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& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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DRIVING FORCE

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Dunbeg residents hit out at lack of infrastructure

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ANGRY Dunbeg residents are determined to oppose any new houses being built until there is a new roundabout, school and improvements to roads.

A 'masterplan' envisioning 600 new houses between Dunbeg and Ganavan as a 'gateway' to Oban was unveiled at a public meeting on Friday January 13.

If endorsed by Argyll and Bute Council, the Dunbeg Corridor Masterplan will allow developers to build 'a mix of for-sale units and multi-tenure affordable homes' on vacant land north of the A85 between Dunbeg and Ganavan. Social landlord

Link Group set out its vision to expand both by 'a series of new neighbourhoods' in a 'coastal woodland settlement', to act as a 'catalyst for ancillary shops, cafes and community uses' and 'increase employment opportunities'.

However, residents argue that more development requires a bigger primary school – the current one will be close to capacity next year – and a roundabout at Dunbeg's busy A85 junction, described as a 'death trap' according to a 900-signature petition. Residents are also calling for an upgrade to the rutted Kirk Road, used by hundreds each day driving to SAMS, the European Marine Science Park, a WHHA

housing estate and Dunstaffnage Castle.

Frustration boiled over last Thursday at Dunbeg Community Council's heated public meeting to discuss the masterplan.

One resident said: 'They said years ago the infrastructure would go in, but it was all pie in the sky. No more houses until the roads and school are finished.'

Chairman Sean MacIntyre agreed, saying the community feels let down by confusing, conflicting information, adding: 'The community council is as much in the dark as you are. We did ask a couple of people if the roundabout is going ahead. One said yes and one said "no – we need funding". We were told the

roads were going in first, then we were told they will be built at the same time.

'At the moment [the council] will not adopt that bit of Kirk Road because they do not own it. They do not want to build a new school or shops. We feel the community is getting led up the garden path. We do not want any more houses unless they put the infrastructure in.'

Community councillor Marion Power said: 'We did not even know this meeting [January 13] was happening until someone told us. What the people of Dunbeg are saying is, "Treat us with respect". Do not think we will lie down.'

One resident added: 'We are

not against houses but it is the way they keep going about it.'

Another added angrily: 'They did not give us enough time. They do not care about this village or the people in it. They will just take the money and leave us.'

The masterplan began with a pre-application consultation in May 2015, which was submitted to Argyll and Bute Council on December 15, which has granted an extension for comments beyond the statutory period until February 17. Residents began canvassing views door to door on Monday.

A council spokesperson explained: 'It is now likely the submission will be considered by the planning committee in

March. Masterplans are vital strategy documents that give real certainty. If approved, this masterplan will show how the site will potentially be developed, if and when development goes ahead.

'The council previously identified two prospective infrastructure projects which would enable the expansion of Dunbeg – the widening of Lorn Road/Kirk Road and the installation of a roundabout and junction off the A85 at the Halfway House. Both projects are being actively pursued.'

'With around 600 houses being developed we will, of course, look at our education provision in Dunbeg.'

TIMESLINE

NHS Highland to save £100 million

The NHS Highland board was told this week that it has to make an 'unprecedented' reduction in costs of around £100 million over the next three years.

During a board meeting, finance director Nick Kenton said a 'more of the same approach' is not going to be sustainable and that the current model of care that NHS Highland delivers needs to be changed – and it needs to change urgently.

Both NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead and employee director Adam Palmer said that NHS Highland staff and management will have to work hand-in-hand together to help transform healthcare delivery.

Full story, page nine.

Loganair lands new mail contract

ROYAL MAIL has awarded a new five-year contract to Loganair to fly its mail throughout Scotland and beyond. Loganair will become one of only two airlines selected by Royal Mail to operate its mail air freight programme.

The new contract will lead to 24 new jobs in Scotland for pilots, engineers and ground staff.

Argyll will rally against Trump

AN 'Argyll against Trump' rally is planned in Oban tonight (Thursday February 2), starting at 8pm in Stafford Street.

The protest, according to its Facebook page, will demand US President Donald Trump ends the 'Muslim travel ban' and that the UK government cancels Mr Trump's state visit.

Andy's fundraising idea is one in a million

A TEAM of 10 *Oban Times* staff members will collectively walk one million steps this month to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

The challenge, which begins just a few days ahead of World Cancer Day on Saturday February 4, will be measured using step-counter devices such as Fitbits.

The OT team chose Cancer Research UK after realising how much cancer has affected staff and their friends and family. *Oban Times* production manager Andy Bruce, who came up with challenge idea, said: 'With constantly improving treatments available, Cancer Research UK is making a real difference to cancer sufferers and their families.'

'Our aim is to raise £1,000 for the cause. It should be a lot of fun too.'

The Fitbit team taking part are, left to right, Andy Bruce, Louise Glen, Nicky Murphy, Susan Windram, Louise Steele, Carolyn Buchanan, Lorna Scott, Rhona McKillop, Kevin McCubbin and Stephanie Dunstaffnage.

For the full story, turn to page seven.



Joy as playpark reaches target

TEARS of joy were shed when members of Friends of Oban Community Playpark discovered they had secured the £100,000 needed to build an under-fives facility, writes David McPhee.

The Friends received the final £30,000 from the Suez Communities Trust last week after making an application in October.

The trust is an 'ethical funding organisation dedicated to making lasting improvements to the natural environment and community life'.

Lyndsay Elliott, chairwoman of Friends of Oban Community Playpark told *The Oban Times*:

OBAN COMMUNITY PLAYPARK

'We made an application last year after we picked up that Tobermory playpark had got £23,000 for a smaller project.'

'The question people ask now is when it will be finished, but it all depends on it getting into the council's workflow.'

'It [the council] has to do the whole project management and there are so many people off sick who we've worked with before. So we are struggling to get hold of someone at the moment.'

'This is the worst time of year

to get something done. The actual build will only take around six to eight weeks.'

After finding out that the Suez Communities Trust application was successful, Lyndsay said: 'I am absolutely delighted.'

'I was in tears – that was the same reaction from all the ladies involved.'

'It has been almost five years, and by the time it is done it will be six years. It is quite an achievement.'

'It is so good for the town and helps attract tourists. It is fantastic to get so much local support.'

A garden area will divide the under-fives playpark and the

five- to 15-year-old playpark which opened last February.

The under-fives park will feature a special flooring that allows the Friends to select from a more comprehensive selection of colours. Lyndsay is hoping to make the playpark bright and colourful.

It will also have a 'Teletubby-style mound' comprised of tunnels and a slide, as well as a small boat, paid for by Scottish Sea Farms, reflecting the design of the bigger park.

'I just want to say thank you to everyone who has played a part,' Lyndsay added. 'However, the job is not done yet, the fat lady has not sung.'

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OT

Field is leased for £1 a year

THE Balemartine schoolhouse playing field on the Isle of Tiree will be leased to the Balemartine Residents' Association for 21 years at a peppercorn rent of £1 per annum, following a full council meeting at Argyll and Bute's headquarters at Kilmory last Thursday.

The association plans to establish a 'usable green space and community garden' on the disused council-owned land, valued at £27,000, for 'local people to have access to play and learn'.

Council officers, who recommended the lease, said: 'The do-nothing option would see the playing field unused, with the council potentially incurring annual maintenance costs.'

'An opportunity would be missed to turn the disused playing field into an aesthetically pleasing community garden that could be accessed by locals.'

'A break clause would allow the council to break from the lease agreement should anything material change for either party or a more strategic use for this piece of land be considered by the council at a future date.'



Tenants wanted for new affordable homes at Ulva Ferry

ULVA Ferry is seeking new families to live in the area, helping to secure the long-term sustainability of this corner of north-west Mull.

There will be two- and three-bedroom houses available to rent from this summer and applications are now invited from interested families. Offering affordable rents, low heating bills and secure tenancies, these new homes are being built

next to Ulva Primary School. The houses will be offered via an application process, with priority given to families with children to enrol in the school.

A joint venture between the Ulva School Community Association (USCA) and Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT), the Ulva Ferry housing project is on track for completion this spring. This innovative community project is

funded by Argyll and Bute Council, the Scottish Government, Quaker Housing Trust, the Trusthouse Charitable Foundation, USCA and many generous donations from locals and visitors alike.

Local development officer Helen MacDonald, who has managed the project since April 2014, said: 'We are delighted to finally be offering these houses for rent. We are grateful for

all the support we have received from community members and our funders, and it is just fantastic to offer two families the opportunity to make these new houses their homes.'

Anyone interested in renting one of the properties should contact Helen on 01680 812 900 or by email to hmacdonald@mict.co.uk. The closing date for applications is Friday March 24.

New job is created on Mull

MULL and Iona Community Trust is creating a new post for a deputy general manager in response to an increasing workload.

Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) was established in 1997 and is based at a purpose-built community hub in Craignure.

Its projects include recycling, countryside ranger services, improving broadband, renewable energy, housing, training and capacity building.

With a volunteer board of directors, the work of the trust continues to evolve and expand and now needs a deputy general manager.

MICT currently employs more than 20 full-time and part-time staff, and is a major year-round employer on the island, with the specific mission of 'enhancing the quality of life on Mull and Iona'.

The role, initially part-time, will allow the trust to develop new projects and to sustain existing ones.

Sandy Brunton, convener, said: 'This is an exciting time for communities in Scotland with real opportunities to take on more responsibilities and control, in terms of assets and services.'

'The board has been considering this for some time now and has managed to find some funds to allow us to recruit to this new post.'

For more information on the vacancy, visit www.mict.co.uk or contact general manager Moray Finch at mfinch@mict.co.uk.

Patient is airlifted

THE Coastguard rescue helicopter was called into action last week (Wednesday January 25) to airlift a person from Mull to Lorn and Islands Hospital at Oban.

The helicopter was called out after Oban lifeboat had been asked to assist with the medical transfer from Craignure.

Due to the anticipated weather conditions and the casualty's condition, it was decided the safest form of evacuation was via the rescue helicopter.

Dervaig toilets sold

DERVAIG'S former public toilets have been sold to North West Community Woodland Company for £100.

The group plans 'to rebuild the toilets, develop new amenities for visitors, enhance the tourism experience and indirectly improve the local economy', while Argyll and Bute Council will save on the annual grounds maintenance costs.

MPs slam 'streamlining' of Argyll airports' security

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SAFETY and jobs have been put at risk by new security procedures at Campbeltown, Tiree and Barra airports, the area's MPs claim.

Highlands and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) announced last week that it will no longer carry out hand-luggage and body searches at Tiree, Barra and Campbeltown airports as of this week.

Current perimeter controls and hold luggage checks will remain, but mail will no longer be screened.

A HIAL spokesman said: 'From Monday January 30, new security procedures will be introduced at Campbeltown, Barra and Tiree airports which will mean that passengers travelling to Glasgow will undergo

a streamlined check-in process at their departure airport ahead of their flight.

'These new measures were agreed with the Civil Aviation Authority and Department for Transport, and are proportionate to the size of the aircraft involved and the number of passengers travelling. They also take full account of safety and security.'

'The new measures have been designed to improve the general passenger experience for passengers travelling to Glasgow, whilst maintaining appropriate security standards

'Any customers transferring to onward destinations will be required to reclaim their luggage, check-in and join the existing security procedures at Glasgow Airport.'

The Prospect union was critical of the change, calling it 'unreasonable and dispropor-

tionate' and putting 'staff and passengers at risk'.

Negotiator David Avery said: 'The current regime of security checks was introduced more than 10 years ago and has been largely successful. But despite the long-standing rules, security staff regularly find passengers carrying prohibited liquids, small knives and, in extreme cases, firearms ammunition.'

'The flight path into Glasgow is close to nuclear power facilities at Hunterston, the large oil terminal and facilities at Finnart on Loch Long, and Ministry of Defence establishments at Coulport, Faslane and Glen Douglas.'

'Lowering security at Highlands and islands airports could make these sites, and the airports themselves, far more likely to be potential targets.'

'No other airport has suggest-

ed making changes like this - indeed the trend has been for more rigorous checks over recent years.'

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara and Na h-Eileanan an Iar MP Angus MacNeil challenged HIAL's managing director Inglis Lyon during a conference call last week about the risk to security and the staff, totalling about 11, who currently make the checks at the three airports.

Mr O'Hara said: 'This smacks of a crude cost-cutting measure. Nothing in this day and age is worth more than passenger safety and confidence. Mr Lyon said there will be no compulsory redundancies and staff will be offered voluntary severance agreements.'

Mr MacNeil added: 'It is a step in the wrong direction to be relaxing security. This is an unnecessary relaxation of

a system that works well. We will now have the situation where you can fly into Glasgow International Airport without prior security checks.'

However, not everyone agreed. South Kintyre councillor Rory Colville said: 'I am delighted that local concerns have been addressed. This common sense approach will end passengers having their personal luggage being individually inspected item by item, resulting in a much more user-friendly service that can only result in a greater uptake of this essential transport provision.'

A statement from Oban and the Isles Airport said: 'There are no plans to change the security procedures at Oban airport - or at Coll and Colonsay. The procedures comply with the National Aviation Security Programme.'

Thefts after cars are left unsecured

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a series of petty thefts from cars in the Balvicar area on the Isle of Seil before Christmas.

PC Jeremy Moore informed Seil Community Council last Tuesday that 'all of the vehicles were insecure and in some cases with the keys in the ignition. One of the vehicles also had a wallet in it.'

'Vehicles left insecure and with the keys in are deemed uninsured, so the insurance company would not pay out.'

'Secondly, a wallet with all the owner's personal details in it is extremely valuable.'

Anyone with information are invited to call 101.

Cuan plagued by 'slumminess' and dog dirt

THE North Cuan slipway's 'slumminess' could harm tourism on Seil and Luing, Seil and Easdale Community Council heard last week.

While praising the efforts of ferry staff to keep the area clean, a North Cuan resident highlighted several problems with bins, dog fouling and road markings which 'contribute to a general air of slumminess, and can do nothing to promote tourism in Argyll and Bute'.

The resident said: 'There is a need for renewal of all road markings at Cuan.'

'It is a wonder the bus drivers manage to safely manoeuvre and park, while visitors have no idea where they may park or wait, or where they should queue for the ferry.'

They welcomed Argyll and Bute Council's proposal to prohibit parking at the ferry terminal at North Cuan at the point where buses turn. The move is expected to be completed before the busy tourist season starts this spring.

The resident added that another issue was uncollected bins, saying: 'The bins are taken by boat from Easdale to North Cuan to be emptied by the council refuse team. Residents of Cuan are already unhappy about this



Problems with the bins were highlighted at the community council meeting.

arrangement, as the bins can be left for many days, sometimes weeks, and become very smelly in warm weather. We would not welcome more bins.'

A council spokesperson responded to the complaint, saying that occasionally, due to weather or sea conditions, the contractor has been unable

to collect bins and drop them off at North Cuan, and so has fallen out of sync with the council's bin collection.

Another 'sore point', the resident said, was North Cuan's own 'overflowing' recycling and refuse bins, 'used mainly by people travelling from Luing'.

They added: 'I would like to see these bins removed. If people have crossed the ferry with their bottles and rubbish, they can easily carry on to Moleigh and leave North Cuan tidy.'

Finally, the resident concluded, was Cuan's problem of dog fouling.

'It is common practice for dogs to be let out of cars waiting at the slipway, and I often have to negotiate multiple turds,' they said.

'I never go to the post box without watching where I put my feet.'

The resident praised ferry staff for trying to keep the slipway as clean as they could.

The council responded: 'Failing to clean up after your dog is not only unacceptable for everyone in the community, it is illegal.'

'People who do not clean up their dog can be issued with an £80 fixed penalty notice and failure to pay could result in a fine up to £500.'

'We would encourage any members of the public to report dog fouling in their area and, if possible, supply information such as the person responsible, the type of dog involved and the time and place the person walks their dog.'

CalMac executives are grilled in parliament

SENIOR executives from ferry operator CalMac have been giving evidence to a Scottish Parliament committee.

Chief executive Martin Dorchester and Robbie Drummond, group finance director, appeared before the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee last Wednesday.

The committee took evidence on the delivery of the Clyde and Hebrides ferry services. David MacBrayne Ltd, CalMac's parent company, is wholly owned by Scottish ministers.

Issues covered in the parliamentary committee session included:

- How they intend to increase passenger/vehicle traffic by 10 per cent and commercial traffic by 12 per cent over the course of the contract, and what impact failure to achieve this growth have on taxpayer support for CalMac services.

- When smart ticketing will be introduced on CalMac services, and what benefits that will bring to passengers, and whether such tickets will allow for onward travel by other modes.

- Details on plans to increase local employment opportunities, especially the creation of more apprenticeship opportunities.

- An update on whether Argyll Ferries has submitted a bid to continue operating the Gourock-Dunoon passenger ferry service, and any practical or commercial barriers to operating a half-hourly service on the Gourock-Dunoon route.

- The MV Lord of the Isles being taken out of service for essential repairs. Given that the vessel is over 30 years

old and that there is no like-for-like replacement, the committee asked if the vessel replacement and deployment plans will be sufficient to ensure robust service provision in the coming years.

The Scottish Government set out its policies and proposals for the development of Scotland's domestic ferry services in the Scottish Ferry Services Plan 2013-2022, which can be read at www.transport.gov.scot/system/files/uploaded_content/documents/tsc_basic_pages/Water/Scottish%20Ferries%20Plan%202013-2022.pdf.

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Bins collections remain in 'chaos'

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A MOUND of bin bags has been piled up next to a community centre and nursery in Soroba as the communal bins are again full to capacity.

The overflowing bins at Scalpay Terrace have already been ransacked by seagulls.

The *Oban Times* spoke to Scalpay resident John Hutchison on Monday, who said: 'The state of the place is terrible.'

'It is ridiculous and it is not getting picked up until Wednesday. I have to sit and look at this - seagulls ripping apart bags.'

'To be honest, I saw a rat at Christmas, but was not quick enough to get the camera so I can't prove it. It is getting beyond a joke.'

Mr Hutchison, who shares three grey bins and one blue bin with eight other households, added: 'How do they expect folk to live like that? It's doing my head in.'

'I have got a wee boy who is meant to be able to play in the garden, but there are seagulls everywhere.'

'I'm sick of looking out my window at it.'

Another Soroba resident, George Berry, wants Argyll and Bute Council's chief executive to resign.

'I am absolutely disgusted,' he said. 'I spent yesterday afternoon out in the car park picking up litter.'

'All over the place seagulls are bursting the bags. I have had it. I would see the point if they were



John Hutchison stands next to the overflowing bins outside his flat in Soroba. 16_105sorobabins01

providing extra bins. I would ask for the chief executive to resign.

'For him to put this into motion without providing extra facilities is outrageous.'

'What is the point in taking pride in the estate when they take that away?'

However, Soroba isn't the only place that is encountering problems with the three-weekly uplift schedule that was implemented in November.

Residents in Lerags say that the bin

uplift dates are in 'chaos' and will lead to more fly-tipping.

One resident said that they should be paying council tax to their neighbours for emptying their bins, rather than to Argyll and Bute Council.

Michelle McAnally of Lerags said: 'Our bins haven't been lifted in weeks.'

'Each week we fill out a missed bin report on the council website, and get a reply email apologising for

the poor service, but no solution has been forthcoming.'

'We are told to leave our bins out for a few more days, but they still are not collected. We are lucky that a good neighbour has been taking our bins to the dump on his trailer, otherwise it would be difficult for us to find the time to do this, as well as not wanting to haul rubbish in our car.'

'I have joked that we should start paying taxes to our neighbour instead

of the council, but it's not very funny. Other residents don't have the luxury of a friend with a trailer, and I don't know how they are dealing with what can only be called a rubbish crisis.'

Another Lerags resident, Liam Griffin, added: 'My concern is for the young mother with a wean at her feet, or the arthritic senior citizen who lives in an upstairs tenement flat.'

'How motivated to recycle will such

folk remain if the uplift dates are in chaos?'

'Systems management teaches that you need to put the path where people will walk: otherwise they just take the easiest route.'

'The easiest route, if the current uplift chaos continues, is likely to be bags of rubbish turning up behind hedges or dumped in farmers' fields.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesman said: 'The new refuse and recycling service has been introduced to 47,000 properties, which has been a huge change for our communities.'

'We apologise for any inconvenience and would like to thank people for their patience and for working with us to help increase recycling.'

'We work hard to make sure we can empty bins on the scheduled days. However, there can be operational difficulties, which mean this isn't always possible.'

'Every effort is made to collect bins as soon as possible following any disruption and keep residents informed of any changes using our website. If your bin isn't collected on the scheduled day, please leave it out the next day.'

'We will arrange for additional uplifts to deal with any overflowing bins and apologise for any inconvenience.'

'We are grateful to residents for their patience and are working in partnership with ACHA [Argyll Community Housing Association] to identify areas where additional bins can be stored.'



Some of the fly-tipped rubbish that blights the Glen Saloch road.

Fly-tipping condemned as incidents reach 200

FLY-TIPPING incidents hit 200 in the region over the past nine months, but Argyll and Bute Council says the number has not risen since the new three-weekly bin collections were introduced last year.

In one incident last week, a concerned HGV driver told *The Oban Times*: 'I pulled in to a layby area on the B845 road Barcaldine to Bonawe (Glen Saloch) road for a rest break, and all this mess was right beside the layby down the bank.'

'I saw a three-seater sofa, a

metal bed, kids' bicycles and toys, spilled cans of white paint, washing machines and tumble dryers.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson responded: 'The council will take action to clean up any fly-tipping on council-owned land or the public road. Fly-tipping on private land is the responsibility of the landowner or occupier to clean up.'

'The council will work (and with the owners) to establish any evidence to identify the offender. The rubbish is not

and a fine of up to £2,500. The fixed penalty notice for fly-tipping is £200. If it is not paid, prosecution could result in a fine of up to £40,000.'

'The council is committed to ensuring public spaces are maintained to as high a standard as possible and we actively discourage fly-tipping and littering. We are grateful this has been brought to our attention and we will have the rubbish removed as soon as possible.'

'Anyone who drops litter can be issued with an £80 fixed penalty notice and failure to pay may result in prosecution

and a fine of up to £2,500. The fixed penalty notice for fly-tipping is £200. If it is not paid, prosecution could result in a fine of up to £40,000.'

'The council has a duty to investigate reports and will take appropriate steps to pursue those responsible. The legislation applies to everyone - no individual is exempt from it.'

'Keeping the area clear of litter is something we know is important to residents and we would encourage everyone to play a part in keeping our communities litter-free.'

Argyll health care faces £22m of cuts in two years

HEALTH and social care services in Argyll and Bute face having to make savings of £22 million over the next two years.

The 'extremely challenging' cost-cutting was announced to members of the Argyll and Bute Integrated Joint Board (IJB) at their meeting on Wednesday January 25.

A budget outlook report estimated that IJB will be required to make savings of £16.3 million for 2017-18 and a further £5.7 million for 2018-19 from its annual budget of £256 million.

Christina West, chief officer for the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, said: 'The budget outlook report presented to the Integrated Joint Board today highlights that the IJB is, like all public sector organisations, facing an extremely challenging financial situation.'

'The need to find savings of this scale is due to a range of factors, including increasing demands on health and social care services, the effects of inflation and the estimated level of funding from our part-

ner bodies, NHS Highland and Argyll and Bute Council.'

'In December 2016, the Scottish Government published its Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, which details how health and social care services need to transform. This means increasing the speed of change from reactive emergency-based services such as those provided in hospitals to community-based services which focus on prevention, early intervention and helping people make better lifestyle choices and manage their own conditions.'

'As a public sector body, the IJB also has to deliver services within its budget and it is clear that to meet all the challenges we cannot continue to do things the same way. We have started the process of planning for this and have involved locality planning groups in developing proposals for change to fundamentally transform services.'

Ms West said the services would prioritise anticipatory care (planning and minimising the need for emergency or urgent care or a crisis response), prevention of ill health, and

maintenance of health and wellbeing.

She added: 'To deliver this change, we have included in our financial planning a new investment of approximately £2 million in our community and health improvement services over the next two years to help achieve this transformation.'

'We will also be continuing to focus on tackling the waste in our systems and processes, reducing duplication, using digital technology to increase productivity, rationalising the number of buildings we operate from and making the best use of the capacity and skills of our workforce.'

'The IJB will have to make difficult decisions and choices which we know will cause anxiety and concerns in local communities, and it is incumbent upon the IJB to explain to the public and our staff the reason that we need to make these changes.'

'We are already seeking views, comments and suggestions from the public, partners and our staff on a number of local projects where we believe we need to redesign services.'

Drug duo are sentenced

A FORMER couple who supplied drugs to a man who died of an overdose have escaped a custodial sentence.

Arno Redlihs, 19, of 37 Kelvin Street, Falkirk, and Carrie Robertson, 23, of 3 MacDougal Court, Dunollie, were accused of supplying class-A drug MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy, on November 1, 2015, to Thomas McKay and Kevin Armour. Armour later died of a drugs overdose.

Robertson pleaded guilty, while Redlihs denied the charge but was found guilty by Sheriff John Herald.

Defending Robertson, Laura McManus told Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday January 31: 'This episode had a tragic

consequence. Ms Robertson discovered she was pregnant and broke up with the accused. It was a catalyst for real change for Ms Robertson.'

'There has been no further offences and no further drug use. A custodial sentence can be avoided.'

Defence agent Kevin McGinness said: 'Mr Redlihs regards his involvement in this matter with regret. He has started employment as a chef. He is assessed as a low risk of re-offending and being a harm to others.'

Sentencing, Sheriff John Herald said: 'I am well aware of the consequences and action on that day. That takes us beyond the normal case.'

'I can only extend my sympathy

to the family of the man who lost his life.'

He told Redlihs: 'Your involvement was that you had carried the drug to Ms Robertson, who then carried it to the third party. You will be fined a sum of £1,000. There will be no discount.'

Turning to Robertson, he added: 'I find your position very difficult. This is a very serious matter, which truly justifies a custodial sentence. With hesitation, because you appear to have sorted your life out and you have a young baby, I will not impose a custodial sentence.'

Sheriff Herald imposed the maximum community payback order of 300 hours' unpaid work on Robertson, to be completed within 18 months.

Advertorial

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Grand gesture for music society's piano appeal

A CASH grant from Scottish Sea Farms has got Oban Music Society's fundraising appeal for a new grand piano off to a flying start.

The existing Steinway grand piano is 80 years old and the society is desperately in need of a replacement, which could cost as much as £30,000.

The £5,000 sponsorship from Scottish Sea Farms has given the appeal a great start and the society is hoping to raise the remaining funds over the course of the next 12 months.

Jeremy Church, secretary of Oban Music Society, said: 'We are delighted to receive this cash from the Heart of the Community Fund, as it helps us get the fundraising appeal off to such a positive start. We are

hoping that other supporters will now come forward, as a new instrument is so important to our young musicians.'

'The piano is also used by the Mòd, the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival, by the Mendelssohn on Mull Festival, the winter series of concerts, the Lorn Live Festival and a number of other musical events which take place in St John's Cathedral. In total, about 500 people will benefit from a new grand piano being purchased, so we are hugely grateful to SSF for this initial support.'

Application forms for the Heart of the Community Fund can be found on the Scottish Sea Farms website www.scottishseafarms.com, together with full details of the criteria required.



Oban Music Society needs £30,000 to replace its 80-year-old Steinway grand piano.

Chinese family pledge to improve Eriska

A CHINESE family are hoping to build a 'bridge of friendship' from Shanghai to Scotland after buying the Isle of Eriska and its hotel for a reported £2.2 million.

The private island is located just off the coast at Benderloch. It covers 300 acres and includes a 25-bedroom five-star hotel with a Michelin-starred restaurant and outdoor facilities, including its own golf course, nature reserve and spa.

Paul Leonard, head chef, retained the restaurant's Michelin star in 2016.

The hotel was previously owned by the Buchanan-Smith family, but they are no longer involved in the day-to-day running of the hotel or island.

New owner Wayne Rong said: 'My family and I are offering a bridge of friendship from



The Isle of Eriska hotel.

beautiful Shanghai to stunning Scotland. We are honoured to continue as the custodians of such an iconic property and aim to protect and nurture the island, securing a bright future for Eriska for years to come.'

Mr Rong's family-owned company, Creation Gem, which is located in Hong Kong, has already started construction on four new hilltop reserves and plans to renovate the main house are already in the pipeline.

Also, as part of this new investment, the company has already carried out a renovation of seven of the 25 en-suite bathrooms.

Gordon Cartwright, who took over as general manager of Eriska in April 2016, said: 'A change of ownership doesn't mean a change in ethos and guests new and old can still expect the roaring fires, luxury, comfort and excellent service from the committed island team, along with a memorable dining experience.'

'Eriska is about providing an island getaway that is totally unique, not just in location but because the experienced team deliver on the small details that make all the difference.'

'As general manager I'm committed to preserving the Buchanan-Smith family legacy that has made Eriska an icon of hospitality for more than four decades.'

Stopgap site for new skatepark



The site identified for the temporary skatepark.

SANDY NEIL
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A 'TEMPORARY' site for an Oban skatepark has been welcomed by councillors amid calls for an ideal, long-term site next to Atlantis Leisure.

The Oban Community Skatepark Project unveiled its new name, The Resolution, and its new status as a constituted group, at Oban Community Council on Monday.

Earlier this month the group announced on its new Facebook page: 'Things are moving at pace and we are excited to be able to tell you that a very community-spirited local businessman has offered us the use of a temporary site. We will be progressing with a planning application soon.'

The site, near Oban Library,

leased by the local businessman, was revealed at Oban Community Council on Monday. Group member PC Claire Brown, a Police Scotland youth development worker, said: 'He is not taking any money for it.'

Group vice-chairman Kevin Irvine, assistant development worker at Lorne Resource Centre, said: 'Neil MacIntyre has given us the land by the railway bridge, but we have to put a fence around it. This might only be a temporary place, somewhere for the kids to go in the summer.'

'I know people on the islands who love skating. This could be an amazing thing for young people.'

A delighted councillor Elaine Robertson deemed it a 'good site because it is not surrounded by houses'. But community

councillor Duncan Martin, stepping in as acting chairman in Marri Malloy's absence, advised: 'Anywhere near a railway becomes a nightmare [because of] the regulations.'

Councillor Neil MacIntyre agreed: 'I will be delighted if you get in there, but I do not think it will be long-term. It is an awkward site because of the railway and what businesses are planning to do down there.'

Councillor Iain MacLean, who has been assisting the group, said: 'This is a stopgap measure until something else comes along.'

PC Brown said a grass pitch beside Atlantis Leisure would be the ideal site. 'From a police point of view, you have CCTV down there, lights,' she said. 'However, we have been met by closed doors.'

Councillor MacIntyre argued:

'I cannot see a better area for it: you have a swimming pool, showers. It is a cracking, big area. That bit of grass does nothing for the community. You have a lovely piece of grass doing nothing, that can quite easily be turned into something.'

He advised the group to push for that rather than 'wasting time' on the railway site.

Oban community councillor George Berry also advised the group to push for the Atlantis Leisure site: 'Every brick in Atlantis was paid for by the community in Oban.'

Councillor Roddy McCuish supported the idea, too, saying: 'Atlantis gets a million pounds every year from the council. Does Atlantis own the land?'

Councillor MacIntyre concluded: 'If the council owns it, there would be no issue.'

Purple patch for campaign

MCCAIG'S Tower, Stafford Street and street lights in Oban turned purple at the weekend to raise awareness of Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI).

Members of the Argyll and Isles branch of the group were joined at Stafford Street on Saturday night by Oban councillors Kieron Green and Roddy McCuish to watch the lights change colour.

The change occurred as a result of a presentation Ann Greer and Karen Murphy of WASPI gave at a meeting of Argyll and Bute Council.

One of the campaigners who travelled to Oban for the event, Joan Fraser, from Helensburgh, said: 'I have worked for 46 years, brought up a family and did

voluntary work, with a view to retiring in my early 60s. We won't retire until we are 66. By the time I retire I will have paid 51 years' national insurance, when 35 years is what is required. We had no information about it, so we could not plan or put things in to place to prepare for this.'

WASPI states that it is a campaign group that fights the injustice done to all women born in the 1950s, who have been affected by the changes to the state pension law. The law extended the number of years women would have to work for.

Ann Greer, co-ordinator of Argyll and Isles WASPI group, said: 'I have still not had any formal notice that I had an increase of six years. So I have to wait until

I am 66. That means that I and my household will have lost about £50,000 and that is money that we would have spent in the Argyll economy.'

Oban South and the Isles councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'Personally, I am delighted to support this cause and raise awareness. What we have done tonight is a great gesture after they came to the council. It is the very least we could do.'

Oban North and Lorn councillor Kieron Green added: 'Pensions are important for people and there's a certain group of people who have been badly affected by the reforms. For pensions to be efficient in the long term, there needs to be changes, but they need to be fair.'



Councillors Kieron Green and Roddy McCuish joined the purple WASPI campaign.

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At Random

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Reducing airport security is a mistake

THERE has been both rapid condemnation and praise for plans to scale down the security checks at a number of airports, including those providing flights to Glasgow from Barra, Tiree and Campbelltown.

It is a subject worthy of concern and it prompted immediate reaction from local MPs Brendan O'Hara, member for Argyll and Bute, and Angus MacNeil, who represents Na h-Eileanan an Iar.

The decision by Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd decision was taken in association with Transport Scotland, the Department for Transport at Westminster, the Civil Aviation Authority and Loganair.

While it will 'streamline' the check-in process at the small airports, it is a worrying development on a number of levels.

HIAL is quick to point out that passengers flying into Glasgow to catch connecting flights will have to reclaim their luggage and then proceed through normal security procedures.

But what about those people simply flying into Glasgow? As it stands, they will not have to go through any security checks.

This has obvious shortcomings, not the least of which is making these airports attractive to criminals, including drug dealers.

Then there is the ever-present threat of terrorism. The airport



Security is to be 'streamlined' at Barra, as well as two other airports.

workers' union Prospect is correct to condemn the move as it believes the new measures will compromise the safety of both staff and passengers. A spokesman was also right to flag up the fact that the flight path into Glasgow passes over a number of potential targets.

While Prospect has an obvious agenda because there are fears for the number of jobs that could be lost as a result of the cutbacks, I fully endorse the comments made by its negotiator, David Avery.

He said that security staff still regularly find prohibited liquids, small knives and firearms ammunition. He added that the flight path 'is close to nuclear power facilities at Hunterston, the large oil terminal and facilities at Finhart on Loch Long, and Ministry of Defence

establishments at Coullport, Faslane and Glen Douglas'.

The safety of passengers and air crew is absolutely paramount and should not be compromised by moves such as this.

Errors or pedantry?

I WAS upbraided the other day by a member of Argyll and Bute Council's press team for 'mistakes' in last week's column.

The council officer complained about a number of issues, including my 'subjective' use of language in condemning the approval given to locate an oil depot next to the travelling people's site close to Oban airport. I was berated for saying the oil storage would be 'yards' from people's homes. 'It's

not yards away - it's 30 metres,' I was reprimanded.

And apparently the kerosene to be stored there is not 'highly flammable'. My Chambers dictionary defines it thus: 'Kerosene, noun: a combustible oily mixture of hydrocarbons obtained mainly by distillation of petroleum, used as a fuel for jet aircraft.' Not flammable?

I was also chided for criticising the planning committee for failing to act over the decision to allow homes to be built too close to Ann Colthart's house in Connel, contrary to planning rules. 'They're not rules - they are guidelines,' I was scolded.

Pedantry? You decide.

Great news for village

IT'S great to see the new affordable homes at Ulva Ferry on Mull nearing completion.

At a time of population decline in our remote communities, this excellent development will help to reverse that trend and bring new families to the village.

Applications are being asked for from people who might want to move to Ulva Ferry. Given the location of the new houses close to the primary school, these homes should be very popular.

What do you think?

Write to The Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Oban, PA34 4 HB, or by email to milaing@obantimes.co.uk.

Villagers united in fight against plan for pylons and power lines

SANDY NEIL
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

THERE is universal opposition to a 'draconian' plan to drive large pylons through Dalmally and Strommilchan without any community benefit, Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council has argued in a consultation.

Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN) has identified two potential sites above Cladich and Upper Sonachan for a new North Argyll substation, to enable renewable energy projects to connect to the electricity network, and convert voltage from 132kV to 275kV.

The energy supplier is also proposing to upgrade its overhead line between the proposed North Argyll and existing Tainuil substations, and create a new 275kV overhead line, with towers 40m to 55m tall, connecting the North Argyll



A transmission station in Kintyre at Crossaig, left, and the options for the overhead line route.

substation to the existing one in Dalmally.

According to SSEN's North Argyll project booklet the company is also investigating potential underground cable sections.

Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council (G&ICC) secretary John Kerr responded to the consultation, which closed on December 9, on behalf of the council, to say all 25 local residents at the November

meeting in Dalmally Community Centre 'vehemently' rejected the proposed route 'bringing large pylons through Dalmally and Strommilchan', and that G&ICC 'will also represent this view at every opportunity'.

The community council, he continued, 'is frankly amazed SSEN should be adopting this 1960s draconian style of driving large-scale industrial infrastructure straight through the heart of

a rural community which will not benefit in any way whatsoever, when quite plainly there are a number of less sensitive options.

'SSEN must understand that the existing industrial infrastructure that has been imposed upon the community in the past is hated, and every opportunity will be taken to lessen its impact.

The residents of Dalmally will not sleepwalk into accepting a proposal for which the main

concern is mapping and cost to the developer.

'Apart from the sheer pleasure of living in an area already designated as of "outstanding natural beauty", the community relies on tourism, and detrimental changes to visual impact will also reverse economic growth. There are great concerns over issues affecting health and wellbeing, particularly among our young people.

'We urge SSEN to give serious consideration of our community's views and develop a less confrontational approach when finding a solution. At the very least we are looking for the undergrounding of transmission lines close to any settlement or isolated properties.'

At its January meeting, Mr Kerr said SSEN acknowledged 'the community's complete opposition to its preferred route for new overhead transmission lines', and called for the line to go

underground, as well as a Q&A evening session with SSEN.

Responding to residents' concerns, SSEN's lead project manager Derek Hearn, told *The Oban Times*: 'As the owner of the electricity transmission network in Argyll, we are required by our licence to provide the capacity that is needed in response to renewable generators in the region who are requesting a connection to the transmission network.'

'We are still in the early development stages of the project and, as a responsible developer, we are fully committed to work closely with the local community as our plans develop to ensure that throughout the development process, we are basing our proposals on a balance between environmental, technical and economic considerations and, where possible, we will do all we can to address any concerns or issues that are raised by the local community.'

Voluntary groups to get free licences

VOLUNTARY organisations will not have to pay a fee to hold events, Argyll and Bute Council has decided.

From November 1, 2016, a change in the law meant voluntary organisations running an event such as a dance will have to apply for a public entertainments licence, rather than, as previously, an occasional licence.

Councillors on the Protective Services and Licensing Committee were presented with three options to choose from: not charging voluntary groups, charging a £40 fee for the third and subsequent events, or 'an alternative charging arrangement'.

In a report, council officers estimated that 140 events run by voluntary groups would now need a public entertainments licence, generating an income of £18,060 for the council if fees were charged at the usual rate of £125.

But, they argued, the legislative change would have a 'detrimental effect' on 'the capacity of voluntary organisations to hold licensed events', and concluded that councillors may determine the fees should be waived or reduced.

The councillors agreed, voting 'to continue not charging a fee for events (indoor or outdoor) where the event is organised by a formally constituted voluntary group based in Argyll and Bute'.

Plan aims to tackle blight of loneliness

ARGYLL and Bute councillors voted last week to support recommendations to reduce the impact of loneliness in older people.

NHS Highland's annual report has revealed that eight per cent of its 1,500 respondents experience loneliness, by either missing a wider social network or intimate relationship, and was significantly higher among those with more than one long-term condition, a disability, and those who provide unpaid care.

Loneliness is associated with increased mortality on par with smoking 15 cigarettes, and increased incidence of long-term conditions such as dementia, heart disease, high blood pressure and depression.

Initiative aims to help wellbeing

PEOPLE with long-term health conditions in Argyll and Bute are set to benefit from a new independent initiative thanks to funding secured by Lomond and Argyll Advocacy Service.

For the past 16 years the advocacy service has been supporting adults with learning disabilities, adults with a mental illness and older people to express their views, challenge decisions and uphold their rights.

The well-established voluntary organisation has now secured £280,000 from the Scottish Government via the Scottish Health and Social Care Alliance to extend its work to meet the needs of anyone aged 16 or over living in Argyll and Bute with one or more long-term conditions which are progressive or degenerative, or which impact on their ability to lead an independent life.

The new project is being supported through the Transforming Self-Management in Scotland Fund and will introduce a new dimension to the development of self-management skills.

Advocacy manager Scott Rorison said: 'We hope to shift the focus away from the current norm or reactive interventions at times of crisis towards a more preventive approach to health-care, with independent advocacy being offered as an essential early intervention, helping individuals to plan their own care and be fully involved in the discussions and decisions which shape their lives.'

'We know from advocating for people with long-term conditions that we can make a significant difference to how they feel and to the support they are able to access. People tell us of the positive impact independent advocacy can have in achieving positive outcomes, promoting



Advocacy workers for Argyll and Bute are Annie Timmins (Oban and Lorn), Sarah McFadzean (Kintyre), Simon Richardson (Cowal and Bute), Arlyn Bolton (Helensburgh and Lomond) and Ailsa McCrae, team leader, (Mid Argyll).

wellbeing and empowering individuals to lead more independent lives.'

The project will initially run until March 2019 and has led to the recruitment of five part-time

advocacy workers in Argyll and Bute. Ailsa McCrae, the advocacy team leader, will co-ordinate the project. She said: 'We have been aware of a gap in advocacy provision for people with long-term

conditions for some time and are already receiving our first referrals. Anyone who would like to find out more about the project can contact us on 01546 606056 or visit our website at www.laas.org.uk.'

Seil waste plans not revealed

THE three new options for a replacement sewage plant on Seil won't be revealed until April, Seil and Easdale Community Council heard last week, writes Sandy Neil.

Scottish Water's £11 million Clachan Seil Waste Water Works, which is unable to separate run-off from heavy rain, has been overflowing untreated human waste into Balvicar Bay.

The company's £1.8 million solution was to pump sewage from Clachan over a hill into a septic tank at Seaview Terrace near Ellenabeich, and then out into a Marine Conservation Area, which some islanders deemed 'cheap', 'nasty', and 'inept'.

Scottish Water (SW) acknowledged the leaking plant between Balvicar and Clachan had resulted in a breakdown in trust and that in order to rebuild trust with the community, and to be transparent with the evidence in the decision-making process, a stakeholder group was set up that included SW employees, an independent expert, local representatives, councillors and MSP Michael Russell.

In June, SW unveiled two alternatives to its controversial plan at a public event in Seil Island Community Hall. But at



The failing £11 million Clachan Seil Waste Water Works are due to be replaced.

a closed meeting in August, all three of SW's options to replace its failing membrane plant were rejected by the island's representatives, who requested further proposals.

The stakeholder group held another meeting on January 16 to discuss three new options for a replacement with the new independent expert Chris Chubb.

But at its meeting last Tuesday, Seil and Easdale Community Council heard that island representatives had been asked not to reveal these until the group's next meeting in April. Community councillor Anne

Marie Robin told the meeting: 'Scottish Water has been asked to report back with more detail and figures on three options before the next stakeholder meeting on April 24. The community will then be consulted.'

'At the meeting, we were advised not to share the draft options details with the community at this stage.'

Scottish Water responded: 'It has always been our intention to go back to the wider community at the appropriate time, once a more defined and preferred option/options have been fully evaluated.'

'The three options being further investigated include a pump-away scheme with treatment at Seaview, and two options which consider re-positioning of the existing works inland with separate treatment at Seaview.'

'Scottish Water will continue to engage with the stakeholder group on an ongoing basis with the next meeting planned for April to update on further detailed work.'

'When the preferred option has been defined we will engage further with the community to keep them informed.'

Dog fouling 'name and shame' idea dropped

A PLAN to 'name and shame' non-payment of fixed penalties for dog fouling has been dropped by Argyll and Bute councillors, as expected.

Elected members asked

officers to find out the legal position on naming those people who allowed their dogs to foul but didn't pay the penalties.

Councillors meeting last Thursday heard legal advice

had confirmed that 'we cannot name and shame individuals when fixed penalty notices are issued.'

'It would only be possible to name individuals where they

failed to pay the fixed penalty charge and the person was subsequently convicted in court of an offence with their personal details released via the media.'

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OT

Taynuilt

THE first ceilidh in 2017 of An Comunn Gàidhealach's Cruachan branch, held in Taynuilt Village Hall, began in rousing fashion with piper Andy Matthews in fine form, playing several enjoyable sets of tunes.

Bean an Taighe Audrey Paterson was on hand to guide the audience through the programme for the evening and also to take her place singing with Atomic Piseag, the well-known Argyll ladies' Gaelic choir, under the guidance of their conductor, Raymond Bremner. The choir was a joy to hear, with a wide selection of songs and arrangements producing lovely sounds and beautiful harmonies.

Talented soloists from the choir, Christine Johnstone, Fiona Munro, Jane Basford, Katie Crossan, Donna Dugdale and 2016 Mod gold medallist Carol MacLean also entertained, with Raymond himself leading the audience in a couple of sing-a-longs from the piano.

Completing the programme for the evening was able accordionist Andrew MacDonald who got the feet tapping on his first, but

certainly not his last, visit to a Taynuilt ceilidh. This was a first-class evening of entertainment, sadly only enjoyed by a somewhat sparse audience.

JESSIE SERVANT, the president of Taynuilt SWL, welcomed 10 members and six visitors to the meeting held at 7.30pm in Taynuilt village hall on Wednesday January 11.

The speaker for the evening was Sandra Bergant, explaining all about calligraphy, the different styles and effects that are possible. Sandra displayed some beautiful pieces of her work and spoke at length as to how they were achieved.

All the members and visitors then tried their hand at some calligraphy exercises that Sandra had brought along and found it is much harder than it looks.

Everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. A vote of thanks was given by Alice Campbell.

The hostesses for the evening were Jane Gillie and Stella Huntingford, who provided a lovely tea. The competition was a photo of morning mist and was won by Jessie MacFarlane.

Raasay

Situation vacant: seeking a distiller with adventurous spirit

WHISKY-MAKING on a rugged and remote Scottish island with a backdrop of vast skies, golden eagles soaring overhead and dolphins in the bay may sound like a wistful fantasy, but Scotch whisky maker R&B Distillers hopes to make this dream a reality for one lucky individual this year.

R&B is in the process of building the first legal distillery on the island of Raasay, off the east coast of the Isle of Skye, and is now on the hunt for a distiller to produce the island's first single malt whisky.

The whisky-maker will be required to relocate to the picturesque but isolated island where they will become an integral part of the close-knit Raasay community of 120 inhabitants (as well as a colony of rare bats, otters and voles).

A formal qualification in distilling and practical experience is essential for the role. R&B has expressed that 'enthusiasm for the multifariousness of island life' is vital for the applicant. It adds: 'The island has minimal facilities - one café and bar only open



Alasdair Day, of R&B Distillers, below, views plans for the distillery on Raasay which has a stunning setting

during the summer months, a small community shop and a bat hotel - and is a ferry journey to mainland Scotland.'

The spokesperson continued: 'R&B's distillery will reinstate whisky-making in this forgotten whisky

region of Scotland as well as providing up to 10 per cent of the island's employment and bringing tourists to the island to witness whisky-making in action: the successful distiller will have a chance to be a part of this exciting story.'



Inveraray



The Archie MacAllister Trio went down a storm.

INVERARAY Accordion and Fiddle Club met at the Inveraray Inn on January 11 for the opening night of 2017.

Fyne Folk got the evening under way, with Jake Mackay, Sally Hall and Alex John MacLeod on fiddles and Agnes Liddell on keyboard playing Highland Wedding and a Burns medley.

Colin Sutcliffe, on melodeon, played a couple of nice sets, including Kate Martin's Waltz, followed by Jake on 'moothie' and Agnes on keyboard with two toe-tapping sets.

Guest musicians were the ever-popular MacAllister brothers from Campbeltown - Archie on fiddle and Alex on accordion - joined

by Ally Murray from Oban on drums, to form an all-Argyll ensemble.

Jake and Agnes opened the second half with sing-a-long Gaelic waltzes and a set of reels, and then the 'three As' played for the remainder of the evening with a great mix of tunes finishing with a set of reels and a superb encore with Archie truly wound up, ably backed by Alex and Ally, resulted in thunderous applause from the crowd.

The chairman, Niall Iain MacLean, thanked all for a great night. Next the club welcomes Alan Small on accordion and 2006 Glenfiddich Fiddle Champion, Gemma Donald.

Daliburgh and Balivanich



TWO primary schools on South Uist and Benbecula have won a national award for innovation and achievement in delivering physical education and extra-curricular sport.

The sportscotland Gold School Sport Award was presented to staff and pupils at Daliburgh and Balivanich primary schools last week by Jacqueline Lynn, sportscotland's head

of school and community sport.

The School Sport Award is a national initiative designed to encourage schools to continuously improve physical education and sport. The award also encourages sporting links between schools and the communities around them.

Councillor Catriona Stewart, who chairs the Education and Children's Services

at Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, said: 'What a fantastic reward for the hard work of the staff and pupils. This has been a real team effort and thanks are also due to the parents and volunteers who assist their local schools and communities.'

Iona Brown, acting head teacher of Daliburgh Primary School, commented: 'Sport is at the heart of Daliburgh school and we

now have a wide range of opportunities available to all our pupils, in and around the school day.'

Anne Graham, head teacher of Balivanich Primary School, added: 'Physical activity and sport play a huge part in developing a positive ethos across our school and our children are developing qualities and skills that they can transfer across their learning.'

Dunbeg



Primary seven pupils Rosie Dairon, Becky Jeffery, Angus Brack and Katie MacEwan piped in and addressed the haggis.

DUNBEG High School pupils bagpiped in the 'great chieftain o the pud-din'-race' and 'clapped in his walle nieve a blade' at their Burns lunch on the birthday of Scotland's na-

tional bard Robert Burns, January 25.

The entranced children packing the canteen then got stuck into the traditional Scottish fare of haggis, bashed neeps and champit

tatties prepared by the school cooks, and carried with ceremony to the top table by head teacher Sine MacVicar.

Figures regarding clean plates are not available.

Appin



Children from the pre-fives unit and pupils of Strath of Appin Primary School put on a splendid production of Aladdin Trouble to a packed, appreciative audience in Appin Village Hall. The children had great fun learning and performing their parts in the panto.

MORVERN lines

An old Appin landmark

A FEW years ago, when I was looking through the wonderful *Oban Times* archives, I came across an article about a little known roadside well in Appin, dated August 28, 1880.

According to the contributor it had been restored by a Major Robertson [1823-1886] of the 79th Cameron Highlanders who provided an inscribed drinking cup in the shape of a Roman helmet, found in a fort in the Ochils, and a plaque with the following Gaelic inscription: *Tobar Chloinn Donnachaidh 's e mar thanbhartas do Mhuinntear na h-Apenn le deagh rubn a Seumas Robanach, maidsear ann an Reiseamaid Fhir na h-Earrachd, 1880*, which translates as: 'The Well of Clan Donnachaidh as a goodwill gift to the people of Appin from James Robertson, major in the Regiment of the Man of Erracht [Sir Alan Cameron], 1880'.

Further research among the public records and *The Oban Times* added to the story.

James Robertson, the widower of Isabella Trail Balfour, lived at Glaiceriska Cottage, between North Shian and Druimneil House, where he died on the December 18, 1886, aged 63 years. Major Robertson was the eldest surviving son of Lord Robertson, a Court of Session judge. It seems he took a special interest in the poor, which, in the days before the NHS, made him popular in Appin, to such an extent that when he died his coffin was carried shoulder high to Portnacraish graveyard - a distance of four miles.

The well is a few feet from and slightly above the unnamed public road that follows the coast from Port Appin to Inverfolla on the North Shian Peninsula, and approximately 300 yards south of the present Glaiceriska Cottage.

The well, which appears to be constantly filled by water from the hillside above, is stone lined and measures about two-foot square and of the same depth. As it does not feature in any of the standard printed reference works on healing wells and springs, it is perhaps not of any great antiquity and only came into use after the building of the coastal road for the convenience of man and beast. It does not appear in the first edition of the OS Six Inch to the Mile series (1871) but is shown in the second (1892-1960), most likely thanks to Col Robertson's activities.



Major James Robertson, the 79th Cameron Highlanders, from a portrait.

As I was nearing the end of my research I came across another report in *The Oban Times* of October 4, 1930, written by a Miss Margaret MacDonald, part of which reads: 'Blessed is the man, who passing through the valley of Baca, made in it a well.' [Psalm 84: 45] Baca means weeping. The lovely district of Appin hardly suggests mourning but, yet, perhaps the blessing is there, too, for the man who makes a well, and may I humbly submit hope for the woman who restores it!

'The well actually existed when he went to live there and was the source of supply for a cottage which stood near, but it is now a ruin, and when he [Major Robertson] had the idea of enclosing and naming it, the people who lived in the cottage were afraid he was going to deprive them of their drinking water.

Needless to say, he did not do so, but only put a fence round, erected a slate bearing the words "Tobar Clann Donnachaidh, 1879," and, hung up by a chain, a little brass drinking cup in the form of a helmet. He sent specially to the War Office for a pattern for this. It bears the inscription in Gaelic that this well was given for the use of the people of Appin by James Robertson.

'Last year [1929] when I visited Appin, I found the well in a very bad condition; the ground around was boggy, the rustic fence and gate all decayed away, the heavy slate headstone was lying flat, and the cup was fastened to a very thin sapling.

'I felt then that I would like to restore it, and seeing my way to do so this summer, I sought and obtained the kind permission of the Laird of Appin, Captain Laing Anderson, to do so.

'The work has been carried out by Mr Donald Black, gardener and contractor, of Appin, who, I am told, has made a very good job of it, the work being tastefully and thoroughly carried out. The slate is embedded in concrete, and has a border of whin stones round it; the ground has been thoroughly drained, and a wooden path leads up to the well'.

Miss MacDonald, I am sure, would be delighted to know that the well still exists but, unfortunately, the inscribed slab and drinking cup disappeared at the time of the Second World War and are thought to have been taken away by some American soldiers who had come ashore from a battleship anchored in the nearby Lynn of Lorn.

It would be a graceful act on the part of the Appin Community if it would ask the present land owner for permission to tidy up and erect a sign at this once notable historic feature.

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Job fears as Mull distillery to close for refurbishment

MARTIN LAING
mlaing@obantimes.co.uk

FEARS have been raised that jobs could be lost at Tobermory Distillery on the Isle of Mull.

Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell has written to the owners voicing his concerns after it was announced this week that the plant is to close for two years.

In a statement on Monday, South African producer Distell Group Ltd said it is 'planning to invest in the distillery and its visitor centre, and will stop production on Friday March 31 for a period of up to 24 months. However, the visitor centre will remain open and continue to welcome guests and host tours throughout this period.'

There are currently seven people employed at the distillery, and a spokeswoman for Distell Group said: 'A consultation process has just begun



Tobermory Distillery will shut down for two years.

with staff and the intention is to protect jobs as far as possible.'

However, Mr Russell said: 'While I welcome the investment, I am concerned about the indication of job losses that is implicit in the announcement.'

'I am very concerned about

the potential for job losses and I have asked the company to be much clearer about that issue and to ensure that the hard work and loyalty of its exceptional workforce is rewarded and sustained by investment, not threatened by it.'

Commenting on the plans for

Tobermory, Distell's European managing director, Fraser Thornton, said: 'We recognise the time during the refurbishment will create substantial change for the distillery team and that is why we have come up with different options to accommodate people's personal situations and continue to financially support them during this time.'

'Whisky tourism continues to thrive with numbers across the industry increasing on average by 20 per cent over the past five years. Tobermory has demonstrated even stronger growth in visitors, and we want to invest in the only distillery on the island and continue to ensure it produces some of the best island malts in Scotland, as well as a truly memorable experience for visitors.'

'We are delighted to have a new general manager for malts joining us in the coming weeks

who will provide some fresh impetus for our malt portfolio generally and Tobermory and Ledaig specifically. An exciting new chapter will be revealed at the end of this and we want everyone to continue to be part of this journey.'

The Distell spokeswoman added: 'The distillery is very unusual in that it operates two production cycles during the year in order to produce both Tobermory and Ledaig malts.'

'These are both well-known and respected brands in the international whisky arena and Distell intends to invest further in their future as premium malts following the upgrade.'

'Sales of Ledaig 10-year-old and 18-year-old will continue, with Tobermory 10-year-old being available to purchase from the visitor centre. A range of limited editions from both brands will be released over the next two years.'



The P1-3 finalists with two of the judges, main picture, and the P4-7 champions, inset.

Inverloch youngsters prove they have the Scots Factor

INVERLOCHY Primary School pupils proved that they have the Scots Factor when they took part in a Scots language poetry competition on Friday.

Pupils from primary one through to seven took part, reciting poetry and sing-

ing songs in Scots. They were whittled down to three finalists from each class.

The finalists performed in front of their peers and parents, as well as the three guest judges - photographer Iain Ferguson, Duncansburgh Church

minister Reverend Richard Baxter, and Reverend Chris 'Kiki' MacRae from Kilmallie Free Church.

The overall winners from each class were Katie McIntyre, Rory Young, Daniel Parfitt, Ben McGregor, Phoebe

Judge, Victoire Bakhache and Aiden MacLellan.

Deputy head teacher Tanya Ross said: 'The children really enjoyed it and they were confident when they were performing their poems.'

TIMESLINE

Oban High FPs mark anniversary

OBAN High School Former Pupils' Association will be holding its 50th annual dinner/dance on Saturday March 11 in the Royal Hotel, Oban.

The cost is £30 per person. The speaker will be Rev Dr Angus Morrison, who attended the school between 1966 and 1971. Music for dancing will be provided by Drams Allowed.

To celebrate the 50th there is also a civic reception by permission of Argyll and Bute Council and a tour of the school, which is being kindly provided by the head teacher.

Further information from Ruth Oliver at rutholiver2013@gmail.com.

Forces charity needs volunteers

SSAFA, the armed forces charity, is urging the people of Argyll and Bute to learn new skills and give something back to their local military community by becoming a volunteer. SSAFA Argyll and Bute says its most vital need is for new volunteer caseworkers, and that need is most acute in Bute, Cowal, Kintyre, Mid Argyll, Mull, Islay and Jura.

In addition to caseworkers, SSAFA in Argyll and Bute needs a volunteer awareness and fundraising officer to help promote and raise vital funds.

Anyone interested in joining the SSAFA Argyll and Bute team should visit www.ssafo.org.uk/newrecruits or call 0800 032 5612.

Oban Times staff step out for charity

A TEAM of 10 staff from *The Oban Times* will collectively walk one million steps this month to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

The challenge, which begins just a few days ahead of World Cancer Day on Saturday February 4, will be measured using step-counter devices such as Fitbits.

The OT team chose Cancer Research UK after realising how much cancer has affected staff and their friends and family.

Oban Times production manager Andy Bruce, who came up with challenge idea, said: 'With constantly improving treatments available, Cancer Research UK is making a real difference to cancer sufferers

and their families. Our aim is to raise £1,000 for the cause.'

'The challenge will also be good for promoting good health in the workplace, especially as we all sit at desks for most of the day.'

'It should be a lot of fun too.' He added: '*The Oban Times* would like to thank Fitbit for kindly donating a number of devices for the challenge.'

To ensure the fundraising really is a challenge, the team's step count will only apply to steps taken during work hours - 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

In order to reach the target, each staff member, all of whom have desk jobs, must reach a minimum of 5,000 steps in their working day by taking regular

screen breaks and long walks at lunchtime.

Lisa Adams, Cancer Research UK spokeswoman in Scotland, said: 'We'd like to say a huge thank you to all the staff at *The Oban Times* for their act of unity for World Cancer Day. The one million steps challenge will raise vital funds for research to beat cancer sooner.'

'Cancer Research UK spent more than £33 million on research in Scotland last year. One in two people in the UK will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives but the good news is that more people are surviving the disease now than ever before.'

'Survival rates have doubled since the 1970s but more funds and more supporters are need-

ed to bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.'

For World Cancer Day on Saturday, Cancer Research UK is calling on men, women and children to play their part by wearing a 'Unity' band or donating to the cause. Money raised will help fund lifesaving research and help bring forward the day when all cancers are cured.

The bands come in three different colours and are available in all 84 Cancer Research UK shops for a suggested donation of £2 as well as online at www.cr.uk.org.uk/worldcancerday.

To donate to *The Oban Times* fundraising efforts, visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/OTmillionsteps.

Man threatened partner

AN OBAN man has pleaded guilty to threatening his partner after she wanted to end their relationship.

Andrew Files, 35, of 1 Duart Place, admitted behaving in a threatening or abusive manner and causing fear or alarm on December 27 at a house in Creag Bhan Village, Oban, by shouting and swearing, uttering demands and offensive remarks, and acting in an aggressive manner.

Procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty told Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday (January 31) that the accused and his partner had been in a relationship for more than 12 years but that the partner had said she wanted the relationship to come to an end.

Mr McGinty said that throughout Christmas Day Files had challenged his partner with 'evidence' that she was having an affair.

'On December 26, the accused left the house. The partner was asleep when the accused returned shouting.

'She came downstairs to ask him to stop.

'The accused's position was that she had done most of the shouting.'

Sheriff Ruth Anderson told Files: 'I am not stopping you contacting your former partner, but it must be in a civilised way. You may visit the house.'

'I will defer sentence for four months to see if things are working out.'

Woman abused officers

A WOMAN has admitted being abusive to police and an Oban taxi driver after being refused to be taken to Glasgow.

Margaret Hogg Watson, 49, of 21 Golspie Street, Glasgow, pleaded guilty to acting in an aggressive and threatening or abusive manner, and uttering threats of violence at Station Square, Oban, on September 24.

Procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty told Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday that the taxi driver, returning to her vehicle, found Watson and her daughter in the back.

He said: 'Her daughter was heavily intoxicated. The driver asked where they wanted to go. The accused said, "Glasgow". She [the driver] asked for the money up front.'

The accused, he said, 'became aggressive and refused to leave. The daughter was still asleep in the footwell.'

The driver called the police. 'The accused remained abusive [and] attempted to lunge at the driver,' he said. 'She then turned on the police, shouting, "I will f***** do you". She was then arrested. She lashed out at police, kicking an officer. She then spat at the sergeant. Thankfully, the spit missed him.'

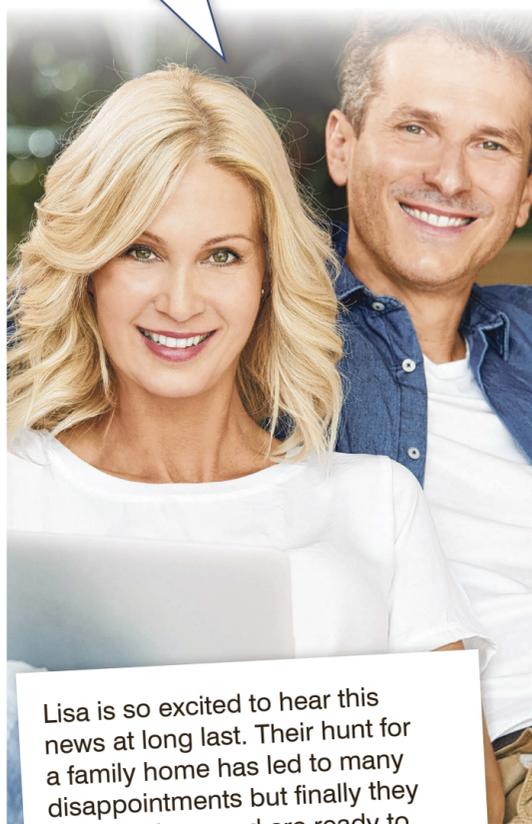
Defending, Kevin McGinness said Watson was 'mortified'.

Sheriff Ruth Anderson said: 'You should be mortified by your violent drunken behaviour. This cannot continue.'

She imposed a structured deferred sentence until October 10.

Meet the Cairns

We've got the keys to 8 Cairngorm Avenue



Lisa is so excited to hear this news at long last. Their hunt for a family home has led to many disappointments but finally they have the keys and are ready to move in.

Lisa and Mike are happily married to one another and have just taken ownership of 8 Cairngorm Avenue, a 20 year old bungalow. The location is fantastic and with the schools close by, supermarkets handy and the countryside just 5 minutes away, it has everything - well almost. "It needs a few tweaks" they say and are keen to put their own mark on it.

Over the next few months we'll be following this lovely couple as they turn No.8 into their dream family home.

We would love you to join them, if you have any questions about their experiences please get in touch.



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Tel: 01463 238 000

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#MeetTheCairns

#OT7DAYS

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Firms positive despite slow start to season

KATIE CARABINE
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LOCHABER'S two ski resorts have been feeling the effects of the mild weather but say they are prepared and ready to open up as soon as there is enough snow.

Nevis Range and Glencoe Mountain Resort have each had less than a handful of days so far where they were able to open for skiing and snowboarding.

Nevis Range marketing manager Heather Negus said: 'At the moment we don't have enough snow to open fully. We did manage to open for one day earlier in January and the artificial slope is open at the moment for beginner lessons. Our new locals group has now had three weeks of lessons.'

'Although we are disappointed not to be fully open for skiing yet, our customers should be assured that we are prepared and waiting to open up the rest of the hill as soon as there's enough snow.'

Glencoe Mountain Resort has also had a quiet start, having not had many ski days so far.

Director Andy Meldrum said: 'We've had a slow start with just four days of skiing so far, but there's been lots of sledging. We've got plenty of big patches of snow but currently not enough to ski. We've been reasonably busy though, with the sledging.'

Other businesses in the Lochaber area have also been affected by the lack of wintery

conditions. Ellis Brigham manager Simon Pitman said: 'We've spoken to all the retailers on the High Street and everybody is finding it quite slow at the moment.'

'We do still have custom from people going away on holiday. Lots of people have been going away this season. We are definitely still waiting for the season to begin here though.'

Tina Cuthbertson, who owns the Snowgoose Mountain Centre in Corpach along with her husband John, said the lack of snow has meant their accommodation has been quieter than it has been in more than 25 years.

She said: 'This has been the quietest January we've ever had since we've had the business in its current form, which is 1990, and that's almost purely snow-related.'

Ms Negus is also remaining positive about the prospects for the rest of the season at Nevis Range.

She said: 'There were snow showers last weekend and there's snow in the forecast towards this weekend.'

'In previous years, we've still been open for snowsports in April and had lovely skiing conditions into May. We're frequently forced to close through lack of interest from our customers rather than lack of snow.'

'So, at this stage in the season there's plenty of time for many months of skiing and for our customers to have a great time skiing and snowboarding.'

centre for both accommodation and the courses.'

Mr Meldrum is not too worried about the success of his season just yet either.

He said: 'Historically at Glencoe Mountain, with it being quite rocky, we tend not to open until late January anyway. The average is January 17, so it's sometimes in December and sometimes not till February. I think the latest so far has been February 19 so this season is not unusual - yet.'

'It won't take much to get fully operational, just a couple of good snow storms and we'll be up and running.'

'We can have skiing up until late April, even early May, so once the snow does come it can stick around for a while. There's still a lot of life left in the season.'

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'So, at this stage in the season there's plenty of time for many months of skiing and for our customers to have a great time skiing and snowboarding.'



Ellie's tartan touch and smiles at Lundavra primary Burns event

Ellie Eaton, who attends Lundavra nursery, was all smiles as she got into the spirit of Burns Day. All over Lochaber, schools, community groups, clubs and care homes have been enjoying celebrating Scotland's National Bard. Lundavra pupils sang, recited poetry and enjoyed a variety of traditional Scottish foods. Lundavra teacher Alison Stephen said guest speaker Jim Sutherland, head teacher at Lochaber High School, 'surprised everyone when he recited *Holy Willie's Prayer* in his nightcap and goonie'. See page four for a round-up of Burns Night photographs. Photograph: A Brightside Photography.

TIMESLINE

Meeting to focus on estate plans

EAST Lochaber and Laggan Community Trust are organising a series of community meetings next month.

Chairman John Hutchison said: 'We will be holding another round of community meetings to bring members up to date with the actions taken during 2016 and outlining how we see the next steps in taking forward our aim of community ownership of the former Rio Tinto Estate. We are keen to hear members' views.'

Meetings will be as follows: Monday February 6, Spean Bridge Community Centre, 7 to 8.30pm; Tuesday February 7, Leven Centre, Kinlochleven, 7 to 8.30pm; Wednesday February 8, Kilmallie Community Centre, Corpach, 7 to 8.30pm; and Thursday February 9, Laggan Village Hall, 7 to 8pm.

New high school depute head

ERIC GROAT has been appointed depute head teacher at Lochaber High School.

He will be year head for S3 and S4 and will have management responsibility for learning and teaching, ICT and management information systems.

Mr Groat joined the school staff as a maths teacher in 2007 and has been principal teacher of support for learning since 2014.

Jim Sutherland, head teacher, said: 'I am delighted to welcome Mr Groat to the school's senior management team. He will make a significant contribution to moving the school forward in a number of important areas.'



NHS Highland told to save £100 million

THE NHS Highland board was told on Tuesday that it has to make 'unprecedented' reduction in costs of around £100 million over the next three years.

During the board meeting, finance director Nick Kenton said that a 'more of the same approach' is not going to be sustainable and, therefore, that the current model of care that NHS Highland delivers needs to be changed, and it needs to change urgently.

Both NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead and employee director Adam Palmer said that NHS Highland staff and management will have to work hand-in-hand together to help transform healthcare delivery to ensure it is 'fit for purpose' in the future. Aside from financial challenges some of the current models cannot be staffed without significant locum costs and there is an over-reliance on costly hospital and institutional care.

Previously Mr Kenton had outlined that the board needed to reduce costs of around £20 million in 2017/2018.

However, this target has now been revised to £50 million. And over the next three financial years from 2017 to 2018 the requirement outlined by the Scottish Government's draft budget is likely to be in the region of £100 million.

He said: 'This is an unprecedented scale of change and it is clear that a "more of the same" approach is not going to deliver a balanced plan and, therefore, the model of care needs to be changed.'

'There needs to be a mindset that focuses on delivering maximum value within our total £800 million resources rather than focusing on the margins.'

'Although the scale of the challenge is daunting, the changes required across NHS Highland are consistent with the Scottish Government's recently published Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, which builds on the National Clinical Strategy (February 2016) and the move towards realistic medicine as set out in the chief medical officer's annual report for 2014/15.'

NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead sent an email to staff recently about the need to fundamentally change the models of care.

She said: 'More of the same is no longer an option. While it is true that

we have had uplift in our funding in this and previous years, our increasing costs and demands mean that we will need to significantly reshape the way that we deliver services.'

'We have already started this, and I do believe we are well placed to now radically transform our services.'

'Our current complex, expensive and often institutional-based models of care can no longer deliver the timely high quality of care that we all rightly aspire to provide. Therefore, it is clear that we will need to change, and change quickly to meet the needs of our aging population.'

NHS Highland employee director and Unison representative, Adam Palmer, said while the challenges from these efficiency targets appear formidable, they are not insurmountable. He said current employment frameworks are in place and a willingness to co-operate on both sides should help enable the necessary changes required.

He said: 'We are all becoming aware of the fact that the future is increasingly challenging for NHS Highland. Not only is there is a financial gap to bridge - both as this financial year closes and for next year - but the board also has to deal with the pressing problem of changing demographics in our area and an ageing workforce.'

Meanwhile, Mr Kenton told the board that the baseline uplift in resources for 2017/18 is 1.5 per cent, which represents an increase of £8.7 million on the board's baseline allocation.

He said: 'This excludes a wide range of other allocations such as primary care funding which are allocated separately. This is £1.7 million lower than we had originally planned on; across Scotland, boards had been planning on a 1.8 per cent uplift.'

A spokesperson for NHS Highland added: 'While NHS Highland has taken significant strides in recent years to implement new models of care to address the increasing demand and a changing workforce, such as redesigns in Badenoch and Strathspey, Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross, the north coast of Sutherland and the board's out-of-hours service, the pace of change has been slow. The board has set a clear direction of travel but the real challenge now is how quickly can changes be made in partnership with all stakeholders.'



ON JANUARY 14 up to a million people in more than 8,000 clubs around the world celebrated the 100th release of the iconic Les Mills Body Pump workout, crossing time zones and national borders.

Atlantis Community Leisure celebrated 'the world's biggest workout' with a midnight Body Pump class, making it the first centre in the UK to launch this release. The following day it hosted a full day of taster fitness classes with 'Born to Move' and a dance-a-thon. In the process, Atlantis raised more than £772 for the Oban Community under-fives playpark.

'I only found out at 8am on Friday the 13th that we were going live for the official Body Pump Facebook page, and the whole town pulled together and found us not one, but two fantastic pipers - Emma Hill and Gregor MacDonald,' said Atlantis marketing co-ordinator Claire Hutchison. 'Jade MacEwan showcased some Highland dancing and Louie Barrow set up some awesome lights for us. Our midnight Body Pump was brilliant - we had such a buzz and going live to the world just made it even bigger. We had comments from all over the world and had over 102,000 views! We had 18 fantastic participants at midnight

with four instructors, and more than 100 participants throughout the day for taster classes. Our team worked so hard to make the whole event a success and we are thrilled with the result!'

Chair of the Oban Community Play Park committee, Lindsay Elliot, said: 'The donation to the under-fives play park is massively appreciated and gets us so much closer to our £100,000 target, which has now been met by a final donation from the Suez Trust. It was great to see so many people of all ages being active and playing on Saturday.' Atlantis offers nine Les Mills Programmes, including Born to Move, with 11 instructors and classes for all fitness levels. The Body Pump workout is refreshed with new music and new moves every three months, using light to moderate weights with lots of repetition, resulting in a total body workout that leaves you lean, toned and fit-fast.



ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES: EARLY YEARS

IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR FREE EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE PROVISION?

Early Learning and Childcare from August 2017 will be available for:-

- Four year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2013 and 28th February 2014
- Three year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2014 and 28th February 2015

A list of current preschool education providers, including those offering Gaelic Medium, is available from:

- All Early Learning & Childcare Providers
- All Primary Schools
- <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/early-years>
- Early Years Helpline noted below

Information leaflets will be available from Early Learning & Childcare Providers at the time of registration and parents can obtain further guidance from the Early Years Helpline, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Telephone 01369 708503).

Parents of eligible children should register at their preferred provider, taking along their child's birth certificate, during week commencing 20th Feb 2017 during the normal operational hours of the nursery.

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

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL'S SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND 2017/18

Application forms for grants to community organisations are now available.

They can be accessed by website: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/third-sector-grants>
phone: 01369 708669
email: communitydevelopment@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Closing date for applications is 10 February 2017.

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As a local, caring, charity the Home is always grateful for any financial support, whether through donations or legacies, to continue to provide exceptional residential and respite care for our old people.

For more information please contact:
North Argyll Eventide Home Association Ltd.
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Viewpoint



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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

It's hard not to keep banging on about the state of play with waste and recycling collections around Oban. This week Soroba residents have again been in touch with the paper, and we also heard from Lerags residents who are getting fed-up with the state of play.

The problem, in part, seems to be that the council has apparently reduced the size of the lorries being used while the amount of rubbish having to be collected has increased, given that bins are fuller due to collections now happening every three weeks.

All credit to the bin men who are dealing with the issue day in day out, and fair play to the council which is strug-

gling to meet demands and expectations with little cash in the budget. But there has to be a better way to make this work.

Change is never easy, and a gradual move would have made more sense. Why reduce the size of the lorries at the start of the changes? People need to get used to recycling more – it was never going to happen overnight.

Also, put the larger lorries on to cover the more densely populated areas, such as Soroba.

Maybe we should take a leaf out of Norway's book. It appears to have taken waste management to a new level, and is increasing its recycling. Food for thought?



Days gone by – the 1930s

This photograph was taken in 1938 of a stalking party arriving home with a 'royal' stag shot at Glensanda on Kingairloch Estate, owned by Mrs Emily Strutt. It shows, left to right, Mrs Rose Mary Morrison (nee Strutt), Mrs Bridget Bradish (nee Strutt), Mr Duncan Brown, Mr Archie Campbell (nicknamed 'Tidy'), Mr Christopher McRae (head stalker) and Mr John Brown. The photograph was taken at the Kingairloch jetty. Lying alongside is the white estate launch called The Goolack.

Macphail

ANGUS MACPHAIL
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THE editorial powers-that-be at this fine newspaper are clearly tiring of my dull weekly dribble about music.

This, coupled with my recent relocation from the partying, bohemian ghettos of the leisure pages to the prestigious leafy suburbs of the letters district, means they have pressed upon me to steer away from music a little more often than before.

In accordance with this, I'm going to introduce my most recently and accidentally acquired hobby – running.

As part of the usual gimmickry of social media marketing when we were releasing the *Alive* single a few weeks ago, Andrew and I boldly (stupidly?) promised that if the song made it into the top 80 on the mainstream charts, we would run the Three half-marathon in April.

We were delighted that it surpassed all our expectations and reached number 26.

This was all well and good, but it means that two of the most unlikely long-distance runners in the history of the sport have to deliver on that ridiculous and ill-conceived pledge and now must prepare our combined 36 stone to move unaided over 13 miles of road and beach by April.

In seriousness, both of us had said over recent times that we must start improving our fitness and that as we are approaching the horrors of middle age, we need to keep a few steps ahead of mother nature and compensate for



The new Skip-inish single *Alive* featured a running women – now Angus and Andrew are being forced to do the same by running the Three half-marathon in April.

too many years of abusing our bodies with music and all that goes with it.

We've luckily managed to get away with it so far and are both pretty healthy, but physical wellbeing is not something to take for granted and we are not getting younger.

So, in accordance with my pontificating on New Year resolutions of a few weeks ago, a new endeavour has been tentatively embarked on.

We are not planning to pursue this any further than April and don't strive to set any records. Getting round the course and doing something healthy for a few months is all we are concerning ourselves with.

It has actually been a very pleasant experience so far. I've seen parts of Glasgow and Fort William that I have never seen before, and the banks

of the Forth and Clyde Canal are becoming as familiar to me on visits to Glasgow as the gantry of the Park Bar – and in the morning it's the legs and feet that are screaming at me and not my head and my conscience.

If we don't pick up any injuries, and if we don't give in too often to that lazy but loud voice in the head that can craft the most convincing arguments against unnecessary physical activity, then hopefully progress will be made and by April 29 we will be fit enough to finish.

If we do manage it, we may well be happy to celebrate with a less healthy 'half-marathon of a different kind.

Updates on progress will be given periodically over the following months, and we may speed up one of our songs from Walking to Running on the Waves!



Social media

There was considerable comment in response to Oban Times columnist Martin Laing criticising Argyll and Bute Council for the decision to approve an oil depot at Ledaig, close to Oban Airport and a travellers' site.

Craig Somerville questioned: 'What about the oil depot on the pier in Oban. It is right next door to a ferry terminal, railway station and numerous restaurants. Or Connel, next to a large hotel and railway station. It seems some people don't want employment

opportunities or fair competition. Or is it just one or two people stirring it up for their own ends.'

Alan Duncan-Smith agreed: 'Exactly Craig. Maybe the councillors could use the phrase 'blast area' a few more times – this is heating oil, not dynamite. Thousands of homes in Argyll have smaller oil tanks right next to their houses without having to be aware of their 'blast area'. No wonder the travellers are worried with this sort of nonsense going about.'

Jean Campbell posted: 'It's unfair to

say these things about people without foundation, though admittedly planners and planning-committees are an obvious easy target (like traffic wardens). Please stop recycling rabble-rousing political statements as news.

It's nearing local election time so there will be plenty of rhetoric to go round without it being the front page headline; factual items please Oban Times!'

David Banks commented: 'Do you know that if you throw a lit match into a bowl of heating oil or diesel it will put the match out!!!!'

Crannog 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

either telephone IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email inquiries@ipso.co.uk. IPSO is an independent body which deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines.

We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Beautiful Loch Etive needs protecting

Sir,
We refer to the article by Sandy Neil 'Fish farm operator attacks opposition campaign group' (The Oban Times, January 19).

We would like to correct Stewart Hawthorn, the farming director for Dawnfresh, who is quoted as saying: 'The action was initiated by a small group of privileged people, many not from the area.'

Friends of Loch Etive has more than 300 members and these are made up of a mixture of those living in the Loch Etive community and the many regular visitors to Etive.

What Mr Hawthorn says is simply wrong, but with his company's position so difficult to defend, perhaps it is easier to attack the messenger.

And, of course, the appeal to Scottish ministers was initiated by Dawnfresh itself and it was Argyll and Bute Council, and not Friends of Loch Etive, that refused to grant the certificate that led to the Dawnfresh appeal.

Friends of Loch Etive has only ever been an interested party in this matter.

The real significance of all this is that Loch Etive is public space. It is not possible for anyone to own a sea loch.

The importance of protecting the landscape of Loch Etive cannot be underestimated.

Mr Hawthorn says he is going to discuss the matter with, among others, local MSPs and councillors. For guidance on what local political opinion is on the matter, he could do no better than read the excellent *Oban Times*. In the edition of January 19, the story headlined 'Tourism surge boosts employment in Argyll' reported that Michael Russell, MSP for Argyll and Bute, recognises just how important the tourism industry is to Scotland's economy and particularly to Argyll.

Mr Russell recognises that Scotland is famed for its incredible scenery. It is that scenery – in this case, the incredibly beautiful Loch Etive – that Friends of Loch Etive seeks to protect from the creeping industrialisation that Dawnfresh seeks to impose on the community.

Last February, *The Oban Times* also reported on the activities of the Argyll and Bute Economic Forum, which brings together members of the area's key business sectors, leading agencies, as well as local and national government representatives.

The forum made it clear that tourism is Argyll's largest private sector employer with some 25 per cent of all private sector jobs and is growing fast, with some 30 per cent of all new employment and very substantial capital investment attributable to tourism.

Simply put, it makes financial and employment sense for the Argyll and Bute Council to seek to protect the landscape of Loch Etive and the council should be applauded for so doing.

Loch Etive needs protecting from the activities of Dawnfresh, a loss-making company that is seeking to industrialise its operations to

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL
ailean@obantimes.co.uk



DIARDAOIN SEO CHAIDH chaidh tagradh le còrr air dà cheud mìle ainm a shineadh dha oifigich aig Sràid Downing ag iarraidh urram a bhuileachadh air Seòras MacIain an aon bhall a th' air fhàgail beò de Sgudran 617 nam Dam Busters a sgrìos tri damaichean anns a' Ghearmailt air an 17 Cèitean 1943.

Bha e cho doirbh ionnsaigh a thoirt aig Mòhne, Eder agus Sorpe ri linn talamh àrd is gun deach am 'boma bocadaich – bouncing bomb' aig Barnes Wallis a leasachadh airson feuchainn orra.

Tha eachdraidh a' dearbhadh mar a shoirbhich leis an ionnsaigh, agus a' ghaisge aig daoine òga a' coileanadh ruathar-adhair an aghaidh bras-shruth urchair bho ghunnaichean dìon.

Ach bu daor a cheannaich Sgudran 617 na bhunnig iad is faisg air leth nan itealan agus caogad 's a trì duine air an call.

Chaidh urram Crois Bhictoria a bhuileachadh air Guy Gibson, ceannsalach an Sgudrain, ach ged a dhearbhadh Barnes Wallis a chuid ealantachd leis a' bhoma bocadaich, bha a

reduce its labour costs, all for the benefit of its billionaire, undoubtedly privileged, absentee owner.

Nor is this recent appeal an isolated case. At the end of last year, Dawnfresh appealed to Scottish ministers against another decision of the Argyll and Bute Council.

After a well-attended public planning hearing at the Corran Halls in Oban last spring, the council refused on landscape grounds to allow further expansion of the farm at Etive 6. Dawnfresh lost that appeal in October.

In 2016, Dawnfresh was also served with planning contravention notices at its farms at Port Na Mine (Etive 3) and at its two farms on Loch Awe at Tervine and Braevallich, and with Section 33A enforcement notices at Port na Mine (Etive 3) and at Airds Bay (Etive 4). All these formal notices were served under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 by the Argyll and Bute Council, on behalf of the people of Loch Etive, and not by Friends of Loch Etive.

Keith Macmillan, Chairman, on behalf of the trustees of Friends of Loch Etive, Fanans Beag, Taynuilt.

Lorn and Islands Hospital is vital

Sir,
We had at one time five hospitals in Oban: the McKelvie, West Highland, Dalintart, the County Chest, and Glen Euchar (Oban Maternity Hospital).

Now we have only one. And we need it. As proof, I have had experience of being a patient within Lorn and Islands Hospital. I suffered two mini strokes and a major one within three months and without the teamwork of the doctors, nurses and other staff, where would I be?

We gave up five hospitals to get this one so we must not yield in the fight to save it.

I cannot see it closing because it covers such a large area, including Mid Argyll, Campbeltown, Tarbert, Lochgilphead, Mull, Iona and Oban.

Who in their right mind would consider closing this wonderful hospital. Whoever thought up the cuts must be joking, so I do not think it will come to pass.

There is a first-class team at Lorn and Islands Hospital so leave them alone and stop interfering.

Hugh McCorquodale, Longsdale Terrace, Oban.

Birthday party was a wonderful surprise

Sir,
My 90th birthday treat was to have been a quiet dinner for three at the Taynuilt Hotel.

However, my son Colin had other plans and so, to my complete surprise and enormous pleasure, I found myself in the midst of loving friends and family of many years. And the mascara held.

A huge thank you to the chef/owner for a splendid buffet and delicious

cake, and the competent and cheerful staff, and I wish them all good fortune for the years ahead.

Admittedly, doubly fortified a glass or two of bubbly, I managed to blow out all the candles with a single breath.

To Colin and Pauline and all the lovely people involved, my sincere appreciation for the wonderful gifts, flowers and, somewhat belatedly, Christmas goodies.

Sybil Cameron, Cruachan Cottages, Taynuilt.

Criticism coming from a Tory is ironic

Sir,
I write in response to Alastair Redman's letter (The Oban Times, January 12).

Mr Redman states that the Scottish Liberal Democrats, at their most recent party conference, debated a motion which considered independence. What he fails to mention, of course, is that the motion was roundly defeated.

The Lib Dems are a broad church and encompass a range of opinion. We favour diversity and tolerance. We have never believed in lockstep obedience to head office. We are in favour both of the union and of decentralisation.

I found it ironic that the comments came from a Conservative when almost all their MPs in Scotland were swept away years ago. The Liberal Democrats only suffered similarly in 2015.

But midwinter is past and although it would be foolhardy to detect green shoots, I do sense a change in the air. Perhaps the normal rules of politics are beginning to apply again.

Denis Rixson, Fank Brae, Mallaig.

Conservative leader is not to be trusted

Sir,
Before the vote on independence, Scots Tory leader Ruth Davidson promised that voting 'no means we stay in' the EU. That's patently not true.

Before the vote on EU membership she said that the case for Brexit was based on 'lies, fantasy economics' and families 'couldn't afford' it, and that thousands of Scottish jobs were 'reliant on the exports we sell within the EU'.

Now she claims it is an 'opportunity'. I'd understand if she said we would have to make the best of a bad decision but now to claim that something that was lies is an opportunity is beyond credible.

After the Brexit vote she said she wanted the UK to stay in the European single market even if it meant having to accept free movement. Now she supports not being in that single market.

Now she is attacking council tax changes she claimed only last year were her party's policy. How can anyone trust what they would do in power with such wildly changing positions?

Not even unionists can trust her.

Andrew Stuart, Norfolk Court, Glasgow.

Ailean Caimbeul

chuid toileachais à sin air a mhilleadh gu mòr le aithne air na chaill am beathannan anns an ionnsaigh.

Saoilidh mi gum bheil e ceart gun tèid gaisge ann an cogadh, agus gu sònraichte aig àm sìthe, aithneachadh gu pòlach agus ma tha creideas gu bhith aig siostam urraman na dùthcha seo, tha fhios gum bheil Seòras MacIain airidh air aithne.

Aig an aon àm chanadh mòran le làn-cheartas gun robh mìltean a nochd gaisge ann an cogaidhean nach d' fhuair aithne, 's dòcha gun robh an àireamh ro mhòr dhan t-siostam.

Tha MacIain ceart le bhith ag ràdh gum bi dad sam bith a thèid a bhuileachadh airsan na urram dhan a-h-uile neach a thug seirbheis ann an Sgudran 617.

Thug seo orm fhìn smaoineachadh às ùr air cho beag còmhraidh 's a dhèanadh leithid m' athair air na chunnaic is na dh'fhuiling e sa chogadh, agus tha fhios gum bheil iomadach teachlach eile aig am bheil an aon fhianais.

Ach tha mise air tighinn chun a' cho-dhùnaidh gur e bu chuireach

dhan t-sàmhchair sin gun robh daoine a' feuchainn ris na chunnaic, na dh'fhuiling, is na rinn iad a chur às an cuimhne.

Mar eisimpleir, aon iomradh air comhailteachd iargalta dhan Ruis aig àm an Dàrna Cogaidh a chuala mi bhom athair, sealladh a tha fios agam a mhair leis da a bheatha, b' e sin uamhas a bhith a' seòladh tancair tro mhuir a bha na teine le ola shoithich a chaidh a cur fodha is e a' faicinn 's a' cluinntinn dhaoine ann an uisge nach b' urrainn dha a chuideachadh. Cha b' iongnadh leithid a chuimhne na trom-laighe!

LAST THURSDAY a 200,000-signature petition was submitted to Downing Street asking that 95-year-old George Johnson, the last survivor of the 1943 617 Squadron Dam Buster raids, be honoured.

I believe he should, because Johnson has stated that any honour he receives will be for his squadron and former colleagues.

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

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.

Woman not guilty of assault on ex-partner

A CAOL woman who was charged with assault after throwing a bowl at her then partner has been found not guilty.

Sheriff William Taylor said he was not satisfied there was sufficient evidence to convict Joanne Margaret Louise Kane, 23, at Fort William Sheriff Court on Monday (January 30).

The court heard how Kane's former partner had gone to her house at Blar Mhor Road after an afternoon in the Lochy Bar, when the pair began to argue. He said Kane had called him on numerous occasions throughout the three hours he was at the pub and the argument was because he had been out drinking during the day.

Her partner then left the house to go and get a fish supper and when he returned the argument broke out again.

The former couple's son was upstairs sleeping when Kane was said to have picked up a porcelain bowl and 'chucked it across the room'. The bowl was said to have shattered as it hit her ex-partner on the nose.

The court heard how Kane's partner had then tried to take their son out of the house as he did not want him to be 'in that environment'.

But Kane's solicitor told the court that she had thrown the bowl in self-defence after her former partner had pinned her down on the sofa and thrown a fish supper at her.

Sheriff Taylor said the Crown did not have sufficient evidence to disprove Kane was acting in self-defence and that his view of the accused's ex-partner was 'not a high one' particularly after hearing how he had tried to take the child away - something which the Sheriff said was done to hurt Kane.

Sheriff Taylor concluded by finding Kane not guilty.

Call for nursing degree to be brought to Fort William

ELLIE FORBES

eforbes@obantimes.co.uk

PEOPLE in Fort William are calling on the University of the Highlands and Islands to include its Fort William campus in a new adult nursing degree.

The University of the Highlands and Islands will take over the BSc adult nursing programme from the University of Stirling in September 2017 with the theory part of the degree being delivered in Inverness and Stornoway.

Potential Fort William students took to social media last week to express their disappointment that they would not be able to study for the degree in their home town but would have to travel almost 200 miles to Stornoway, or more than 60 miles to Inverness.

Elaine Stoddart, 33, a health care assistant at Tweedale medical practice, Fort William, posted about the issue on Facebook on January 19 and more than 120 people commented to say they were interested, or knew people who may be interested in studying for the degree if they could do it at the Fort William college.

Elaine, who lives in Caol with her four young children aged between three to nine, told *The*



Elaine Stoddart with son Joey at the Fort William campus. Photograph: A Brightside Photography.

Oban Times: 'Nursing is something I have always wanted to do, but it's just not possible with all the travelling that would be involved.'

Elaine asked UHI about the possibility of being able to study at the Fort William campus and make use of Lochaber services for placements and was asked to feed back the level of demand

for this. Currently students from Stirling come to Fort William on placement and Elaine and others questioned why people who lived in the town could therefore not study and do their placements here.

She continued: 'It would be so good for the whole area in terms of the economy and all the people who want to do the course,

but can't travel, to have it in Fort William. We should be making use of the local resources we have.'

'We have the Belford, GP practices and district nurses.'

'I think the support would be in place.'

'People here are at a disadvantage because of where we live. Living in this area is brilliant

and people are having to move away to do what they want.'

'People should be able to get the qualifications they want when we have the university here.'

Health care assistant in Ballachulish and mum of two Katy Patterson got in touch with *The Oban Times* to say nursing is something she has been thinking about doing since her dad was hurt in an accident five years ago.

Katy, whose children are two and five, said she would like to start studying once her youngest starts school: 'There just isn't scope to do it round here just now. You have to travel so far, but it's something I want to do now.'

A spokesperson for UHI said: 'The Nursing and Midwifery Council has given approval for the theoretical part of the programme to be delivered in Inverness and Stornoway. Students will then undertake their practice elements across the region. This will continue to include, as it currently does with University of Stirling, placements in Fort William.'

'In the future, we intend to look at how we can best support students/potential future students who are distant from the delivery campuses.'

POLICE FILES

THERE has been an increase in house break-ins throughout Lochaber and police are encouraging home owners to remain vigilant.

The most recent break-ins took place while homes were unoccupied.

Police said taking precautions such as leaving lights on while away and asking neighbours to keep a watchful eye all help in preventing and detecting these crimes.

Police advice that any suspicious activity or strange/unknown vehicles seen in local areas should be reported as a matter of urgency.

A WINDOW of a house in Drumfada Terrace, Corpach, was damaged when a stone was thrown at it sometime between 10am on January 22 and 12.30pm on January 23. Anyone in the area at the time who saw anyone acting suspiciously is asked to contact police in Fort William.

AN ANCHOR and buoy may be missing from Glasdrum Point on the Sound of Mull. If anyone has information as to the whereabouts of the buoy, or any reason to suggest the anchor may be missing, they should contact police in Strontian.



The Belhaven Development has brought about the call for the catchment boundary change. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

Proposed school boundary changes

THE HIGHLAND Council is seeking the views of two Fort William communities on a proposal to change the catchment boundary of Inverloch Primary School and Lundavra Primary School.

The change is being proposed because a new housing development is being built across the existing boundary.

The Belhaven site, Fort William, will have 13 new properties on it.

A Highland Council spokesperson said: 'There are five bungalows which are for the council and these are all wheelchair adapted properties. Currently none of the families which are likely to be allocated to these properties have school age children.'

The other eight flats on the site will be allocated through Lochaber Housing Association. Members of the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee (ECAS)

agreed to carry out a public consultation on the proposal at their meeting last week.

The views of parents, the community and others will be sought from February 6 to March 23 and a public meeting will be held in Fort William on March 8.

The proposal paper will be available on the Highland Council website from February 6 at www.highland.gov.uk/school-consultations.

Father and son get payback orders

A FATHER and son were handed Community Payback Orders (CPO) at Fort William Sheriff court on Tuesday.

Antonino Giovanni Sabiu was charged with assault and sentenced to a level one community payback order of 75 hours to be completed in six months.

His solicitor told the court that while Sabiu is 'no stranger to the court', he is 'not a violent individual' and that 'provocation was the catalyst' for the attack.

His son Kevin Giovanni George Sabiu was also given a CPO in a separate case

on Tuesday. Kevin Sabiu was charged with possession of ecstasy on April 3, 2016, in Middle Street, Fort William.

He was found with eight tablets, which had a value of around £80.

The court heard that the 22-year-old was seen by patrol police officers near Superdrug on the High Street and he began to walk briskly in the other direction after seeing them.

The officers alerted other police in the area who stopped the accused, but a search turned up negative. Later inspection

of CCTV footage in Middle Street showed Kevin Sabiu disappearing behind a set of bins just before he was searched by the second set of officers.

Police later found the tablets in the area beside the bins in Middle Street.

Sabi's solicitor told the court that the younger generation use such substances for recreational purposes and that the tablets were for personal use.

Sheriff William Taylor handed Kevin Sabiu a CPO for 40 hours, to be completed in three months.

Fined and banned for speeding at 103mph

A 28-YEAR-OLD man has been disqualified from driving for six months and fined £1,500 after being caught driving at 103mph.

Ivor Ian Finlayson, from Kyle of Lochalsh, was handed the penalty after being found guilty at Fort William Sheriff Court on Tuesday (January 31).

A static police camera van caught Finlayson speeding on a straight stretch of the A82 near Glencoe, going south, after he had overtaken a number of other vehicles.

The court heard Finlayson had accelerated to 103mph to overtake the vehicles. CCTV footage showed how he had tried to overtake the last car in the row of vehicles, but had to slow down and pull in behind it before a corner in the road.

Finlayson, who works as a marine engineer with CalMac, has to travel around 12,000 miles a year with his job. But the court heard how his employers had said he would not be fired because of a disqualification.

Sheriff William Taylor added the stretch of road was a well-known area for speeding and that it is very important people do not drive at the same speeds Finlayson did.

Screening saves mother's life twice

A MOTHER from Skye is urging women in the Highland to take part in a cervical screening programme.

Jo-Anne Ford, 46, from Portree, says regular participation in the Scottish Cervical Screening Programme may have prevented her developing cervical cancer twice, and potentially saved her life.

Ms Ford used Cervical Cancer Prevention Week (January 22-January 28) to raise awareness of the programme, which invites all women aged from 25 to 64 to regularly attend cervical screening.

'I have participated in cervical cancer screening since my early twenties and I'm in no doubt as to how important it is,' explained Ms Ford.

'It was thanks to regular participation in screening that pre-cancerous cells were discovered in my cervix when I was 34.'

'The test aims to pick-up changes in your cervix so they can be monitored or treated. I was lucky that changes were spotted at an

early stage, allowing them to be treated before they developed further.'

'After my treatment, I continued to have the smear test.'

'Unfortunately I had abnormal cell changes a second time five years later, by which time I had moved to Skye. It was during this time I discovered the fabled Highland hospitality was genuine, as the nurses and staff at the hospital were fabulous with me.'

NHS Highland said Across Scotland, approximately 300 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year, and it is the most common cancer among women aged 34 and under.

Jo-Anne added: 'It's because of this that I want to tell my story and highlight the importance of cervical screening.'

'I appreciate that it is a delicate subject, however I would encourage women to put embarrassment to one side and take part in cervical screening. I'm living proof of how important it can be.'

Temporary bus shelter at health centre

A FORT WILLIAM bus shelter that was knocked down last July after it was hit by a bus is to be replaced this week.

A meeting between property owners Bidwells and NHS Highland took place last week to discuss a permanent replacement bus shelter.

Following the meeting, both parties confirmed a temporary shelter will be erected this week, with talks about a new permanent one ongoing.

A spokesperson for managing agents Bidwells said: 'We have contracted a local joiner to erect a temporary bus shelter at the health centre and this should be in place sometime this week.'

'We are currently in the process of negotiating with the insurers and bus shelter suppliers to secure a permanent replacement.'

'We realise this has caused some inconvenience to bus passengers but we are working

hard to resolve this.' NHS Highland said: 'We have been in discussions with Bidwells and a temporary shelter will be put in place this week.'

'Discussions to secure a permanent replacement bus shelter are ongoing. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.'

As reported in *The Oban Times* on January 12 the community was frustrated that nothing had been done about the bus shelter for months after it was knocked down.

Former community councillor Mary Bruce is also frustrated a new shelter has still not been put in place.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'Someone just needs to get it fixed because if this had happened at Raigmore a new one would be up tomorrow.'

'Things just get left lying here though. Let's just do something and argue about it later.'

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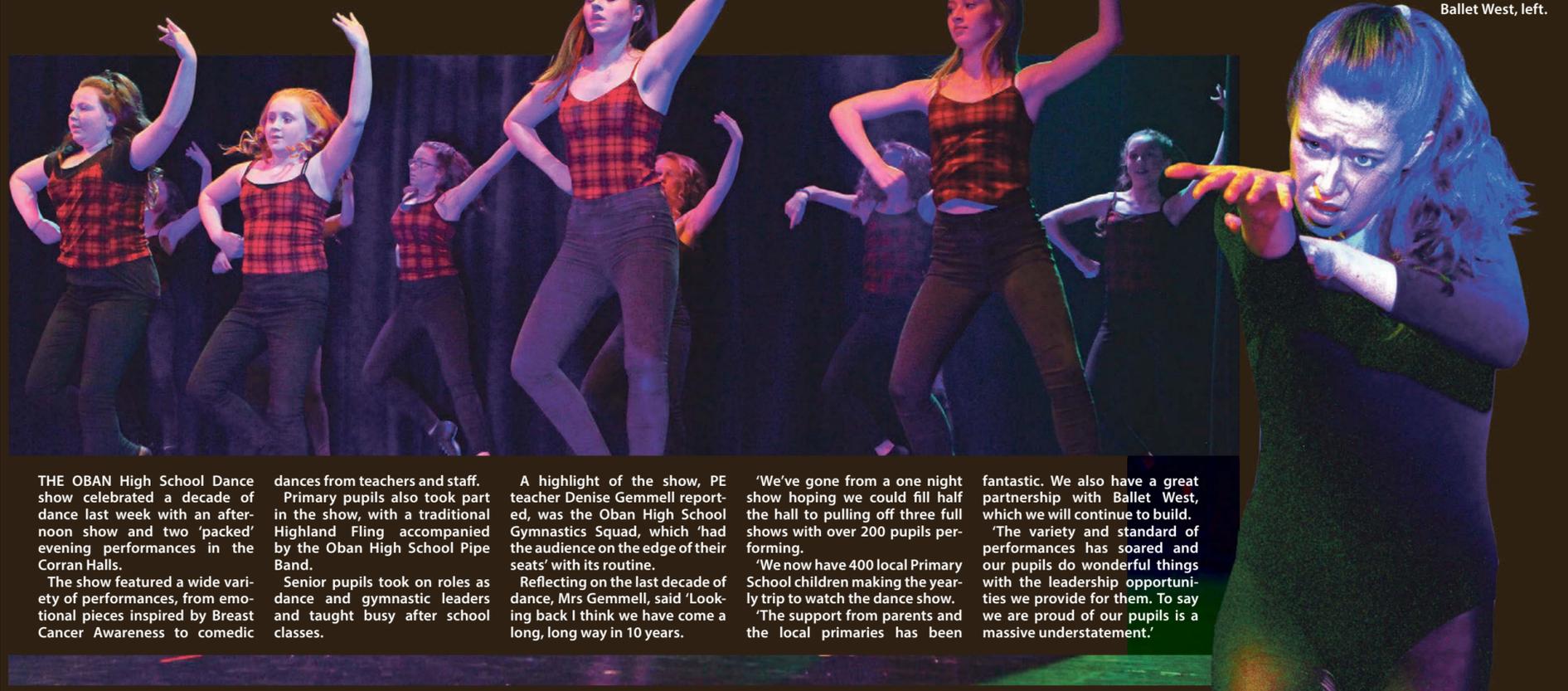
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Oban High School celebrates a decade of dance shows

Upbeat Highland dancers put on a show, far left, as did outreach students from Ballet West, left.



THE OBAN High School Dance show celebrated a decade of dance last week with an afternoon show and two 'packed' evening performances in the Corran Halls. The show featured a wide variety of performances, from emotional pieces inspired by Breast Cancer Awareness to comedic

dances from teachers and staff. Primary pupils also took part in the show, with a traditional Highland Fling accompanied by the Oban High School Pipe Band. Senior pupils took on roles as dance and gymnastic leaders and taught busy after school classes.

A highlight of the show, PE teacher Denise Gemmell reported, was the Oban High School Gymnastics Squad, which 'had the audience on the edge of their seats' with its routine. Reflecting on the last decade of dance, Mrs Gemmell, said 'Looking back I think we have come a long, long way in 10 years.

'We've gone from a one night show hoping we could fill half the hall to pulling off three full shows with over 200 pupils performing. 'We now have 400 local Primary School children making the yearly trip to watch the dance show. 'The support from parents and the local primaries has been

fantastic. We also have a great partnership with Ballet West, which we will continue to build. 'The variety and standard of performances has soared and our pupils do wonderful things with the leadership opportunities we provide for them. To say we are proud of our pupils is a massive understatement.'

Campaign launched to raise funds for new Gàidhlig centre

Ceòlas has launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise £250,000 towards building a new £7m 'centre for excellence' for Gàidhlig culture on South Uist.

The Scottish Government granted Ceòlas £1million in December to help build the centre for Gàidhlig music, dance, language and cultural heritage at Cnoc Soilleir in Daliburgh – but its staff and volunteers now need to raise £250,000 from the public to demonstrate community support.

Ceòlas, a 21-year-old arts and education organisation, is described as 'rooted within the Gàidhlig heartland of South Uist', and a distillation of the island's culture and heritage. Uist is recognised as the most vibrant Gàidhlig community in Scotland, its crowdfunder page explains, 'a place where language, music and dance are essential components of our cultural heritage.'

Since its establishment in 1996, Ceòlas has grown from a week-long music and dance school to become one of Scotland's leading Gaelic cultural organisations. Ceòlas currently hosts music schools in summer and winter – most recently a Fèis Chullaig at Hogmanay featuring fiddle, bagpipe and singing classes and concerts in Grogarry Lodge, and fireside ceilidhs stretching from Eriskay's Am Politician Bar to the Dark Island Hotel in Benbecula. But Ceòlas now hopes to host a lot more, partnered with Lews Castle College UHI in Stornoway.

'For many years our community has looked forward to seeing a centre for Gaelic music, dance and culture here in Uist,' Ceòlas's website reads. 'We are excited to be at the

threshold of achieving this ambitious project for Uist, and need your help now to make this happen by donating to the capital fund.

'Through supporting this project you will be helping to make Uist an attractive place for people to live and visit, giving families more reason to stay in the islands and hopefully stem the flow of young people leaving the island. This building will be a game changer, not only for Ceòlas and Lews Castle College UHI but for the whole island community.'

Pledging £1million to the Cnoc Soilleir project, Deputy First Minister John Swinney said: 'The establishment of a multi-functioning Gàidhlig education and arts centre in Uist will create over 40 full-time equivalent jobs in the coming years and generate significant benefits for the local economy. It will also secure a sustainable future for Gaelic in the area.'

Cnoc Soilleir, meaning 'Hill of Bright Light', will support the growth of Ceòlas' Summer School, winter festival, song conference and symposium, as well as Lews Castle College's LCC music programmes, including a BA in applied music, MA in music and the environment, an HNC music, and other creative industry courses.

Ceòlas projects that, by 2022, there will be ten new Ceòlas events delivered from Cnoc Soilleir, and that the winter festival and summer school will attract more than 2,000 visitors to the island. It also estimates the project will directly and indirectly create 41 new full-time equivalent jobs, and attract 91 new people living permanently in Uist.

Architect John Renshaw, who undertook a feasibility study in 2015, said: 'We are thrilled



Above and below: Architects' concept drawings of the proposed building in Daliburgh © John Renshaw Architects 2016

Ceòlas are at the point of developing such an important building for the celebration, performance and teaching of Gàidhlig music, dance and cultural heritage.'

The new building promises an 'exemplary modern teaching and working environment with ideal acoustics and ambience for experiencing, performing and teaching traditional music, dance and Gàidhlig, 'characterised by plentiful natural daylight' and 'an intimate connection with the surrounding landscape'.

For more information, and to donate, you can visit www.ceolas.co.uk.



SCOTS

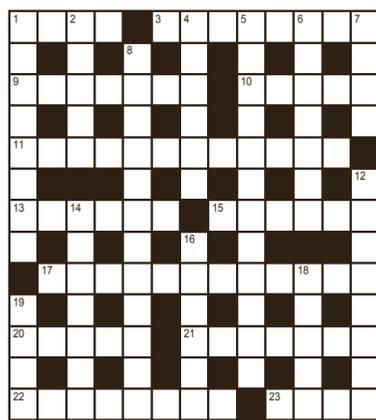
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Across

- 1 Bar (4)
- 3 Etiquette (8)
- 9 Heartfelt (7)
- 10 Got up (5)
- 11 Binding that adheres without glue (8,4)
- 13 Strip for take-off (6)
- 15 Served between the starter and main (6)
- 17 A place to sit? (12)
- 20 Copy (5)
- 21 Radio frequency (7)
- 22 Not cold now (6,2)
- 23 Intelligence (4)

Down

- 1 Dairy (8)
- 2 Child (5)
- 4 Sell to the public (6)
- 5 Crumpet holder (8,4)
- 6 Fall, on plant? (7)
- 7 Bank claim (4)
- 8 Shop which sells an assortment of goods (7,5)
- 12 Crudeness (8)
- 14 Without expectations of winning (2-5)
- 16 Seen it all before! (4,2)
- 18 Circumvent (5)
- 19 Roast (4)

LAST WEEK'S
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Friday 3 – Thursday 9 February

A MONSTER CALLS | 12A | 128 MIN

Sat: 15:30, Sun: 12:00
Parent & Baby Screening! Lights will be left on at a dimmed level and baby changing available – Tue: 11:30
A boy seeks the help of a tree monster to cope with his single mum's terminal illness.

BALLERINA | U | 119 MIN

Tue: 16:00, Thu: 16:00
Children's animation. Set in 1879 Paris. An orphan girl dreams of becoming a ballerina and flees her rural Brittany for Paris, where she passes for someone else and accedes to the position of pupil at the Grand Opera house.

KIDS CLUB: PIRATES IN AN ADVENTURE WITH SCIENTISTS | U | 88 MIN

Sat: 11:00
Children's Classic. Pirate Captain sets out on a mission to defeat his rivals Black Bellamy and Cutlass Liz for the Pirate of the year Award. The quest takes Captain and his crew from the shores of Blood Island to the foggy streets of Victorian London.

LA LA LAND | 12A | 148 MIN

Fri: 18:30, Sat: 13:00, Sun: 12:30, Mon: 18:30, Tue: 18:15, Wed: 18:30, Thu: 18:15
Mia, an aspiring actress, serves lattes to movie stars in between auditions and Sebastian, a jazz musician, scrapes by playing cocktail party gigs in dingy bars, but as success mounts they are faced with decisions that begin to fray the fragile fabric of their love affair, and the dreams they worked so hard to maintain in each other threaten to rip them apart.

MOANA | PG | 133 MIN

Fri: 16:00, Sat: 13:00, Mon: 16:00, Wed: 16:00
From Walt Disney Animation Studios comes "Moana," a sweeping, CG-animated feature film about an adventurous teenager who sails out on a daring mission to save her people.

SILENCE | 15 | 181 MIN

Sat: 18:00
Silver Screening – "Last Chance to See" – Concessions (age 60+) entry just £3! – Sun: 14:30
Two Jesuit priests, Sebastião Rodrigues and Francis Garrpe, travel to seventeenth century Japan which has, under the Tokugawa shogunate, banned Catholicism and almost all foreign contact. There they witness the persecution of Japanese Christians at the hands of their own government which wishes to purge Japan of all western influence. Eventually the priests separate and Rodrigues travels the countryside, wondering why God remains silent while His children suffer.

SPLIT | 15 | 137 MIN

Fri: 21:00, Sat: 15:45, Sun: 18:00, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu: 21:00
While the mental divisions of those with dissociative identity disorder have long fascinated and eluded science, it is believed that some can also manifest unique physical attributes for each personality, a cognitive and physiological prism within a single being. Though Kevin (James McAvoy) has evidenced 23 personalities to his trusted psychiatrist, Dr. Fletcher (Betty Buckley), there remains one still submerged who is set to materialize and dominate all the others. Compelled to abduct three teenage girls led by the willful, observant Casey (Anya Taylor-Joy, The Witch), Kevin reaches a war for survival among all of those contained within him—as well as everyone around him—as the walls between his compartments shatter apart.

T2: TRAINSPOTTING | 18 | 135 MIN

Fri: 17:00, 19:45, Sat: 18:30, 21:00, Sun: 15:15, 18:00, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu: 17:00, 19:45
First there was an opportunity.....then there was a betrayal. Twenty years have gone by. Much has changed but just as much remains the same. Mark Renton (Ewan McGregor) returns to the only place he can ever call home. They are waiting for him: Spud (Ewan Bremner), Sick Boy (Jonny Lee Miller), and Begbie (Robert Carlyle). Other old friends are waiting too: sorrow, loss, joy, vengeance, hatred, friendship, love, longing, fear, regret, diamorphine, self-destruction and mortal danger, they are all lined up to welcome him, ready to join the dance

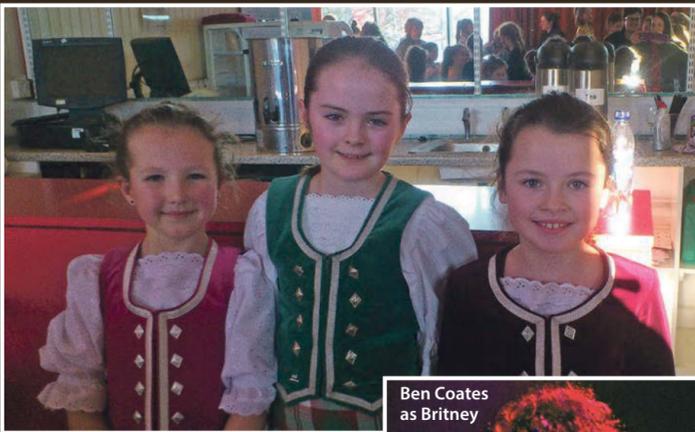
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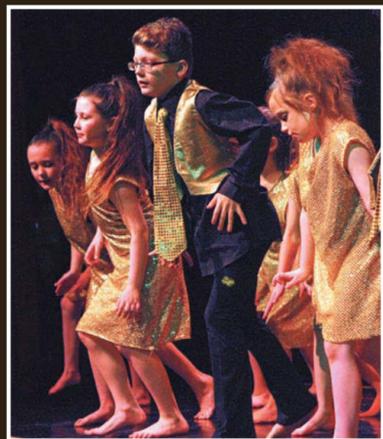
MONDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2., 1700 Drivetime With Marcus, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McClockie's Show, 2100 David Cullen
TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are 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 Lawrie
SATURDAY: 0800 Breakfast Show, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crosher, 1300 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



Pupils from St Columba's Primary in Oban, above left and right, also took part.



Ben Coates as Britney



Ballet West Junior outreach students.



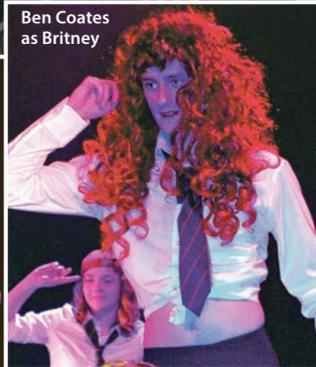
The very emotive Breast Cancer Awareness dance.



Teachers and staff take to the stage for one of the highlights.



Hair was flying during some of the routines.



Lucy Croarkin's fusion of pop and Highland.

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Community Noticeboard

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Guest Artists From Fife
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COMUNN GAIDHEALACH AN OBAIN
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MOD Academy & MOD Competitors Ceilidh
Pupils from Oban High, Rockfield, St Columba's & Dunbeg Schools
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IN AID OF STEM CELLS APPEAL FOR GUY FORTEITH

Guy Forteith, 23, was diagnosed with MS when he was aged 16, and is hoping to raise £20,000 towards the new treatment, which he hopes will change his life

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Postponed due to ill health
Now to be held on Saturday 18th February
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Highlands & Islands Music & Dance Festival
Syllabus for the 2017 Music Competitions now available in Music Scotland, Argyll Square, Connel Village Store or from any Committee member.
Closing date for entries: 13th March 2017
Piping; Drumming; Singing; Recorder; Clarsach; Piano; Woodwind & Brass; Accordion; & Fiddle competitions.
Scottish Charity SC010287

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Railway Club Inverlochry
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COFFEE MORNING
Oban Congregational Church
Saturday 4th February 10.30am - 12.30pm
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Arena

> cinema, radio and what's on listings > leisure ideas > local events

Never mind first-night nerves, panto is a beauty

This year's Killin pantomime of *Sleeping Beauty* played to sell-out audiences last Thursday, Friday and Saturday night in Killin's McLaren Hall.

One of the team, Ron Allner, told *The Oban Times*: 'Everyone agreed the performance this year was truly professional and was very much enjoyed by all the audiences. 'On Thursday night Stirling's

Provost Mike Robbins and his wife came and supported everyone to help calm the first-night nerves, but there was no need to worry: the production went almost without a hitch.'

Mr Allner said director Gordon Hibbard, directing his 21st annual Killin Drama Club pantomime, said afterwards that 'everyone from the actors to the crowd were there to enjoy themselves', and he thanked

'the very many people who worked so hard for so many weeks to make this wonderful event possible'.

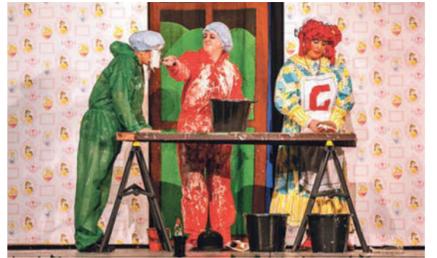
In the audience, Stirling MP Steven Paterson joined Trossachs and Teith councillor Fergus Wood to see the Killin Drama Club's performance of *Sleeping Beauty*. The local politicians paid tribute to the hard work from volunteers of the club and local school children in the amateur performance.

Councillor Wood said: 'The Killin panto never fails to impress and the performance this year was no exception. It was great to see, once again, so many members of the community getting involved to deliver this local tradition which was thoroughly enjoyable.'

Mr Paterson added: 'It was great to join the local community in Killin for the annual panto and, despite tense competition during the community song, everyone was a winner - oh yes they were!'



Trossachs and Teith councillor Fergus Wood and Stirling MP Steven Paterson join the cast of Killin panto, *Sleeping Beauty*.



Eye to eye
with John Wallace

Reading problems?

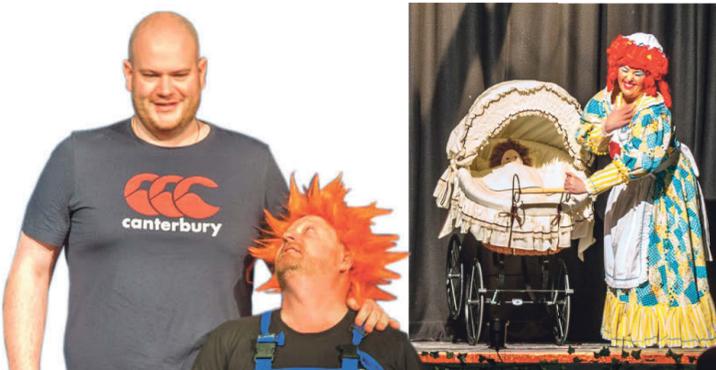
Last month I discussed some of the latest research about 'rewiring' the human brain - ie, neuro-plasticity. These techniques can also be applied to patients who have problems reading.

Much has been made of the dramatic increase in children diagnosed with dyslexia. Approximately one in five children suffers from some form of reading problem. Dyslexia is actually fairly rare and is a more extreme form of reading disorder. It is not possible to cure dyslexia but it is possible to dramatically improve the reading ability of sufferers. Much has been made of helping children and teenagers but what about adults with reading problems? The proportion of adults with reading problems is also one in five yet most simply accept what they have been told since childhood ... there is no effective treatment and they should simply try to manage to the best of their abilities. In

reality, it is possible to provide effective treatment for adults with reading disorders. The process simply takes a bit longer than with children. Research into neuro-plasticity tells us patients in their sixties, seventies and older can be helped effectively.

Treatments take a variety of forms and all start with a comprehensive eye examination. A typical NHS eye examination looks at maximising the clarity of what you can see. There is much more to vision than simply seeing clearly. The muscles surrounding your eyes must work in harmony with each other. You need to be able to read without losing your place and you need to readily comprehend what you are reading. Ask your optometrist if they can help or ask them to refer to a colleague who can. The NHS does not fund this type of treatment.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP
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A' cur 's a' Buain

Listings for Thursday 2 February - Thursday 9 February 2017

DIARDAIN 2 GEARRAN

THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY
17.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's Programming
19.05 **Co-Sheirm** - archive music from choirs and soloists (rpt)
19.35 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** - News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Dealbhan Fraoich** - Heather's Portraits - Episode 3
21.00 **DIY le Donnie** - Donnie MacLeod is back with more DIY - Episode 5 (rpt)
21.45 **UR | NEW: Air an Rathad** - it's all about the cars! - Episode 5
22.15 **UR | NEW: Ice Road Rescuers** - Episode 4
23.00 **Football: Hamilton Accies v Inverness CT**

DIHAOINE 3 GEARRAN

FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY
17.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's Programming
18.35 **Machair** (rpt)
19.00 **An Là** - News
19.25 **Fraoich Bay** (rpt)
19.30 **Taigheadais Dùthchail** - Rural Housing - Episode 2 (Rpt)
20.00 **MacAsgaill** - Visionary Missionary - the work of Rev Iain MacAskill (rpt)
20.50 **Ceòl bho Perthshire Amber** - music (rpt)
21.00 **A' Suathadh Ri Iomadh Rubha** - the Campbell family from Ness (rpt)
22.00 **Seirm** - Music - Episode 1 (rpt)
23.00 **Football: Partick Thistle v St. Johnstone**

DISATHAIRNE 4 GEARRAN

SATURDAY 4 FEBRUARY
16.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's Programming
17.25 **De a-nis?** (rpt)
18.30 **Seachd Là** - News Review
19.30 **Alleluia!** - Spiritual music and verse (rpt)
17.05 **BEÒ | LIVE: Football** - Dundee United v Raith Rovers

19.20 Ceòl bho Perthshire Amber

(rpt)
19.30 **Machair** (rpt)
19.55 **Fraoich Bay** (rpt)
20.00 **Fonn Mo Bheatha** - music and chat (rpt)
20.30 **Lugh Mi** - guests and their favourite books (rpt)
21.00 **Seirm** - music from Celtic Connections - Episode 2 (rpt)
22.00 **Football: Aberdeen v Partick Thistle**
23.00 **A gu U: Na Thadhail Thu?** - an island journey through the Gaelic alphabet - Part 1 (rpt)
24.00 **Women in Blue** - documentary on LAPD Part 2 (rpt)
24.45 **Belladrum 2014** - music (rpt)

DIDÒMHNACH 5 GEARRAN

SUNDAY 5 FEBRUARY
16.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's Programming
17.25 **De a-nis?** (rpt)
18.30 **Seachd Là** - News Review
19.30 **Alleluia!** - Spiritual music and verse (rpt)
20.00 **Fuine** - cooking with seafood (rpt)

20.30 Dealbhan Fraoich

- Heather's Portraits - Episode 3 (rpt)
21.00 **Farpaisean Chon-chorach** - Sheepdogs - Episode 5 (rpt)
22.00 **Football: Inverness CT v Dundee** (rpt)
23.00 **Rathad na Deighe** - Ice Road Rescuers - Episode 4 (rpt)
23.45 **Ceòl bho Perthshire Amber** - music (rpt)

DILUAIN 6 GEARRAN

MONDAY 6 FEBRUARY
17.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's programming
19.10 **Clann a' Chogaidh Mhòr** - Small hands in a big war - Episode 5 (rpt)
19.35 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** - News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Taigheadais Dùthchail** - looks at rural housing in Scotland - Episode 3
21.00 **Trusadh** - Escapes - our nation's hideaways (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW: Port** - Episode 6 - making musical connections in Argyll
22.30 **All That Lies Behind Me** -

Sgeulachd Donald Merrett

- drama documentary (rpt)
23.30 **Air an Rathad** - the car show - Episode 5 (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 7 GEARRAN

TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY
17.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's programming
19.00 **Co-Sheirm** - archive music from choirs and soloists - Episode 5
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
19.55 **Earrann Eachdraidh** - History Shorts (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** - News
20.30 **Alba: 1990** - the charts hits and top news stories (rpt)
21.00 **UR | NEW: Farpaisean Chon-chorach** - Sheepdogs - Episode 6
22.00 **Trusadh: Escapes** - the nation's hideaways (rpt)
23.00 **Aiteal** - supernatural Scotland - Episode 2 (rpt)
23.25 **Binneas: Taghadh bho Na Trads** - music (rpt)
23.30 **Alleluia!** - Spiritual music and verse (rpt)

DICIADAIN 8 GEARRAN

WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY
17.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's programming
19.05 **Clann a' Chogaidh Mhòr** - Small hands in a big war - Episode 5 (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
19.55 **Earrann Eachdraidh** - History Shorts (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** - News
20.30 **Fuine** - cooking for a Birthday party (rpt)
21.00 **Of Diabolical Purposes** - Sgeulachd Monsieur Chantrelle - drama documentary (rpt)
22.00 **Gaol@Gael** - Gaelic match-making - Series 2 - Episode 2 (rpt)
22.30 **Port** - musical connections in Argyll (rpt)
23.00 **DIY le Donnie** - more DIY tips - Series 2 Episode 5 (rpt)
23.25 **Fonn mo Bheatha** - music and chat (rpt)

DIARDAIN 9 GEARRAN

THURSDAY 9 FEBRUARY
17.00 **Programan na Cloinne** - Children's Programming
19.05 **Co-Sheirm** - archive music from choirs and soloists (rpt)
19.30 **Speaking our Language** (rpt)
20.00 **An Là** - News
20.30 **UR | NEW: Dealbhan Fraoich** - Heather's Portraits - Episode 4
21.00 **DIY le Donnie** - Donnie MacLeod is back - Episode 6 (rpt)
21.45 **Ceòl bho Perthshire Amber** - music (rpt)
22.00 **UR | NEW: Air an Rathad** - it's all about the cars! - Episode 6
22.30 **UR | NEW: Ice Road Rescuers** - Episode 4
23.15 **Hebridean Celtic Festival** - highlights (rpt)
23.25 **Fonn mo Bheatha** - music and chat (rpt)

Glasgow Letter

Angus Nicolson
— *Sealladh Àrd*

Last Thursday, January 26, I had the immense pleasure of attending a joint album launch at St Andrews in the Square. The Angus Nicolson Trio (Angus Nicolson from Sleat, Andrew MacPherson and Murdo Cameron) and Calum Alex MacMillan both launched their respective albums in an evening that finished with a well-deserved standing ovation. I have not had the chance to listen to Calum Alex's yet but will write about it as soon as I do. Angus's album, on the other hand, I can safely say is an absolute crack-

er. *Sealladh Àrd* is very different in its approach from the trio's first album, *Lasses that Baffle Us*, which was crammed full of big arrangements, and bolstered by brass and string sections. Instead, the band return to the traditional, and let the tunes do the talking. The album shares its name with the house of Angus's best friend, the late Ivan MacDonald from Uist after whom Angus named his tune, *Ivan's Waltz*. Angus had originally intended naming the waltz *Sealladh Àrd* before discovering there was already a tune to the same name and, therefore, deciding to make that the album title

instead. The front cover of the album is a picture Ivan's sister took of the view from the house – which is the highest house in the township in Uist. *Ivan's Waltz* is beautiful; and Angus's heartfelt delivery of it, both live and on the album, is quite something. My other favourite melody on the album is *A Dhia Thoir Dhuinn Na Gràsan* at the start of track three – led by the sublime guitar melody playing of Murdo Cameron. At the concert, the band were joined on this track by Duncan Lyall, whose bass playing added phenomenal depth to the sound. Other guests were Iain Macfarlane, in whose studio the

album was recorded, and Allan Henderson, the album's producer. As you can imagine when those two are involved, the stage performance of the band was full of craic and nonsense. Angus's own onstage style is as Gaidhealachd as it gets. At one point, he spoke at great length about a 2/4 march, *Duncan Livingstone of Feinchochan*, composed by his father, that begins the whole album; then proceeded to pick up his pipes and play *Donald MacLean's Farewell to Oban*, only to stop suddenly and announce he had gone into the wrong tune!

As the crowd rose to their feet at the end of the evening, it was, I think, in appreciation of the traditional no-nonsense delivery of the tunes that is present both in Angus's stage performance, and in the album. *Sealladh Àrd* is a must-buy.

What's on

Sunday February 5: Documentary screening about Murchadh MacPhàrlain, the Melbost Bard, 7pm: preceded by a 'comhradh', conversation, at 6.30pm. Friday February 10: Clydebank Highlanders ceilidh in the Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, 7.30pm. Artists: Donald Iain Brown, Iain Maclean, Kirsteen Grant, Elspeth

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Davies, Fiona Johnston, and Robert Wood. Admission is £7.

Saturday February 11: Na h-Oganaich perform live the songs of the Melbost Bard, joined by Pupils of the Glasgow Gaelic School, and Mischa McPherson in the CCA, 350 Sauchiehall Street. Friday February 17: The Mull and Iona Association Annual Gathering at 7.30pm in the Glasgow University Union.

Pub Scene

Park Bar. Friday February 3: Nicky McMichan. Saturday February 4: Robert Robertson. Sunday February 5: Gunna Sound (afternoon

session between 5pm and 8pm).

Islay Inn. Friday February 3: Gunna

Sound. Saturday February 4: Parting Glass. Wednesday February 8: quiz night.



Stress-busting calendar dates to keep in mind

There is a new event coming to Oban – a day of yoga and mindfulness on Saturday February 11 from 10am to 4.30pm. It is being run by two women from Seil Island, Claire Hartley (mindfulness instructor) and Karen McCoss (yoga teacher). 'The day will consist of sessions of yoga alternating with sessions of mindfulness,' Claire explained, 'and anyone is welcome – they can be a beginner or experienced at yoga and it doesn't matter if they don't know anything about mindfulness. The day will give a good overview of what mindfulness is and how it can help people to be less stressed and anxious.'

For more details about the day, see the courses/workshop section at www.clearandmind-ful.co.uk or www.isleyoga.net or if you have questions or wish to book a place call Claire on 01852 300073 or Karen on 07793 653080. Karen added: 'It is a wonderful opportunity to have a whole day dedicated to yourself. It is something most of us never make time for and it is so invigorating and refreshing. The practices are led so it shouldn't feel too long or too tiring and people can take it at their own pace.' Claire trained to teach at Bangor University, considered to be the best course in the UK for training teachers in mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) and Karen has trained with Triyoga, Europe's leading yoga teacher training body. Karen teaches in Oban on

Wednesday evenings (and carers – Thursday mornings) and on Seil on Wednesday mornings and Thursday evenings, while Claire runs eight-week mindfulness courses (the next one starts April 18 in Oban, 19 in Lochgilphead) and courses in businesses to improve staff health, communication and productivity. They both teach one-to-one sessions. Claire said: 'We will run another day event in the future so if the date of this one doesn't suit people, they can call to put their name on a list and we will contact them about the next one. The day events are £40 with tea and biscuits provided. People just need to bring a packed lunch and have time to just focus on themselves for a change.'



Claire Hartley.



Karen McCoss.

Exhibition is an illuminating glimpse into chandeliers

The chandeliers will be lit to accentuate their qualities.

Mull arts organisation Comar opens a new exhibition, *Off The Wall*, by Karen Suzuki and Gill Govan at An Tobar on Saturday February 11. Gill Govan is a Tobermory-based artist who works mainly in kiln-fired glass. The dark days of winter seem the perfect time to

exhibit her work, which will be lit so as to accentuate their colour and reflective qualities. Each of the glass elements in Gill's work are singly hand-made, over the past year or so for this exhibition. Gill's chandeliers will be exhibited with a collection of scary mixed media animals

made by Glasgow-based artist, Karen Suzuki. Karen makes bespoke mixed media textile animals inspired by urban wildlife, Staffordshire pottery figures, medieval bestiaries and old toys. She works intuitively using traditional hand-sewing techniques, from pieces

of textiles and other media. The creatures that emerge are vigorously sewn together with visible freehand stitching, each one is unique and displays a playful and surreal spontaneity. This work has been made especially for the *Off The Wall* exhibition, which runs until March 10.



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Plan your adventure getaway! 2017

Camping and caravanning in Argyll is an exhilarating experience. Rugged coastlines, tranquil forests and remote glens – they all make the perfect outdoor backdrop for a holiday in the great outdoors. With dozens of campsites in the area, it has never been easier to explore the West Coast's beautiful countryside. From glamping luxury to rustic cabins, from tent pitches to glamping pods, our guide makes it easy to plan your ultimate adventure getaway.

Great reasons to go wild

For those who remember camping as involving a leaky tent and burned marshmallows on the end of a stick, today's outdoor experiences have come a long way. Modern tents and caravans are packed with technology – forget about wrestling tent poles, today's makers offer inflatable models. Caravans allow you to travel in self-contained comfort and style with all the conveniences of home. And, nowadays, 'glamping' is the trend – that is 'glamorous camping' for those who prefer a bit more frills with their outdoor holidays. While the technology has progressed, one thing remains the same – camping lets you get outside, get active, spend quality time together and it provides genuine value for money.

Get kids camping

Did you know that children who camp at least once a year go on to do better at school, as well as being happier and healthier? That's the finding of research by Sue Waite, associate professor at the Plymouth Institute of Education, who found that more than four out of five parents thought camping had a positive effect on their children's school education. The study showed that 98 per cent of parents said camping makes their kids appreciate and connect with nature; 95 per cent said their kids were happier when camping; and 93 per cent felt that it provided useful skills for later life. Many parents reported that escaping technology (laptops, tablets, mobiles) is a good thing for their children.



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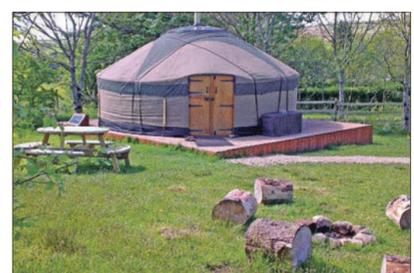
WITH fully equipped, insulated yurts, log burning stoves, private bathrooms and a fire pit for cooking outside, there is lots of fun to be had 'glamping' on the Isle of Arran.

Runach Arainn ('secret Arran' in Gaelic) is a small family-run three yurt eco-friendly glamping site on the south of the island.

The quiet rural location offers the opportunity for a romantic retreat or a family activity packed holiday.

The three yurts are set around an orchard filled with wildflowers. You can walk from there to the beach, up into forest walks or to the Lagg Hotel for refreshments!

For more details on glamping on Arran, go to www.runacharainn.com.



Camping can make anyone feel like a kid again, and it's a great chance to do those things you haven't done in years – together as a family or alone. Here are some of our favourite camping activities:

1. **Playing games** – Take along a deck of cards, some paper and/or some board games. It's like the good old days, with everyone gathered together and doing the same thing – without the television and other electronic devices.
2. **Walking** – Pick your pace, whether it is power-walking or leisurely strolls along the scenic, twisty roads that typically wind through the campground areas. Whether you're just leisurely walking or enjoying a day of hiking, make sure you pack some comfortable walking shoes.
3. **Singing songs around the campfire** – With or without the guitar. Adults and kids alike will enjoy singing all their favourite songs around the fire.
4. **Bike riding** – There are plenty of bike paths and paved roads with shoulders that are just perfect for a leisurely bike ride at most campgrounds these days. Remember to take your bikes.
5. **Swimming** – Whether you're headed to the nearby lake, swimming hole or campground swimming pool, don't forget the swimsuit.
6. **Boating** – Many campgrounds have very nice lochs, streams (or even oceans) nearby. If so, consider renting a boat for the afternoon.
7. **Canoeing or kayaking** – You could rent a canoe or a kayak for a little bit of exercise and excitement on the water.
8. **Sightseeing** – If you get the opportunity to visit the nearest town (for a day or an hour), do it! Take the time to be a carefree tourist with no cares or worries for a unique change of pace.
9. **Dog days** – Don't overlook the big fun that can be had by taking your dog along on the trip! Just like kids, active pets will help you to experience camping on a whole new level.
10. **Photographing** – Do not miss the opportunity to photograph your time spent in the great outdoors. You might even make a day of it photographing nature as you see it.

OUTDOORS

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Beaumont kicks off Wild About Argyll campaign

WILD ABOUT ARGYLL

TUESDAY night's launch of Wild About Argyll with Mark Beaumont in Glasgow was the culmination of months of work by Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative (AITC) to pull together a campaign, which will appeal to a mass audience and will position Argyll and the Isles as Scotland's adventure coast – the first choice destination for adventure tourists.

While the Wild About Argyll films showcase the stunning scenery, the amazing experiences and the fabulous adventures that await visitors to the region, what is more difficult to capture, but certainly has been, is the essence of Argyll. For anyone in the audience in the Corran Halls for Mark Beaumont's talk on August 3 last year, it was tangible.

The spirit of Argyll is what drives AITC and this is what is delivered through the Wild About Argyll campaign – from the films, to the website and in every social media post and the e-brochure.

The campaign is underpinned by Mark's consecutive 12-day adventure which saw him run, mountain bike, kayak, quad bike, horse ride, sail and open swim – not forgetting rowing a Viking longship – across the length and width of the region. It was undoubtedly an amazing feat of endurance, but you don't need to be Mark Beaumont to take on Argyll and the Isles – you choose your pace and make it as wild or mild as you want it.

The campaign has a heavy digital focus, with a dedicated Wild About Argyll campaign site (www.wildaboutargyll.co.uk) positioning Argyll and the Isles



Mark Beaumont launched AITC's new campaign in Glasgow on Tuesday, which sees Argyll and the Isles promoted as Scotland's adventure coast.

as Scotland's adventure coast – on Glasgow's doorstep.

The site has a big offering, breaking down this huge area into bite-sized chunks.

Find out more about things you can do on the water, explore trails, get close to nature but also find out about the area's unique experiences, book an activity and, possibly for the first time in Argyll, there is a category simply called 'winning'. Find events that you can take part in – you never know you might take home the gold.

As well as winning events, the campaign also has a rolling set of competitions with some very special prizes donated by adventure providers – the first competition went live on Tuesday and you can win a pair of tickets for a Loch Lomond Sea Plane flight across Argyll courtesy of the Cowal Way.

There will be another competition launched at the Scottish Running and Outdoor Pursuits exhibition in Glasgow's SECC from March 10-12 where you can win your ultimate Wild About Argyll

adventure. This competition will run across the year and is something the dedicated adventure tourist will not want to miss out on. But there's much more to come.

The campaign will air a 30-second cinema advert at the end of March for three weeks and it will appear in movie theatres across Scotland's central belt.

Once again the AITC team will be at VisitScotland Expo, which this year returns to Glasgow's SECC from April 26-27 and visitors to the

AITC stand can be prepared to be Wild About Argyll.

In addition, more digital material including an e-brochure will be on offer, which can be downloaded to your device with a tap or a swipe.

This is a hugely exciting time to get out and explore Argyll and the Isles. While Glasgow's west end was treated to Argyll adventures on Tuesday night as Wild About Argyll footage was projected onto Oran Mor's spire – for those inside, they discovered the adventure has just begun.



A skate is tagged and measured as part of the project. Photograph courtesy of SNH

Local anglers help to protect fish species

MARINE biologists from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and Marine Scotland Science (MSS) are working together to try to protect two of Scotland's fish species.

Using high-tech tracking, and with help from local creel fishermen and anglers, they are working to understand how common skate and spurdog use the Argyll Marine Protected Area (MPA).

Dr Jane Dodd, who is managing the project for SNH, said: 'We're really lucky in Scotland to have a wonderful range of wildlife living in our seas.'

'Previous studies have shown that common skate are resident in the waters off Oban in significant numbers and the MPA was designated for their protection in 2014.'

'By tracking skate in the MPA, we aim to better understand how they use the area throughout the year, which will help us to make sure that the management of the site is appropriate.'

The project, which runs until July, has so far fitted tags to 40 skate and more tagging is planned for the summer.

The area is also a hotspot for spurdog, sometimes known as spiny dogfish, a small shark which grows up to 1.5 metres long. The team tagged eight spurdog in the Firth of Lorn and 50 in Loch Etive, the largest of which was 99.5cm long.

The individual fish were photographed for future identification and each had a DNA sample taken for analysis.

Some of the skate were also fitted with data storage tags (DSTs) which provide information about how the fish spend their time in the MPA by recording depth and temperatures.

Both species are now classed as 'vulnerable' having declined significantly in numbers.

Dr Dodd said: 'This exciting project has brought together a range of people who all want to see these fantastic fish thrive in Scotland's seas.'

'We are particularly grateful to the creel men who are helping us to maintain the moorings and collect the data from the receivers, and to the anglers who have shared their skate and spurdog data with us and are returning the DSTs to us.'

EE agree to talks on Glen Etive masts

MOBILE phone company EE has agreed to review their proposals for mobile phone masts in Glen Etive.

The company has offered to meet with organisations, including Mountaineering Scotland to discuss the way forward.

The masts, both in Glen Etive and elsewhere in the Highlands, are intended to extend the range of coverage for the Emergency Services Network, used by the police, ambulance and fire etc, but will also provide commercial 4G coverage.

They confirmed on Wednesday they had withdrawn the proposals to review the number and locations of the masts, and will discuss this at the upcoming meetings.

Alarm bells initially started ringing when EE applied to Highland Council regarding the masts in Glen Etive, at which time both Mountaineering Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage registered concern about the effect the masts would

have on one of Scotland's most beautiful and well-known glens.

The site also falls within the Ben Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area.

Mountaineering Scotland urged Highland Council to consider other locations within the glen where there would be a less severe visual impact, and SNH backed this argument.

The objection they submitted stated: 'As an organisation representing those who enjoy a range of outdoor activities, we recognise the importance of effective mobile telecommunications, especially in the context of safety in the hills.'

However, we believe that in the case of this proposal, that viable alternatives are available to the developer. We object to the proposal and would urge EE and BT Group to think again.'

EE acted promptly after receiving the objections and has contacted Mountaineering Scotland to discuss ways of mitigating the impact of the masts.

SNH issues wildfire warning and guidelines

SCOTTISH Natural Heritage is warning people about the dangers of wildfires.

Burning heather moorland or rough grazing in spring is a traditional land management practice that has been used for generations to promote new growth to improve grazing.

However SNH has issued a reminder about the potential dangers of uncontrolled burning, which can damage properties, conservation sites and harm nesting birds and reduce biodiversity.

Wildfires are also costly and time-consuming to control, taking up valuable time and resources from the Fire and Rescue Service.

Therefore, says SNH, the Muirburn code, legislation



SNH has issued a warning about wildfires, such as this one in Glen Nevis in 2013. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

governing such burning, must be strictly adhered to, with

burnings only permitted between October 1 and April 15.

The code recommends notifying neighbours of any planned burning by and also the fire and rescue service on 01382 835804 – phone the previous evening or on the morning of the day of burning. Fires should also not exceed 50m/165ft wide or burn uphill or on slopes.

Sites traditionally used by specially-protected bird species or blanketed in fog should also be avoided.

Keith Duncan, SNH operations officer based in Aviemore, who also has a role with wildlife crime said: 'Out-of-control fires have damaged habitats on Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Lochaber.'

'As well as being a wildlife crime, it can take many years

for some of these important habitats to recover and during that time spoil people's enjoyment of these special places.'

PC Hugo Martin who is based in Mallaig and whose role includes wildlife crime said: 'Out-of-control fires on moorland may cause safety issues for surrounding homes and villages as well as protected species of wildlife. I urge all people responsible for Muirburning to have adequate staff to safely manage their fires and closely follow the Muirburn code.'

If you see or suspect someone acting suspiciously, recklessly or irresponsibly in the countryside, contact Police Scotland on 101 or you can pass information anonymously to Scotland Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Voyage of discovery through pages of a book

REVIEW
editor@obantimes.co.uk

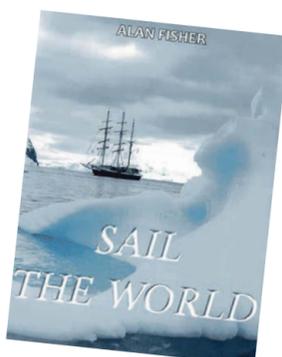
I HAVE just circumnavigated the world in the sail training ship Lord Nelson. I enjoyed the company of her two very able captains, Barbara Campbell, from Dunoon, and Chris Phillips, together with her professional crews.

The ship was sailed by these qualified sailors with around 1,000 crew, both able-bodied and disabled, sailing different 'legs' of the circumnavigation. All aboard (apart from me, the only passenger) were part of the crew sailing 'Nellie', and many had never sailed or even rowed a boat before setting foot on

the gangway. We set sail from Southampton on Trafalgar Day, October 21, 2012, and did not return until September 26, 2014.

'Lord Nelson is part of the Jubilee Sailing Trust, a charity set up in 1978 to integrate physically disabled with able-bodied people on tall ships – the result was Tenacious and Lord Nelson, which were built to accommodate the varied needs of people with physical problems.'

This was to be the adventure of a lifetime, with up to 40 crew sailing for each leg of the journey. I was astonished at the abilities of the people branded disabled, and their willingness to do things, such as going up



the rigging in a wheelchair or steering the ship when you are blind.

We sailed through strong

gales, high seas, torrential tropical downpours and were in the doldrums for a while. Sailing in Lord Nelson, under full sail, was an amazing experience and the ship looked absolutely stunning, sailing at speeds of up to 14.2 knots.

Near the tropics, at times it could be unbearably hot and in Antarctica, freezing cold.

We visited busy ports, safe harbours, Antarctic shores, tropical islands and secluded bays out of reach to all but intrepid sailors. We sailed alongside vessels of all shapes and sizes but often did not see another vessel for days on end. I crossed the equator six times in the company of Neptune's

Court and a great many pollywogles (look it up). I sang along with Queen as we approached Freemantle, making our fun video based on the band's song, I Want to Break Free song.

At one stage the captain and her mates posed with guns, prepared to face pirates, alongside armed security guards. Fortunately, firepower was not needed, but you have to be prepared. I also saw her and the crew wearing some very strange outfits on more than one occasion, but perhaps this was one law of the sea which I did not understand.

I saw scenery and wildlife, which were unforgettable. My vocabulary was broadened dra-

matically. The camaraderie was infectious and although at times I was scared, at others almost seasick, I had great fun.

Locals in the places we visited were mainly generous, warm and welcoming. During her two-year voyage Nellie covered 52,557 nautical miles and I was there for every one of them.

I should confess that this was all without leaving my sofa, as I have just finished reading the new book, Sail the World by Alan Fisher who sailed as a bosun's mate on four legs of the voyage. There are full contributions from both captains and others from crew members, with a glorious spread of beautiful photographs.

Profits from sales go towards the Jubilee Sailing Trust to help enable more people enjoy the experience of a lifetime and perhaps change their lives for the better.

Enjoy the voyage yourself – Sail the World by Alan Fisher is available from YPD Books, 64 Hallfield Road, Layerthorpe, York, YO31 7QZ. The special advance order price is £20 plus £3.75 P&P. Or email orders@yps-publishing.co.uk.

Captain Barbara Campbell lives in Dunoon. She joined the merchant navy in 1975 as a deck cadet and has sailed as master in tall ships since 1999.

Ann Galliard

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HIE urged to adopt rural leader project

NFU Scotland members have written to Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) urging it to adopt the successful Rural Leadership Programme (RLP) currently available in other parts of Scotland.

The letter to HIE chairman Lorne Crerar has been signed by the NFUS Highland regional chairman Martin Birse, Orkney and Shetland chairman Paul Ross, Argyll and the Islands chairman John Dickson and Sandy Murray, who chairs the union's Crofting, Highlands and Islands Committee.

The RLP, delivered on behalf of Scottish Enterprise (SE) by SAC Consulting, has just celebrated its 10th anniversary, with almost 450 people from rural backgrounds benefiting from a course that has seen them developing their leadership skills and growing their businesses.

However, similar funding and support is not available to rural people living and working in

the HIE area. The NFUS said it firmly believes that the rural economy of the Highlands and Islands would be bolstered if HIE were to fund applicants.

In their letter, the group state: 'We strongly believe that the lack of access to this programme for people in the HIE area is hugely detrimental to the Highlands and Islands, and is severely disadvantaging potential rural leaders here, compared to those in the SE area.'

'There is some limited support to rural leadership from HIE but the reality is that what it currently offers in terms of leadership for rural businesses, particularly to smaller farm-based ones, is not effective in developing rural leaders in the way that the RLP does.'

'Independent evaluation of the RLP has shown that the programme is having a very direct and positive impact on the rural economy in the SE area. This includes the creation or safe-

guarding of employment, the start-up of new rural businesses and the launch of new products.

'More importantly, it creates confidence in people's ability to lead and dramatically improves their motivation.'

'The rural economy and the agricultural industry desperately needs leaders with ambition, who also have the skills to help them realise their aims. It has been shown in the SE area that the RLP provides these skills, while also developing a key network of leaders across the region - and that is what we are missing out on.'

'As well as targeting existing farmers and crofters, we believe that to engage with more women from farming and crofting backgrounds, to enable our young entrepreneurs to develop their businesses and to encourage people to stand for the Crofting Commission elections, developing these rural leaders across the HIE network is essential.'



Above: the Lochaber Monitor Farm team, left to right, Morven MacArthur (SAC Oban, facilitator), Chris, Eileen and Malcolm Cameron; and, below, those who attended the event.

Programme monitors Lochaber farm

FORT WILLIAM farmer Chris Cameron, of Strone Farm, opened his gates to the local farming community last week.

Strone Farm was recently announced as the Lochaber monitor farm and on Thursday January 26 held the first in a series of meetings.

Nine monitor farms have been established around Scotland in a joint initiative by Quality

Meat Scotland (QMS) and AHDB Cereals and Oilseeds to help improve the productivity, profitability and sustainability of the businesses.

Strone Farm will be hosting a series of 18 meetings over the next three years. The focus will be on the technical and financial challenges that the Camerons face.

The 1,200-hectare hill farm,

located in the Great Glen, is run by Chris in partnership with his father Malcolm and mother Eileen. The family, who are tenants of Lochiel and Achnacarry Estate, runs 550 North Country Cheviot ewes and 40 Limousin cows.

For more information about the monitor farm programme visit www.qmscotland.co.uk or cereals.ahdb.org.uk.

Initiative will study hares on Speyside

SPEYSIDE gamekeepers are working with scientists to develop the best way to count the iconic mountain hare and help inform its future conservation.

Managing mountain hare numbers to prevent disease, damage to trees and habitats, and to control rising tick numbers is a controversial issue within the Cairngorms National Park.

Critics of population management fear Scotland's only native lagomorph may have suffered declines in some regions and this has led to calls for greater monitoring of the way the species is managed and their numbers.

Now gamekeepers on three Speyside estates are assisting scientists from the James Hutton Institute, Scottish Natural Heritage and Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust on a project to help guide future management.

The three-year project aims to assess the most reliable method for land managers and gamekeepers to monitor population numbers so hares can be managed sustainably.

Mountain hares are notoriously problematic to count and daylight-only surveys often offer a limited indication of actual numbers on the ground.

Keepers at Glenloch, members of Speyside Moorland Group, have been helping project scientists identify and use areas of their heather moorland to enable meaningful data to be collected.

These estates have also agreed to halt population management around the study area while surveyors count the same ground both in daytime and at night using thermal cameras, and count dung deposited by hares whilst also trapping hares to be marked and recaptured.

It is hoped the final analysis, to be presented later this year, will help ensure management of the hares is sustainable and poses no long-term threat to regional populations.

Commission election nominees

NOMINATIONS have now closed for this year's election to the Crofting Commission.

The names put forward for the different constituencies are as follows.

East Highlands (East Sutherland, Easter Ross, East Inverness and Moray): Rod Mackenzie, Teanroit, Beaulie, Archie Macnab, Old Inn Croft, Blairninch, Ross-shire; John Ferme McMorran, Keepers House, Balnacoll, Brora, Sutherland.

South West Highlands (Lochaber, Argyll and Bute, Arran and Cumbrae, Small Isles): Ronnie Campbell, Bohuntin,

Roy Bridge, Lochaber; Colin Niall Kennedy, Croft No2, Arinagour, Highland Corrie, Isle of Coll; Catherine MacKinnon, Cul a' Bhile, Bohuntin, Roy Bridge, Lochaber; Billy Neilson, Cruachan Cottages, Taynult; Uilleam Smith, Caledonian Road, Inverness.

Western Isles: Alasdair MacEachan, 15 Aird, Balivanich, Benbecula; Iain Maccler, 23 Laxay, Isle of Lewis.

West Highlands (West Sutherland, Wester Ross, Skye and Lochalsh): Jonathan James Hedges, Rossal, Rogart; Stephen William Love, Sand Passage, Laide, Wester Ross;

Mairi Mackenzie, Torran, Loggie, Lochbroom, Ullapool, Ross-shire; Peter O'Donoghue (Donnelly), Camustianabhaig, Portree.

Ballot papers will be issued by post to all eligible electors in those constituencies and must be returned in the pre-paid envelope provided by 4pm on Thursday March 16.

There was only one nominee for the Caithness and Orkney constituency, Cyril Annal, from South Ronaldsay, and the Shetland constituency, Andy Holt, from Papa Stour, who are duly declared elected as no vote is required.

Around the markets

STIRLING - Caledonian Marts Ltd (Thursday January 26) sold 166 cattle comprising of 100 prime bullocks and heifers and young bulls, two OTM cattle and 64 cast cows and bulls. Prime bullocks averaged - 202p. Prime heifers averaged - 202p. Beef bulls averaged - 182p. Beef cows averaged - 120p. Dairy cows averaged - 88p. Bullocks sold to 238ppkg twice for Limousins, both from W Dandie & Sons, Learielaw, Broxburn, purchased by T Johnston, Butchers, Falkirk and to £1692.80 for a Charolais from C Smith, South Flanders, Kippen. Heifers top the sale today at 248ppkg for a Limousin again from W Dandie & Sons, Learielaw, Broxburn, purchased by G Kirk & Son, Butchers, Denny and to £1493.44 for a Limousin from J & J Wylie, Knockhouse, Dunfermline, purchased by H A Black & Son, Butchers, Larnark & Armadale. Young bulls sold to 186ppkg for a Limousin from J Gibb, Giffordland, Dairy and to £1003.40 from P Quigley, Harvieston, Gorebridge.

Other leading prices:-
Bullocks ppgk
235p Todhall 230p Nethermyres (twice) 220p Angle Park & Todhall 218p Nethermyres 216p West Carmuiris 214p Faskine
Bullocks per head
£1604.12 Learielaw £1578.24 South Flanders £1518 + £1504.20 Nethermyres £1480.36 Learielaw £1444 Arns £1430.80 Nethermyres
Heifers ppgk
238p Learielaw 232p Nethermyres & Knockhouse 218p Knockhouse (three times) & Nethermyres 216p Todhall 214p Faskine
Heifers per head
£1460.16 Knockhouse £1451.80 Learielaw £1443.04 + £1369.04 Knockhouse £1364 Learielaw
Also forward were 64 cast cows and bulls. Beef cows sold to 139ppkg from J Drysdale, Forestmill, Alloa, and to £1170 from Hume of Overton, Overton, Denny. Dairy cows sold to 111ppkg and to £840 from W Hamilton & Sons, Meldrum, Blairdrummond. With a plainer show

of cows overall leaner beasts sold away the best. Other leading prices:
Beef cows ppgk
138p Overton 135p Nether Glins & Forestmill 134.5p Blackhill & Baluskie 133p Gibsley 131p Forestmill
Beef cows per head
£1130 Nether Glins £1030 + £990 Forestmill £970 Blackhill £950 Forestmill £920 Middlerigg
Dairy cows ppgk
105p Greenrigg 104p + 102p Meldrum 101p Harvieston & Baluskie 100p Meldrum
Dairy cows per head
£810 Greenrigg £780 Meldrum £740 Baluskie & Harvieston £680 + £670 Meldrum
Also forward were 2 Friesian bull calves, selling to £175 from A Hamilton, Mid Forrest, Cumbernauld.
STIRLING - United Auctions (Wednesday January 25) sold 820 store cattle, native cattle and young bulls 179 cast cows and forward cattle and 2374 store and breeding sheep.
Bullocks (473) - averaged 219.00p to 269.00p per kg

for a 226kg CHX from Auchentiber and £1330 for 646kg AAX from Croftjane.
B & W Bullocks (32) - averaged 154.81p to 214.00p per kg for a 523kg HFX from Inchgall and £1120 for a 523kg HFX from Inchgall.
Heifers (306) - averaged 207.00p to 257.00p per kg for a 260kg CharX from Auchentiber and £1250 for a 634kg CHX from Shortrigg.
Cast Cows (123) - averaged 116.00p to 168.00ppk for a BBX from Cuttlehill and £1350 for a AAX from Northfield.
Cast Cows (Dairy) (32) - averaged 107.00p to 141.00p for a MOX from Woodend and £1290 for a MOX from Woodend.
Forward Cattle (24) - averaged 160.00p to 196.00p for a LimX from Hatton of Cargill and £1330 for a LimX from Hatton of Cargill.
Bullocks: Up to 250kgs - Auchentiber £610, 269.9p; 401-450kgs - Mid Auchencarroch £100, 9 Killeonan 249.0p; 451-500kgs - Challochmun £1170, Cowans 237.2p; 501-550kgs - Cowans £1190, Feoch 224.2p; 551-600kgs - Hillview £1250, 215.9p; 601-650kgs - Croftjane £1330, Challochmun 209.8p; 651-700g - Challochmun £1310, Starr 195.8kg; 700kgs+ - Croftjane £1300, 161.3p.
Heifers: Up to 250kgs - Cairncurran £610, 246.0p

251-300kgs - Berrylaw 690, Auchentiber 257.7p 301-350kgs - Wester Kepdownie £805, Gateside 256.4p; 351-400kgs - Bogside £865, West Shawtonhill 228.2p; 401-450kgs - Nether Dalkeith £990, Crosswoodhill 226.8p; 451-500kgs - Farden £1130, 238.6p; 501-550kgs - Farden £1170, 230.3p; 551-600kgs - Inchgall £1160, Challochmun 208.3p; 601-650kgs - Shortrigg £1250, 197.2p.
Bulls: 300-350kgs - Nethererton £650, 207.0p 350-400kgs - East Banknock £790, 212.0p; 401-450kgs - Muirhouse £680, 155p; 451-500kgs - Crosshouse £980, 205.1p; 501-550kgs - Crosshouse £1060, 204.6p; 551-600kgs - Crosshouse £940, 167.9p.
OTM Cows:
£ per head - Northfield (AA) £1350; Hatton of Cargill (Lim) £1330; Cuttlehill (Brb) £1310; Woodend (MO) £1290; Forneth (SD) £1270; Forneth (CH) £1250; Whitsome Laws (Sim) £1090.
Store Sheep
United Auctions Stirling also sold 2374 store and breeding sheep.
Store Hogs: Wester Bowhouse (Tex) £64.50; Uigle (TexX) £64.50; Putchean (Char) £63.50; Darnhall (Suff) £60; Darnhall (Mule) £53.50; Duncroisk (BF) 55.00.
Breeding Sheep: R.D.S.V.S (Chev/Mule) £103; East Mains (Corr Mule) £100; East Mains (C/B Mule) £86; Balnasirm (Chev gmrs) £90; Balnasirm (Chev ewes) £78.



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North Argyll Branch Blackface Sheep Breeders Association
AGM
Wednesday
1st of March at 8pm in the Falls of Lora Hotel, Connel
The annual stock judging will be held on Friday 10th February at 7.30pm at Dalnally Auction Mart (by kind permission of United Auctions).

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West Coast PROPERTY GUIDE

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Gross mortgage lending increases by 12 per cent in 2016

The Council of Mortgage Lenders estimates that gross mortgage lending reached £20.4 billion in December. This is four per cent lower than November (£21.2 billion), and four per cent higher than December 2015 (£19.7 billion). This brings the estimated total for the year to £246 billion, a 12 per cent increase on 2015's £220 billion and the highest annual gross lending figure since 2008.

Gross mortgage lending for the fourth quarter of 2016 was therefore an estimated £62 billion. This is a three per cent decrease on the third quarter and closely matches the 61.8 billion lent in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Commenting on market conditions in this month's market commentary, CML senior economist Mohammad Jamei said: 'The UK

housing market, much like the wider UK economy, ended 2016 on a generally positive note.

'Approvals for house purchases have recovered strongly of late, and this should feed through to lending figures in the early months of 2017.

'The current availability of mortgage credit is benign, and the real issue continues to be a dearth of properties on the market, which adds to the challenges facing would-be buyers.

'Uncertainty associated with political factors and prospective changes to the tax treatment of landlords will weigh on prospects for the year ahead.'



CIH Scotland comments on new Scottish household projections



Newly published 2014-based figures projecting the number and type of households there will be in Scotland by 2039 were published this week by the National Records of Scotland.

Commenting on the figures, Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland executive director Annie Mauger said: 'These figures confirm again the average size of household in Scotland is continuing to fall and is set to reduce from 2.17 in 2014 to 2.01 by 2039. The percentage of Scots living alone is projected to reach 24 per cent by 2039 while the percentage of Scottish households in the age group 75 or older will

increase from 13 per cent to 20 per cent over that same period

'All of these factors will combine to place sustained pressure on housing in Scotland, emphasising once again the critical importance of increasing the supply of homes across all tenures. Trends towards an ageing population and more people living alone also underline what a critical role housing has to play in the Scottish Government's current policy of integrating health and social care. With that in mind, we are keen to ensure that the housing sector continues to be fully involved in the implementation of that policy.'

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Traditional Stone Built Steading, 2 double bedrooms, unfurnished, Landlord Reg: 05661/130/15250.



1 & 2 THE SQUARE, DUNSTAFFNAGE
£550/£600 PCM EPC: E46/G16

2 Semi-detached properties, 2 and 3 bedrooms, unfurnished. Landlord Reg: 00264/130/0814.



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Flat 1/1 Lismore House
Oban, PA34 4NU
Recently decorated 2 double bedroom flat for rent conveniently situated in Oban town centre.
Unfurnished
Designated Secure Parking.
Council Tax Band D, Secured entry, EPC Rating: D61
Landlord Registration number: 452117/130/11301
£575 a month.
17/19 LOCHSIDE STREET, OBAN, ARGYLL, PA34 4HP
☎ (01631) 566771 info@ethornton.co.uk

Furnished first floor FLAT TO LET
3 double bed,
1 single bed
2 bathrooms
Centre of town square
Partial sea views
£600 per month
07881 418565
Reference essential



Rental demand in Scotland now at an all-time high

Landlords operating in Scotland are enjoying some of the best conditions ever experienced, according to new data, which suggests that the market north of the border is now coming in line with the rest of the UK.

For some time, home ownership levels in the UK have been dropping considerably as more and more people opt to become tenants instead, thanks to the convenience and freedom this offers, and in Scotland, this is now also becoming the case, as tenant demand hit an all-time high in 2016, data shows.

According to the latest index from Citylets, the past year has seen new highs hit for rental prices in a number of different cities across Scotland as demand pushes asking prices ever higher nationwide.

Fiona Hindshaw of Clyde Property said that the general consensus

was that the market experienced new highs in 2016 and a real trend towards strength for some time to come.

'Positive trends include record low interest rates leading to further buy-to-let investment and as rental prices continue to rise with increasing tenant demand, fuelled in part by a housing shortage, we also see this shortage fuel strong capital growth, reaffirming property as a sound investment for the future,' she said.

Here at West we are experiencing the same strong market conditions experienced in other areas, with rental demand outstripping supply. If you are thinking about investing in the rental sector then we would be delighted to hear from you. Call a member of our team today on 01631 569 466.



w: www.west-property.co.uk

e: info@west-property.co.uk

t: 01631 569 466 (Oban)

t: 01397 747 123 (Fort William)

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So if you want to see how West could save you money, why not call us today and find out about our fantastic management packages!

33 Combie Street, Oban

- Top Floor Flat
- 1 Bedroom / Shower Room
- Central location
- Excellent rental investment
- EPC Rating: F33

REDUCED PRICE OIRO £59,000

33 Combie Street - A compact 1 bedroom top floor flat close to Oban town centre. This flat comprises a lounge, small bedroom, kitchen and shower room. The property is decorated in neutral colours and benefits from double glazing throughout.

Riverside Court, Tobermory

- Semi-Detached House
- 3 Bedrooms/1 Bathroom/1 WC
- Walk-in Condition
- Garden and Private Parking
- Ideal Family Home
- EPC Rating: D62

NEW TO MARKET OIRO £180,000

32 Riverside Court is a superb 3 bedroom semi-detached house located in the beautiful town of Tobermory on the Isle of Mull. This modern home has been tastefully decorated and is in walk-in condition, offering spacious family accommodation arranged over 2 floors.

25 Stevenson Street, Oban

- One bedroom flat
- Located centrally in Oban
- Unfurnished First Floor
- Council Tax Band A
- EPC Rating: B84

FLATS 3 AND 7 AVAILABLE £460 Per Calendar Month

One bedroom flat located centrally in Oban. Open plan living room and modern kitchen with spacious double bedroom and shower bathroom.

Glencruitten Road, Oban

- 2 bedrooms
- Close to town centre
- EPC Rating: E41
- Landlord Reg No: 339143/130/07511

£525 PCM

Two bedroom semi-furnished top floor flat close to Oban town centre. The accommodation comprises: One single bedroom & one double bedroom, shower room, lounge (unfurnished) and kitchen including all white goods and appliances. The property has electric storage heating and double glazing throughout.

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Architectural Technologist
Rural Design, Portree
Apply today at <https://hijobs.net/job/46641>

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Mull and Iona Community Trust Deputy General Manager

Mull and Iona Community Trust, now in its 20th year, is strengthening its management team by creating a new post of Deputy General Manager. Mull and Iona Community Trust was established in 1997 and is considered one of the more successful development trusts in Scotland.

The applicant should have excellent communication and team-working skills be self-motivated and used to working to demanding targets!

The position will be part-time initially with the hope that funding can be generated to make this a full time position. The position will be based at our purpose built offices at An Roth in Craignure. Some travel around the islands will be expected.

The contract will run for 12 months subject to funding with possible extension thereafter.

The ability to work on your own initiative is essential.

To view the job description visit www.mict.co.uk, then contact Moray Finch, General Manager of the Community Trust (mfinch@mict.co.uk) for an application pack; Closing date for applications: 28th February 2017.

ENGINEER Required to join our busy workshop team here at Ardfern

Working as part of our existing team undertaking a variety of engineering jobs aboard various types of craft.

Applicants should have experience with modern marine diesel engines, small 2 & 4 stroke petrol engines and basic 12v auto/marine electrics. Welding / Fabrication skills would be beneficial, all relevant experience considered.

For further details and applications forms please contact Mark Cameron.
01852 500 247 / mark@ardfernyacht.co.uk
www.ardfernyacht.co.uk

SEASONAL PORT SECURITY PERSONNEL, OBAN

CLYDE MARINE RECRUITMENT

£9.50 per hour plus end of season bonus

Clyde Marine Recruitment is hiring on behalf of one of our prestigious clients, a local port operator in Oban.

Based in Oban, the successful candidates shall work on a rotational basis, every second Tuesday, to provide shore side security services to visiting passenger vessels. Additional shifts shall be required during seasonal peaks and to provide staff cover. This is an ideal opportunity for those looking for a rewarding part time role throughout the passenger vessel season.

Full security training and uniforms will be provided to the successful candidates throughout February and March. High levels of customer service are essential.

Candidates must be available to attend an interview in Oban on Wednesday 15th February 2017 and to commence employment mid-March.

Please submit your CV to Oban@clyderecruit.com. Closing date is Monday 13th February 2017.



We have two vacancies for smart, reliable resourceful, customer focused delivery staff:

- 1) 7.5 tonne driver
- 2) Apprentice HGV driver

We are a small and growing business delivering chilled and frozen foods to commercial and private customers.

Please apply in writing with CV to Waltons of Oban, 13, Lochavullin Road, Oban, PA34 4PL. Or email to eric@waltonsofoban.co.uk

Driver training may be available to an ideal but unqualified candidate.

We are looking for a Manager to run a small but iconic restaurant/B&B in a very remote Highland location.

The ideal candidate should be a good all rounder and will have hospitality experience, experience in staff recruitment and overall management, environmental health experience, as well as kitchen and front of house. The post is seasonal and we are looking to recruit from the beginning of March until the end of October. The position may suit a couple and work is available for a partner.

The posts are live-in with all meals included. Applicants should be prepared to work in a remote but extremely beautiful part of the world. Anyone with a love of the outdoors and nature would be well suited. This is a unique opportunity to work in one of the most beautiful areas of Scotland. A clean driver's licence is essential and personal licence holder would be an advantage although not essential. Successful applicants should be prepared to interview from the middle of February. Highly competitive rates of pay offered. Please reply with an up to date CV to Post Box No 24, The Oban Times, Lochavullin Estate, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

INVERARAY CASTLE SEASONAL STAFF REQUIRED

Full/Part-Time
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An interest in Scottish history and foreign languages an advantage

Please send your current CV to:-
Mrs J Young, Castle Manager
Inveraray Castle, INVERARAY PA32 8XF
E-Mail - manager@inveraray-castle.com

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:
10TH FEBRUARY

RECRUITMENT RECRUITMENT HIJOBS HIJOBS



The Majestic Line Experienced Marine Engineer

required for 2017 season on small cruise vessel operating out of Oban, April to October inclusive. Good understanding of diesel engines and a mechanical/electrical mind is necessary. The job spec also requires people and hospitality skills and be able to work as part of a team providing a high level of customer care. Working rota of 2 weeks on and 1 week off.

For further details please apply to: info@themajesticline.co.uk or telephone Neil on 01369 707951

Domestic Assistant (Part-Time)
£14,044 - £15,356
18 Hours per week
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Closing date: 17 February 2017.
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www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs



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Harbour Master
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See website for details
www.tobermoryharbour.co.uk

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Please apply in writing only to:
Iain Coates, Hazelbank Motors Ltd,
Lynn Road, Oban PA34 4PL

EMPLOYMENT VACANCY

Position: Shop/Reception Assistant
Location: Dunstaffnage Marina, Dunbeg, Oban
Hours: Normal working hours. WILL include weekend work on a rotational basis
Wage: TBC (Depends on experience)
Role: The role of the shop assistant/receptionist is to ensure the effective and efficient running of our Marina Shop and Chandlery. The suitable candidate should enjoy customer interaction as this role is very customer based. Experience in a similar role or knowledge in the Marine Industry is desired but not essential. Polite telephone manners is crucial.
Responsibilities: Welcoming customers when entering the shop and ensuring everyone is being looked after. Taking customers registration details and collecting payments. Handing out brochures when required. Answering all inbound phone calls and emails and or taking bookings. General Admin duties and tidying the shop floor. The ideal candidate will be enthusiastic, confident, friendly, organised, well presented and most importantly reliable. This role is open to Male and Female applicants of 18 years +.
Enquires: If you're interested please email or post your CV FAO Ranulph McLauchlan to: info@dunstaffnagemarina.com Dunstaffnage Marina Ltd, Dunbeg, Oban, PA37 1PX 01631 566 555

Head Gardener required for an Estate near Oban Argyll

Successful candidate will be responsible for the regeneration, improvement and maintenance of a large garden with a further walled garden. Ideal candidate will be highly motivated and able to work under their own initiative with significant experience in horticulture. In addition, a practical ability to maintain buildings and machinery would be a further advantage.
If you are interested in the above position, please contact
Sophie Handley, Assistant Land Agent on 01631 566122 or Sophie.handley@bellingram.co.uk

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Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Argyll Bute COUNCIL

AREA COMMITTEE MEETING

A MEETING OF THE OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD IN THE CORRAN HALLS, OBAN

AT 10:30AM – WEDNESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY 2017

Members of the public are welcome to attend and a public question time will take place during the meeting. Questions can be asked on the day or can be submitted in advance to the Area Committee Manager, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RT. Telephone: 01631 567945.

The Agenda for the meeting will be available to view from Wednesday 1st February at the Service Point, Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AW and at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director – Customer Services

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

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Argyll Bute COUNCIL

PLANNING

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00-12:30 -13:30-16:00 hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, 1A Manse Brae Lochgilphead 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.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

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

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
17/00099/PP	Erection of 5 dwellinghouses and formation of vehicular access	Land At Shillinghill Tobermory Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute	Tobermory Area Office
17/00062/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 20 metre high lattice tower and associated works	Land South West Of Kintail Eredine Dairmally Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Dairmally
17/00055/PP	Installation of external wall insulation with white render finish.	4 High Street Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7JE	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
17/00150/PP	Alterations to garage to form ancillary residential accommodation.	63 Main Street Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA48 7TX	Sub Post Office Port Charlotte
17/00138/PPP	Site for the erection of croft house	Land North Of Lindsay Croft Connel Oban Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Connel
17/00169/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 13/02694/PP - Demolition of dwellinghouse, erection of replacement dwellinghouse with attached garage and installation of septic tank	Dunoran North Connel Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1OX	Sub Post Office Connel
17/00165/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference: 13/02524/PPP (Site for proposed hotel, leisure facilities and lodges)	Land At Tom Liath/Tom Ard Dunbeg Near Oban Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Dunbeg
17/00117/PP	Installation of DSLAM telecommunications cabinet	Land South West Of Burnbank Craighouse Isle Of Jura Argyll And Bute	Sub Post Office Craighouse Isle of Jura
17/00035/PP	Erection of additional guest accommodation for hotel.	Bellachroy Hotel Dervaig Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6QW	Sub Post Office Dervaig
17/00079/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Lettershuna Croft 1 Appin Argyll And Bute PA38 4BN	Sub Post Office Port Appin
17/00054/PP	Installation of external wall insulation with white render finish.	17 Flora Street Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7JX	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
17/00056/PP	Installation of external wall insulation with white render finish.	2 Main Street Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7JH	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
17/00057/PP	Installation of external wall insulation with white render finish.	88 Main Street Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7JH	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay
17/00058/PP	Installation of external wall insulation with white render finish.	89A Main Street Bowmore Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA43 7JH	Bowmore Area Office Isle of Islay

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

www.highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>; electronically at the AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE FULTON HOUSE, GORDON SQUARE, FT WILLIAM, PH33 6XY; or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

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
16/05719/FUL	Laggan Raineach, Achnaha, Kilchoan, Acharacle		Erection of house & installation of private drainage system
17/00037/PIP	Land 110M NW of The Cottage, Drimmin		Erection of house, installation of septic tank and soakaway (planning in principle)
17/00098/FUL	Land 270M North West of Duneira, Kentra, Acharacle		Erection of holiday cottage (renewal of 12/04417/FUL)
17/00148/FUL	Burnbrae, West Laroch, Ballachulish		The garage is to be converted to and a new porch added to form a one bedroom self-contained unit
17/00154/FUL	Land 665M SE of Ardmolach, Kinlochmoidart, Lochailort		Telecommunications apparatus; ancillary equipment cabinets; fenced compound and 80 meters of new access track at ardmolich wood.
17/00181/PIP	Land 300M SW of Innish Cottage, Glenborrodale, Acharacle		Erection of house, formation of access and installation of private drainage system
17/00186/FUL	Land 470M SE of Allt A'Choire Cottage, Morvern		Planning application for ee telecommunications apparatus; ancillary equipment cabinets; fenced compound; area of handstanding and new access track at land at Srath An Ainidh Bhig, Morvern
17/00187/FUL	Ballachulish Hotel, Ballachulish		Installation of a biomass heating system and flue
17/00188/LBC	Ballachulish Hotel, Ballachulish		Installation of a biomass system, with associated flue terminating at or around ridge level
17/00211/MSC	Site 100M North West of 1 Low Bridge, Glen Gloy, Spean Bridge		Erection of house, formation of vehicular access, installation of septic tank & soakaway
17/00220/FUL	Land 300M SW of West Lodge, Roshven, Glenuig		Erection of house, formation of access & installation of private drainage system
17/00246/PIP	Land 200M NW of West Lodge, Roshven, Glenuig		Erection of house renewal of 13/03415/PIP
17/00251/PIP	Land 100M NW of West Lodge, Roshven, Glenuig		Erection of house - renewal of Planning in Principle (13/03414/PIP)
17/00258/FUL	Land 790M SE of Polgarbh, Gairloch, Spean Bridge		EE telecommunications apparatus, ancillary equipment cabinets, fenced compound & 50 meters of new access track at forestry north of B8004
17/00261/FUL	Land 100M East of 15 Clovullin, Ardgour		Proposed house
17/00270/FUL	Land 70M East of Blaich Cottage, Blaich, Fort William		Formation of 2 no serviced house sites
17/00292/PIP	Land 35M SE of MacEachen & Carr Boat Builders, Toigal, Morar		Formation of house site

Time period for comments is 14 days, 17/00188/LBC is 21 days
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD

PROPOSAL TO DECLARE A CROFT TENANCY VACANT DUE TO FAILURE OF STATUTORY SUCCESSION

CROFT: 96 Lochyside (share), Kilmallie
NAME OF DECEASED CROFTER: Mrs Janet MacLean

CROFT: 103 Lochyside (share), Kilmallie
NAME OF DECEASED CROFTER: Miss Isabella Rankin

CROFT: 20 & 21 Badabrie (share), Kilmallie
NAME OF DECEASED CROFTER: Mrs Dorothy Cowie

CROFT: 1/2 43, 44 & Pt 45 Banavie (share), Kilmallie
NAME OF DECEASED CROFTER: Mr Robert Bisset

We hereby give notice for our proposal to declare the tenancies of the above crofts vacant due to failure of statutory succession.

Any confirmed Executor or immediate family members wishing to comment on the above proposals should submit representations in writing or some other permanent form to the Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW by 2 March 2017. When writing, please specify your relationship to the deceased.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Charles Self has registered their croft Gleann Sabhail croft, North Knapdale, 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 October.

Details of the registration may be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C3611.

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Allan MacColl has registered his croft 234 Gorteneorn in the parish of Ardnamurchan 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 19 October.

Details of the registration may be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is AO234.

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 10 COMMERCIAL MOORINGS, CREAGANLEA, APPIN, ARGYLL

Notice is hereby given that Callum Weir has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of 10 commercial moorings at:

Location	Latitude	Longitude
Creaganlea, Appin, Argyll	56° 33.027' N	005° 18.515' W
	56° 33.061' N	005° 18.152' W
	56° 32.983' N	005° 18.438' W
	56° 32.979' N	005° 18.155' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at Port Appin post office

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 to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: **06273**
Mr C. Weir

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

David Arthur Kershaw has registered his croft, Glenmore, Ardnamurchan and Sunart 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 October 18, 2017.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C3591.

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

Councillor Roddy McCuish (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor McCuish will be holding a surgery on Friday 3rd February 2017 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 1.30pm – 4.00pm.
He can be contacted by email – Roderick.McCuish@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567854.

Councillor Kieron Green (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)
Councillor Green will be holding a surgery on Friday 17th February 2017 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 2.00pm – 4.00pm.
He can be contacted by email – Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 562 444.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING DIRECTIONS ISSUED

Mr. J R MacCallum
15 Airds Bay, Ardchattan & Muckairn
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DEATHS

MACKENZIE - Peacefully at the Lynn of Lorne Care Home, Benderloch on January 16, 2017, in her 95th year. Angusena MacKenzie (Ena) from Kinlochleven. Cremated privately at her request.

MACNEILL - Suddenly, at home surrounded by his family on Saturday, January 28, 2017, Alistair MacNeill. A loving husband of Lynnette, a much-loved dad, father-in-law and grampa. A Celebration of Alistair's Life will take place at 2pm on Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at Inverness Crematorium. All friends are respectfully invited.

McGUIRE - (Stirling/Ballachulish). Catherine (Cathy) passed away peacefully after a short illness at Stirling Community Hospital, on Saturday, January 21, 2017. Loving mum and mother-in-law of Fiona and Richard, dearly loved gran of John, David and Suzanne, beloved sister of Morag and Hugh. A funeral service to which all friends are invited will be held at Houndwood Crematorium, Grants House on Friday, February 3 at 2.30pm. Family flowers only please.

McIVER - Peacefully at the Lorn and Islands Hospital on Friday January 27, 2017. Jean wife of the late Walter, mother of Stewart, mother-in-law of Stella and gran of Fiona. Funeral will take place at Clydebank Crematorium on Thursday, February 9, 2017 at 1.30pm. All friends are invited. Family flowers only and retiring collection for Oban Hospice.

NOBLE - Peacefully at home, in her 93rd year, Marjorie Scott Noble, beloved wife of the late Sheriff David Noble a much loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Sadly missed.

PATERSON - Peacefully, at the Knapdale Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital, on January 24, 2017, after a long illness borne with great dignity, Dora Johnstone Paterson, née Drummond, in her 89th year, formerly of Strone Farm, Minard, beloved wife of the late Joey Paterson, much loved mother of John, James, Kenneth, Hilda, Ailsa and the late Douglas. Adored Granny Dora and great granny and a dear sister, aunt and cousin to all the family. A good friend and dear neighbour to many. Funeral service was held in Lorne Street Funeral Parlour, Lochgilphead, on Monday, January 30, 2017, followed by interment at Kilevin Cemetery. Sadly missed.

WILSON - At Glencairn House, Auchterarder on January 25, 2017, Elizabeth Lang (Betty) née Pollock aged 95, formerly of Wychwood, North Connel. Much loved wife of the late William Richmond (Bill), devoted mother of Elizabeth, Carol and Fiona and proud granny of her six grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Funeral service at Auchterarder Parish Church at 12.30 p.m. and committal at Perth Crematorium at 2.00 p.m. on

Tuesday, February 7, 2017. Family flowers only, please. Donations, if desired, to Cancer Research UK.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BEATH - Betty and family would like to thank all family members, friends and neighbours for their kind messages and support during their recent loss of Ian. We thank Rev. Donald Fraser for his comforting service in Dundee and Ian Gowdie and Gregor Crawford for their generous tributes in Oban. Our grateful thanks also to Ian MacInnes of D & A Munn for his reassuring services; Amanda MacPhail at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls and the Woodlands Hotel in Broughton Ferry for the catering, Moreen Gracie for the beautiful flowers and piper Angus MacColl. The kind donation of £415.00 has been sent to Cancer Research UK.

HENDERSON - The family of the late Abb Henderson would like to thank all family, friends and neighbours for their continuing support, and for all the phone calls, visits, cards, and flowers received since our bereavement. Thank you to Rev. Cliff Acklam for the service, to the Hoey family for the funeral arrangements, to Moreen Gracie for the flowers, to Angus Douglas, to AJ MacColl piper, and to the Brander Lodge. The amount of £488 from the retail collection has been donated to Scottish Wildcat Action and to Carrbridge Carve.

McALEER - John Philip, died at home in Glasgow on January 4, 2017, aged 59 years and was buried privately at Dalmally on Wednesday, January 25. The family thank all those in attendance and for the many expressions of sympathy received.

MCGREGOR HOWARD - The family would like to express their grateful thanks to all family, friends and neighbours, for their overwhelming messages of sympathy and support received following the untimely death of our beloved Tessa. Special thanks to the wonderful staff and doctors at Salen surgery and Mull and Iona Community Hospital, all of whom made Tessa's final journey as pain free as possible. Heartfelt thanks also to Rev John Paton, Fr James MacNeil, and Jan Sutch Pickard for their ministrations during Tessa's final hours and for a most uplifting and moving funeral service at Kilmore Parish Church, Dervaig, and afterwards at Calgary Cemetery, to Billy McClymont for organising everything so seamlessly, to Ian Nicoll organist, to Becky Roth for beautiful harp playing, Anna Hogan for her lovely rendition of Ave Maria, to Calum MacLean for expert piping, to Linda Cameron for delicious food and drink, also to staff and helpers at Dervaig Community Hall. We would especially like to thank the Munro Family and Barry George our neighbours on Ulva for their support at a difficult time for the family. A total of £1,350.00 was raised for the retail collection for Mary's Meals and the Mull and Iona

Community Hospital Comfort Fund, thank you to everybody for giving so generously. Finally, we are so grateful for all who attended Tessa's funeral, many of whom travelled from very far away.

MEMORIAMS

CAMBELL - David (The Bear), 2/10/60 - 5/2/12 Your presence we miss Your memory we treasure Loving you always Forgetting you never. - Mary, David, Maree and Glenn.

CAMPBELL - David. A beloved son died February 5, 2012 It broke my heart to lose you A son so good and true God's gift to me was you my dear son Rest in peace your work on earth was done.

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of my young brother David (the Bear), who passed away on February 5, 2012. Death leaves a heartache. Difficult to heal. You left good memories. No-one can steal. - Diana, Mel, Gwen and Lorna, sister, brother-in-law and nieces.

CAMPBELL - David (Bear) taken on February 5, 2012. In loving memory of those who are forever present in our hearts. - Marina, David, Davina and Iona, sister, brother-in-law and nieces.

KENNEDY - Angus. February 1, 2015. The flowers I place upon your grave May wither and decay But my love for you who sleeps beneath Will never fade away. - Fiona.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear wife Catherine MacDonald, Churchfield House, Kinlochewe who passed away on February 1, 2007. Also remembered at this time my dear cousins Hugh MacDonald, Stronaba Farm, Spean-Bridge who passed away on February 1, 1984 and Robert MacDonald who passed away on January 17, 1990 at Maidstone, Kent. In my Fathers house are many mansions I go to prepare a place for you John Ch14 Verses 1&2 - Malcolm MacDonald

MACLEAN - Cherished memories of Ian Matheson (Cleansy), a much loved son, brother and uncle, who died February 2, 2004. Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts. - Mum, Dad, Ann, Sandra and families

MACLEAN - Ian (Cleansy). Loved and remembered every day. Treasured memories will never fade away Love and miss you always. - Libby, Pat and family

PATERSON - Mary (née Clark), a dear mother, mother-in-law and nana, who died on February 5, 2015 You have just walked ahead of us And we understand you must release The ones you love and let go of their hand We are trying to cope the best we can Love and miss you mam. - Andrew, Rhonda and Jacqueline.

PATERSON - Mary (née Clark), my darling companion of 35 years I am missing you so much, if only I could see you and once more feel your touch Love always - Willie.

PORTER - Flora 'Patsy' Porter, died February 2, 2016. We little knew that morning that God was going to call your name

In life we loved you dearly In death we do the same It broke our hearts to lose you You did not go alone For part of us went with you The day God called you home. You left us peaceful memories Your love is still our guide And though we cannot see you You are always by our side Our family chain is broken And nothing seems the same But as God calls us one by one The chain will link again. - Richard and Dixie

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Oban Times BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

Tribute paid to Catriona Paterson

CATRIONA Mary Paterson, well known and much loved in both her native Greenock and her ancestral home of Jura, died peacefully in the early hours of New Year's Day. Catriona was the youngest and last surviving daughter of Greenock master mariner George Paterson and Dhiurach Mary Black or Shaw. She was born and lived her life in Greenock, following her mother and sisters into teaching which saw her reach assistant head teacher at Greenock High School.

As well as teaching maths, when 'choice activities' came round in the summer term each year she opted to teach boys to cook, with great success. Even years after her retirement, it was difficult to walk along the esplanade in Greenock without bumping into a former pupil with, usually, fond memories of Miss Paterson.

Catriona and her sisters maintained close ties with Jura, spending each summer with their mother and joined by their father when his puffer Narwhal had cargo for the islands. Although he was from Greenock, he would have felt at home in the cottage at Caighenhouses, a hamlet that produced no fewer than four master mariners.

Catriona continued to visit Jura until quite recently and to take an active part in island life. As well as her sporting achievements in the regatta, where she won a rowing cup outright with Archie Black, and took her turn as commodore, she competed (walking) in the inaugural 10K and received a commemorative walking stick as the oldest competitor.



The three Paterson sisters, left to right, Flora, Catriona and Elsie, on the pier at Jura in the 1930s.

Drawing from her mother's Jura roots, Catriona was a lifelong Gaelic learner and singer. She sang in Greenock Gaelic Choir for most of her life, sometimes as a soloist, and was elated when she gained the coveted Green Card for proficiency for the competitions at the annual Mòd, where she and her sister Elsie competed in duet and quartet classes as well as with the choir.

The love of the language and music never left her and even at the end of her life she was able to quote verses from memory and comment on the differences in pronunciation between the islands.

Catriona belonged to the Glasgow Jura Association and always enjoyed their annual gathering, where a dish sometimes on offer was salt herring, a staple food in earlier times on the island. She had a deep respect

for her island ancestors, whose lives were hard. She hated waste and was herself frugal. Disapproving of time wasted, she usually knitted while watching TV. A keen member of the National Trust for Scotland, Catriona spent a memorable summer on St Kilda with her sister Elsie helping to restore some of the buildings, including the church. Their group included a well-known Gaelic singer, so after work there were great ceilidhs.

In her retirement, Catriona was an active supporter of good causes, delivering meals on wheels, hospital driving and baking for a weekly café in aid of the Ardgowan Hospice.

Her death brings to an end the generation of Paterson girls in Jura, but their love of the island has been passed down to the next generation, who hope to continue the connection.



Catriona Paterson, second row fourth from left, in Greenock Gaelic Choir.

Thought for the week

SO THAT is January over already and maybe along with it resolutions about diet, exercise, unfinished DIY, and books we really should read.

Well none to any who are still persevering! Whatever aspect of life we think about, persevering, keeping going is hard work. Not least in terms of our relationships.

When we are hurt, let down, badly treated, it is so easy to give up and cut the ties.

Maybe sometimes this has to be done, but often these days it seems anything but a last resort.

Jesus sets us great example in the way he refused to give up on his closest followers. They were a very mixed bunch, with likely suspicions among them. How would a

man collecting taxes for the Romans, Matthew, be viewed by a Jewish patriot known as Simon the Zealot? And as far as Jesus and his mission were concerned how often did they misunderstand, misapply, or lack faith?

Yet never once did Jesus say, 'I'm finished with you guys, I'm going to start with a new group.'

He didn't give up then and at the heart of the Christian faith is the promise he won't give up on any who trust him now.

Remembering that example should surely encourage us to persevere with each other.

After all like the disciples none of us are perfect.

James Beaton
Oban Free Church

GRADUATIONS



FIONA MARGARET MCADAM

Graduated in November from the University of the West of Scotland with a Bachelor of Science degree in Adult Nursing. Fiona is the daughter of Ian and Mhairi McAdam, Tobermory, Isle of Mull, and granddaughter of Derek and Kathy McAdam, Tobermory, and Ian and the late Mary Russell, Oban. Fiona is currently working as a staff nurse in Glasgow Royal Infirmary.



SARAH MCINNES

Graduated from the University of Glasgow with an MLitt (Postgraduate) degree in War Studies. Sarah is the daughter of Ian and Rhoda McInnes, Oban, and granddaughter of Barbara Hill and the late John Hill, and Marie McInnes and the late Roy McInnes. Sarah is a former pupil of Park Primary School and Oban High School.

GOLDEN WEDDING



MACPHAIL

Calum and Ann (née Curtis), married at Maxwell Church, Coatbridge on February 3, 1967. Current address: Fingal's View, Stronmilchan, Dalmally. With love from all the family.

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Oban Lorne turn on the style with emphatic shield win over Stewartry

Oban Lorne	55
Stewartry	0
West Regional Shield – quarter-final	

OBAN Lorne welcomed West Division 2 leaders Stewartry to Glencruitten on Saturday in the quarter-final of the West Regional Shield competition.

Stewartry were expected to provide some tough opposition for the Green Machine, having performed well in their league this season and recording an away win last weekend at promotion rivals Cambuslang.

Oban have been improving both in performance and confidence since the turn of the year and impressed despite last week's 43-27 defeat at Carrick.

Player/coach Corrie Louw made a few changes from last week's match. A first start was handed to 17-year-old second row Jack Strachan, while Louw's own inclusion to the starting line-up were the only changes in the pack. In the backline, Finlay Carmichael made a start at scrum-half, allowing Vasco Borisov to move to the wing.

Stand-off Dave McCabe had a new centre pairing to control with Kiwi Malcolm Kavanagh making his debut alongside captain Craig Wright.

It was a disastrous start for the home side, who were sleepy from the kick-off and immediately knocked the ball on. Stewartry attacked well in the opening exchanges and spread the ball wide at almost any given opportunity to spread the home defence.

Oban withstood the early onslaught and managed to hack the ball clear and gain some upfield territory with fullback Rudolphe Bertrand winning a penalty after being taken out off the ball. From the resulting lineout, deep in the Stewartry half, Oban attacked well with Dave McCabe pulling the strings to bring dangerous runners such as Calum MacLachlan and Craig Wright into the game.

Ten minutes in, the away defence was breached when prop Robin MacQueen crashed over from short range. Finlay

Rugby

Carmichael's conversion gave a 7-0 lead for the home team.

The home side pressed well straight from the kick-off and were looking extremely dangerous in attack. McCabe's long missed pass to winger Vasco Borisov out wide resulted in the second try of the day for the home side. Another Carmichael conversion took the score to 14-0.

At this stage Oban were totally dominating the game and extended their lead midway through the first half with a Carmichael penalty taking the score to 17-0.

Oban were unlucky not to add further points on 25 minutes as another penalty struck by Carmichael was denied by the posts with the rebound being knocked on at the tryline by the onrushing Malcolm Kavanagh, who was desperate for his first try for the club.

The home side's dominance continued and they were denied a third try of the day on the half-hour mark with Craig Wright's try being disallowed due to crossing.

The men in green added to their tally just before half-time with another try. A break down the touchline by prop Rhys Brodie gave a good attacking position in the 22. Brodie's offload to Corrie Louw was recycled quickly at the breakdown with a charging run by Tommy Sutherland distracting the defence and allowing the ball to be given to Robin MacQueen who scored his second try of the day.

This gave a half-time score of 24-0 with the home side playing what was certainly their best 40 minutes of rugby so far this season. A couple of changes were made at the break with injured Jack Baxter being replaced by Lorne MacLachlan and Rhys Brodie making way for another debutant, prop Alex Banks.

Stewartry started the second half well and pressed for their first score of the day. The visitors were held up over the



The Green Machine's Stephen Povey is held up just short of the Stewartry line during last Saturday's BT West Regional Shield quarter-final at Glencruitten. Photos: Kevin McGlynn. Match report Allan Wright

line on one occasion but could not build on their positional advantage with a powerful Oban scrum denying them a chance to keep possession.

As the visitors continued to batter away in attack, Oban were brought down to 14 players with Lorne MacLachlan sin-binned for repeated infringements at the breakdown. Some great tackling – in particular from Stephen Povey and Malcolm Kavanagh – denied the visitors further scoring chances.

After soaking up the Stewartry pressure, Oban added to what was becoming a comfortable scoreline with dangerous winger Calum MacLachlan diving over to bring the score to 29-0.

A further try followed shortly after from Oban's top scorer Tommy Sutherland who crossed over with a trademark finish from only a metre out. This

brought Oban's points haul to 36-0 with the team looking hungry to add to the dominant scoreline.

Just as Oban were back to 15 men Stewartry had a player sin-binned, making their defensive effort a little harder going into the last quarter of the game.

Oban looked to have scored their seventh of the day with Alex Banks being held up on the line. Again Oban's scrum-maging power was used to their advantage with the Oban pack dismantling the opposition and allowing number eight Corrie Louw and easy touchdown on the line. Another conversion from Carmichael made it 43-0.

Credit must be given to Stewartry, who kept putting in a huge defensive effort despite such dominance from the home team. The visitors also worked hard at the breakdown, turning the ball over on more than a

few occasions, something that Oban will have to work on moving forward.

Two further tries sealed the game for Oban in the last 10 minutes. Fullback Rudolphe Bertrand made a fantastic break from his own half, passing to Borisov on the wing. The ball was spread wide from left to right, allowing flanker Vladi Mihov to finish off under the posts in acres of space.

The last score of the day came immediately from the kick-off with Corrie Louw offloading to Tommy Sutherland who made one of his best charging runs forward of the season.

The 20 or so metres gained by Sutherland put the defence on the back foot. Oban used the ball well to find Bertrand in space with the Frenchman using his dangerous footwork to race clear and score an impressive try and finish the

Oban scoring fest for the day. A final score of 55-0 was a terrific result for the home XV with some fantastic rugby on show. The result means the team progress to the semi-final of the West Regional Shield, only three wins away from a historic second National Final appearance at BT Murrayfield.

Oban will be hoping for a favourable home tie in the semi-final that should be drawn this week by the SRU West Regional Committee.

Oban Lorne's next game is at home to promotion-chasing Newton Stewart who can seal the West Division 1 title with a win at Glencruitten on Saturday February 11.

This is shaping up to be a great game with a much improved Oban Lorne looking for some vital points to ease any relegation fears. Kick-off on February 11 is at 3pm.



Oban prop Rhys Brodie is tackled by a Stewartry defender.

Oban Lorne women edged out at Annan

Annan Women	10
Oban Lorne Women	8
BT Women's Bowl	

IT WAS an early start for the Green Army ladies, who departed Oban at 7am in order to fulfil a 1.30pm kick-off against Annan Warriors for the BT Women's Bowl.

The ladies, who have struggled for numbers in recent games, were expecting an impressive turnout of 17, but last-minute cancellations meant they travelled without substitutes.

Despite Oban maintaining a large proportion of possession throughout the game, the first half proved to be very tight with regards to the scoreline. The only points came from an Oban penalty, kicked by hooker Ellie MacNiven.

Conditions were slippery underfoot, and this meant handling was scrappy at times for both sides.

Unfortunately, a nasty injury

to Annan's captain led to a 20-minute delay in the game, with the half-time whistle eventually showing the Green Army just marginally ahead with a 0-3 lead.

As the second half began, it was clear that this was to be the nature of the match. Green Army captain Camilla Leslie commented that the ladies barely left Annan out of their own half for the duration of the match, also dominating in the scrums. However, just after the match resumed from half-time, Annan's winger Jane Stewart found a gap in the defence to successfully open the try scoring.

Impressively, according to the Annan Rugby Facebook page, this was their top try scorer's 24th of the season, but a missed conversion meant the Warriors led by the smallest of margins (5-3).

Once again some strong tackles and unbreakable defensive

Women's rugby

lines by both sides meant a further 15 minutes passed without points. It was after 60 minutes that the Oban ladies managed to push over the try line to resume the lead once more.

Young scrum-half Lucy Stewart cleverly used an Oban penalty advantage to cut in close to a ruck and dive over the line. By this point, MacNiven had left the pitch due to injury so was unavailable to kick. The score remained at 5-8.

After the Green Army dropped to 14 players, Annan did not match numbers, and MacNiven was not allowed to rejoin the match as the opposition's coach deemed her 'unfit' to play.

As the game played out, Oban appeared to be on track for the win when unfortunately Annan's Stewart managed a break for the line once again to take the score back into the home team's favour (10-8).

With 10 minutes of the game remaining, Oban fought back hard, but Annan's player advantage proved too much for the visitors, meaning an extremely tight game ended with Annan Warriors clinching victory by just two points.

The ladies wish Annan good luck as they progress to the next round of the bowl against either Glasgow Uni or Howe of Fife, while they return home to focus on their league games.

They currently dominate the BT Women's National League Division 2, sitting just one point clear at the top.

Their next game will take place on February 12 away to Lismore before they return home on February 19 to play what will undoubtedly be a grudge match against Annan Warriors.



Action from the BT Women's Bowl match at Annan.



Oban Lorne U-16s pictured before the game against Marr last Sunday.

Sickness bug fails to deter Oban youngsters as they defeat Marr in West Region Cup

Oban Lorne	12
Marr	6
West Regional Under-16 Cup	

OBAN'S U-16 team welcomed Marr RFC U-16s to Glencruitten on Sunday with the teams battling it out for a place in the first round of the West U-16 Cup.

Marr would provide a tough test, having played in a higher league this season, but would come up against a well-organised Oban team who have played a record number of U-16 games so far this season.

With a sickness bug taking its toll on the squad, along with a couple of injuries, Oban were forced to start the game with only 13 players, notably missing Tommy MacQuade, Ian Barlow, Sandy Bavington and Angus Neil.

Despite having a numerical disadvantage, Oban started well and were piling the pressure on the away defence. Impressive, too, was the Oban scrum which shoved the opposition off the ball on a few occasions with two fewer players.

Oban took a 5-0 lead after 20 minutes with centre David Cameron finishing off after collecting a clever kick in mid-field from stand-off Archie Spencer. Cameron used his strength well to find space and touch down for the first try of the day. Marr hit back shortly after with a penalty, reducing the score to 5-3.

The home side were aided with the late arrival of Jordan Norman to the team, meaning they now had only one player fewer than the visitors.

Unlucky
Keiron Morrison was unlucky not to add to Oban's lead with referee Willie Malone disallowing his effort at the tryline for being held up.

Oban played well in the remaining minutes before half-time with some great play in the forwards from the likes of Euan Shearer, Craig Cook, Finn Charlton and Ross McCaskill.

At half-time, the score stood at 5-3 in what was becoming an entertaining game. The home side looked to ex-

tend their lead into the second half but Jordan Norman was taken down short of the line. Some poor discipline at the breakdown let Marr back into the match and they managed to take the lead with another penalty that made it 5-6.

Oban hit back midway in the second half as fullback Robert MacLaughlin's clearing kick gave the hosts some great field position. With the ball stolen at the lineout, Oban were again held up over the line resulting in a five-metre scrum.

From a well-organised scrum, the ball found its way out to centre David Cameron, who battled his way through a couple of defenders to score his second try of the game under the posts. With a successful conversion, Oban led 12-6 with 20 minutes of the match remaining.

Marr pressed hard for a winning try but could not break down a battling Oban defence. The Oban team were left delighted at the final whistle and will now progress to the first round of the cup on February

Youth rugby

12 where some formidable opposition await.

Schools rugby

Biggar RFC hosted a combined Oban U13/U14 team on Sunday. Oban were depleted on numbers due to a sickness bug but still managed to travel with a healthy squad.

Racing four tries clear early on, Oban managed to hold on for an impressive 21-18 win away from home.

Next weekend Oban's U-13 and U-14 boys team along with the U-15 and U-18 girls teams travel to Glasgow to take on Cartha Queens Park RFC.

Girls rugby

For the first time, Oban Lorne/Oban High School managed to field an U-12 girls team at Stewarts Melville RFC's U-12 girls festival on Sunday.

The Oban girls were defeated 4-2 by Montrose but recorded victories over Auchterarder and Stewart's Melville.



SHINTY

Best for all shinty news, results and fixtures

Marine Harvest Media Award winners 2016

Opening league fixtures announced

THE OPENING Marine Harvest league fixtures have been confirmed and the Balliemore Cup draw has been added to the 2017 shinty schedule.

Marine Harvest Premiership

Newtonmore's bid to secure an eighth successive title begins with a home match against Lovat. This will be a tough opening test for new Lovat boss Fraser Gallacher although the Balgait side were the only club to beat Paul John MacKintosh's team last season, winning 2-1 at the Eilan in their Artemis Macaulay Cup tie.

Oban Camanachd travel north to play Kinlochshiel at Kirkton in an early meeting between two of Newtonmore's nearest challengers last term.

Lochaber welcome Kyles Athletic to Spean Bridge on the opening day. Kyles won both their league fixtures last season although the Lochaber men came out on top in the Camanachd Cup after a replay.

Newly-promoted Kilmallie host Glenurquhart at Canal Parks. Both teams will be keen to gather early points with little to choose between a number of teams in the league.

Glasgow Mid Argyll, who also gained promotion from last year's national league, are also at home. Kingussie are the opposition in what will be Dallas Young's first competitive match as manager.

Marine Harvest National Division

The opening match of the day in this league could be the contest between Oban Celtic and Fort William in Oban. Both teams are new to the division, with Fort William relegated from the Marine Harvest Premiership whilst Oban Celtic secured promotion by winning Marine Harvest South Division 1.

Strathglass are another new addition to this league. David Balharry's side finished second to the Newtonmore reserves in North one last season but they made a successful pitch to the Camanachd association to be moved up a division. They start against Caberfeidh at Cannich.

Skye Camanachd will be keen to get off to a winning start and they welcome Inverness to Paic nan Laoch, Portree.

Inveraray and Bute are two of the three south teams in this league and they meet at the Winterton.

Beaulie are the free team in this nine team league with a friendly meeting with Ballachulish a possibility as the Jubilee Park side doesn't have a fixture either.

A preview of the north and south regional divisions will appear in next week's *Oban Times*.

RBS MacTavish Cup - preview

Holders Newtonmore travel to An Aird to take on Fort William in the first round of the 2017 RBS MacTavish Cup.

In what looks to be a favourable draw, victory would give the holders another tie against Marine Harvest National Division opposition in the quarter-finals as they would meet the winners of the tie between Caberfeidh and Skye Camanachd at Castle Leod.

Glenurquhart and Lochaber meet at Blairbeg in what should be a keenly-contested affair. The 'Glen' won 2-0 when the sides met at the same venue last season, whilst it was a 2-2 draw at Spean Bridge. The winners will host Strathglass or Lovat in the quarter finals. Fraser Gallacher's Lovat side will start as favourites in this derby encounter but it's very hard to predict who out of the 'Glen', Lochaber and Lovat will reach the last four where perhaps Newtonmore lie in wait.

Kilmallie will fancy their chances of a semi-final slot. Mark MacPherson's side were given a first round bye followed by home advantage against Inverness in the last eight of the tournament.

Alan MacRae's Beaulie side also received a first round bye and they await whoever wins the all-Marine Harvest Premiership tie between Kinlochshiel and Kingussie which takes place at Kirkton. 'Shiel will be happy to have home advantage as each side won their home game when they met last season.

Aberdein Considine Sutherland Cup - preview

2016 Aberdein Considine Sutherland Cup winners Newtonmore colts begin the defence of their trophy at the Eilan where the Kilmallie colts, from the division below, come to visit.

The reward for the victors is a home tie against Strathdearn Cup winners Lochcarron or the Glasgow Mid Argyll second team who were drawn to play at Battery Park.

Last year's runners-up, Kingussie seconds, host Skye Camanachd seconds in what should be a close tie with the winners off to Silversands to play Aberdour's seconds.

Oban Lorn were given a first round bye so they will travel to take on whoever comes out on top in the tie between the Fort William and Kinlochshiel second teams at An Aird.

Lochside Rovers are off to Braeview Park to play the Beaulie colts in the knowledge

that an away tie against Lovat or Kyles Athletic reserve sides awaits.

The reconstituted Strathglass second team will play Caberfeidh's second team and whoever progresses will be at home to Inverness reserves or Lewis Camanachd with all four of these sides playing in Marine Harvest North Division 2.

Glengarry will have a particular interest in the opening round tie at Spean Bridge between the Lochaber and Inveraray second teams as they will have home advantage against the winners in the next round.

Caithness will again field a side in the cup competitions and whilst they got a opening round bye, they will travel to play either Forces side SCOTS Camanachd or the Bute seconds in the next round.

The Glenurquhart reserves and Boleskine were also given first round byes and they meet at Blairbeg in the second round.

Bullough Cup Draw - preview

2016 Bullough Cup holders Tayforth play in the Balliemore Cup so they won't have the opportunity to defend their trophy.

Last year's runners-up Kilmory open with the visit of SCOTS Camanachd to MacRae Park. The eventual winners will travel to the Winterton to play the Inveraray seconds who got a first round bye.

The Aberdour reserves and Lochside Rovers both received opening round byes and will meet at Silversands in the quarter finals.

The English Shinty Association will be excited about a trip to Tighnabruaich to face the Kyles colts.

Oban Lorn have home advantage against Dunoon with the victors away to Strachur or Glasgow Mid Argyll reserves. The winners will travel to the Meadows to take on Bute reserves.

Strathdearn Cup Draw - preview

Lochcarron open their Strathdearn Cup defence with a second round tie against the Kingussie second team.

The Fort William seconds were one of only four clubs given a first round tie and they should be too strong for Caithness at An Aird. The winners will host the Kinlochshiel seconds.

The other first round tie gives the Beaulie seconds home advantage against Glengarry. The winners will host the Glenurquhart second team in the second round with Fort William, Caithness or Kinlochshiel awaiting in the quarter finals.

The Lochaber seconds or Lewis Camanachd will be at home to Newtonmore or Lovat seconds in the last eight of the competition.

The Strathglass or Inverness colts will be at home to Boleskine or the Skye Camanachd second team at the same stage of the competition.

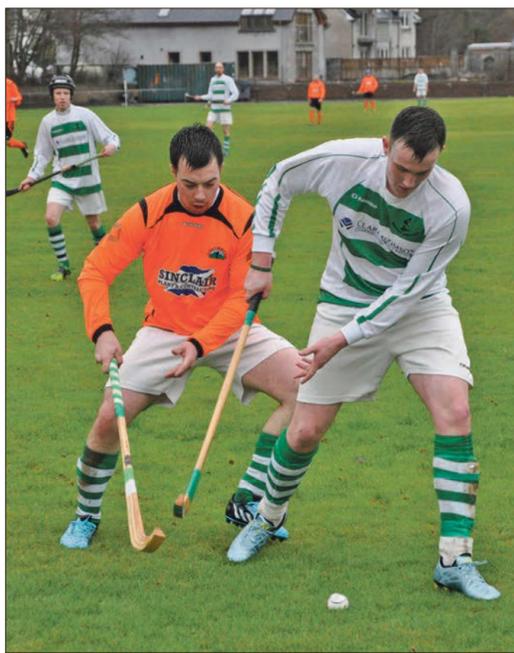
Pre-season fixtures

Some early pre-season friendlies took place on Saturday January 28.

Aberdour P Fort William P

Fort William were due to travel to Silversands to play Aberdour. However heavy overnight rain meant the match had to be postponed so the pitch wasn't damaged ahead of the new shinty season.

Lisa MacColl's Aberdour squad host Marine Harvest Premiership new-boys Glasgow Mid Argyll at the same venue this Saturday, whilst Fort William will be at home to Kyles



Oban Celtic's Andy MacDonald, right, takes on teammate John Hill who 'guested' for Taynuilt in the pre-season friendly at Mossfield last Saturday.

Athletic in the Drew Ferguson Memorial Cup match.

Beaulie 3 Aberdeen University 3

A Beaulie side hosted Aberdeen University in a noon throw-up at Braeview Park and the contest ended in an entertaining 3-3 draw. A Jack MacDonald double and a Calum Morrison goal counted for Beaulie whilst Ewen Fraser, a Jamie Beaton penalty and a Gregor Cushnie goal, with the Lochcarron player guesting to make up the Aberdeen 12, earned the students a draw.

Duncan Matheson scored the goal of the game when he collected the ball on the 'Shiel right and crashed it into the roof of the net, giving keeper Loades no chance. A neat turn and shot from Alasdair Nixon deserved a goal but the ball flew past the post and it remained 7-0.

Scott Kennedy had to stretch low to his right to turn away a William MacKinnon shot and, following an Inverness set-piece after MacKinnon had been impeded, Scott Kennedy did well to clear his lines. 'Shiel immediately broke forward and Alasdair Nixon ran through the heart of the home defence before slotting the ball into the net to round off the 8-0 win.

Oban Celtic 4 Taynuilt 0

Oban Celtic beat Taynuilt 4-0 in their 12.30pm throw up at Mossfield.

New signings Andrew Hunt and Fulton Ronald were given a run out from a 19-player Oban Celtic squad but new capture from Oban Camanachd, Ross MacMillan, was unavailable.

Ally McKerracher, Iain Mackechnie, Scott Burnett and Daniel Madej got the goals in what was a good work-out for Kenny Wotherspoon's side.

Shinty action this Saturday

There are a number of pre-season friendlies scheduled for Saturday February 4.

Included in the weekend games are Oban Camanachd's meeting with Inveraray at Mossfield, Lochside Rovers

The home back-line passed up chances to clear the danger and Keith MacRae punished them with a low strike into the net at the back post.

The home side's first real threat at goal came when youngster William MacKinnon shot from the right but 'Shiel keeper Scott Kennedy made a good save at the expense of a corner.

'Shiel conjured up a delightful goal to make it 4-0. Keith MacRae crossed the ball in from the left and a superb Jordan Fraser touch teed the ball up perfectly for John MacRae to strike the ball home.

The pattern of play continued with the visitors doing most of the pressing. Duncan 'DA' MacRae made an immediate impact when he played a one-two with John MacRae before scoring with a confident finish from the left.

John MacRae completed his hat-trick, netting from a rebound off the keeper, to make it 6-0.

and Oban Lorn clashing at Ganavan, Fort William and holders Kyles Athletic meeting at An Aird for the Drew Ferguson Memorial Trophy and Newtonmore taking on Lochaber at the Eilan.

Badenoch and Strathspey lift Johnstone Rose Bowl

Badenoch and Strathspey Ladies lifted the Johnstone Rose Bowl at the Nevis Centre, Fort William, on Saturday January 28.

Skye Camanachd had won the tournament for the previous three years and won through to the final again.

Badenoch topped their five-team group stage, only dropping one point in the process.

Badenoch then beat Glengarry A 10-3 in the semi-finals to set up a final with Skye.

The match finished 5-5 at the end of the regulation time so an extra four minutes was needed to separate the teams. There was still plenty drama before Badenoch eventually ran out 7-6 victors.

Badenoch's Kirsty Deans was named player of the tournament.

The Johnstone Rose Bowl was donated to the Glengarry Girls Shinty Club in 1998 - a year after the team was formed - by Mrs Ailsa Johnstone of DA Johnstone & Son Contractors, Invergarry, who have been loyal sponsors ever since.

Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers set pre-season programme

Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers have confirmed their final pre-season programme.

On Saturday February 4, Marine Harvest National Division side Inveraray visit Mossfield to play Oban Camanachd. On the same day, Marine Harvest South Division 1 side Lochside Rovers and Oban Lorn from the league below meet at Ganavan. Oban Camanachd and Lochside Rovers will play the Kyles Athletic first and second teams a week later and these games will now take place at Ganavan. The Oban Camanachd squad travel to Cannich on Saturday February 18 to play Strathglass, a new addition to the Marine Harvest National Division. Lochside Rovers are also in action that day against the Newtonmore second team at Ganavan.

Finally, on Saturday February 25, Lochside Rovers will host the Inveraray second team at Ganavan.

Donnie Ross captained the Kingussie team which lifted the 1961 Camanachd Cup, beating Oban Celtic 2-1 at the King George V Park, Fort William.

He also represented the club with distinction through the 1950s and 1960s.

Donnie is survived by his wife Margaret, sons Donnie, Neil, Peter and Duncan and daughter Aeleen, and his funeral took place at Kingussie Parish Church on Monday January 30 with the interment at Leault Farm.

Glenurquhart prepare for 2017

The Glenurquhart first and second teams have confirmed their pre-season matches ahead of the 2017 campaign.

In the first of four home matches against Marine Harvest National Division opposition, new Glenurquhart first team manager Iain MacLeod will get a chance to see his troops in action when Caberfeidh visit Blairbeg on Saturday February 4.

The 'Glen' seconds will play the Cabers seconds at Castle Leod the same day.

The 'Glen' firsts follow that up with another home match a week later, this time against Beaulie, whilst the reserves travel to play their Fort William counterparts at An Aird.

There are home and away meetings with Skye Camanachd on Saturday February 18 with the first teams clashing at Blairbeg.

Glenurquhart round the month off with their annual MacDonald Cup and Ali Ban Cup derbies against Strathglass taking place at Blairbeg on Saturday February 25.

Inverness line up top friendlies

Inverness have lined up four more pre-season friendly matches - all against Marine Harvest Premiership opposition.

Having lost 8-0 to Kinlochshiel at the Bught Park outside pitch last Saturday, Drew McNeil's Marine Harvest National Division will play the same opponents on Saturday February 4 in the Highland capital.

Newly-promoted premierships side Kilmallie visit the Bught Park a week later.

There will be a meeting with Newtonmore at the Eilan on Saturday February 18 followed by Lochaber at the Bught Park on the final Saturday of the month.

Donnie Ross, Kingussie

Kingussie lost one of their most famous captains when Donnie Ross passed away peacefully at his home at Leault Farm on Sunday January 22.

Donnie Ross captained the Kingussie team which lifted the 1961 Camanachd Cup, beating Oban Celtic 2-1 at the King George V Park, Fort William.

He also represented the club with distinction through the 1950s and 1960s.

Donnie is survived by his wife Margaret, sons Donnie, Neil, Peter and Duncan and daughter Aeleen, and his funeral took place at Kingussie Parish Church on Monday January 30 with the interment at Leault Farm.



Inverness player Ruairidh MacKay gets to the ball before Kinlochshiel's Ali Nixon during last weekend's pre-season friendly match. Photo: Donald Cameron

Balliemore Cup draw

The draw for the 2017 Balliemore Cup took place at the Camanachd Association Offices, Inverness, on Thursday January 26.

The Balliemore Cup is contested between senior sides outwith shinty's top division and there was an increase in participating clubs this year from 14 in 2016 to 17 teams.

With Camanachd Association president Jim Barr taking charge of proceedings, the draw was made as follows:

Saturday April 8 First round
Col Glen v Aberdeen University

Saturday April 22 Second round
Beaulie v Glenorchy
Taynuilt v Ballachulish
Kilmory v Oban Celtic
Skye Camanachd v Strathglass
Fort William v Aberdour
Col Glen / Aberdeen Uni v Caberfeidh
Tayforth v Inverness
Inveraray v Bute

Saturday May 20 Quarter finals
Skye/Strathglass v Fort William/Aberdour
Inveraray/Bute v Kilmory/Oban Celtic
Taynuilt/Ballachulish v Beaulie/Glenorchy
Col Glen/Aberdeen University/Caberfeidh v Tayforth/Inverness

Saturday June 17 Semi final
Col Glen/Aberdeen University/Caberfeidh/Tayforth/Inverness
v Taynuilt/Ballachulish/Beaulie/Glenorchy
Inveraray/Bute/Kilmory/Oban Celtic
v Skye Camanachd/Strathglass/Fort William/Aberdour

The 2017 Balliemore Cup Final will take place on **Saturday July 15** with the venue has yet to be confirmed.

Feathers fly as Dunoon win Argyll Cup at Atlantis

TEAMS from Oban, Dunoon, Mid Argyll and Campbeltown battled it out on the badminton court last Saturday for the annual Argyll Cup.

In the end it was Dunoon who came out on top, winning both categories and taking home the A and C cups.

Each team entered a handful of pairs to compete in 10 games and the region with the most wins was crowned the winner.

The tournament took place at Atlantis Leisure and was organised by Oban Badminton Club.

The prize-giving ceremony took place in the Regent Hotel in Oban on Saturday night,

where all the teams got together and enjoyed a meal.

Debbie Craig, Oban's team captain, said: 'Well done to both Dunoon's teams. We put everything into our games.'

'I love playing the Argyll Cup. I have played in loads of tournaments and the Argyll Cup is a great tournament. I don't care how much it takes, we have got to keep it going.'

Steven Wilson of Oban said: 'It was a great turn-out. Everyone seemed to have fun. It was great to see young and old, as well as new players coming through the ranks. It was good to see people travel a long way to come here.'

Badminton

Ally MacDonald of Mid Argyll said: 'The Argyll Cup is a massive competition and it means an incredible amount to me.'

'It is such an important thing. Any young players, who are going off to university, please try to make time to come back and play - everyone enjoys it.'

Both Steven and Debbie emphasised that anyone is welcome to join the club.

They can do so by attending an open night at Atlantis Leisure, which takes place every Tuesday from 8pm until 10pm.



Above: Both of Dunoon's winning teams at the Regent Hotel in Oban 16_t05argyllcup01



Right: All the Oban competitors. 16_t05argyllcup02



Left: Duncan Campbell and Debbie Craig of Oban competing on the day. 16_t05argyllcup03

Volunteer of the Year award for Oban sailing club member

BILLY Forteith of Oban Sailing Club (OSC) has been awarded the RYA Scotland Volunteer of the Year Award sponsored by Clyde Challenger. He was presented with the award at the annual dinner held in Glasgow Science Centre.

For nearly 40 years, Billy has been a stalwart volunteer at OSC on many days of the week, helping, organising and supporting the calendar of activities and showing a remarkable commitment to the club.

Billy said: 'I was pleasantly surprised and extremely honoured to have been shortlisted for such an award. It is amazing to have won it. I enjoy volunteering with a passion for Oban SC and love to see others enjoy sailing as much as I do, both adults and young people.'

Billy has assisted in most of the volunteer roles during his time as a member since the early 1980s and has been on the OSC committee almost continuously. He became club commodore in the early 1990s. He still sits on the handicap committee and regularly assists with race officer duties at the club.

Billy has also volunteered with Oban Lifeboat Station for

41 years and holds a gold badge for his service to the RNLI.

For the past 20 years, Billy has been the main organiser of OSC's popular Round Mull Race - now in its 31st year. During his involvement Billy has orchestrated the race organisation, ensuring its success year on year. Not only



Billy Forteith. Photo: Dougie Bell

does this involve the smooth running of the racing side but the promotion and handling of race entries, organising the opening reception buffet and coordinating the on-shore social activities. Billy is also a highly successful competitor in the event.

His effort has ensured the race has become a real jewel in the west coast sailing calendar with entries consistently around 40 boats - all the more impressive when other race events have declined in numbers. This, says OSC, is down to Billy's love of the race, his spirit and his hard work. His volunteer spirit was demonstrated in one remarkable 12-month period.

After organising the race in 2006, he was taken severely ill when competing and airlifted to hospital in Glasgow. His condition was so poor that he nearly didn't make it. However, against all the odds, Billy recovered and, undaunted, immediately set about organising the following year's event.

Billy's great support of OSC and contribution as a member of the recent committees also helped OSC being awarded Sailing Club of the Year for 2015.

Sailing

Billy is a great supporter of west coast sailing generally and the Argyll area in particular. At last year's Glencoe Regatta, the commodore publically acknowledged his long-standing attendance at the event and his commitment to sailing in the area.

Billy regularly brings potential new members out to sail in local club races. Many of these people have subsequently gone on to join OSC with some continuing to hold senior roles within the club organisation. This welcoming attitude and willingness to get people on the water has given the club a real vitality.

Finlo Cottier, commodore of Oban Sailing Club, said: 'Oban Sailing Club is absolutely delighted that the many years of work and enthusiasm that Billy has put into the club has been recognised and rewarded. The sport can only flourish with such dedicated volunteers who give so much of their time to their local club. Billy is well known throughout the Scottish sailing community and I'm sure many will be equally delighted by this award.'

Gregor Cameron extends sponsorship of Glasgow Celtic Society Cup

THE Glasgow Celtic Society is delighted to announce Gregor Cameron has extended his sponsorship of shinty's Glasgow Celtic Society Cup for the 2017 competition. The Argyll-based project management consultant has supported shinty's oldest competition since 2015.

It was also confirmed that this year's Gregor Cameron Celtic Society Cup final will take place on Saturday June 24 at the Taynuilt Sports Hub.

Society chairman John MacLeod said: 'We are thrilled that Gregor Cameron has further invested in our competition for this year. He has been an avid supporter of our game and has shown real commitment to the competition and the Taynuilt Sports Hub in the past two years. I would like to thank him for his support; we are delighted to be working with him for another year.'

In speaking of the sponsorship, Gregor commented: 'I am absolutely delighted to continue our alliance with this fantastic competition. This will be our third year of involvement and we are all looking forward to returning to the Taynuilt Sports Hub this June. The past two cup finals have provided fans with exciting shinty encounters and I am sure this year will provide more of the same.'

The Glasgow Celtic Society also announced the draw for the 2017 Gregor Cameron Celtic Society Cup which sees holders Kyles Athletic take on Kilmory or Taynuilt in the quarter-finals. Commenting on the draw, John MacLeod added: 'This year's draw has thrown up

Shinty

some exciting ties which I am sure all teams will be looking forward too. Kyles Athletic and Inveraray was a great final to watch for all shinty fans, and Taynuilt provided excellent facilities so we are delighted to return there for what we hope will be another memorable shinty match.'



First round

Glenorchy v Ballachulish
Tayforth v Colglen
Bute v Oban Celtic
Kilmory v Taynuilt

Quarter-final

Tayforth/Colglen v Oban Camanachd
Glasgow Mid Argyll v Glenorchy/Balachulish
Bute/Oban Celtic v Inveraray
Kyles Athletic v Kilmory/Taynuilt

Semi-final

Kyles Athletic/Kilmory/Taynuilt v Glasgow Mid Argyll/Glenorchy/Balachulish
Bute/Oban Celtic/Inveraray v Tayforth/Colglen/Oban Camanachd

Final - Taynuilt Sports Hub, Saturday June 24

Kyles Athletic/Kilmory/Taynuilt/Glasgow Mid Argyll/Glenorchy/Balachulish
v Bute/Oban Celtic/Inveraray/Tayforth/Colglen/Oban Camanachd

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £900

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE. . .



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

D Anderson
Taynuilt
Argyll

J Smith
Morris Avenue
Spean Bridge

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

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



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MacEwan nets hat-trick as Saints slam six past sorry Star

'We now have to concentrate on a very tough match away to Tarbolton in the Scottish Cup this coming weekend'

Oban Saints	6
Ferguslie Star	1
SAFL Premier Division	

OBAN Saints warmed up for their crunch Scottish Amateur Cup sixth-round tie against Tarbolton Amateurs with an emphatic 6-1 league win over an understrength Ferguslie Star at Gleneruitten last Saturday.

Saints gaffer Alex Craik also had selection problems with Donald Campbell, Dene Cassells, Myles McAuley and Marc Maccallum all missing from the previous week's line-up due to former player Allan Miller's wedding. Also unavailable was Jamie Graham.

Alex was, however, still able to name a 16-man squad whose performance on the day will now give him a massive headache as he ponders his squad for the trip to Ayrshire.

Thomas McCulloch continued in goal behind a new-look central defensive pairing of David McArthur and Paul Carmichael, with Matthew Kelly and Scott Maitland occupying the fullback berths. Willie Gemmell made his first start since the away defeat at Drumchapel Amateurs Colts in November, joining Brian Mackay and stand-in skipper Paul Kerr in the middle of the park. Dean Smith and Ross Maitland were restored to the starting line-up with the on-fire Craig MacEwan making up the eleven. On the bench were utility man Martin Bonar, veterans Alex Craik and Keith Millar, and youngsters Jay Cooper and Fraser MacFarlane.

The visitors kicked off in heavy rain, attacking the Mossfield end, and after some early sparing it was Saints who were first to show with Star keeper Raymond Brown coming off his line to gather a Ross Maitland cross from the right wing intended for Craig MacEwan.

Willie Gemmell then tested Brown's handling with a low 25-yard shot which the keeper fielded safely in the wet conditions.

After 10 minutes the rain eased off and, as the good crowd's umbrellas came down, Saints made the breakthrough. A

well-weighted pass from Willie Gemmell sent Brian Mackay scurrying through the inside-left channel. Brian skipped past two challenges, making his way into the box and cutting back to Ross Maitland, whose effort was blocked at his feet by Raymond Brown. The Star keeper hurt his left shoulder in the process and couldn't hold the ball, which broke kindly for Dean Smith to roll into the net. There was a three-minute delay for treatment to Brown's injured left shoulder before the Star keeper was thankfully able to continue.

Saints doubled their advantage in the 24th minute when David McArthur carried the ball a long way out from central defence and sent a deep cross into the Star box looking for the head of Craig MacEwan. Craig climbed



Paul Carmichael turned in a first class display at centre half.

above Leon Morrow and David Cunningham to loop a header out of the reach of Raymond Brown and into the bottom corner of the net.

From the restart, the visitors showed some attacking intent with Shaun Kelly driving forward on the left and flashing a drive across Thomas McCulloch which the Saints keeper could only palm across his six-yard line.

Fortunately for Saints, Scott Maitland was on hand to mop

up the loose ball comfortably with no other Star players up in support.

Saints countered immediately with Willie Gemmell's through ball forcing Raymond Brown to scamper off his line to smother it just inside his 18-yard box ahead of Ross Maitland.

Gemmell's range of passing from midfield paid dividends in the 33rd minute when he picked out Dean Smith 25 yards from goal. Dean turned away from the close attentions of Derek McGrory and, from 16 yards, slotted the ball past the advancing Raymond Brown to put Saints three goals in front.

Three minutes later the Star keeper defied his shoulder injury, leaping high to his left to palm away a curling Craig MacEwan effort from 18 yards.

The home side ended a dominant first-half performance with a David McArthur header over the crossbar after another driving run from Brian Mackay had given Ross Maitland the chance to send in a corner kick from the right.

Saints started the second half confidently but without the urgency which had caused the visiting defence so many problems in the first half.

The visitors were given some encouragement in the 48th minute when skipper Andrew Turner beat two men before laying off to John Syme, who sent his shot wide. Star followed this up three minutes later with David Stewart beating Scott Maitland on the right and feeding Leon Morrow for a shot on target which Thomas McCulloch saved comfortably.

In the 58th minute, Willie Gemmell made a rare run forward from midfield, racing away from Leon Morrow and David Cunningham only for Raymond Brown to narrow the angle and spread himself well to save Willie's effort from 17 yards. Disappointingly for Ross Maitland, his supporting run went unnoticed by Willie as a pass from Willie would surely have left Ross a simple tap-in.

Just before the hour mark, Andrew Turner forced Thomas



Craig MacEwan is congratulated on his hat-trick by Paul Carmichael, Brian Mackay, Martin Bonar and David McArthur. Match report and photos: Derek Black

McCulloch into another save after turning away from David McArthur on the edge of the Saints box.

With 20 minutes remaining, the visitors were rewarded for their perseverance when Paul Carmichael brought down Andrew Turner just outside the Saints box giving Derek McGrory the chance to demonstrate his prowess with the dead ball.

McGrory had curled a wonderful free kick high past Thomas McCulloch in the corresponding fixture at Seedhill last October but this time shot low through a disintegrating Saints wall and into the bottom corner past Thomas McCulloch's despairing right hand.

The goal from the visitors was exactly what Saints needed to wake them from their second-half lethargy and within two

minutes they restored their three-goal advantage.

Brian Mackay picked out Craig MacEwan's run forward and from 18 yards the in-form Saints hit man lifted the ball over the on-rushing goalkeeper and into the bottom corner of the net.

Manager Alex Craik elected not to join the action himself but used all four of his other options from the bench. Martin Bonar and Keith Millar replaced Matthew Kelly and Willie Gemmell, while Dean Smith and Ross Maitland made way for Jay Cooper and Fraser MacFarlane.

In between times, Dean was denied the chance of a hat-trick by a tight but correct offside decision by referee John Stobo, who acquitted himself well throughout.

Saints have been guilty of not converting enough chances in recent weeks so manager Alex Craik will have been delighted to see his charges notch two further goals in time added on for stoppages. Craig MacEwan cut into the right hand side of the box, turning Derek McGrory inside out before laying off to renowned goal sniffer Martin Bonar who calmly stroked the ball into the net from eight yards.

Two minutes later Craig MacEwan put the icing on the cake of an excellent team performance, rounding off an inspired personal performance with his second hat-trick in as many weeks. Brian Mackay demonstrated

phenomenal energy reserves to drive forward from midway inside his own half. Leaving the Star midfielder in his wake, Brian hurdled a cynical challenge from Derek McGrory before setting up Craig MacEwan for a sweet left-foot finish past the helpless Raymond Brown.

Craig may yet ask the dubious goals panel to have another look at the goal against Campbeltown Pupils controversially awarded to Marc Maccallum which would have earned him three consecutive hat-tricks.

Mr Stobo cautioned Derek McGrory for the challenge on Brian Mackay, adding his name to that of Gary Gormley which he had taken earlier for dissent.

The visitors were spared any further punishment with the referee blowing for full-time and a convincing home win which sends Saints to the top of the Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division.

Manager Alex Craik was delighted at the performance. He said: 'We played some great football and scored six goals into the bargain against a team that beat us earlier in the season. The win puts us top of the league so the aim is to stay there till the end of the season.'

'We now have to try to emulate last season's Scottish Cup run but we face a tough test on Saturday away to Ayrshire Premier Division side Tarbolton.'

'A win would put us into the last 16 of the competition.'



Martin Bonar strokes home Saints fifth goal.

Scottish AFL results and fixtures

Football

LAST Saturday's results: Premier Division - Campbeltown Pupils, no game; Oban Saints 6, Ferguslie Star 1; Premier Division 1 - Alba Thistle 4, Dunoon 1; Premier Division 2A - Rossvale 3, Lochgilhead Red Star 2; Premier Division 2B - Tarbert 1, East End United 2.

This Saturday's fixtures: Scottish Amateur Cup, sixth round - Tarbolton v Oban Saints; Jimmy Marshall Cup, second round - Duncraig v Dunoon; Inverclyde v Campbeltown Pupils; Lochgilhead Red Star v East Kilbride; Premier Division 2B - FC Argyle v Tarbert.

Oban Saints youth results and fixtures

Youth football

LAST weekend's results: Drumchapel United 7, Under 13s 0; League Cup - Glenvalley, Under-14s; 1. Scoring for Saints was Connor Moore; Under-15s, no game; Under-16s, no game; Under-17s, no game.

This weekend's fixtures: Drumchapel Amateurs v Under 13s; Hillwood BC v Under 14s; Scotstoun Athletic v Under 15s; Under 16s, no game; Under 17s v Antonine.

Tight at the top of indoor league

Indoor football

THE Atlantis Leisure indoor football league moves into its fifth week, with Atlantis Leisure topping the table with 15 points.

However, Glensanda, who won 12-1 against Cuan Mor last weekend, are hot on their heels, with 12 points and a game in hand.

In third place is Inter Milama, who were defeated 5-3 by Atlantis, in the week's closest encounter.

As it stands, Oaklea are in fourth place with nine points; Oban Camanachd are in fifth place with six points; and AC Milama and Bungalow Bills both have three points.

And yet to rack up any points are Oban No-Starz, Cuan Mor and Menzies Parcels.

Over-35s indoor league

Over 35s football

RECENT results from the Over-35s indoor league held at Atlantis Leisure.

Emergency 3, Teachers 3.
Emergency 5, DK Lafferty 4.
Emergency 2, Taynuilt 4.
Clements 2, DK Lafferty 0.

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Taynuilt	3	3	0	0	9
Coasters	3	2	1	0	7
Clements	3	2	1	0	7
Emergency	5	1	1	3	4
D&K Lafferty	5	1	0	4	3
Teachers	3	0	1	2	1

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WEATHER

Thursday Light rain
Winds strong south easterly
Temperatures 8°C to 10°C.

Friday Sunshine and showers
Winds strong south south easterly
Temperatures 5°C to 9°C.

Weekend Outlook Light rain on Saturday
Light rain on Sunday
Winds strong south south easterly
Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.



Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd

TIDAL INFORMATION
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday January 26, 2017 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

Date	am	pm		
Thur	02.55 0.9 09.00 3.7 15.26 1.2 21.10 3.5		Ardrishaig	-5.35
Fri	03.42 1.1 09.48 3.5 16.19 1.3 22.00 3.3		Campbeltown	-5.30
Sat	04.41 1.3 10.50 3.3 17.25 1.5 23.06 3.1		Crinan	-0.47
Sun	05.57 1.5 12.21 3.1 18.41 1.5 *** **		Islay Port Ellen	2.00
Mon	00.41 3.0 07.21 1.5 14.16 3.2 19.57 1.5		Lochboisdale	+0.30
Tues	02.29 3.1 08.48 1.4 15.30 3.3 21.08 1.3		Ferry Crossings/Sea States	
Wed	03.40 3.4 10.03 1.2 16.24 3.6 22.09 1.1		Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)				
Oban to Coll/Tiree Moderate				
Kennacraig to Islay Moderate				

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INSIDE your guide to 17 plate registrations

Firms positive despite slow start to season

KATIE CARABINE

kcarabine@obantimes.co.uk

LOCHABER'S two ski resorts have been feeling the effects of the mild weather but say they are prepared and ready to open up as soon as there is enough snow.

Nevis Range and Glencoe Mountain Resort have each had less than a handful of days so far where they were able to open for skiing and snowboarding.

Nevis Range marketing manager Heather Negus said: 'At the moment we don't have enough snow to open fully. We did manage to open for one day earlier in January and the artificial slope is open at the moment for beginner lessons. Our new locals group has now had three weeks of lessons.'

'Although we are disappointed not to be fully open for skiing yet, our customers should be assured that we are prepared and waiting to open up the rest of the hill as soon as there's enough snow.'

Glencoe Mountain Resort has also had a quiet start, having not had many ski days so far.

Director Andy Meldrum said: 'We've had a slow start with just four days of skiing so far, but there's been lots of sledging. We've got plenty of big patches of snow but currently not enough to ski. We've been reasonably busy though, with the sledging.'

Other businesses in the Lochaber area have also been affected by the lack of wintery

conditions. Ellis Brigham manager Simon Pitman said: 'We've spoken to all the retailers on the High Street and everybody is finding it quite slow at the moment.'

'We do still have custom from people going away on holiday. Lots of people have been going away this season. We are definitely still waiting for the season to begin here though.'

Tina Cuthbertson, who owns the Snowgoose Mountain Centre in Corpach along with her husband John, said the lack of snow has meant their accommodation has been quieter than it has been in more than 25 years.

She said: 'This has been the quietest January we've ever had since we've had the business in its current form, which is 1990, and that's almost purely snow-related.'

She added that the mild season has also affected the winter mountain courses they run – including mountaineering and ice climbing – which start this weekend as usual, but to a lesser extent than they would normally.

The lack of snow has not been problematic for everyone, however. The Alexandra Hotel said: 'We've had a busier winter season than we've had before. The snow's not been a problem for us.'

For those still dreaming of a white winter to boost business, things are looking up.

Mrs Cuthbertson said: 'We have an influx of bookings in February at the Snowgoose

centre for both accommodation and the courses.'

Mr Meldrum is not too worried about the success of his season just yet either.

He said: 'Historically at Glencoe Mountain, with it being quite rocky, we tend not to open until late January anyway. The average is January 17, so it's sometimes in December and sometimes not till February. I think the latest so far has been February 19 so this season is not unusual – yet.'

'It won't take much to get fully operational, just a couple of good snow storms and we'll be up and running.'

'We can have skiing up until late April, even early May, so once the snow does come it can stick around for a while. There's still a lot of life left in the season.'

Ms Negus is also remaining positive about the prospects for the rest of the season at Nevis Range.

She said: 'There were snow showers last weekend and there's snow in the forecast towards this weekend.'

'In previous years, we've still been open for snowsports in April and had lovely skiing conditions into May. We're frequently forced to close through lack of interest from our customers rather than lack of snow.'

'So, at this stage in the season there's plenty of time for many months of skiing and for our customers to have a great time skiing and snowboarding.'



Ellie's tartan touch and smiles at Lundavra primary Burns event

Ellie Eaton, who attends Lundavra nursery, was all smiles as she got into the spirit of Burns Day. All over Lochaber, schools, community groups, clubs and care homes have been enjoying celebrating Scotland's National Bard. Lundavra pupils sang, recited poetry and enjoyed a variety of traditional Scottish foods. Lundavra teacher Alison Stephen said guest speaker Jim Sutherland, head teacher at Lochaber High School, 'surprised everyone when he recited *Holy Willie's Prayer* in his nightcap and goonie'. See page four for a round-up of Burns Night photographs. Photograph: Abridgeside Photography.

TIMESLINE

Meeting to focus on estate plans

EAST Lochaber and Laggan Community Trust are organising a series of community meetings next month.

Chairman John Hutchison said: 'We will be holding another round of community meetings to bring members up to date with the actions taken during 2016 and outlining how we see the next steps in taking forward our aim of community ownership of the former Rio Tinto Estate. We are keen to hear members' views.'

Meetings will be as follows: Monday February 6, Spean Bridge Community Centre, 7 to 8.30pm; Tuesday February 7, Leven Centre, Kinlochleven, 7 to 8.30pm; Wednesday February 8, Kilmallie Community Centre, Corpach, 7 to 8.30pm; and Thursday February 9, Laggan Village Hall, 7 to 8pm.

New high school depute head

ERIC GROAT has been appointed depute head teacher at Lochaber High School.

He will be year head for S3 and S4 and will have management responsibility for learning and teaching, ICT and management information systems.

Mr Groat joined the school staff as a maths teacher in 2007 and has been principal teacher of support for learning since 2014.

Jim Sutherland, head teacher, said: 'I am delighted to welcome Mr Groat to the school's senior management team. He will make a significant contribution to moving the school forward in a number of important areas.'



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Volunteers sought to welcome refugees

VOLUNTARY Action Lochaber (VAL) is recruiting volunteers to support and welcome refugee families and individuals to Lochaber.

Four families from Syria are expected to arrive in Scotland in early spring and be housed in Kinlochleven.

Lochaber residents, parents and community group representatives are being invited to a second community meeting in Kinlochleven, hosted by The Highland Syrian Resettlement Partnership.

The meeting will be held on Monday February 6 at 6.30pm in Kinlochleven High School hall. People attending will meet those involved in the partnership including the Highland Council, Police Scotland, NHS Highland, Voluntary Action Lochaber, Department for Work and Pensions, and High Life Highland.

Volunteers will work with families and individuals for at least a couple of hours once a week for eight to 12 weeks shortly after their arrival. Volunteers will need to commit to a two-day training session on February 24 and 25 and a minimum of one refugee support programme of approximately two hours sessions over eight to 12 weeks from March 2017.

Councillor Thomas MacLennan, who chaired the first public meeting, said: 'My opinion is that by the end of the last meeting more people were in favour than against them coming. There were a smaller number who reacted negatively, but the more vocal majority were open and welcoming.'

Looking to Monday's meeting, councillor MacLennan said he hopes the outcome will be positive and that the

community will continue to be positive so that 'these people who have come from goodness knows where will be welcomed and live their lives here in peace'.

Welcoming the Syrians into our communities is also a priority for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Kate Forbes. She invited experienced Syrian refugee co-ordinator Bruma Kadletz to speak at Holyrood about her first-hand experience of the plight of Syrians fleeing their war-torn country and trying to set up new lives in places like Kinlochleven.

Miss Forbes said: 'I hope this will give MSPs and staff an insight into the stories behind the photographs.'

To download a volunteer role description and application form, visit valochaber.org or call 01397 706044 to arrange for a form to be posted out.

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Views sought on housing strategy

COMHAIRLE nan Eilean Siar is developing a new local housing strategy for 2017-2022 and wants to gather as many views as possible on the priorities it should address.

The public consultation will consider four priority areas: housing quality, supply, homelessness and independent living. All Western Isles residents are welcome to comment on the proposals so the council can get an idea of the levels of support for the suggestions as well as identifying other areas that should be considered.

The council also plans to contact the voluntary sector, community groups, the construction industry and utility companies. They will also consult further with partner organisations including the Scottish Government, NHS Western Isles, Tighean Innse Gall, Hebridean Housing Partnership and Community Trust organisations.

Consultation documents are available at www.cne-siar.gov.uk/consultations/index.asp and the consultation period will end on Friday March 10.

Call to end unfair electricity pricing

AN MP has called for an end to high electricity distribution prices which it is claimed sees the Highland and Islands pay 84 per cent more than London. Speaking during Prime Minister's Question time, Ian Blackford said: 'In the UK we have 14 regional markets for electricity distribution. In the Highlands we are facing higher prices because of where we live. In the north of Scotland, electricity distribution charges are 84 per cent higher than they are for London.'

The representative for Ross, Skye and Lochaber added: 'The Prime Minister talks about fairness, so will she introduce a universal pricing structure for electricity distribution and stop penalising Highlanders and islanders? Those of us who live in the coldest, windiest places are discriminated against by her Government and it must end.'

Parents voice concern over money-saving school plans

ELLIE FORBES
eforbes@obantimes.co.uk

MONEY-SAVING proposals, which will see head teachers manage several schools at once, have been approved by Highland Council.

The drastic shake-up of management in Highland schools was voted through last Thursday (January 26) by 15 votes to nine.

But members of the Highland Council's Education, Children and Adult Services committee (ECAS) stopped plans in one Lochaber area where the strategy caused particular controversy.

Council officials agreed to postpone a decision on cluster management in the Mallaig area school group (ASG) until

the March ECAS meeting. Mallaig ASG, which covers Mallaig High School and eight primary schools, including four on islands, was taken out of the equation after parents claimed there had been a lack of communication from the council about the proposal.

Caol and Mallaig councillor Ben Thompson told *The Oban Times* that a parent council meeting last Monday (January 23) was attended by about 30 parents who unanimously rejected the proposal.

He said: 'People are worried about how you would manage a current head teacher's transition to a principal teacher. This would be seen as a downgrade by the head teacher which some said could have a negative

impact on recruitment.' Mr Thompson added this is particularly sensitive to island schools in the Mallaig ASG, who said a negative impact on recruitment is a threat to an entire island community if families leave or chose not to live there.

He said: 'Some of the teachers are now worried they will lose their job in August - when this is meant to be rolled out - which is unacceptable. People at the meeting were very doubtful about how this plan can work geographically in such a complex ASG that covers nine schools.'

ECAS committee chairman Drew Millar said: 'Members of this committee previously agreed to the Management of Schools Programme in October 2015. We recognised head

teachers required more support and that Highland needs to develop a new model for provision of education into the future.

'This agreement that we have committed to again today is about sustaining education in local communities across the Highlands. It is not about one-size-fits all and it is not about school closures.

'Assurance has been given today that where there has been lack of consultation, this will be addressed.'

After the meeting, the MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch described the decisions as treating Highland schools 'like the X-Factor'.

Kate Forbes said the council had to face up to a 'lack of consultation on a significant

change to rural education' after she received a high number of concerns from constituents - Plockton, Invergarry, Mallaig and the Small Isles cluster would all be affected.

She said: 'These plans are significant and parents need to have answers before they are pushed through.'

'What is being proposed is a significant restructure in the management of our local schools and one would assume major changes such as this must go through a robust consultation.'

'I don't expect everyone to be happy with the end result, but Highland Council must allow teachers, parents and other stakeholders the opportunity to have their say in a transparent and fair way.'

Countdown to opening of new Skye centre

A NEW community hub in Sleat, Skye, will be open in time for Easter.

An Crùbh has a shop and post office, a café, a community hall, a meeting room, exhibition space, toilets and showers.

Situated just above the A851 where it passes through Duisdale and Camuscross, the hub will serve local residents and visitors, and is one of the first projects of its kind in Scotland to be developed, owned and run by a local community as a social enterprise.

Construction finished last December when the building was handed over to its owners, Camuscross and Duisdale Initiative (CDI).

CDI chairman Mark Wringe said: 'We are very proud of our new building. Both the café and the hall have spectacular views above the Sound of Sleat. We want what we offer in the shop and café to be as impressive as the building and we need ambitious staff to achieve that.'

Another CDI director, Susan Walker, added: 'It is fantastic to see our hard work and the confidence placed in us by funding bodies become reality. In just one year, we've gone from local children symbolically cutting the first turf to having an amazing facility.'

'It takes a lot to get an empty building fitted out to do so many things and working groups have been meeting regularly since the New Year to hone plans for equipping and furnishing its various spaces, drawing on the expertise of local people with experience of operating a shop, café or hall.'

CDI director Laura Stephen added: 'A team of fundraising volunteers, mainly women from Camuscross, did a magnificent job of reaching the £6,000 we needed to raise towards the project through local activities.'

'We're now juggling a very tight budget to acquire everything, from teaspoons to chill cabinets. The team is going the extra mile to make it happen. Its next fundraiser is a car boot and table-top sale at An Crùbh on Saturday February 25.'

For details of the jobs on offer and photographs of An Crùbh visit www.camuscross.org and CDI's Facebook page.

Lochalsh team invests in new fitness equipment

LOCHALSH Leisure Centre has a new look following an upgrade and investment in new fitness cardio machines.

It is hoped the centre's new Spirit Fitness equipment will 'ensure members experience the best workouts possible'.

Located beside the Skye Bridge, which links the mainland

to the isle of Skye, the nearest alternative facility is around 30 miles away.

The centre now boasts new Spirit Fitness ellipticals, upright bikes and a CS800 stepper machine - the first to be installed in the UK.

Lochalsh Leisure has said it hopes that upgrading the equip-

ment will show a commitment to maintaining the facility.

Chris Mackinnon, manager of Lochalsh Leisure Centre, said: 'Due to our location we have a lot of members, around 400-500, but rather than becoming complacent, we believe it's important to provide a good facility that people enjoy using.'

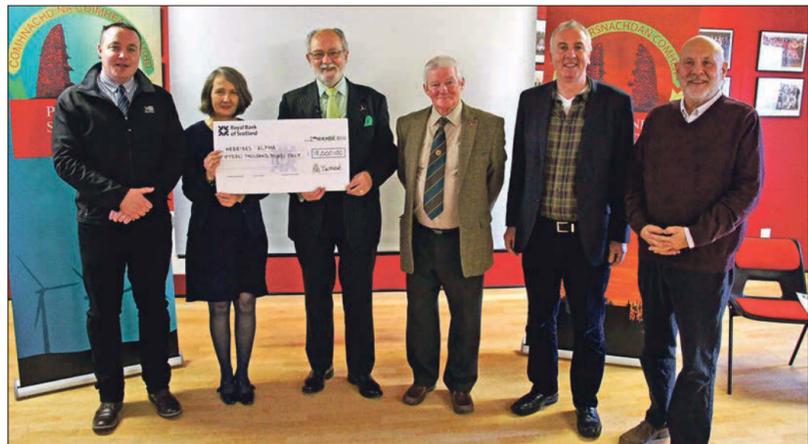
'The old equipment had become rather tired, so it was definitely time for us to upgrade and, so far, everyone is loving the new Spirit machines.'

As well as a fitness suite, Lochalsh Leisure also has a heated indoor swimming pool, a steam room and sauna and a free weights room.

Business development manager for Spirit Fitness Dan Hodge said: 'Chris and the team at Lochalsh knew they needed to upgrade their equipment.'

'Spirit Fitness was delighted to work with them to devise a solution that was not only cost effective, but also excellent quality.'

Addiction project boosted by trust donation



Reverend Tommy MacNeil and Shona Macleod of the Hebrides Alpha Project with, from left to right, Point and Sandwick Trust chairman Angus McCormack, vice chairman Duncan Mackay, developer Calum Macdonald and general manager Donald John MacSween.

A PROJECT offering supported accommodation and rehabilitation for people recovering from addiction has received £15,000.

The Hebrides Alpha Project received the money as a first instalment of an annual £30,000 donation from wind farm charity Point and Sandwick Trust (PST).

The charity, which has been running since 2006, incorporates an in-house recovery programme for up to six people at a time.

Shona Macleod, manager at the Hebrides Alpha Project, said they were 'so grateful' for the support from Point and Sandwick Trust, which will go towards salaries, administration and travel.

'The money is so appreciated,' she said. 'It is an incredible contribution to this project and

the wind farm trust really is contributing to people's lives in this community.'

'The money has impacted very positively and it means we can continue to run the service and continue to take residents in who have serious alcohol and drug dependencies in addition to other psychological and practical problems.'

PST general manager Donald John MacSween said: 'The Western Isles has one of the highest incidents of alcohol and drug use in the UK and Hebrides Alpha is providing a much-needed rehabilitation service, available locally for the first time.'

Hebrides Alpha Project appreciates even small monthly donations. If anyone would like to support the project, telephone 01851 820830.

Cash boost for Grimsay mill

A MILL and wool centre on Grimsay is to receive £90,000 from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

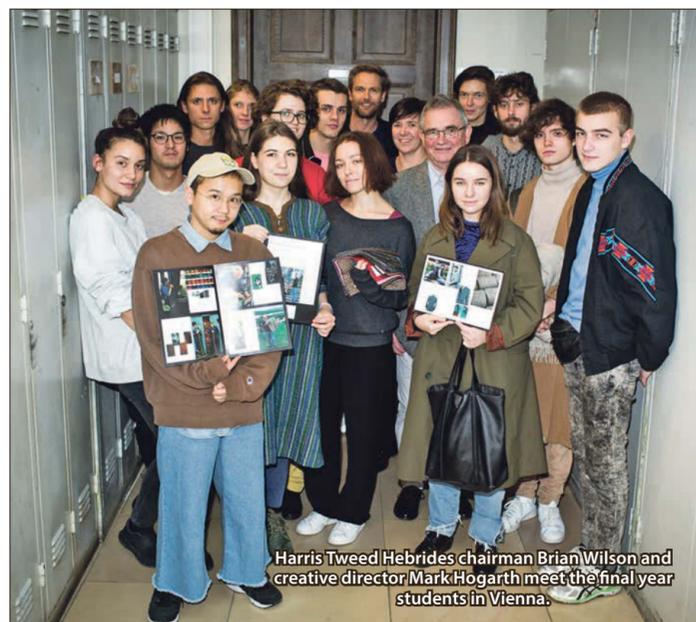
Uist Wool was awarded the grant to help it develop into a trading social enterprise. The company spins a range of yarns for knitting and weaving using local fleece.

Uist Wool has already raised more than £1 million in public and private funds to build the mill and centre, acquire and refurbish heritage spinning machinery and train staff.

Uist Wool director Dana Macphee said: 'This is an exciting time for Uist Wool as we've put all the pieces together to finally launch the trading element of the enterprise and move into the wool centre annexe at the mill.'

Joanna Peteranna, account manager at HIE in Benbecula, added: 'The mill is a welcome boost to the rich textile heritage and economy of the Outer Hebrides.'

Tweed firm looks to the future at design school



Harris Tweed Hebrides chairman Brian Wilson and creative director Mark Hogarth meet the final year students in Vienna.

A HEBRIDEAN company has teamed up with one of Europe's leading fashion and design schools to ensure the industry's future leaders are ambassadors for its iconic fabric.

Harris Tweed Hebrides (HTH) visited Austria to foster a relationship with the Institute of the Applied Arts in Vienna.

HTH creative director Mark Hogarth believes such efforts are increasingly important in light of ongoing Brexit discussions.

He added: 'When we visited Vienna to explain Harris Tweed to the students, fewer than half of them had previously heard of it. But they were really enthused to learn of its qualities and provenance. That sums up the need for this kind of initiative.'

'Students today will be the creative leaders of tomorrow's fashion industry. We are proud to invest in such talent and be associated with such a prestigious European institution. A similar partnership with a Scottish design school will be announced shortly.'

Distiller sought to take the helm on Raasay

A WHISKY innovator, who says a decision to immerse himself in the industry was either brave or mad, is building the first legal distillery on Raasay.

Alasdair Day got into whisky after he inherited a 'cellar' from his great grandfather, a blender from the border town of Coldstream.

His other grandfather hailed from Hebrides, so when Mr Day and his family decided to depend on the 'water of life' for a living, they came up with the name R&B Distillers, standing for Raasay and Borders.

Mr Day told *The Oban Times*: 'My grandfather's cellar book had blends from 1899 to 1960. It was amazing. But we knew if we wanted to scale up we would have to make our own blends.'

Alongside business partner Bill Dobby, the Days are in the process of building their distillery on

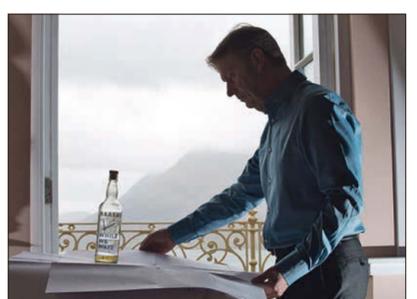
Raasay which will boast a members' club and 'one of the best distillery views', according to Mr Day.

R&B hopes to open this summer but in the meantime is on the hunt for a distiller.

Mr Day, 51, said: 'My qualification is in botany so I want to put the distillery in the hands of someone whose passion for whisky is as extensive as their knowledge.'

'We've had interest from all around the globe, even from people who have come to Scotland from Asia and are now qualified distillers. It is so impressive that the tradition and the art of whisky and Scotland is as appealing as ever.'

He added: 'I am a fan of all whisky. My choice will depend on the mood and the surroundings. We hope Raasay will provide whisky lovers with one of the most enjoyable and inspiring environments.'



Alasdair Day is looking for a distiller to operate his new business on Raasay.



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Woman not guilty of assault on ex-partner

A CAOL woman who was charged with assault after throwing a bowl at her then partner has been found not guilty.

Sheriff William Taylor said he was not satisfied there was sufficient evidence to convict Joanne Margaret Louise Kane, 23, at Fort William Sheriff Court on Monday (January 30).

The court heard how Kane's former partner had gone to her house at Blar Mhor Road after an afternoon in the Lochy Bar, when the pair began to argue. He said Kane had called him on numerous occasions throughout the three hours he was at the pub and the argument was because he had been out drinking during the day.

Her partner then left the house to go and get a fish supper and when he returned the argument broke out again.

The former couple's son was upstairs sleeping when Kane was said to have picked up a porcelain bowl and 'chucked it across the room'. The bowl was said to have shattered as it hit her ex-partner on the nose.

The court heard how Kane's partner had then tried to take their son out of the house as he did not want him to be 'in that environment'.

But Kane's solicitor told the court that she had thrown the bowl in self-defence after her former partner had pinned her down on the sofa and thrown a fish supper at her.

Sheriff Taylor said the Crown did not have sufficient evidence to disprove Kane was acting in self-defence and that his view of the accused's ex-partner was 'not a high one' particularly after hearing how he had tried to take the child away - something which the Sheriff said was done to hurt Kane.

Sheriff Taylor concluded by finding Kane not guilty.

Call for nursing degree to be brought to Fort William

ELLIE FORBES

eforbes@obantimes.co.uk

PEOPLE in Fort William are calling on the University of the Highlands and Islands to include its Fort William campus in a new adult nursing degree.

The University of the Highlands and Islands will take over the BSc adult nursing programme from the University of Stirling in September 2017 with the theory part of the degree being delivered in Inverness and Stornoway.

Potential Fort William students took to social media last week to express their disappointment that they would not be able to study for the degree in their home town but would have to travel almost 200 miles to Stornoway, or more than 60 miles to Inverness.

Elaine Stoddart, 33, a health care assistant at Tweedale medical practice, Fort William, posted about the issue on Facebook on January 19 and more than 120 people commented to say they were interested, or knew people who may be interested in studying for the degree if they could do it at the Fort William college.

Elaine, who lives in Caol with her four young children aged between three to nine, told *The*



Elaine Stoddart with son Joey at the Fort William campus. Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

Oban Times: 'Nursing is something I have always wanted to do, but it's just not possible with all the travelling that would be involved.'

Elaine asked UHI about the possibility of being able to study at the Fort William campus and make use of Lochaber services for placements and was asked to feed back the level of demand

for this. Currently students from Stirling come to Fort William on placement and Elaine and others questioned why people who lived in the town could therefore not study and do their placements here.

She continued: 'It would be so good for the whole area in terms of the economy and all the people who want to do the course,

but can't travel, to have it in Fort William. We should be making use of the local resources we have.'

'We have the Belford, GP practices and district nurses.'

'I think the support would be in place.'

'People here are at a disadvantage because of where we live. Living in this area is brilliant

and people are having to move away to do what they want.

'People should be able to get the qualifications they want when we have the university here.'

Health care assistant in Ballachulish and mum of two Katy Patterson got in touch with *The Oban Times* to say nursing is something she has been thinking about doing since her dad was hurt in an accident five years ago.

Katy, whose children are two and five, said she would like to start studying once her youngest starts school: 'There just isn't scope to do it round here just now. You have to travel so far, but it's something I want to do now.'

A spokesperson for UHI said: 'The Nursing and Midwifery Council has given approval for the theoretical part of the programme to be delivered in Inverness and Stornoway. Students will then undertake their practice elements across the region. This will continue to include, as it currently does with University of Stirling, placements in Fort William.'

'In the future, we intend to look at how we can best support students/potential future students who are distant from the delivery campuses.'

POLICE FILES

THERE has been an increase in house break-ins throughout Lochaber and police are encouraging home owners to remain vigilant.

The most recent break-ins took place while homes were unoccupied.

Police said taking precautions such as leaving lights on while away and asking neighbours to keep a watchful eye all help in preventing and detecting these crimes.

Police advice that any suspicious activity or strange/unknown vehicles seen in local areas should be reported as a matter of urgency.

A WINDOW of a house in Drumfada Terrace, Corpach, was damaged when a stone was thrown at it sometime between 10am on January 22 and 12.30pm on January 23. Anyone in the area at the time who saw anyone acting suspiciously is asked to contact police in Fort William.

AN ANCHOR and buoy may be missing from Glasdrum Point on the Sound of Mull. If anyone has information as to the whereabouts of the buoy, or any reason to suggest the anchor may be missing, they should contact police in Strontian.



The Belhaven Development has brought about the call for the catchment boundary change. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

Proposed school boundary changes

THE HIGHLAND Council is seeking the views of two Fort William communities on a proposal to change the catchment boundary of Inverloch Primary School and Lundavra Primary School.

The change is being proposed because a new housing development is being built across the existing boundary.

The Belhaven site, Fort William, will have 13 new properties on it.

A Highland Council spokesperson said: 'There are five bungalows which are for the council and these are all wheelchair adapted properties. Currently none of the families which are likely to be allocated to these properties have school age children.'

The other eight flats on the site will be allocated through Lochaber Housing Association. Members of the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee (ECAS)

agreed to carry out a public consultation on the proposal at their meeting last week.

The views of parents, the community and others will be sought from February 6 to March 23 and a public meeting will be held in Fort William on March 8.

The proposal paper will be available on the Highland Council website from February 6 at www.highland.gov.uk/school-consultations.

Father and son get payback orders

A FATHER and son were handed Community Payback Orders (CPO) at Fort William Sheriff court on Tuesday.

Antonino Giovanni Sabiu was charged with assault and sentenced to a level one community payback order of 75 hours to be completed in six months.

His solicitor told the court that while Sabiu is 'no stranger to the court', he is 'not a violent individual' and that 'provocation was the catalyst' for the attack.

His son Kevin Giovanni George Sabiu was also given a CPO in a separate case

on Tuesday. Kevin Sabiu was charged with possession of ecstasy on April 3, 2016, in Middle Street, Fort William.

He was found with eight tablets, which had a value of around £80.

The court heard that the 22-year-old was seen by patrol police officers near Superdrug on the High Street and he began to walk briskly in the other direction after seeing them.

The officers alerted other police in the area who stopped the accused, but a search turned up negative. Later inspection

of CCTV footage in Middle Street showed Kevin Sabiu disappearing behind a set of bins just before he was searched by the second set of officers.

Police later found the tablets in the area beside the bins in Middle Street.

Sabi's solicitor told the court that the younger generation use such substances for recreational purposes and that the tablets were for personal use.

Sheriff William Taylor handed Kevin Sabiu a CPO for 40 hours, to be completed in three months.

Fined and banned for speeding at 103mph

A 28-YEAR-OLD man has been disqualified from driving for six months and fined £1,500 after being caught driving at 103mph.

Ivor Ian Finlayson, from Kyle of Lochalsh, was handed the penalty after being found guilty at Fort William Sheriff Court on Tuesday (January 31).

A static police camera van caught Finlayson speeding on a straight stretch of the A82 near Glencoe, going south, after he had overtaken a number of other vehicles.

The court heard Finlayson had accelerated to 103mph to overtake the vehicles. CCTV footage showed how he had tried to overtake the last car in the row of vehicles, but had to slow down and pull in behind it before a corner in the road.

Finlayson, who works as a marine engineer with CalMac, has to travel around 12,000 miles a year with his job. But the court heard how his employers had said he would not be fired because of a disqualification.

Sheriff William Taylor added the stretch of road was a well-known area for speeding and that it is very important people do not drive at the same speeds Finlayson did.

Screening saves mother's life twice

A MOTHER from Skye is urging women in the Highland to take part in a cervical screening programme.

Jo-Anne Ford, 46, from Portree, says regular participation in the Scottish Cervical Screening Programme may have prevented her developing cervical cancer twice, and potentially saved her life.

Ms Ford used Cervical Cancer Prevention Week (January 22-January 28) to raise awareness of the programme, which invites all women aged from 25 to 64 to regularly attend cervical screening.

'I have participated in cervical cancer screening since my early twenties and I'm in no doubt as to how important it is,' explained Ms Ford.

'It was thanks to regular participation in screening that pre-cancerous cells were discovered in my cervix when I was 34.'

'The test aims to pick-up changes in your cervix so they can be monitored or treated. I was lucky that changes were spotted at an

early stage, allowing them to be treated before they developed further.'

'After my treatment, I continued to have the smear test.'

'Unfortunately I had abnormal cell changes a second time five years later, by which time I had moved to Skye. It was during this time I discovered the fabled Highland hospitality was genuine, as the nurses and staff at the hospital were fabulous with me.'

NHS Highland said Across Scotland, approximately 300 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year, and it is the most common cancer among women aged 34 and under.

Jo-Anne added: 'It's because of this that I want to tell my story and highlight the importance of cervical screening.'

'I appreciate that it is a delicate subject, however I would encourage women to put embarrassment to one side and take part in cervical screening. I'm living proof of how important it can be.'

Temporary bus shelter at health centre

A FORT WILLIAM bus shelter that was knocked down last July after it was hit by a bus is to be replaced this week.

A meeting between property owners Bidwells and NHS Highland took place last week to discuss a permanent replacement bus shelter.

Following the meeting, both parties confirmed a temporary shelter will be erected this week, with talks about a new permanent one ongoing.

A spokesperson for managing agents Bidwells said: 'We have contracted a local joiner to erect a temporary bus shelter at the health centre and this should be in place sometime this week.'

'We are currently in the process of negotiating with the insurers and bus shelter suppliers to secure a permanent replacement.'

'We realise this has caused some inconvenience to bus passengers but we are working

hard to resolve this.' NHS Highland said: 'We have been in discussions with Bidwells and a temporary shelter will be put in place this week.'

'Discussions to secure a permanent replacement bus shelter are ongoing. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.'

As reported in *The Oban Times* on January 12 the community was frustrated that nothing had been done about the bus shelter for months after it was knocked down.

Former community councillor Mary Bruce is also frustrated a new shelter has still not been put in place.

She told *The Oban Times*: 'Someone just needs to get it fixed because if this had happened at Raigmore a new one would be up tomorrow.'

'Things just get left lying here though. Let's just do something and argue about it later.'

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WHAT'S ON

AN EVENT focusing on the threats and issues of biodiversity in Lochaber will take place on Monday February 13 at 7.30pm in the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William.

It will comprise of a discussion panel chaired by the Lochaber Biodiversity Action Group, with speakers invited from Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Nevis Landscape Partnership, Police Scotland and Lochaber District Fisheries Trust.

A CONCERT featuring Lews Castle College music student and Mary Ann Kennedy will take place on Tuesday February 7 at Clachan Church Hall. A raffle will be held with proceeds being donated to Carinish school project.

THE NEXT meeting of the Fort William branch of the Scottish Women's Institute is on Monday February 6 at 7.15pm in the Montrose Centre, Inverlochy. The speaker is Kenny Lang who will talk about his life as a vet. Everyone welcome.

THE ANNUAL general meeting of Lochaber Sensory Care (LSC) for Sight and Hearing Support is being held on Saturday February 25 at Caol Community Centre. The meeting will run from 2pm to 4pm and the agenda will include a report on sensory care year, and the election of new board members. The AGM will be followed by a free buffet provided by LSC.

On Tuesday February 7, representatives of Lochaber Sensory Care for Sight and Hearing support will be at Mallaig Medical Centre. They will be in attendance to have a chat and offer help and advice to anyone living with sight or hearing loss. The LSC team will also supply NHS hearing aid batteries, provide re-tubing for hearing aids and help with any difficulties. They will be there from 2pm to 3pm and no appointment is needed.

FREE back-to-basic sewing classes are being offered by Lochaber Environmental Group (LEG). Everyone is welcome and no previous sewing experience is required. The classes start on Wednesday February 15 from 6-8pm at the Attic Window, 76 High Street. For more information call 01397 700090 or email info@lochaberenviro.org.uk

Newsdesk
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703003



There was tartan as far as the eye could see at the Banavie Primary School Burns Supper. Photograph: Abrightside Photography.



Left to right: piper Finlay Cameron with Glengarry Community Hall association members Neil Stewart, Mairi Gold MacLennan, Peter Walker, James Menzies, Isobell Henderson, Colin Sage and Catriona Menzies at their Burns Supper.



Left: Braving high winds, snow and cold to stage Scotland's highest Burns' Supper, 10-year-old Daniel Parfitt addressed the haggis which was cooked by Nevis Range chef Will MacDonald and piped in by Ben Fulford, 15.



Youngsters enjoy a wee nip of apple juice at the Lundavra Primary School and nursery Burns Supper.



The Lochaber Burns Club supper took place at the Alexandra Hotel, Fort William, last Friday.

Poetry, song and a feast of haggis as Lochaber celebrates Robert Burns

BURNS suppers have taken place across Lochaber to celebrate Scottish poet Robert Burns.

Lundavra Primary School teacher Alison Stephen said: 'P7 hosted a Burns Supper and invited parents and friends. The children sang, recited poetry and provided the audience with haggis, neeps, shortbread and tablet. Jim Sutherland,

Lochaber High School's head teacher, was the guest speaker and surprised everyone when he recited *Holy Willie's Prayer* in his nightcap and goonie.'

Moss Park care home manager Libby McKee said: 'The residents thoroughly enjoyed their Burns Supper. Thanks to everyone who attended.' P2/3 teacher at Caol, Mrs Lamont, said: 'As part of our topic

on Scotland, P2/3 invited their parents in to celebrate Burns in class. The children performed Scots songs and poems and the *Selkirk Grace*. We prepared haggis balls, scones and cranachan in class and parents provided Scottish food too, including a whole hot smoked salmon.'

At St Columba's Nursery the haggis was addressed by John Hynd. Everyone then enjoyed

haggis, neeps and tatties. The entertainment continued with Burns' poetry read by a group of primary six pupils and Highland dancing by Faye MacKinnon.

At the end everyone joined in a rousing rendition of *Auld Lang Syne*. Head teacher Violet Smith said: 'An excellent morning of entertainment was enjoyed by everyone.'



Moss Park Nursing Home residents enjoyed their Burns Supper. Manager Libby McKee said: 'Allan MacDonald was absolutely phenomenal and the residents thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were requesting to be in the photos. Thanks to everyone who took part.'

Father Roddy McAuley of nearby St John's Church piped in the haggis, which was addressed by Belford Hospital consultant Allan MacDonald, while Larry Burns played the accordion along with his granddaughter. Nevis Bakery provided haggis, neep and tattie pies, made with potatoes and turnips donated by JM Breckenridge suppliers. Photograph Abrightside Photography.



A Burns supper and ceilidh was held at the Ariundle Centre, Strontian, on Saturday January 28. Left to right: Chris Ogilvie, who piped in the haggis; Pat Adams who organised the event, and Rev Donald McCorkindale, minister of the linked parishes of Strontian, Ardgour, Lochaline and Kingairloch, who addressed the haggis. Pat's husband, Alec, recited the Selkirk Grace. A total of £750 was raised for local Macmillan nurses.



At St Bride's Primary School, Campbell Mackintosh addressed the haggis which was held by Magaidh Ward and piped in by John MacCallum.



A fantastic night was organised by St Munda's Church of Scotland and members of the Ballachulish community to honour 'Scotland's National Bard'. Left to right: Bill Srachan, Graham Robertson and piper Neil Slinger.



Alasdair Roberts recites the *Immortal Memory* during the Mallaig High School Burns Supper.



Caidan Cameron from St Columba's Nursery investigates the haggis during the group's Burns Supper.



Left: Caol Primary School's primary 2/3 pupils all smiles at their Burns celebration.

For more Burns Supper photographs from across Lochaber see The Oban Times website www.obantimes.co.uk

View from the Chamber



DURING the past year, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce held numerous meetings and events, from member networking events right up to government lobbying meetings. The events calendar for 2017 is shaping up nicely, with a variety of events planned, including business showcases, seminars and working groups. Follow us on social media to keep up to date with what is happening. Don't forget that the monthly newsletter is your opportunity to tell other members about your business and offer member to

member discounts. The newsletter is distributed on the first Thursday of each month, and you can email submissions to membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk.

If there is anyone else in your organisation who would like to receive the newsletter, they can be added onto the distribution list - just let us know. Lochaber Chamber of Commerce is a business membership organisation and our activity is driven by what the members want.

Whether you are a large or small business, operating in the tourism sector or not, we depend on contributions from, and participation by, the members for the organisation to build on its success.

So don't be shy - get in touch with Fiona McCormick, our membership and events officer by telephone on 01397 705765 or by email to membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk.



Fiona McCormick is the Chamber's membership and events officer.

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Sleat group blasts CalMac in letter to Transport Scotland

SARA BAIN
fort@obantimes.co.uk

OPERATORS of a troubled ferry route have been accused of delivering a 'fairy story of political spin and blatant inaccuracy'.

In the wake of CalMac Ferries Ltd's announcement of its new summer timetable earlier this month, Sleat Transport Forum says it was 'astounded' at what was likely to be 'another summer of unacceptable service on the Mallaig-Armadale route'.

But Transport Scotland says it and ferry operators CalMac are doing their best to provide additional capacity, frequency and improved reliability on the route.

The service came under fire last year when the MV Coruisk, which had operated successfully between Mallaig and Armadale for 12 years, was re-deployed to serve the Oban to Craignure route.

CalMac replaced the one-vessel Mallaig to Armadale service



Secretary of Sleat Transport Forum Rob Ware at Armadale Ferry terminal. Photograph: Sara Bain.

with three vessels. Two of the vessels deployed, however, were not designed for the route and by the end of the season almost 400 services had been cancelled.

CalMac says its 2017 summer timetable will increase capacity on the service by operating two ferries - The MV Lord of the Isles and MV Loch Fyne - which will replace last year's

three-vessel service. But Sleat Transport Forum has blasted the move saying Drew Collier, CalMac operations director, failed to mention 'the tens of thousands of travellers whose journeys were affected last year which has resulted in a dramatic loss of confidence in the route'.

In a letter to Graham Laidlaw, Transport Scotland's head of fer-

ries, Rob Ware, forum secretary, said: 'Mr Collier fails to mention the 350 less coaches on the route in 2016 than 2015, a staggering drop of 15 per cent, and with a nine per cent increase with the MV Coruisk in 2015 than 2014, this represents a swing of 24 per cent in coach traffic over two summers.'

Mr Ware said that what should have been a 'celebration of growth with the introduction of RET proved to be a public relations fiasco'. He added that attempts by the forum to ask for the costs of operating the route in 2015 as against 2016 have been refused under Freedom of Information exemption.

In reply to the forum's concerns, Mr Laidlaw added: 'Spring tides remain an issue in the timetable and, for the first two weeks of the summer, service will be noticeably variable. While that is unavoidable, customers are being provided with advance notice and can plan around that.'

But Mr Ware claims analysis by the forum suggests that, with a tidal timetable on the route, there are days where there are significantly less than nine sailings and on some days only five are scheduled.

He predicts that, under the new timetable, almost 40 per cent of this year's summer service across the Sound of Sleat will be affected by changes to the schedule due to low tidal conditions. Mr Ware said: 'On an optimum week, there are planned to be 120 sailings in total for the Mallaig to Armadale route, with the combination of Lord of the Isles and Loch Fyne. However, with the requirement to make tidal changes on 79 out of the 206 sailing days, some weeks have as few as 92-95 sailings, a significant reduction and some of these occur in the peak holiday season.'

'The forum and our colleagues across the Sound of Sleat made it abundantly clear that, from a customer's perspective, a tidal

timetable would be totally unacceptable in 2017.

'With the deployment of the MV Loch Fyne, the timetable has had to be revised to allow for the tides which results in some days having no services between Mallaig and Armadale for more than five hours. In the reverse direction, there are days when there is a six-hour gap between sailings. The forum predicts further disruption will occur where tides are lower than expected.'

CalMac and Transport Scotland say they will continue to monitor the service over the summer and urged interested parties to support the service.

Mr Laidlaw said: 'CalMac has offered assistance to the Sleat community with marketing and other promotional activity to encourage more people to come to the area and reassure them that the Mallaig to Armadale ferry route is open for business.'

'I urge the Sleat community to take up that offer from CalMac and work with them.'

TIMESLINE

Skye chef in the mix for Bake Off

A SKYE chef is one of four people thought to be in the running to be Paul Hollywood's co-host in the next series of *Great British Bake Off*.

Lady Claire MacDonald, 69, who runs Kinloch Lodge on the island with her husband Godfrey, has been spotted at a studio in London, where it is believed audience tests are taking place for the show, which has been taken over by Channel 4. Irish chef and baker Rachel Allan, Yorkshire cook Frances Atkins and TV chef Michel Roux Junior were also spotted at the London studio.

Lady MacDonald and her family declined to comment when contacted by *The Oban Times*.

MSP praises work of Genuig Inn

LOCHABER MSP Kate Forbes has highlighted the 'trailblazing' work of the Genuig Inn in Lochailort as the Scottish Government published its draft climate change plan.

She told the Scottish parliament the Genuig Inn was a great example of how remote rural businesses could 'innovatively adapt and substantially lower their carbon footprint'.

In 2015 the inn was the first in the UK to receive a gold award from the Green Tourism Business Scheme and has been completely powered by renewable energy since March that year.

Haggis festival design contest

HIGHLAND Haggis Festival organisers are seeking entries to design a haggis-themed gondola for Nevis Range.

The winning design will be adapted and wrapped around a gondola in time for the festival in Spean Bridge on April 1 and 2. Entries from groups of two or more people under 17, in any artistic format and showing how the design covers each of the four sides of the gondola, must be submitted by Tuesday February 28.

The winners will be treated to a trip on the gondola followed by refreshments in the Snowgoose restaurant.

Nevis Range managing director Peter MacFarlane said: 'We are excited to be working with the organisers of the Highland Haggis Festival.'

More information and entry details can be found at www.highlandhaggisfest.co.uk/design-a-haggis-gondola

At your service

THE OBAN TIMES, together with NHS Highland, is running a series of articles which puts the spotlight on people who work in healthcare across our area.

Answering the questions this week is Haley Duncan, a mental health practitioner with the newly-established supporting self management service.

Q. What is the supporting self management service?

A. We're a new service based at New Craigs Hospital, Inverness, that delivers short, time-limited interventions for people with any mental health diagnosis. We deliver four skills-based groups over two weeks that are focused on learning and developing life and self-management skills such as activities of daily living, the stress response and a range of 'decider' skills designed to equip people with skills to lead a less impulsive life. Individuals who use the service will also create a self-management plan, including a crisis plan to use in times of future distress.

Q. What is your background?

A. I completed my mental health nursing training at the University of Stirling's Stirling campus three years ago. I have spent two-and-a-half years working in acute mental health wards at New Craigs and six months in this service.

Q. Why did you decide to become a mental health nurse?

A. I initially studied psychology at Strathclyde University in Glasgow, however, I realised I prefer a much more hands-on style of working. I had briefly worked in a social care setting for those with mental health problems and decided this was the route I wanted to take.

Q. What is your favourite part of mental health nursing?

A. Talking to people. My role enables me to provide empathy and emotional support for someone when they're opening up their deepest feelings and thoughts to me. It's a privileged position to be in.

Q. Is there still a stigma attached to mental health?

A. I would say that there is a huge stigma attached to people who have mental ill-health. We need to educate people on the issues and raise awareness of mental health.

Q. How do you relax away from your work?

A. I love going for walks, photography and spending time with family and friends.

Q. Describe your role in three words...

A. Rewarding, challenging and stimulating.



Haley Duncan believes there is still a huge stigma attached to people who have mental ill-health.

teach youngsters that mental ill-health can happen to anyone and that there is support available.

Q. What attracted you to work in the supporting self management service?

A. The job was advertised internally and I was looking for a new challenge. I had achieved all the goals I had set myself before I started working in a ward and I wanted to try something new. This job allows me to be autonomous and creative. It's an exciting opportunity to develop a service that can be a real benefit to patients and their families.

Q. Is there such a thing as a typical working week for you?

A. I wouldn't say so because the job has so many roles within it. As well as the self management service, we dip into the personality disorder service. I spend a lot of time working with different groups as well as handling referrals, team meetings and completing training and development. I love the variety this job provides as it contributes to my professional development and provides various opportunities to learn.

Q. What is the long-term aim for the service?

A. We have made a very positive start to the service, with great feedback from patients and colleagues. We want to keep building that momentum and gain more referrals to the service and roll-out training to staff across Highland.

Q. How do you relax away from your work?

A. I love going for walks, photography and spending time with family and friends.

Q. Describe your role in three words...

A. Rewarding, challenging and stimulating.

First electric taxi service for Fort

A FORT William businessman has launched the first fully electric, zero-emission taxi service in the Highlands.

And his expansion plans could see him leading the way in Scotland with his electric car chauffeur service.

Scott Easson, who was born and bred in the west Highlands, has always been interested in electric cars. He bought his first one in 2015 and set up Elecar. He initially operated a chauffeur service using a Tesla car but in November last year, he introduced a taxi service using a Nissan Leaf.

Mr Easson said: 'Business is going quite well. People get very interested in the electric cars when they get in them. The taxis are getting more popular.'

He is already planning to expand the business and has ordered a second Tesla car - a model which is not yet in production. 'I've ordered a Tesla 3. I'm the first in Scotland to order one so I should be the first in Scotland to have one when it comes out at the end of this year, although I'm not expecting to get it until 2018. I want to promote electric cars. They're really smooth and quiet to drive, and there's no servicing costs. 'The environment is a big part

of it. It means customers and other taxis sitting behind me at a rank don't have to breathe in fumes from my car.'

Mr Easson is also trying to get more charge points installed around Fort William, particularly rapid charge ones which allow for much faster charging. There is only one such point in Fort William at the moment, in the An Aird car park behind Morrisons.

'I'm trying to work with Tesla to get a specific Tesla charge point put in,' added Mr Easson.

He is aware there is a conception about electric cars being dangerous because they are so quiet and therefore people might be less likely to hear coming, but he doesn't believe there are real safety issues with them.

'People will walk out in front of cars that are not electric just as easily.'

'I've also read that more people are killed through fumes given off from cars than actually being hit by them, so in that respect the electric cars are safer.'

The long-term plan for Elecar is for it to be a 24/7 service in Fort William, perhaps as soon as next year, although at the moment availability of suitable cars is still an issue as electric cars are still a relatively new concept.



Scott and his daughter Emily with the Nissan Leaf electric taxi.



Scott uses the Tesla S 85D Supercar (L) for his chauffeur service and weddings, and the Nissan Leaf, back, for his taxi service.

Army cadet bags bronze Duke of Edinburgh award

A FORT William army cadet has achieved his unit's first Duke of Edinburgh Award of 2017.

Cadet Lance Corporal Ewan McGregor, 16, from Fort William Detachment, 1st Battalion The Highlanders, was presented with his bronze award on Wednesday January 25 by Detachment Commander RSMI James Standen.

To achieve his bronze award, Ewan had to complete four sections: volunteering, skills, physical and an expedition over two

days and one night camping outdoors, which he did at the Rothiemurchus Estate near Aviemore last year alongside fellow Fort William cadets Cadet Sergeant Corran Wineberg, Cadet Sergeant Jodie Standen and Cadet Danielle Ferguson, who all achieved their bronze awards at the end of last year.

A spokesperson from the detachment said: 'We are very happy for Ewan and he has already set his sights on the next level - silver.'



Ewan at the end of the two-day expedition, which he completed as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award.

Club continues to fund music therapy

THE ROTARY Club of Lochaber is continuing to support music therapy sessions for primary pupils who have additional support needs by donating a further £500.

Last year the club supported pupils from Caol and Fort William primaries. Club president Paula Ross said: 'We firmly believe in the benefits of involving children with music at an early age. Supporting local youngsters is one of our core aims and we were more than happy to continue our support.'

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Fort William

GLEN MOR Pipe Band is looking to recruit new pipers and drummers in a bid to boost numbers for its forthcoming competition season. The band, which has been inactive for the past two years, hopes to attend the Scottish Championships with a view of possibly attending the world championships.

The band practice every Monday from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Salvation Army, Glen Nevis Place, in Fort William.

A spokesperson for the

band said: 'This is the perfect opportunity for anyone who is thinking about getting their pipes or drumsticks out of the cupboard and get back into playing again. We also welcome the beginners too.'

To get in touch call Pipe Major Willie Evans on 07799 254 779, email pipe-major@glenmorpipeband.com or through Facebook on Glen Mor Pipeband.

Practice evenings are subject to change so check with one of the members before going along.

Arisaig

ARISAIG Women's Institute held its first meeting of 2017 on January 19.

After business was conducted, the speaker Christoph Ewers, of Ardshealach Smokehouse, gave an interesting insight into his production methods for smoked foods.

The WI was fortunate enough to sample his wares, which members said were 'delicious'. Some members ordered smoked salmon and smoked cheeses, among other fare.

All money raised from orders on the day are kindly being donated by Mr Ewers to a charity in which he is involved - Cameira,

Bolivia. Competitions were a two-course menu using a smoked product in at least one course - 1. June Cairns, 2. Ann Lamont, 3. Margaret MacEachen, 4. Anne Cameron; a verse from your favourite love poem song - 1. Ann Lamont, 2.= Margaret MacEachen and Helen Lamb, 3. Anne Cameron, 4. June Cairns.

Anne Cameron wishes to thank the senior citizens and the dancers who donated to the Sandpiper Trust and the sum raised was £240.

The next Arisaig WI meeting is on February 16 at 2.30pm in the Astley Hall.

Kentra Bay



Eden went off the air but is set to continue.

HIGHLAND Council has agreed to support an application to continue blocking public access to an area of land adjacent to Kentra Bay in Ardnamurchan.

At a meeting of the council's Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee last week (January 25), Councillor Thomas MacLennan reported that there was 'overwhelming' support for the show from the local community and nobody had lodged any objections to the proposed extension to the access exemption.

KEO films was originally granted a land order in March 2016 to restrict access to a 2.4 square kilometer area at Gorteneorn for a year to film wilderness survival reality show Eden.

There was some initial concern from the local community and questions were raised about the authenticity of the show, with

many people saying the location was not as isolated as the film-makers were making out.

Questions were also asked when the show mysteriously went off the air after only a small number of episodes were broadcast.

However, once filming was under way, support for the project grew and towards the end of last year, KEO revealed that it would be applying to extend the restriction so filming could carry on for another year, until March 2018.

The council will now forward the agreed land order for consultation by Scottish ministers, who will make the final decision.

Councillor MacLennan added that if the order is approved, and filming continues, he hopes it will benefit the area.

'Hopefully, we will see a boost in tourism in the year to come,' he said.

Kinlochleven



Representatives from the foodbank were overwhelmed at the generosity of pupils from Kinlochleven, while, below, Neil MacPherson received a kindness award for organising a bake sale for babies.

Kindness prevails in Kinlochleven

COMMUNITY members and students in Kinlochleven have been praised for their kindness.

Neil MacPherson, a primary five pupil at Kinlochleven Primary School, approached head teacher Heather Thomson to ask if he could organise a 'bake sale for babies'.

Neil wanted to raise money for the neonatal unit of the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in Glasgow after hearing about how Mrs Thomson's niece, Freya, was born 13 weeks prematurely and had been

cared for so well by the staff at the hospital. Neil co-ordinated the whole event and managed to raise £80.

The area's Community Kids Group, which is made up of the school's nursery children and staff, also took part in the 'reverse advent calendar' before the New Year, where pupils were asked to bring in an item of food to be donated to the Lochaber foodbank.

Mrs Thomson said she was very proud of how kind the school community is and thanked everyone for their participation.



Plockton



PLOCKTON Amateur Dramatic Society has put on its third revived pantomime.

The club was revived in 2013 after being out of action for a number of years, and this year members put on *The Snow Queen*, starring Sue Atkinson in the title role and Greg Dobson as Granny McGonagall.

The Plockton Amateur

Dramatic Society and its youth section, Plockton Amateur Dramatic Youth Society (PADYS), came together for this year's performance, with 18 children and 10 adults in the cast and youngsters sharing parts across the performances.

During the performance the Snow Queen stole young Kai so she could marry him and rule both

the Kingdom of Ice and the Kingdom of Men. Granny and her friends, including Jack Frost and a troll, made the treacherous journey to save him.

The club put on four performances over three days with proceeds going back in to help pay for costumes, scenery and props for competitive productions, as well as helping with travel ex-

penses for competitions and buying laptops and T-shirts for the youth section.

Sarah Bruce from the society said: 'This year we have had to have extensive repairs done to our storage barn and meeting room which have cost us a lot of money, so we're hoping this will be successful enough to put us back in a financial comfort zone.'

Ardnamurchan



Kate Bradley has been shortlisted for a FilmG award in the Sport's Report category.

Pupil shortlisted for Film G award

AN ARDNAMURCHAN High School pupil has been shortlisted for a FilmG Gaelic film award, continuing the proud tradition of the school having nominations for the awards every year since they started entering.

Kate Bradley (S5) is in the final four in the new Sports Report category for her

commentary piece from the Valeria Fraser shinty cup final in Fort William.

She will attend the prestigious FilmG award ceremony in Glasgow later this month.

Kate said: 'I enjoyed learning different sports commentary skills from professionals like Hugh

Dan MacLennan and am looking forward to the awards night in Glasgow this month.'

Gaelic teacher Mr John MacInnes said: 'We are delighted that Kate's hard work and effort in entering this competition have been rewarded with this deserved nomination.'

MORVERN
lines

An old Appin landmark

A FEW years ago, when I was looking through the wonderful *Oban Times* archives, I came across an article about a little known roadside well in Appin, dated August 28, 1880.

According to the contributor it had been restored by a Major Robertson [1823-1886] of the 79th Cameron Highlanders who provided an inscribed drinking cup in the shape of a Roman helmet, found in a fort in the Ochils, and a plaque with the following Gaelic inscription: *Tobar Chloinn Donnachaidh 's e mar thanbhartas do Mhuinntear na h-Apinn le deagh rubn a Seumas Robanach, maidsear ann an Reiseamaid Fhir na h-Earrachd, 1880*, which translates as: 'The Well of Clan Donnachaidh as a goodwill gift to the people of Appin from James Robertson, major in the Regiment of the Man of Erracht [Sir Alan Cameron], 1880'.

Further research among the public records and *The Oban Times* added to the story.

James Robertson, the widower of Isabella Trail Balfour, lived at Glaiceriska Cottage, between North Shian and Druimneil House, where he died on the December 18, 1886, aged 63 years. Major Robertson was the eldest surviving son of Lord Robertson, a Court of Session judge. It seems he took a special interest in the poor, which, in the days before the NHS, made him popular in Appin, to such an extent that when he died his coffin was carried shoulder high to Portnacroish graveyard - a distance of four miles.

The well is a few feet from and slightly above the unnamed public road that follows the coast from Port Appin to Inverfolla on the North Shian Peninsula, and approximately 300 yards south of the present Glaiceriska Cottage.

The well, which appears to be constantly filled by water from the hillside above, is stone lined and measures about two-foot square and of the same depth. As it does not feature in any of the standard printed reference works on healing wells and springs, it is perhaps not of any great antiquity and only came into use after the building of the coastal road for the convenience of man and beast. It does not appear in the first edition of the OS Six Inch to the Mile series (1871) but is shown in the second (1892-1960), most likely thanks to Col Robertson's activities.



Major James Robertson, the 79th Cameron Highlanders, from a portrait.

As I was nearing the end of my research I came across another report in *The Oban Times* of October 4, 1930, written by a Miss Margaret MacDonald, part of which reads: 'Blessed is the man, who passing through the valley of Baca, made in it a well.' [Psalm 84: 45] Baca means weeping. The lovely district of Appin hardly suggests mourning but, yet, perhaps the blessing is there, too, for the man who makes a well, and may I humbly submit hope for the woman who restores it!

'The well actually existed when he went to live there and was the source of supply for a cottage which stood near, but it is now a ruin, and when he [Major Robertson] had the idea of enclosing and naming it, the people who lived in the cottage were afraid he was going to deprive them of their drinking water.

Needless to say, he did not do so, but only put a fence round, erected a slate bearing the words "Tobar Clann Donnachaidh, 1879," and, hung up by a chain, a little brass drinking cup in the form of a helmet. He sent specially to the War Office for a pattern for this. It bears the inscription in Gaelic that this well was given for the use of the people of Appin by James Robertson.

'Last year [1929] when I visited Appin, I found the well in a very bad condition; the ground around was boggy, the rustic fence and gate all decayed away, the heavy slate headstone was lying flat, and the cup was fastened to a very thin sapling.

'I felt then that I would like to restore it, and seeing my way to do so this summer, I sought and obtained the kind permission of the Laird of Appin, Captain Laing Anderson, to do so.

'The work has been carried out by Mr Donald Black, gardener and contractor, of Appin, who, I am told, has made a very good job of it, the work being tastefully and thoroughly carried out. The slate is embedded in concrete, and has a border of whin stones round it; the ground has been thoroughly drained, and a wooden path leads up to the well.'

Miss MacDonald, I am sure, would be delighted to know that the well still exists but, unfortunately, the inscribed slab and drinking cup disappeared at the time of the Second World War and are thought to have been taken away by some American soldiers who had come ashore from a battleship anchored in the nearby Lynn of Lorn.

It would be a graceful act on the part of the Appin Community if it would ask the present land owner for permission to tidy up and erect a sign at this once notable historic feature.

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Dunbeg residents hit out at lack of infrastructure

SANDY NEIL
sneil@obantimes.co.uk

ANGRY Dunbeg residents are determined to oppose any new houses being built until there is a new roundabout, school and improvements to roads.

A 'masterplan' envisioning 600 new houses between Dunbeg and Ganavan as a 'gateway' to Oban was unveiled at a public meeting on Friday January 13.

If endorsed by Argyll and Bute Council, the Dunbeg Corridor Masterplan will allow developers to build 'a mix of for-sale units and multi-tenure affordable homes' on vacant land north of the A85 between Dunbeg and Ganavan. Social landlord

Link Group set out its vision to expand both by 'a series of new neighbourhoods' in a 'coastal woodland settlement', to act as a 'catalyst for ancillary shops, cafes and community uses' and 'increase employment opportunities'.

However, residents argue that more development requires a bigger primary school – the current one will be close to capacity next year – and a roundabout at Dunbeg's busy A85 junction, described as a 'death trap' according to a 900-signature petition. Residents are also calling for an upgrade to the rutted Kirk Road, used by hundreds each day driving to SAMS, the European Marine Science Park, a WHHA

housing estate and Dunstaffnage Castle.

Frustration boiled over last Thursday at Dunbeg Community Council's heated public meeting to discuss the masterplan.

One resident said: 'They said years ago the infrastructure would go in, but it was all pie in the sky. No more houses until the roads and school are finished.'

Chairman Sean MacIntyre agreed, saying the community feels let down by confusing, conflicting information, adding: 'The community council is as much in the dark as you are. We did ask a couple of people if the roundabout is going ahead. One said yes and one said "no – we need funding". We were told the

roads were going in first, then we were told they will be built at the same time.

'At the moment [the council] will not adopt that bit of Kirk Road because they do not own it. They do not want to build a new school or shops. We feel the community is getting led up the garden path. We do not want any more houses unless they put the infrastructure in.'

Community councillor Marion Power said: 'We did not even know this meeting [January 13] was happening until someone told us. What the people of Dunbeg are saying is, "Treat us with respect". Do not think we will lie down.'

One resident added: 'We are

not against houses but it is the way they keep going about it.'

Another added angrily: 'They did not give us enough time. They do not care about this village or the people in it. They will just take the money and leave us.'

The masterplan began with a pre-application consultation in May 2015, which was submitted to Argyll and Bute Council on December 15, which has granted an extension for comments beyond the statutory period until February 17. Residents began canvassing views door to door on Monday.

A council spokesperson explained: 'It is now likely the submission will be considered by the planning committee in

March. Masterplans are vital strategy documents that give real certainty. If approved, this masterplan will show how the site will potentially be developed, if and when development goes ahead.

'The council previously identified two prospective infrastructure projects which would enable the expansion of Dunbeg – the widening of Lorn Road/Kirk Road and the installation of a roundabout and junction off the A85 at the Halfway House. Both projects are being actively pursued.

'With around 600 houses being developed we will, of course, look at our education provision in Dunbeg.'

TIMESLINE

Argyll will rally against Trump

AN 'Argyll against Trump' rally is planned in Oban tonight (Thursday February 2), starting at 8pm in Stafford Street.

The protest, according to its Facebook page, will demand US President Donald Trump ends the 'Muslim travel ban' and that the UK government cancels Mr Trump's state visit.

Loganair lands new mail contract

ROYAL MAIL has awarded a new five-year contract to Loganair to fly its mail throughout Scotland and beyond. Loganair will become one of only two airlines selected by Royal Mail to operate its mail air freight programme. The new contract will lead to 24 new jobs in Scotland for pilots, engineers and ground staff.

Andy's fundraising idea is one in a million

A TEAM of 10 Oban Times staff members will collectively walk one million steps this month to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

The challenge, which begins just a few days ahead of World Cancer Day on Saturday February 4, will be measured using step-counter devices such as Fitbits.

The OT team chose Cancer Research UK after realising how much cancer has affected staff and their friends and family. Oban Times production manager Andy Bruce, who came up with challenge idea, said: 'With constantly improving treatments available, Cancer Research UK is making a real difference to cancer sufferers and their families.'

'Our aim is to raise £1,000 for the cause. It should be a lot of fun too.'

The Fitbit team taking part are, left to right, Andy Bruce, Louise Glen, Nicky Murphy, Susan Windram, Louise Steele, Carolyn Buchanan, Lorna Scott, Rhona McKillop, Kevin McCubbin and Stephanie Dunstaffnage.

For the full story, turn to page seven.



NHS Highland told to save £100 million

THE NHS Highland board was told on Tuesday that it has to make 'unprecedented' reduction in costs of around £100 million over the next three years.

During the board meeting, finance director Nick Kenton said that a 'more of the same approach' is not going to be sustainable and, therefore, that the current model of care that NHS Highland delivers needs to be changed, and it needs to change urgently.

Both NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead and employee director Adam Palmer said that NHS Highland staff and management will have to work hand-in-hand together to help transform healthcare delivery to ensure it is 'fit for purpose' in the future. Aside from financial challenges some of the current models cannot be staffed without significant locum costs and there is an over-reliance on costly hospital and institutional care.

Previously Mr Kenton had outlined that the board needed to reduce costs of around £20 million in 2017/2018.

However, this target has now been revised to £50 million. And over the next three financial years from 2017 to 2018 the requirement outlined by the Scottish Government's draft budget is likely to be in the region of £100 million.

He said: 'This is an unprecedented scale of change and it is clear that a "more of the same" approach is not going to deliver a balanced plan and, therefore, the model of care needs to be changed.'

'There needs to be a mindset that focuses on delivering maximum value within our total £800 million resources rather than focusing on the margins.'

'Although the scale of the challenge is daunting, the changes required across NHS Highland are consistent with the Scottish Government's recently published Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, which builds on the National Clinical Strategy (February 2016) and the move towards realistic medicine as set out in the chief medical officer's annual report for 2014/15.'

NHS Highland chief executive Elaine Mead sent an email to staff recently about the need to fundamentally change the models of care.

She said: 'More of the same is no longer an option. While it is true that

we have had uplift in our funding in this and previous years, our increasing costs and demands mean that we will need to significantly reshape the way that we deliver services.'

'We have already started this, and I do believe we are well placed to now radically transform our services.'

'Our current complex, expensive and often institutional-based models of care can no longer deliver the timely high quality of care that we all rightly aspire to provide. Therefore, it is clear that we will need to change, and change quickly to meet the needs of our aging population.'

NHS Highland employee director and Unison representative, Adam Palmer, said while the challenges from these efficiency targets appear formidable, they are not insurmountable. He said current employment frameworks are in place and a willingness to co-operate on both sides should help enable the necessary changes required.

He said: 'We are all becoming aware of the fact that the future is increasingly challenging for NHS Highland. Not only is there is a financial gap to bridge – both as this financial year closes and for next year – but the board also has to deal with the pressing problem of changing demographics in our area and an ageing workforce.'

Meanwhile, Mr Kenton told the board that the baseline uplift in resources for 2017/18 is 1.5 per cent, which represents an increase of £8.7 million on the board's baseline allocation.

He said: 'This excludes a wide range of other allocations such as primary care funding which are allocated separately. This is £1.7 million lower than we had originally planned on; across Scotland, boards had been planning on a 1.8 per cent uplift.'

A spokesperson for NHS Highland added: 'While NHS Highland has taken significant strides in recent years to implement new models of care to address the increasing demand and a changing workforce, such as redesigns in Badenoch and Strathspey, Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross, the north coast of Sutherland and the board's out-of-hours service, the pace of change has been slow. The board has set a clear direction of travel but the real challenge now is how quickly can changes be made in partnership with all stakeholders.'



ON JANUARY 14 up to a million people in more than 8,000 clubs around the world celebrated the 100th release of the iconic Les Mills Body Pump workout, crossing time zones and national borders.

Atlantis Community Leisure celebrated 'the world's biggest workout' with a midnight Body Pump class, making it the first centre in the UK to launch this release. The following day it hosted a full day of taster fitness classes with 'Born to Move' and a dance-a-thon. In the process, Atlantis raised more than £772 for the Oban Community under-fives playpark.

'I only found out at 8am on Friday the 13th that we were going live for the official Body Pump Facebook page, and the whole town pulled together and found us not one, but two fantastic pipers – Emma Hill and Gregor MacDonald,' said Atlantis marketing co-ordinator Claire Hutchison. 'Jade MacEwan showcased some Highland dancing and Louie Barrow set up some awesome lights for us. Our midnight Body Pump was brilliant – we had such a buzz and going live to the world just made it even bigger. We had comments from all over the world and had over 102,000 views! We had 18 fantastic participants at midnight

with four instructors, and more than 100 participants throughout the day for taster classes. Our team worked so hard to make the whole event a success and we are thrilled with the result!'

Chair of the Oban Community Play Park committee, Lindsay Elliot, said: 'The donation to the under-fives play park is massively appreciated and gets us so much closer to our £100,000 target, which has now been met by a final donation from the Suez Trust. It was great to see so many people of all ages being active and playing on Saturday.' Atlantis offers nine Les Mills Programmes, including Born to Move, with 11 instructors and classes for all fitness levels. The Body Pump workout is refreshed with new music and new moves every three months, using light to moderate weights with lots of repetition, resulting in a total body workout that leaves you lean, toned and fit-fast.



Run for the community, by the community

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES: EARLY YEARS

IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR FREE EARLY LEARNING & CHILDCARE PROVISION?

Early Learning and Childcare from August 2017 will be available for:-

- Four year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2013 and 28th February 2014
- Three year old children whose birth date falls between 1st March 2014 and 28th February 2015

A list of current preschool education providers, including those offering Gaelic Medium, is available from:

- All Early Learning & Childcare Providers
- All Primary Schools
- <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/early-years>
- Early Years Helpline noted below

Information leaflets will be available from Early Learning & Childcare Providers at the time of registration and parents can obtain further guidance from the Early Years Helpline, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon PA23 8AJ (Telephone 01369 708503).

Parents of eligible children should register at their preferred provider, taking along their child's birth certificate, during week commencing 20th Feb 2017 during the normal operational hours of the nursery.

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

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL'S SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND 2017/18

Application forms for grants to community organisations are now available.

They can be accessed by website: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/council-and-government/third-sector-grants>
phone: 01369 708669
email: communitydevelopment@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Closing date for applications is 10 February 2017.

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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Many residents of the Lochaber area will be, quite understandably, somewhat relieved that the region has seen little in the way of snow or harsh winter weather conditions.

It is, however, a troubling development for the local tourism sector, which has been suffering from a downturn in the number of visitors.

As we report today, the Nevis Range managed to open for just one day in January although the artificial slope is open at the moment for beginner lessons.

And Glencoe Mountain Resort has also had a quiet season, with director Andy Meldrum saying: 'We've

had a slow start with just four days of skiing so far, but there's been lots of sledging. We've got plenty of big patches of snow but currently not enough to ski.'

There is, consequently, a damaging knock-on effect for other businesses. One business owner, who admitted being a snow-dependent enterprise, went so far as to say this was the quietest January since 1990. Elsewhere, entrepreneurs in Fort William's retail sector say they are still waiting for the winter season to begin.

But the business owners in this Outdoor Capital of the UK are resilient and remain confident of a turnaround in fortunes. We hope they are right.



Days gone by – the 1930s

This photograph was taken in 1938 of a stalking party arriving home with a 'royal' stag shot at Glensanda on Kingairloch Estate, owned by Mrs Emily Strutt. It shows, left to right, Mrs Rose Mary Morrison (nee Strutt), Mrs Bridget Bradish (nee Strutt), Mr Duncan Brown, Mr Archie Campbell (nicknamed 'Tidy'), Mr Christopher McRae (head stalker) and Mr John Brown. The photograph was taken at the Kingairloch jetty. Lying alongside is the white estate launch called The Goolack.

Macphail

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THE editorial powers-that-be at this fine newspaper are clearly tiring of my dull weekly dribble about music.

This, coupled with my recent relocation from the partying, bohemian ghettos of the leisure pages to the prestigious leafy suburbs of the letters district, means they have pressed upon me to steer away from music a little more often than before.

In accordance with this, I'm going to introduce my most recently and accidentally acquired hobby – running.

As part of the usual gimmickry of social media marketing when we were releasing the *Alive* single a few weeks ago, Andrew and I boldly (stupidly?) promised that if the song made it into the top 80 on the mainstream charts, we would run the Three half-marathon in April.

We were delighted that it surpassed all our expectations and reached number 26.

This was all well and good, but it means that two of the most unlikely long-distance runners in the history of the sport have to deliver on that ridiculous and ill-conceived pledge and now must prepare our combined 36 stone to move unaided over 13 miles of road and beach by April.

In seriousness, both of us had said over recent times that we must start improving our fitness and that as we are approaching the horrors of middle age, we need to keep a few steps ahead of mother nature and compensate for



The new Skip-innish single *Alive* featured a running women – now Angus and Andrew are being forced to do the same by running the Three half-marathon in April.

too many years of abusing our bodies with music and all that goes with it.

We've luckily managed to get away with it so far and are both pretty healthy, but physical wellbeing is not something to take for granted and we are not getting younger.

So, in accordance with my pontificating on New Year resolutions of a few weeks ago, a new endeavour has been tentatively embarked on.

We are not planning to pursue this any further than April and don't strive to set any records. Getting round the course and doing something healthy for a few months is all we are concerning ourselves with.

It has actually been a very pleasant experience so far. I've seen parts of Glasgow and Fort William that I have never seen before, and the banks

of the Forth and Clyde Canal are becoming as familiar to me on visits to Glasgow as the gantry of the Park Bar – and in the morning it's the legs and feet that are screaming at me and not my head and my conscience.

If we don't pick up any injuries, and if we don't give in too often to that lazy but loud voice in the head that can craft the most convincing arguments against unnecessary physical activity, then hopefully progress will be made and by April 29 we will be fit enough to finish.

If we do manage it, we may well be happy to celebrate with a less healthy 'half-marathon of a different kind.

Updates on progress will be given periodically over the following months, and we may speed up one of our songs from Walking to Running on the Waves!



Social media

There was considerable comment in response to Oban Times columnist Martin Laing criticising Argyll and Bute Council for the decision to approve an oil depot at Ledaig, close to Oban Airport and a travellers' site.

Craig Somerville questioned: 'What about the oil depot on the pier in Oban. It is right next door to a ferry terminal, railway station and numerous restaurants. Or Connel, next to a large hotel and railway station. It seems some people don't want employment

opportunities or fair competition. Or is it just one or two people stirring it up for their own ends.'

Alan Duncan-Smith agreed: 'Exactly Craig. Maybe the councillors could use the phrase 'blast area' a few more times – this is heating oil, not dynamite. Thousands of homes in Argyll have smaller oil tanks right next to their houses without having to be aware of their 'blast area'. No wonder the travellers are worried with this sort of nonsense going about.'

Jean Campbell posted: 'It's unfair to

say these things about people without foundation, though admittedly planners and planning-committees are an obvious easy target (like traffic wardens). Please stop recycling rabble-rousing political statements as news.

It's nearing local election time so there will be plenty of rhetoric to go round without it being the front page headline; factual items please Oban Times!

David Banks commented: 'Do you know that if you throw a lit match into a bowl of heating oil or diesel it will put the match out!!!!'

Crannog 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

either telephone IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or email inquiries@ipso.co.uk. IPSO is an independent body which deals with complaints from the public about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.

Beautiful Loch Etive needs protecting

Sir,
We refer to the article by Sandy Neil 'Fish farm operator attacks opposition campaign group' (The Oban Times, January 19).

We would like to correct Stewart Hawthorn, the farming director for Dawnfresh, who is quoted as saying: 'The action was initiated by a small group of privileged people, many not from the area.'

Friends of Loch Etive has more than 300 members and these are made up of a mixture of those living in the Loch Etive community and the many regular visitors to Etive.

What Mr Hawthorn says is simply wrong, but with his company's position so difficult to defend, perhaps it is easier to attack the messenger.

And, of course, the appeal to Scottish ministers was initiated by Dawnfresh itself and it was Argyll and Bute Council, and not Friends of Loch Etive, that refused to grant the certificate that led to the Dawnfresh appeal.

Friends of Loch Etive has only ever been an interested party in this matter.

The real significance of all this is that Loch Etive is public space. It is not possible for anyone to own a sea loch.

The importance of protecting the landscape of Loch Etive cannot be underestimated.

Mr Hawthorn says he is going to discuss the matter with, among others, local MSPs and councillors. For guidance on what local political opinion is on the matter, he could do no better than read the excellent *Oban Times*. In the edition of January 19, the story headlined 'Tourism surge boosts employment in Argyll' reported that Michael Russell, MSP for Argyll and Bute, recognises just how important the tourism industry is to Scotland's economy and particularly to Argyll.

Mr Russell recognises that Scotland is famed for its incredible scenery. It is that scenery – in this case, the incredibly beautiful Loch Etive – that Friends of Loch Etive seeks to protect from the creeping industrialisation that Dawnfresh seeks to impose on the community.

Last February, *The Oban Times* also reported on the activities of the Argyll and Bute Economic Forum, which brings together members of the area's key business sectors, leading agencies, as well as local and national government representatives.

The forum made it clear that tourism is Argyll's largest private sector employer with some 25 per cent of all private sector jobs and is growing fast, with some 30 per cent of all new employment and very substantial capital investment attributable to tourism.

Simply put, it makes financial and employment sense for the Argyll and Bute Council to seek to protect the landscape of Loch Etive and the council should be applauded for so doing.

Loch Etive needs protecting from the activities of Dawnfresh, a loss-making company that is seeking to industrialise its operations to

Beachd Ailein

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DIARDAOIN SEO CHAIDH chaidh tagradh le còrr air dà cheud mìle ainm a shineadh dha oifigich aig Sràid Downing ag iarraidh urram a bhuileachadh air Seòras MacIain an aon bhall a th' air fhàgail beò de Sgudran 617 nam Dam Busters a sgrìos tri damaichean anns a' Ghearmailt air an 17 Cèitean 1943.

Bha e cho doirbh ionnsaigh a thoirt aig Mòhne, Eder agus Sorpe ri linn talamh àrd is gun deach am 'boma bocadaich – bouncing bomb' aig Barnes Wallis a leasachadh airson feuchainn orra.

Tha eachdraidh a' dearbhadh mar a shoirbhich leis an ionnsaigh, agus a' ghaisge aig daoine òga a' coileanadh ruathar-adhair an aghaidh bras-shruth urchair bho ghunnaichean dìon.

Ach bu daor a cheannaich Sgudran 617 na bhunnig iad is faisg air leth nan itealan agus caogad 's a trì duine air an call.

Chaidh urram Crois Bhictoria a bhuileachadh air Guy Gibson, ceannsalach an Sgudrain, ach ged a dhearbhadh Barnes Wallis a chuid ealantachd leis a' bhoma bocadaich, bha a

chuid toileachais à sin air a mhilleadh gu mòr le aithne air na chaill am beathannan anns an ionnsaigh.

Saoidh mi gum bheil e ceart gun tèid gaisge ann an cogadh, agus gu sònraichte aig àm sìthe, aithneachadh gu raibh agus ma tha creideas gu bhith aig siostam urraman na dùtha seo, tha fhios gum bheil Seòras MacIain airidh air aithne.

Aig an aon àm chanadh mòran le làn-cheartas gun robh mìltean a nochd gaisge ann an cogaidhean nach d' fhuair aithne, 's dòcha gun robh an àireamh ro mhòr dhan t-siostam.

Tha MacIain ceart le bhith ag ràdh gum bi dad sam bith a thèid a bhuileachadh airsan na urram dhan a-h-uile neach a thug seirbheis ann an Sgudran 617.

Thug seo orm fhìn smaoinichadh às ùr air cho beag còmhraidh 's a dhèanadh leithid m' athair air na chunnaic is na dh'fhuiling e sa chogadh, agus tha fhios gum bheil iomadach teaghlach eile aig am bheil an aon fhianais.

Ach tha mise air tighinn chun a' cho-dhùnaidh gur e bu chuireach

Lorn and Islands Hospital is vital

Sir,
We had at one time five hospitals in Oban: the McKelvie, West Highland, Dalintart, the County Chest, and Glen Euchar (Oban Maternity Hospital).

Now we have only one. And we need it. As proof, I have had experience of being a patient within Lorn and Islands Hospital. I suffered two mini strokes and a major one within three months and without the teamwork of the doctors, nurses and other staff, where would I be?

We gave up five hospitals to get this one so we must not yield in the fight to save it.

I cannot see it closing because it covers such a large area, including Mid Argyll, Campbeltown, Tarbert, Lochgilphead, Mull, Iona and Oban.

Who in their right mind would consider closing this wonderful hospital. Whoever thought up the cuts must be joking, so I do not think it will come to pass.

There is a first-class team at Lorn and Islands Hospital so leave them alone and stop interfering.

Hugh McCorquodale,
Longsdale Terrace, Oban.

Birthday party was a wonderful surprise

Sir,
My 90th birthday treat was to have been a quiet dinner for three at the Taynuilt Hotel.

However, my son Colin had other plans and so, to my complete surprise and enormous pleasure, I found myself in the midst of loving friends and family of many years. And the mascara held.

A huge thank you to the chef/owner for a splendid buffet and delicious

cake, and the competent and cheerful staff, and I wish them all good fortune for the years ahead.

Admittedly, doubly fortified a glass or two of bubbly, I managed to blow out all the candles with a single breath.

To Colin and Pauline and all the lovely people involved, my sincere appreciation for the wonderful gifts, flowers and, somewhat belatedly, Christmas goodies.

Sybil Cameron,
Cruchan Cottages, Taynuilt.

Criticism coming from a Tory is ironic

Sir,
I write in response to Alastair Redman's letter (The Oban Times, January 12).

Mr Redman states that the Scottish Liberal Democrats, at their most recent party conference, debated a motion which considered independence. What he fails to mention, of course, is that the motion was roundly defeated.

The Lib Dems are a broad church and encompass a range of opinion. We favour diversity and tolerance. We have never believed in lockstep obedience to head office. We are in favour both of the union and of decentralisation.

I found it ironic that the comments came from a Conservative when almost all their MPs in Scotland were swept away years ago. The Liberal Democrats only suffered similarly in 2015.

But midwinter is past and although it would be foolhardy to detect green shoots, I do sense a change in the air. Perhaps the normal rules of politics are beginning to apply again.

Denis Rixson,
Fank Brae, Mallaig.

Conservative leader is not to be trusted

Sir,
Before the vote on independence, Scots Tory leader Ruth Davidson promised that voting 'no means we stay in' the EU. That's patently not true.

Before the vote on EU membership she said that the case for Brexit was based on 'lies, fantasy economics' and families 'couldn't afford' it, and that thousands of Scottish jobs were 'reliant on the exports we sell within the EU'.

Now she claims it is an 'opportunity'. I'd understand if she said we would have to make the best of a bad decision but now to claim that something that was lies is an opportunity is beyond credible.

After the Brexit vote she said she wanted the UK to stay in the European single market even if it meant having to accept free movement. Now she supports not being in that single market.

Now she is attacking council tax changes she claimed only last year were her party's policy. How can anyone trust what they would do in power with such wildly changing positions?

Not even unionists can trust her.

Andrew Stuart,
Norfolk Court, Glasgow.

Ailean Caimbeul

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.

Bins collections remain in 'chaos'

DAVID MCPHEE
dmcph@obantimes.co.uk

A MOUND of bin bags has been piled up next to a community centre and nursery in Soroba as the communal bins are again full to capacity.

The overflowing bins at Scalpay Terrace have already been ransacked by seagulls.

The *Oban Times* spoke to Scalpay resident John Hutchison on Monday, who said: 'The state of the place is terrible.'

'It is ridiculous and it is not getting picked up until Wednesday. I have to sit and look at this - seagulls ripping apart bags.'

'To be honest, I saw a rat at Christmas, but was not quick enough to get the camera so I can't prove it. It is getting beyond a joke.'

Mr Hutchison, who shares three grey bins and one blue bin with eight other households, added: 'How do they expect folk to live like that? It's doing my head in.'

'I have got a wee boy who is meant to be able to play in the garden, but there are seagulls everywhere.'

'I'm sick of looking out my window at it.'

Another Soroba resident, George Berry, wants Argyll and Bute Council's chief executive to resign.

'I am absolutely disgusted,' he said. 'I spent yesterday afternoon out in the car park picking up litter.'

'All over the place seagulls are bursting the bags. I have had it. I would see the point if they were



John Hutchison stands next to the overflowing bins outside his flat in Soroba. 16_105sorobabins01

providing extra bins. I would ask for the chief executive to resign.

'For him to put this into motion without providing extra facilities is outrageous.'

'What is the point in taking pride in the estate when they take that away?'

However, Soroba isn't the only place that is encountering problems with the three-weekly uplift schedule that was implemented in November.

Residents in Lerags say that the bin

uplift dates are in 'chaos' and will lead to more fly-tipping.

One resident said that they should be paying council tax to their neighbours for emptying their bins, rather than to Argyll and Bute Council.

Michelle McAnally of Lerags said: 'Our bins haven't been lifted in weeks.'

'Each week we fill out a missed bin report on the council website, and get a reply email apologising for

the poor service, but no solution has been forthcoming.'

'We are told to leave our bins out for a few more days, but they still are not collected. We are lucky that a good neighbour has been taking our bins to the dump on his trailer, otherwise it would be difficult for us to find the time to do this, as well as not wanting to haul rubbish in our car.'

'I have joked that we should start paying taxes to our neighbour instead

of the council, but it's not very funny. Other residents don't have the luxury of a friend with a trailer, and I don't know how they are dealing with what can only be called a rubbish crisis.'

Another Lerags resident, Liam Griffin, added: 'My concern is for the young mother with a wean at her feet, or the arthritic senior citizen who lives in an upstairs tenement flat.'

'How motivated to recycle will such

folk remain if the uplift dates are in chaos?'

'Systems management teaches that you need to put the path where people will walk: otherwise they just take the easiest route.'

'The easiest route, if the current uplift chaos continues, is likely to be bags of rubbish turning up behind hedges or dumped in farmers' fields.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesman said: 'The new refuse and recycling service has been introduced to 47,000 properties, which has been a huge change for our communities.'

'We apologise for any inconvenience and would like to thank people for their patience and for working with us to help increase recycling.'

'We work hard to make sure we can empty bins on the scheduled days. However, there can be operational difficulties, which mean this isn't always possible.'

'Every effort is made to collect bins as soon as possible following any disruption and keep residents informed of any changes using our website. If your bin isn't collected on the scheduled day, please leave it out the next day.'

'We will arrange for additional uplifts to deal with any overflowing bins and apologise for any inconvenience.'

'We are grateful to residents for their patience and are working in partnership with ACHA [Argyll Community Housing Association] to identify areas where additional bins can be stored.'



Some of the fly-tipped rubbish that blights the Glen Saloch road.

Fly-tipping condemned as incidents reach 200

FLY-TIPPING incidents hit 200 in the region over the past nine months, but Argyll and Bute Council says the number has not risen since the new three-weekly bin collections were introduced last year.

In one incident last week, a concerned HGV driver told *The Oban Times*: 'I pulled in to a layby area on the B845 road Barcaldine to Bonawe (Glen Saloch) road for a rest break, and all this mess was right beside the layby down the bank.'

'I saw a three-seater sofa, a

metal bed, kids' bicycles and toys, spilled cans of white paint, washing machines and tumble dryers.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson responded: 'The council will take action to clean up any fly-tipping on council-owned land or the public road. Fly-tipping on private land is the responsibility of the landowner or occupier to clean up.'

'The council will work (and with the owners) to establish any evidence to identify the offender. The rubbish is not

and a fine of up to £2,500. The fixed penalty notice for fly-tipping is £200. If it is not paid, prosecution could result in a fine of up to £40,000.'

'The council has a duty to investigate reports and will take appropriate steps to pursue those responsible. The legislation applies to everyone - no individual is exempt from it.'

'Keeping the area clear of litter is something we know is important to residents and we would encourage everyone to play a part in keeping our communities litter-free.'

Argyll health care faces £22m of cuts in two years

HEALTH and social care services in Argyll and Bute face having to make savings of £22 million over the next two years.

The 'extremely challenging' cost-cutting was announced to members of the Argyll and Bute Integrated Joint Board (IJB) at their meeting on Wednesday January 25.

A budget outlook report estimated that IJB will be required to make savings of £16.3 million for 2017-18 and a further £5.7 million for 2018-19 from its annual budget of £256 million.

Christina West, chief officer for the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, said: 'The budget outlook report presented to the Integrated Joint Board today highlights that the IJB is, like all public sector organisations, facing an extremely challenging financial

situation. 'The need to find savings of this scale is due to a range of factors, including increasing demands on health and social care services, the effects of inflation and the estimated level of funding from our partner bodies, NHS Highland and Argyll and Bute Council.'

'In December 2016, the Scottish Government published its Health and Social Care Delivery Plan, which details how health and social care services need to transform. This means increasing the speed of change from reactive emergency-based services such as those provided in hospitals to community-based services which focus on prevention, early intervention and helping people make better lifestyle choices and manage their own conditions.'

'As a public sector body, the IJB also has to deliver services within its budget and it is clear that to meet all the challenges we cannot continue to do things the same way. We have started the process of planning for this and have involved locality planning groups in developing proposals for change to fundamentally transform services.'

Ms West said the services would prioritise anticipatory care (planning and minimising the need for emergency or urgent care or a crisis response), prevention of ill health, and maintenance of health and wellbeing.

She added: 'To deliver this change, we have included in our financial planning a new investment of approximately £2 million in our community and health improvement services over the next two years to help

achieve this transformation.'

'We will also be continuing to focus on tackling the waste in our systems and processes, reducing duplication, using digital technology to increase productivity, rationalising the number of buildings we operate from and making the best use of the capacity and skills of our workforce.'

'The IJB will have to make difficult decisions and choices which we know will cause anxiety and concerns in local communities, and it is incumbent upon the IJB to explain to the public and our staff the reason that we need to make these changes.'

'We are already seeking views, comments and suggestions from the public, partners and our staff on a number of local projects where we believe we need to redesign services.'

Drug duo are sentenced

A FORMER couple who supplied drugs to a man who died of an overdose have escaped a custodial sentence.

Arno Redlihs, 19, of 37 Kelvin Street, Falkirk, and Carrie Robertson, 23, of 3 MacDougal Court, Dunollie, were accused of supplying class-A drug MDMA, commonly known as ecstasy, on November 1, 2015, to Thomas McKay and Kevin Armour. Armour later died of a drugs overdose.

Robertson pleaded guilty, while Redlihs denied the charge but was found guilty by Sheriff

John Herald. Defending Robertson, Laura McManus told Oban Sheriff Court on Tuesday January 31: 'This episode had a tragic consequence. Ms Robertson discovered she was pregnant and broke up with the accused. It was a catalyst for real change for Ms Robertson.'

'There has been no further offences and no further drug use. A custodial sentence can be avoided.'

Defence agent Kevin McGinness said: 'Mr Redlihs regards his involvement in this matter

with regret. He has started employment as a chef. He is assessed as a low risk of re-offending and being a harm to others.'

Sentencing, Sheriff John Herald said: 'I am well aware of the consequences and action on that day. That takes us beyond the normal case.'

'I can only extend my sympathy to the family of the man who lost his life.'

He told Redlihs: 'Your involvement was that you had carried the drug to Ms Robertson, who then carried it to the

third party. You will be fined a sum of £1,000. There will be no discount.'

Turning to Robertson, he added: 'I find your position very difficult. This is a very serious matter, which truly justifies a custodial sentence. With hesitation, because you appear to have sorted your life out and you have a young baby, I will not impose a custodial sentence.'

Sheriff Herald imposed the maximum community payback order of 300 hours' unpaid work on Robertson, to be completed within 18 months.



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Fort William suffer heavy defeat away at Cove Rangers

Football

Cove Rangers	7
Fort William	0
Highland League	

THE FORT remain firmly rooted to the bottom of the South Highland Football League after another thumping defeat at the weekend.

This time it was current champions Cove Rangers who dished out the punishment, firing home seven unanswered goals.

Goalkeeping coach Jimmy Paterson, 51, had to come off the bench, only 25 minutes in, to replace the injured Dougie MacLennan.

Cove did not take the lead until the 38th minute when Mitch Megginson scored.

Daniel Park doubled their lead on the stroke of half time.

Megginson and Park both scored again in the second half, as did Connor Scully, Eric Watson and Ryan Stott.

This defeat now means the Fort have conceded an unenviable 103 goals in 26 games.

Next up is a home game against Rothes, who come to Claggan Park this weekend with a 3pm kick-off.

Table tennis club back in action after festive break

Table tennis

Fort William's Table Tennis club has resumed competitions following the Christmas break.

In division one, champion Steve Crook resumed battle with Monte Bleasdale and John Grant, with the former still prevailing against both his nearest rivals.

The latter two also fought out a close run contest, with Grant taking a 2-1 lead only for Bleasdale to fight back to level the fourth game after being 10-6 down.

Despite some tenacious play from Grant in the deciding game, Bleasdale prevailed to take the match 3-2.

Grant then played Angus MacDonald in another enthralling game, which MacDonald narrowly won 3-2.

Another enthralling game also unfolded which saw Jim Hinchley narrowly defeat Neil Cameron, Hinchley needing all his guile to take the final game for his 3-2 victory.

The club is always on the look out for new members. If you are interested, please see the club's website, tabletennisfortwilliam.org.uk



Competitions have started again at the Fort William table tennis club. Photo: Abridge Photography

Alleycats still top dogs in scratch league

10-pin bowling

AFTER week 10 of the Lochaber Building supplies 10-pin bowling leagues at the Nevis Centre in Fort William, Alleycats remain in the lead of the scratch division with 40 points, followed by British Legion Fort William with 31 points and Don't Give A Split on 30 points.

The handicap division is much tighter where British Legion Fort William stay on top with 31 points, closely followed by Don't Give A Split on 30 points who beat previous second place team The Shambowls 5-0. Alleycats move into third spot with 27 points.

Individually, the best game in week 10 was 198 from Tony Whitelocke (Alleycats).

Other good games this week came from Gary Cowan (Don't Give A Split) with 186, Ben Weller (Don't Give A Split) with 182 and Nicholas Brooke (The Shambowls) with 177.

Tony Whitelocke also had the top two game scratch series of 367 and the top two game handicap series of 435 whilst Nicholas Brooke had the top handicap game with 234.

The best team scores of the week came from Don't Give A Split who had the top scratch game of 609, the top two game scratch series of 1,215 and the top two game handicap series of 1595. Rotavators had the top handicap game with 803.

The top scratch averages are currently held by Pam Weller (Alleycats) with 164 followed by Tony Whitelocke (Alleycats) with 161 and Ben Weller (Don't Give A Split) on 154.

Club lottery numbers

Lotto

THE WINNING numbers for the Ballachulish shinty lottery at the weekend were 2, 6 and 8. Stuart Robertson in Ballachulish had the winning ticket on twice and so he shares the £800 with himself. The jackpot for next week's draw will revert back to £200.

Fort William Golf Club's winning lotto draw numbers for Thursday January 26 were 15, 19 and 20. There were no winners so the jackpot is up to £1,000 for today's draw (Thursday February 2).

The winning numbers for the Kilmallie lottery draw on January 29 were 1, 9 and 15. There were no winners so the jackpot goes up to £900 for next week's draw

Recent results

Indoor football

RESULTS from Week 12: Goon Squad 3, Fiorentina Turner 8; Nevis Range 4, The Young Team 10; Doghouse Thistle 15, Inverloch 2; HW Energy 5, Portoway 11; Ballatasaray 3, Walk Over 0.

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Inverloch Primary won this year's Lochaber Area Shinty Tournament for P7s and under.

Inverloch lift the silverware

INVERLOCHY Primary were the undisputed winners of this year's Lochaber Area Shinty Tournament for P7s and under, retaining their title for another year.

They beat each of the other five teams in the round robin format tournament: Ardnamurchan, Ballachulish, Banavie, Bun Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Aber and Caol.

Caol Primary came second

on the night, narrowly beating Ballachulish into third place.

High Life Highland's Active Schools Coordinator, Bridget Thomas, who helped organise the event, said: 'I was really impressed with the standard of play and sportsmanship.'

National finals

'Some excellent shinty skills were on display from the youngsters from all the teams, which bodes well for the future

School shinty

of the sport in the area, and for Inverloch's chances at the national finals which take place on February 25.

'Massive thanks go to all of the schools coaches who give up their time week in week out to run school teams and especially to Colin MacCormack for refereeing on the night.'

Isle of Skye half marathon to attract 1,000 entries this year

A REGULAR fixture on the running calendar for more than 30 years the Isle of Skye half marathon looks set to have its biggest year in race history.

Taking place on Saturday June 10, there will be 1,000 entry places available to runners, and it has now been announced that the Scottish Salmon Company will be the headline sponsor for the 2017 event.

Mark Crowe, race director, said: 'To have the support of The Scottish Salmon Company means we can realise our ambitions and open up the Isle of Skye Half Marathon to 1,000 runners for the first time. Now more people than ever before can experience the half marathon on our beautiful island.'

The race has grown in popularity over the last 30 years with people travelling from all over the world to take part.

Mr Crowe added: 'The Isle of Skye Half Marathon is a real community event and without the help and

Marathon

support of local people and businesses such as The Scottish Salmon Company we wouldn't be able to grow the event to where it is now.'

With views of Ben Tianavaig, The Old Man of Storr, Isle of Raasay and the Cuillin mountain range, runners taking part in the Isle of Skye Half Marathon experience some of the most breath-taking scenery Scotland has to offer.

Craig Anderson, managing director of The Scottish Salmon Company, said: 'The Isle of Skye Half Marathon is particularly special to us as the start and finish line is just a few minutes away from our own site in Portree.'

'As one of the world's most scenic and challenging races, we are looking forward to being involved in this year's event and are pleased to work with the race organisers to help it grow further and open it up to more entrants than ever.'



Left, Alistair Danter, chairman of Skye Events, celebrates the sponsorship agreement with David Taylor from The Scottish Salmon Company and Mark Crowe, race director for the Isle of Skye Half Marathon.

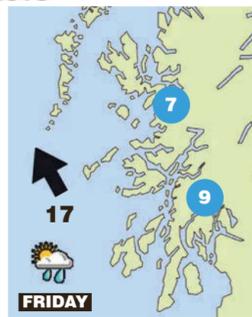
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WEATHER

Thursday	Light rain Winds strong south easterly Temperatures 8°C to 10°C.
Friday	Sunshine and showers Winds strong south south easterly Temperatures 5°C to 9°C.
Weekend Outlook	Light rain on Saturday Light rain on Sunday Winds strong south south easterly Temperatures 4°C to 7°C.



Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd

TIDAL INFORMATION
Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday January 26, 2017 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour) BST)

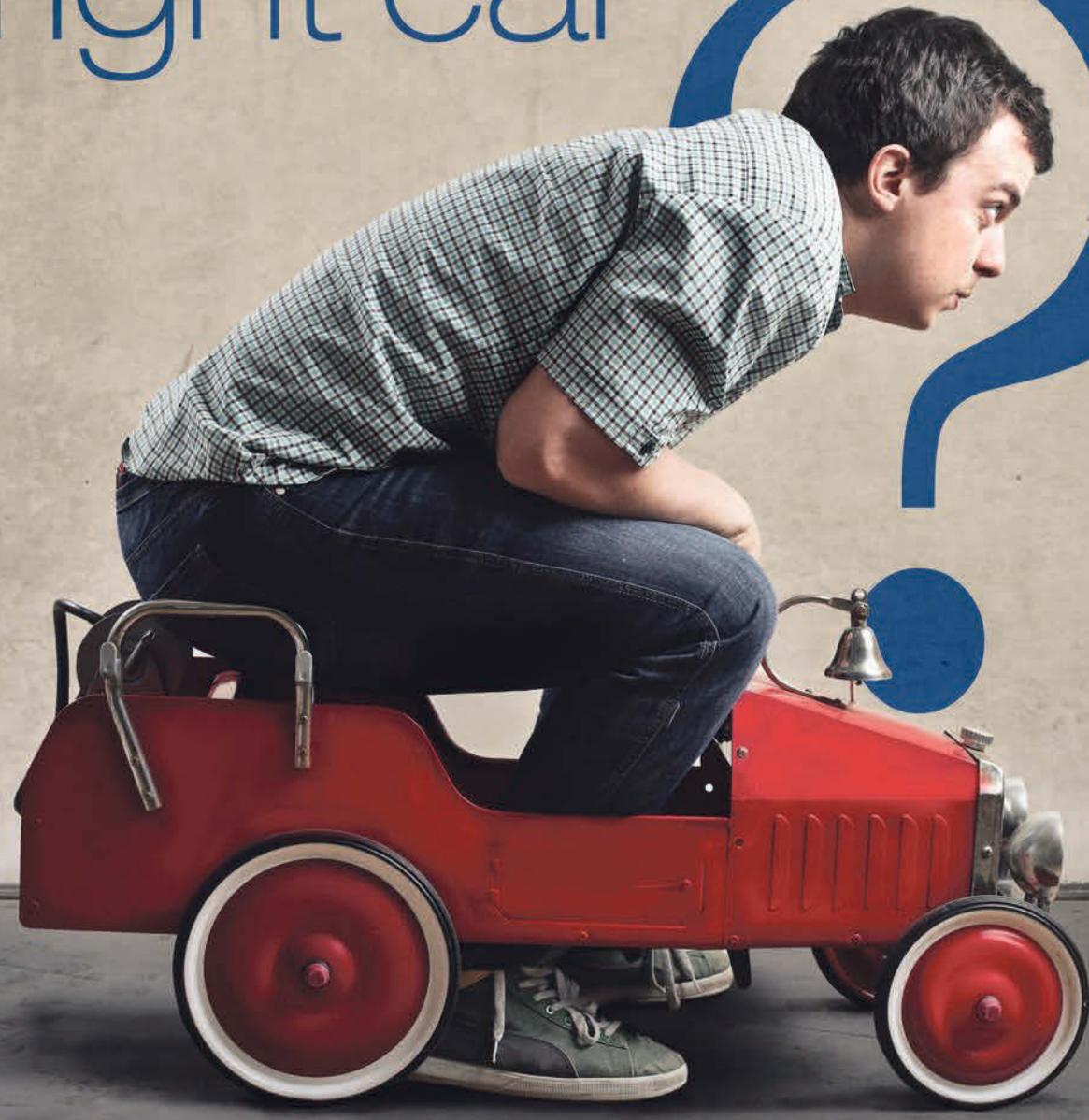
Date	am	pm										
Thur	02.55	0.9	09.00	3.7	15.26	1.2	21.10	3.5	Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Fri	03.42	1.1	09.48	3.5	16.19	1.3	22.00	3.3	Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Sat	04.41	1.3	10.50	3.3	17.25	1.5	23.06	3.1	Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Sun	05.57	1.5	12.21	3.1	18.41	1.5	***	**	Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Mon	00.41	3.0	07.21	1.5	14.16	3.2	19.57	1.5	Lochboisdale	+0.30		
Tues	02.29	3.1	08.48	1.4	15.30	3.3	21.08	1.3				
Wed	03.40	3.4	10.03	1.2	16.24	3.6	22.09	1.1				

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

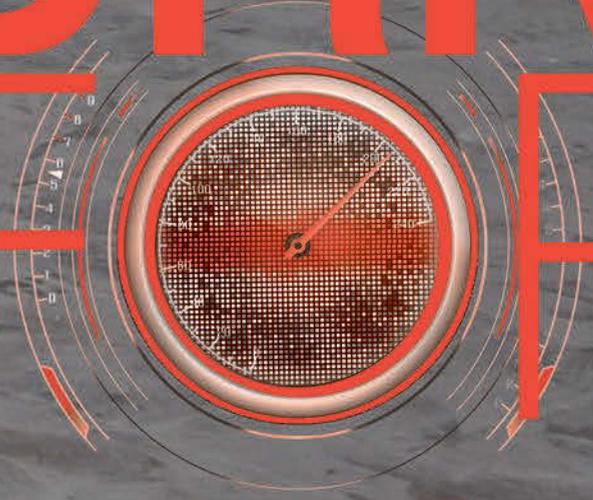
Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate

STILL not found
the right car



DRIVING FORCE



your guide to 17 plate registrations

The Oban Times
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

Welcome to Driving Force

Buying a car can be the second biggest investment you will make. Choosing a new car is one of the most exciting experiences a motorist can enjoy and having a clear idea of exactly what you are looking for can make the process much easier.

Whether you buy from a local dealer, a distant retailer, an online broker or via the internet, it pays to do your homework so you are in the best position to get a good deal. This means deciding what make and model you want, as well as any add-ons that you need.

Once you have the facts and figures in front of you, it's time to talk to the dealer and negotiate your best price. Our guide will help you get the right car, with the right features for the right price, so read on and get inspired!



DVLA move to clear up reg plate confusion

ARE YOU confused by new car registration plate changes? With so many DVLA changes to the number plate system over recent years, it is no surprise that many people do not know how to tell what the year of a car on the road is by its number plate.

To make it clear, the DVLA now have two plate changes a year and this year – for cars registered from March through to August – the number plate represents

the year, e.g. cars produced in 2017 will have a '17' plate. From September through to February, the number plate represents the year prefixed by a six for September, e.g. cars produced from September 2017 until February 2018 will have a '67' plate. This method of identifying has multiple uses, including being able to narrow down certain cars based on location. The age identifier system of the registration also has such

awareness that many car dealers utilise it instead of the actual year to advertise the car.

With those shiny new plates about to hit the streets, there will be a host of deals to further tempt you into that new dream car. Have a look through our featured dealerships and keep an eye out for offers on 16-plate stock that dealers will now want to get rid of to make way for the new models.



VED rate change and what it means for new car buyers

As of April 1, 2017, the Vehicle Exercise Duty CO2 bands are changing for all new cars. In short, low emission cars that would previously have been VED exempt will now have a fee for the first five years of ownership. The first year fees are either less or more than the subsequent years depending on the band. The first year fees can be hefty if you buy a less economical car – anything up to a staggering £2,000 (for cars over 255 g/CO2/km). So, this is serious stuff for new car buyers. The only new cars exempt from VED under the new scheme are zero emissions cars (totally electric).

The first year rate (£10-£2000), is followed by a yearly fee for

the subsequent four years. This is a £140 flat fee, except for cars costing over £40,000, where an additional £310 is added for subsequent years, bringing the total to £450. It's also worth noting that the additional £310 fee (after year one) applies to all cars over £40,000, irrespective of economy. Cheaper cars with optional extras that tip the price over the £40,000 threshold will be placed on the premium rate.

When the wait time on factory ordering a new vehicle is considered, there are only a couple of months left to order before you can no longer get the current rate. The good news is the VED tax only applies when buying brand new cars, so used car purchases won't carry it.

What car do I need?

Here's a handy checklist:



- ✓ What are my essential requirements? Fuel efficiency or enough room for all the family?
- ✓ Do I need the car to do anything specific? This could include towing a trailer or fitting into a small space. Is it for short city drives or longer journeys?
- ✓ Does it need to be able to cruise at motorway speeds without straining?
- ✓ Do I need a massive boot? Consider whether you need room for things such as sports equipment or a pushchair – or if you need to fit friendly Fido or your mother-in-law.
- ✓ Do I prefer petrol or diesel? The fuel you want to use can make a big difference in the model you might choose.
- ✓ Do I want to consider an eco-friendly car? If so, a hybrid or electric car could be an option.
- ✓ How much will it cost? Moneysavingexpert.com offers this checklist for calculating the full cost of your new vehicle.
- ✓ Any upfront costs. Once you've decided to buy a car, you will of course have to pay for it. You can either pay the whole cost upfront or take out a finance deal. Whichever way you choose, expect to at least pay a down payment before you drive off.
- ✓ Finance repayments. If you've taken a personal loan, or dealer finance, you'll need to factor in repayments. To work out the rough cost of running a new car, the Gov.uk website has a fuel consumption search tool. Motoring website Honest John also has a handy 'real MPG' section where drivers have reported how many miles per gallon they get.
- ✓ Tax. You can check out how much road tax you'll need to pay on the Gov.uk website. You can also search for cars in a particular tax band. These range from A-M depending on the car's CO2 emissions, with the cost of tax ranging from £0 to over £1,000 in year one. Standard rates then apply, at up to £500/year.
- ✓ Car insurance. The cost of insurance is based on how much of a risk insurers perceive you to be. For example, if you are a youngster who's just passed your test, you will pay more for your cover. Plus, taking breakdown cover will bump up the cost. New cars often come with a year's worth of breakdown cover.
- ✓ MOTs. Once the car's three years old, you'll have to pay for an MOT every year, which costs £54.85 (for the test).
- ✓ Servicing. You'll need to get your car serviced regularly, typically once a year, though it varies by model. Servicing ensures it's safe to drive and keeps the manufacturer's warranty valid. A routine service typically starts around £120.
- ✓ Parking permits and tolls. Unless you have free parking where you live, or a garage, you will probably have to pay for a resident's permit. Check your council website to see how much this costs. Consider any costs to park at work if you drive there too, as well as toll charges you may face along the way.
- ✓ Other spending. New tyres, repairs and valet cleans can add up, so make sure there's some breathing room in your budget. So allow a couple of £100s extra for additional spending per year – just in case.



Jaguar F-Pace crowned Best Large Crossover in UK Car of the Year Awards



- **Jaguar F-PACE picks up 'Best Large Crossover' title at the UK Car of the Year Awards 2017.**
- **This win places the F-PACE on the shortlist for the overall UK Car of the Year Award which will be announced in February.**
- **Judges praised F-PACE for its design, handling, practicality and best-in-class residual values.**
- **The F-PACE has already picked up more than 25 global awards, and is the fastest-selling Jaguar ever, with more than 46,000 sold globally since its April launch.**

The Jaguar F-PACE has been named 'Best Large Crossover' in the UK Car of the Year Awards 2017. It will now feature in the final shortlist for the overall UK Car of the Year Award which will be announced in February.

The UK Car of the Year judging panel is made up of 27 of the UK's leading motoring journalists, with representatives from publications including *Top Gear*, *Auto Express*, *Autocar* and *Car*.

The judges praised Jaguar's first SUV, and its best-selling vehicle ever, for its 'show-stopping' looks, agile handling, and best-in-class residual values. It's all thanks to the F-PACE's aluminium lightweight architecture, which creates a light, stiff body structure, allowing for great performance and emissions across the range.

John Challen, managing director of UK Car of the Year, said: 'Jaguar has arrived in the crossover market and set a new benchmark. The F-PACE is imposing and impressive in equal measure and offers an almost luxury-level interior. A joy to drive and to spend time in.'

This latest recognition caps an impressive first 10 months for Jaguar's first SUV, which has already received more than 25 major global awards. With more than 46,000 F-PACE models bought worldwide since April, it's also Jaguar's fastest-selling model ever.

Jeremy Hicks, Jaguar Land Rover UK managing director, said: 'We are delighted that the F-PACE has been recognised by the UK Car of the Year judges.

'These experts will have driven almost every car on sale, so for them to name F-PACE the best in its sector just caps off what has been an incredible first 10 months for this car.'

'It is capturing the attention of our customers the world over, gaining critical acclaim, and already becoming the fastest-selling Jaguar ever.'

The Jaguar F-PACE is an SUV built to offer the agility, responsiveness and refinement that all Jaguars are renowned for, together with unrivalled dynamics and everyday usability.

The vehicle seats five adults in absolute comfort with generous headroom and knee room, while offering a 650-litre luggage compartment.

The rear-wheel-drive 180PS diesel F-PACE emits just 129g/km, while the 380PS supercharged V6 model is capable of 0-60mph in 5.1 seconds.

The Jaguar F-PACE, priced from £35,020, is available to order now at Jaguar UK retailers.

You can configure your preferred specification at: www.jaguar.co.uk



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Official fuel consumption figures for the Jaguar range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 14.8-64.2 (19.1-4.4); Extra Urban 31.4-83.1 (9.0-3.4); Combined 22.2-75.0 (12.7-3.8). CO2 Emissions 297-99 g/km. Official EU Test Figures. For comparison purposes only. Real world figures may differ.

Ssangyong launches the Tivoli 4x4

As the cold winter weather starts to bite, SsangYong is introducing a 4x4 winter upgrade offer on its 1.6-litre turbo diesel Tivoli SUV and extended bodied Tivoli XLV models.

The offer applies to current EX and ELX models, manual and automatic, and registered before January 31, 2017.

Comprehensively equipped, the Tivoli EX 4x4 features cruise control, smart steering (normal, comfort and sport modes), an RDS/Bluetooth radio and seven airbags, grey or beige leather upholstery, 18-inch alloy Spiral wheels, dual zone climate control, seven-inch touch screen smart audio system with rear view camera, heated front seats, front fog lights and a luggage load cover.

The top of the range ELX 4x4 adds the choice of manual and automatic transmission, and features diamond-cut alloy wheels, a smart instrument cluster, smart keyless starting, front and rear parking sensors, privacy glass, rear spoiler, automatic headlamps, rain sensing wipers, full TomTom navigation system with seven-inch touch screen, rear view camera, and the option of the styling pack and red leather pack with My Tivoli.

Sharing the same platform and 2,600mm wheelbase as the Tivoli, the Tivoli XLV SUV estate features a lengthened body from behind the C pillar, an increase of 238mm over the standard car, expanding the load capacity to a huge 720 cubic litres of space.

The SsangYong Tivoli 4x4 employs an intelligent and advanced

all-wheel drive torque on demand system that senses the road surface and driving conditions, and distributes the power to the wheels that need it most.

Under normal driving conditions, 100 per cent of the engine's torque is delivered to the front wheels so that the car runs with optimised fuel efficiency. On icy or slippery roads or, when driving on wet off-road conditions, power is distributed to both the front and rear wheels to ensure a safe, stable and dependable drive. The technology operates to give a smooth and safe departure when driving away from a standstill on a steep slope, while a lock mode distributes power equally between the front and rear wheels at speeds below 25mph to optimise traction.

In conjunction with the standard

electronic stability program (ESP) with hydraulic brake assist and four-channel anti-lock braking system (ABS), the four-wheel drive system provides the best possible grip and control whatever the conditions. Hill start assist (HSA)

and active roll-over protection (ARP) also feature.

The Tivoli 4x4 also features multi-link rear suspension for a comfortable drive on the road, and increased wheel articulation for optimum grip off-road.



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Fuel consumption figures in mpg, Urban 28.8 – 55.3, Extra Urban 42.8 – 72.4, Combined 35.3 – 65.7, CO2 emissions in g/km: 194 – 113. Models featured are a Korando 2.2 ELX at £21,750, a Rexton 2.2 EX at £25,995, a Turismo EX at £21,750, and a Tivoli ELX at £17,000, all including optional metallic paint priced at £500. *Korando 2.2 SE, Rexton 2.2 SE, Turismo 2.2 SE and Tivoli SE all including VAT, delivery charge, Road Fund Licence & first registration charge. Prices are correct at the time of going to print, but may be modified or changed at any time. 3 years free servicing available on 2016 model year Tivoli, Korando, Rexton and Turismo only and cannot be used in conjunction with other offers. 3 years or 37,500 miles.

Subaru XV gets interior upgrade and re-tuned chassis

- XV gets higher quality interior in line with new models
- Major re-tuning of chassis improves ride and handling
- NVH measures for more refinement
- New touchscreen infotainment with voice control and navigation

Subaru UK has announced a raft of modifications and upgrades to the interior and chassis of its XV compact crossover. The interior changes result in further significant improvements to cabin refinement and ambience.

Boasting the lowest centre of gravity in the compact crossover class – and the highest ground clearance – changes to the car's suspension have been designed to result in a smoother, more compliant ride but without sacrificing any of the stability that the XV is renowned for.

Among the most important changes to the upgraded XV is a revised interior, which now features improved materials and an all-new touchscreen infotainment and navigation system.

The interior design now has a high-quality look and feel thanks to the

adoption of an all new instrument binnacle and new metallic and piano black accents throughout the cabin for the central console, dashboard and steering wheel switchgear and arm rests.

Subaru is pleased to announce that the all-new Subaru XV will make its global debut at the 87th Geneva International Motor Show to be held in Switzerland on March 7-19, 2017.

Fitted with Subaru's renowned Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive system, XV is a compact SUV with a personality packed exterior.

The all-new Subaru XV will be unveiled at the press conference scheduled for 11am (Central European Time) on March 7 at Subaru booth following a speech by FHI President and CEO, Yasuyuki Yoshinaga.



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Peugeot's award-winning all-new 3008 SUV lands on UK roads



- PEUGEOT's All-New 3008 SUV arrives on UK roads
- Dealers attending the PEUGEOT Dealer conference at Arena MK drove away the new model in convoy
- Latest generation of PEUGEOT's unique i-Cockpit® available across the All-New 3008 SUV range

PEUGEOT's All-New 3008 SUV officially hit UK roads with the first 200 models arrived at the PEUGEOT Dealer conference at Arena MK, Milton Keynes.

Dealers at PEUGEOT's conference drove away the All-New 3008 SUV model in convoy following the close of the event, with the visual spectacle neatly captured by drone footage.

The All-New 3008 SUV received rave reviews following its European launch during the latter half of 2016, and has already established the brand as a key competitor in the compact SUV segment.

Primed and ready for the UK, the All-New 3008 SUV demonstrates the latest in its unique i-Cockpit® interior design, recognised by the automotive industry as one of the most advanced technological packages currently available after it scooped the 'Technology Award' at the 2017 What Car? Car of the Year Awards ceremony held earlier this month.

The new i-Cockpit® design places key instrumentation in the driver's eyeline for a safer and more engaging driving experience, as well as adding to the overall ambience of an already premium interior.

What Car? and Thatcham Research also commended the All-New PEUGEOT 3008 SUV with its Safety Award, owing to its standard autonomous emergency braking (AEB), speed limit recognition and blind spot warning system.



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A/C 1.2 68 5 door



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82 5 door



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OTR £16495.00
Based on 308 Access 1.2 82 5 door

All finance prices above based on 6000 miles per annum. Images shown for illustration purposes only. Terms & Conditions apply. Age restrictions may apply on certain models. Excess mileage charges may apply. Contact us for more information

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PEUGEOT

New Scenic and Grand Scenic named best MPV at UK car of the year awards 2017

- **All-New Renault Scenic and Grand Scenic awarded 'Best MPV' at UK Car of the Year Awards 2017**
- **Judged by some of the UK's most influential motoring writers**
- **Latest fourth generation Scenic described as stylish, confident and practical**
- **UK COTY provides authoritative, independent advice to buyers**

The distinctive fourth generation All-New Renault Scenic and Grand Scenic have been awarded the title of 'Best MPV' at the UK Car of the Year Awards 2017 today, just over a month after going on sale.

The stylish five-seat Scenic and seven-seat Grand Scenic, with unprecedented 20-inch wheels as standard and available with an abundance of innovative high-end safety and convenience features, were voted into first place thanks to its design, practicality and a sense of fun. The UK Car of the Year (UK COTY) Awards judging panel is made up of 27 independent, influential motoring journalists who assess more than 100 new cars to produce winners in 12 categories,

from which one overall champion is chosen.

John Challen, managing director of the UK COTY Awards and editor of ukcoty.co.uk, said of the All-New Scenic and Grand Scenic: 'For situations where space is a must – especially for a large family, the Renaults get it spot on. Practicality taken to a whole new level in a pleasant environment.'

Indeed, other judges impressions of the cars included: 'The best cure for parental depression'; 'The Scenic gets so much right for families, it just has to be the winner in this sector'; 'A car that proves there's life in the MPV format yet' and 'Style with substance. Demonstrates Renault's new-found confidence'.

Paul Flanagan, managing director, Groupe Renault UK, commented: 'Renault invented the compact MPV and now with the latest fourth generation, the All-New Scenic has brought distinctive design, innovative technologies and unprecedented safety to its category. To win 'Best MPV' so soon after launching in the UK from such a respected group of motoring experts really is a fantastic accomplishment and one that everyone at Renault UK is very proud of.'

Renault Clio adds new top-of-the-range version

- **New Clio Signature Nav top-of-the-range trim level available, sitting above Dynamique S Nav, in line with the rest of the Renault range**
- **New Clio Signature Nav gains Hands Free Parking, part-leather upholstery, reverse parking camera with 360-degree parking sensors and Renault R-Link multimedia system as standard**

Renault has strengthened its best-selling Clio line-up with the introduction of a top-of-the-range Signature Nav version. Offering drivers greater choice and heightening the appeal of the iconic Clio which was updated in late 2016, the enhancements introduce even higher levels of comfort and convenience to the supermini.

Based on the already extensively-equipped Dynamique S version, the Signature specification adds black part-leather upholstery with heated front seats and height-adjustable passenger seat, together with hands-free parking, rear parking camera, 360-degree parking sensors and Renault R-Link Multimedia system with 7-inch touchscreen with TomTom LIVE Satellite Navigation system.

Buyers can specify the Signature with a

choice of two diesels or two petrol engines and in either EDC efficient dual clutch automatic or manual transmission.

The Clio Signature's additional equipment builds upon an extensive specification that includes 17-inch alloy wheels, automatic climate control, full LED front and rear headlamps with integrated daytime running lights, leather steering wheel, hands free keycard and electrically heated and folding door mirrors.

The New Clio was introduced in October 2016 and with the launch of this new top-of-the-range version, Clio customers are now able to choose from a total of five trim levels, plus two Renault Sport models.



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SUBARU RANGE Fuel consumption in mpg (l/100km): Urban 25.2-41.5 (11.2-6.8); Extra Urban 40.4-61.4 (7.0-4.6); Combined 33.2-52.3 (8.5-5.4). CO₂ Emissions 197-141g/km. MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Every vehicle marketed by Subaru (UK) Ltd, excluding WRX STI, is covered by a 5 Year/100,000 mile (whichever comes sooner) Limited Warranty which comprises of a standard 3 Year / 60,000 mile (whichever is sooner) Manufacturer's Warranty (bumper to bumper, excluding clutch driven plate) and an Extended Warranty (applies to powertrain only) provided by the importer. Remaining warranty is subject to date first registered and mileage on date of purchase. *NCAP Rating applies to models shown only. Information correct at time of going to print.

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Motability



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Model shown is Yaris Icon 3 door 1.0 VVT-i Manual at £13,390. Price excludes metallic paint at £515. Prices correct at time of going to print. *0% APR Representative only available on new retail orders of Yaris (excluding Active grade and Hybrid models) between 15th December 2016 and 31st March 2017 and registered and financed through Toyota Financial Services by 30th June 2017 on a 3.5 year Access Toyota (PCP) plan with 0%-35% deposit. **Payment shown is based on a 42 month AccessToyota contract with £1,948.50 customer deposit, £1,500 Finance Deposit Allowance and Guaranteed Future Value/Optional Final Payment. Toyota Financial Services (UK) PLC, registered office Great Burgh, EPSOM, Surrey, KT18 5UZ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s. Other finance offers are available but cannot be used in conjunction with this offer. 8,000 miles per annum, excess miles over contracted charged at 8p per mile. Toyota Centres are independent of Toyota Financial Services. Terms and conditions apply. Affordable finance through AccessToyota. 5 year/100,000 mile manufacturer warranty subject to terms and conditions. **Free Sat Nav available on new retail orders of Yaris (excluding Active grade and Hybrid models) between 15th December 2016 and 31st March and registered by 30th June 2017.

Yaris Icon 3 door 1.0 VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 54.3 (5.2), Extra Urban 74.3 (3.8), Combined 65.7 (4.3). CO₂ Emissions 99g/km. All mpg and CO₂ figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated laboratory test results. These are provided to allow comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

Your regional Volvo specialist just keeps getting better

As Volvo Car UK celebrates its best sales performance in 25 years and receives even more safety accolades for the new S90 and V90 models from Euro NCAP, Perth-based Strathmore prepares for another exciting year with the Swedish manufacturer.

While it may occupy the same kerb space as any medium-sized 4x4, and popular with Perth locals, the Volvo XC60's dynamic looks allow it to stand out from the crowd. From the side it resembles a sporty estate car but still boasts the commanding driving position and functionality of its class rivals.

Volvo's capable XC60 is available with two five-cylinder engines and the D4 from the four-cylinder Drive-E powertrain family. Available in both manual and automatic to help contribute to a refined drive and excellent fuel economy.

For those looking for something smaller, but by no means less impressive, the newly-facelifted Volvo V40 now comes equipped as standard with Drive-E pow-

ertrains – offering a world-class blend of drivability and low CO2 emissions.

Strathmore's director, Norman Leishman, comments: 'The V40, XC60 and the impressive XC90 have all become hugely popular with local Perth motorists and the demand for these models continues to remain strong.'

'We're confident that the latest models to arrive at the dealership, particularly the V90 estate and its Cross Country variant, will be just as successful with our customers thanks to their innovative safety, technological and performance credentials.'

Looking ahead to the next year, Strathmore is set to go through Volvo's corporate showroom upgrades to enhance the customer retail experience. The new layout will offer more space, with large exterior and interior glazing and a focus on physical and digital presentation, as well as integrating sales and service areas to deliver an open and friendly environment and making the whole experience based around openness.



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Official fuel consumption for the XC60 D4 SE Nav, in MPG (l/100km): Urban 32.1 (8.8) - 57.6 (4.9), Extra Urban 51.4 (5.5) - 67.3 (4.2), Combined 42.2 (6.7) - 62.8 (4.5). CO2 emissions 157 - 117g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

*Important information: Strathmore is a trading style of Strathmore Motors Ltd who is acting as an introducer. Contract hire provided by Lex Autolease Ltd trading as Volvo Car Leasing, SK3 ORB. 18+ and over, subject to status. You will not own the vehicle and it must be returned in good condition to avoid further charges. Excess mileage charges 17.40p per mile. Subject to availability at participating dealers for vehicles registered 01/01/17 to 31/03/17. Not available with other promotions.

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Subaru Eyesight – your third eye on the road

Pedestrians are particularly at risk on the road; a collision with a car often has severe, life-altering consequences for this group. Modern emergency brake systems with pedestrian recognition can prevent or reduce the severity of these accidents. ADAC, the German Automobile Club rated the Subaru EyeSight assistance system highly; and capable of providing reliable protection day and night.

The automobile club closely examined the emergency brake assistance systems of six models and brands, including four premium manufacturers. The Subaru Outback convinced with its camera-based EyeSight system across the board. EyeSight came out on top and was the only system tested to achieve full points in all three categories tested – pedestrian, cyclist and night driving.

While systems from other manufacturers use various sensor technologies such as camera and radar or microwaves, EyeSight functions purely optically. The Subaru technicians have placed two camera lenses to the left and right of the rear-view

mirror that together create a stereoscopic image.

The stereo-cameras installed on the windscreen reliably captures pedestrians in dark clothing in un-lit areas, as commonly found throughout rural areas of the UK, and when needed initiates emergency braking. Up to a speed of 28mph accidents can be completely avoided and the severity significantly reduced at higher speeds.

In addition to the ADAC further independent test centres such as the American Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) confirm the excellent functioning method and reliability of this system. The only brand to achieve maximum points in the IIHS test was the Subaru Outback in the prevention of a frontal collision. The technology also has a positive effect on running costs and insurance ratings.

EyeSight is available on Subaru Outback Lineartronic models in the UK; and will be introduced to the Subaru Levorg from Spring 2017.



Subaru Forester



Subaru Outback

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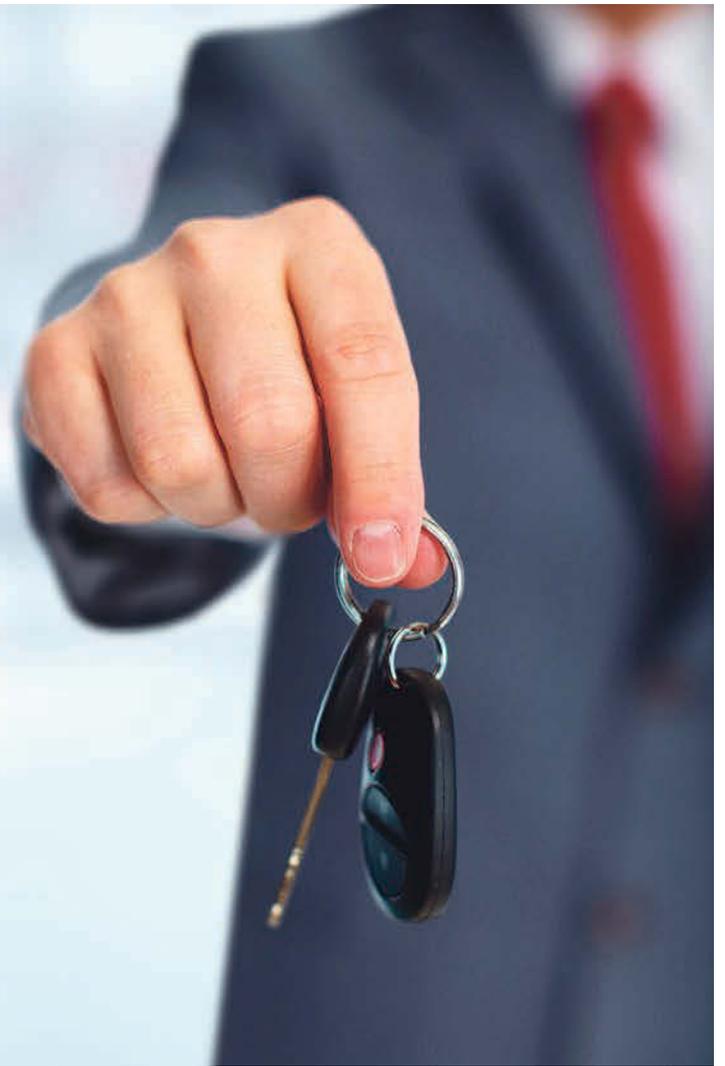
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Used Car buying tips

A record number of used cars were purchased during 2016 and the trend shows no signs of letting up. While buying a used car can be a gamble, our tips can help you avoid a lemon.

- ✓ Talk to owners of similar vehicles. Ask about maintenance, problems and mileage. Many online forums are dedicated to specific makes and models and can be a good resource for owner feedback.
- ✓ Get familiar with current pricing. Check the used vehicle ads in the classified section of *The Oban Times*, used vehicle advertising specialty publications and online services.
- ✓ Determine if you want to purchase a vehicle from a private owner or a dealer. While you might be able to negotiate a lower price from a private owner, the vehicle usually does not come with a guarantee that many dealers offer.

- ✓ If you're buying the vehicle from a dealer, read the contract carefully. If there are problems that need to be corrected, make sure the dealer takes care of them before you drive away. Read everything before you sign, ask questions if you do not understand something and keep a copy of the contract.
- ✓ In a private sale, check that the seller is, in fact, the registered owner of the vehicle. Make sure you get the vehicle's title and a bill of sale. Remember, most private party sales are 'as is'.
- ✓ Always take a road test. Make sure the test is more than just a drive around the block. Check how the vehicle handles at highway speeds and in stop-and-go traffic.
- ✓ Have a mechanic check it out. You will likely have to pay a fee to have the vehicle inspected; however it's worth the money to catch looming mechanical problems in advance.
- ✓ Shop around. Don't be so enamoured with a particular model that good judgment falls by the wayside. The first one you see may not be the best deal.



KMF CAR SALES AND MECHANICAL SERVICES



VAUXHALL

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STOCK LIST

16/16 Vauxhall Astra SRI EcoFlex	£13,795
1.0cc, Petrol, Silver, 4,900 miles, Digital Touch Screen Radio, Bluetooth, Front & Rear Electric Windows, Front & Rear Parking Sensors, Cruise Control, Air Con, Alloys, Front Fog Lights, £20 a Year Road Tax, Manufactures Warranty Until March 2019.	
15/65 Vauxhall Mokka SE Turbo S/S 4X4	£14,595
1.4cc, Petrol, 5 Door, White, 5,700 miles, Leather Interior, CD/Radio, Remote Central Locking, Front & Rear Electric Windows, Electric Wing Mirrors, 6 Speed Gear Box, Parking Sensors, Cruise Control, Heated Front Seats, Isofix, Automatic Lights, Front Fog Lights, 1 Owner, Fully Serviced, Manufactures Warranty Until September 2018.	
15/65 Vauxhall Corsa SRI Eco Flex	£8,495
1.4cc, Petrol, 5 Door, Grey, 10,800 miles, Digital Touch Screen Radio, Bluetooth, Aux Connection, Remote Central Locking, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Air Con, Cruise Control, Isofix, Front Fog Lights, 1 Owner, £30 a Year Road Tax, Fully Serviced, Manufactures Warranty Until September 2018.	
15/65 Vauxhall Corsa SRI Eco Flex	£8,495
1.4cc, Petrol, 5 Door, White, 11,300 miles, Digital Touch Screen Radio, Bluetooth, Aux Connection, Remote Central Locking, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Air Con, Cruise Control, Isofix, Front Fog Lights, 1 Owner, £30 a Year Road Tax, Fully Serviced, Manufactures Warranty Until September 2018.	
14/64 Suzuki Swift SZ - L	£7,795
1.2cc, 3 Door, Hatchback, Petrol, Black with White Roof, 14,600 miles, CD/Radio, Bluetooth, Remote Central Locking, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Air Con, Alloys, Front Fog Lights, Isofix, Multi Function, Steering Wheel, 1 Owner, £30 a Year Road Tax, Fully Serviced, Manufactures Warranty Until Sept 2017.	
12/12 Ford Focus Titanium Turbo	£7,995
1.6cc, Petrol, Silver, 37,600 miles, Remote Central Locking, CD/Radio, Front & Rear Electric Windows, Electric Folding Mirrors, Bluetooth, Alloy Wheels, Cruise Control, Air Con, Isofix, Front Fog Lights, Fully Serviced, 1 Years Mot.	
10/10 Ford Focus Zetec 125	£4,295
1.8cc, Petrol, Blue, 62,700 miles, Remote Central Locking, CD/Radio, Aux Connection, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Air Con, Front Fog Lights, Alloy Wheels, Fully Serviced, 1 Years Mot.	
07/57 Volkswagen Golf GT Sport TSI 170	£4,995
1.4cc, Petrol, Grey 74,000 miles, Remote Central Locking, CD/Radio, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Alloy Wheels, Front Fog Lights, 6 Speed Gear Box, Fully Serviced, 1 Years Mot.	
07/07 Mini Cooper	£4,495
1.6cc, Petrol, 3 Door, Silver, 54,000 miles, Remote Central Locking, CD/Radio, Electric Windows & Mirrors, 6 Speed Gear Box, Front Fog Lights, Fully Serviced, 1 Years Mot.	
Light Commercial Vehicles	
15/15 Vauxhall Vivaro 2700 Sportive CDTI	£11,995 + vat
1.6cc, Diesel, Grey, 22,000 miles, Digital Touch Screen Radio, Bluetooth, Rear Parking Sensors, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Air Con, Alloys, Ply Line, 6 Speed Gear Box, Cruise Control, Sat Nav, Manufactures Warranty Until April 2018.	
15/15 Ford Transit Connect 200	£9,295 + vat
1.6cc, Diesel, White, 28,300 miles, Remote Central Locking, Electric Windows, CD/Radio, Bluetooth, Roof Bars, Ply Line, Fully Serviced, Manufactures Warranty Until April 2018.	
12/62 Nissan NV200 SE DCI	£4,795 + vat
1.5cc, Diesel, White, 77,600 miles, Remote Central Locking, Electric Windows, CD/Radio, Aux Connection, Multi Function Steering Wheel, Fully Serviced, 1 Years Mot.	
12/62 Citroen Nemo 660 LX HDI	£4,795 no vat
1.3cc, Diesel, Blue, 41,300 miles, Remote Central Locking, CD/Radio, Electric Windows & Mirrors, Ply Line, Tow Bar, Fully Serviced, 1 Years Mot.	

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10 - 5 door h/back - 93,825 miles	£3,495
VW Polo 1.0S	
15 - 5 door h/back - 10,426 miles	£8,495
VW Golf 1.6 Match	
10 - 5 door h/back DSG - 38200 miles	£7,995
VX Astra 1.6	
13 - 5 door h/back - 9,671 miles	£8,249
Ford Focus Zetec (Auto)	
63 - 5 door Estate - 11,135 miles	£8,950
Skoda Octavia SE TDI	
15 - 5 dr h/back - 21,000 miles	£12,495
Suzuki Splash SZ4	
63 - 5 door h/back - 11,144 miles	£5,650
Landrover Freelander 2 Diesel Auto	
08 - 2.2 TD4 SE - 110,000 miles	£6,500
Peugeot Partner	
64 - Tepee 1.6 HDI (Auto) - 6,800 miles	£10,900
VW Caddy Van	
64 - 1.6 Diesel - 44,325 miles	£8,995
Citroen Nemo	
63 - 1.3 HDI - 39,200 miles	£5,495
Dodge Nitro	
57 - 4 x 4 CRD - 63,808 miles	£4,550

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GARAGE SERVICES



Driver advice: Vehicle maintenance

Proper vehicle maintenance is essential to keep yourself and others safe on the road. In 2013, 42 people were killed in crashes caused by vehicle defects, with hundreds seriously injured[i]. If you drive, you are operating a fast-moving piece of heavy machinery that needs to be kept in the safest possible condition.

Good maintenance can save you money as well as avoiding breakdowns or potentially devastating crashes. Badly-inflated tyres can mean you use more petrol, while putting off minor repairs can make them far more costly in the long-run.

You should carry out regular 'walk-round' checks of your vehicle, once a week and before any long journeys, which need only take a few minutes. The main things you should look out for are:

- tyre tread wear. Look out for tread wear indicator bars on tyres – small bumps in the main grooves which indicate the minimum tread. Change your tyres well before your tread gets to the legal minimum (1.6mm in the UK). Brake recommends replacing at 3mm, as tyres can be dangerous in wet conditions with less than this. If you drive with tyres worn down to below the legal limit, you could face three penalty points and a £2,500 fine, or it could cause a deadly crash.
 - tyre pressure. Buy a hand-held tyre pressure gauge and check the pressure weekly, when the tyres are cold. The correct pressure will be written in your vehicle's handbook.
 - general tyre condition. Check for cracks, bulges or bubbles on the sides of your tyres. These are signs that the tyre is damaged and at risk of blowing out.
- If you see any of these, get the tyre checked

by a professional, and replaced if necessary.

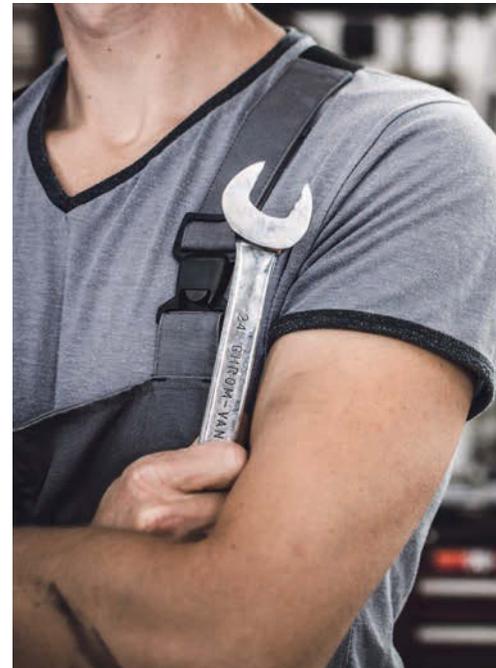
- lights are working. Check lights are clean and bulbs aren't blown (reflect against a wall, or ask a friend to help).
- oil, water and fluids. Check oil and water levels, and other fluids such as power steering, windscreen washer and brake fluid, are well above minimum levels.
- wiper blades. Check they are in full working order and replace if worn.
- wheel fixings. Check wheels and wheel fixings for defects, including loose nuts.

If you drive a commercial or specialist vehicle, there may be additional checks you should make. Check with your employer or consult your handbook.

Setting off and while on your journey, look out for:

- problems with, or noises from, your brakes. Brakes usually make a noise when worn, but if you notice any problem with them, get them checked immediately by a professional mechanic. It's a good idea to test brakes weekly and at the start of long journeys, following your walk-round checks, by applying them gently while driving very slowly on a flat, empty stretch;
- warning lights on your dashboard;
- excess noise or smoke from the exhaust;
- smoke from under the bonnet;
- fluid leaking from under the vehicle;
- smell of hot electrics, fuel, or a burning smell;
- unusual sounds from the engine;
- a pulling sensation from the steering.

If you have any suspicion at all there's a problem with your vehicle, take it to a garage immediately – putting it off could cost you cash, result in a breakdown, or worse, lead to a serious crash.



Editorial courtesy of
Brake
the road safety charity
www.brake.org.uk

Professional servicing

Don't try to fix safety-critical components yourself. Always use a qualified mechanic to work on your vehicle. Make sure you get your annual MOT and your vehicle is serviced in line with your vehicle handbook.

If you're driving an employer's vehicle, speak to them about who is maintaining it and when it was last checked. Ask your employer to ensure it is maintained in line with the vehicle handbook. Encourage them to make use of Brake's guidance for companies on fleet safety (see www.brakepro.org).

Just because a vehicle has passed an annual test or been serviced, it doesn't mean it will be safe until the next service. A brake pad (the material that keeps your brakes working) may be only just above legal now, and worn out and dangerous well before your next service. Talk to your

garage about the level of wear on brake pads and tyres, and any other problems your vehicle might experience in the coming months, so you know if you should pay them a visit between services.

Faulty batteries are one of the biggest causes of breakdowns, so get it tested, particularly before cold weather sets in. Many garages offer free checks.

Choosing the safest vehicle

Buy the safest, most reliable vehicle you can. To find out the safest car models, visit Euro NCAP which tests and rates them. Before buying a second-hand vehicle, get it checked over by an independent, qualified and experienced mechanic. It's better to pay for a mechanic than buy a car that isn't safe. See our factsheet on choosing safer vehicles for more information.

[i] Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2013 Annual Report, Department for Transport 2014.

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