

# The Oban Times

## & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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SKERRYVORE'S  
**OBANLIVE**

# Exclusive news inside

Exciting announcement regarding Oban's two-day concert celebrating traditional music

### Young farmers lose out on government support

THE SCOTTISH Government has withdrawn financial support for Scotland's largest rural youth organisation, the Scottish Association of Young Farmers' Clubs (SAYFC).

For the last decade, the SAYFC has received an annual grant from ScotGov's education budget, via the Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund. Prior to that, its records show unbroken cash support from the government stretching back to the 1950s.

In the last financial year, the SAYFC's education grant amounted to £66,000 – 13 per cent of the association's annual income – but its grant application for the 2016-17 financial year has been refused and, pending a scheduled meeting with the funding authorities, the organisation does not yet know the reason why the application was refused.

'This is the first time in nearly 70 years that SAYFC will receive no financial support from the Scottish Government, impacting more than 3,500 members across Scotland,' a SAYFC spokeswoman told *The Oban Times* this week.

### Unemployment figures down

LATEST employment figures show that 855 people are currently seeking work in Argyll and Bute – representing less than two per cent of the population.

A total of 590 men and 265 women are looking for employment.

Year-on-year figures show the number of unemployed adults has fallen by 10 per cent in the last year.

# Distraught Yvonne appeals for help to bring Billy home

LOUISE GLEN  
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

THE PARTNER of jailed Connel man Billy Irving is asking for anyone who can help her to come forward as she has 'run out of ideas of what to do'.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* late on Tuesday evening, Yvonne MacHugh, 27, said she was still in shock following the news of her partner's five-year sentence with hard labour in India.

She had believed Mr Irving would be home within the month after taking Foreign Office and legal advice.

Ms MacHugh, who is the mother of Billy's 11-month-old son William, said: 'I am so shocked. Everyone told us it would be okay, that the lawyers would sort it out, that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office would help, that David Cameron would intervene. For years we have believed that. We have believed that no-one in the world would find innocent men guilty.'

'But they have. It seems there is no-one in the world that knows what to do.'

'I cannot tell you how supportive everyone has been. Every single text, or Facebook message or phone call has helped me. They have given me the courage to keep going on.'

'I miss living in Oban and working in Boots. No-one will believe how much I want that life back.'

'We are living in an unprecedented situation. Billy is innocent. The other men are in prison in India? Anyone with any advice or help, or even ideas about what we can do now needs to contact me – or any of the men's partners and families to help us. We are lost right now.'

The men were first arrested in 2013 after their vessel, owned by an American company offering armed protection services to vessels sailing through an area known as 'pirates' alley' between



Yvonne MacHugh with partner Billy and their son William.

the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, was blown off course.

For two years they were living in India with no money and no passports, unable to return home.

This week, evidence and paperwork from ex-paramilitary Billy and 34 of his colleagues failed to convince the India Tuticorin District Court of their innocence, and the judge ruled the proper paperwork for the US-owned anti-piracy ship the MV Seaman Guard Ohio had not been filed and therefore firearms charges against the majority of staff aboard the ship proved them guilty.

The owners of the ship, who reside between Washington, DC and the Philippines, were

unavailable for comment, but it is understood they have spoken with family members to say they have no money to pay wages or to help with lawyers to free the men. The company is still trading and working in the same waters.

Ms MacHugh explained that 35-year-old Billy had made good friends in India who were now like family to him. She said: 'One of Billy's closest friends, Prem, has already been to see him in prison. He said to me, we are going to appeal this and get Billy out on bail. He has asked me not to come out to India until that happens.'

Prem told Ms MacHugh that prison was 'not like it was before'. This time Billy is locked up be-

hind bars with no visits allowed until paperwork is processed.

Campaigners are now calling for Prime Minister David Cameron to step in to have the sentence quashed.

Ms MacHugh said: 'I just hope Billy gets home before William is five and he has missed everything.'

Speaking after the sentencing in India, his British colleagues said they were 'shocked and disgusted at the absurd justice system in India'.

In BBC news footage, the men are seen flanked by more than 50 police officers. Mr Irving appears looking distressed, talking to his colleagues before he steps aboard the prison transport. The 'harsh' sentence has been

condemned by MP Brendan O'Hara, who swiftly called a meeting with the Foreign Office to garner support for a campaign to free the father-of-one.

Mr O'Hara said: 'I met with the Foreign Office minister Hugo Swire MP to discuss this terrible situation and to see what further action the UK government plans to take in light of this verdict and sentence. I put on record my deep disappointment at this news, as many of us expected Billy and his shipmates would be found not guilty and released, particularly as the case was thrown out of court at an earlier hearing.'

'I also expressed my shock at the length of sentence; the maximum possible term of five years' 'rigorous imprisonment'.

'I understand the men will make an immediate application for bail and that they will also be appealing this verdict.'

David Hammond, of Human Rights at Sea, said: 'At the time of writing, this appears to be a travesty of justice for the ordinary crew members who we understand were not aware of instructions being passed down from the employer, and who were otherwise simply doing their job. Human Rights at Sea will be co-ordinating with other non governmental organisations, civil society and UK Government departments to assure support is provided to the families involved, as necessary.'

A Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesman said: 'Our staff in India and the UK have been in close contact with all six men since their arrest to provide support to them and their families, including attending court.'

'Ministers have also raised this case at the highest levels, pressing for delays to be resolved. We recognise what a difficult time this is for those involved. We will continue to provide consular assistance. However, we cannot interfere in another country's judicial process.'

### TIMESLINE

#### Fly-past for life-saving 'copter

ROYAL Navy Search and Rescue (SAR) flight, HMS Gannet, is set to say so-long Scotland with a final farewell fly-past, today (January 14).

The Royal Navy's helicopter heroes, who are based at HMS Gannet in Prestwick, have been involved in thousands of Scottish rescues in the 44 years since the unit was first established.

Weather permitting, Royal Navy Sea King helicopters from HMS Gannet will fly-over Prestwick at 10am, Glasgow at 10.30am, Garelochhead at 10.45am, Tyndrum/Crianlarich at 11am, Lochaber at 11.40am, Oban at 12.40pm, Inverlochlarig at 1.05pm, Stirling at 1.25pm, Edinburgh at 1.40pm, Ayr at 2.25pm, back to Prestwick for 2.27pm and finally Troon at 2.30pm.

#### Clarification

A STORY in last week's Oban Times may have lead readers to believe only librarian posts in Mull are under threat.

The Oban Times would like to clarify that librarian posts are at risk throughout Argyll and Bute Council areas under service choices proposals.

A quote attributed to a petition was, in fact, directly attributable to Michael Russell MSP and should have read: 'I support school librarians in their important work and reject the current cuts process.'

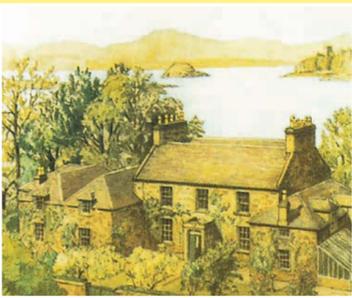
#### Disruptions

BUSES will replace trains between Crianlarich and Fort William on February 14, 21, and 28. The replacement buses will not serve Upper Tyndrum, Rannoch or Corour.

Buses will replace trains between Glasgow Queen Street and Oban on March 6, 13, 20 and 27. The buses will not serve Garelochhead Station.



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## Cancelled Mull sailings spark row

ISLANDERS have hit out at the boss of CalMac ferries after they were told a sharp fall in the number of sailings over the last month was down to 'weather' and nothing to do with the competency of masters, writes Louise Glen.

Speaking on behalf of Mull and Iona Ferry Users Group (FUG), businessman Neal Goldsmith says the number of cancelled sailings has increased significantly – from 16 cancellations in one full winter in 1999 to 16 cancellations in one month in November 2015.

In an open letter to CalMac, Mr Goldsmith [in full on page

10], said: 'We need an urgent explanation for the collapse of reliability on the Oban to Craignure service.'

'In the winter of 2013/14 there were 62 cancellations and in 2014/15 there was a massive 160 cancellations due to bad weather. Any moderate breeze seems to result in cancellation. So far, no reasonable explanation has been offered by the company and instead the community is arriving at its own conclusions.'

'It certainly seems the only beneficiaries of a cancellation are CalMac coffers as less money is spent on fuel. One

has to ask if a culture of timidity has taken hold in CalMac.'

Mr Dorchester replied to Mr Goldsmith saying: 'Every effort has been made to sail when and where possible, in the worst weather conditions seen for many years... weather patterns are scientifically proven to be changing for the worse... gale-force winds, torrential rain and flooding are fast becoming the norm in the winter and are increasingly becoming a threat at other times of the year too.'

'The wind direction is also changing bringing significant challenges to ports and har-

bours that were simply not designed to cope with these conditions.'

'The safety of our passengers, crews and ships must be everyone's number one priority and our highly skilled and qualified Masters are entrusted with making the decisions on whether to sail or not.'

'We take our responsibility to operate lifeline ferry services very seriously and the decision to cancel in times of extreme weather is never taken lightly and it is frankly an insult to these Masters to accuse them of timidity or to suggest they cancel sailings to save fuel.'

**The Nutcracker**  
Corran Halls, Oban  
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01631 567333  
Tickets: £14 & £12

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MULL lines



A contender gets ready to sink his teeth into a monster burger in the Mull vs Food competition on January 1.

Cowabunga! Firemen are hungry for success

A NEW YEAR competition – Mull vs Food – took place in Tobermory on January 1.

Three hungry teams of six tried to take down the massive monster 96oz Glengorm burger, with members of Tobermory fire brigade taking the prize after polishing off their burger, as well as having time for pudding before the runners up managed to work their way through the main course.

Team three gave up before finishing, asking for doggy bags to take away.

Burger steak mince was donated by Glengorm Estate and the Tobermory bakery donated and baked the 25-inch burger buns.

Fèis Mhuile – all set for second festival

FIDDLES are being strung, pipes tuned and voices warmed up in anticipation of Fèis Mhuile next month.

The fèis will take place in Bunnassan from February 18-20. The extremely popular tutors' ceilidh will kick things off on the Thursday in the Argyll Arms Hotel.

Tutors will lead classes in fiddle, guitar, pipes, chanter, drum, song, keyboard, step dancing and accordion on Friday and Saturday. Registration forms have already been distributed to all local schools.

Children from other areas are welcome to participate. They should contact organisers for a registration form.

These forms must be returned by tomorrow (Friday January 15) for entrants to be guaranteed a place.

The main fèis is open to all children aged eight to 18, but there is also a fèis bheag for younger members of the family, aged three to seven years old. Fèis bheag forms are also available.

It is also hoped to increase the adult classes this year and if anyone is interested in attending, they should contact organisers for further information.

The weekend will culminate with the Fèis Concert on Saturday afternoon, where the children will showcase what they have achieved at the weekend classes, followed by a ceilidh dance in the evening.

For further details visit the Facebook page Fèis Mhuile or contact Morven Gibson by emailing: mgibson@swmid.co.uk

Santa pulls out all stops for CalMac superfan

STEVEN RAE srae@obantimes.co.uk

A CALMAC super fan was treated to a special New Year treat, after asking for one of the ferry operator's fleet from Santa. Santa knew a picture or a model of the ferry wouldn't do for the Ardrishaig toddler Blair Houston, who is 3, but he also knew that even he wouldn't be able to fit the ferry on his sleigh. So, he put in a call to Lochinvar skipper Lawrence Allibone and a special trip was arranged.

Lawrence said: 'It's not often we get a call from Santa. We did explain we couldn't just hand over the ferry as it would make other people sad, but we couldn't disappoint our young fan either. We decided we would love to have Blair on the bridge with us helping to sail his favourite ferry.'

Lawrence was very impressed with Blair's knowledge of the ferry when the family went for the special day out on January 4, saying: 'He has sailed the route so often he was able to give us plenty of tips and keep us on course. He was absolutely fantastic and really helped me out. 'He'll make a fine captain one



Blair shows skipper Lawrence how it's done; and right, the whole family enjoyed the special day out.

day; maybe Santa will have a spare ferry for him by then.'

Blair's mum Ann Marie, dad Craig and sister Lexie joined the youngster on the trip.

Ann Marie said: 'This has been

such a total surprise for Blair – he is absolutely mad about CalMac and all the ferries and he's chuffed to bits. We honestly didn't know what Santa was going to do when Blair announced



he wanted the Portavadie ferry for Christmas – we thought maybe he might find a model.

'This has been much better than anything we could have hoped for – I'm sure he will be talking about it for a very long time. We just have to thank CalMac, Lawrence and all the crew on MV Lochinvar for making this dream come true.'

After showing the skipper how it was done Blair and his family were treated to an afternoon at the spa in Portavadie, where they were given use of the swimming pool and ate ice-cream before heading back to Tarbert.

Rare treat for military enthusiasts

BOAT and military enthusiasts will have a rare opportunity to set foot on a Royal Navy vessel this weekend when it visits Oban.

The Mine Counter Measure Vessel (MCMV) will be in the town on Saturday, to allow the public the chance to step aboard and learn about what she does.

HMS Blyth and her Crew of 40 sailors are spending a well-earned weekend in Oban taking a break from their preparations to deploy to the Middle East later in the year.

The primary role of Blyth and her six Scotland-based sister ships is to keep vital trade routes safe from sea-mines, with the crew busy testing their equipment and practicing their skills since completing a multi-million pound refit in Rosyth last year.

The boat will be berthed on the North Pier and visitors will have the chance to go on-board, have a look around the ship and meet some of the



HMS Blyth, which will be in Oban on Saturday.

ship's crew, between 10am and 4pm. Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander Matt Sykes said: 'After a busy few months it's great for my team

to visit Oban and show off the ship and what we do. The ship was lucky enough to visit the town last year and everyone has been looking forward to coming

back after the warm welcome received last time.'

The visit is one of around 4,700 vessels which Oban harbour handles annually.

Oban landlord takes home silver

OBAN-BASED West Highland Housing Association (WVHA) has been awarded silver accreditation from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS).

The TPAS award is given to organisations which involve their tenants in the organisation's activities and decision-making process, with gold, silver and bronze awards available.

A WVHA spokesman said: 'We have been working towards the TPAS award for a while now. Our submission went before the judging panel it was judged we should be awarded a silver accreditation. We received good marks in several categories and were pleased to receive the silver award. We are now working towards gold.'

Alison holds the keys to stellar fundraiser

A COLONSAY woman defied the extreme weather to put on a piano recital at her home for charity.

Alison Guest, Support in Mind Scotland's interim chairwoman, raised around £300 for the charity's 1 IN 100 Fundraising and Awareness campaign.

Board member Alison weathered stormy conditions to give her piano performance on January 3 on the island, which was much appreciated as there are virtually no classical music events held on Colonsay.

Alison also had to deal with the additional challenge of the weather, which played havoc with ferries in the area and disrupted the power supply.

Alison explained: 'We had an anxious time before we came

across, as two ferries were cancelled and we travelled through the aftermath of Storm Frank, taking six hours to get to Oban.'

'We eventually arrived on Hogmanay and both the house and piano were cold. Then on the day of the concert, our power went off from early morning until lunchtime, so we lit our woodburning stove to heat up the house and had candles at the ready.'

'This is the first solo public performance I have made for many years, so as you can imagine, I was a bit nervous.'

'But all went well. I played pieces by Schubert, Mozart, Grieg, Chopin, Rachmaninov and others, and then we all had a chat and a glass of wine.'

'Those who came have asked

for it to become an annual event.

'I spoke about Support in Mind Scotland at the start, before I introduced the pieces.'

Anyone wishing to back the charity's 1 IN 100 campaign or has an idea for a fundraising challenge, contact imitchell@supportinmindscotland.org.uk or call 0131 662 4359.

The charity has a base in the Glengarry Centre, Fort William. For more information visit www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/highland-services-

Alison Guest performed a recital in her home in aid of Support in Mind Scotland, a charity that supports people with mental illness.



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## Trust appoints project manager

A PROJECT development consultant has been appointed by Oban Communities Trust (OCT) to take plans for The Rockfield Centre forward to the next stage.

Andrew Pinkerton, a retired architect from Ayrshire, has extensive experience in community project development, most recently with the successful development of The Atlantic Islands Centre at Cullipool on Luig.

Mr Pinkerton has finalised a briefing document to progress the procurement of a design team for Oban's new centre.

Mr Pinkerton is updating the OCT business plan and formulating a timetable of potential funding.

Gordon McNab, chairman of OCT said: 'We are absolutely delighted to welcome Andrew onboard through the award of funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.'

'Andrew's extensive experience with community project developments is invaluable and allows us to progress our vision and take another step closer to opening the doors at the Rockfield Centre.'

Mr Pinkerton said he was hugely excited at the potential The Rockfield Centre offered.

He said: 'Already the use of the huts is showing the demand there is from the community for the centre.'

'I was really impressed with the turn out for the first AGM, and the feedback and enthusiasm shown by everyone for the plans.'

'This level of support and current use will undoubtedly help with our future funding applications.'

## Luig pagers back in use after mast repair

PHONE pagers on the isle of Luig are finally back in use after mobile company Vodafone brought in engineers to fix the mast.

The pagers allow emergency first responders on the island to be called to an incident from anywhere on Luig. When the pagers are not functioning first responders are unable to leave their homes when on call.

The pagers had been out of commission for 10 weeks before the mast was fixed. It the second time in a number of months that the pagers have been unable to be used.

# Oban town centre in chaos claims the taxi community

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THE TAXI community in Oban is claiming an Argyll and Bute Council project designed to enhance town pavements is causing chaos to drivers and pedestrians.

To allow the work to be carried out, the town's taxi rank has been temporarily moved from Station Square to Station Road.

A representative of the taxi community, who did not want to be named 'because it is the council which issues licences to drive taxis', said: 'We are sick

and tired of being last on the list. This is our business. If someone was to come along and move a shop there would be an outrage.'

'The town centre is in chaos, no one seems to be working on the site and too much is being done at one time.'

'We have been told there would be minimal disruption but already we are having to dodge orange fencing and pedestrians who have no clue where to go. Frankly, it is a mess already.'

But Argyll and Bute Council maintains work has been planned to 'minimise disruption'

and improvements around shopfronts has been planned outside trading hours.

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: '[Contractor] Land Engineering is aiming to complete the shopfront side of George Street and Station Square first, with the seaward side going ahead last.'

'The work around shopfronts has been planned to minimise disruption, with small sections being completed quickly then handed back to the public, rather than working on large sections of street which would obviously

take more time. The work will start at the roadside of the footway and work in, meaning access is maintained at all times.'

'Any work directly around shopfronts will take place outside trading hours, again keeping the disruptive element of the work to an absolute minimum.'

Land Engineering has a site office at the Rockfield Centre, where people can drop in if they have business or personal queries on the project and speak to the community liaison officer, Luke Hart. He can also be called on 07817 882772 or email:

lukehart@landengineering.co.uk. Over the next few weeks the spokesman said work would be under way to put temporary ramps up to the shops between the Clearing Shop to the Nationwide on George Street.

On Station Square trees and planting beds are being cut down and removed.

Contractors will work 12-hour shifts between 7am and 7pm, Monday to Thursday, with work on Friday finishing at noon.

The council spokesman said there would be no work outside this period.

## Tasty reasons to love the west of Scotland

FROM the world's narrowest hotel to island crossings, a new food and drink initiative has taken the country by gastronomic storm during 2015.

VisitScotland is celebrating the 1,000th awardee of the Taste Our Best accreditation scheme, a quality assurance initiative that recognises eateries that provide and promote quality Scottish produce.

In Argyll and Bute, the number of Taste Our Best accredited businesses has almost doubled in the past 12 months - from 56 in January to 100 in December - while the Highlands has seen scheme members increase from 132 to 216.

Launched in September 2013, Taste Our Best is a joint initiative between the national tourism organisation and the Scottish Government. Assessors rate the overall eating experience, the extent to which Scottish produce is used and promoted, and staff knowledge of the produce on the menu and its provenance.

Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive of VisitScotland, said: 'Scotland can be proud of its natural larder and the Taste Our Best scheme recognises that.'

'Not only does it indicate to visitors that the establishment believes in quality but it also shows they are committed to promoting local produce and giving customers a true taste of Scotland.'

'From restaurants to Scotland's built heritage, chippies to ferries, Taste Our Best is open to any business with a food and drink offering.'

'With research finding that three out of four visitors think eating local cuisine will enhance their visit, Taste Our Best really is a recipe for success.'

## High level of response to survey

AN ARGYLL and Bute budget consultation which closed on December 31 saw one of the highest levels of response in the authority's history.

More than 1,000 people replied to the consultation online, more than 1,000 gave views via the council's Citizens Panel, more than 300 responded through its Third Sector partners, 60 took time to attend focus groups, while 60 people replied on paper copies of the survey.

## Band's thank you party attracts big crowd

TRAIL West's party to thank members of the public who raised money after the band's mini-bus and equipment was stolen in Glasgow saw a capacity crowd at Queen Margaret's Union in Glasgow last Saturday night.

Celebrity friends including Daniel and Martin Gillespie from Skerryvore were joined by Skipinnish youngsters Robert Robertson, Ross Wilson and Kyle Orr along with Micheal Steele of Dun Mor Ceilidh Band.

Iain Smith from Trail West said: 'Terrific night at our crowd-funding thank you dance at the QMU on Saturday.'

'Big thanks to Martin, Daniel, Robert, Ross, Kyle, Micheal and Rory for joining us on stage.'

'We're delighted to have raised £297.21 for the RNLI so thanks to everyone who donated to that.'

'We also recorded the whole night so will be sharing some tracks in the next few weeks.'



ON SONG: Trail West gave a thank you concert to everyone who donated cash after £14,000 worth of equipment was stolen and needed to be replaced.

## Businessman from Argyll hits big time with high street in your hand

A BUSINESSMAN from Argyll has hit the big time with his online shopping mall, with the business ranking an incredible second place in the online shopping category on Google in the two days before Christmas.

Taking a huge part of the sales, Mallzee, a small internet business, took on international companies including Ebay and Argos to become one of the best-performing companies for its size in the UK over the Christmas period.

Sitting just behind Amazon for online hits, the business's computer and smart phone technology allows shoppers from all over the world to buy in various online shops - just as anyone would do in a shopping centre or high street.

Chief executive Cally Russell, from Argyll, was inspired to start his business at the age of 12, when a school enterprise project promoted throughout the region encouraged him to get into business.

Cally, 27, said: 'I guess I was always a bit of an entrepreneur. My parents used to get me involved in local fundraising activities, and even at the age of six, I was incredibly competitive and always had to sell the most raffle tickets at events.'

'Then at the age of 12, I started going to car boot sales and making my own money.'

'When I was a bit older, I set up a mobile DJ business which took me to various venues in and around Argyll.'



Cally Russell whose Mallzee business has become one of the top performing websites over the Christmas period.

## Inspectors heap praise on Lomond School after three-day visit

DURING a three-day visit to Lomond School, in Helensburgh, HM Inspectors of Education found consistently high-quality learning experiences, a wide range of learning pathways, the best Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) attainment results for five years and outstanding approaches to outdoor learning.

A strong culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement has resulted in 'joined up thinking and a shared purpose across the nursery, junior and senior stages' and the inspectorate team are confident that under the 'astute, inspiring leadership' of Principal Johanna Urquhart, Lomond School will go from strength to strength.

The lead inspector noted the strong pastoral and collegiate ethos of the school, praising the 'sensitive, well-judged support' for pupils and the 'outward looking' staff who 'know the pupils well as individuals'.

This was attributed to the school's core guiding principles: internationalism, environmentalism, adventure, leadership, lifelong learning and service, which are delivered through both the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Inspectors commented on the positive impact of new posts such as Head of Adventure and Service, Head of E-Learning and Digital Strategy and Head of Careers and Future Destinations, which ensure that all young people readily take responsibility for their learning and develop a 'wide range of skills and attributes to prepare them for life, learning and the world of work'.

Mrs Urquhart, said: 'At Lomond School, we passionately believe that ed-

ucation should be about supporting our young people to be the best they possibly can be.

'We want to help them to develop and grow - academically and personally - into rounded individuals, in possession of strong values and mighty hearts and who are ultimately prepared to embark confidently and successfully on their life beyond Lomond School.'

'The inspection was a hugely positive experience for our school and I am delighted with the feedback.'

'An important feature of this visit was for Education Scotland to be confident that the school has the capacity to self-evaluate and continue to improve autonomously.'

'We were thrilled with the glowing feedback, and also with the fact that the team agreed with all of our plans for the future direction of our school.'

Lomond School currently has approximately 400 day and boarding pupils aged from three to 18 years old, and provides an all through experience from nursery to S6 as well as after school and holiday care. Lomond School was founded in 1977 and in 2017 will begin celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Chairman of the Board of Governors, Alastair Hope said: 'We will, inevitably, be looking back across the school's history but the school has great ambitions for the future and will keep driving forward, doing the best for its pupils.'

'It was particularly gratifying to gain such positive feedback about the leadership team of the school and to hear that the children and young people are justifiably proud of their school.'



## Eye to eye with John Wallace

### Your New Year Resolution

When you celebrated the New Year did you make a New Year's resolution? More to the point, have you kept it? I must admit to a little self-satisfaction. I had a list of seven different areas of my life I felt I could do better. (No nasty comments about what I should do, please. I have had plenty of ribbing from the family.) Rather than have a long list of failed resolutions I decided to have just one thing I resolved to see through to completion. Two weeks into the New Year I am managing to stick to my resolution. It's not been easy. Life has a nasty habit of interfering with the best of our intentions.

Probably the most frequently broken resolution is about taking better care of our bodies. It could be about losing weight, getting more exercise, stopping drinking or stopping smoking or many other facets of life. One resolution you could make and very easily keep

is to arrange an eye examination for yourself and other members of your family. The recommended interval for having an eye examination is two yearly for adults and annually for children and senior citizens. Sadly, the majority of children never have an eye examination whilst of school age and most adults only return every three years.

Children are our seed corn for the future. One in five children under-perform in school due to undetected or inadequately treated vision problems. They rely on us "oldies" to lead by example. Adults should know better. I never ceased to be amazed by patients turning up twenty years after their last eye examination, never having had another examination! We are born with two eyes. We should do everything in our power to maintain clear vision. Book your appointment today and keep your New Year resolution.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP  
**Wallace Optometrists**  
The West Highland Orthokeratology Clinic  
11/12 Argyll Square, Oban  
**Tel: 0845 230 3937 (EYES)**  
www.wallaceoptometrists.co.uk

## SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Will your child be five years of age before 28 February 2017? Yes? Then it's time to enrol them for school.

The next school session starts on 16 August 2016. Children who will be five on or before 28 February 2017 are eligible to be enrolled for Primary 1. Enrolment will take place week commencing 25 January 2016.

All enrolment information can be found online at [www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment](http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment)

When to enrol your child?	Where	What to bring
3.00pm 25 January - 29 January 2016	Local Primary School	Child's birth certificate Proof of Address

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 Care and Learning Office.

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

### Am bi ur pàiste còig bliadhna a dh'aois ro 28 Gearran 2017? Bidh? Ma-thà, tha an t-àm ann an clàrachadh airson na sgoile.

Bidh an ath sheisean sgoile a' tòiseachadh air 16 Lùnastal 2016. Faodaidh clann a bhios còig air no ro an 28 Gearran 2017 a bhith air an clàrachadh airson P1. Bidh an t-seachdain chlàrachaidh a' tòiseachadh air 25 Faoilleach 2016.

Gheibhear fiosrachadh clàrachaidh air-loidhne aig [www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment](http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment)

Cuin a chlàras sibh ur pàiste?	Càite	Dè bheir sibh leibh?
3.00f 25 Faoilleach - 29 Faoilleach 2016	A Bhun-sgoil Ionadail	T'isteanas breith ur pàiste Dearbhadh air seòladh.

Ma tha sibh airson 's gun tèid ur pàiste gu sgoil eile seach a' bhun-sgoil ionadail, feumaidh sibh an clàrachadh aig a' bhun-sgoil ionadail an t-seach, agus iarrtas a chur a-steach às dèidh sin gu Oifis Cùraim agus Ionnsachaidh na Sgìre.

Chan eil feum air iarrtas airson àite-sgoile airson Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig no dhaibhsan a tha a' dèiligeadh airson sgoil sheòrsaichte.

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# Oban-based scientist joins pioneering adventure to the Antarctic

**LOUISE GLEN**  
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

A YOUNG Scottish scientist has been selected for a unique women-only Antarctic expedition next year.

Dr Raeanne Miller, the only Scotland-based scientist selected for the Australian-led Homeward Bound international outreach trip, met with Education Secretary Angela Constance to mark one year until her departure.

The project aims to reach 1,000 women with a science background from across the globe over the next decade and will give them the experience and support to take up and stay

in leadership roles. Dr Miller works as a marine ecologist with the Scottish Association for Marine Science. She has interests in species biogeography – where we find different species and why – and marine renewable energy.

She won a place on the expedition after submitting a video application in 2014 and was chosen as one of only 78 women from across the globe to take part in the project.

Homeward Bound is the world's first state-of-the-art leadership and strategic programme for women in science, with the first trip departing from Ushuaia, Argentina, between December 2 and 21, 2016.

The 10-year project was borne from the lack of women in formal

leadership roles, but recognises their voices are crucial to our future sustainability.

The project will build a global collaboration of women in science who have had the same experience at sea together, focusing on the leadership and the planning required to tackle world-wide issues such as climate change.

Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning said: 'I am delighted that there will be a female scientist from Scotland involved in this expedition.'

'Dr Miller's achievement is fantastic and will be an inspiration to all our children and young people who aspire to find out more about our world and

how it works. If her achievement encourages just one young girl to follow in her footsteps and choose science as a career, that would be a great additional outcome.'

'Earlier this year I brought together a group of women working in science engagement to look at identifying the barriers to equality and what more can be done to overcome them. I am looking forward to following Dr Miller and her colleagues' progress and the long-term impact of this inspiring mission.'

Now living in Oban, Dr Miller's family are originally from Glasgow. She has studied at the University of Aberdeen, the University of the Highlands and Island, the University of South-

ampton and Cornell University in the USA.

Dr Miller said: 'This project is a really fantastic opportunity to take what I've learned from meeting an incredible group of women and bring that back to Scotland.'

'I live in an incredibly rural area and opportunities like this don't happen all the time, so it is a wonderful chance to bring the enthusiasm, knowledge and understanding that we will develop on the expedition to my work back at home and share it with colleagues.'

'Between now and November I will be raising funds for my contribution to the expedition and preparing to leave from Argentina in December.'



Dr Raeanne Miller who lives in Oban has been selected for a unique women-only Antarctic expedition in 2016.

## MSP backs need for press freedom in light of anniversary

HIGHLANDS and Islands MSP, Jamie McGrigor, has discussed the importance of press freedom during a Holyrood debate on the first anniversary of the *Charlie Hebdo* atrocity in Paris.



Mr McGrigor, who said during the debate that 'laughter is poison to a tyrant'.

The attack on the French satirical newspaper on January 7, 2015, left 12 people dead, including 11 members of staff at the publication and one policeman. A further attack killed another four civilians in another part of the city.

Islamic extremists from Yemen took responsibility for the attacks following satirical cartoons aimed at religion, specifically Islam.

The Scottish Government debate was led by Christian Allard MSP.

Mr McGrigor said: 'The physical attack on *Charlie Hebdo* symbolised an attack on the core freedoms we used to take for granted – freedom of speech and the right to express beliefs without fear or terror. These fundamental freedoms are the basis of our Western European culture. They are a guard against tyranny and we have seen only too clearly what can happen when tyrants such as Hitler and Stalin throttle that process.'

'The Islamist attackers, members of Al-Qaeda ultimately failed in their aims because of the huge groundswell of outrage, first among the people of France and then elsewhere.'

'Je suis Charlie identified that groundswell with those innocents who had died and hopefully proved is still mightier than the sword. But these shocking events must impress upon us how fragile are these freedoms and how important the need to protect

decent values that are central to our democracy and our way of life.

'Tyrants and terrorists alike, in many of the most despicable regimes, fear journalists, cartoonists, musicians, and film makers for exposing them for what they are. Satire is a most effective of tool in eroding pedestals. Laughter is poison to a tyrant. Let us remember the anger felt by Hitler when he was lampooned in Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* and more recently the film, *The Interviewer*, which depicts North Korea.'

'The *Charlie Hebdo* atrocity highlights the dangers faced by journalists across the world. It takes great bravery to stand up and be counted and that is never more important than now in an era which is seeing a decline in freedoms and an increase in terrorism.'

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## Labour pledge to first-time buyers

TWO Highlands and Islands Labour MSPs are backing the party's pledge to help first-time buyers get on the property ladder.

David Stewart and Rhoda Grant are backing the policy, part of Scottish Labour's manifesto ahead of the Holyrood elections in May, which would effectively double the help first-time buyers currently receive towards saving for a deposit.

Under the plans, a person who saves money in an ISA for a deposit would have the amount equalled by a Labour Scottish Government.

Mr Stewart said: 'Everyone

deserves a home and a chance, but too many young people are either living at home with their parents or stuck in expensive rents unable to get that first foot on the housing ladder.'

'Home ownership is a big ambition for hundreds of thousands of young people but for too many it remains an ambition rather than a reality.'

Mrs Grant added: 'Under Scottish Labour's plan we will effectively double the help towards saving a deposit for first time buyers, investing an additional £3,000 for first time buyers saving as part of our plan.'

## Registering your child for primary

CHILDREN across Argyll and Bute who turn five between March 1, 2016 and February 28, 2017 should be registered for primary school between January 18 and 22.

Parents should take their children to their local primary school to register during that week, between 10am and 3pm. If your child is not already receiving pre-school education in Argyll and Bute, you should bring their birth certificate with you when you register.

Further information can be found by logging on to: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/primary-school-registration-2016](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/primary-school-registration-2016), or by calling the Education Department on 01369 704000.

## Energy roadshow visits Hebrides

A SSE roadshow is travelling around the Outer Hebrides this week offering residents the opportunity to find out more about their fuel usage and how they can reduce their energy bills.

Events have been held in

South Uist and Barra so far this week, with events taking place in Uig Community Centre and Ravenspoint Centre, Harris tonight (January 14) from 6-8pm.

Councillor Angus Campbell, leader of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, has welcomed the events, saying: 'Fuel poverty is one of the most serious issues facing the Outer Hebrides with the highest levels (71 per cent) of households in fuel poverty and 18 per cent in extreme fuel poverty – the highest in Scotland.'

'Everything that can be done should be done to reduce the price of fuel and increase energy efficiency in homes across the islands, including the removal of the 2p surcharge.'

'In my view a social or community tariff should be introduced to alleviate some of the fuel poverty challenges in the island and the Comhairle will continue to campaign for such a measure.'

'I would encourage consumers across the islands to attend the roadshows and get as much information as possible in regard to their fuel usage and how to reduce fuel bills.'

Oban Times newsdesk 01631 568000

## By-election deadline for council candidates

**STEVEN RAE**  
srae@obantimes.co.uk

WITH the recent retirement of Argyll and Bute councillor Duncan MacIntyre due to ill-health, candidates have until Monday [January 18] to register for the coming by-election.

The by-election will be held on Thursday, February 18.

Councillor MacIntyre stood down on December 9 after more than 16 years of service with the local authority.

At his time of resignation he was one of the longest-standing councillors in Argyll and Bute, and the longest-serving in the Oban, Lorn and the Isles area, serving the communities of Oban and surrounding area since May 1999, latterly in the Oban North and Lorn ward.

The ward includes the areas surrounding Oban, from Kil-



Councillor MacIntyre retired in 2015 due to ill health.

melford to Bridge of Orchy, and has an electorate of just under 8,000 people.

The candidate successful in February will join councillors Elaine Robertson, Iain Angus MacDonald and Iain Stewart

MacLean in the ward. The by-election is the third in two years in the ward, with John MacGregor elected in the first in July 2014.

Mr MacGregor was then succeeded by the SNP's Iain Stewart MacLean following Mr MacGregor's death less than a month after his election.

The tenure of the next councillor could, however, be a short one, if proposals from the Boundary Commission go ahead.

Under the new ward structure, much of the Oban, North and Lorn ward would become part of a much larger Mid Argyll ward. Oban, North and Lorn is also one of the wards set to lose a councillor, as Argyll and Bute faces reduced elected member numbers, from 36 to 33.

The proposals have seen

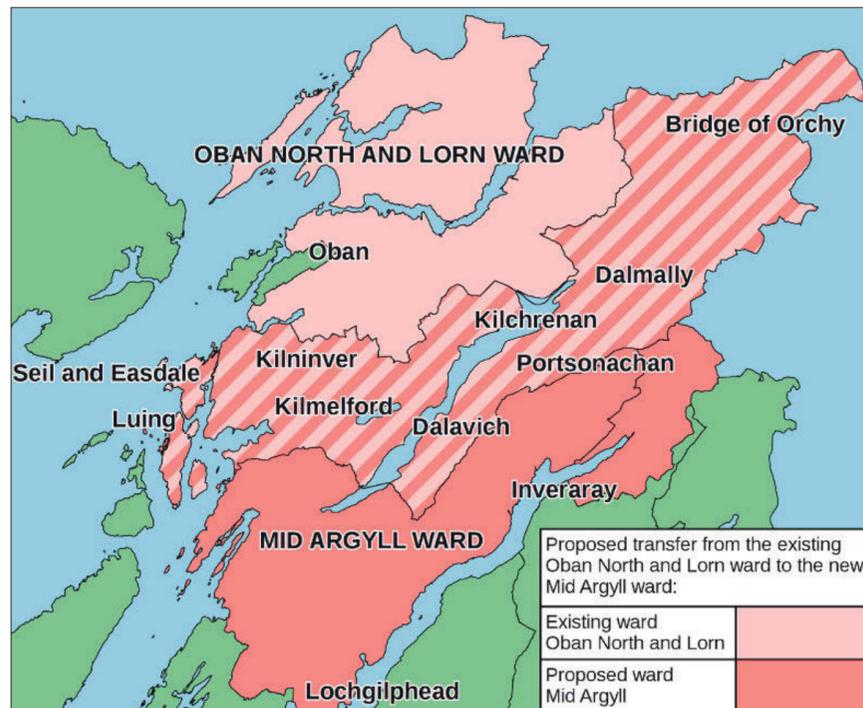
significant opposition from Argyll and Bute Council, community councils in the ward and other individuals and groups.

Final recommendations to Scottish ministers by the commission will be made after the Scottish Parliament elections in May 2017.

Nominations from prospective candidates for the by-election will close on Monday at 4pm.

Once announced, all candidates will be given the opportunity to submit their manifesto to The Oban Times, highlighting the policies they feel are fundamental to being elected.

The notice of election, timetable and nomination pack are available at: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/oban-north-and-lorn-ward-election](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/oban-north-and-lorn-ward-election)



The proposed Oban North and Lorn ward.

## Drivers stuck as tanker removed from A83

A TANKER that lay in a ditch for almost a fortnight was finally removed on Sunday, closing the A83 for more than five hours, writes Colin Cameron.

The bogged-down lorry proved more difficult to remove than first anticipated, leading to frustration for drivers caught up in road closures.

At the centre of the operation was a Scottish Water sludge tanker that left the road between Castleton and Achnaba on December 29 before coming to rest on its side in a ditch. The driver received minor injuries in the crash. No-one else was hurt.

Plans to recover the vehicle were hampered by poor weather and road closures at the Rest and Be Thankful.

The recovery operation was eventually able to take place, in heavy sleet and rain, on Sunday January 10. To allow a crane to lift the HGV from the ditch, a full trunk road closure was agreed.

A spokesperson for trunk road operator, BEAR Scotland, explained: 'Work to recover the vehicle started at first light, with the road reopening under traffic control at 1.30pm, before being fully reopened at 2.30pm.'

The process took longer than anticipated as a result of the vehicle being entrenched in a muddy ditch. During the recovery, the vehicle used to stabilise the tanker broke down, delaying the operation. Signposted diversions took drivers on an 80-mile detour via Oban.

Among frustrated drivers stuck at the Lochgilphead-bound side were building contractors attempting to catch the Islay ferry and at the other end, a Boys' Brigade party from Campbeltown was forced to abandon hopes of travelling to a pantomime in Glasgow.



The tanker trailer is removed by crane shortly after 11am on Sunday. 06\_a03tanker04

# Choir members find music really is the food of love

LOUISE GLEN  
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A GAELIC choir conductor is making a very unusual pitch for new members, and it seems to be working, with numbers in his two choirs swelling to unheard of numbers.

Raymond Bremner, 49, says joining a choir will 'improve the chance of falling in love' - and he should know, as six couples have already met and married through their involvement with a choir.

With many groups getting back together after the long Christmas break, he says joining a choir 'will change your life' and he is encouraging as many people as possible to join.

Mr Bremner, conductor for Atomic Piseag, the Argyllshire ladies Gaelic choir, told *The Oban Times*: 'Our choir is better and cheaper than a dating agency. We have had six weddings in the last five years and there are a few more I can see on the horizon.'

'The choir has all anyone would need or want - friendship, hospitality, drinks, barbecue in summer, dining out in small groups and altogether. We travel all over the place, we love each other and are all part of a huge, big family of friends.'

Living in Thurso and travelling all over country, Raymond, who conducts his ladies choir from the Pipe Band Hall in Oban, said: 'In the past few years, three of my ladies section in Còisir Ghàidhlig Mhealbhach have got married - and there's another two getting married this



Clockwise from top left: Alison and Andrew Swanson; Sheena and Murdo MacRitchie; Sarah, who is marrying Ali Macleod; Rebecca who will marry Neil MacRitchie; and Helen and Michael Heddle.

year. One of them to one of our tenors - the sopranos and altos are busy sorting out new dresses and hats for the wedding.'

Mr Bremner explained: 'In 2009 Allison married Andrew

Swanson. He's not in the choir but she sings alto and we've known him for as long as we've known her. They got hitched at the West Church in Thurso. The whole choir were there and

sang at the church service. In 2011 Sheena married Murdo MacRitchie. She sang soprano in the choir and they met at a Melvich Gaelic Choir cèilidh in Thurso. He's from Lewis, she's

originally from Harris. They got married at Tarbert, Harris, on the Monday of the Western Isles Mòd - a true Mòd wedding. I was the best man. They are both now happily married and living in Perth.

'In 2012 Helen married Michael Heddle. She sang for Melvich for the first time in Stornoway in 2011 and we won the Lorn Shield. She got married the following year, and again the whole choir sang at the wedding on a glorious sunny day.'

'In 2016 Sarah will be marrying Ali Macleod. Sarah joined the choir when she was 15 and started learning Gaelic. She is now a Gaelic medium teacher in Inverness and met Ali whilst she was a Gaelic Development officer with Comunn na Gàidhlig in Fort William - the year we all went to the Pan Celtic Festival in Carlow.'

'Also this year, Rebecca will be marrying Neil MacRitchie. They both met through the choir even though she's from Portree and he's from Carloway on the Isle of Lewis. I met Rebecca at a Skye cèilidh hosted by the late Charlie MacColl in the West End Hotel in 2012. She joined the choir that year, as did Neil. The wedding is on July 1 in Portree and the choir will be singing at the reception.'

While Mr Bremner manages to arrange weddings for others, it seems he hasn't managed to find love himself.

He says people are intimidated by the grilling members of Atomic Piseag would give any potential partner he has and he is happy to stay single 'for now'.

## Work begins to revamp Soroba tenement

WORK to revamp the tenement at 52 Soroba Road, Oban, resumed this week following a break over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

The 10-week contract, coordinated by Argyll Community Housing Association to a value of £133,000, has been awarded to Turner Facilities Management Limited.

The works will include putting a new roof on the building, re-rendering, wall insulation, external painting and new fascias, soffits, downpipes and guttering.

Alastair MacGregor, ACHA's

Chief Executive, said: 'I am delighted that with the support of Argyll and Bute Council, property owners and our tenants, we have got on site to save this building to provide homes for the future.'

'I hope it will, on completion, be as successful as the neighbouring tenement restoration across the road, which the organisation completed three years ago.'

'The restoration of this building will see the completion of improvements to the third and final tenement at the heart of Soroba Road.'



Work has started to restore the tenement at 52 Soroba Road.

## POLICE FILES with Sergeant Alan Moore

### Thank you for working together

POLICE in Oban are reporting unprecedented results in catching drug users and dealers in the town after another week of taking both Class C and Class A drugs out of the pipeline.

Sergeant Alan Moore praised the entire town for getting behind the Shop-A-Dealer campaign, which has allowed 'intelligence-led' policing to make real problems for criminals.

In the last week more three people have been reported to the Procurator Fiscal on charges of possession with intent to supply, and a further two of being

in possession of illegal drugs. Sergeant Moore said: 'The whole town seems to be working together to shop a dealer.'

The information has made all the difference to the work of officers. Please keep every bit of information coming into the office, by dialling 101 and asking for Oban Police Station or by phoning Crimestoppers in confidence on 0800 555 111.

### Police carry out stop and searches

SHORTLY after noon on Wednesday January 6, a 31-year-old man was stopped and searched by police.

He was alleged to have been found in possession of cannabis - a Class C drug - a report has been made to the Procurator Fiscal.

The same day, a 33-year-old man was stopped and searched in Dunollie under the misuse of drugs act.

He was found to be in possession of cannabis and reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

Also that day, a 55-year-old man and a 53-year-old man were stopped and searched while they were in their car.

The men were allegedly found to be in possession of a 'large quantity' of cannabis.

Both men were charged with intent to supply drugs. One of the men was from

Dunfermline and the other from Tiree.

Finally, at 1.10pm on January 6, a 41-year-old man was stopped and searched under the misuse of drugs act in Dunollie.

Following enquiries it is alleged a large amount of drugs was found at the man's premises. He was later charged with possession with intent to supply. A report has been sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

### Multi-agency search for man

A MAN who made off after crashing his car on the A816

near to Kilmore did more than just woke up local residents - he felt the full force of the law in action.

The incident in the early hours of Saturday morning saw the driver of an Audi make off, but he was seen by another driver who almost crashed into the abandoned vehicle.

The incident saw police officers from all over the command area pulled in to search for the man. The support of helicopter Coastguard 177 and the police dog unit was also enlisted.

Sergeant Alan Moore of Oban Police Station said: 'We used the significant police resources available to us as we were dealing with a man who had been

involved in a serious car crash.' Later that morning, police located a 32-year-old man who was believed to be involved in the incident.

The man was charged with driving under the influence of drink or drugs, driving without insurance or an MOT, culpable and reckless conduct, attempting to pervert the course of justice, and failing to report a road traffic accident.

A report has been made to the Procurator Fiscal.

Contact Oban Police Station by dialling 101

## Oban man admits assault on partner

AN OBAN man stabbed himself and pushed his partner during a domestic argument at their home.

Luigi Aldo Lopez, 47, of flat 2-2, 14 Soroba Road, Oban, admitted striking himself on the body with a knife and falsely claiming to police that he had been assaulted and stabbed in the stomach. He also admitted assaulting his partner by pushing her from the property on September 8 last year.

Oban Sheriff Court heard how Lopez and his then girlfriend, now wife, had been out for the evening and during their ride home in a taxi he became argumentative and started to behave aggressively towards her.

The argument continued at their home - Lopez seized her and threw her and her belongings from their flat then went into the kitchen, found a knife and stabbed himself.

When police and paramedics arrived at the property they found her 'distressed and bleeding', said Eoin McGinty, Procurator Fiscal. 'Paramedics were suspicious as they could see what they thought were self-harm wounds on his arms.'

When interviewed, Lopez accepted that he made up the account of him being stabbed and apologised for that. He told police that prior to the event he had stopped drinking but had consumed whisky that night. 'I just went over the score. I thought I could handle a bottle of it and obviously I couldn't,' he said.

Lopez' defence agent, Waqas Ashraf told Sheriff Ruth Anderson QC that the couple's subsequent marriage had brought stability to the life of Lopez, a part-time chef.

Sheriff Anderson deferred sentence until February 2 for a report into what alcohol treatment was available and suitable for Lopez, and his suitability to carry out unpaid work in the community.

## Rare ice found in Appin

A RARE ice formation called hair ice is covering dozens of pieces of dead wood found in an Appin woodland.

The highly-unusual type of frost needs a particular set of conditions to form.

Marina Curran-Colthart, Local Biodiversity Officer for Argyll and Bute Council, discovered the ice in Glenstockdale, Appin last Saturday.

The candy floss-like strands are caused by a fungus that enables the ice to form very thin hairs and will keep this shape when temperatures are close to freezing.

'I've never seen this before and was intrigued by its structure and its softness to the touch,' Ms Curran-Colthart said. 'I found out the ice only appears on wet dead wood which has fungus growing in it, allied with exactly the right combination of humidity and low temperature.'



Hair ice has been linked to the fungus *Exidiopsis effusa*.

Photo: Marina Curran-Colthart

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## Colonsay

THE NEW Year was welcomed on Colonsay by a couple of 'very successful' organised events, along with some informal parties.

Following the ravages of the gales brought by Storm Frank, a number of visitors chose to cancel their holidays due to the uncertainty of travel arrangements as CalMac tried desperately to provide minimal lifeline services to all the islands.

The annual New Year's Day ceilidh was organised and hosted by Caitlin McNeill, and was well-attended by residents and visitors.

Island resident Donald MacNeill said: 'It was a chance to wish friends a happy new year and enjoy a drink and a dance.'

A second event was a piano recital by local musician Alison Guest who invited people into her home to raise money and awareness for 'support in mind Scotland', a mental health charity. (See story, page 2.)

Donald said: 'Alison played for approximately an hour including music by Scarlatti, Rachmaninov and Chopin and it was generally agreed that her choice of music was ideally suited to the audience.'

'Alison was at pains to point out that she was not a 'concert pianist' but to those of us less educated in such matters, she played with great musicality and empathy, and made for a very enjoyable afternoon.'

## Roy Bridge

ROY BRIDGE Scout Group are on their way to a nation Scout event thanks to a £500 donation from the Rotary Club of Lochaber.

The group, known as The Braes, was only formed in 2012 and this year will be attending the 100th anniversary of Cub Scouts at the Scout Outdoor Activity Centre in Lochgoilhead.

This involves buying a trailer to take their camping equipment to the centre, which has been made possible by Rotary's contribution.

Terry Lee, president of the Rotary Club of Lochaber, said: 'We were pleased to hear how successful this group had become during its short period of existence. Bringing learning and adventure to youngsters is a good use of our funds and we were delighted to contribute towards the cost of a trailer.'

Scout Leader Sean Sessions, from Tulloch, near Roy-bridge, thanked the club.

He said: 'We run an active, balanced and challenging programme to teach our youngsters to be responsible, proactive and interested in their community, the environment and the wider world.'

## Spean Bridge

SPEAN Bridge Primary School pupils will become superheroes for the day as they take part in a fun run to raise school funds.

Organised by the Parent Teacher Association, the 'Soup-er Hero Dash' starts at 1pm from the school on Sunday January 17. It costs £2.50 to enter and will be finished with a well-earned bowl of soup and a roll.

Fancy dress is optional but the theme is superheroes for those who would like to take part.

## Arisaig

DECEMBER 2015 was the rainiest month this century in Arisaig, according to amateur meteorologist Ranald Coyne.

Rainfall over the village reached just over 10 inches, bringing the total for the year to almost 67 inches, which is normal in Arisaig.

The average daily temperature ranged from 4.3°C to 9.5°C, both slightly warmer than usual for December.

The coldest night was -1°C and the hottest day was 17°C.



**BUDDING ENTREPRENEURS:** Kinlochleven High School third year pupils have made it to the final of a national business competition. f02kinlochleven01

## Kinlochleven pupils mean business

KINLOCHLEVEN High School pupils have been named as one of just 10 groups across the country to qualify for a national competition.

The third-year students will travel to Edinburgh in February for the Coca-Cola Enterprises Real Business Challenge, picked from 850 participating schools.

To qualify, the youngsters designed

a drink they thought would be popular in the business market, in a 'Dragon's Den' themed competition.

One of the budding entrepreneurs, Connor MacKenzie, said: 'My group and I have enjoyed every minute of it. We have worked so hard as a group and we are all excited about being in the final. We don't know what to expect from the other nine schools

but hopefully we can present to the best of our abilities and make our school proud.'

Kinlochleven head teacher, Rebecca Machin, called the news 'a wonderful Christmas present'. She added: 'I am already proud, very proud indeed, of our youngsters. They have done fabulously well and already are a huge credit to their school.'

## Stornoway

A GAELIC poet from Stornoway has been recognised in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

Derick Thomson (Ruairidh Mac Thòmais) was added to the list along with 221 other men and women who left their mark on Britain and died in 2012.

The scholar was born in Stornoway in 1921 and dedicated his life to editing both Gaelic and Welsh texts and to increase appreciation of Gaelic culture in national history.

An active campaigner for the revival of spoken Gaelic, he chaired the Scottish National Party's Gaelic committee in the 1970s and wrote the polemical pamphlet 'Why Gaelic Matters' (1984) for the Saltire Society.

Thomson was also a noted poet, publishing eight volumes over a 70-year writing career.

## Curtain up on panto fun



**FESTIVE FUN:** Abbeyfield Care Home residents enjoyed a pantomime, written and directed by staff.

## Ballachulish

RESIDENTS of Abbeyfield Care Home in Ballachulish enjoyed a busy Christmas and New Year.

A highlight of the festive season was a pantomime, written and directed by staff, as well as a Christmas family party.

Office manager Dominic Duffy said: 'It's been a very busy time over Christmas and New Year for all of Abbeyfield.'

'Thanks to everyone involved and to all the friends and family who visited.'

## Specialists identify whale found dead on Tiree

A KILLER whale found dead on a Tiree beach died after it became entangled in fishing gear, a post mortem examination has revealed.

This is the first time a killer whale is known to have died this way in Scotland.

The whale has been identified as Lulu, one of only nine orcas left in Scottish waters, and one of only four females in the group.

The identity of the animal was confirmed this week by Dr Andy Foote, an orca specialist and Dr Conor Ryan of Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust (HWDT).

Using photos from the trust's catalogue the pair were able to identify Lulu from the distinctive eye and saddle patches, which are unique to each individual killer whale. Photos taken of the stranded orca by John Bowler,



**IDENTIFIED:** Killer whale Lulu was found dead on Tiree.

RSPB Scotland's Tiree Officer were crucial to allow HWDT to identify the animal. The whale's body was found at Crossapol Point, a rocky area between Crossapol and Soroby beaches.

This small and well-known group is Britain and Ireland's only known resident population of killer whales and is feared to be at risk of extinction.

Dr Conor Ryan, the trust's sighting and stranding

officer said: 'It is particularly sad to know another of these killer whales, unique to the British and Irish Isles, has died.'

'There may be as few as eight individuals remaining in this population, which has not produced calves since studies began.'

The trust has been studying orca in the Hebrides using photo ID since 1992. Lulu was last photographed by the charity

from its specialised research yacht, Silurian, off Waternish, Isle of Skye in July 2014.

The HWDT is working to secure the future of western Scotland's cetaceans and the Hebrides' globally important marine environment through education, research and engagement with local communities.

For details call 01688 302620 or visit www.hwdt.org.



**UNUSUAL:** A fox killed recently on the south side of Loch Aline had black and red forelegs.



**STRIKING:** a fox in the wild.

THE PUBLIC announcement just before last year's Hogmanay celebrations that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has cut its staff by 15 per cent in the last five years axing dozens of jobs across the Highlands and Islands, with a hint of more to come, surprised no-one.

Indeed the question was posed not long ago that if SNH disappeared overnight would it make any difference in the great scheme of things?

A touch harsh perhaps but that it was asked at all speaks volumes.

Although SNH has a workforce of almost 1,000, it is often criticised for its airy-fairy views and reluctance to employ local country folk who, unlike some of its undergraduates, are more in tune with the huge land mass it covers.

Add to this a vigorous and extreme anti-deer policy favouring peripatetic contractors, it is little wonder it has not always been as popular as the Nature Conservancy Council, its highly acclaimed predecessor.

Science is a systematic enterprise that creates, builds and organises knowledge in the form of testable explanations and predictions about the universe, and we ignore it at our peril.

But where land management and rural affairs are concerned, scientists must be kept firmly in the back ground to advise when called on, not to lead and control.

If SNH does not survive the inevitable financial putsch at least, in years to come, its archives will show the world the variety and quantity of wildlife there once was in the Highlands and islands.

Iain Thornber  
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## Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry

ABRIDGED minutes of the Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council meeting on Tuesday January 5:

Address by Vicky Dodman, Lochaber co-ordinator of Step It Up Highland: the Step It Up Highland initiative promotes walking. It especially encourages those who are inactive to become active. It does this in several ways, including establishing free local walking groups, training their leaders and working with health professionals to refer patients who may benefit from these groups. They have three stages of walks - slower, shorter ones of up to 30 minutes, health walks up to an hour and, for the most able, walks up to two hours. Vicky is keen to start a group in Spean Bridge and Roy Bridge in the spring, with volunteer walk leader training being held locally in March. Anyone willing to train as a walk leader should contact [lochaber@pfw.org.uk](mailto:lochaber@pfw.org.uk)

BEAR and Transport Scotland: The chairman/secretary reported that despite attending two of Dave Thompson MSP's surgeries, he had not received any replies to community council requests, despite promises about ditch infilling at Aonachan Crossroads, future plans for resurfacing on the A82 in Spean Bridge and why the Transport Minister had not replied to community council letters of January and February 2015. There were ongoing discussions between interested parties regarding signs on the A82 outside the Ferguson Transport log store. It was decided the community council had done as much as it could and the matter was closed.

Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal: Peter McIntosh said they appeared to be experiencing difficulty with installing BT lines in some premises and that had delayed the timetable.

Commando Memorial car park toilets: Funding for the feasibility study has been approved by Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and should start early in the new year.

Paths and Sustrans: The secretary had written to SUSTRANS as requested. SUSTRANS suggested that if the community council was serious about progressing a path between Roy Bridge and Spean Bridge the community council would have to commission a feasibility study and find match funding. As a first stage, Sara Bellshaw offered to canvass local landowners for their support, which was agreed.

Fort William new facility NHS steering group meeting: The treasurer reported on the preliminary meeting he had attended on December 3. Nothing had been decided, but the consensus was that the community wanted a 24-hour, seven days a week replacement for the Belford Hospital.

LEADER: The chairman gave a report on the first meeting of the Lochaber local action group. It is hoped that expressions of interest will be accepted from the middle of January, and stage one online applications from April 18. In the first year, a maximum of £200,000 will be available, with the lowest available grant £5,000, and the highest £50,000. An initial intervention rate of 50 per cent was agreed. Community councillors were keen that organisations in their area make applications for grants.

Stagecoach North of Scotland/Scottish Citylink: There has been no improvement in the service since the timetable change. A complaint about a specific Citylink coach which was having recurring faults with its air conditioning/heating unit was being investigated.

Next meeting: February 9.

# Alarm for pupils as bus window broken in Calais migrant melee



RECORD BREAKERS: Mark Booker of SCIAF accepts the cheque from Alice Ann MacPherson and Stewart Petrie, with the rest of the school looking on.

## Record-breaking fundraising pupils

THE FUNDRAISING efforts of a Fort William school are to be used as an example to others after pupils raised a record amount for a national charity.

Lochside Primary School's primary seven pupils took part in a Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) project, raising the most by any school in Scotland.

The Talented Fundraisers

Project involved the 22 pupils in Carol Tait's class being given £50 between them to set up enterprises to raise funds. The pupils raised a whopping £1,350, which was presented to Mark Booker, schools officer in Scotland for SCIAF, on Monday.

Mark had previously visited the school in September to discuss the work SCIAF does for people in some of the

world's poorest countries. Head teacher Violet Smith, explained: 'The primary sevens ran the project but everyone in the school was involved in some way. The pupils made lip scrub, body scrub, candle holders, lanterns, Christmas cards, advent calendars and baking, which were all sold at our Christmas fair.'

Primary seven pupil Alice Ann MacPherson, 11, added:

'We also did things like a Christmas hamper, a raffle, guess Santa's birthday and guess the number of sweets in a jar.'

Mark said: 'The school will be used as an example of what it is SCIAF does. We often get asked by schools, 'what can we do to fundraise?', so we will put all the ideas the pupils here had on our youth site and send it out to them too.'

STEVEN RAE  
srae@obantimes.co.uk

A COACH carrying Skye school pupils had a window smashed when an incident broke out between migrants and police near the French port of Calais.

The 35 pupils from Portree High School were on their way back to Skye from a ski trip in Italy in the early hours of Sunday, catching a ferry to Dover.

An outer window of double glazing on the coach was broken as it passed through the disturbance according to Highland Council. No one was hurt in the clash.

In a statement, the local authority said on Monday: 'Highland Council has confirmed that all pupils and adults who attended a ski trip in Italy have safely returned.'

'The coach in which 35 pupils and seven adults were travelling was caught up in an incident between police and migrants as they approached Calais in the early hours of Sunday morning. An outer window of double glazing on the coach was broken as it passed through the police

incident. Passengers on the coach were asleep at the time.

'The incident was reported to the police and Border Control at Calais and the coach was deemed safe to continue its journey.'

Despite a report in the national press of one child suffering an epileptic fit, other representatives from the council and the school said everyone on the bus returned home unharmed.

Bill Alexander, Highland Council's director of care and learning said: 'We were alerted to the incident yesterday and parents were informed. This was an unfortunate episode to the end of what was otherwise a very successful school ski trip. All those on the trip have returned safely.'

Portree High School head teacher, Catherine MacDonald, added: 'Everyone has returned home safe and sound from what was a fantastic ski trip with snowsports certificates under their belts.'

'No one was injured as a result of the incident at Calais, which was efficiently dealt with by our coach operator.'



CALAIS CLASH: the pupils were from Portree High School, above.

## TIMESLINE

### Producers forced to make own rain

FILM producers in Glencoe were forced to use a rain machine last week as the area was too dry to film a shot.

Despite the west coast of Scotland being notorious for rain, the company had to create its own for an advert they were shooting.

MTP Production Company, which is based in Glasgow, shot in parts of Glen Etive and Clachaig Inn, using the Kings House Hotel as a base.

The filming will be used for an ident - a logo used between programmes - for Channel 5.

The A82 was also closed for short periods, with police using a rolling road block to avoid delays.

### Thief steals power tools and booze

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a theft was reported in Fort William.

On the morning of Tuesday, January 5, power tools and alcohol were taken from within a shed outside a house on Lochaber Road. A man was seen running away down Lochaber Road in possession of the stolen items.

Anyone with any information should ring the non-emergency number, 101, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

### An abundance of bikes with police

POLICE at Fort William Police Station have a large number of bicycles which have been handed in as found property.

Some of these are quite valuable bikes and some are relatively new.

If you have lost a bicycle please call into the station or ring the non-emergency number, 101.

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www.facebook.com/obantimes

# What's The Alternative?

WHETHER suffering from chronic pain, insomnia or the effects of stress, Brits are increasingly turning to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and therapies to find relief. Alternative therapy is used in addition to, or instead of, conventional western medicine, and includes treatments such as massage, herbal medicine and acupuncture.

The use of what are now considered 'alternative' therapies, called 'traditional' therapies by the World Health Organisation (WHO), have been around for millennia - the ancient Greeks practised chiropractic, and archaeologists found medicinal herbs amongst the personal effects of a prehistoric mummified ice man found in the Italian Alps.

Massage therapy dates back thousands of years in places such as Asia, the Middle East and Greece. And while alternative therapies can never replace modern medicine for every condition, according to the WHO, they can be safe and effective with fewer possible side effects.

'Traditional medicine has much to offer, especially as a contribution to primary health care and universal coverage, and most especially at a time when chronic noncommunicable diseases have overtaken infectious diseases as the world's biggest killer,' said Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of the WHO. 'This form of care unquestionably soothes, treats many common ailments, reduces suffering and relieves pain. It also keeps people with minor complaints and illnesses from flooding clinics and emergency wards.'

## Dragon Spring Taiji & Qigong

with Susanne Lin McCardel

### New Taiji Beginners Class

7.45pm, Thursday 14th January 2016  
Church of Scotland Centre, Glencruitten Rd, Oban

For more details contact Susanne  
T: 01852 500361 M: 07979860754  
E: susanne@dragonspringtaiji.co.uk  
www.dragonspringtaiji.co.uk

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Royal Society of Medicine

**Tasmin McVean - Well Body Argyll**

Tasmin McVean is a Traditional Acupuncturist & Alternative Medicine Practitioner whose highly recommended Well Body Clinics are unique - offering fully integrated Alternative Natural Medicine, Complementary Care & Remedial Therapies under one roof for men, women, & children, in Oban, Argyll & Highlands.

'I am interested in all my patients & my practice embraces a wide range of health conditions & referrals. The Well Body Clinics are recognised for their fast, effective results, & excellent patient care & feedback, based on 20 years experience. I specialise in supporting every patient as a unique individual, often from an initial painful or stressful outset, to a balanced maintenance or support programme. Good health is not just about the absence of pain or disease - it's about learning how to best listen and support your body, at all stages of life, & in its daily challenges. In the UK, often we think of health when we are ill. Yet true health is a proactive approach - not turning a blind eye

or ear, but listening, & responding fast to early signals. Our bodies want to be well - we just sometimes need a little help in helping ourselves tap into this.'

Working alongside GP services, her approach is endorsed, for example by one surgery stating 'patient feedback to Tamsin's treatments has been globally positive'. Professional memberships include The Royal Society of Medicine, The British Acupuncture Council, The International Institute of Traditional Herbal Medicine & Aromatherapy, & Bowen UK. Tamsin's own recovery from serious spinal & orthopaedic injury informs her empathic approach.

'My aim as a practitioner is to support each patient from that first step of pain, crisis or illness - working together for fast symptom relief, whilst also addressing the underlying root problem. In Traditional Medicine this is called treating Ben & Biao, Root & Stem. This holistic approach nourishes the Well Body Clinics'. All Appointments: www.wellbodyargyll.co.uk Tel: 01631 760329

### Dragon Spring Taiji and Qigong

A new Taiji beginner class is starting this week teaching the 37 step form. The gentle nature of Taiji makes it suitable for all whatever your age or state of fitness. It is a way of exercise for health and there are many health benefits to gain, such relaxation and enhanced sense of wellbeing. Taiji is also meditation in movement. If you have watched someone doing Taiji, you may have seen a slow and almost mystical kind of movement. The Short Form in its length takes ten minutes to practise, and it is

a great antidote to busy life. The aim for Dragon Spring Taiji is to teach the relevance of Taiji in today's society, how to deal with lives pressures in a non-aggressive way using awareness and creating a deeper connection with yourself.

The first week of an eight week term starts on Thursday 14th January, 7.45, at the Church of Scotland Centre, Glencruitten Rd, Oban. Come along and try the first week to see if it something for you. The cost is £54.



## Viewpoint

PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB  
email: editor@obantimes.co.ukThe Oban Times  
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Established 1861 No 8216

According to Shakespeare, 'If music be the food of love, play on'. Now one choir master has taken the bard's words to heart and is encouraging people to join his choir – and find love in the process. Raymond Bremner's pitch is almost perfect, for no less than six couples have met and fallen in love due to one or both parties involvement in the two choirs run by Mr Bremner.

And the conductor believes love will blossom for other choir members in 2016. In a damp, dark January, when the news is full of flooding, wars and suffering, it's great to share in some of the good things happening in the region. Music has the ability to make your heart sing, but not half as loudly as love. And when you combine the two, well, you really are onto a winner!



## Days gone by – Oban club wins title at north Argyll drama festival, March 1975

This week's flashback photograph comes from the files of The Oban Times. It features Comunn Gaidhealach an Obain Dramatic Club, principal winners at the Scottish Community Drama Association's North Argyll District Festival in Connel in March 1975. The club's play, *Eilidh*, was written by Iain Crichton Smith and produced by Bill Gordon. Cast members, left to right, are: Agnes Morrison; Hugh MacPherson; Iain Kennedy; Catherine Christie; Anne Ferguson and Neil MacLeod. Digital versions of flashback photos for *The Oban Times* can be sent to 'editor@obantimes.co.uk' or prints sent to the editor, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB. Anyone who wishes a print returned should include a stamped-addressed envelope.

## Beachd Ailein

Ailean Caimbeul

ALLAN CAMPBELL  
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

B' E BHEATHA E! Tha sin math is tha e math dhut!

Sin faicail a bhiodh tric aig mo sheanair nuair a bhiodh biadh air chor-eigin a' còrdadh ris gu sònraichte. Ach anns an t-saoghal annasach a th' againn an-diugh tha, ma chreidear mòran den chomhairle a tha sinn a' faotainn, tomhas mhath den bhìadh a tha math leinn dona dhuinn!

'S e firinn na cùise nach robh airgead aig a' chuid as motha de mhòr-shluagh na dùthcha, suas gu mu cheathrad bliadhna air ais na mar sin, gu bhith a' ceannach ach biadh simplidh a chumadh teaghlach a' dol. Ged a bhiodh miann aca air rudan grinn, cha robh an comas air leithid sin fhaotainn, agus dh'fhàg sin na ginealach a bha romhainne ag ithe biadh traidiseanta. Maorach de gach seorsa, iasg agus feòil ùr is shailte, agus buntata is lusana chuireadh 's a thogadh iad fhèin. Cha robh guth aig duine an uairsin gun robh cus salainn neo feòil reamhar dona dhut, ach cha mhotha na sin a bha mothachadh

gun robh ceò tombaca dol a dhèanadh cron air slàinte nam feadhna a bha ris agus feadhainn a bha an dlùth nàbachd dhaibh nan dachannan. Am bheil cuimhn' agaibh air na bùthan beaga dùthchail is na bhanaichean bidh is eile a bhiodh a' frithealadh choimhearsnachdan is mar a bhiodh aran is càis is iomadh rud eile gan làimhseachadh gun chòmhdach pàipeir neo dad orra? Gun ghuth air leithid sgadan sailte, ròp is tairnean, is gach nì eile a bhiodh iad a' reic! Mar bu trice cha robh dòigh air làmhhan a nighe eadar gach neach-ceannach. Chan e sin a-mhàin ach chan eil cho uamhasach fada bhon a bha e cumanta im a thogail às a' chroga agus a sgaoleadh air an aran le òrdaig!

Bhiodh mo mhàthair ag innse mar a bha teaghlach faisg oirre nuair a bha i òg a bhiodh ag ithe an cuid sgadain sailte is buntata far fàdan-mònach, agus ged is e dìth shoithichean a bh' orrasan, bhithinn-sa ag ràdh rithe gur iad sin a' chiad thruinne-searan ath-chleachdte! A dh'aindeoin sin

uile chan eil eachdraidh air daoine a bhith a' bàsachadh ri linn dìth slàinteachais neo air sgàth riaghailt bidh.

Ged a tha mi a' cur asam mar seo, agus cha mhise a' chiad neach a th' air comhairleachadh bidh is dìbhe a chàineadh, cha ghabh an dearbhadh saidheansail àicheadh agus feumaidh mise mar a h-uile duine eile feuchainn ri rian a chumail air mo chuid ithe is òil! Tha mi 'n dòchas gun amais sinn uile air na bhios math dhuinn ann an 2016!

SCIENTIFIC evidence cannot be denied, but I often think of how previous generations existed on diets which were at odds with so much of today's guidelines.

Food was also frequently prepared and consumed in environments which were primitive by modern standards, and yet people survived.

Let us all try for a good 2016 diet, which will also be good for us!

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

## Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON  
robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk

## Celtic Connections

THE PEOPLE of Glasgow are in a privileged position.

Every year, once Christmas and New Year are over and the January blues set in for everyone else, Glasgow still has a month of partying to look forward to in the form of the much-anticipated Celtic Connections.

The festival begins this weekend with a packed schedule of gigs. I could not possibly list them all in here – but I have included a small number of particularly interesting gigs in my 'what's on' section.

There are lots of exciting looking gigs that I have left out so check the line-up yourself online.

## Trail West crowd-funding gig

I THOROUGHLY enjoyed the electric atmosphere inside Glasgow University's Queen Margaret Union for the Trail West gig at the weekend.

The boys put on a great show for a considerable crowd.

The Queen Margaret Union is a cracking venue.

It looks smart and modern, it has a massive stage, a great sound system, cool lighting and, crucially for any gathering of Glasgow gael, the bar is in the same room as the dance floor!

I think it should be considered more often as a venue for ceilidh dances – its layout worked a treat.

The Trail West boys were joined on stage by Martin and Daniel Gillespie from Skerryvore, Micheal Steele from South Uist and Kyle Orr from Benderloch, and myself and Ross Wilson from Skipinnish.

For the last set of the evening, we all piled onto the stage for a final horo gheallaidh.

There were three accordions and four sets of pipes – what an almighty noise!

It was a one off – a chance for Trail West to say 'thank you' to those who donated to their crowdfunding campaign after their van was stolen – and, for that reason, will be remembered for many years to come.

## Clydebank ceilidh

DESPITE a poor turn out on Friday evening, the Clydebank Highlanders had a lovely ceilidh with all the artistes performing to a very high standard.

Alasdair McMillan was the chairman and even treated the audience to a few songs. The Gaelic singers were Rhona Morrison, Fiona Ross and Ruairaidh MacDairmid, who also played the accordion. Seonaidh Rostant sang Scots songs and Robert Wood played the

pipes, while Kirsteen Grant and Sheila Galbraith accompanied the singers.

The performances were all very well received.

## What's on

**Friday January 15:** Dàimh and Les Poules à Colin, 8pm, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Skerryvore with We Banjo 3, Old Fruitmarket, 9.30pm.

**Saturday January 16:** Stirling An Comunn Gaidhealach Ceilidh, Albert Hall. Scott Wood Band and Mec Lir, Òran Mòr, 7.30pm. Ceòl 's Craic featuring Tional, the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Sauchiehall Street, 7.30pm.

**Tuesday January 19:** Kathleen McInnes, Brian Finnegan, Dermot Byrne, Mike Vass and support, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, 8pm

**Wednesday January 20:** Iain Macfarlane and Margaret Stewart Trio, St Andrew's in the Square, 7.30pm.

## Pub scene

**Park Bar:** Thursday January 14: Session. Friday January 15: Eriskey Lilt. Saturday January 16: Gunna Sound. Sunday January 17: Trail West. **Islay Inn:** Friday January 15: Twist of Fate. Saturday January 16: Deep River. Wednesday January 20: quiz night.

## Committee insists CalMac explains

Copy of letter to Martin Dorchester, managing director, CalMac

Dear Mr Dorchester, We, Mull and Iona Ferry Committee on behalf of an increasingly disgruntled local community, need an urgent explanation for the collapse of service reliability on the Oban to Craignure service.

Through the 12-year period between 1999 and 2010, although the number gradually increased, the average number of cancellations was a modest 16.7 each year. In the winter of 2013/14 there were 62 cancellations and in 2014/15 there was a massive 160 cancellations due to bad weather. This is a 10-fold increase in the cancellation rate.

It seems the service status is placed on 'amber', when weather conditions are far from extreme.

On our committee we have numerous experienced commercial boat operators, all familiar with the local conditions. They are often left incredulous at the moderate weather conditions that result in amber warnings and cancellations. Not only are the cancellations a huge economic and social problem for islanders, but the persistent 'amber warning' that hangs over the service is a huge disincentive to the visitors on which our economy relies.

It is not tenable to blame deteriorating weather – no such decline has been noted on other services outside the CalMac network. Neither is the ferry incapable – the MV Isle of Mull has plied the route from 1988 and has until very recently had a good reliability record.

Perhaps it is simply too much trouble to use the anchor to assist with getting on and off the pier?

Instead, one has to ask if a culture of timidity has taken hold in CalMac, encouraged either explicitly or tacitly by management that would rather have a boat tied up than doing its job serving the islands.

We insist on an explanation from CalMac management as to why they cannot run the service they are

contracted to provide during winter months. The current state of affairs is no longer acceptable.

Neal Goldsmith, chairman, Mull and Iona Ferry Committee.

## Sort A83 road before someone gets killed

Sir, I hope Mrs Jane Else is recovering from the injuries she sustained when landslide debris hit her car at the Rest and Be Thankful.

The failure of the netting must be a wake-up call to the SNP Government. The next landslide could kill a passing motorist.

When the Forth Road Bridge was closed, the SNP Government rightly pulled out all the stops to get it repaired. In contrast, all the A83 got was some nets. The SNP must put a proper solution in place now to make the road safe before someone gets killed.

Alan Reid, Liberal Democrat candidate for Argyll and Bute, Dunoon.

## More electricity will need to be imported

Sir, The Department of Energy and Climate Change published figures showing that 49.7 per cent of Scotland's electricity demand came from renewable sources.

Cue for much rejoicing by the green brigade. However, Scotland will be forced to import more electricity from England when coal-fired Longannet power station closes in March 2016.

Longannet produces 21 per cent of Scotland's energy. The SNP dominated government hates fossil fuels but shift the blame for the closure of Longannet to Westminster citing the £40 million transmission charges despite SNP politicians aiming to shut down gas, nuclear and coal power plants in Scotland.

Industry sources confirm that more nuclear, gas and coal power will have to be imported from the rest of the UK. Scotland already imports electricity from south of the

border on one in every five days. In a show of solidarity SNP and Green politicians, pressure groups Friends of Earth, Stop Climate Chaos Stirling and especially WWF Scotland should refuse to take 'tainted' electricity from Westminster, switch off their lights and heating, and cook over wood chips imported from cut down trees in America and Canada.

Clark Cross, Linlithgow.

## Historic homes in television spotlight

Sir, Do you own a beautiful historic home in Argyll and Bute or know anyone else who does? Do you or they need help restoring some of the rooms?

An award-winning television company needs home owners in Argyll and Bute to be part of a second series for Channel 4 celebrating the history of British and Irish properties.

If you would like to put your historic house back on the map or if you'd like to nominate someone else to take part, please get in touch on 02079 070626 or email houses@betty.co.uk

Nick Little, assistant producer, Betty TV Limited.

## Research into effects of wind turbines vital

Sir, I was delighted to read Dr Sarah Laurie's response to Christine Metcalfe's article in *The Oban Times*.

I am reminded of the failure of the powers-that-be to recognise the ill-effects of tobacco many years ago and now tobacco is accepted as a significant health hazard.

It is imperative we realise wind turbines are not as risk-free as we are led to believe by the energy companies, the Scottish Government and the 'green' lobby. We must be prepared to evaluate the risks scientifically, as Dr Laurie has done.

Dr Angela Armstrong M.B.Ch.B. Barrachan Home Farm, Newton Stewart.

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WE AT The Oban Times endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time.

If you think we have made a significant mistake and you wish to discuss this with us, please let us know as soon as possible by any of the three methods: emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephoning the editor on 01631 568046; writing to the Editor at The Oban Times,

Crannon Lane, Lochavullin estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO, which will investigate the matter. You can

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We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

## Your letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page.

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 or those supplied 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.

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**THE OBAN AND LOCHABER**  
**2016 INDEXES**

**lochaber INDEX 2016**  
The Lochaber Index lists telephone subscribers, trades, businesses and services within the Lochaber area.

# Resident's anger over TV programme plan

STEVEN RAE  
srae@obantimes.co.uk

THE GREEN light could be given to film a television programme in Lochaber, shutting off more than 24,000 square meters of land to the public for a year.

The Channel 4 show, *Eden*, would follow a group of 24 strangers as they try to build a self-sufficient community in the 'wilderness'.

They will spend a year fending for themselves, cut off from the outside world and filmed round-the-clock.

The volunteers, yet to be selected by the production company making the show, will be expected to build their dwellings, hunt for food and grow crops.

The area at Gorteneorn on Ardnamurchan Estate will be exempt from access rights from March this year if it is given the go ahead. Councillors put the issue out to public consultation in October but have yet to send their findings to Scottish Government ministers who will then make a decision.



However, the plans have angered one nearby resident, who claims councillors should not have considered the consultation in the first place.

Margaret Green, 67, was previously the secretary of Acharacle Community Council. She has lived at Ardtoe for

16 years with husband Andrew, 72. Their house overlooks part of the Eden site across Kentra Bay.

Mrs Green claims that the proposals would harm tourism in Ardnamurchan.

'I want it stopped,' she said. 'My husband and I have always

been active in promoting local tourism. It is the mainstay of the Highland economy. And we certainly do not need this television caper here. If the series site gets the go ahead from Scottish ministers then lovely woodland walks and popular stretches of stunning beaches

will be shut off to everyone, particularly holidaymakers.

'I think the closing date for objections to the council was deliberately chosen as December 24 as everyone would be too busy at that time to get around to responding.'

The no-go area near the village is part of the glittering white 'Singing Sands' and woodland with spectacular views westward to the Ardnamurchan Peninsula and the Inner Hebridean Islands of Eigg, Muck and Rum.

The site is flanked on one side by a wartime commando training ground where rusting scraps of barbed wire and spent rifle and machine-gun cartridge cases can still be found in the sand dunes from the Second World War.

The show is set in a similar scenario to *Castaways*, produced in 2000 for the BBC on the uninhabited Harris island of Taransay. However, Mrs Green added: 'The location is neither wild or remote. People live near it.'

A spokeswoman for Highland Council said: 'At a meeting of the council's planning, de-

velopment and infrastructure committee on Wednesday November 4, councillors agreed the draft order could be put out to public consultation and then forwarded on to the Scottish ministers for them to determine. The act requires a 'reasonable' period for consultation and we considered four weeks to be reasonable. All the representations received during the consultation have been forwarded on to the Scottish Government for ministers to determine whether or not the Order is to be confirmed.'

A spokeswoman for KEO Films, the company commissioned by Channel 4 to produce the series, said: 'KEO Films submitted an application to the Highland Council in September and await the decision on this formal process.'

A Scottish Government spokesman said: 'Highland Council has yet to submit a request to Scottish ministers regarding the exemption of access rights at Ardnamurchan. We understand that Highland Council has consulted on a draft section 11 Order and are considering responses.'

## TIMESLINE

### First aid and child protection courses

PEOPLE who want to learn about first aid and child protection are being urged to sign up for courses by the end of this week.

Jane Blanchard of Lochaber Sports Association said Emergency Action Training, based in Caol, would be able to offer the courses after enquiries to the association from the public and other groups.

Jane added: 'Please could any groups or clubs who need to brush up on either course, get in touch by the end of this week and we can then propose a couple of dates.'

Anyone interested should telephone Lochaber Sports Association on: 01631 740 300 or 07733 264 976.

### Curtain up on jazz-themed concert

THE NEXT Lochaber Music for All concert will take place this Saturday (January 16).

The event, in the Ben Nevis Hotel, is a jazz-themed evening featuring the Bill Fleming Quartet, made up of Bill Fleming on saxophone, Paul Tracey on guitar, James Lindsay on double bass and Scott Mackay on drums.

Kicking off at 7.30pm, the group will play a repertoire of jazz greats.

### Bid to ban election posters is rejected

A PROPOSAL to ban election posters in the Highlands has been rejected following a meeting of the local authority.

At a full council meeting on December 17, Liberal Democrat member Carolyn Caddick proposed a motion to ban the posters, calling them an 'eyesore' and said they were off-putting to visitors.

However, 40 elected members voted to keep the posters, with only 27 supporting the motion.

### Group's bid to help dementia patients

SMALL changes can make a big difference in helping people with dementia, says a Highland councillor.

This comes after the creation of a working group of elected members, council officers and other relevant bodies to improve life for the 4,200 people in the Highlands living with the illness.

Isobel McCallum, convener of Highland Council, welcomed the new group.

She said: 'Dementia affects many people and it could happen to any of us in the future. It is really important that we all understand more about the condition and what we can do to help in any way we can.'

## Budget team in talks to balance council books

THE HIGHLAND Council's budget team have had crunch talks over Christmas and New Year as it tries to balance the local authority's books.

All managerial positions are to be looked at, meaning even the chief executive's role could be under threat as the beleaguered local authority aims to save £50 million.

The administrative functions of the council will also be considered as part of the review.

Councillors Bill Fernie, Alister Mackinnon, Ben Thompson and Matthew Reiss have been working with council leader Margaret Davidson, discussing the grant for its 2016/17 budget, described by them as 'extremely challenging'.

On January 6, the team met with the council's chief executive and director of finance, Steve Barron, to explore areas where potential savings could be made, and discuss areas they would like to protect from funding cuts.

Mr Barron made the commitment that senior management posts will be further reduced to save money in addition to reductions already made in the last four years.

There was also an 'encouraging' response to voluntary redundancy reported at

the meeting on January 6. Councillors have noted that the packages available may become less attractive in the next financial year as the Scottish Government is planning to introduce a cap on such payments.

Budget leader, councillor Bill Fernie said: 'Over the next 12 months a thorough review of council services and structures will be undertaken to take account of the current financial position. Every post from chief executive downwards will be under review by the Independent Administration to ensure Highland Council services are redesigned to meet the expectations of Highland communities within the resources available to us.'

'We will shortly be continuing discussions with the whole Independent group, the opposition groups and the trade unions.'

'Faced with the fact that we need to save over £50million we need to examine all aspects of the budget.'

At a special meeting of The Highland Council on January 21, the responses from the recent Citizen Panel survey about the budget will be discussed and on February 25 the main budget setting meeting of the council will take place.

## Transport forum's warning over Mallaig ferry changes

FERRY operator CalMac has said ferry services will not be downgraded as it announces a third vessel to serve the Armadale to Mallaig route.

However, a community group on Skye has warned plans to run three boats with a varying timetable would cause 'serious disruption' to passengers.

Sleat Transport Forum, a group set up last year by Sleat Community Council on Skye to address transport issues, has said the new proposals will cause 'confusion and disruption'.

The decision to add the third ferry comes after pressure on both CalMac and Transport Scotland by both the forum and local politicians, amid fears businesses, tourism and local life on Skye could be badly affected by the changes.

The Coruisk ferry currently serves the route, with capacity for 40 vehicles, but it has now been earmarked for Oban to Craignure journeys, which are expected to see a rise in passengers this summer with the introduction of the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).

CalMac has proposed to replace Coruisk with the Lochinvar boat, which can take only 22 cars and has 'inadequate' passenger facilities onboard, according to Sleat Transport Forum. The Lochinvar will be supplemented by runs by the larger Lord of the Isles in



DISAPPOINTED: Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Dave Thompson. f03dthompson01

between serving Lochboisdale (South Uist) from Mallaig, and CalMac announced it will introduce a third vessel, the MV Bhrusda, to aid at peak times. This means there will be three separate timetables over the summer period.

Roddy Murray, the Sleat Transport Forum's chairman, said: 'Businesses in Sleat dependent on tourism require a definitive schedule for the summer season but the lack of a suitable finalised timetable with sufficient capacity leaves them in limbo. CalMac's latest proposal to run three ferries with shoulder and peak period timetables will cause uncertainty, confusion and serious

disruption at Mallaig and at Armadale. It is not considered a viable option.'

The issues were due to be discussed on Tuesday night at the Sleat Community Council meeting.

Dave Thompson, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, has had extensive communications with CalMac and transport minister Derek Mackay, regarding their proposed new ferry provisions. He said he was disappointed the MV Coruisk will be re-deployed to the Oban to Mull service. However he added that he 'reluctantly accepted' the extra vessel at peak times, and he would be monitoring the situation.

He said: 'As someone who has been campaigning to keep the MV Coruisk for the Mallaig to Armadale Crossing, I reacted with disappointment at the news that the MV Coruisk will be redeployed to Oban to Mull.'

'From my recent meeting with the Transport Minister, Derek Mackay, I am informed that the expected increase on the Craignure to Oban service is significantly higher than that expected of Mallaig to Armadale service.'

'However, it is welcome news that the MV Bhrusda will take the vessels operating on the crossing from two to three and that there will be greater frequencies of sailings and a significant increase in capacity

## Fort man admits carrying offensive weapon



CAUGHT WITH GARDEN HOE: Gourlay was on trial at Fort William Sheriff Court. f03fortcourt01

A FORT William man has admitted being in possession of an offensive weapon, after being caught carrying a garden hoe in the early hours of the morning to 'frighten' people.

Euan Gourlay, of 43 Wallace Place in the town, pleaded guilty in Fort William Sheriff Court on January 6.

The 47-year-old was seen with the gardening tool on Kennedy Road, near to his home, at 1.45am on July 25 last year after hearing a family friend was in danger, the court heard.

Fiscal depute Ross Carvel said: 'The accused was seen on CCTV behaving in a suspicious fashion carrying the garden hoe. When he saw police approaching it was thrown towards nearby bins.'

Defending solicitor Brian Allison said his client had left his house to investigate and 'foolishly' took the hoe with him.

He said: 'He was worried about the individual who had been in his company earlier as his wife said there had been some kind of altercation. 'The tool had been bought for legitimate purposes but he rather foolishly took it with him. He took it to frighten off anyone who may have been there rather than to use it.'

Sheriff Richard Davidson deferred sentencing until February 2 for background reports.

## Plan ahead when heading to the mountains

ANYONE planning to venture to the hills this winter has been asked to let someone know where they are going.

Highlands and Islands police and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland say simple precautions such as leaving a planned route with someone to aid rescuers if something goes wrong.

David Monteith from the mountaineering council said: 'Leaving route details is vital if valuable and scarce resources are

not to be wasted in fruitless searches putting others at risk as well as those who have sought help.'

'The Scottish mountains are wonderful in winter but can be unforgiving for the unprepared. Plan ahead, especially regarding your route, weather and avalanche hazard, carry the right equipment and know how to use it.'

'If unsure, find a winter mountaineering course to update those essential skills.'

Superintendent Colin Gough

added: 'At this time of year, people rightly come to the Scottish mountains for the excellent winter sports and mountaineering challenges.'

### Off piste

'Already, people are making winter ascents of technical winter climbs, ascending Munros in full winter conditions and even managing to make some off piste ski descents.'

'We do not want to put anyone off these great outdoor experiences by talking about taking precautions

in case things go wrong, but we are looking for the help and support of the hill-going public to help us to help them if something adverse happens.'

'Police Scotland works with volunteer mountain rescue teams in Scotland to provide a world-class service any time and in any weather.'

'We are, however, increasingly challenged by searches for people who have left minimal or no information regarding their intentions.'

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# Arena

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## Social scene

January 2, 2016 at the Royal Hotel, Oban

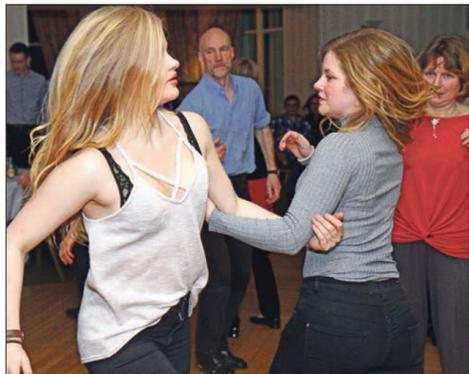
### Oban Accordion and Fiddle Club annual dance



A packed floor as dancers waltz the night away to the music of Iain Anderson and his band.



Musicians for the evening Iain Anderson, Gus Millar and Iain Cathcart kept the dancers on the floor.



Packed floor for the Dashing White Sergeant.



Calum and Morag Smith enjoy the Pride of Erin waltz.



Brother and sister Craig and Nicola McFadyen try their hand at an Eva Three Step.



Robert and June MacDonald enjoy a laugh at the quickstep.

## malt of the month

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Glengoyne 18-year-old 43%ABV Approx £84.

JOY DUNLOP is a wonderful singer and a terrible influence on me. We were in a crush zone at Na Trads – the traditional music awards in Dundee. She held my hand and pulled me out of the crowd into the foyer smack bang in front of the Glengoyne tasting table. I know from a previous Glengoyne foray that

the company is quite keen to see people pair the whisky with food. There was no food on the table, much to my chagrin. It was then I was introduced to the redoubtable Trevor Thomson – a film maker from the dear green place who will forever be in my heart for the three Black Magic chocolates he gave me. Firstly, the chocolate paired with the 18-year-old malt was heavenly perfection, secondly,

the ability of the whisky to punctuate the conversation with the stories I love to hear when people take a sip. Trevor, a father of four boys, has long been a whisky drinker but had very rarely (if ever) been exposed to the wonders of a ceilidh. The last I saw of him that night was when he was being pulled onto the wooden dance floor of the Caird Hall by a Lewis girl with well-honed muscles in her arms. He phoned me the next

morning and asked: 'Who was she?' 'A whisky woman,' I answered. He sounded fearful that he might ever meet her again. 'Hello Trevor', welcome to the world of the west where women are wild and whisky paired with chocolate is manna from heaven.

Louise Glen



## MacPhail's MUSIC

THE FIRST weekend of Celtic Connections gets off to a rip-roaring start this Friday, with Skerryvore blasting The Old Fruitmarket with their trademark Tirie/Livingstone/Nashville/Falkirk fusion. The band have just emerged from an incredible year. During 2015 they collaborated with Irish accordion legend Sharon Shannon to record

their feel-good summer single *Happy to be Home*, they celebrated their 10th birthday and to top it off they did this by attracting over 6,000 fans to Oban for a phenomenally good birthday party. In celebrating their Decade in such style, they have laid the foundations for an annual event to be called ObanLive. Indeed, one

## Skerryvore to light

of the highlights of this Friday's gig will be the keenly anticipated announcement of the first acts to have been booked. Readers will be astounded by the calibre of some of the artists rumoured to be revealed this weekend. I have a long connection with Skerryvore and, in fact, can claim the honour of having given the band their name. I have known Martin

and Daniel Gillespie since they were toddlers and it is an interesting observation on how success adversely affects only certain people that in all the years I have known them their character has not changed. From coming round to our house as children to eat Turkish Delight and watch the *Chronicles of Narnia*, to misbehaving our way through the wild summers on Tirie of 2004 and 2005, to Skerryvore having just organised and

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**The Annual Quiz Night**  
In aid of Oban Pipe Band will be held on Friday 15th January 2016 at 7.30pm in the Masonic Lodge, Albany Street Admission: £3.00 per person (teams can vary from 2 to 6 in number)

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**Oban Gaelic Choir**  
With conductor Sileas Sinclair.  
Joanie Garvin, Michael Garvin, Calum Garvin  
Laura Munro Dancers Fear an Taighe: John Joe MacNeil  
in TAYNUILT VILLAGE HALL, SATURDAY, 16th January 2016 at 7.30 p.m.  
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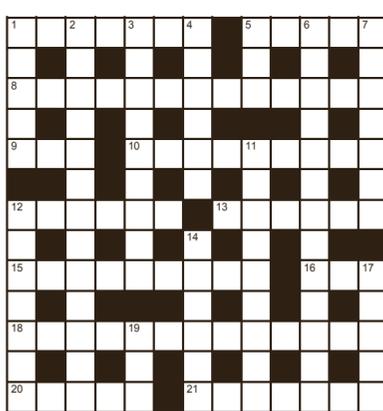
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### Across

- 1 Expresses doubts about something said (7)
- 5 Run out (5)
- 8 One trained to deal with the female body (13)
- 9 Score in rugby (3)
- 10 Reticent (9)
- 12 Cannot (6)
- 13 Acetylene (6)
- 15 Private conversation (4-1-4)
- 16 Strange (3)
- 18 District of people (13)
- 20 Carriage (5)
- 21 Splash out (7)

### Down

- 1 Gold unit (5)
- 2 Two coined bike (5-8)
- 3 Rebel (9)
- 4 Unhastened (6)
- 5 Toilet (3)
- 6 One of three to make many others, it's not all black and white! (7,6)
- 7 Authorize (7)
- 11 One makes a town into a city (9)
- 12 Until this time (2,2,3)
- 14 Of the blood carriers (6)
- 17 Artful move (5)
- 19 One pecks her mate (3)

## LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



# OBAN LIVE

THE OBAN TIMES is delighted to announce it has become media partners with Oban Live, the inaugural two-day open air concert, which will take place at Mossfield Stadium on May 13 and 14.

The event is the brainchild of popular folk rock band Skerryvore and follows their sell-out concert, Decade, last May to celebrate the band's 10-year anniversary. That event generated £1.1M for the town and its businesses, and it is estimated that Oban Live, which will showcase international music, attracting visitors from around the world, will generate in excess of £2M for the local economy in 2016.

Event Scotland has confirmed its support and funding for the event, which has 7,000 capacity - 1,000 more than Decade - and a community steering group has been set up, managed by Neil Mackay, former BID4Oban events

and marketing manager. The two-day event will include an Oban Live Fringe, which will provide opportunities for all businesses, organisations and groups to play a key part in the event and weekend.

Daniel Gillespie of Skerryvore said: 'We are absolutely delighted to confirm *The Oban Times* as the main media partner of Oban Live.

'Integration and communication with the local community is integral to the long-term success of the event and this partnership will not only enhance that element but also help promote the town, businesses and all the great fringe activities that we see as a key part of Oban Live.'

Susan Windram, Editor of *The Oban Times* added: 'The Oban Times is delighted to be official media partners for Oban Live 2016. Following the sell-out success of last year's Decade concert, backing this key cultural and

community-orientated event was an easy decision for us.

'As Daniel has said, the event will rely heavily on communicating and integrating with the local community, and with more than 34,000 readers in Oban and across the west highlands, *The Oban Times* is ready to help them achieve this.

'We wish Oban Live every success this year and we look forward to working in partnership with them for the first of what we hope will be an annual event.'

Don't miss next week's *Oban Times*, when readers will be able to take advantage of an Early Bird exclusive discount offer on tickets for the event, which go on sale on Friday January 23. In the first of many exclusive features, readers can collect a special *Oban Times* discount code, which will give the first 500 readers a 10% discount on tickets for the event.

## The Ceilidh King is back

Fergie MacDonald returns to *Take the Floor*

CELEBRATING 60 years this year as Scotland's top ceilidh band, the BBC has invited Fergie to perform on the popular *Take the Floor* programme on Saturday (January 16).

Fergie did his first broadcast in 1965, playing pure Scottish country dance music, incorporating that distinctive sound of accordion, fiddle, bass, piano and drums. However, after a few broadcasts, Fergie reverted back to his basic cultural Gaelic roots and introduced ceilidh music, which caused consternation and mayhem in the dance music world. The introduction of many varied musical instruments and vocals soon became the hallmark of the Fergie Band, just as it was in croft-house ceilidhs, and village halls, where anyone who could play an instrument joined in the fun. Enjoy the music, anything goes was the motto. This uninhibited, carefree approach was quickly generated to the dancers on the floor. That was the birth of ceilidh music.

All credit to BBC Scotland for getting Fergie back "on air" with his unmistakable style celebrating 60 years on the road, and still going strong. The



Allan Henderson, fiddle; Addie Harper, accordion, banjo, guitar; Sandy Meldrum, keyboard; Hugh MacCallum, drums; and Fergie on 'Box'.

boys performing with Fergie in this programme have played with him since they were children - all big names now in their own right.

### Michael Russell hosts inaugural lecture

ARGYLL and Bute MSP Michael Russell will be hosting his inaugural lecture as Professor of Scottish Culture and Governance next month at the University of Glasgow.

To be held in the Sir Charles Wilson Lecture Theatre, Mr Russell will consider how Scotland has been, is, and might be governed in the future, and what makes that governance distinctive.

Following the lecture, there will be a chance to network with fellow attendees and discuss the topics covered during the course of the lecture.

For more information and to book a place, visit: [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

### Kilmore family ceilidh

A FAMILY ceilidh supper dance was held in Kilmore Hall on Saturday January 2.

Music was by the Ceol-nan-Aire band, who played to an excellent and appreciative audience. After deductions, a profit of £1,380 was made, which goes towards the new kitchen and extension to the hall.

The 100 Club winners for December were: £500, I McColl; £300, S Grieve and £100, L Romney. January's winner of £100 was M Farmer.

### New members required for Forestry forum

PEOPLE looking to take part in the future direction of forestry across Argyll have four weeks left in which to apply to join Perth and Argyll Regional Forestry Forum (PARFF).

Six new members are required to help the forum guide the work of Forestry Commission Scotland's local conservancy team, which aims to increase the contribution of forestry to rural development, increase the provision of public benefits from forestry and increase public awareness of the importance of woodlands within the area.

The voluntary and unpaid forum role is an opportunity to participate in policy development and delivery of the aims of the Scottish Forestry Strategy.

Forum posts are voluntary and unpaid, but are eligible for travel expenses. The forum meets four times a year and is a combination of indoor and outdoor field visits to various sites throughout the conservancy, looking at a variety of forestry issues as well as areas of high importance and interest.

The closing date for applications is January 29. Applications forms are available via email at: [panda.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:panda.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

## Keep Scotland Beautiful

ENVIRONMENTAL charity Keep Scotland Beautiful is calling for groups from Argyll and Bute to register to take part in two upcoming competitions.

Local volunteers and entire communities are being urged to come together for 'Beautiful Scotland' and 'It's Your Neighbourhood' to celebrate 50 years of community growing.

Derek Robertson, chief executive of Keep Scotland Beautiful, said: 'All year round communities from across Argyll and Bute are doing their bit to ensure local spaces are clean, green and beautiful, and all too often these efforts are overlooked. Yet the economic value of the hours people in Scotland volunteer stands at almost £3million a year. The Beautiful Scotland and It's Your Neighbourhood campaigns provide the opportunity for us to support the work they do, celebrate their achievements and encourage even more communities to participate.'

Beautiful Scotland and It's Your Neighbourhood are managed by Keep Scotland Beautiful and linked to the

Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain in Bloom campaign. The campaigns have, for many years, supported and celebrated the achievements of communities throughout Scotland in their continuous work to improve local environmental quality, and Beautiful Scotland is celebrating 50 years of success in 2016.

The campaigns focus on year-round horticultural and gardening achievements, environmental responsibility and community participation, with recognition being given for exemplar work in areas such as tourism, biodiversity and sustainability.

Online registration for both campaigns is now open. Further information can be found at: Beautiful Scotland [www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org](http://www.KeepScotlandBeautiful.org)

All entrants - past and present - are also being asked to share images, photography and their own memories of taking part in the campaigns on social media using #BeautifulScotland or via email to [beautifulscotland@keepscotlandbeautiful.org](mailto:beautifulscotland@keepscotlandbeautiful.org)

## Easdale Very Amateur Dramatics packs them in



Easdale Very Amateur Dramatics performed *Jack and the Beanstalk* to a packed community hall on Saturday January 2. The annual panto raised just over £400 in donations for the community charity, Eilean Eisdale. The annual panto has become a very popular event over the festive period. It's a fantastic community effort, from script writing to painting the scenery. Many of the island's second home owners also get involved in the production, with only a few days of full rehearsals when they arrive after Christmas, so literally anything can happen. But it's clear the audience loved it and everyone taking part has a ball.

## Up Celtic Connections opening weekend

headlined at one of the biggest events ever to be held in the West Highlands, it is testimony to the type of people they are that they are just the same. Other founders Fraser West and Alec Dalgligh, and all subsequent members who have joined Skerryvore are similarly grounded and of sound character. From their beginnings playing as four young friends in the Scarinish Hotel, they very soon, with additional members, became one of the

biggest names on the Scottish music scene.

They are a band who have never stopped growing and their decade year saw a considerable acceleration in that growth. I predict that the next 10 years will bring them huge success and that their double decade party will need the whole of Mossfield stadium and half of Glencruitten Golf Course to accommodate the revellers!

Tickets at [www.celticconnections.com](http://www.celticconnections.com)

### Limerick reply to The Glasgow Letter of 07/01/16

There once was a man from Torlundy Who goes AWOL from Friday till Sunday. Ramping round Glasgow On a stag-like fiasco With no clue where his clothes are on Monday.

And as January days just get wetter We lament the once great Glasgow Letter. With a now urgent hurry We must bring back Neil Murray - His writing and looks were much better.

To the dogs the O.T. Rab is bringing With his poor rhymes of literary mud slinging. I don't have a quibble With his dull weekly dribble But I think he should stick to the singing!

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**Friday 15th January - Thursday 21st January**

**In the Heart of the Sea (12A) 142mins**  
Fri 18.20, Sat 17.30, Sun, Tue: 16.30  
3D Version: Thu 16.30

In the winter of 1820, the New England whaling ship *Essex* was assaulted by something no one could believe: a whale of mammoth size and will, and an almost human sense of vengeance. The real-life maritime disaster would inspire Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*.

**Kids Club: Ice Age (U) 78mins**  
Sat: 12:00  
Children's Classic. Set during the Ice Age, a sabertooth tiger, a sloth, and a woolly mammoth find a lost human infant, and they try to return him to his tribe. Kids £4 - Adults free!

**Snoopy and Charlie Brown: The Peanuts Movie (U) 113mins**  
Fri, Mon, Wed: 16.15, Sat: 14.00, Sun: 12.00  
Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, and the rest of the beloved 'Peanuts' gang make their big-screen debut as they've never been seen before - in 3D animation.

**Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens (12A) 156mins**  
Fri, Mon: 16:30, Sat: 14:45, Sun: 13:45, Tue, Thu: 16:15  
3D Version - Sat, Wed: 16:30  
Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens - 156mins. A continuation of the saga created by George Lucas set 30 years after Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi (1983).

**The Danish Girl (15) 140mins**  
Fri: 20:50, Sat: 20:15, Sun: 19:15, Mon, Wed: 18:30, Tue, Thu: 19:00  
The remarkable love story inspired by the lives of artists Lili Elbe and Gerda Wegener. Lili and Gerda's marriage and work evolve as they navigate Lili's groundbreaking journey as a transgender pioneer.

**The Dressmaker (12A) 118mins**  
Silver Screening Sun: 14:30  
Concessions (age 60+) entry just £2.50! Includes complimentary tea and cake.  
Based on Rosalie Ham's best selling novel, *The Dressmaker* is the story of femme fatale Tilly Dunnage, who returns to her small home town in the country to right the wrongs of the past.

**The Good Dinosaur (PG) 121mins**  
Sat: 12.30, Sun 11.30  
'The Good Dinosaur' asks the question: What if the asteroid that forever changed life on Earth missed the planet completely and giant dinosaurs never became extinct? In this epic journey into the world of dinosaurs, an Apatosaurus named Arlo makes an unlikely human friend.

**The Revenant (15) 176mins**  
Fri, Sat, Mon, Wed: 19:30, Sun: 18:30, Tue, Thu: 19:15  
Inspired by true events, *The Revenant* captures one man's epic adventure of survival and the extraordinary power of the human spirit. In an expedition of the uncharted American wilderness, legendary explorer Hugh Glass (Leonardo DiCaprio) is attacked by a bear and left for dead by members of his own hunting team.

**Coming Soon**

**Creed (12A)**  
22/01/2016

**Kids Club: Ice Age - Dawn of the Dinosaurs (U)**  
23/01/2016

**Les Liaisons Dangereuses (15)**  
28/01/2016

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MONDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1700 Drivetime With Marcus, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McLuckie's Show, 2100 David Cullen

TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1500 Lesley Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 1900 Sounds Scottish with Archie Cameron, 2000 Highest Praise with Stuart, 2100 Elaine Lamb, 2300 Northern Soul with Gordon Covey

WEDNESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Sound Scottish (repeat), 1000 Comfort Zone with Doug Carmichael, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Elaine Lamb, 1700 Drivetime with Campbell, 1900 Country Meets Rock with Len & Ken, 2100 Gordon's Grooves

THURSDAY: 0800 Morning show, 1100 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Gordon Covey, 1700 Drivetime with Stephen, 1900 Christine's Collection, 2100 Ann's Ceilidh, 2200 Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300-1500 Weekend Warmup with Ian Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 1845 Sports View, 1900 Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig, 2000 Friday Night with Innes, 2100 TFI Friday with Jim Lavin

SATURDAY: 0800 Breakfast Show, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crosher, 1330 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis

SUNDAY: 0900 Sunday Morning with Breege, 1100 - 1400 Sunday Brunch, 1630 Archie Darling, 1800 Ken's Friends with Ken Hunter, 1900 New Country Show with David Entwistle, 2100 Drum & Bass with Graham Scott

# Social scene

January 9, 2016 at Oban Masonic Hall

## Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain Old New Year cèilidh

Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain held an Old New Year cèilidh at the Oban Masonic Hall on Saturday.

The celebration of the New Year as calculated by the Julian calendar has long been recognised

in Scotland; this year it falls on January 14 in the Gregorian calendar.

It was a good old-fashioned-style cèilidh for an Old New Year, with more than 60 people sitting down to enjoy music and stories and a buffet

made by members. It was a great way to mark the end of 2015 for Comunn Gàidhealach an Òbain, and for all the work members did to make the Royal National Mòd's visit to the town in 2015 such a great success.



Saturday night was a good, old-fashioned cèilidh, with music and stories and a good chance to catch up with old friends.



Danny MacRae was fear-an-tighe for the evening, while Skye's Iona Macdonald was one of the singers.



Alasdair MacDonald of Connel provided music for the cèilidh on the accordion.



Piper Alastair MacLean and Mary Catherine MacNeil, a Mòd medallist and his mother, who both performed at the cèilidh.



Mary and Freddie MacKenzie; a traditional gold medal winner at the Mòd, Freddie was one of the singers at the cèilidh.



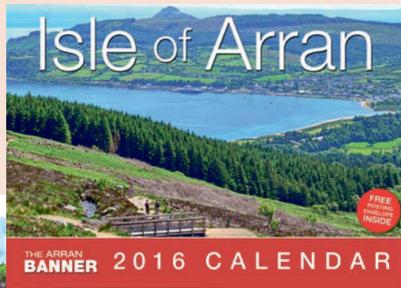
The ladies who did all the hard work getting the buffet ready: Morag Smith, Chrissie Grant, Babs MacIntyre, Mary MacNeil and Anne Garvin.

# Scottish Calendars 2016

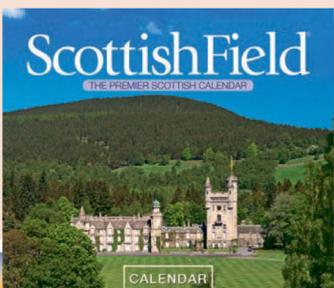
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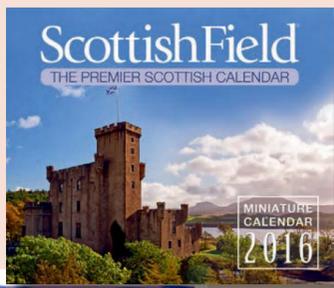
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## Money Matters

with Iain Cairns



### 5 Key Financial Dates for 2016

There are a number of key financial dates which happen each year. Whether it is tax deadlines, budget announcements or an election, it is important to know which ones could impact you. Here is a run down of five key dates for your financial calendar in the first half of 2016.

#### 31st of January

This is the deadline for submission of 2014/2015 self-assessment tax returns to HMRC.

#### 16th of March

The Chancellor's budget speech. There are yet more anticipated pension changes, with a possible change from the current tiered tax relief to a flat rate expected.

#### 5th of April

Last day of the 2015/2016 tax year. This is the deadline for using your current ISA allowance (£15,240). Remember - if you don't use this you lose it.

#### 6th of April

First day of the 2016/2017 tax year when a number of new measures come into place. Here are some of the key changes:

- The new £155.65 flat rate state pension starts;
- The amount an individual can pay tax efficiently into a pension over their lifetime will reduce to £1m;
- Introduction of a new personal savings annual allowance (basic rate taxpayers will be able to receive the first £1,000 of interest tax free whilst higher rate taxpayers will be able to receive the first £500 tax free)

- There are new rules for flexible ISAs allowing investors to withdraw cash and replace it in the same tax year without impacting their annual ISA allowance;
- A new £5k tax-free dividend allowance replaces the 10% notional tax credit. Dividend income in excess of the allowance will be taxed at 7.5%, 32.5% or 38.1%, as appropriate

#### 5th May

Scottish Parliamentary election. This will be the fifth Holyrood election since the Parliament was devolved in 1999.

It is important to understand what dates are relevant to you and your financial plan. Argyll Financial Services help many individuals and businesses throughout Argyll on issues ranging from investment and pension advice, personal and business protection and residential and buy-to-let mortgage planning. Contact us on 01369 706198 or info@argyllfinancial.co.uk to help secure your financial future.

The purpose of this article is to provide technical and generic guidance and should not be interpreted as a personal recommendation. It represents our interpretation of current and proposed legislation and HMRC practice as at the date of publication. These may change in future. Argyll Financial Services Ltd are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Not all inheritance tax planning solutions are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Buy to Let Mortgages and not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority



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## Technology Matters

with John Orr



### The Cloud: what's all that about?

IF YOU are in business you will traditionally have a computer or network of computers working for eight or 12 hours per day but not used at all for the rest of the day. Factor in the spare processing and storage capacity of machines even when they are in use and you can see that office-based systems are hugely under utilised. If you scale that inactivity up across the whole of Scotland or even western Europe, you soon see that millions of organisations are collectively wasting an expensive resource.

Now think about the rest of the world, which works at a different time of day. If others could tap into that sleeping capacity then computer users across the world would get a more efficient service. And

that's where the Cloud comes in. It is a network of huge computers spread about the world working 24 hours a day for customers connected around the world, sharing their computing and storage capacity where and when it's needed. Rather than buying a big computer, a business can simply hire a tiny bit of a global machine.

Is there a catch? Yes, there is. To work in the Cloud your system must be linked to the outside world. To move any significant amount of data to or from the Cloud you need a 'superfast' connection. And if your computer network has a pathway out to the Cloud, then other, possibly criminal, elements may well have a pathway into your computer. We will look at that next time.

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# Customers go wild for Ewan's eco-tourism business on Mull

A YOUNG entrepreneur has set up his own eco-tourism company providing wildlife tours on Mull.

Ewan Miles, 28, based in Tobermory, set up Share Nature last year - having gained valuable experience working in wildlife tourism in the region - because he wanted to provide educational wildlife tours that offer customers the opportunity to enhance their experiences of the natural heritage on Scotland's west coast.

Last year he personally provided almost 130 tours on Mull and Ardnamurchan, and he expects this number to rise this year. With support from Business Gateway Argyll and Bute, Ewan hopes to steadily build up Share Nature.

Ewan said: 'I was born and raised in the Northern



CONFIDENT: Ewan Miles of Mull hopes to make a positive contribution to British wildlife through eco-tourism.

Pennines where my dad worked at the second largest RSPB nature reserve, so I learned about wildlife and nature from a very young age. My first real love were birds of prey and I can still remember my first sighting of a Golden Eagle, which cemented my passion and commitment to nature. I worked in the wildlife tourism industry for five years and learned a huge amount, but I wanted to set up my own business using my own ideas.

'At Share Nature we allow our customers to see wildlife, such as the white-tailed eagle, otter, hen harrier, red deer, seals and more.

'Our main aim is to encourage more people to connect with the natural world and educate people for the benefit of wildlife and conservation.'

Share Nature offers day, evening and stargazing tours that stop in a number of stunning locations to observe and explore the environment around Mull. The success of the tours last year has led to more interest for the year ahead and Ewan is confident about the future.

He added: 'My main aim is to make a positive contribution to British wildlife through eco-tourism, education and encouraging conservation, and so far the response has been fantastic.

'Our goal is to keep on building on our success and to keep expanding and improving by eventually providing excursions nationwide and beyond.

'Business Gateway has been a great help. Being able to take advantage of the free

workshops it runs and having an adviser to talk to gave me the confidence and belief that I could run a successful business.'

Angela Vernel, Business Adviser for Business Gateway said: 'Ewan built up knowledge of the local area working in wildlife tourism and he has used that experience to set up his own business.

'As well as attending our business start-up workshop, we have provided support and guidance which has helped Ewan to build the foundations of this business.'

For more information visit [www.sharenature.co.uk](http://www.sharenature.co.uk)

To find out more about how Business Gateway can help you set up and develop your own business call 01546 808 363 or visit [www.bgateway.com/argyll-and-bute](http://www.bgateway.com/argyll-and-bute)

## New year, new business skills workshops

WITH the new year under way, Business Gateway Argyll and Bute is encouraging small business owners to take stock of their business and consider whether any of the free business skills workshops on offer could help their business flourish in the year ahead.

A host of new workshops have been added to the range available across Argyll and Bute, with several of these being delivered in Oban for the first time in February.

The half day 'Developing your Business Skills' workshop, running in Oban on February 2, is aimed at those new to self-employment or looking to improve their business skills.

This workshop will be delivered for Business Gateway by Jill Connell. Jill has trained more than 10,000 individuals through business start-up and growth development. She has 18 years' experience of working in the Business Gateway network throughout Scotland.

Anyone looking to take on staff for the first time could benefit from the half-day 'Becoming an Employer' workshop taking place in Oban on February 18. It will help you understand the process of

employing people, covers your legal obligations as an employer and gives an insight into good practice recruitment.

This workshop will be delivered for Business Gateway by Karen Morrill. Karen owns and runs Morrill PMC Ltd, a people management consultancy providing advice to businesses and individuals. Karen is a qualified professional in people management through the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

The new 'Funding Your Business' workshop in Oban on February 11 will help you confirm the funding needs of your business, identify relevant potential sources of external funding (such as loan finance, grant funding, or crowd funding) and take you through what your business will need to provide to be able to access the funding.

The workshop will be delivered for Business Gateway by John Allan of The Roberts Partnership Ltd.

John has run his own consultancy and training business for many years and is also CFO of an innovative agri-business.

The updated one day 'Introduction to Trading Online', taking place in Oban on

February 16, is a workshop of two halves. The morning will focus on some of the basics required for trading online. It will include some information on the legal requirements and discuss the impact of online ecommerce versus bricks and mortar. Specifically you will learn how to plan for a successful ecommerce site, decide which payment options to use, understand the rules and regulations, make it easy for your visitors to buy from you and engage your buyers.

The afternoon will focus on online marketplaces such as Amazon, Ebay and Etzy. This new workshop is being delivered for Business Gateway by Gary Ennis, founder of NS Design Ltd, an award-winning digital agency.

Other workshops available in Oban during this period include the popular 'Marketing Your Business' on February 4, 'Introduction to Social Media' on February 9, and 'Getting More from Social Media' on February 10.

To book a place or to find out more about the full range of workshops, contact the Business Gateway team on 01546 604555 or email [business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk).

## Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau

ARGYLL and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau offers free, impartial, confidential advice on a range of issues. It is a local charity, with a board of directors from across the region who volunteer their time.

In 2014/15 Argyll and Bute CAB helped clients with 8,755 issues and generated £1.7million in client financial gain.

It is an accredited advice-giving organisation and holds the Scottish National Standards awarded to it by the Scottish Government. It is also accredited by Money Advice Scotland to provide debt and money advice.

Every three years Citizens Advice Scotland carries out a comprehensive audit of the local organisation's work and in March 2015 it passed with no recommendations made.

In this current financial year, Argyll and Bute CAB managed to secure £363,000 of grant funding to pay for specialist projects. It also manages a team of volunteer advisers who undertake in-depth training to enable them to provide advice on:

- Your Money - debt, employment, benefits, tax
- Your Family - health, housing, family relationships, education
- Your Daily Life - communications, consumer affairs, travel
- Your Rights - civil rights, immigration, legal rights and responsibilities

In addition to the above general advice, CAB also has a range of specialist advisers who can assist with longer term debt options, pensions and money advice, social security claims and advice, and also advice tailored to those with a background in the armed forces.

It can offer clients completely confidential face to face interviews or can help clients by phone or by email. Clients can make an appointment at one of the offices in Lochgilphead, Helensburgh or Dunoon, or contact CAB for an appointment at outreach sessions in Oban and Campbeltown.

For details email: [info@abcab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:info@abcab.casonline.org.uk) or call 01546 605550.

## Council keeps local contractors informed of new opportunities

ARGYLL and Bute Council is hoping to increase the number of its contracts awarded to local suppliers.

It is hosting a series of events aimed at informing local contractors about the council's new approach to tendering for capital works contracts with estimated individual values between £25,000 and a new upper limit of £500,000.

The council already awards a greater percentage of work to local suppliers than the average for Scottish local authorities. Last year 34 per cent of council contracts were awarded to suppliers in Argyll and Bute.

The type of contracts vary in cost and size and may include reroofing, fire alarm installations and upgrades, replacement of heating systems, refurbishment of buildings, electrical works, coastal protection and bridge strengthening, parking machines installation and traffic management works.

These surgeries will provide an opportunity for local suppliers to meet with procurement staff to find out more about forthcoming contract opportunities and learn about the support available via the Supplier Development Programme.

Council leader and policy lead for Customer and Support Services, Councillor Dick Walsh, said: 'The council's single outcome agreement supports a diverse and thriving economy and this new approach gives local contractors a real opportunity to bid for work. Everything is to benefit them, get them involved and make them aware of changes in tendering

requirements. These events will provide a great opportunity to come along and meet the council's buyers for these works contracts and find out more about the new approach to their procurement.

'I would urge any contractors interested in tendering for these types of contracts to come to one of these events. It could only be beneficial in the long run.

'While EU procurement rules mean we are unable to discriminate in favour of local suppliers, the council is committed to making sure that local businesses are aware of the opportunities and can access support to help them tender successfully.'

Individual appointments with council officers will also be available. Any contractor interested in bidding for contracts is urged to make an appointment.

The surgeries will be held in Lochgilphead on January 27, Dunoon on February 3, Oban on February 16, Rothesay on March 3, Campbeltown on March 23 and Helensburgh on March 30. The surgeries will run from 10.30am-12.30pm at each location.

To make an appointment please contact Gillian Allenby, Procurement Analyst, at least seven days prior to the date of the event you are interested in, either by email to [procurement@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@argyll-bute.gov.uk); or telephone 01700 501 358.

Please provide your contact details, which event you would like to attend, the nature of your business and any topics you would like to discuss to allow the buyers to prepare in advance and make best use of the time available.



### Pension Wise - Your money. Your choice.

From April 2015, the Government introduced some changes to pensions, giving people more freedom to decide what to do with their pension pots. In introducing these new freedoms, the Government also pledged to provide free guidance for those who wanted it. The result is Pension Wise, a new service that will help individuals understand the options available to them.

The service can be delivered by telephone or face to face appointments, and is aimed at those who are approaching age 50 or over and who have a defined contribution pension pot.

What is a defined contribution pension? It is pot of money built up over time that is based on the contributions that you, and possibly your employer make, as well as investment returns.

The face to face service is being delivered locally by our Pension Wise teams at Citizens Advice Bureaux across Scotland. An appointment will take around 45 minutes and will explain;

- the different options available to you
- how the options might fit in with your circumstances
- other things to consider, like tax and benefits
- things to think about before making your decision
- your next steps
- how to shop around to get the right deal for you

Pension Wise will provide impartial guidance, not financial advice.

It won't recommend any products or tell you what to do with your money.

You can make an appointment through these contacts:  
Local face to face appointments can be made through  
Citizens Advice Bureau in Lochgilphead  
T: 01546 605 556 [www.argyllandbutecab.org.uk](http://www.argyllandbutecab.org.uk)  
Or Citizens Advice Direct - T: 0800 800 9060, [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk).  
Telephone or face to face appointments can also be made through the main  
Pension Wise service - T: 0300 330 1001, [www.pensionwise.gov.uk](http://www.pensionwise.gov.uk)



## Start a business. Grow a business. Business Gateway is here to help.

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# Farming

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## Call for keepers to be vigilant as avian flu confirmed in Fife

POULTRY keepers in Argyll are urged to be vigilant following a confirmed outbreak of low pathogenic avian influenza at a Fife poultry unit.

In the wake of similar outbreaks in Europe and the UK in recent times, Scottish poultry keepers will be well aware of the biosecurity measures they need to maintain and for greater disease vigilance to be put in place.

Scotland's Chief Veterinary Officer, Sheila Voas said: 'We have taken immediate action to contain this case as part of our robust procedures for dealing swiftly with avian flu.'

'This is a low severity form of the virus [H5N], however we are taking action to ensure that the disease does not spread or develop into a more severe form.'

'I would urge poultry keepers in the surrounding area to be vigilant for any signs of disease and to ensure they are maintaining good biosecurity on their premises.'

NFU Scotland's vice president, Andrew McCormick, said: 'Given the number of cases of low pathogenic avian influenza seen across Europe and in the UK, often linked to migratory birds and wildfowl, this is a worrying but not unexpected outbreak.'

'It is welcome that, at the earliest opportunity, experts have reminded the public that the implications for human health and food safety are very low. This is an animal health matter

and one that all stakeholders are taking very seriously.

'With the industry's well-rehearsed contingency plans now coming into force, the hope is that this outbreak is quickly contained and the threat to other commercial poultry flocks is eliminated.'

'Biosecurity on all poultry units must be maintained and, given the number of low pathogenic avian influenza cases being recorded across Europe, it is likely that those high standards are already commonplace. High health is something that Scottish poultry producers have always taken great pride in.'

'However, it is worth reminding all poultry keepers - large and small - of the need for vigilance. Given the growing number of people keeping backyard hens, it is worth restating that Avian Influenza is a notifiable disease and that all poultry keepers have an obligation to notify the authorities if they suspect disease.'

'Backyard hens can often be at higher risk because of their closer contact with wild birds.'

Scottish Government advice is that the risk to human health is considered very low, and Food Standards Scotland has said there is no food safety risk for consumers.

Visit [www.scotland.gov.uk/avianinfluenza](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/avianinfluenza) For more information on the disease and biosecurity arrangements.



Anyone keeping poultry is asked to be vigilant. a03Hen01no

## Market reports

### STIRLING

#### Caledonian Marts cattle sale at Stirling

CALEDONIAN Marts Ltd sold 246 cattle - comprising 136 prime bullocks and heifers, seven bulls, ten OTM cattle and 100 cast cows as well as 55 calves and stirks - on Thursday January 7 at the firm's Stirling mart.

In the cow section a very good show for quality would be dearer to that of the previous sale. Prime bullocks sold to 240p per kg for a Limousin from David Dickinson, Brockwoodlees, Canonbie, selling to R Johnson, butcher, Falkirk and to £1,565.20 gross from J and N Kerr, Bankhead, Aberdour. Prime heifers sold to 248p per kg for a Limousin from Roddy Kennedy, Borlick, Aberfeldy to T Connors, butcher, Troon and sold to £1,446.40 from David Dickinson, Brockwoodlees, Canonbie. Young bulls sold to 194p per kg for a Limousin from Dalchirla Farms Ltd, Muthill to Charles Kirkpatrick and to £1,412.30 from Robert McNee, Woodend, Armadale.

#### Leading prices

##### Bullocks

238p, 235p Learielaw; 235p (twice) Brockwoodlees; 228p Shields & Bankhead (Kerr); 224p Todhall; 222p Spittal (Gardner); 220p Faskine; 218p (twice) Seggarsdean

##### Heifers

242p Borlick; 232p Dalchirla and Ramornie; 230p Brockwoodlees and Dalchirla; 226p Brockwoodlees; 224p Shields Craigend (McCord) Brockwoodlees and Learielaw; 222p Ramornie and Seggarsdean; 220p Easterton (Owen), Meadowend and Bankhead.

##### Young bulls

190p Easter Buchanty. OTM cattle sold to 190p per kg for a Limousin from Croy Cunningham Farms, Gartness, Killlearn and to £1,362.90 from JH and NT Turnbull, Meadowend Farm, Clackmannan.

#### OTM leading prices

185p Craigend (McCord) and Meadowend. Beef cows sold to 158p per kg for a Limousin from JH and NT Turnbull, Meadowend and £1,320 gross from Kerr, Bankhead, Aberdour.

#### Leading Prices

£1,290 and £1,210 Meadowend  
£1,180 and £1,140 Bankhead  
£1,100 Over Inzievar  
£1,070 and £1,060 Westwood Lane and Dyke  
£1,050 Croy Cunningham Farms.

#### Prices per kg

150p and 146p Bankhead and Gartness; 145p Meadowend; 141p Meadowend and Dyke; (Macgregor); 138p Mains of Burnbank; 136p Over Inzievar; 134p Dyke.

Dairy cows sold to 110p per kg for a Friesian from Iain Wainwright, Todhall, Cupar and to £860 gross from the same farm.

55 calves and stirks were slightly harder to sell compared with the previous sale, and sold to an average of £74.40 and sold to £355 for an Aberdeen Angus heifer from Drew Hamilton, Mid Forrest, Cumbernauld.

#### Other leading prices

BB bull calves - £200, £180, £160 £150 Claish  
Friesian calves - £180 Mid Forrest; £120 West Drumlemble (3); £110 Wester Balbeggie; £98 West Drumlemble (4).

## Union unveils new award in memory of farming stalwarts



Lachlan MacLean. a03LachlanMacLean01no

TWO WELL-known Argyll farming characters will be remembered today as the local NFU Scotland branch launches a new award.

As members from across Argyll and the Islands meet in Tarbert on Friday January 15 for their regional board AGM, they will recognise the contribution of Mull farmers Bert Leitch and Lachlan MacLean, both of whom sadly passed away last year.

Both were loyal and committed supporters of NFU Scotland, contributing hugely to the union's work locally and nationally over many years and they are both sorely missed following their sudden deaths in 2015.

Regional manager, Lucy Sumsion, said: 'In recognition and in memory of Bert and Lachlan, the regional board would like to launch an annual award to be presented each year to either a NFUS member who has followed in their footsteps and given their time and effort to the work of the union in Argyll and the Islands region, or someone who has made a significant contribution to agriculture in the area.'

'The 'Stalwart Award' will be launched at this year's regional AGM, with nominations being sought later in the year and the award presented to the first winner in 2016.'

The meeting will also see the appointment of a new chair for the region, as John Semple from Mid Argyll steps down after five years

of hard work on behalf members in Argyll and the Islands.

An open discussion session in the afternoon which will focus on a couple of key policy issues.

The first will be the Scottish Government land reform bill, which is now going through parliament and will become law by the end of March 2016. NFU Scotland has consulted widely with its members on this subject, but with government amendments to the bill expected, members will be updated on the current position and their views sought.

The second issue will be training and skills in agriculture and how this can best be provided in the Argyll and the Islands region, whether by encouraging young people to take up agriculture through the provision of modern apprenticeships, or training that existing farmers and crofters need. Representatives from industry training body, Lantra, and the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs will be at the meeting and will be keen to discuss with members the work that they have been doing in Argyll.

NFU Scotland president, Allan Bowie, and chief executive, Scott Walker, will be there to update members on any other policy issues or the campaigning and lobbying work of the union.



Bert Leitch. a03BertLeitch01no

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Contact James 07500 603068  
or 07875 671994.

### 1,200 cattle go through United Auctions sale ring

ON WEDNESDAY January 6 in Stirling, United Auctions sold 1,141 store cattle, 116 cast cows and forward cattle, plus 178 store sheep.

Bullocks (128) averaged 213.04p to 268.60p per kg for a 350kg Charolais cross from Taiglim and £1,270 for a 688kg Limousin cross from Holehouse.

Black and white bullocks (57) - averaged 142.23p to 150.50p per kg for a 465kg British Friesian cross from Midhouse and £920 for a 594kg Holstein Friesian cross from Kepculloch.

Heifers (456) - averaged 208.57p to 251.60p per kg for a 310kg Charolais cross from Moor and £1,170 for a 596kg Charolais cross from Angus Lime Store.

Cast cows (116) - averaged 116.85p to 187p for a Limousin cross from Loanhead of Duchally and £1,350 for a Limousin cross from Greenshields.

Forward Cattle (13) - averaged 152.16p to 204p for a Limousin cross from Back O' Muir and £1,310 for a Limousin cross from Back O' Muir.

Cast cows (dairy) (19) - averaged 85.03p to 102.10p for a Montbeliarde cross from Wester Thirds and £775 for a Montbeliarde cross from Wester Thirds.

#### Bullocks:

251-300kgs - West Park £680, 241.10p 301-350kgs - Taiglim £940, 268.60p 351- 400kgs - Kings Arms £1,000, 259.10p 401- 450kgs - Longhouse £1,090, 246.60p 451 - 500kgs - Longhouse £1,150, 239.60p 501 - 550kgs - Hoprigshields £1,130, Newhouse £1,240, 251.40p 551- 600kgs - Kepculloch £1,240, 208.80p; 600 - 651kgs - Holehouse £1,250, 196.20p; 651-700kgs - Holehouse £1,270, 184.60p

#### Heifers:

251 - 300kgs - Taiglim £740, 250.80p; 301 - 350kg - Moor £860, 251.60p 351 - 400kgs - Kings Arms £900, Moor 245.80p 401 - 450kgs - Townhead £1,100, 246.10p 451 - 500kgs - Balgray £1,100, 238.10p 501 - 550kgs - Lodge Hill £1,100, Hatrick 207p; 551 - 600kgs - Angus Lime Store £1,170, 202.80p; 601 - 650kgs - Wester Borland £1,160, 184.10p

#### OTM cows:

Greenshields (Lim) £1,350, Loanhead of Duchally 187p; Lathrisk (CH) £1,270, 143.30p; Bordie (AA) £1 250, Lathrisk 147.60p; Traprain (Sim) £1,110, 140.40p.

#### OTM Bulls:

Meikle Carleith (AA) £1,000, 85.50p  
United auctions had an entry of 178 store lambs.

#### Leading prices

Orpwood (SuffX) £69; Orpwood (SuffX) £68; Broadmeadows (TexX) £65; Broadmeadows (BF) £65.

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**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 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>

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

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
15/04740/FUL	58 Camanachd Crescent, Fort William	Subdivision of one flat to form two flats
15/04752/FUL	Corrie Greagach Cottage, Corroul	Alterations and change of use to extend laundry
15/04754/PIP	Land 40m East of Ramona, Banavie, Fort William	Erection of house
15/04755/PIP	Land 85m NE of Ramona, Banavie, Fort William	Erection of house

**Time period for comments is 14 days**  
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX  
Email: [eplanning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:eplanning@highland.gov.uk)

**MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010  
34 Moorings for Acoustic Receivers, Sound of Mull/Loch Linnhe/Lynn of Lorn/ Firth of Lorn**

Notice is hereby given that Scottish Natural Heritage has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of **34 Moorings for Acoustic Receivers** at:

Cost	£16,750	
Location	Latitude	Longitude
Sound of Mull/Loch Linnhe/ Lynn of Lorn/Firth of Lorn	Co-ordinates	Co-ordinates
Curtain B 4 receivers	56°29.095' N	05°42.656' W
	56°29.334' N	05°42.292' W
	56°29.574' N	05°41.903' W
	56°29.814' N	05°41.513' W
Curtain C 6 receivers	56°30.001' N	05°34.640' W
	56°30.292' N	05°34.952' W
	56°30.526' N	05°35.258' W
	56°30.801' N	05°35.593' W
	56°31.036' N	05°35.874' W
	56°31.285' N	05°36.156' W
Curtain D 2 receivers	56°33.266' N	05°25.795' W
	56°33.110' N	05°25.324' W
Curtain E 5 receivers	56°27.232' N	05°38.556' W
	56°27.338' N	05°38.051' W
	56°27.438' N	05°37.364' W
	56°27.523' N	05°36.856' W
	56°27.611' N	05°36.323' W
	56°27.700' N	05°35.800' W
Curtain F 10 receivers	56°23.315' N	05°39.725' W
	56°23.127' N	05°39.321' W
	56°22.940' N	05°38.892' W
	56°22.794' N	05°38.523' W
	56°22.501' N	05°38.090' W
	56°22.474' N	05°37.741' W
	56°22.448' N	05°37.172' W
	56°22.577' N	05°36.644' W
	56°22.649' N	05°36.137' W
	56°22.765' N	05°32.582' W
Receiver 1	56°31.772' N	05°46.664' W
Receiver 2	56°30.485' N	05°37.629' W
Receiver 3	56°24.706' N	05°37.567' W
Receiver 4	56°23.383' N	05°31.471' W
Receiver 5	56°20.100' N	05°41.714' W
Receiver 6	56°31.970' N	05°52.020' W
Receiver 7	56°30.600' N	05°44.354' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Cameron House, Albany Street, Oban.

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:  
Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: [MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk), quoting reference: **05772 Scottish Natural Heritage**

**First Registration of a Croft**

Kenneth Stewart has registered his croft 139 Kilmory, Ardnamurchan & Sunart on the Crofting Register held by Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 29 July 2016.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C1098.

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**First Registration of a Croft**

Mrs Helen Catherine McDonnell has registered the croft 8 Bracora & Part Glasnacardoch (Share), Glenelg, on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 22 September, 2016.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C2099.

**First Registration of a Croft**

Mrs Diana Charlotte Snelgrove has registered the croft 4 Treslaig (Shares), Treslaig, Ardour, on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 23 August, 2016.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C2025.

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**Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence**

Argyll Haulage Ltd trading as Argyll Haulage Ltd of Greenacre, Connel, Argyll PA37 1PJ is applying for a licence to use Marine Resource Centre, Barcaldine by Oban PA37 1SE as an operating centre for 4 goods vehicles and 1 trailer and to use Greenacre, Connel, Argyll PA37 1PJ as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicle and 1 trailer. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

**The Scottish Government**  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

**TRANSPORT SCOTLAND**

**THE A84 TRUNK ROAD (BALQUHIDDER STATION) (50MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2016**

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS give notice that they have made the above Order under sections 84(1)(a) and 124(1)(d) of, and paragraph 27 of Schedule 9 to, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

The Order revokes and reproduces the provisions of the A84 Trunk Road (Balquhidder Station) (50mph Speed Limit) Order 2015, the effect of which is as described in the Oban and West Highland Times dated 11 June 2015, the Edinburgh Gazette Issue Number 27573 dated 12 June 2015, and the Stirling Observer dated 24 June 2015. The Order comes into force on 29 January 2016.

A copy of the Order as made and the relevant plan may be inspected free of charge until 16 February 2016 during normal business hours at the offices of Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF; Strathyre Post Office, The Village Shop, Strathyre, Callander, Perthshire, FK18 8NA; and Glen Ogle Post Office, Lochearnhead, FK19 8PR.

A copy of the Order and this Notice will be available on the Transport Scotland website at <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/node/666>

**JJ MORAN**  
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers  
Transport Scotland, Buchanan House,  
58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow  
G4 0HF

**WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003  
WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2011**

**APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISATION  
ALLT AN LAGAIN HYDRO SCHEME, LAGGAN**

An application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) by highland Eco-design Ltd for authorisation to carry on controlled activities at, near or in connection with the Allt an Lagain Hydro Scheme, namely:

Description of controlled activity reference	Waters affected	National grid
Construction and/or operation of impounding works 1 metre in height	Allt an Lagain	NN 3058 9727
Abstraction of 21,686 m3 per day of water	Allt an Lagain	NN 3058 9727
Construction and/or operation of impounding works 1 metre in height	Un-named tributary of Allt an Lagain	NN 3031 9674
Abstraction of 1,209 m3 per day of water	Un-named tributary of Allt an Lagain	NN 3031 9674
Return of abstracted water approximately 1km away from abstraction point	Allt an Lagain	NN 2968 9727

SEPA considers that the above controlled activities may have an impact on the water environment and on the interests of other users of the water environment.

A copy of the application and any accompanying information may be inspected free of charge, at the SEPA Registry below, between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday (except local and national holidays). Alternatively, the application may be viewed on SEPA's website at: <http://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/consultations/advertised-applications-under-car/>

Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement, at the following address, quoting reference number CAR/L/1140269:

**Registry Department, SEPA, Graesser House, Fodderty Way, Dingwall, IV15 9XB**

- Written representation received by SEPA within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining whether or not to grant the application.
- Before determining the application, SEPA will:
  - assess the risk to the water environment posed by the carrying on of the activity or activities;
  - assess the indirect effects of that impact on any other aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected;
  - consider any likely adverse social and economic effects of that impact and of any indirect environmental effects that have been identified;
  - consider the likely environmental, social and economic benefits of the activity;
  - assess the impact of the controlled activity or activities on the interests of other users of the water environment;
  - assess what steps may be taken to ensure efficient and sustainable water use; and apply and have regard to relevant legislation.

SEPA will then either grant or refuse to grant the application.

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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](http://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 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT**

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
15/03340/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Glennure Farmhouse Fasnacloch Appin Argyll and Bute PA38 4BJ	Sub Post Office Connel
15/03358/PP	Erection of wood fuel storage shed	Land North West of Ashcroft Achadh An Droma Dervaig Isle of Mull	Sub Post Office Dervaig
15/03359/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage and formation of vehicular access	Land at 2 Greenhill Kilkenneth Isle of Tiree Argyll and Bute	Tiree Area Office
15/03370/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Land South of Woodlands Barcaldine Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Connel
15/03406/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North East of Arns Ard Croft Drive Oban Argyll And Bute	Oban Area Office
15/03444/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and detached domestic garage/workshop	Land West of Dunearn House Ellenbeich Isle of Seil Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Balvicar
15/03479/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 12/02606/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage)	Land South of Penlarch Lerags Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4SE	Oban Area Office
15/03486/PP	Renewal of planning permission 12/02440/PP - Formation of vehicular access	Land East of Oakview Taynuilt Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Taynuilt
15/03501/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 12/02207/PPP (Site for the erection of a single dwellinghouse)	Land South of Blarhachsa Farm Appin Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Connel
15/03511/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 12/02640/PP (Erection of dwellinghouse and holiday let chalet)	Plot 1 Deervue Taynuilt Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office Taynuilt
15/03532/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North of Horse Shoe Cottage Kerrera Oban Argyll and Bute	Oban Area Office
16/00009/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Plot 3, Fields Adjacent to Ach Na Coarich Erray Road Tobermory Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA75 6PS	Tobermory Area Office

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 1A Manse Lochgilhead Brae PA31 8RD, 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](http://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
15/03372/LIB	External and internal alterations to dwellinghouse (including installation of replacement windows and roof covering) and erection of replacement rear extension	Pennygate Lodge Craignure Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA65 6AY	Sub Post Office Craignure

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilhead PA31 8RD.

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.

**DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES (TAYLOR'S BRAE FOOTPATH, OBAN) (TEMPORARY CLOSURE) ORDER 2016**

On Monday 11th January 2016 Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order under Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, which temporarily closes the entire length of Taylor's Brae Footpath to pedestrian traffic. Pedestrian access to the rear of affected properties, will be maintained.

The restriction which is required due to a collapsed retaining wall will be effective from 19th January to 19th July 2016 or until remedial works are complete, whichever is the earliest.

Alternative pedestrian routes are available via Ardconnel Terrace, Rockfield Road, or via Ardconnel Terrace, Jacobs Ladder, Tweeddale Street and Hill Street.

**Jim Smith, Head of Roads & Amenity Services, 1A Manse Brae, LOCHGILHEAD, PA31 8RD**

**CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD PUBLIC HEARING**

A Public Hearing will be held by the Crofting Commission into the application by Sheila Cameron to decroft part of the croft at 70 & 71 Camaghael, Kilmallie advised as extending to 0.1 ha in order to provide the site for a dwellinghouse.

The Hearing will take place in the Kilmallie Hall, Corpach, Fort William on Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 7.00 pm and anyone interested may attend. A statement of the facts and relevant issues may be obtained by writing to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW by 20 January 2016 quoting the case number: 4.86.49082

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Argyll Bute COUNCIL

**CIVIC GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1982  
TAXI FARE REVIEW**

Notice is hereby given that there will be no changes to the maximum fares for taxis operating within the jurisdiction of Argyll and Bute Council following the recent taxi fare review in accordance with Section 17 and 18 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. These maximum fares will become effective from 25th January 2016. The fares will be as follows:-

Tariff	Hirings from ranks or "flag"	Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof)	Subsequent charge (each 176 yards or part thereof)	
Tariff 1	Hiring between 7am and 10pm	£3.00	20 pence	
	Hirings from ranks or "flag" Hiring between 10pm and 7am	£3.60	20 pence	
Tariff 2	Initial charge (860 yards or part thereof)	£3.60	20 pence	
	Tariff 2 also applies to hirings from ranks or "flag" between 6pm and 10pm December 24th, 6pm and 10pm December 31st and between 7am 2nd January and 7am 3rd January			
Tariff 3	Hiring from ranks or "flag" between 10pm 24th December and 7am 27th December and 10pm 31st December and 7am 2nd January	£4.20	20 pence	
	Initial Charge (860 yards or part thereof) Subsequent Charge (each 120 yards or part thereof)			

**Soiling Charge** - £100 maximum (with permission to display warning signs indicating that there may be an additional charge for any potential loss of earnings suffered as a consequence)

**Waiting Time** - 35 pence per minute commencement of journey, charged on a pro rata basis per second

**Taxi called by means of telephone** - 30 pence additional charge

**Large Mini-bus type vehicles** (carrying 5 or more passengers together at their own request) -

- Where Tariff 1 would apply - charge Tariff 2
- Where Tariff 2 would apply - charge Tariff 3
- Where Tariff 3 would apply - Surcharge £1.00

**Fee by negotiation** - for all journeys commencing within but finishing outwith Argyll & Bute, in a place of the above charges, such fares may be charged as prior to the acceptance of the hire, were proposed to the hirer and accepted by him/her

**Ferry Fares** - The hirer shall be liable for the cost of a return ferry fare for any journey involving a ferry

Charles Reppick, Head of Governance and Law, Argyll and Bute Council, Kilmory, Lochgilhead, PA31 8RT

**PUBLIC MEETING**  
Replacement of aligning structure at Lochaline Ferry Terminal

Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) would like to invite you to a public meeting to present the latest information regarding the replacement of the Lochaline Ferry Terminal Aligning Structure.

All members of the public and interested parties welcome.

Public Meeting:  
**Lochaline Village Hall**  
**Tuesday, 26th January 18:00-19:00**

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**The Oban Times** & WEST HIGHLAND TIMES | Deputy Editor

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As well as excellent news sense, the successful candidate must be an experienced sub-editor with a flair for design, headline writing and page layout, and be fully qualified (or have relevant time-served experience), with a sound knowledge of Scots law and the IPSO Code of Practice.

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Candidates will have excellent communication skills, both verbal and written. They will be responsible for managing daily workflow, working with reporters to get the best content possible, providing clear briefings and feedback on content requirements.

They must be self-motivated, highly organised and able to take instruction as well as manage own workload efficiently.

An understanding of digital would be an advantage as the right candidate will be required to liaise with the editor on the digital strategy and ensure that content is promoted via an effective social media presence.

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Closing date for applications: 25 January 2016.

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**Closing date: 12 noon, Friday 22 January 2016**

**Interviews: Thursday 11 February 2016 - Lochgilphead (tbc)**

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ENGAGEMENTS

**INNES - MATHESON** - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Gary, eldest son of Leslie and Hughie, Spean Bridge to Hannah, only daughter of Shirley and Hamish, Taynuilt. Wishing them both lots of love and happiness.

**WYLLIE - MACKENZIE** - Both families are delighted to announce the engagement of Jason, eldest son of Ian and Ruby, Easdale to Abby, youngest daughter of John and Jayne, Oban.

DEATHS

**CAMPBELL** - Peacefully at Ilay Hospital on January 1, 2016, Archie aged 83, from Keills, (formerly of Port Askaig and Torrabus), loving husband of the late Nettie, father and grandfather. Sorely missed.

**CLARK** - Peacefully at home, on Monday January 11, 2016, aged 97 years, Annie, (Nan), (née MacColl), Glenshellach Farm, Oban, loving wife of the late Donald, beloved mother of Iain, mother-in-law of Elena and grandmother of Masha. Sadly missed.

**CUTLER** - Suddenly, but peacefully, at the Mid Argyll Hospital, Lochgilphead, on January 6, 2016, Brian Cutler, aged 60 years, of Roadman's Cottage, Ormsary, by Lochgilphead, Argyll, much loved husband of Barbara, proud father of Lisa, grandfather of Summer and father-in-law of Jon. A dear brother, brother-in-law, cousin and uncle to all the family. A good neighbour and dear friend to many. Funeral service was held on Monday, January 11, 2016, at Achahoish Parish Church, followed by interment at Ormsary Graveyard. Will be sadly missed.

**HILL** - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on January 10, 2016, James (Jimmy - Slater and Plasterer), loving husband to May for 70 years, beloved father, grandad and gramps. Sorely missed by all. Funeral will take place from Oban Parish Church on Friday, January 15 at 1.00 pm. Thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Retiring collection/donations if desired for the Erskine Hospital and Ward I, Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban.

**MACKINNON** - Suddenly, but peacefully at home on Saturday, January 9, 2016, Hamish MacKinnon, beloved husband of Phemie, dear father of Norman and Peter. 2 Carn Dearg, Claggan.

**MACNAB** - (Oban/Edinbane) - Peacefully, after a long illness courageously borne, at and Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on Saturday, January 9, 2016 Alistair (Ali), aged 48 years. Dearly loved partner, brother, stepdad and uncle. Funeral service at Lenomere Free Church, Dunvegan, Isle of Skye on Friday, January 15 at 2pm and thereafter to Edinbane cemetery. Family flowers only. Dearly loved and sorely missed.

**MACRAE** - Peacefully at home, at Kilfinichen Isle of Mull, on January 1, 2016, Carol aged 86, beloved mother, granny and great granny. Funeral service will be held at Salen and Ulva Parish Church on Friday, January 15, 2016 at 11.30 am. Thereafter to Kilfinichen cemetery.

**POWELL** - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on January 2, 2016, Henry Thomas (Harry) of Grosvenor Crescent, Connel, aged 90, following a brave struggle against cancer, beloved husband of the late Helen Grace Powell, much loved dad of Anne and David, father-in-law to Janet and a dear grandfather to Jenny, James and Maxwell. Sadly missed by all who knew him. A memorial service will be held at St. Oran's Church, Connel

on Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 7.30pm. There will be a retiring collection for Cancer Research and Macmillan nurses, should you wish to make a donation.

**URQUHART** - Colin Urquhart MBE. Peacefully after a short illness at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on January 7, 2016, Colin aged 84 years dearest husband of Morag, much loved father of June and father-in-law to Alex. A dearly loved Bamba to Colin, Robin, Lucy and David, also great-grandpa to Grace. A dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle. Funeral service at Oban Free High Church on Thursday, January 14 at 1.30pm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**HOUGHTON** - The family of Michael Houghton wish to thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy and overwhelming support following the sad loss of Michael.

**PATTERSON** - The family of the late Frank W Patterson would like to thank everyone most sincerely for the many expressions of sympathy received in their recent sad loss. Also to all who paid their last respects at the church service. Our special thanks to Rev. Adrian Varwell for his comforting and fitting service and thanks to Monsignor Wynne for sharing with us his fond memories of dad, and to John Cameron for playing the organ. Special thanks to the doctors and staff of Ward 3 Raigmore Hospital, Craig Nevis Surgery and Moss Park Care Home - also to Fiona, Shona and Sarah (Home Care) who all looked after dad so well in his declining years. John McLellan Funeral Directors made a difficult time a great deal easier with special thanks to Scott Greenlees. The retiring offering of £600 will be donated to Moss Park Care Home.

**RILEY** - The family of Maudie (Bell) would like to thank all relatives and friends for their kind words, thoughts and support at this very difficult time. Thanks also to those who came to her celebration of life from near and far. Special thanks to Consultants Dr Mmeka and Dr Nichols, their staff at Macmillan Suite, Raigmore Hospital and Nurse Christina McRae and her team from Dingwall District Nurses for their dedicated care and also to her close network of friends who supported Maudie and the family over the last two years. Thanks to Ian MacInnes of D&A Munn for his excellent and caring funeral arrangements - he went above and beyond his duty and we are most grateful, to the Royal Hotel for providing refreshments. Finally thanks to Rev Dugald Cameron for his comforting service and to Angie Stewart for her fitting and heartfelt tribute to Maudie. The generous sum of £1,037.00 was raised for the Macmillan Suite at Raigmore Hospital.

MEMORIALS

**CAMPBELL** - In loving memory of Chrissie Campbell who died January 12, 2004, a much loved wife, mum and gran. Sadly missed in every way. Quietly remembered every day - Duncan and family.

**CLARK** - In loving memory of Angus Ross Clark, a much loved husband, father, father-in-law and adoring Granpa, who passed away on January 19, 2009. He lives on forever within our hearts. Remembering also Donald Brown, a loving father and grandfather who passed away January 19, 1973. Loved and remembered every day by all the family. - Peggy, Morag, Dugie, Donald and Gavin. Mike, Kaye and Lorraine. Nicola, Paula, Ryan, Cooper, Taylor, Dara, Iona, Colin and Ciaran.

**CRUICKSHANK** - In ever lasting memory of Jimmy, a loving husband, dad and grandad taken from us on January 15, 1999.

A long time ago now but never forgotten by the family. - Wife Kate, sons Iain and Dougie and their families.

**EVANS** - In loving memory of a dear mother, granny and great-grandmother who passed away on January 10, 2008. Always in our thoughts. - Nigel, Hazel, David, Gareth and Kaitlyn

**HAY** - Treasured memories of Jimmy, a much loved son, brother and uncle, who died on January 10, 1998. Precious memories keep you near

As time unfolds another year Forever loved. - Mum, Donald, Anthea and Iain and families.

**HIGGINS** - Linda Joyce (née Donnelly). Born January 13, 1956 - died January 15, 2014, wife of Daniel and mother of Steven.

Rest peacefully as although you are sadly no longer with us You remain fondly remembered.

**MACIVER** - Precious memories of dear Duncan, a wonderful father, brother and brother-in-law, who died January 12, 2007. Remembered with love. - Chrissie and Rob, Colin and Jocelyn, Kevin, Lindsay and families.

**MACKINNON** - Nancy. In loving memory of my nana who passed away on January 16, 2013 in Sandaig, Tiree. Always remembered. - Duncan.

**MACMILLAN** - In fond and loving memory of our dear son, Mark, who died January 14, 1991 aged 15 years.

The hardest thing in life to bear Is to want your child and he's not there With tears in our eyes we whisper low We love you Mark and miss you so. - Love you always dad and mum, Ballachulish.xx

**MACMILLAN** - Special memories of my dear brother Mark.

Those we love don't go away They walk beside us every day Sadly missed. - Iain, Frances, Lucy and Cara.xx

**MACMILLAN** - Mark. Miss you always. Love you. - Jane xxx

**MACMILLAN** - In loving memory of Mark, died January 14, 1991, age 15. Forever in our thoughts - Maureen, Andrew and Andrew, Oban.

**MACMILLAN** - Mark, January 14, 1991. Sorely missed cousin. - Lynne and family. xx

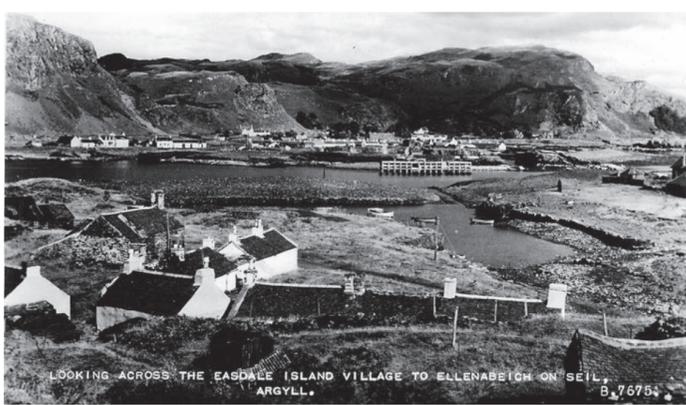
**MACPHEE** - In loving memory of my long-term partner and friend Dan, who passed away January 11, 2015. I'll forget many things in my lifetime But my darling I won't forget you Always in my heart. - Love Donna. xxx

**MACRAE** - Precious memories of Len, much loved husband, dad and grampa who sadly passed away January 18, 2003. Loved and remembered every day. - Kate and families.

**NOBLE** - In loving memory of my dear dad George who died on January 11, 2015. Not a day dawns or night falls without a thought of you. Sadly missed. - George.

Flashback photographs

**MEN loading hay onto a cart taken at Knipoch, Kilninver taken around 1932. The boy on the left in a kilt is Jimmy Mellor with Johnny MacLean and the man on the right is Donald MacInnes who came from the Isle of Seil. Jamie Mellor, who still lives on the farm said: 'I remember him still working for the family in the sixties when I was a boy.'**



**THIS photograph of the Isle of Seil from the Isle of Easdale was sent in by Stuart Gray of Clydebank who found the post card in his mother's belongings.**

LIFE lines

Goodbye David Bowie

What sad news. For my generation there was something seminal, and something reassuringly unpredictable about David Bowie. When vinyl was the only medium for popular music, most record collections had at least one Bowie album (probably *Hunky Dory*) and his presence on the world stage always commanded attention.

Like most people, I had no idea he had cancer. He died just days after the release of his latest album, so he must have known it would be his last.

The man who gave us *Ziggy Stardust* and *Aladdin Sane* has hung up his zoot suit for the last time, and he will be missed by millions.

The pop and rock soundtrack to growing up in the 1970s included many Bowie hits, and I can remember particular episodes of my youth being accompanied by his songs - songs that I learned the words to, and that still play in my head every now and then. It feels like there is a Bowie song for every occasion.

Affection for his unique performances continued into the following decades. He was a huge influence on Band Aid and the outstanding Live Aid concert and will be remembered for his commitment to tackling world hunger as well as his music.

Not every project won Bowie critical acclaim, but he was so immersed in music that he was prepared to experiment, and his passion and sense of purpose were extraordinary qualities.

JA

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Thought for the week

Fred-how can such an innocuous name conjure up such thoughts of pain, suffering hardship and destruction? We can all recall the news bulletins over the last few weeks after Storm Fred hit our shores bringing with it the terrible nightmares of devastation experienced by so many. Householders weeping as they return to their homes after the storm to see all their treasured possessions destroyed or missing, and some then experiencing this 2 or 3 times more in a

matter of days because of the subsequent flooding. Our hearts go out to them and it is encouraging to see how communities come together to support each other in these circumstances. Many times through the year I look out and see the brave members of the Fire and Rescue or RNLI practicing for such eventualities at the Falls of Lora. And now we see them in action where they are most needed. When we are in desperate need, hope overcomes fear when we know that someone

is coming alongside with the experience and wherewithal to rescue us and bring us to safety. The scriptures tell us that 'When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you... For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. Whatever your situation, call out to the one who saves. His promise is never to leave you nor forsake you.'

Dr Stuart Chalmers

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**GRADUATION**

**FRASER EWAN BRYDON**  
Graduated from the University of Glasgow with a Masters degree MRes in Biomedical Science (Medical Biochemistry and Molecular Biology). Eldest son of Gus and Fiona Brydon. Grandson of Helen and the late Bob McEwan, Oban and George and Ellen Brydon, Dunbar. Fraser is a former pupil of Park Primary School and Oban High School.

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OT

# Shinty stalwart decides to hang up his caman after 20 years

A LOCAL shinty stalwart has hung his stick up after more than two decades in the game.

John Stewart, 36, played with Caol side Kilmallie for the last 21 years, both as a wing forward and then a full forward. He announced his retirement on Monday, with a long-term injury bringing his career to a close.

John has been suffering from rheumatoid arthritis since 2012, causing him 'almost unbearable' pain at times, especially in his feet.

John, who played for Scotland for more than 12 years, said: 'With pre-season due to start tomorrow night it's with a heavy heart I've to finally admit defeat to the injuries and hang up the stick and boots on my shinty career.'

'Most of last season I have been at the stage where I can't train during the week and only just manage to play at full forward. I can remember saying when I

## Shinty

was younger I didn't want to ever be that type of player who stands up there and can hardly move. I can hear people saying, 'he's been doing that for years'.

'It's just the way a lot of shinty players are - you'll almost do anything to try and play.'

'I still managed to contribute 19 goals in my last season but it was overall a disappointment that we didn't get promoted to the Premier League.'

'I'd like to wish the first team all the success in 2016 and I think they will be playing Premier league shinty in 2017.'

John said he would now be focusing on his family more, and found breaking the news to shinty-mad son Harry, three, particularly difficult.

He also thanked a number of people who have helped him along the way in his career,



Dave Corrigan, right, from league sponsors Marine Harvest, presents Kilmallie captain John Stewart with the North Division 1 championship trophy in 2013.



John Stewart's number one fans, son Harry and daughter Ruby, in their Kilmallie tops.

including his wife Amy and mum Jill, and dozens of players and coaches. Highlights of his career include winning the North Division One in 1998, 2010 and 2013 as well as the bitter-sweet feeling of getting to the Camanachd Cup Final in 2005, only to lose to local rivals Fort William.

He also enjoyed his experience

as an international in the shinty/hurling matches against Ireland, including scoring the only goal of the game for Scotland v Ireland at Nowlan Park, Kilkenny in 2008.

Kilmallie manager Mark MacPherson paid tribute to John, who had captained the club in recent years.

The pair played together for

around 12 years until Mark took the reins as first team coach last season. Everyone at the club holds John in the very highest regard,' said Mark.

'He's been an absolutely brilliant servant to Kilmallie Shinty Club, all the players looked up to him. I know I can speak for all the boys when I say that he

gave everything to the cause. He had trouble with his feet for a few years and had been playing through the pain barrier.'

'I had a good conversation with him at the start of the week and the door is open for him to come back in some capacity if he ever wants to, but after all these years he's due a break.'

## Fort William face tough test away to league leaders

FORT WILLIAM travel to face league leaders Brora Rangers this weekend, with the club management under no illusions how difficult a task they face.

The Lochaber side's New Year got off to a false start on Saturday, when their first fixture was postponed. The pitch at Claggan Park was deemed unplayable due to the freezing conditions, meaning the Press and Journal Highland League tie against Keith will be replayed at a later date. Manager Ally Ewen did put his players through their paces in a closed-door friendly, however, in a bid to boost match fitness, as they aim to claw themselves

up from second-bottom of the division.

Ewen's side make the near three-hour journey to Dudgeon Park on Saturday to face Brora, who have scored an incredible 100 goals already this season in 25 games.

The Sutherland side are hot favourites to take the title this season and make it three-in-a-row in the league's top tier.

Fort vice-chairman David McDonald said the side would go into the game hoping that they could cause Brora some problems.

'Hopefully we can frustrate them,' he said.

'We need to believe before every game we can take something out of it. The last time we played them we never got playing until we were 3-0 down, and managed to bring it back to 3-2 and then 5-3, and missed a last minute penalty. So you never know what could happen.'

'One problem this season has been consistency of competitive games. You might play one game then be off the next two or three weeks. You can always do some training but it doesn't get the lads match fit.'

'But by the looks of the schedule we could be playing Saturdays and Wednesdays almost until the end of the season now with

## Football

the fixtures we still have to play, which I'm sure the lads will be happy with.'

Manager Ewen will have the option of playing three young signings who have boosted his squad in the past few weeks, including one who signed from this Saturday's opponents.

Adam Porritt, 21, who can play in a number of positions, has signed an 18-month contract with Fort, after more than two years playing with Brora. Described by manager Ewen as having an 'amazing range of passing, allied with a keen eye for goal', it's hoped he can add some firepower to the side.

Joining Adam is Conor MacPhee, 17, who moves from Clachnacuddin, having risen through the ranks since starting with the Inverness side aged just six. He has already made one appearance for Fort William against Buckie Thistle as a trialist at right-back.

Striker Scott Davidson makes up the hat-trick of signings for Fort, having signed at the turn of the year. Scott has already scored a brace for the club, against Hilton FC on January 6.

Saturday's tie with Brora kicks-off at 3pm.



## Michael 'splodges' to victory

Pictured above are competitors setting off through the woods before looping back to the waterside in the Lochaber Athletics Club Riverbank Splodge on Sunday.

## Athletics

came first in a time of 51 minutes and 24 seconds. First female was Kate Jenkins of Gala Harriers, with a time of 1:02:10. First junior male under-23 went to Steven Burns of Lochaber, in 55:54.

Picture: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

## Ross Sutherland pay a visit to Banavie

RAIN stopped play at the weekend for Lochaber Rugby Club, whose BT Caledonia North League Two North fixture against Garioch was postponed.

The Garioch team, along with some other local teams, spent the weekend helping clean up the aftermath of the flood. With the division's top side, Highland, on 96 points, and second-place Garioch 22 points adrift, promotion now looks all-but-impossible for Lochaber this season, who are sixth with 45 points.

## Rugby

Stewart Sandison's, men play hosts to Ross Sutherland this Saturday, hoping to take full points and close the gap between them and Moray, who are just two points ahead in fifth place.

The tie gets under way at 2pm in Banavie.

## Shinty match officials workshop

### Shinty

A SERIES of workshops will take place across the country on Saturday January 16 to bring all match officials together prior to the start of the new shinty season.

These workshops form an important part of a wider programme of training and development activity being supported by the Camanachd Association during 2016 in line with the agreed Strategic Plan for Shinty.

The pre-season workshops will run from 11am until 1pm and take place simultaneously in Glasgow, Inveraray, Fort William and Inverness.

The workshops will provide an opportunity for officials to address a range of topics, including: Rule Clarification and Interpretation, Payments and Administration, Dealing with Dissent, Communication, Training and Development.

It is important that as many active officials (referees, goal judges and match assessors) as possible attend their nearest workshop.

Travel expenses will be reimbursed and lunch will be provided. The final agenda and venue details will be circulated.

As part of the campaign to recruit additional referees for Division Two in 2016, the above workshop is also intended to provide an initial induction opportunity for new referees, with further training dates to be confirmed prior to the new season starting.

An additional workshop specifically for match assessors will also be organised in February. If you are interested in refereeing in 2016 please contact Astie Cameron, CA Operations and Events Manager, at the earliest opportunity. Email: Astie.Cameron@shinty.com or Tel: 01463 715931 or Mobile: 07912 731295.

Finally, following a vote by members at the recent AGM, the CA is pleased to confirm an increase in match fee (referees) and mileage rate for officials in 2016, rising from £30 to £35 and 40p to 45p respectively.

As discussed on the night of the AGM, the Camanachd Association is currently reviewing the administration of payments to referees on behalf of clubs.

There are likely to be some changes to this process in 2016 and further/final information will be issued to all clubs and officials shortly.

## Double up for Peter Davidson at Glenfinnan shoot

### Shooting

THE END-of-year Glenfinnan Gun Club shoot was held, with a good turn-out of 38 guns.

Peter Davidson had a successful day, taking home both the John MacLeod Memorial Shield and the Joe MacLeod Cup.

Held on a mild and dry day, the second competition, the Duncan Stoddart Memorial Quaich, was won by Fred Lockwood.

Finlay Dempster took the David MacDonald Shield, and the junior prize was won by Michael MacPherson.



Fort William manager Ally Ewen.

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The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

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 Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.



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Oban Camanachd and Oban Camanachd Veterans before their annual New Year fixture at Mossfield Stadium last Saturday.

# Fitness proves to be the deciding factor

Oban Camanachd	3
Camanachd Veterans	1
Friendly fixture	

OBAN Camanachd held their traditional New Year fixture on Saturday at Mossfield Stadium.

The park was in remarkably good condition for this lively encounter.

The Veteran's Team, made up of members of the successful team that won the Scottish Cup in 1996, made a positive start to the game, although they went two goals down in the first-half, both scored by new signing Willie Neilson.

The veterans replied through Fraser Inglis who finished off a fine move involving David Mac-

Cuish and Dougie MacIntyre resulting in a half-time score of 2-1 to Camanachd.

The veterans were rolling back the years and were proving more than a match for their younger opponents. With Alec MacVicar marshalling the defence to good effect, the contest between him and son Daniel MacVicar was proving interesting.

### Welcome return

Making a welcome return to the Camanachd line-up was Andrew 'Papa' MacCuish after a long-term injury.

The game, which was played in a sporting fashion, was over as a contest when James MacMillan, playing in an unaccustomed role up front, completed the scoring.

With legs beginning to weary, Scott Buchanan, the Veteran's goalie, pulled off a string of fine saves to keep the score line respective, ably assisted by substitutes Ian Hay, Gareth Evans and David Devine thus ensuring a good finish to the match which was well handled by referee Billy Wotherspoon.

The presentation of the John Collie Trophy was made by Club Chieftain Ian MacIntyre who presented the cup to winning captain James MacMillan.

Both teams made their way to Coasters for some welcome hospitality.

As the countdown begins to the new season, Camanachd resume training on Tuesday and

### Shinty

Thursday in preparation for up and coming friendlies against Inveraray and Kilmallie.

The club eagerly awaits the 2016 fixtures due to be issued by the Camanachd Association at the end of January.

Team manager Ian Hay said: 'We have provided the Camanachd Association with the necessary information regarding our home allocation of league fixtures and from that info we hope to have a more balanced league programme on a par with other clubs in the Premiership thus ensuring the opportunity of a positive start to the league.'



Fraser Inglis fires the ball past Gavin Stobbart to open the scoring for the Veterans.



Above: Gavin Stobbart saves from Dougie MacIntyre.

Right: Alex MacVicar clears his lines despite the close attention of Malcolm Clark.



Oban Camanachd Under 14 players and their coaches Brian Logan and Steven Sloss with the 9-a-side championship shield.

## Camanachd youngsters retain shield

OBAN Camanachd retained the South Under 14 9-a-side championship on the 3G surface at Lochgilphead Joint Campus last Sunday. They defeated Bute 3-2 in an exciting final.

Bute took the lead in the first minute through Aaron McKirdy but two goals from Ross Campbell gave the red and blacks a 2-1 half-time lead.

Kenny Gray increased the lead but Bute pulled

### Youth shinty

a goal back through Craig MacKay with three minutes to go. However, Camanachd ran the clock down to retain the trophy. Shinty development officer Euan McMurdo, who refereed the game, also handed over the shield and medals to the winners.

# Brave fightback comes just too late for Green Machine

Lenzie	25
Oban Lorne	19
BT West Division 1	

OBAN Lorne travelled to Lenzie RFC for the opening game of 2016 in West Division One.

After a long break in games following a number of cancellations because of bad weather, Oban managed to field a strong squad confident of getting a good result.

The opening 10 minutes of the game saw Oban off to a strong start finding themselves working their way up the park following three strong driving mauls from a quick succession of penalties given away by the home forward pack. However, following a turn over deep in the Lenzie 22, the home side worked themselves upfield and following a strong attacking maul they moved the ball wide to see the open side winger finish off a set of slick hands to touch down in the corner. Try converted: Lenzie 7 - 0 Oban.

Following the kick off, the Green Machine's discipline let them down and allowed the experienced Lenzie stand-off to put over two penalties for a soft six points onto the score board: Lenzie 13 - Oban 0.

This set the tone for the remaining 20 minutes of the first half with Oban working themselves into good attacking situations only to find themselves being turned over at the crucial stage and allowing Lenzie to clear their lines through silly indiscipline.

Lorne then found themselves down to 14 men after Robin MacQueen was yellow carded for a hit off the ball with five minutes left in the half. Lenzie capitalised on this and scored with the closing play of the first half.

Half-time: Lenzie 20 - Oban 0.

Coach Corrie Louw and captain Craig Wright provided the team with some calming words during

half-time. Unfortunately Lenzie took advantage of the extra man before Robin MacQueen was able to return to the field.

David McLaughlin and Vasil Borisov were introduced from the bench to bring a different element to the game and to try and lift Oban early in the second half, with Calum MacLachlan moving back to his schoolboy position of number eight.

Oban then came to life and lifted to a level that they had started the game with. The line out functioned fantastically and the rolling maul was used fantastically and managed to sustain momentum despite Lenzie's attempts to collapse the Green Machine. Tommy Sutherland found himself running over two metres from the Lenzie defenders to put Oban onto the score board for the first time. A solid conversion from Finlay Carmichael: Lenzie 20 - Oban 7.

Oban unfortunately couldn't follow this with a following score and after a strong break from one of the Lenzie back row, Oban found themselves defending against a controlled forward pack and a very loud home crowd. Oban held out well but the overlap was eventually executed by the home side. Lenzie 25 - Oban 7.

Oban now found themselves with 20 minutes left and a substantial deficit to overcome and the pitch conditions where deteriorating. Craig Wright rallied the team under the post and this seemed to transcend through the team.

The forwards were now dominating at scrum time and the flow of the game started to fall in Oban's favour. The accurate boot of Oban's stand off found the forward pack camped in the far right corner of the boggy Lenzie park. Working hard right around the fringes aiming to suck in the

Lenzie defence, the back line was then released with a crisp screen pass and a blind off load, and full back Dave McCabe found himself sliding over the white wash. Another successful conversion brought the score line tighter and you could feel the swing and the silencing of the home support. Lenzie 25 - Oban 14.

The away side now lifted up to a gear they had found in their last game of 2015 and were finding themselves on the dominant side of the contact. With this, Lenzie's discipline slipped substantially with one of their second rows being sent to the sin bin for repeat infringements. Oban capitalised on this and after a long driving maul including back line members, Oban where now five metres from the Lenzie try line.

Pick and go after pick and go they worked themselves into a position to allow for Lorne MacLachlan to drive over the line. Try was unconverted. Lenzie 25 - Oban 19.

The momentum was now truly in favour of the visitors, and there was a strange atmosphere lingering around the ground with the home supporters clearly on edge. Both sides knew there was only a short period of time left and the next score would decide the game.

Lenzie found themselves with possession and yet kicked the ball away to Oban in the dying phases of the game.

Experienced full back Dave McCabe called for the mark to settle the Oban side for what everyone had seen as the last attack. The ball was cleared from the back line by centre Dan Fox and kicked directly into touch by the young Lenzie winger receiving the ball. The crowd were all looking to the referee for the final whistle but it was yet to come.

Oban had one final play. From the half way they set up one of their most devastating rolling mauls of the day. The ball came loose but was kicked through by a Lenzie player into the back field. Through this spell of play, Oban standoff Carmichael weaved and stepped his way through a tired and staggered Lenzie defence, spinning the ball wide to replacement winger Vasil Borisov who was hoping to show a clean pair of heels to the Lenzie defence but was cut down in a speculative high tackle.

The Green Machine found themselves one metre out with the opportunity to have a shot at taking an away win at the start of 2016. Unfortunately, with difficult conditions, the muddy, slippery ball was to play its part on a day where Oban's handling had been very impressive. The ball was spilt and the blast of the referee's

final whistle could be heard over the eruption of the home support.

This was a very disappointing start to the year for Oban Lorne losing against opposition they would be expecting to take a bonus point win from.

Oban Lorne travel to Helensburgh RFC for an Argyll derby match this Saturday. Kick off is 2pm at Ardencaple.

**Narrow defeat for Argyll and Bute**

Shawlands	24
Argyll & Bute	18
BT West Division 4	

A DEPLETED Argyll & Bute team of only 14 players travelled to Dumbreck on Saturday to take on second-placed Shawlands in the first league game of 2016.

Argyll were missing a few key players but were still in confident mood with a strong showing of 14 players.

The men from Argyll made a strong start to the game and were unlucky not to score with the ball being knocked on close to the line. A penalty attempt from Niall MacFarlane was narrowly missed as the visitors sustained some early pressure.

The hosts took the lead after 15 minutes when a handling error in the Argyll backline gifted the Shawlands left winger some easy possession to run clear and touch down in the corner.

With a man advantage, Shawlands created several try-scoring opportunities in the first half but were undone with some poor passing and some fantastic last gasp tackles from the Argyll players.

The Argyll defence did eventually break just before half-time with Shawlands gaining a second try for a 10-0 lead.

Argyll started the second half

### Rugby

well. A successful penalty from MacFarlane reduced the score-line to 10-3 shortly before the hosts ran in their third try of the afternoon for a 17-3 lead.

Despite the three try deficit, Argyll were now beginning to play the better rugby and were starting to dominate a tiring Shawlands pack.

A long period of pressure on the tryline was rewarded first with a MacFarlane penalty then a well worked try from Rufus Stones that reduced the score to 17-13. Argyll were back in the game with 15 minutes to go.

With 10 minutes remaining, Argyll managed to turn the hosts over on the tryline. The resulting clearing kick was misplaced and fell straight into the hands of an onrushing Shawlands player who managed to break a tackle and score over the line.

This was a huge blow for the Argyll men who had been looking to build on their fantastic comeback. Argyll did not let this dampen their spirits as with two minutes to go Mid Argyll's Daniel Broderick finished off a fantastic team try to give Argyll hope in the final two minutes.

The 14 men pushed for a late try to win the game but were eventually turned over with the hosts claiming a 24-18 win.

Despite losing out narrowly Argyll were delighted with their performance and to return north with a losing bonus point. Several players stood out for Argyll, particularly prop Stu Lyth and second row Kyle Graham who are still new players to the game having started playing last season.

Argyll & Bute now have a run of five successive home games starting this Saturday with an Argyll derby at home to Cowal RFC. Kick off is 2pm at Glencruitten.



Argyll and Bute suffered a narrow defeat away to Shawlands last Saturday.

## No hangover as Saints stun last year's Scottish Cup finalists

**Oban Saints 4**  
**Craigshill Thistle 1**  
Scottish Cup Amateur - 5th round

THERE was no sign of a new year hangover as Saints returned to action after the festive break for their biggest fixture of the season so far at Glencruitten last Saturday.

A tremendous all-round team performance earned the D&K Lafferty-sponsored side a thoroughly deserved 4-1 win over Craigshill Thistle, last season's beaten finalists, in the Scottish Amateur Cup fifth round, inflicting the Livingston side's first defeat of the season in the process.

Manager Alex Craik stuck with the same starting 11 that had beaten Postal United in the last round, with Dene Cassells and Keith Millar returning to join Alex, Allan MacKay and Scott Maitland on the bench.

**Look lively**  
Saints started brightly and forced Craigshill keeper Robert Sinclair into action in the second minute with the big keeper having to look lively to punch a Willie Gemmell cross from the left off the head of David McArthur who had made a terrific run to the back post.

At the other end, Saints netminder Thomas McCulloch saw his first action of the afternoon in the sixth minute rising confidently to catch a deep cross from 'Jags' right back Gary White.

Saints opened the scoring in the 13th minute after two brilliant saves from the visiting keeper led to a corner. Donald Campbell rose eight yards out and, despite stretching back, met Ross Maitland's flighted delivery perfectly finding the bottom corner of the net with his header to give Saints the lead.

**Torrid time**  
Ross Maitland was giving the Jags left back Robert McGregor a torrid time on the Saints right and in the 23rd minute he burst through the inside right channel onto a slide rule pass from Donald Campbell, once again leaving Robert McGregor trailing in his wake. Ross unleashed a powerful swerving shot which Robert Sinclair could only parry into the path of Dean Smith who drilled the ball home to double Saints' lead.

The visitors began to exert more of an influence on the game and enjoyed a good period despite being unable to break down the Saints defence, although a free kick deflected off the Saints wall and hit the junction of the post and bar with Thomas McCulloch struggling to get close.

Referee James Gallacher, who was excellent throughout, produced his first yellow card of the match in the 44th minute when a late Donald Campbell challenge on the half way line brought a dangerous looking Craigshill counter attack to a halt.

It was definitely a case of Donald taking 'one for the team' and proved to be worthwhile as the free kick came to nothing and the half ended with Saints in a commanding 2-0 lead.

Saints made a storming start to the second half with a dazzling 20 minute attacking display which eventually made the tie safe.

Saints came close in the 48th minute when Dean Smith delivered an excellent cross from the left, picking out Ross Maitland who had made a good run to the back post. The delightfully cushioned effort off his instep from Ross beat the keeper but slipped agonisingly wide of the post.

More persistence from Dean Smith in the 50th minute won a free kick 20 yards from goal and



Saints' striker Dean Smith is mobbed by his team mates after scoring the third goal against Craigshill. Photos: Stephen Lawson. Match report: Derek Black

slightly left of centre. Willie Gemmell took responsibility for the kick and curled a delicious effort around the wall and onto exactly the same spot on the junction of post and bar that Craigshill had hit in the first half.

From a corner on the right, Willie then produced his own acrobatics with a spectacular bicycle kick which beat Robert Sinclair but the ball flew narrowly over the crossbar.

**Lobbed**  
Dean Smith increased the home team's lead in the 59th minute when he beat the Craigshill off-side trap.

He cleverly lobbed the advancing keeper with the ball rolling into the unguarded net for Dean's second and Saints third goal of the afternoon.

In the 70th minute Freddie Coyle brought down Dean Smith 22 yards from goal and right of centre.

The angle didn't favour a strike on goal from a right footer but Willie Gemmell once again took responsibility and curled a delightful effort around the wall and in off the keeper's right hand post

to give Saints a four-goal lead. In the 73rd minute, a good ball from Craig MacEwan found Donald Campbell who picked out Dean Smith inside the box. With a hat trick firmly in his sights, Dean blazed over the bar when perhaps a lay off to the better placed Ross Maitland would have been the better option.

With the match over as a contest, manager Alex Craik gave all his substitutes some valuable game time as the clock ran down.

In the 79th minute the irrepressible Donald Campbell won possession inside the centre circle and threaded another defence splitting pass sending Dene Cassells through on goal. Dene made a good run and squared the ball to Allan Mackay on the edge of the box whose shot was charged down and the danger cleared.

The consolation goal for the visitors came with just four minutes of the 90 remaining. Substitute Mark Shipton made an excellent run up the left wing and crossed low across the face of goal past the despairing dive of Thomas McCulloch for fellow sub Jason McGowan to hammer the ball

### Football

into the unguarded net. Saints comfortably saw out the remaining time plus the three additional minutes added by Mr Gallacher to secure their place in the sixth round where a trip to face Central Scottish Amateur Football League side Stirling City awaits.

Manager Alex Craik was delighted by the result but more importantly by the performance of his team.

He said: 'We were excellent today. Everyone played their part in a great team performance. We defended well when we had to and always looked dangerous going forward.'

'Make no mistake about it, that was a big scalp we took.'

'If we can keep up that level of football then we are capable of doing really well in the cup this year.'

It's back to league action for Saints on Saturday when they travel to play East Kilbride Rolls Royce at The Murray, kick-off 2pm.

### Scottish Amateur Football League results and fixtures

#### Football

LAST Saturday's results: Scottish Amateur Cup, fifth round - Dunoon 1, Leven United 2; Oban Saints 4, Craigshill Thistle 1; Hall Cup, second round - Carlton YM v Dunoon Athletic, postponed; Premier Division - East Kilbride RR 3, Campbeltown Pupils 0; Premier Division One - Lochgilhead Red Star 0, Kings Park Rangers 3. Premier Division Two - Tarbert v Dumbarnton Wanderers, postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures - Scottish Amateur Cup, fifth round - Campbeltown Pupils v St Patricks FP; Premier Division - East Kilbride RR v Oban Saints; Premier Division One - Motherwell Thistle v Dunoon; Lochgilhead Red Star no game; Premier Division Two - Port Glasgow OBU v Tarbert; Division One - Dunoon Athletic v Rossvale.

### Oban Athletic get back in action

#### Football

OBAN Athletic get back to action after the festive break on Saturday when they travel to take on Argyll rivals Carradale in the first round of the Thomson Trophy.

The following weekend, the Oban side are on their travels again. This time they make the journey to Greenock to play Bellaire in the quarter finals of the League Cup.

### Oban Saints youths results and fixtures

#### Youth football

LAST weekend's results: Under 13s no game; Under 14s 0, Campbeltown Pupils 1; Under 15s no game; Under 16s no game; Under 19s no game.

This weekend's fixtures: Condorrat BC v Under 13s; Under 14s v Milngavie; Under 15s v Under 16s; Under 19s v Dumbarnton United.

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Determination written all over Craig MacEwan's face as he races past two Craigshill defenders.

## Tight at the top in Oban Pool League

OBAN Pool League, sponsored by Gordon and Strathairn Ltd, may have entered another calendar year, but the three apex predators that are Lochnell, Lancaster 'A' and Lochavullin's Cellar showed no signs of a festive hangover.

Last Thursday, Lochnell and Lancaster 'A' faced daunting trips to the Lancaster 'B' and the Gluepot respectively, whilst the Lochavullin's Cellar squared off against basement side Outreach hoping to squeeze the frame difference separating the sides.

True to form, defending champions Lochavullin's Cellar wasted little time in securing the two points, despite a valiant effort from their opponents.

The holders laid their stall out early and never relented in a disciplined performance, yielding only a singles and a doubles match throughout the course of the evening.

With the two points secured

and their own 100 per cent record preserved, they hoped the early result would apply the pressure to their championship rivals.

Last season Lochnell twice had to settle for a share of the spoils against Lancaster 'B' and they would have been forgiven for entering the tie with some apprehension.

That theory was quickly dispersed from the offset, as the goodwill to all men period abruptly came to an end for the hosts. The Ben Lora boys have already reached the summit this season, the question remains will there be a descent?

The reality is it will take more than the firepower of the Lancaster 'B' to knock them off the crest as Lochnell coasted to victory without having to dig into their reserves.

As the campaign unfolds it may be that the Lancaster 'A' just about carry the artillery required, as they showcased against

the Gluepot. A stern test of the title contender's credentials was expected and the Gluepot did win a couple of early frames, but unfortunately for them Lancaster 'A' weren't searching for their car keys just yet. In truth, what followed was a domination as systematically Lancaster 'A' dismantled the Gluepot player by player until the white flag was being waved high overhead.

The Markie Dan's derby provided the league with the first draw of the season, both teams having to settle for a point. This was an opportunity missed by Markie Dan's 'A' to hold onto the big three's coat-tails as complacency kicked in when the winning post was in sight.

Perhaps the friendly atmosphere between the sides contributed to the collapse but nonetheless Markie Dan's 'B' weren't complaining as they finally got off the mark at the fifth time of asking.

The remaining fixture saw an

### Pool

experienced Lochavullin side climb into the top half of the table after a comfortable home victory over the Wide Mouthed Frog.

A couple of familiar faces returned for the hosts, which could be well-timed in their quest to finish in the top five. With their next few matches involving those around them, older wiser heads may be required if they truly want to stake their claim.

Results 7/1/16: Outreach 2-10 Lochavullin's Cellar; Gluepot 2-10 Lancaster A; Markie Dans B 6-6 Markie Dans A; Lancaster B 2-10 Lochnell; Lochavullin 9-3 Wide Mouthed Frog

Fixtures 14/1/16: Lochavullin's Cellar v Lancaster B; Lancaster A v Wide Mouthed Frog; Markie Dans A v Lochnell; Outreach v Markie Dans B; Gluepot v Lochavullin.



Oban Saints Under 14s met their counterparts from Campbeltown Pupils in a Dumbarnton Development League game at the Oban Community 3G pitch last Saturday. The visitors won a close game 1-0 with the goal scored just before half time.

OBAN POOL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE										DOUBLES LEAGUE TABLE									
	P	W	D	L	Ff	Fa	Fd	Pts		P	W	D	L	Ff	Fa	Fd	Pts		
1 Lochnell	5	5	0	0	50	10	40	10	1 Lancaster A	5	4	1	0	22	8	14	9		
2 Lancaster A	5	5	0	0	48	12	36	10	2 Lochnell	5	3	2	0	24	6	18	8		
3 Lochavullin's Cellar	5	5	0	0	45	15	30	10	3 Markie Dans A	5	4	0	1	21	9	12	8		
4 Markie Dans A	5	3	1	1	41	19	22	7	4 Lochavullin's Cellar	5	3	1	1	21	9	12	7		
5 Lochavullin	5	2	0	3	30	30	0	4	5 Lochavullin	5	2	1	2	16	14	2	6		
6 Lancaster B	5	2	0	3	28	30	-4	4	6 Gluepot	5	2	0	3	13	17	-4	4		
7 Gluepot	5	2	0	3	24	36	-12	4	7 Lancaster B	5	2	0	3	13	17	-4	4		
8 Markie Dans B	5	0	1	4	17	43	-26	1	8 Markie Dans B	5	1	2	2	12	18	-6	3		
9 Wide Mouthed Frog	5	0	0	5	9	51	-42	0	9 Wide Mouthed Frog	5	0	0	5	5	25	-20	0		
10 Outreach	5	0	0	5	8	52	-44	0	10 Outreach	5	0	0	5	3	27	-24	0		

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**WEATHER**

**Thursday** Light snow showers  
Winds light west north westerly  
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

**Friday** Cloudy  
Winds light north westerly  
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

**Weekend Outlook** Sunny intervals on Saturday  
Sunny on Sunday  
Winds light north north easterly  
Temperatures -2°C to 4°C.



**Stop Press:** New pontoons recently installed by North West Marine at Kyle Lochboisdale for visiting yachts

**TIDAL INFORMATION**  
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday January 14, 2016 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am	pm	Ardrihaig	Mallaig
Thur	02.20	08.22	-5.35	+0.25
Fri	03.06	09.08	-5.30	+0.55
Sat	03.58	10.00	-0.47	+0.16
Sun	04.59	11.07	2.00	+5.30
Mon	06.10	12.46	+0.30	
Tues	01.00	07.29		
Wed	02.32	08.51		

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

**Ferry Crossings/Sea States**

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

SKERRYVORE'S  
**OBANLIVE**

# Exclusive news inside

Exciting announcement regarding Oban's two-day concert celebrating traditional music

## Alarm for pupils as bus window broken in Calais migrant melee



RECORD BREAKERS: Mark Booker of SCIAF accepts the cheque from Alice Ann MacPherson and Stewart Petrie, with the rest of the school looking on.

### Record-breaking fundraising pupils

THE FUNDRAISING efforts of a Fort William school are to be used as an example to others after pupils raised a record amount for a national charity.

Lochside Primary School's primary seven pupils took part in a Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) project, raising the most by any school in Scotland.

The Talented Fundraisers

Project involved the 22 pupils in Carol Tait's class being given £50 between them to set up enterprises to raise funds. The pupils raised a whopping £1,350, which was presented to Mark Booker, schools officer in Scotland for SCIAF, on Monday.

Mark had previously visited the school in September to discuss the work SCIAF does for people in some of the

world's poorest countries. Head teacher Violet Smith, explained: 'The primary sevens ran the project but everyone in the school was involved in some way. The pupils made lip scrub, body scrub, candle holders, lanterns, Christmas cards, advent calendars and baking, which were all sold at our Christmas fair.'

Primary seven pupil Alice Ann MacPherson, 11, added:

'We also did things like a Christmas hamper, a raffle, guess Santa's birthday and guess the number of sweets in a jar.'

Mark said: 'The school will be used as an example of what it is SCIAF does. We often get asked by schools, 'what can we do to fundraise?', so we will put all the ideas the pupils here had on our youth site and send it out to them too.'

**STEVEN RAE**  
srae@obantimes.co.uk

A COACH carrying Skye school pupils had a window smashed when an incident broke out between migrants and police near the French port of Calais.

The 35 pupils from Portree High School were on their way back to Skye from a ski trip in Italy in the early hours of Sunday, catching a ferry to Dover.

An outer window of double glazing on the coach was broken as it passed through the disturbance according to Highland Council. No one was hurt in the clash.

In a statement, the local authority said on Monday: 'Highland Council has confirmed that all pupils and adults who attended a ski trip in Italy have safely returned.'

'The coach in which 35 pupils and seven adults were travelling was caught up in an incident between police and migrants as they approached Calais in the early hours of Sunday morning. An outer window of double glazing on the coach was broken as it passed through the police

incident. Passengers on the coach were asleep at the time.

'The incident was reported to the police and Border Control at Calais and the coach was deemed safe to continue its journey.'

Despite a report in the national press of one child suffering an epileptic fit, other representatives from the council and the school said everyone on the bus returned home unharmed.

Bill Alexander, Highland Council's director of care and learning said: 'We were alerted to the incident yesterday and parents were informed. This was an unfortunate episode to the end of what was otherwise a very successful school ski trip. All those on the trip have returned safely.'

Portree High School head teacher, Catherine MacDonald, added: 'Everyone has returned home safe and sound from what was a fantastic ski trip with snowsports certificates under their belts.'

'No one was injured as a result of the incident at Calais, which was efficiently dealt with by our coach operator.'

### TIMESLINE

#### Producers forced to make own rain

FILM producers in Glencoe were forced to use a rain machine last week as the area was too dry to film a shot.

Despite the west coast of Scotland being notorious for rain, the company had to create its own for an advert they were shooting.

MTP Production Company, which is based in Glasgow, shot in parts of Glen Etive and Clachaig Inn, using the Kings House Hotel as a base.

The filming will be used for an ident - a logo used between programmes - for Channel 5.

The A82 was also closed for short periods, with police using a rolling road block to avoid delays.

#### Thief steals power tools and booze

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a theft was reported in Fort William.

On the morning of Tuesday, January 5, power tools and alcohol were taken from within a shed outside a house on Lochaber Road. A man was seen running away down Lochaber Road in possession of the stolen items.

Anyone with any information should ring the non-emergency number, 101, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

#### An abundance of bikes with police

POLICE at Fort William Police Station have a large number of bicycles which have been handed in as found property.

Some of these are quite valuable bikes and some are relatively new.

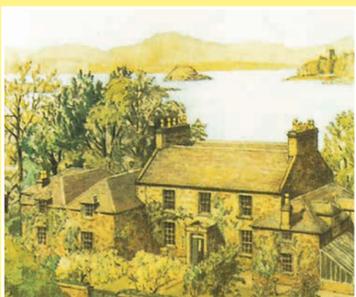
If you have lost a bicycle please call into the station or ring the non-emergency number, 101.



CALAIS CLASH: the pupils were from Portree High School, above.



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### Rotary steps in to help apprentices foot tool bill

LOCHABER Rotary Club is to buy tools for apprentices to help them get work placements.

The young people benefiting, who would normally have to buy their own tools, are employed by the recently-formed Shared Highland Apprentices in Construction (SHAC) group, which secures short-term placements for apprentices in smaller construction companies that traditionally could not fund a full-time post.

Rotary President Terry Lee said: 'The club thought this was an innovative and far-sighted project. Fort William and rural Lochaber have a great many small companies involved in the building and construction industries and the idea of flexible work placements for young apprentices under the secure employment umbrella of SHAC is an excellent idea.'

Katie Yuill, SHAC co-ordinator, thanked the club for its support and said: 'With the support of the Construction Industry Training Board and the Highland Council, we aim to attract and employ more young people in the construction industry.'

### Residents want council tax freeze scapped

RESIDENTS of the Highland Council region want the Scottish Government to scrap the council tax freeze, according to a recent consultation.

People living in the area were asked a range of questions on how they felt the local authority can balance its books better, with the results reported last Friday.

A survey of 2,300 residents revealed 61 per cent of people in the area would accept a five per cent rise in council tax if it meant a protection of services.

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, which represents all the local authorities in Scotland, is against the council tax freeze. A spokesman said: 'We got a crystal clear steer from council leaders in December that the package of measures for local government within the budget, including the council tax freeze, is totally unacceptable.'

However, a Scottish Government spokesman said: 'We have announced a council tax freeze for a ninth consecutive year - a saving of around £1,550 for the average Band D household.'

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# Resident's anger over TV programme plan

STEVEN RAE  
srae@obantimes.co.uk

THE GREEN light could be given to film a television programme in Lochaber, shutting off more than 24,000 square meters of land to the public for a year.

The Channel 4 show, *Eden*, would follow a group of 24 strangers as they try to build a self-sufficient community in the 'wilderness'.

They will spend a year fending for themselves, cut off from the outside world and filmed round-the-clock.

The volunteers, yet to be selected by the production company making the show, will be expected to build their dwellings, hunt for food and grow crops.

The area at Gorteneorn on Ardnamurchan Estate will be exempt from access rights from March this year if it is given the go ahead. Councillors put the issue out to public consultation in October but have yet to send their findings to Scottish Government ministers who will then make a decision.



However, the plans have angered one nearby resident, who claims councillors should not have considered the consultation in the first place.

Margaret Green, 67, was previously the secretary of Acharacle Community Council. She has lived at Ardtoe for

16 years with husband Andrew, 72. Their house overlooks part of the Eden site across Kentra Bay.

Mrs Green claims that the proposals would harm tourism in Ardnamurchan.

'I want it stopped,' she said. 'My husband and I have always

been active in promoting local tourism. It is the mainstay of the Highland economy. And we certainly do not need this television caper here. If the series site gets the go ahead from Scottish ministers then lovely woodland walks and popular stretches of stunning beaches

will be shut off to everyone, particularly holidaymakers.

'I think the closing date for objections to the council was deliberately chosen as December 24 as everyone would be too busy at that time to get around to responding.'

The no-go area near the village is part of the glittering white 'Singing Sands' and woodland with spectacular views westward to the Ardnamurchan Peninsula and the Inner Hebridean Islands of Eigg, Muck and Rum.

The site is flanked on one side by a wartime commando training ground where rusting scraps of barbed wire and spent rifle and machine-gun cartridge cases can still be found in the sand dunes from the Second World War.

The show is set in a similar scenario to *Castaways*, produced in 2000 for the BBC on the uninhabited Harris island of Taransay. However, Mrs Green added: 'The location is neither wild or remote. People live near it.'

A spokeswoman for Highland Council said: 'At a meeting of the council's planning, de-

velopment and infrastructure committee on Wednesday November 4, councillors agreed the draft order could be put out to public consultation and then forwarded on to the Scottish ministers for them to determine. The act requires a 'reasonable' period for consultation and we considered four weeks to be reasonable. All the representations received during the consultation have been forwarded on to the Scottish Government for ministers to determine whether or not the Order is to be confirmed.'

A spokeswoman for KEO Films, the company commissioned by Channel 4 to produce the series, said: 'Keo Films submitted an application to the Highland Council in September and await the decision on this formal process.'

A Scottish Government spokesman said: 'Highland Council has yet to submit a request to Scottish ministers regarding the exemption of access rights at Ardnamurchan. We understand that Highland Council has consulted on a draft section 11 Order and are considering responses.'

## TIMESLINE

### First aid and child protection courses

PEOPLE who want to learn about first aid and child protection are being urged to sign up for courses by the end of this week.

Jane Blanchard of Lochaber Sports Association said Emergency Action Training, based in Caol, would be able to offer the courses after enquiries to the association from the public and other groups.

Jane added: 'Please could any groups or clubs who need to brush up on either course, get in touch by the end of this week and we can then propose a couple of dates.'

Anyone interested should telephone Lochaber Sports Association on: 01631 740 300 or 07733 264 976.

### Curtain up on jazz-themed concert

THE NEXT Lochaber Music for All concert will take place this Saturday (January 16).

The event, in the Ben Nevis Hotel, is a jazz-themed evening featuring the Bill Fleming Quartet, made up of Bill Fleming on saxophone, Paul Tracey on guitar, James Lindsay on double bass and Scott Mackay on drums.

Kicking off at 7.30pm, the group will play a repertoire of jazz greats.

### Bid to ban election posters is rejected

A PROPOSAL to ban election posters in the Highlands has been rejected following a meeting of the local authority.

At a full council meeting on December 17, Liberal Democrat member Carolyn Caddick proposed a motion to ban the posters, calling them an 'eyesore' and said they were off-putting to voters.

However, 40 elected members voted to keep the posters, with only 27 supporting the motion.

### Group's bid to help dementia patients

SMALL changes can make a big difference in helping people with dementia, says a Highland councillor.

This comes after the creation of a working group of elected members, council officers and other relevant bodies to improve life for the 4,200 people in the Highlands living with the illness.

Isobel McCallum, convener of Highland Council, welcomed the new group.

She said: 'Dementia affects many people and it could happen to any of us in the future. It is really important that we all understand more about the condition and what we can do to help in any way we can.'

## Budget team in talks to balance council books

THE HIGHLAND Council's budget team have had crunch talks over Christmas and New Year as it tries to balance the local authority's books.

All managerial positions are to be looked at, meaning even the chief executive's role could be under threat as the beleaguered local authority aims to save £50 million.

The administrative functions of the council will also be considered as part of the review.

Councillors Bill Fernie, Alister Mackinnon, Ben Thompson and Matthew Reiss have been working with council leader Margaret Davidson, discussing the grant for its 2016/17 budget, described by them as 'extremely challenging'.

On January 6, the team met with the council's chief executive and director of finance, Steve Barron, to explore areas where potential savings could be made, and discuss areas they would like to protect from funding cuts.

Mr Barron made the commitment that senior management posts will be further reduced to save money in addition to reductions already made in the last four years.

There was also an 'encouraging' response to voluntary redundancy reported at

the meeting on January 6. Councillors have noted that the packages available may become less attractive in the next financial year as the Scottish Government is planning to introduce a cap on such payments.

Budget leader, councillor Bill Fernie said: 'Over the next 12 months a thorough review of council services and structures will be undertaken to take account of the current financial position. Every post from chief executive downwards will be under review by the Independent Administration to ensure Highland Council services are redesigned to meet the expectations of Highland communities within the resources available to us.'

'We will shortly be continuing discussions with the whole Independent group, the opposition groups and the trade unions.'

'Faced with the fact that we need to save over £50million we need to examine all aspects of the budget.'

At a special meeting of The Highland Council on January 21, the responses from the recent Citizen Panel survey about the budget will be discussed and on February 25 the main budget setting meeting of the council will take place.

## Transport forum's warning over Mallaig ferry changes

FERRY operator CalMac has said ferry services will not be downgraded as it announces a third vessel to serve the Armadale to Mallaig route.

However, a community group on Skye has warned plans to run three boats with a varying timetable would cause 'serious disruption' to passengers.

Sleat Transport Forum, a group set up last year by Sleat Community Council on Skye to address transport issues, has said the new proposals will cause 'confusion and disruption'.

The decision to add the third ferry comes after pressure on both CalMac and Transport Scotland by both the forum and local politicians, amid fears businesses, tourism and local life on Skye could be badly affected by the changes.

The Coruisk ferry currently serves the route, with capacity for 40 vehicles, but it has now been earmarked for Oban to Craignure journeys, which are expected to see a rise in passengers this summer with the introduction of the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).

CalMac has proposed to replace Coruisk with the Lochinvar boat, which can take only 22 cars and has 'inadequate' passenger facilities onboard, according to Sleat Transport Forum. The Lochinvar will be supplemented by runs by the larger Lord of the Isles in



DISAPPOINTED: Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Dave Thompson. f03dthompson01

between serving Lochboisdale (South Uist) from Mallaig, and CalMac announced it will introduce a third vessel, the MV Bhrusda, to aid at peak times. This means there will be three separate timetables over the summer period.

Roddy Murray, the Sleat Transport Forum's chairman, said: 'Businesses in Sleat dependent on tourism require a definitive schedule for the summer season but the lack of a suitable finalised timetable with sufficient capacity leaves them in limbo. CalMac's latest proposal to run three ferries with shoulder and peak period timetables will cause uncertainty, confusion and serious

disruption at Mallaig and at Armadale. It is not considered a viable option.'

The issues were due to be discussed on Tuesday night at the Sleat Community Council meeting.

Dave Thompson, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, has had extensive communications with CalMac and transport minister Derek Mackay, regarding their proposed new ferry provisions. He said he was disappointed the MV Coruisk will be re-deployed to Oban to Mull service. However he added that he 'reluctantly accepted' the extra vessel at peak times, and he would be monitoring the situation.

He said: 'As someone who has been campaigning to keep the MV Coruisk for the Mallaig to Armadale Crossing, I reacted with disappointment at the news that the MV Coruisk will be redeployed to Oban to Mull.'

'From my recent meeting with the Transport Minister, Derek Mackay, I am informed that the expected increase on the Craignure to Oban service is significantly higher than that expected of Mallaig to Armadale service.'

'However, it is welcome news that the MV Bhrusda will take the vessels operating on the crossing from two to three and that there will be greater frequencies of sailings and a significant increase in capacity

## Fort man admits carrying offensive weapon



CAUGHT WITH GARDEN HOE: Gourlay was on trial at Fort William Sheriff Court. f03fortcourt01

A FORT William man has admitted being in possession of an offensive weapon, after being caught carrying a garden hoe in the early hours of the morning to 'frighten' people.

Euan Gourlay, of 43 Wallace Place in the town, pleaded guilty in Fort William Sheriff Court on January 6.

The 47-year-old was seen with the gardening tool on Kennedy Road, near to his home, at 1.45am on July 25 last year after hearing a family friend was in danger, the court heard.

Fiscal deputy Ross Carvel said: 'The accused was seen on CCTV behaving in a suspicious fashion carrying the garden hoe. When he saw police approaching it was thrown towards nearby bins.'

Defending solicitor Brian Allison said his client had left his house to investigate and 'foolishly' took the hoe with him.

He said: 'He was worried about the individual who had been in his company earlier as his wife said there had been some kind of altercation. 'The tool had been bought for legitimate purposes but he rather foolishly took it with him. He took it to frighten off anyone who may have been there rather than to use it.'

Sheriff Richard Davidson deferred sentencing until February 2 for background reports.

## Plan ahead when heading to the mountains

ANYONE planning to venture to the hills this winter has been asked to let someone know where they are going.

Highlands and Islands police and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland say simple precautions such as leaving a planned route with someone to aid rescuers if something goes wrong.

David Monteith from the mountaineering council said: 'Leaving route details is vital if valuable and scarce resources are

not to be wasted in fruitless searches putting others at risk as well as those who have sought help.'

'The Scottish mountains are wonderful in winter but can be unforgiving for the unprepared. Plan ahead, especially regarding your route, weather and avalanche hazard, carry the right equipment and know how to use it.'

'If unsure, find a winter mountaineering course to update those essential skills.'

Superintendent Colin Gough

added: 'At this time of year, people rightly come to the Scottish mountains for the excellent winter sports and mountaineering challenges.'

### Off piste

'Already, people are making winter ascents of technical winter climbs, ascending Munros in full winter conditions and even managing to make some off piste ski descents.'

'We do not want to put anyone off these great outdoor experiences by talking about taking precautions

in case things go wrong, but we are looking for the help and support of the hill-going public to help us to help them if something adverse happens.'

'Police Scotland works with volunteer mountain rescue teams in Scotland to provide a world-class service any time and in any weather.'

'We are, however, increasingly challenged by searches for people who have left minimal or no information regarding their intentions.'

## SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Will your child be five years of age before 28 February 2017? Yes? Then it's time to enrol them for school.

The next school session starts on 16 August 2016. Children who will be five or before 28 February 2017 are eligible to be enrolled for Primary 1. Enrolment will take place week commencing 25 January 2016.

All enrolment information can be found online at [www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment](http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment)

When to enrol your child?	Where	What to bring
3.00pm 25 January - 29 January 2016	Local Primary School	Child's birth certificate Proof of Address

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 Care and Learning Office.

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

### Am bi ur pàiste còig bliadhna a dh'aois ro 28 Gearran 2017? Bidh? Ma-thà, tha an t-àm ann an clàrachadh airson na sgoile.

Bidh an ath sheisean sgoile a' tòiseachadh air 16 Lùnastal 2016. Faodaidh clann a bhios còig air no ro an 28 Gearran 2017a bhith air an clàrachadh airson P1. Bidh an t-seachdain chlàrachaidh a' tòiseachadh air 25 Faoilleach 2016.

Gheibhear fiosrachadh clàrachaidh air-loidhne aig [www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment](http://www.highland.gov.uk/schoolenrolment)

Cuìn a chlàras sibh ur pàiste?	Càite	Dè bheir sibh leibh?
3.00f 25 Faoilleach - 29 Faoilleach 2016	A' Bhun-sgoil Ionadail	Tìteisteanas breith ur pàiste Dearbhadh air seòladh.

Ma tha sibh airson 's gun tèid ur pàiste 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 Cùraim agus Ionnsachaidh na Sgìre.

Chan eil feum air iarrtas airson àite-sgoile airson Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig no dhaibhsan a tha a' aithris air roghainn airson sgoil sheorsaichte.

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## Young farmers lose out on government support

THE SCOTTISH Government has withdrawn financial support for Scotland's largest rural youth organisation, the Scottish Association of Young Farmers' Clubs (SAYFC).

For the last decade, the SAYFC has received an annual grant from ScotGov's education budget, via the Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund. Prior to that, its records show unbroken cash support from the government stretching back to the 1950s.

In the last financial year, the SAYFC's education grant amounted to £66,000 - 13 per cent of the association's annual income - but its grant application for the 2016-17 financial year has been refused and, pending a scheduled meeting with the funding authorities, the organisation does not yet know the reason why the application was refused.

'This is the first time in nearly 70 years that SAYFC will receive no financial support from the Scottish Government, impacting more than 3,500 members across Scotland,' a SAYFC spokeswoman told *The Oban Times* this week.

## Unemployment figures down

LATEST employment figures show that 855 people are currently seeking work in Argyll and Bute - representing less than two per cent of the population.

A total of 590 men and 265 women are looking for employment.

Year-on-year figures show the number of unemployed adults has fallen by 10 per cent in the last year.

# Distraught Yvonne appeals for help to bring Billy home

LOUISE GLEN  
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

THE PARTNER of jailed Connel man Billy Irving is asking for anyone who can help her to come forward as she has 'run out of ideas of what to do'.

Speaking to *The Oban Times* late on Tuesday evening, Yvonne MacHugh, 27, said she was still in shock following the news of her partner's five-year sentence with hard labour in India.

She had believed Mr Irving would be home within the month after taking Foreign Office and legal advice.

Ms MacHugh, who is the mother of Billy's 11-month-old son William, said: 'I am so shocked. Everyone told us it would be okay, that the lawyers would sort it out, that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office would help, that David Cameron would intervene. For years we have believed that. We have believed that no-one in the world would find innocent men guilty.'

'But they have. It seems there is no-one in the world that knows what to do.'

'I cannot tell you how supportive everyone has been. Every single text, or Facebook message or phone call has helped me. They have given me the courage to keep going on.'

'I miss living in Oban and working in Boots. No-one will believe how much I want that life back.'

'We are living in an unprecedented situation. Billy is innocent. The other men are innocent. Why then are they in prison in India? Anyone with any advice or help, or even ideas about what we can do now needs to contact me - or any of the men's partners and families to help us. We are lost right now.'

The men were first arrested in 2013 after their vessel, owned by an American company offering armed protection services to vessels sailing through an area known as 'pirates' alley' between



Yvonne MacHugh with partner Billy and their son William.

the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, was blown off course.

For two years they were living in India with no money and no passports, unable to return home.

This week, evidence and paperwork from ex-paramilitary Billy and 34 of his colleagues failed to convince the India Tuticorin District Court of their innocence, and the judge ruled the proper paperwork for the US-owned anti-piracy ship the MV Seaman Guard Ohio had not been filed and therefore firearms charges against the majority of staff aboard the ship proved them guilty.

The owners of the ship, who reside between Washington, DC and the Philippines, were

unavailable for comment, but it is understood they have spoken with family members to say they have no money to pay wages or to help with lawyers to free the men. The company is still trading and working in the same waters.

Ms MacHugh explained that 35-year-old Billy had made good friends in India who were now like family to him. She said: 'One of Billy's closest friends, Prem, has already been to see him in prison. He said to me, we are going to appeal this and get Billy out on bail. He has asked me not to come out to India until that happens.'

Prem told Ms MacHugh that prison was 'not like it was before'. This time Billy is locked up be-

hind bars with no visits allowed until paperwork is processed.

Campaigners are now calling for Prime Minister David Cameron to step in to have the sentence quashed.

Ms MacHugh said: 'I just hope Billy gets home before William is five and he has missed everything.'

Speaking after the sentencing in India, his British colleagues said they were 'shocked and disgusted at the absurd justice system in India'.

In BBC news footage, the men are seen flanked by more than 50 police officers. Mr Irving appears looking distressed, talking to his colleagues before he steps aboard the prison transport. The 'harsh' sentence has been

condemned by MP Brendan O'Hara, who swiftly called a meeting with the Foreign Office to garner support for a campaign to free the father-of-one.

Mr O'Hara said: 'I met with the Foreign Office minister Hugo Swire MP to discuss this terrible situation and to see what further action the UK government plans to take in light of this verdict and sentence. I put on record my deep disappointment at this news, as many of us expected Billy and his shipmates would be found not guilty and released, particularly as the case was thrown out of court at an earlier hearing.'

'I also expressed my shock at the length of sentence; the maximum possible term of five years' 'rigorous imprisonment'.

'I understand the men will make an immediate application for bail and that they will also be appealing this verdict.'

David Hammond, of Human Rights at Sea, said: 'At the time of writing, this appears to be a travesty of justice for the ordinary crew members who we understand were not aware of instructions being passed down from the employer, and who were otherwise simply doing their job. Human Rights at Sea will be co-ordinating with other non governmental organisations, civil society and UK Government departments to assure support is provided to the families involved, as necessary.'

A Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesman said: 'Our staff in India and the UK have been in close contact with all six men since their arrest to provide support to them and their families, including attending court.'

'Ministers have also raised this case at the highest levels, pressing for delays to be resolved. We recognise what a difficult time this is for those involved. We will continue to provide consular assistance. However, we cannot interfere in another country's judicial process.'

## TIMESLINE

### Fly-past for life-saving 'copter

ROYAL Navy Search and Rescue (SAR) flight, HMS Gannet, is set to say so-long Scotland with a final farewell fly-past, today (January 14).

The Royal Navy's helicopter heroes, who are based at HMS Gannet in Prestwick, have been involved in thousands of Scottish rescues in the 44 years since the unit was first established.

Weather permitting, Royal Navy Sea King helicopters from HMS Gannet will fly-over Prestwick at 10am, Glasgow at 10.30am, Garelochhead at 10.45am, Tyndrum/Crianlarich at 11am, Lochaber at 11.40am, Oban at 12.40pm, Inverlochlarig at 1.05pm, Stirling at 1.25pm, Edinburgh at 1.40pm, Ayr at 2.25pm, back to Prestwick for 2.27pm and finally Troon at 2.30pm.

### Clarification

A STORY in last week's *Oban Times* may have lead readers to believe only librarian posts in Mull are under threat.

The *Oban Times* would like to clarify that librarian posts are at risk throughout Argyll and Bute Council areas under service choices proposals.

A quote attributed to a petition was, in fact, directly attributable to Michael Russell MSP and should have read: 'I support school librarians in their important work and reject the current cuts process.'

### Disruptions

BUSES will replace trains between Crianlarich and Fort William on February 14, 21, and 28. The replacement buses will not serve Upper Tyndrum, Rannoch or Corrour.

Buses will replace trains between Glasgow Queen Street and Oban on March 6, 13, 20 and 27. The buses will not serve Garelochhead Station.

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# What's The Alternative?

WHETHER suffering from chronic pain, insomnia or the effects of stress, Brits are increasingly turning to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) and therapies to find relief. Alternative therapy is used in addition to, or instead of, conventional western medicine, and includes treatments such as massage, herbal medicine and acupuncture.

The use of what are now considered 'alternative' therapies, called 'traditional' therapies by the World Health Organisation (WHO), have been around for millennia - the ancient Greeks practised chiropractic, and archaeologists found medicinal herbs amongst the personal effects of a prehistoric mummified ice man found in the Italian Alps.

Massage therapy dates back thousands of years in places such as Asia, the Middle East and Greece. And while alternative therapies can never replace modern medicine for every condition, according to the WHO, they can be safe and effective with fewer possible side effects.

'Traditional medicine has much to offer, especially as a contribution to primary health care and universal coverage, and most especially at a time when chronic noncommunicable diseases have overtaken infectious diseases as the world's biggest killer,' said Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of the WHO. 'This form of care unquestionably soothes, treats many common ailments, reduces suffering and relieves pain. It also keeps people with minor complaints and illnesses from flooding clinics and emergency wards.'

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'I am interested in all my patients & my practice embraces a wide range of health conditions & referrals. The Well Body Clinics are recognised for their fast, effective results, & excellent patient care & feedback, based on 20 years experience. I specialise in supporting every patient as a unique individual, often from an initial painful or stressful outset, to a balanced maintenance or support programme. Good health is not just about the absence of pain or disease - it's about learning how to best listen and support your body, at all stages of life, & in its daily challenges. In the UK, often we think of health when we are ill. Yet true health is a proactive approach - not turning a blind eye

or ear, but listening, & responding fast to early signals. Our bodies want to be well - we just sometimes need a little help in helping ourselves tap into this.'

Working alongside GP services, her approach is endorsed, for example by one surgery stating 'patient feedback to Tamsin's treatments has been globally positive'. Professional memberships include The Royal Society of Medicine, The British Acupuncture Council, The International Institute of Traditional Herbal Medicine & Aromatherapy, & Bowen UK. Tamsin's own recovery from serious spinal & orthopaedic injury informs her empathic approach.

'My aim as a practitioner is to support each patient from that first step of pain, crisis or illness - working together for fast symptom relief, whilst also addressing the underlying root problem. In Traditional Medicine this is called treating Ben & Biao, Root & Stem. This holistic approach nourishes the Well Body Clinics'. All Appointments: www.wellbodyargyll.co.uk Tel: 01631 760329

### Dragon Spring Taiji and Qigong

A new Taiji beginner class is starting this week teaching the 37 step form. The gentle nature of Taiji makes it suitable for all whatever your age or state of fitness. It is a way of exercise for health and there are many health benefits to gain, such relaxation and enhanced sense of wellbeing. Taiji is also meditation in movement. If you have watched someone doing Taiji, you may have seen a slow and almost mystical kind of movement. The Short Form in its length takes ten minutes to practise, and it is

a great antidote to busy life. The aim for Dragon Spring Taiji is to teach the relevance of Taiji in today's society, how to deal with lives pressures in a non-aggressive way using awareness and creating a deeper connection with yourself.

The first week of an eight week term starts on Thursday 14th January, 7.45, at the Church of Scotland Centre, Glencruitten Rd, Oban. Come along and try the first week to see if it something for you. The cost is £54.



## Trust appoints project manager

A PROJECT development consultant has been appointed by Oban Communities Trust (OCT) to take plans for The Rockfield Centre forward to the next stage.

Andrew Pinkerton, a retired architect from Ayrshire, has extensive experience in community project development, most recently with the successful development of The Atlantic Islands Centre at Cullipool on Luig.

Mr Pinkerton has finalised a briefing document to progress the procurement of a design team for Oban's new centre.

Mr Pinkerton is updating the OCT business plan and formulating a timetable of potential funding.

Gordon McNab, chairman of OCT said: 'We are absolutely delighted to welcome Andrew onboard through the award of funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.'

'Andrew's extensive experience with community project developments is invaluable and allows us to progress our vision and take another step closer to opening the doors at the Rockfield Centre.'

Mr Pinkerton said he was hugely excited at the potential The Rockfield Centre offered.

He said: 'Already the use of the huts is showing the demand there is from the community for the centre.'

'I was really impressed with the turn out for the first AGM, and the feedback and enthusiasm shown by everyone for the plans.'

'This level of support and current use will undoubtedly help with our future funding applications.'

## Luig pagers back in use after mast repair

PHONE pagers on the isle of Luig are finally back in use after mobile company Vodafone brought in engineers to fix the mast.

The pagers allow emergency first responders on the island to be called to an incident from anywhere on Luig. When the pagers are not functioning first responders are unable to leave their homes when on call.

The pagers had been out of commission for 10 weeks before the mast was fixed. It the second time in a number of months that the pagers have been unable to be used.

# Oban town centre in chaos claims the taxi community

LOUISE GLEN  
lglen@obantimes.co.uk

THE TAXI community in Oban is claiming an Argyll and Bute Council project designed to enhance town pavements is causing chaos to drivers and pedestrians.

To allow the work to be carried out, the town's taxi rank has been temporarily moved from Station Square to Station Road.

A representative of the taxi community, who did not want to be named 'because it is the council which issues licences to drive taxis', said: 'We are sick

and tired of being last on the list. This is our business. If someone was to come along and move a shop there would be an outrage.'

'The town centre is in chaos, no one seems to be working on the site and too much is being done at one time.'

'We have been told there would be minimal disruption but already we are having to dodge orange fencing and pedestrians who have no clue where to go. Frankly, it is a mess already.'

But Argyll and Bute Council maintains work has been planned to 'minimise disruption'

and improvements around shopfronts has been planned outside trading hours.

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute Council said: '[Contractor] Land Engineering is aiming to complete the shopfront side of George Street and Station Square first, with the seaward side going ahead last.'

'The work around shopfronts has been planned to minimise disruption, with small sections being completed quickly then handed back to the public, rather than working on large sections of street which would obviously

take more time. The work will start at the roadside of the footway and work in, meaning access is maintained at all times.'

'Any work directly around shopfronts will take place outside trading hours, again keeping the disruptive element of the work to an absolute minimum.'

Land Engineering has a site office at the Rockfield Centre, where people can drop in if they have business or personal queries on the project and speak to the community liaison officer, Luke Hart. He can also be called on 07817 882772 or email:

lukehart@landengineering.co.uk. Over the next few weeks the spokesman said work would be under way to put temporary ramps up to the shops between the Clearing Shop to the Nationwide on George Street.

On Station Square trees and planting beds are being cut down and removed.

Contractors will work 12-hour shifts between 7am and 7pm, Monday to Thursday, with work on Friday finishing at noon.

The council spokesman said there would be no work outside this period.

## Tasty reasons to love the west of Scotland

FROM the world's narrowest hotel to island crossings, a new food and drink initiative has taken the country by gastronomic storm during 2015.

VisitScotland is celebrating the 1,000th awardee of the Taste Our Best accreditation scheme, a quality assurance initiative that recognises eateries that provide and promote quality Scottish produce.

In Argyll and Bute, the number of Taste Our Best accredited businesses has almost doubled in the past 12 months - from 56 in January to 100 in December - while the Highlands has seen scheme members increase from 132 to 216.

Launched in September 2013, Taste Our Best is a joint initiative between the national tourism organisation and the Scottish Government. Assessors rate the overall eating experience, the extent to which Scottish produce is used and promoted, and staff knowledge of the produce on the menu and its provenance.

Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive of VisitScotland, said: 'Scotland can be proud of its natural larder and the Taste Our Best scheme recognises that.'

'Not only does it indicate to visitors that the establishment believes in quality but it also shows they are committed to promoting local produce and giving customers a true taste of Scotland.'

'From restaurants to Scotland's built heritage, chippies to ferries, Taste Our Best is open to any business with a food and drink offering.'

'With research finding that three out of four visitors think eating local cuisine will enhance their visit, Taste Our Best really is a recipe for success.'

## High level of response to survey

AN ARGYLL and Bute budget consultation which closed on December 31 saw one of the highest levels of response in the authority's history.

More than 1,000 people replied to the consultation online, more than 1,000 gave views via the council's Citizens Panel, more than 300 responded through its Third Sector partners, 60 took time to attend focus groups, while 60 people replied on paper copies of the survey.

## Band's thank you party attracts big crowd

TRAIL West's party to thank members of the public who raised money after the band's mini-bus and equipment was stolen in Glasgow saw a capacity crowd at Queen Margaret's Union in Glasgow last Saturday night.

Celebrity friends including Daniel and Martin Gillespie from Skerryvore were joined by Skipinnish youngsters Robert Robertson, Ross Wilson and Kyle Orr along with Micheal Steele of Dun Mor Ceilidh Band.

Iain Smith from Trail West said: 'Terrific night at our crowd-funding thank you dance at the QMU on Saturday.'

'Big thanks to Martin, Daniel, Robert, Ross, Kyle, Micheal and Rory for joining us on stage.'

'We're delighted to have raised £297.21 for the RNLI so thanks to everyone who donated to that.'

'We also recorded the whole night so will be sharing some tracks in the next few weeks.'



ON SONG: Trail West gave a thank you concert to everyone who donated cash after £14,000 worth of equipment was stolen and needed to be replaced.

## Businessman from Argyll hits big time with high street in your hand

A BUSINESSMAN from Argyll has hit the big time with his online shopping mall, with the business ranking an incredible second place in the online shopping category on Google in the two days before Christmas.

Taking a huge part of the sales, Mallzee, a small internet business, took on international companies including Ebay and Argos to become one of the best-performing companies for its size in the UK over the Christmas period.

Sitting just behind Amazon for online hits, the business's computer and smart phone technology allows shoppers from all over the world to buy in various online shops - just as anyone would do in a shopping centre or high street.

Chief executive Cally Russell, from Argyll, was inspired to start his business at the age of 12, when a school enterprise project promoted throughout the region encouraged him to get into business.

Cally, 27, said: 'I guess I was always a bit of an entrepreneur. My parents used to get me involved in local fundraising activities, and even at the age of six, I was incredibly competitive and always had to sell the most raffle tickets at events.'

'Then at the age of 12, I started going to car boot sales and making my own money.'

'When I was a bit older, I set up a mobile DJ business which took me to various venues in and around Argyll.'



Cally Russell whose Mallzee business has become one of the top performing websites over the Christmas period.

## Snagging repairs still not complete

SNAGGING works at the Stafford Street pedestrianised area in Oban are still not completed in spite of guarantees at the last area committee of Argyll and Bute Council that they would be finished before the end of 2015.

Outstanding problems with the textured glass, initially attributed to young people on bikes and skateboards damaging the area, and planting and seating concerns alongside the fragility of some of the areas have been brought to the attention of the contractor. The area opened in July and was officially launched in November.

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesman said: 'The outstanding works are detailed in the attached paper to the Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area Committee on December 9 2015. We have instructed the contractor to carry out these works and are currently awaiting confirmation of dates from them. Obviously the account will not be settled until such time as this outstanding work is completed.'

It is understood that Argyll and Bute Council has retained a small amount of the payment until all snagging works have been completed.

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## Eye to eye with John Wallace

### Your New Year Resolution

When you celebrated the New Year did you make a New Year's resolution? More to the point, have you kept it? I must admit to a little self-satisfaction. I had a list of seven different areas of my life I felt I could do better. (No nasty comments about what I should do, please. I have had plenty of ribbing from the family.) Rather than have a long list of failed resolutions I decided to have just one thing I resolved to see through to completion. Two weeks into the New Year I am managing to stick to my resolution. It's not been easy. Life has a nasty habit of interfering with the best of our intentions.

Probably the most frequently broken resolution is about taking better care of our bodies. It could be about losing weight, getting more exercise, stopping drinking or stopping smoking or many other facets of life. One resolution you could make and very easily keep

is to arrange an eye examination for yourself and other members of your family. The recommended interval for having an eye examination is two yearly for adults and annually for children and senior citizens. Sadly, the majority of children never have an eye examination whilst of school age and most adults only return every three years.

Children are our seed corn for the future. One in five children under-perform in school due to undetected or inadequately treated vision problems. They rely on us "oldies" to lead by example. Adults should know better. I never ceased to be amazed by patients turning up twenty years after their last eye examination, never having had another examination! We are born with two eyes. We should do everything in our power to maintain clear vision. Book your appointment today and keep your New Year resolution.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP  
**Wallace Optometrists**  
The West Highland Orthokeratology Clinic  
11/12 Argyll Square, Oban  
**Tel: 0845 230 3937 (EYES)**  
www.wallaceoptometrists.co.uk

## Inspectors heap praise on Lomond School after three-day visit

DURING a three-day visit to Lomond School, in Helensburgh, HM Inspectors of Education found consistently high-quality learning experiences, a wide range of learning pathways, the best Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) attainment results for five years and outstanding approaches to outdoor learning.

A strong culture of self-evaluation and continuous improvement has resulted in 'joined up thinking and a shared purpose across the nursery, junior and senior stages' and the inspectorate team are confident that under the 'astute, inspiring leadership' of Principal Johanna Urquhart, Lomond School will go from strength to strength.

The lead inspector noted the strong pastoral and collegiate ethos of the school, praising the 'sensitive, well-judged support' for pupils and the 'outward looking' staff who 'know the pupils well as individuals'.

This was attributed to the school's core guiding principles: internationalism, environmentalism, adventure, leadership, lifelong learning and service, which are delivered through both the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Inspectors commented on the positive impact of new posts such as Head of Adventure and Service, Head of E-Learning and Digital Strategy and Head of Careers and Future Destinations, which ensure that all young people readily take responsibility for their learning and develop a 'wide range of skills and attributes to prepare them for life, learning and the world of work'.

Mrs Urquhart, said: 'At Lomond School, we passionately believe that ed-

ucation should be about supporting our young people to be the best they possibly can be.

'We want to help them to develop and grow - academically and personally - into rounded individuals, in possession of strong values and mighty hearts and who are ultimately prepared to embark confidently and successfully on their life beyond Lomond School.'

'The inspection was a hugely positive experience for our school and I am delighted with the feedback.'

'An important feature of this visit was for Education Scotland to be confident that the school has the capacity to self-evaluate and continue to improve autonomously.'

'We were thrilled with the glowing feedback, and also with the fact that the team agreed with all of our plans for the future direction of our school.'

Lomond School currently has approximately 400 day and boarding pupils aged from three to 18 years old, and provides an all through experience from nursery to S6 as well as after school and holiday care. Lomond School was founded in 1977 and in 2017 will begin celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Chairman of the Board of Governors, Alastair Hope said: 'We will, inevitably, be looking back across the school's history but the school has great ambitions for the future and will keep driving forward, doing the best for its pupils.'

'It was particularly gratifying to gain such positive feedback about the leadership team of the school and to hear that the children and young people are justifiably proud of their school.'

## Is your child eligible for Free Early Learning and Childcare?

For children born - 1st March 2013 - 28th February 2014.

Registration for free 'Early Learning and Childcare' will take place at Oban's 1st Steps Day Nursery, Croft Road  
\*Please bring your wee ones birth certificate when registering

Do come along to our nursery during registration week 1st to 5th February.

Open morning 9.30 to 10.30 on Tuesday 2nd of February 2016

We look forward to meeting you



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FW

# No hangover as Saints stun last year's Scottish Cup finalists

Oban Saints	4
Craigshill Thistle	1
Scottish Cup Amateur - 5th round	

THERE was no sign of a new year hangover as Saints returned to action after the festive break for their biggest fixture of the season so far at Glencruitten last Saturday.

A tremendous all-round team performance earned the D&K Lafferty-sponsored side a thoroughly deserved 4-1 win over Craigshill Thistle, last season's beaten finalists, in the Scottish Amateur Cup fifth round, inflicting the Livingston side's first defeat of the season in the process.

Manager Alex Craik stuck with the same starting 11 that had beaten Postal United in the last round, with Dene Cassells and Keith Millar returning to join Alex, Allan MacKay and Scott Maitland on the bench.

### Look lively

Saints started brightly and forced Craigshill keeper Robert Sinclair into action in the second minute with the big keeper having to look lively to punch a Willie Gemmell cross from the left off the head of David McArthur who had made a terrific run to the back post.

At the other end, Saints net-minder Thomas McCulloch saw his first action of the afternoon in the sixth minute rising confidently to catch a deep cross from 'Jags' right back Gary White.

Saints opened the scoring in the 13th minute after two brilliant saves from the visiting keeper led to a corner. Donald Campbell rose eight yards out and, despite stretching back, met Ross Maitland's flighted delivery perfectly finding the bottom corner of the net with his header to give Saints the lead.

### Torrid time

Ross Maitland was giving the Jags left back Robert McGregor a torrid time on the Saints right and in the 23rd minute he burst through the inside right channel onto a slide rule pass from Donald Campbell, once again leaving Robert McGregor trailing in his wake. Ross unleashed a powerful swerving shot which Robert Sinclair could only parry into the path of Dean Smith who drilled the ball home to double Saints' lead.

The visitors began to exert more of an influence on the game and enjoyed a good period despite being unable to break down the Saints defence, although a free kick deflected off the Saints wall



Saints' striker Dean Smith is mobbed by his team mates after scoring the third goal against Craigshill. Photos: Stephen Lawson. Match report: Derek Black

and hit the junction of the post and bar with Thomas McCulloch struggling to get close.

Referee James Gallacher, who was excellent throughout, produced his first yellow card of the match in the 44th minute when a late Donald Campbell challenge on the half way line brought a dangerous looking Craigshill counter attack to a halt.

It was definitely a case of Donald taking 'one for the team' and proved to be worthwhile as the free kick came to nothing and the half ended with Saints in a commanding 2-0 lead.

Saints made a storming start to the second half with a dazzling 20 minute attacking display which eventually made the tie safe.

Saints came close in the 48th minute when Dean Smith delivered an excellent cross from the left, picking out Ross Maitland who had made a good run to the back post. The delightfully cushioned effort off his instep from Ross beat the keeper but slipped agonisingly wide of the post.

More persistence from Dean Smith in the 50th minute won a free kick 20 yards from goal and

slightly left of centre. Willie Gemmell took responsibility for the kick and curled a delicious effort around the wall and onto exactly the same spot on the junction of post and bar that Craigshill had hit in the first half.

From a corner on the right, Willie then produced his own acrobatics with a spectacular bicycle kick which beat Robert Sinclair but the ball flew narrowly over the crossbar.

### Lobbed

Dean Smith increased the home team's lead in the 59th minute when he beat the Craigshill off-side trap.

He cleverly lobbed the advancing keeper with the ball rolling into the unguarded net for Dean's second and Saints third goal of the afternoon.

In the 70th minute Freddie Coyle brought down Dean Smith 22 yards from goal and right of centre.

The angle didn't favour a strike on goal from a right footer but Willie Gemmell once again took responsibility and curled a delightful effort around the wall and in off the keeper's right hand post

to give Saints a four-goal lead. In the 73rd minute, a good ball from Craig MacEwan found Donald Campbell who picked out Dean Smith inside the box. With a hat trick firmly in his sights, Dean blazed over the bar when perhaps a lay off to the better placed Ross Maitland would have been the better option.

With the match over as a contest, manager Alex Craik gave all his substitutes some valuable game time as the clock ran down.

In the 79th minute the irrepressible Donald Campbell won possession inside the centre circle and threaded another defence splitting pass sending Dene Cassells through on goal. Dene made a good run and squared the ball to Allan Mackay on the edge of the box whose shot was charged down and the danger cleared.

The consolation goal for the visitors came with just four minutes of the 90 remaining. Substitute Mark Shipton made an excellent run up the left wing and crossed low across the face of goal past the despairing dive of Thomas McCulloch for fellow sub Jason McGowan to hammer the ball

### Football

into the unguarded net. Saints comfortably saw out the remaining time plus the three additional minutes added by Mr Gallacher to secure their place in the sixth round where a trip to face Central Scottish Amateur Football League side Stirling City awaits.

Manager Alex Craik was delighted by the result but more importantly by the performance of his team.

He said: 'We were excellent today. Everyone played their part in a great team performance. We defended well when we had to and always looked dangerous going forward.'

'Make no mistake about it, that was a big scalp we took. If we can keep up that level of football then we are capable of doing really well in the cup this year.'

It's back to league action for Saints on Saturday when they travel to play East Kilbride Rolls Royce at The Murray, kick-off 2pm.



Determination written all over Craig MacEwan's face as he races past two Craigshill defenders.

## Scottish Amateur Football League results and fixtures

LAST Saturday's results: Scottish Amateur Cup, fifth round - Dunoon 1, Leven United 2; Oban Saints 4, Craigshill Thistle 1; Hall Cup, second round - Carlton YM v Dunoon Athletic, postponed; Premier Division - East Kilbride RR 3, Campbeltown Pupils 0; Premier Division One - Lochgilhead Red Star 0, Kings Park Rangers 3. Premier Division Two - Tarbert v Dumbarton Wanderers, postponed.

This Saturday's fixtures - Scottish Amateur Cup, fifth round - Campbeltown Pupils v St Patricks FP; Premier Division - East Kilbride RR v Oban Saints; Premier Division One - Motherwell Thistle v Dunoon; Lochgilhead Red Star no game; Premier Division Two - Port Glasgow OBU v Tarbert; Division One - Dunoon Athletic v Rossvale.

## Oban Athletic get back in action

OBAN Athletic get back to action after the festive break on Saturday when they travel to take on Argyll rivals Carradale in the first round of the Thomson Trophy.

The following weekend, the Oban side are on their travels again. This time they make the journey to Greenock to play Bellaire in the quarter finals of the League Cup.

## Oban Saints youths results and fixtures

LAST weekend's results: Under 13s no game; Under 14s 0, Campbeltown Pupils 1; Under 15s no game; Under 16s no game; Under 19s no game.

This weekend's fixtures: Condorrat BC v Under 13s; Under 14s v Milngavie; Under 15s v Under 16s; Under 19s v Dumbarton United.

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## Tight at the top in Oban Pool League

OBAN Pool League, sponsored by Gordon and Strathearn Ltd, may have entered another calendar year, but the three apex predators that are Lochnell, Lancaster 'A' and Lochavullin's Cellar showed no signs of a festive hangover.

Last Thursday, Lochnell and Lancaster 'A' faced daunting trips to the Lancaster 'B' and the Gluepot respectively, whilst the Lochavullin's Cellar squared off against basement side Outreach hoping to squeeze the frame difference separating the sides.

True to form, defending champions Lochavullin's Cellar wasted little time in securing the two points, despite a valiant effort from their opponents.

The holders laid their stall out early and never relented in a disciplined performance, yielding only a singles and a doubles match throughout the course of the evening.

With the two points secured

and their own 100 per cent record preserved, they hoped the early result would apply the pressure to their championship rivals.

Last season Lochnell twice had to settle for a share of the spoils against Lancaster 'B' and they would have been forgiven for entering the tie with some apprehension.

That theory was quickly dispersed from the offset, as the goodwill to all men period abruptly came to an end for the hosts. The Ben Lora boys have already reached the summit this season, the question remains will there be a descent?

The reality is it will take more than the firepower of the Lancaster 'B' to knock them off the crest as Lochnell coasted to victory without having to dig into their reserves.

As the campaign unfolds it may be that the Lancaster 'A' just about carry the artillery required, as they showcased against

the Gluepot. A stern test of the title contender's credentials was expected and the Gluepot did win a couple of early frames, but unfortunately for them Lancaster 'A' weren't searching for their car keys just yet. In truth, what followed was a domination as systematically Lancaster 'A' dismantled the Gluepot player by player until the white flag was being waved high overhead.

The Markie Dan's derby provided the league with the first draw of the season, both teams having to settle for a point. This was an opportunity missed by Markie Dan's 'A' to hold onto the big three's coat-tails as complacency kicked in when the winning post was in sight.

Perhaps the friendly atmosphere between the sides contributed to the collapse but nonetheless Markie Dan's 'B' weren't complaining as they finally got off the mark at the fifth time of asking.

The remaining fixture saw an

### Pool

experienced Lochavullin side climb into the top half of the table after a comfortable home victory over the Wide Mouthed Frog.

A couple of familiar faces returned for the hosts, which could be well-timed in their quest to finish in the top five. With their next few matches involving those around them, older wiser heads may be required if they truly want to stake their claim.

Results 7/1/16: Outreach 2-10 Lochavullin's Cellar; Gluepot 2-10 Lancaster A; Markie Dans B 6-6 Markie Dans A; Lancaster B 2-10 Lochnell; Lochavullin 9-3 Wide Mouthed Frog

Fixtures 14/1/16: Lochavullin's Cellar v Lancaster B; Lancaster A v Wide Mouthed Frog; Markie Dans A v Lochnell; Outreach v Markie Dans B; Gluepot v Lochavullin.



Oban Saints Under 14s met their counterparts from Campbeltown Pupils in a Dumbarton Development League game at the Oban Community 3G pitch last Saturday. The visitors won a close game 1-0 with the goal scored just before half time.

OBAN POOL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE											DOUBLES LEAGUE TABLE										
	P	W	D	L	Ff	Fd	Pts		P	W	D	L	Ff	Fd	Pts						
1 Lochnell	5	5	0	0	50	10	40	10	1 Lancaster A	5	4	1	0	22	8	14	9				
2 Lancaster A	5	5	0	0	48	12	36	10	2 Lochnell	5	3	2	0	24	6	18	8				
3 Lochavullin's Cellar	5	5	0	0	45	15	30	10	3 Markie Dans A	5	4	0	1	21	9	12	8				
4 Markie Dans A	5	3	1	1	41	19	22	7	4 Lochavullin's Cellar	5	3	1	1	21	9	12	7				
5 Lochavullin	5	2	0	3	30	30	0	4	5 Lochavullin	5	2	2	1	16	14	2	6				
6 Lancaster B	5	2	0	3	28	30	-4	4	6 Gluepot	5	2	0	3	13	17	-4	4				
7 Gluepot	5	2	0	3	24	36	-12	4	7 Lancaster B	5	2	0	3	13	17	-4	4				
8 Markie Dans B	5	0	1	4	17	43	-26	1	8 Markie Dans B	5	1	2	2	12	18	-6	3				
9 Wide Mouthed Frog	5	0	0	5	9	51	-42	0	9 Wide Mouthed Frog	5	0	0	5	5	25	-20	0				
10 Outreach	5	0	0	5	8	52	-44	0	10 Outreach	5	0	0	5	3	27	-24	0				

## SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

T Brown Breadalbane St Oban

S Fraser Menzies Terrace Fintry

## THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £1800

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.

**Easy to enter**  
Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.  
You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

**Competition rules**  
No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.  
The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.  
If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

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 Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses. The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB



Please tape your £1 coin here

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Tel No .....

## Shinty stalwart decides to hang up his caman after 20 years

A LOCAL shinty stalwart has hung his stick up after more than two decades in the game.

John Stewart, 36, played with Caol side Kilmallie for the last 21 years, both as a wing forward and then a full forward. He announced his retirement on Monday, with a long-term injury bringing his career to a close.

John has been suffering from rheumatoid arthritis since 2012, causing him 'almost unbearable' pain at times, especially in his feet.

John, who played for Scotland for more than 12 years, said: 'With pre-season due to start tomorrow night it's with a heavy heart I've to finally admit defeat to the injuries and hang up the stick and boots on my shinty career.'

'Most of last season I have been at the stage where I can't train during the week and only just manage to play at full forward. I can remember saying when I

### Shinty

was younger I didn't want to ever be that type of player who stands up there and can hardly move. I can hear people saying, 'he's been doing that for years.'

'It's just the way a lot of shinty players are - you'll almost do anything to try and play.'

'I still managed to contribute 19 goals in my last season but it was overall a disappointment that we didn't get promoted to the Premier League.'

'I'd like to wish the first team all the success in 2016 and I think they will be playing Premier League shinty in 2017.'

John said he would now be focusing on his family more, and found breaking the news to shinty-mad son Harry, three, particularly difficult.

He also thanked a number of people who have helped him along the way in his career,



Davie Corrigan, right, from league sponsors Marine Harvest, presents Kilmallie captain John Stewart with the North Division 1 championship trophy in 2013.

including his wife Amy and mum Jill, and dozens of players and coaches. Highlights of his career include winning the North Division One in 1998, 2010 and 2013 as well as the bitter-sweet feeling of getting to the Camanachd Cup Final in 2005, only to lose to local rivals Fort William.

He also enjoyed his experience

as an international in the shinty/hurling matches against Ireland, including scoring the only goal of the game for Scotland v Ireland at Nowlan Park, Kilkenny in 2008.

Kilmallie manager Mark MacPherson paid tribute to John, who had captained the club in recent years.

The pair played together for

around 12 years until Mark took the reins as first team coach last season. Everyone at the club holds John in the very highest regard,' said Mark.

'He's been an absolutely brilliant servant to Kilmallie Shinty Club, all the players looked up to him. I know I can speak for all the boys when I say that he

gave everything to the cause. He had trouble with his feet for a few years and had been playing through the pain barrier.

'I had a good conversation with him at the start of the week and the door is open for him to come back in some capacity if he ever wants to, but after all these years he's due a break.'



John Stewart's number one fans, son Harry and daughter Ruby, in their Kilmallie tops.

## Fort William face tough test away to league leaders

FORT WILLIAM travel to face league leaders Brora Rangers this weekend, with the club management under no illusions how difficult a task they face.

The Lochaber side's New Year got off to a false start on Saturday, when their first fixture was postponed. The pitch at Claggan Park was deemed unplayable due to the freezing conditions, meaning the Press and Journal Highland League tie against Keith will be replayed at a later date. Manager Ally Ewen did put his players through their paces in a closed-door friendly, however, in a bid to boost match fitness, as they aim to claw themselves



Fort William manager Ally Ewen.

up from second-bottom of the division.

Ewen's side make the near three-hour journey to Dudgeon Park on Saturday to face Brora, who have scored an incredible 100 goals already this season in 25 games.

The Sutherland side are hot favourites to take the title this season and make it three-in-a-row in the league's top tier.

Fort vice-chairman David McDonald said the side would go into the game hoping that they could cause Brora some problems.

'Hopefully we can frustrate them,' he said.

'We need to believe before every game we can take something out of it. The last time we played them we never got playing until we were 3-0 down, and managed to bring it back to 3-2 and then 5-3, and missed a last minute penalty. So you never know what could happen.'

'One problem this season has been consistency of competitive games. You might play one game then be off the next two or three weeks. You can always do some training but it doesn't get the lads match fit.'

'But by the looks of the schedule we could be playing Saturdays and Wednesdays almost until the end of the season now with

### Football

the fixtures we still have to play, which I'm sure the lads will be happy with.'

Manager Ewen will have the option of playing three young signings who have boosted his squad in the past few weeks, including one who signed from this Saturday's opponents.

Adam Porritt, 21, who can play in a number of positions, has signed an 18-month contract with Fort, after more than two years playing with Brora. Described by manager Ewen as having an 'amazing range of passing, allied with a keen eye for goal', it's hoped he can add some firepower to the side.

Joining Adam is Conor MacPhee, 17, who moves from Clachnacuddin, having risen through the ranks since starting with the Inverness side aged just six. He has already made one appearance for Fort William against Buckie Thistle as a trialist at right-back.

Striker Scott Davidson makes up the hat-trick of signings for Fort, having signed at the turn of the year. Scott has already scored a brace for the club, against Hilton FC on January 6.

Saturday's tie with Brora kicks-off at 3pm.



## Michael 'splodges' to victory

Pictured above are competitors setting off through the woods before looping back to the waterside in the Lochaber Athletics Club Riverbank Splodge on Sunday.

### First

Leading the pack of 60 runners on the day was Michael Bossard, of Lochaber Athletics Club, who

### Athletics

came first in a time of 51 minutes and 24 seconds. First female was Kate Jenkins of Gala Harriers, with a time of 1:02:10. First junior male under-23 went to Steven Burns of Lochaber, in 55:54.

Picture: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

## Ross Sutherland pay a visit to Banavie

RAIN stopped play at the weekend for Lochaber Rugby Club, whose BT Caledonia North League Two North fixture against Garioch was postponed.

### Flooded

Inverurie, where Garioch are based, was one of several areas across Aberdeenshire severely flooded on Friday after the River Don burst its banks.

The Garioch team, along with some other local teams, spent the weekend helping clean up the aftermath of the flood.

With the division's top side, Highland, on 96 points, and second-place Garioch 22 points adrift, promotion now looks all-but-impossible for Lochaber this season, who are sixth with 45 points.

### Rugby

Stewart Sandison's, men play hosts to Ross Sutherland this Saturday, hoping to take full points and close the gap between them and Moray, who are just two points ahead in fifth place.

The tie gets under way at 2pm in Banavie.

## Shinty match officials workshop

### Shinty

A SERIES of workshops will take place across the country on Saturday January 16 to bring all match officials together prior to the start of the new shinty season.

These workshops form an important part of a wider programme of training and development activity being supported by the Camanachd Association during 2016 in line with the agreed Strategic Plan for Shinty.

The pre-season workshops will run from 11am until 1pm and take place simultaneously in Glasgow, Inveraray, Fort William and Inverness.

The workshops will provide an opportunity for officials to address a range of topics, including: Rule Clarification and Interpretation, Payments and Administration, Dealing with Dissent, Communication, Training and Development.

It is important that as many active officials (referees, goal judges and match assessors) as possible attend their nearest workshop.

Travel expenses will be reimbursed and lunch will be provided. The final agenda and venue details will be circulated.

As part of the campaign to recruit additional referees for Division Two in 2016, the above workshop is also intended to provide an initial induction opportunity for new referees, with further training dates to be confirmed prior to the new season starting.

An additional workshop specifically for match assessors will also be organised in February. If you are interested in refereeing in 2016 please contact Astie Cameron, CA Operations and Events Manager, at the earliest opportunity. Email: Astie.Cameron@shinty.com or Tel: 01463 715931 or Mobile: 07912 731295.

Finally, following a vote by members at the recent AGM, the CA is pleased to confirm an increase in match fee (referees) and mileage rate for officials in 2016, rising from £30 to £35 and 40p to 45p respectively.

As discussed on the night of the AGM, the Camanachd Association is currently reviewing the administration of payments to referees on behalf of clubs.

There are likely to be some changes to this process in 2016 and further/final information will be issued to all clubs and officials shortly.

## Double up for Peter Davidson at Glenfinnan shoot

THE END-of-year Glenfinnan Gun Club shoot was held, with a good turn-out of 38 guns.

Peter Davidson had a successful day, taking home both the John MacLeod Memorial Shield and the Joe MacLeod Cup.

Held on a mild and dry day, the second competition, the Duncan Stoddart Memorial Quich, was won by Fred Lockwood.

Finlay Dempster took the David MacDonald Shield, and the junior prize was won by Michael MacPherson.

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**WEATHER**

**Thursday** Light snow showers  
Winds light west north westerly  
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

**Friday** Cloudy  
Winds light north westerly  
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

**Weekend Outlook** Sunny intervals on Saturday  
Sunny on Sunday  
Winds light north north easterly  
Temperatures -2°C to 4°C.

**Stop Press:** New pontoons recently installed by North West Marine at Kyle Lochboisdale for visiting yachts

**TIDAL INFORMATION**  
Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday January 14, 2016** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am				pm			
Thur	02.20	0.8	08.22	3.9	14.51	1.0	20.33	3.6
Fri	03.06	0.9	09.08	3.8	15.40	1.1	21.20	3.4
Sat	03.58	1.1	10.00	3.6	16.36	1.3	22.14	3.2
Sun	04.59	1.3	11.07	3.3	17.41	1.5	23.24	3.1
Mon	06.10	1.4	12.46	3.2	18.52	1.5	**	**
Tues	01.00	3.0	07.29	1.5	14.19	3.3	20.04	1.5
Wed	02.32	3.2	08.51	1.4	15.27	3.4	21.12	1.4

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		

**Ferry Crossings/Sea States**

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate