volkswagen Corrado in 2012, when he secured third place.

The 39-year-old said: 'The championship contains a vast range of teams and cars, all with varying budgets.'

'The class structure allows any car to be competitive in the overall championship. This winter we have invested in a new custom-built race engine and made several other improvements to the car. We hope this will help us go one better in the championship next year and that's what we're aiming for.'

Mark plans to race the full SMRC Season at Knockhill in 2014, which kicks off on April 6 but also plans to compete in events throughout the UK and in Europe.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

WIN £950

COMPETITION

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.

This week's nearest ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

C McMillan, Broughton Place, Hamilton

R Gillies, Nursery Cottages, Ford

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...

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, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Name
 Address
 Tel No.

Please tape your £1 coin here

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, April 2014 and by 12noon Tuesday.

Competition rules
 No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mailed 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 Wyman Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

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Camanchd hold exhibition match



Lorne Dickie fires in Camanchd's equaliser in the game against the Old Crocks. 07.02.2014my05

'We have been working hard this winter'

AN EXHIBITION match at Mossfield gave Oban Camanchd manager Gussie Campbell the chance to try out some new players, who he hopes can help fire them back into shinty's premier league.

The Oban side were relegated at the end of last season to the newly-formed National Division One, a league Campbell believes will be just as tough as the Orion Group Premiership.

A lack of goals proved costly last season but the recruitment of three young forwards for the 2014 campaign; Mattie Rippon, who returns from suspension, Shaun Morgan and Lorne Dickie could signal a change in fortune.

Campbell said: 'I think there are potentially five teams in the new National Division One who could win the league and I count ourselves among them. 'It is our ambition to win it and get ourselves back into the Orion Group Premiership. 'We have been working hard this winter and are a fitter team than we were last season. We also learnt some valuable lessons from last season, not least the importance of sticking the ball in the back of the net.'

Oban Camanchd began their

pre-season with an exhibition match last Saturday against an Old Crocks team consisting of many of the club's 1996 Camanchd Cup winning side.

Dougie MacIntyre opened the scoring early on but Lorne Dickie equalised 10 minutes before half time.

As the young team's fitness told in the second half they took the lead through teenager Connor Howe but Brian MacCallum equalised late on for the Old Crocks.

This forced a penalty shoot-out, which was won by the young team with Scott MacMillan hitting the winning penalty.

Campbell has added Fraser Inglis and Ian Hay as first team

SHINTY

coaches, with Hay also having responsibility for the under-17 team. The under-14s will be run by David MacCush.

Oban Camanchd have three pre-season fixtures lined up next month. On February 8 they host Inverary at Mossfield, with Lovat coming to Oban a week later.

Kinlochshiel will play Camanchd at Ganavan on February 22.

Lochside Rovers, who play Newtonmore at Mossfield in a friendly on February 1, will be managed by Tony Howlett and David 'Skinny' MacInnes.



The Old Crocks' Alec MacVicar uses every trick in the book to halt Camanchd's Andrew 'Papa' MacCush. 07.02.2014my07

Athletic net six, but just fail to win West League Cup section

West of Scotland League Cup
ANTONINE 3
FOOTBALL

OBAN Athletic finally played their last group match in the league cup against Antonine, knowing they had to win by four clear goals to top the group.

Unfortunately they only managed to win the game 6-3 to finish in second place which means an away tie in the quarter finals.

Athletic dominated most of the match and were leading from the third minute until the 90th with goals from Kris Gillies, Dean Smith and Paul Carmichael in the first half.

There was a calamitous goal for Antonine because of a mix up between keeper Craig Maitland and the defence preventing Athletic from having a flawless first half.

The second period was a bit more feisty with Antonine trying bullying tactics and it worked to an extent with Oban losing focus on passing the ball and more trying to avoid some hefty tackles.

Credit to the Oban side who took it on the chin and scored another three goals again through Gillies, Carmichael



Argyll Under-15s player Lomond MacPherson, from Oban, breaks through the Cumbernauld defence during Sunday's match between the two sides. The Argyll boys put in a great performance to win the West League tie 50-20. Argyll Under-15s have only lost one league match this season. Photo: Stephen Lawson

Three teams battle it out at the top of pool league

OBAN pool players returned to domestic duties after the festive holidays and if last Thursday night is anything to go by 2014 is going to be a fantastic year for the sport locally.

Markie Dans 'A' held a two-point advantage over their opponents, reigning champions The Cellar Bar, prior to their match.

A defeat for The Cellar would have severely dented hopes of retaining their crown and Markie Dans were looking to secure an impressive 10th league win on the bounce.

But any talk of The Cellar's demise proved to be premature as the current holders produced their performance of the season to blow the title race wide open.

The Lancaster 'A' just about occupy the top spot now by game difference after finally scraping through their derby against The Lancaster 'B' in a gruelling encounter. Not for the first time this season the new league leaders had to rely on big doubles performances to secure the result, much to the disappointment of the junior side who battled gallantly throughout the match.

With all three of the big guns now sitting on the same points and the same number of games played, this year's title race could be going to be the most exciting in the league's history.

With The Lancaster 'B' suffering defeat it offered Markie Dans 'B' and The Lochell the opportunity to narrow the gap and both duly obliged against The Creagan Inn and The Claredon respectively to close the deficit to three points.

The Gluepot returned to winning ways at home to The Lochavullin to continue their quest for a top six finish and Foleys Bar left it late to deny

BOXING

The Outreach their first point of the season in the league's other two remaining fixtures.

Results, January 9: The Cellar 7-3 Markie Dans A; Markie Dans B 10-0 The Creagan Inn; The Outreach 4-6 Foleys Bar; Lancaster A 6-4 Lancaster B; The Lochell 8-2 The Claredon; The Gluepot 6-4 The Lochavullin.

Oban Filling Station Cup quarter finals, January 16: Markie Dans B v Lancaster B; Lancaster A v The Gluepot; Markie Dans A v The Claredon; The Cellar v The Lochell.

Oban Pool League - Sponsored by The Creagan Inn

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|-----------------|----|---|---|----|----|----|-----|
| 1 Lancaster A | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 75 | 25 | 18 |
| 2 Cellar Bar | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 74 | 26 | 18 |
| 3 Markie Dans A | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 68 | 32 | 18 |
| 4 Lancaster B | 10 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 61 | 39 | 13 |
| 5 Markie Dans B | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 51 | 49 | 10 |
| 6 Lochell | 10 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 48 | 52 | 10 |
| 7 Gluepot | 10 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 48 | 52 | 8 |
| 8 Claredon | 10 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 48 | 52 | 8 |
| 9 Lochavullin | 10 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 43 | 57 | 8 |
| 10 Creagan Inn | 10 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 24 | 76 | 5 |
| 11 Foleys Bar | 10 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 38 | 62 | 4 |
| 12 Outreach | 10 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 24 | 76 | 0 |

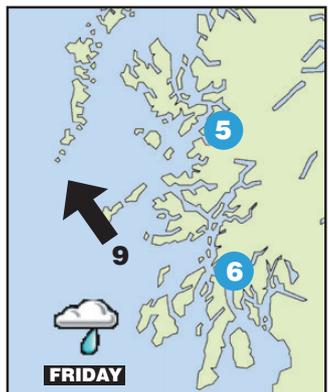
Weather

Thursday Sunshine and showers
Winds moderate south easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C

Friday Light rain
Winds moderate south south easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook Light rain at times
Winds light south easterly
Temperatures 4°C to 6°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 16, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

| Date | am | pm |
|------|---|----|
| Thur | 05.42 3.9 12.26 1.3 18.18 3.9 *** ** | |
| Fri | 00.19 1.0 06.17 4.0 12.59 1.3 18.42 3.9 | |
| Sat | 00.55 1.0 06.51 4.0 13.31 1.3 19.14 3.9 | |
| Sun | 01.28 1.0 07.22 4.0 14.02 1.4 19.44 3.8 | |
| Mon | 01.58 1.1 07.52 3.9 14.29 1.5 20.12 3.7 | |
| Tues | 02.26 1.2 08.20 3.8 14.49 1.6 20.43 3.5 | |
| Wed | 02.58 1.3 08.52 3.6 15.19 1.7 21.19 3.4 | |

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

| | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Ardrishaig | -5.35 | Mallaig | +0.25 |
| Campbeltown | -5.30 | Portree | +0.55 |
| Crinan | -0.47 | Tobermory | +0.16 |
| Islay Port Ellen | 2.00 | Dover | +5.30 |
| Lochboisdale | +0.30 | | |

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The Oban Times

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COMING SOON THE 2014 Fort William & Lochaber Index

New sheriff to take charge at Fort William court

A STRAIGHT-talking law man will take charge of court cases in Fort William from early next month. Sheriff Richard Davidson will preside over the town's sheriff court from February 3 and will also sit part-time on the bench in Portree. The judge spent 20 years as a sheriff in Dundee until the move. He faced controversy in the city last year when he called legislation to tackle sectarianism in football 'nonsense'. He made the comment when clearing a man accused of singing a pro-IRA song at Dens Park, Dundee, in April. He also upset the Catholic Church during the acquittal by suggesting the way to deal with sectarianism in Scotland would be to do away with denominational schools.

Survey highlights importance of Harry Potter connection

GLENFINNAN Visitor Centre should capitalise more on Harry Potter fans visiting the viaduct nearby, a survey has revealed. The arch structure became famous after the Hogwarts Express steamed over it in three of the film series. Now a National Trust for Scotland study has found the viaduct is equally as popular with visitors as the monument built to mark the raising of Bonnie Prince Charlie's standard in 1745.

Responses were gathered at the visitor centre over October and early November last year and included a mix of West Highland locals, other Scots and many more nationalities. A National Trust spokesperson told *The Oban Times*: 'As the survey highlights there are a number of reasons why visitors stop in at Glenfinnan including the Harry Potter connection. We are already looking at ways we can work with others locally to improve access to enable visitors to take better photos of this impressive landmark. As a heritage charity we feel our primary focus at Glenfinnan is on the area's historic significance and telling visitors about the Jacobite rebellion. This approach is proving popular and the centre is currently exceeding its annual visitor targets.'



Glenfinnan residents didn't let hail dampen their spirits before the game. 20_03shinty01

Shinty match marks old Scots New Year

GLENFINNAN residents celebrated the old Scots New Year with their traditional shinty game on Saturday. Around 20 adults and children gathered at the viaduct field for a light-hearted match - despite heavy hail and a muddy field. The locals were split into two teams with Glenfinnan 1 scoring four goals against

'Glenfinnan 2' who scored two. A fire fought against the hail beside the pitch and warming drinks and wine were handed out to the adults as spectators huddled together to watch the game. Local fiddler Iain MacFarlane said: 'This year we played Glenfinnan versus Glenfinnan. It was good fun despite the horrible

weather. Everyone had fun - and no one was injured.' The Glenfinnan community traditionally celebrates the old New Year's Day on the Saturday closest to the date. January 1 became January 13 when the Gregorian calendar replaced the Julian calendar in 1752.

Transport group to probe A82 accident blackspot

TRANSPORT Scotland is to investigate a series of accidents on a stretch of the A82 near Fort William.

EXCLUSIVE

REPORT by STEPHEN NORRIS [snorris@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:norris@obantimes.co.uk)

It is understood the probe will centre on whether road surface quality is a contributory factor to the crash toll. All the incidents have occurred within a 100-yard stretch three miles north of the Corran Ferry. The move follows last week's report in *The Oban Times* highlighting local concerns over why there had been so many crashes at the same spot in recent weeks. The notorious accident blackspot struck again on Friday when a car went down an embankment and overturned around 2pm. One woman in her 40s and two teenage girls were taken to the Belford Hospital for checkups. A police spokesperson said no injuries were reported. Glencoe couple Martin Morrison and Krystie Wright are among those urging Transport Scotland to carry out

and it has been proved to work. All they have done at the moment is to put out slippery surface signs.' A Transport Scotland spokesperson told *The Oban Times*: 'The safety of the trunk road network is extremely important and we will be investigating this stretch of the A82, north of Corran Ferry, over the coming year to determine if there are any common circumstances in the recent incidents and whether remedial measures are appropriate.' Councillor Brian Murphy, the chairman of road campaign group The A82 Partnership, pledged to take the matter up with Transport Scotland A82 route manager Bob Mitchell at a meeting in Fort William on February 4. He said: 'I welcome this statement from Transport Scotland that they will be investigating the condition of the road surface.'

Communities to be linked to new super-fast broadband

SLOW internet connections will soon be a thing of the past for eight Lochaber communities after it emerged they are to be connected to high speed fibre broadband. Ardgour, Corpach, Ballachulish, Duror, Kinlochleven, Onich, Spean Bridge and Strontian will all receive the service by the end of the year. The villages are among over 600 places across the UK included in a programme of works just published by contractors BT Openreach. Homes and businesses will be hooked up to the new super-fast

network in one of two ways - fibre to the cabinet (FTTC), or fibre to the premises (FTTP). FTTC, a fibre and copper connection to an exchange in the street, will deliver download speeds of up to 80megabits a second and upload speeds of up to 20MBs. FTTP, a more expensive all-fibre cable, will be even faster with download speeds of up to 300MBs and upload speeds of 30MBs. The upgrade is part of a partnership project to revolutionise communications across the Highlands and Islands.

'But as a result of this project, many communities across Lochaber can look forward to the arrival of next generation broadband from later in 2014'. Glencoe IT consultant Simon Meldrum, who splits his work between home and London, said tourism businesses would be among those to benefit. He said: 'Guests are often very disappointed they can't get a weather forecast online or upload their photos to Facebook. Having this type of technology means you could have more people in working from home jobs in the longer term, which can only be good for areas like the Highlands.'

However, Mr Meldrum believes some customers could lose out because broadband speeds would be slowed by the length of cable to the new network. He said: 'If you live two or three miles up the glen there will be a degradation of signal from the cabinet to the home.' Most of west Lochaber, including Mallaig, Knoydard and Achardale, must wait until 2016 for the upgrade. No date has yet been given for Morvern, which is described as 'under evaluation'. No communities in Skye or Lochalsh will get the faster service before 2016.

Woman gored by stag moved out of intensive care

A WOMAN gored by a stag in Lochaber last month is now out of intensive care at the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow. Dr Kate Stone was taken off sedation following a second operation on her windpipe last Tuesday and has been moved to the high dependency unit. The animal ran towards the 44-year-old early on December 30 when she was on a short break with friends at Lochailort. She was taken to the Belford Hospital in Fort William before being airlifted to Glasgow. She was placed in an induced

coma on Hogmanay following the first operation to repair her trachea. Signs are Dr Stone will make a steady recovery. She has slowly been regaining consciousness and becoming more active in terms of communicating with doctors and her family.



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A WARM WELCOME AWAITS

'Fairy forest' to be cleared over next year

HUNDREDS of toys, ornaments and mementos in Lochaber's secret 'fairy forest' will be cleared over the next year. The magical grotto at Coille Rais forest near Garloch will disappear before Achnacarry Estate begins timber operations begin next spring. Now the custodians, two local women who wish to remain anonymous, want the public to reclaim any donated items. One told *The Oban Times*: 'Over the coming 12 months the fairy community of Coille Rais forest will gradually be taking leave of the homeland they have had the good fortune to occupy over the past eight years. Past visitors who have kindly donated items over the years may wish to reclaim their property lest it be disposed of in the final clearance. They should feel free to do so in the coming months.'

Museum launches new campaign to broaden its appeal

STAFF and volunteers at the West Highland Museum have launched a campaign to broaden its appeal. A three year initiative to attract members, funding and support was kick-started by a reception in Fort William on Friday evening. The campaign is funded by The Moidart Trust, a programme that supports local enterprises. Angus MacDonald, founder of the trust, told the visitors: 'I want to remind people to visit this very successful organisation. My only wish is that you all go away and tell people about the museum and that it has fabulous stuff inside.' John Hutchison, chairman of trustees, told guests that things were looking up and reported a 24 per cent rise in visitors to the museum in the last year. He also explained that extra funds in the budget would help with building refurbishments, while £1,000 could be used to install wi-fi and create an app to help more information on museum exhibitions.

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Call slip up led to rescue delay

AN INCOMPLETE Mayday radio call led to the rescue of a crew from a sinking fishing boat off Harris being delayed by 45 minutes, investigators have found.

The three crew aboard the *Achieve* were being unaware the vessel was going down because an alarm in the fish hold had been disconnected, a Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) report also said.

Lewis fisherman Norman Macleod died from hypothermia after the crew boat foundered off Taransay on February 21 last year.

The 30-year-old skipper and another crew member hailed Mr Macleod aboard a liferaft after he had jumped from the vessel as it sank below him.

But the 20 minutes he spent in the 4°C water meant efforts to save the 46-year-old at Stornoway hospital failed.

The MAIB said the skipper's unfamiliarity with the boat's digital selective calling (DSC) and 'incorrect understanding' of another emergency distress call system, the Manoverboard Guardian, meant he preferred voice contact with the coastguard.

Sinking

But the watch operator misheard the vessel's name, *Accord* and the skipper had no time to correct the misunderstanding as the *Achieve* was sinking 'very rapidly'.

It was only when it became clear that no vessel by the name of *Accord* was in distress that the search for the *Achieve* began.

The report concluded the boat began taking on water after 'a heavy slam' sprung a plank below her waterline.

There were no warning lights in the wheelhouse to warn the crew that the pump had automatically started working.

It said: 'Had the hold bilge alarm been functional, it should have alerted the crew almost as soon as the flooding started. The crew could then have taken steps to prevent further flooding, or at least raised a distress call much earlier.'

Liferaft

However, the MAIB congratulated the skipper for ensuring there was a serviced and working liferaft on board as fishing vessels under 10m registered length were not required to carry one.

It added: 'Further, his timely action in releasing the liferaft, kicking it clear when it was about to be snagged in the net, cutting it free as it was drawn towards the propeller and helping one of his crewmen into the raft, were all commendable.'

His diligence and presence of mind might have saved his own life and that of his crewman.'



Stephanie Parsons: pregnancy means she has had to step down as coxswain. Donnie Nicolson: leading the 100-mile Row St Kilda to Skye charity expedition.

The larch skiff under repair at Broadford; she will be in the water by early April.



It's all smiles at Caol Lunch Club before the food arrives. 20_f03h001

Lunch club serves up a winner

THE CHIPS were down for Caol Lunch Club when it closed in 2011 under Highland Council cutbacks - but now the vital service is going from strength to strength.

Initially run by volunteers after the council pulled out, the club became the responsibility of Lochaber Action on Disability (LAD) in November last year.

Since then the average number of elderly, vulnerable and disabled people sitting down at Caol Community Centre for a craic and a hot two-course meal has risen from 30 to 35.

The LAD mibus, which is specially adapted for the disabled, brings in up to 40 people daily to the centre. A group with learning disabilities join the senior citizens for lunch every Thursday.

The club is a great way of countering loneliness and isolation through meeting new friends, LAD manager Laura Cheetham said.

'If somebody is alone at home they can become reclusive, especially if they are not very good at walking,' she said.

'They might not see anybody and close in on themselves so we are trying to bring them back out into the community.'

LAD runs the club in partnership with the Lochaber District Lunch Club committee, with support from Highland Council and Caol Community Centre.

Committee chairman Dougie MacLachlan said: 'We are all working together and so far it has been very successful.'

Baby news leaves crew expecting new coxswain

Rower forced to pull out of 100-mile St Kilda to Skye charity event

EXCLUSIVE REPORT BY STEPHEN NORRIS snorris@obantimes.co.uk

AN AMBITIOUS attempt to row 100-miles from St Kilda to Skye for charity has lost a key crew member - because she is expecting a baby.

Stephanie Parsons was due to be coxswain aboard an 18-foot wooden larch skiff for the potentially perilous journey back to Portree this summer.

But the skilled rower had to pull out after learning her baby was due on May 9 - just when the boat could be in the water.

Stephanie, who was captain of Anglia Ruskin University rowing club in Cambridge before she moved to Portree, told *The Oban Times*: 'I would like to have been the coxswain but I will carry on coaching them.'

She is watching for them very nervously and I would rather be in the boat with them than on land biting my nails.'

Three other girls, Rosie McDaid and Cathryn Baillie from Portree, and Gill Housley from Carbot, have agreed to take Stephanie's place.

Row St Kilda to Skye

expedition leader Donnie Nicolson, who will be one of eight Skymen behind the oars, said: 'Our three replacement coxswains have never been in a boat before, never rowed and never coxed.'

'The challenge now is not only getting the boat ready but training up the three girls in time for departure.'

The skiff is currently undergoing refurbishment at Iain MacLean's boatyard in Broadford.

Mr Nicolson said: 'We are waiting for a delivery of timber so we can progress things. We are hoping to have her ready by springtime, ideally March or early April at the latest.'

'We want to be ready for the beginning of May as historically that's when we can get some cracking weather.'

'If we don't get good conditions

then we will just wait for a weather window. The priority now for the crew is just to get on the water.'

Both skiff and crew will be taken out to St Kilda on the foredeck of the expedition's support vessel, the Portree fishing boat the *Dunan Star*.

The non-stop row back to Portree is expected to take two days.

The attempt is being undertaken in aid of the RNLI and Skye and Lochalsh Young Carers.

One of the young carers has christened the boat but organisers are not revealing the name until repairs are nearing completion.

Meanwhile, Mr Nicolson has tracked down the great-grandson of Thomas Orr, the man who built the skiff at Greenock in the 1890s.

Repeated phone calls to Thomas Orr Kirk in Florida met with no response.

Mr Nicolson wrote to Mr Kirk before Christmas but so far no reply has been received.

Curtain up on island war project

GAELIC arts agency Proicseact nan Ealan (PNE) is to assist five Western Isles communities commemorate the centenary of the Great War through a new project.

'Gairm nan Gàidheal' (Call of the Gael) will explore the involvement of islanders in the conflict through drama, music, song and exhibitions.

Professional theatre practitioners are working with local people to produce scripts for five new plays, each to be staged at a different location.

The first will be performed in Harris in March followed by North Uist, Barra, Point and Stornoway.

The writers involved include D S Murray, Iain Macrae, Alison Lang, Chrissie Ross and Margaret MacNeil.

PNE chairwoman Cathy Macdonald said: 'This ambitious project in the five different island communities is being supported by people from these communities, many of whom have a direct connection with the horror that unfolded in 1914.'

'All parts of the United Kingdom suffered but few sacrificed as many as the islands. We hope to be able to reflect its impact and draw on the great reservoir of creative material the Great War produced.'

PNE plans to take the plays to communities across Scotland including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness, Oban and Skye, later in the year.

Man denies reversing car at pedestrians

A BALLACHULISH man has denied reversing his car at speed towards pedestrians in the village on two consecutive days.

Ray Chisholm of Allanbrock, Lettermore, is accused of driving dangerously towards a Sandra Michie outside her home at Lochside Cottages, Ballachulish on July 10 last year.

The 45-year-old faces a second charge of driving without due care and attention and reversing towards Mrs Michie, her husband Kenneth Michie and another woman at the same location the following day.

Chisholm is due to stand trial at Forth William Sheriff Court on February 3.

Welcome drop in fire deaths as safety message hits home

WORK to educate the public on fire safety appears to be paying dividends in the Highlands, a special emphasis on prevention and protection and we're now starting to see the benefits of that.

The total number of fires, both deliberate and accidental, also fell from 561 to 400, while 'good intent' false alarms dropped from 601 to 516.

The only types of call outs to increase, according to the local operations assessment, were accidental building fires in buildings other than homes, road traffic collisions and malicious false alarms.

Scott Hay, local senior officer for Fire and Rescue Highland welcomed the big reduction

in loss of life and injuries. He told *The Oban Times*: 'It's been unbelievable. We've had a special emphasis on prevention and protection and we're now starting to see the benefits of that.'

'We're getting so much benefit from working with people on fire safety education and finding ways to prevent fires. We want that to continue as much as possible in the next three years.'

However, Mr Hay admitted much work remained to be done to reduce the road accident rate in the Highlands, which is the highest in Scotland and three times the national average.

He said: 'The number of crashes could be for a number of reasons, it's hard to say. It could be wet roads, the sheer number of people using the roads, and in some cases it could be that

people go too fast on certain roads.

'This is a beautiful part of the world and there might be a feeling that when there's an open road in front of someone they just want to open the car up and go too fast.'

'We're doing everything we can to lower this figure. We have a zero tolerance policy and ideally would like not to see any accidents at all and I would urge everyone to drive to the road conditions.'

The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Highland 2014-2017 comes from a Scotland-wide initiative to reduce the number of fires and accidents across the country, broken down into area divisions.

The public is invited to submit their views online via the feedback form at www.fireScotland.gov.uk.

Got a story? Call our newsdesks on 01397 703003 or 01631 568000

Fund boost could see Lochaber Geopark back on world stage

THE BODY promoting Lochaber's unique landscapes and rock formations has been through a financial lifeline.

And the £37,000 funding from Scottish Ministers could mean Lochaber Geopark regaining its place on the world stage.

In 2011, the voluntary group lost the coveted Unesco geopark status because it could not afford a project

officer - a key requirement of the designation.

Its membership of the European and Global Geopark Networks also lapsed, leaving North West Highlands and Shetland as Scotland's only Unesco-accredited geoparks.

But now Lochaber looks set to rejoin the ranks in 2015 by employing full-time staff to run

day-to-day operations and draw up a business plan detailing a way forward without government hand-outs.

Lochaber Geopark director David Findlay told *The Oban Times*: 'We will be allowed back in again because we have one of the best geological areas on the planet.'

'This is great news for Lochaber Geopark and ends the immediate uncertainty of short term funding

to enable the geopark to find a mechanism to provide long term sustainability.

'It will then be in a position to make a reapplication to the European and Global Geopark Networks to renew its membership and regain the UNESCO accolade, for the wonderful and outstanding landscape and geological heritage of Lochaber.'

Ministers have also requested that Lochaber Geopark join forces with North West and Shetland to find ways to share some activities and cut costs, Mr Findlay said.

Lochaber's geological wonders include Ardanmurchan's volcanic rings and the Parallel Roads in Glen Roy, the former shorelines of lochs formed during different ice ages.

Thousands back online campaign against excessive delivery charges

By EMMA CRICHTON A LOCHABER woman campaigning online to end excessive delivery charges in the north has gained the support of more than 20,000 people.

Jacky Cooper's page on a social networking site is calling on retailers and couriers to stop charging inflated prices and refusing to post products to the Highlands and Islands - and users have flocked to the site to discuss their experiences.

Ms Cooper, from Ballachulish, launched her crusade on January 5 after becoming frustrated with companies not delivering to her area. Over 1,300 people signed up within 24 hours and support has been rocketing ever since.

Ms Cooper, who works in Ballachulish Co-op, set up the page after browsing an online auction site and noticed yet another seller who would not post to the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'I was incensed as this had happened so many times previously.'

In addition to this I had an experience with [an online retailer] before Christmas where at checkout, they would not post perfume to my postcode, even though it was available to the UK mainland.

'I was so surprised how the numbers 'liking' the page started to increase from the moment the page was launched. It just shows the strength of feeling on this subject, not only from



Jacky Cooper: 20,000 people are now backing her online campaign.

people in the Highlands and Islands but also in other Scottish areas too.'

She added: 'I have encouraged contributors to share their stories, both good and bad.'

for being at the northern end of the UK. What I always say is that London is as far away from Scotland as Scotland is from London.'

One common problem for online buyers appears to be suppliers suggesting the Highlands is not part of mainland Scotland and charging excessive rates as a result.

Grace Malcolm posted on the campaign page: 'I live in postcode PA23 and I was asked for £20 as I live in Scotland offshore. I live in Dumoon.'

Other posters complained of companies charging three times the normal delivery rate or refusing to deliver to anywhere in the Highlands and Islands.

Sabine Weiten from the Isle of Lewis said: 'I wanted to order flat packed cardboard boxes as packing material. Picked a Scottish company which said free delivery.'

'Found out that they wanted over £60 for delivery to the Isle of Lewis.'

'This has shown us many examples of how the Highland area, and even Scotland more generally, is penalised

campaign to end excessive delivery surcharges and compel retailers to be upfront about charges.

Advertisement for D. McNAIR & SON LTD Fuel Oil Specialists. Text includes: 'Competitively Priced Fuel throughout Argyll, serving YOU, when you need us', 'Stay FOCUSED We are... FOCUSED on Service FOCUSED on Quality Fuels FOCUSED on Reliability FOCUSED on Fairness FOCUSED on Price FOCUSED on YOU', 'No sales gimmicks or promotions just fair pricing every week year in year out', 'Kinloch Road, Campbeltown, Argyll PA28 6EG Tel: (01586) 552020 (24hrs) Email: sales@dmcnairshipping.com'

Advertisement for CURSAICHEAN GOIRID 2014. Text includes: 'Nach tig sibh còmhla rinn airson seachdain eireachdail a chur seachdain an Eilean Sgìtheachadh ag Ìm na Càisge airson ionnsachadh mu chèil, mu chultar agus mu chànan na h-Alba. Airson cunntas slàn de na cùrsaichean thèid chun an Iarach-lìn aginn.', 'Your opportunity to discover Scottish Gaelic Spend a week on Skye this Easter and find out more about the Gaelic language, culture, music, song and dance of Scotland. We offer a variety of five day courses and welcome adult learners from all over the world year after year. For a full list of available courses please visit our website.'

Contact information for CURSAICHEAN GOIRID 2014. Text includes: '01471 888304 iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk WWW.SMO.UHI.AC.UK', 'University of the Highlands and Islands' logo.

Human remains in Arrochar linked to missing student

HUMAN remains discovered in Arrochar could be those of missing student Yulia Solodyankina, Police Scotland has confirmed.

The remains were discovered by hill walkers in Succoth Forest, near the A83, last Thursday afternoon. Police Scotland said on Tuesday it could be two weeks before the badly decomposed body was formally identified but confirmed the discovery was being linked to the search for Ms Solodyankina.

The 22-year-old was studying for a physics degree at Edinburgh University when she was reported missing on June 12 last year.

She was last seen at Buchanan Bus Station in Glasgow at around 4.55pm on Friday June 7 from where it is believed she boarded a bus to Argyll or the Highlands.

Enquiries about the student were made in Ardrishaig, Oban and Campbelltown at the time of her disappearance.

Police Scotland had earlier confirmed the remains did not belong to Edinburgh woman Suzanne Pilley, who disappeared in May 2010.

David Gilroy, her former partner who was convicted of her murder, was understood to have damped her body somewhere near the Rest and Be Thankful, a few miles away from Arrochar.

Music festival comes of age

THE CELTIC Connections music festival, which starts today (Thursday), has 'come of age' in its 21st year, according to its artistic director, Taynait Mac Donald Shaw.

Among the headliners at the Glasgow event are Dal Amiri, who will play their first UK show since 2002.

But there is, as ever, a healthy Highland flavour to the programme and another highlight will be Three: Outside the Box on Sunday night. The concert features award-winning Three accordion teacher Gordon Connell and former pupils who went on to form some of the country's favourite traditional bands, including *Skipinnish*, *Gumna Sound*, *Skerryvore* and *Trail West*. *Skipinnish's* own concert on January 24 sold out before the festival began.



Lucy Hyam, who becomes the first woman to serve on Oban Lifeboat in its 42-year history, is welcomed to the station by coxswain John Hill. 16.10314cyhym1

Oban lifeboat's first lady raring to go

AFTER a 42-year wait, Oban Lifeboat Station has finally welcomed its first female crew member - and she's raring to go.

At just 23, Lucy Hyam is also the youngest member of the crew for the Mora Edith Macdonald, but that hasn't stopped her fitting right into the team - who have even painted her locker pink to welcome her on board.

Now she's waiting for her first shoot after transferring from her hometown station in Cromer, Norfolk, moving to Oban primarily to study marine science at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunbeg.

Speaking to *The Oban Times*, Lucy, who is also working as a swimming instructor at Atlantis Leisure, said: 'The guys have been lovely. I feel like I've landed on my feet here. Everyone has been great.

'Being the first girl hasn't been a dramatic overhaul. I sometimes catch the guys watching their Ps and Qs when I'm about, and they've painted my locker pink - although there is a practical reason for that. If someone else picked up my gear by accident they wouldn't fit it into it because I'm so tiny.'

Lucy always seems to have been destined to work on the water. Her father used to work as a commercial diver, passing on his passion for the sea. She started volunteering as a beach lifeguard at the age of 17 before making the move into the RNLI three years ago, starting her training as a crew member in 2012. The move to Oban has meant a period of retraining, which means Lucy hasn't been out on a shoot yet, but she's now posted and ready to go.

Billy Forteth, operations manager at the Lifeboat station, said: 'Lucy's been a breath of fresh air. We're delighted to welcome her on board and hope she enjoys her time here.'

Coxswain John Hill added: 'Lucy's been in the post for the station and she fitted in really well. We're delighted to welcome her here.'

Pay increase for councillors

COUNCILLORS are set to receive a pay increase after the current financial year and a further 1 per cent for next year.

An amendment to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration), laid before parliament last month and passed on Monday, will see councillor pay increase become effective from February 18.

Dawnfresh fish farm decision due

THE NET result of a planning application to establish a new fish farm on Loch Etive is set to be heard in the Corran Halls in Oban at the end of the month.

Meanwhile the developer behind the application for the 10-acre farm, Dawnfresh, reported worsening losses for the 2012/13 financial year.

The pre-tax loss for that period of £5.09million was worse than the £3.99million reported in the previous financial year. Sales were up though, increasing by 5.2 per cent year on year to £4.02million, with exports of £4.02million largely responsible.

Dawnfresh wants to build the farm consisting of 10 80-metre pens in Loch Etive to expand the export side of the business.

Backers say the development will bring increased security to those already employed in Dawnfresh in the area, but critics say pollution, a lack of any new jobs and possible harm to indigenous wildlife, as reasons it shouldn't be approved.

The special planning hearing to determine the outcome of the application is currently scheduled for January 29 at 9.30am.

Owner, Alastair Salvesson, who visited residents including a councillor in the Ardschattan area last year in a bid to win support for the Loch Etive farm application, has invested £7.5million into the company's facilities over the past three years with a view to doubling the size of the business by 2016.

Islanders urged to help raise wind turbine cash

Islay, Jura and Colonsay projects to benefit from community fund

ISLANDERS are being asked to help raise £750,000 to construct a community wind turbine that promises tens of thousands of pounds a year for community projects on Islay, Jura and Colonsay.

The Islay Community Wind Project, led by Islay Energy Trust (IET), will be one of the first community-owned wind power projects in Scotland to be part-financed through so-called community benefit society share offer.

Launched on Tuesday evening at Islay High School, the share offer aims to raise up to £750,000 to build the 330kW wind turbine on Scottish Natural Heritage land at Castlehill, Islay.

Investors can buy a minimum of 20,000 at £1 per share to become members of the newly-formed Islay Energy Community Benefit Society (IECBS).

Wind project officer Lindy MacLellan said: 'This is a huge project for Islay Energy Trust and for the island. It has taken years and years of hard work. It is the first income generating project we have taken to this stage and I hope it won't be the last. The project had been in doubt when it was revealed the Argyll grid would not have sufficient capacity to connect the turbine but IET has since reached an agreement with Scottish and Southern Energy that could see the turbine operational as early as October this year.

The turbine, which will be in place for 20 years, is estimated to yield a community fund of around £80,000 per annum, with funds being made available for developing other renewables projects and awarding grants to island groups and charities.

Jenni Minto, secretary of IECBS, said: 'The share offer is an exciting opportunity for the many people who know and love the islands of Islay, Jura and Colonsay to make a social investment in a locally-owned project which will generate benefits for these communities.

'The more money raised through the share offer, the less that will have to be borrowed from the banks.'

The total cost of the windpower project is more than £1.2 million and applications have been made to the Big Lottery for £180,000 to cover the costs of grid upgrades, and to the Scottish Government's Renewable Energy Investment Fund for any additional funding needed after the share offer closes on March 31.

Increase in Cruachan production

THE SCOTTISH Government has paved the way for an increase in energy production at Cruachan Power Station.

An intention to expand pumped storage at the 'hollow mountain' had already been mooted but this has now been formalised within the government's Proposed National Planning Framework 3, published on Tuesday. Planning Minister Derek Mackay announced the Cruachan project as one of two new national developments, adding hydropower was key to the government meeting its renewable energy targets.

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competition 2014

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Terms & conditions: The Oban Times Bonnie Babies competition is open to babies and toddlers born on or after February 1, 2011. Entrants must live in Argyll or West Highlands. You may also enter a child if you are a subscriber living outside this area. Only one entry per child. 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 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. The winner must take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter.

The Oban Times Bonnie Babies competition is back for 2014. Enter your little bundle of joy today for your chance to win a whopping £500 worth of vouchers to spend at The Co-operative Plus, this year we will have £150 of vouchers for a second place winner and £100 of vouchers for third place. Just think how handy that would be after Christmas and New Year.

The Co-operative Group is the UK's largest mutual business, owned by nearly eight million members. It is the UK's fifth biggest food retailer operating across the country with almost 2,500 local, convenience and medium-sized stores, and is also one of Britain's leading farming operations. Further information is available at www.co-operative.coop

HOW THE COMPETITION WORKS
The competition will take place in weekly rounds where readers are asked to vote for that week's bonniest baby. For example, if your child is in week one and gets the most votes out of all the entries in that issue they will be entered into the grand finale. The baby who has the most votes from the grand finale, which will be held early next year, will be crowned the Bonniest Baby of 2014. It doesn't matter which round your baby appears in, you can keep voting every week from the date your child appears until the voting deadline, which we will announce in a future issue. Voting for your wee one every week after they appear gives them the best chance to be crowned their week's bonniest. We won't count the votes to decide who goes into the grand finale until the voting deadline has been reached. Readers will be able to vote by text or by coupon, details of which will be printed when the weekly rounds begin.

HOW TO ENTER
We are now open for entries! The Oban Times Bonnie Babies 2014 is open to babies and toddlers born on or after February 1, 2011. Entrants must live in Argyll or West Highlands. You may also enter a child if you are a subscriber living outside this area. You can enter your 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 your photo to be returned, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. We will do our very best to return your photo but please make a copy just in case. You can also enter online by visiting www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies.

After you have entered your child, keep an eye on The Oban Times every week to see when your baby appears. The closing date for entries will be announced in a future issue. For rules and terms and conditions, visit www.obantimes.co.uk/bonniebabies or call 01631 568000.

Good luck!

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Lorry driver admits careless driving

A LORRY driver suffered 'life-threatening, life-changing' injuries because of another driver's loss of attention. Their HGVs collided head-on, blocking the busy A85 in Connel on July 13 2012 as emergency services battled to free both men from their cabs.

Since then each man has undergone numerous operations and treatment.

Last Tuesday Thomas McLean age 56, of 12 Eppiestone Road, Whitburn, admitted driving carelessly on the A85 in Connel, by crossing into the opposing carriageway and colliding with an oncoming vehicle causing damage to both vehicles and injuring the other driver and his passenger.

McLean was driving towards Oban on his way to deliver goods to the Co-operative store on

Mull. As he entered the 40mph limit in Connel and negotiated a slight left hand bend his lorry crossed into the opposing lane. The passenger said he saw the driver of the oncoming lorry, David McNiven, with a colleague as a passenger, was confronted with the Co-op lorry in his lane travelling towards him. He braked heavily to try and prevent the head-on collision. Both drivers were trapped in their cabs.

'The passenger said he saw the driver of the oncoming vehicle [McLean] was bending over, towards the passenger side of the cab, protractor fiscal foin damage to both vehicles and injuring the other driver and his passenger.'

McLean denied this, claiming he had moved out because of a 'spooked animal' at the roadside.

McGinty told the court:

'Mr McNiven [driver of the other lorry] suffered life-threatening, life-changing injuries; a compound fracture of the lower leg, which needed several operations. The driver of the oncoming lorry, David McNiven, with a colleague as a passenger, managed to get out of the cab himself but suffered cuts, which needed stitches.'

The road was closed for a considerable amount of time with the police helicopter taking aerial photographs of the scene.

'A picture speaks a thousand words,' said the fiscal as he handed the photographic evidence to Sheriff Douglas Small, drawing his attention to the lengthy skid marks from the braking lorry driven by Mr MacNiven, and the much shorter ones of the Co-op lorry driven by McLean.

McLean's agent, Jane Thomson, said that he too had suffered

severe injuries, a badly broken ankle and plates had only just been removed from his leg; he also suffered nerve damage to his legs and now walked with a fractured skull, cheekbones and vertebrae. His passenger managed to get out of the cab himself but suffered cuts, which needed stitches.'

McLean was to have stood trial for driving dangerously but had pled guilty to careless driving.

Sheriff Douglas Small fined him £600 and disqualified him for one year.

He said: 'You pled guilty to a considerably reduced charge of driving carelessly and I have to sentence you accordingly.'

'No sentence I can impose would compensate for the considerable stress and injury caused by this accident, which you maintain was caused by your loss of attention caused by a spooked animal.'



Both drivers had to be cut from their cabs after the head-on collision which closed the A85 at Connel in July 2012. Photograph copyright Police Scotland

Hope for crash victim after 18 months of hell

HE SUFFERS from flashbacks at any recollection of the accident, but David MacNiven says he can now at least get on with his life, following the conclusion of last week's court case.

On Friday, July 13, 2012 the lorry he was driving was involved in a head-on collision caused by a Co-op lorry driven by Whitburn man Thomas McLean.

David was taken to Lorn and Islands Hospital in Oban before being driven by ambulance to the Southern General, Glasgow - the journey was the final transfer for Oban ambulance man, and friend of David, John Barbour before his retirement.

Despite losing a lot of blood, suffering brain injuries, fracturing his skull, chest bone, vertebrae, neck and almost losing his leg completely, David maintained consciousness throughout his ordeal until the hospital transfer. That awareness has allowed David to fully appreciate what the emergency services did for him that day but has also given him vivid and unwelcome flashbacks of the incident.

'The flashbacks of the accident

it didn't even cross my mind that he could have died, because he was conscious the whole time.

'I only realised how serious it could have been when the doctor came out to tell me: "He's going to make it."

'The first thing David said to me was: "You better cancel our holiday". He hadn't lost his sense of humour.

Last Tuesday McLean, who also suffered injuries from the crash, pled guilty to a reduced charge of careless driving and was fined £600.

David believes the punishment did not fit the crime but, as he marked his 45th birthday last Thursday, is now more concerned with getting his own life back on track.

Drawn out legal proceedings have hampered his plan: David, who worked as an overhead telecons engineer for his brother's company, JAM Drilling, has been unable to work but could not sign on for state benefits while his compensation claim awaited the court's verdict.

'I was going round in circles,' said David. 'If my brother hadn't

kept me on the payroll I would have lost my house. I would not have had an income. It's crazy how it works.

'I just want to get on with my recovery now.'

'It is a relief to have the whole incident brought to a close. Even though I was the victim, the court case was like a noose around my neck because it seemed to drag on so long.'

Because of David's severe leg injuries, walking around Tesco feels like a marathon and none of the plethora of pain killers he has tried have had the desired effect.

But with the support of his wife Michelle and children Laura and David, he is determined to get better.

David said: 'You have to think positively and just get on with it.'

'In the Southern General there was a guy in my ward who had been in a motorcycle accident. He had broken both ankles and felt so sorry for himself.

'The doctors were trying to get him up on crutches but he just wouldn't do it.'

'I thought, there's no way I'm going to be like that.'

are so clear. I get them every night. I see the lorry coming towards me and I remember the impact, a big bang, glass flying about the cab as if in slow motion and the sound of metal crunching.

'Little things, like a glass getting smashed, brings it all back.'

His wife Michelle said: 'After



David MacNiven is scarred for life and has come through a turbulent past 18 months but is hopeful of a brighter future. 16.03.14/09/11



An aerial view taken from the police helicopter shows how badly damaged the vehicles were. Photograph copyright Police Scotland.

Oban girl stars in Swan Lake tour

A 16-YEAR-old Oban girl will star in Ballet West's upcoming tour of Swan Lake - performing in her home town before heading off across the country.

Meroula Houdon progressed through the Ballet West outreach programme and joined the first year of the full-time course in September 2013, after leaving Oban High School.

The 16-date tour of Swan Lake will open in the Corran Halls on January 24 and 25. It will then take in 12 venues around Scotland through February, finishing in Pitlochry on March 1.

Using Tchaikovsky's score and an adaptation of the original choreography by Daniel Job, the dancers will tell the story of the love of a young man for the cursed Odette, who is destined to spend her life as a swan, unless true love can release her from the spell of the evil Von Rothbart.

The production will feature most of the Ballet West dancers who competed in the Genie International Ballet Competition in Glasgow last year as well as guest artist Duncan Saul.

Duncan graduated from Ballet West and has worked with Dortmund Ballet, Dortmund Opera, Ballet Hagen and Vienna Festival since he left in 2011.

Performances are 7.30pm on January 24 and 25.



Sara-Maria Smith will play the principal role in Swan Lake.

Workshops to tackle population decline

POPULATION problems across Argyll and Bute are to be tackled at new workshops after the region saw a drop of 3,000 residents over the past 10 years.

Officials are now warning the declining population could have consequences for public services - including health, education and employment in the area, and may also impact on government funding allocated to Argyll and Bute in future.

Even Oban, Lorn and the Isles, which is currently seeing a rise in the number of residents, is facing problems - as its population is ageing. Now those who live in the area are being invited to share ideas on how to address population issues at a series of public events, organised by Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

Barry McEwan, chairman of Argyll and Bute CPP Management Committee, said: 'Tackling population decline is

our number one priority. Argyll and Bute's economic success over the next 10 years will be built on a growing population.'

'I would really urge people to come along to these local events. We want to hear people's views on this critical issue.'

There will be a workshop held in An Talla, Tiree at 2pm on February 1, Craignure Village Hall, Mull at 1.30pm and 7pm on February 10 and Oban's Corran Halls at 2pm on February 4. There will also be a

Official opening of Oban's Gaelic language centre

FURAN, Oban's Gaelic Language Centre, will be officially opened tomorrow (Friday) by Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell.

The centre, which has been running since the end of last summer, is a celebration of the Gaelic language, history and culture in the local area.

Interactive workshops involving the language are due to be held at the centre and will be available to communities throughout Argyll and Bute.

Lorn Lines

A QUIZ organised to raise money for Dalmailly Primary School had to be cancelled after a poor turnout from residents.

The quiz was last year hailed a success, with 11 teams competing. But last Saturday evening Dalmailly Community Hall was decidedly quiet. Community hall committee member Graeme MacKechnie said: 'School events are usually very well supported.'

The hall committee met on Monday night to discuss the low turnout and find out whether the school wanted to run the quiz on another night. Just a few weeks ago the hall saw one of its largest audiences as hundreds of tickets for a Skerryvore gig sold out a month in advance.

AT THE last meeting of the Lorn Archaeological and Historical Society, John Macfarlane entertained and enlightened the group with a fascinating talk on early Christian sites in Muckairn.

The next meeting of the society is on Friday January 17, when Neil Horne will talk about St Conan's Kirk, Lochawe.

MEMBERS of Oban Speakers Club got the new year off to a good start last Thursday with three enjoyable speeches.

The surprise package of the evening was by Nick Maclean who was making his maiden speech to the club and chose 'Dartmoor Prison'. He gave an excellent talk on the place and his own experience of working there. The other two speakers were Guido Faccenda who spoke on 'McCaig's Tower' and Bill Leech on 'Penny Black Twopeony Blue'.

The speakers and their immediate critics were introduced by Frank Walton. The topics session was under the control of Eamonn Arthur who brought light-hearted replies on subjects from 'Messing about on boats' to 'Concorde' from Alec Clark, Jim Fraser, Peter Mills, Willie Melville, Roy Wood and John Maclean. Timekeeper for the evening was Tom Clegg and a kind and humorous general evaluation was done by Martin Wilson.

Police files

THE DRIVER of a van which left the road on the back road between Connel and Oban has been accused of drink driving. Police received a report of a van off the road near Ardconnell Farm, Connel, last Saturday at around 10.50pm. A 26-year-old man is the subject of a report to the procurator fiscal.

THE REAR window of a black Vauxhall Corsa, parked in Scalpay Terrace, Soroba, Oban was smashed overnight between Saturday and Sunday last week.

The incident would have happened at some point after 10.45pm and Oban Police are keen to speak to anyone who may know anything about the vandalism.

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Community cash hopes for Barra turbine

BARRA'S community-owned wind turbine is set to be commissioned next month, with the potential to generate up to £100,000 for island causes and projects.

Installed at the most north westerly point of Barra at Gb Sgarabhal, it is hoped the 300kw turbine will be one of the most productive in western Europe. The £2.2million project has already benefited the island economy through according to Coimhearsnachd Bharraigh agus Bhatarsaidh's lead on the project, Euan Scott.

He said: 'By using local companies

and individuals where possible, the project has not only built capacity on the island but also maximised the economic benefit to the local community during construction phase.

'The turbine, when commissioned, will provide revenue for years to come. It will help to address practical needs on the island such as providing funding towards building an all-weather sports pitch or supporting social and respite services for the elderly and providing grants for young people so they can more easily travel to events and courses on the mainland.'

'The community as a whole will have a say on how it wants to see the money spent emphasising the fact the wind turbine is a community owned and managed asset.'

Funding for the project came from Triodos Bank NV and Scottish Government. Triodos Bank's Norrie Cruickshank said: 'The Barra and Vatersay project is just the sort of development that Triodos Bank loves to get behind when it can. It demonstrates unequally that collective ownership can deliver tangible benefits for the community.'

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Fort in mood to pick up points against Buckie

'We are a lot better than a bottom of the table club'

REPORT BY

STEPHEN NORRIS
snorris@obantimes.co.uk

FORT WILLIAM take on Buckie at Claggan Park on Saturday buoyed by a highly creditable showing at title-chasing Nairn County last weekend.

Manager Danny Conlon will be without the services of left back Matt Murphy, who is out in the United States for two weeks of trials, but midfield general Keith Millar is likely to make his return to the squad along with fellow midfielder Danny Macintosh and hit-man Duncan Campbell.

The Fort go into the game having notched an impressive 0-0 draw away to their opponents earlier in the season - and assistant manager Mike MacEachen is looking for a performance at least on a par with that showing. He told The Oban Times: 'We played really well against them up there and if we can stop conceding goals I think we can pick up a few more points.'



Keith Millar, midfielder is set to make a return to Fort's line-up against Buckie on Saturday. 20.9/2014/10/20

FOOTBALL

'A win would be massive for our morale. We want to get off the bottom of the league and we are just two points behind Strathspey. There's a lot of ability here and with better fitness and a bit more confidence we are capable of doing that.'

'We are a lot better than a bottom of the table club - we do try to play football and our training is all about passing and movement - although that sometimes can be our downfall if other teams just hump it up the park.'

He added: 'Hopefully the boys can get a couple of good training sessions in this week and have a go at them on Saturday.'

MacEachen was far from despondent after the 3-0 defeat at Nairn and reckoned with a bit more luck the result would have been closer.

He said: 'We started really well and arguably for the first 20 minutes we were the better side. The boys battled away well, Mackie hit the bar and their keeper had a couple of cracking saves.'

'We felt that we would have deservedly been ahead at one point and Nairn had to work really hard to break us down. It was only two cracking finishes that put us behind at half-time.'

'We suffered because we had not played for four weeks and you could see the boys struggling in the second half. They put us under a bit of pressure but we had a couple of breakaways where we almost scored.'

MacEachen added: 'There was a lot of encouragement there against one of the top three teams in the Highland League. Their goalies was a lot harder worked than anyone expected.'



Winner Gary MacDonald (left) grabs an early lead in the duathlon at Glen Nevis. 20.9/2014/10/20

Gary wins in a sprint finish at Winter Feast Duathlon

KINLOCHLEVEN joiner and Scottish motorbike trials champ Gary MacDonald won the first No Fuses Events Winter Feast Duathlon Series in a sprint to the line in Glen Nevis on Saturday.

MacDonald edged out rival Tim Brand to be first home at the finish at Achriabhach in a time of 56mins 51secs.

Four seconds behind
Second placed Brand was just four seconds behind with a time of 56mins 55secs whilst Graeme Smith took third in 1hr 29secs.

Marie Meldrum was the first woman

to cross the finish line in 1:08:00 with Jill Kerr coming second in 1:10:33 and Louise Crilly in third place in 1:10:44.

Back to fitness
The duathlon, comprising a 3.5 km trail run and a 12.5 kilometre on and off road cycle, drew a 70-strong field of athletes for the event, which was aimed at athletes relatively new to the sport or just getting back into fitness again.

A delighted MacDonald told The Oban Times: 'I'm really pleased, it's a great start to the year. I did the event last year and came seventh. I said I would like to

come back and win it and I did.'

The superb 29 year-old has also made his mark in the mountain bike circuit this winter, claiming third place for a podium finish in the Enduro 'Dudes of Hazzard' race at Kinlochleven back in November.

Winter series
The Glen Nevis race was the first of a 'winter series' of three duathlons, with the next scheduled for Arisaig on February 15.

Top 20 finishers: 1 Gary MacDonald 56:51; 2 Tim Brand 56:55; 3 Graeme Smith 1:00:29; 4 Gordon Dickson 1:01:00;

ATHLETICS

5 Rohan Corlett 1:01:23; 6 Graham Whyte 1:03:33; 7 Niall Campbell 1:03:59; 8 Ralph Torr 1:04:17; 9 Iain MacDonald 1:04:33; 10 Rory Robinson 1:05:28; 11 John Richardson 1:05:34; 12 Stevie Martin 1:05:50; 13 Graham MacNab 1:06:21; 14 Craig McGowan 1:06:23; 15 Robert Ledingham 1:07:46; 16 Jim Keenan 1:07:57; 17 Marie Meldrum 1:08:00; 18 Roger Gibbons 1:08:26; 19 Alex Simpson 1:08:36; 20 Stephen Gaunt 1:09:34.



Squash coach Simon Boughton held group training sessions for the young club members. From left: Kian Cameron 10, Craig MacDonald 9, Jamie McConnell 9, and Jamie Docherty 9. 20.9/2014/10/20

Squash coach visits leisure centre

A LEADING squash coach visited Lochaber Leisure Centre this weekend to give training sessions to club members.

Simon Boughton, from Edinburgh Sports Club coached 20 squash players over Saturday and Sunday, including a junior

Warren Cameron, member of Lochaber Squash Club said: 'Simon is an excellent coach who identifies players' weak points and provides remedies. Everyone has enjoyed their session and their game will improve.'

Club chairperson Amanda Henderson thanked Lochaber Sports Association and High Life Highland for their support and the leisure centre staff for their help.

Claymore boxers in district championships

KINLOCHLEVEN-based Claymores Amateur Boxing Club will have two members competing in the district championships next month.

Callum Clement from Tyndrum and 14 year-old Eilidh Smith from Glencoe will box at the event in Aberdeen on February 8 - if there are other people in their weight category on the day. Callum, 16, will then face the Scottish senior

BOXING

championship prelims on February 23 in Scotland in Glasgow where he will take to the ring against some of the best boxers in Scotland. The teenager will need to beat at least two opponents to make the Scottish senior finals in March.

Finlay wins 'river bank splodge'

ATHLETICS

LOCHABER Athletic Club members raced at Glen Nevis on Sunday morning in the club's annual 'river bank splodge'.

Finlay Wild, Lochaber AC, came first of 55 runners, completing the seven mile route in 55:39; 6 Ben Thompson 56:00; 7 John Birnie 56:29; 8 Diane Baum 57:03; 9 Sarah MacKenzie 52:48 while Lochaber's Allan Ross was third in 53:35.

Lochaber's Diane Baum was the first woman to finish in 1:03:08, with Sarah MacKenzie, also Lochaber, just two seconds behind in 57:05. Carnethy's Kate Jenkins (Carnethy) 1:03:08; 16 Barrie MacKinnon 1:03:16; 17 David Munro 1:04:12; 18 David MacDonald 1:05:36; 19 Helen Leggett 1:06:02; 20 Lyndsey Shaw 1:06:21.

ATHLETICS

1 Finlay Wild 48:01; 2 Craig Mattocks (Carnethy) 52:48; 3 Allan Ross 53:35; 4 Steve MacDonald 54:05; 5 Jon Gay 55:39; 6 Ben Thompson 56:00; 7 John Birnie 56:29; 8 Diane Baum 57:03; 9 Sarah MacKenzie 52:48 while Lochaber's Allan Ross was third in 53:35.

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Finlay Wild manoeuvred through trees and uneven ground to maintain a steady lead throughout the race. 20.9/2014/10/20

Bowlers return after festive break

TEN PIN BOWLING

LOCHABER'S 10-pin bowlers returned to the lanes at the Nevis Centre in Fort William after their Christmas and New Year break.

Alleycats remain the leaders of the scratch division with 56 points after beating Fairway Filles. Council stay in second place on 44 points with Bandits in third place also on 44 points.

In the handicap division Bandits extend their lead at the top with 48.5 points after beating Rock and Bone 4-0. Alleycats remain in second place with 41 points with Council in third on 39 points.

There were a lot of good individual scratch games again this week with Tony Whitelock (Alleycats) rolling the season's high of 251 which included a run of seven strikes in a row.

Two other bowlers made it into this week's 200 club with Bill Clark (Bandits) rolling 209 and George Band (Bandits) 201.

Other good games came from Gae Fraser (Council) with 173 and Tommy McKnight (Alleycats) with 171.

Tony Whitelock swept the board with the top handicap game on 28.5, the top two game scratch series of 410 and the top two game handicap series of 478 - all season highs.

Alleycats had this week's top ten scratch team game of 683 (the season high) and the top handicap team game of 856.

The week's top scratch two game series went to Bandits with 114 edging out Alleycats by one pin. Bandits also had the top two game handicap team series of 1690.

The highest scratch average is now held by Tony Whitelock (Alleycats) on 162 followed by Pam Weller (Alleycats) on 160 and Martin Faryna (Likely Lads) next on 147.

Goon Squad stay top of the league

INDOOR FOOTBALL

GOON SQUAD maintained their position at the top of the Ali Young indoor football league with a 10-1 demolition of Kentallen after round 12 of fixtures at the Nevis Centre on Sunday night.

Second-placed Portwey lost ground on the leaders after being shocked 4-2 by Caol Cosna, while Lochaber Leisure moved up to joint second spot with a 4-2 over Ballachulish.

AFC Distillery ran up a cricket score in their 19-0 hammering of With Ourselves to move up to fourth and the Janis B Team handed out an 8-0 thumping to HWEnergy.

Caol United gained three points with a 3-0 walkover win in the final fixture.

Lochaber at home

RUGBY

LOCHABER RFC get back to RBS Caledonia League Division 2 duty on Saturday when they welcome third-placed Ross Sutherland to Black Parks in Inverclyde.

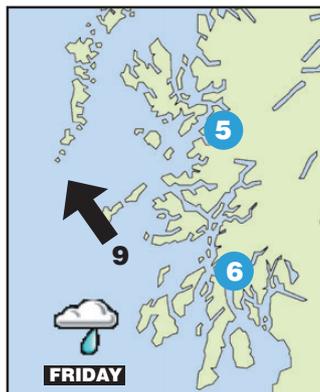
The Banavie men lie fifth in the table, seven points behind their opponents, and a win would take them within striking distance of the top three. Kick-off is at 2pm.

Weather

Thursday Sunshine and showers
Winds moderate south easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C

Friday Light rain
Winds moderate south south easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 7°C

Weekend Outlook Light rain at times
Winds light south easterly
Temperatures 4°C to 6°C.



Tides

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, January 16, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed beneath.

All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

| Date | am | pm |
|------|---|----|
| Thur | 05.42 3.9 12.26 1.3 18.18 3.9 *** ** | |
| Fri | 00.19 1.0 06.17 4.0 12.59 1.3 18.42 3.9 | |
| Sat | 00.55 1.0 06.51 4.0 13.31 1.3 19.14 3.9 | |
| Sun | 01.28 1.0 07.22 4.0 14.02 1.4 19.44 3.8 | |
| Mon | 01.58 1.1 07.52 3.9 14.29 1.5 20.12 3.7 | |
| Tues | 02.26 1.2 08.20 3.8 14.49 1.6 20.43 3.5 | |
| Wed | 02.58 1.3 08.52 3.6 15.19 1.7 21.19 3.4 | |

Total Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

| | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Ardrishaig | -5.35 | Mallaig | +0.25 |
| Campbeltown | -5.30 | Portree | +0.55 |
| Crinan | -0.47 | Tobermory | +0.16 |
| Islay Port Ellen | 2.00 | Dover | +5.30 |
| Lochboisdale | +0.30 | | |

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