

The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

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Oban Winter Festival

Pages 10 and 11

Dancers in wonderland as they kick off festival

A WINTER Wonderland dance extravaganza at the Corran Halls kicked off this year's Oban Winter Festival in style.

The Ballet West performances, from principal dancers Jonathan and Sara-Maria Barton to the young outreach dancers, attracted a full house last Friday.

On Saturday, the festival got into full swing with events on throughout the town, including a food market and Victorian-themed craft fayre.

Later that day the town's Christmas lights were switched on after a reindeer parade through Oban, from the Corran Halls to Station Square.

Oban pipe band, which led the parade, played for hundreds of people who were also entertained by singers and dancers.

For more, see pages 10 and 11.



TIMESLINE

Gigha £3m debt prompts vote

ISLANDERS on community-owned Gigha will tonight (Thursday) take a vote of confidence in the chairwoman of its trust

The vote is to gauge the confidence of the community in dealing with almost £3 million worth of debt recently revealed after a review of the community company's assets with Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Fortnight of phone 'farce' on Colonsay

VODAFONE users on Colonsay were left without mobile phone coverage for two weeks on the island.

Islanders couldn't make calls from November 10 to 24, which community council member William Joll called 'utterly ridiculous' and 'a farce'.

Vodafone failed to comment on the technical problems.

Post Office closes as couple retire

COLIN and Lynn Galbraith, who have run Esplanade Post Office in Oban for 24 years, will retire when the business closes at 5.30pm on January 28.

The Post Office will re-open the following morning in McColl's on George Street. There will be no break in service.

Inquiry highlights C.diff 'failure'

AN INQUIRY into 34 deaths at Vale of Leven hospital, Alexandria over a Clostridium difficile (C. diff) outbreak in 2007-2008 has criticised NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC). Judge Lord MacLean said GGC had 'badly let down' patients. The health board has apologised.

THE DEVASTATED FAMILY OF MURDERED OBAN MAN COLIN PENROSE IN SEARCH FOR ANSWERS FROM PRISON AUTHORITIES

Our son should have been safe in his cell, say parents

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THE DEVASTATED parents of a murdered Oban prisoner have this week continued their search for answers into his death after his killer was jailed for a minimum of 19 years.

A jury at the High Court in Glasgow last week found John Clark guilty of murdering Oban man Colin Penrose, 22, on March 20 when the pair shared a cell at Barlinnie Prison in Glasgow.

In handing down a life sentence, Judge Michael O'Grady,

QC, told Ayr man Clark, also aged 22, that he had committed an 'appalling crime' and that Mr Penrose's life had been 'snatched away by your wickedness'.

But the murdered man's parents believe their son should have been safe in prison and have employed Glasgow law firm Irwin Mitchell to investigate.

Following the trial, Mr Penrose's parents, Thomas and Linda, said: 'We are devastated by the loss of our son and remain convinced that more could have been done to protect him in prison and ultimately prevent his

death. The trial has provided important answers regarding what our son went through and our legal team is now continuing with investigations into the events surrounding his death.'

Last Wednesday, the High Court in Glasgow heard that Clark bound his victim's hands and then put a shoelace round his neck before throttling him in the early hours of March 20 in the cell they shared.

Clark did this after discovering, through official paperwork he found in the cell, that Mr Penrose had convictions for sex offences.



MURDERED: Colin Penrose

The judge told Clark: 'You acted as judge, jury and executioner, quite literally in this case.'

In evidence, Clark denied murder and claimed it was an elaborate fake hostage set-up which went disastrously wrong.

Clark said the intention was that he would get moved to another prison and Mr Penrose could claim compensation from the authorities.

But the jury didn't believe his story and the judge passed a life sentence on Clark, and told him: 'This was an appalling crime. Mr Penrose must have suffered

a frightful and terrifying death at your hands. Mr Penrose was a young man who had his life in front of him, a life snatched away by your wickedness.'

The jury heard that prison officers rushed to the cell at 2am, where they found Mr Penrose lying on his back with his hands tied and a shoelace round his neck. Clark was watching TV.

Police, who searched the cell, found a sheet of notepaper on which Clark had written: 'F*** all beasts.' He had signed it and put his prison number on it.

Trust unveils plans for phase one of Rockfield

THE GROUP behind a plan to create a community hub at the former Rockfield primary school has revealed its plans for the building.

Oban Communities Trust believes The Rockfield Centre will become a workshop for artists and small businesses in a first phase of the project.

Phase one will also include a car park and use of the school huts to raise money for phase two.

A trust spokesman said: 'The thinking is that there will be a phased development of the building and site over the next

few years. With significant interest in phase one space, development will include a review of public toilets, workshop space and retail options.'

Phase two would restore and develop the main building for its longer term use as 'a centre for creativity' which could provide exhibition space and a 'conversation cafe'.

Business plans and initial drawings are being prepared for submission to the council at the end of December 2014 for consideration at the Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee meeting in February 2015.

£2million go-ahead for Oban improvements

THE release of £2 million from the CHORD budget will kick-start the redevelopment programme in Oban town centre.

Phase one of the plan sees Stafford Street improvements going ahead early next year.

The improvements to Stafford Street will provide a terraced area with Wi-Fi for small scale events.

At last week's meeting of the Oban, Lorn and Isles area committee, members recommended the release of phase one funds from the overall Oban CHORD budget.

The recommendation is set to be considered at the full council meeting today (Thursday) and, if approved, will see construction work begin in January next year.

Area committee chairman Roddy McCuish said: 'I'm delighted to have these assurances that the first of an exciting set of projects will be going ahead and we'll have the fantastic new Stafford Street open for business in time for the 2015 tourist seasons.'

'I would just ask for patience from retailers and people going about their daily business.'

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Praise for Iona's green hostel

AN ISLAND hostel has been praised by judges in an international competition to reward the most environmentally friendly businesses.

The Iona Hostel narrowly missed winning the top accolade of a Green Tourism Goldstar Award but was highly commended by the judges for the efforts of staff in supporting and promoting sustainability.

The hostel was among 60 businesses from across the UK and Canada, out of more than 2,000 contenders whittled down by the judges, to make the final list of nominations for 15 award categories.

Situated at the north end of the island the hostel on the croft of Lagandorain, has spectacular views to Staffa and the Treshnish Isles, and beyond Rum to the Black Cullins of Skye.

The winners of all the awards were announced at the annual Green Tourism conference held in Manchester.

Lottery award music to ears

YOUNG MUSICIANS in the Western Isles are to benefit from a residential learning weekend thanks to a lottery award.

Workshops for 25 youths will be held in Harris and Stornoway next summer after Comhairle nan Eilean Siar was awarded £10,000 from the Big Lottery for the pilot project from the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland (NYOS).

Peter Carpenter, the local authority's director of education, said: 'This is a tremendous opportunity for our talented musicians to further develop their performance skills.'

'The expertise and talent of NYOS musicians is well known and our young people will gain from their support, skills and musical guidance.'

Oban appearance for popular piper

PIPING maestro Fred Morrison will be returning to Oban next week, to the delight of many of his enthusiasts, as part of his latest tour.

Mr Morrison, a native of South Uist, is scheduled to play in the Argyllshire Gathering Halls on Wednesday, December 3.

Satisfied inspectors in call for improvements

Report praises well-behaved, motivated pupils but numeracy skills don't add up

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OBAN high school has received pass marks in its recent inspection, but it could do better, according to the report by Education Scotland.

The report praises the 'well-behaved and motivated' pupils and highlights the school's performing arts, sports and clan system as key strengths.

The report states that pupils 'learn and achieve well' adding: 'They are proud of their school and enjoy belonging to one of the four school clans which foster strong teamwork and a sense of community, particularly for those residing in the hostel.'

'The senior pupil leadership team act as very positive role models as they work with other young people in their clans and across the school.'

Particularly mention was given to young people's achievements

in the performing arts and sports supported by the schools of rugby, traditional music and dance.

However, improvements are needed in the attainment of numeracy among pupils and the number of S5/6 pupils studying for qualifications through Argyll College is not high enough, says the report.

Questionnaires given to pupils, parents and staff show that more than a quarter of the school's population do not feel involved in decision-making in the school.

Almost a third of teachers, 30 per cent, felt leadership in the school was not effective with 22 per cent of teachers saying they were not involved in setting the priorities for the school.

However, all staff agreed that good practise was shared across the whole school.

Eight out of 10 parents randomly selected for a questionnaire said they were happy with the school but 40 per cent felt that

their view was not asked for, and when it was, 34 per cent felt it wasn't taken into account.

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, Fiona Robertson, said: 'We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision.'

'Senior and, in particular, middle managers need to be more consistent and take greater responsibility for monitoring self-evaluation activities, including within the support department, to increase the pace of improvement.'

'We are confident that self-evaluation processes in the school and halls of residence are leading to improvements.'

'As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection.'

'As part of its arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of education, Argyll and Bute council will inform parents about the school's progress.'

Glencruitten hostel was inspected at the same time as the school and inspectors asked for training for staff in autism, notes for new pupils and an improvement plan to be put in place.

It also asked for discipline at the school to be recorded in young people's personal plans.

Argyll and Bute Council's Director of Community Services, Cleland Sneddon said: 'We welcome the inspection report on Oban high school and Glencruitten hostel and the key strengths it highlights on the quality of educational experience enjoyed by pupils.'

'The quality of education is a significant factor in people coming to live and work in Argyll and Bute and developing our economy through population growth.'

'We will use the feedback from the Education Scotland report to help continue improve educational standards at Oban high school.'

St Columba's 'Disney' hold back on playpark cause

AN OBAN primary school transformed into a mini Disneyland as staff and pupils dressed up to raise money for a local cause.

St Columba's primary school's primary 3/2 class organised the Disney day and convinced the whole school - even the teachers - to pay a donation to dress up as their favourite Disney characters.

As well as having lots of fun, they raised £416 for Friends of Oban Community Playpark.

Activities included a very popular Frozen sing-along and home baking and popcorn were donated by parents of the pupils.

Primary 3/2 teacher Siobhan MacLellan explained that the pupils had been doing a topic on voting, based around the Scottish referendum.

She said: 'We talked about the community playpark and funding and voted on the theme of our fundraiser and how we could raise the money.'

'We asked the whole school for their opinions and wrote a letter to the playpark committee to tell it about the project. It is basically children helping children.'

'In the past the school has had



COMIC CURRICULUM: the staff at St Columba's primary getting into the Disney spirit

fundraising days on themes of High School Musical and Grease but because Frozen is so big just now, most people chose a Disney day.'

Lyndsay Elliot from Friends of Oban Community Playpark came to the school to see the costumes on display. She said: 'I am just blown away

by the effort that's gone into this. It's fantastic. The children are so involved and engaged and it is exciting to see them take responsibility for fundraising.'

Machrihanish best spaceport option

ARGYLL MP Alan Reid has lobbied in the Houses of Commons for Machrihanish to become Britain's first spaceport.

He told Greg Clark, minister for universities, science and cities, that the UK government should look no further than Machrihanish Airbase to provide commercial spaceflights from the UK by 2018, given the facilities it can provide.

Mr Reid said: 'Machrihanish, with its three-kilometre runway, all the facilities of the former RAF base and a sparsely-populated location, satisfies the criteria perfectly and is clearly the obvious choice for Britain's first spaceport.'

All talk at murder mystery night

MEMBERS of Oban Speakers club, their wives and friends were left wondering 'whodunnit?' last week, as they enjoyed a murder mystery night.

After a meal served by Coast Restaurant on November 20 the guest speaker, Stuart Carmichael from Appin, gave an entertaining and very detailed description of the events surrounding the fictional murder.

The group's next meeting will be held on December 4 at 8pm in the Church Centre, Glencruitten Road, Oban.

CHAS concert hits the right notes

A CONCERT by a women's choir from Oban and Lorn has raised £215.40 for Children's Hospice Association Scotland (CHAS).

Held on the opening night of Oban Winter Festival on Saturday, the Sequence in Song concert at Glencruitten church centre in the town saw an appreciative audience entertained with everything from Rhythm of Life to Delilah.

Alongside the choir was Oban Community Singers, both of which are conducted by Janet Fergusson, and a number of solo artists.

MULL lines



WINNER: Ellie Grierson shows off her prizes in a recent book competition

Ellie plots book success

A PUPIL from Mull had a great story to tell after winning hundreds of pounds worth of books for her school.

Ellie Grierson, a primary five pupil at Lochdon, entered an Argyll and Bute writing competition after the school embarked upon a digital literacy topic in August.

The modest pupil said: 'We entered into the Argyll and Bute Good Poems Make Great Comics writing competition. At our community café earlier this month, I was surprised to hear that I had won the competition.'

'I found out that I had won £250-worth of books for the school and five books for myself. You can see my comic on the Sharing Argyll Learning website. I was extremely surprised and excited.'

The competition was supported by the Scottish Book Trust and was inspired by the Argyll Art Collection.

Messy work recognised

A CRAIGNURE shop is the first re-use business on Mull and Iona to achieve accreditation by Zero Waste Scotland.

The national scheme to promote excellence, Revolve, has identified the Island Castaways store as one of the best in Scotland.

Mull Environmentally Sensitive Solutions (MESS) has shops in Tobermory and Bunessan as well as the port village.

Praising the work of more than 30 volunteers and a small team of part-time staff, shop manager Hazel Cowe said: 'I am delighted that the hard work and dedication of everyone at Island Castaways has led to the achievement of this accreditation.'

'The journey to accreditation has been incredibly useful in helping us to achieve our aims of reducing island waste.'

Goods donated by islanders and visitors are recycled through the shops, generating profits which are put back into the community directly through a small grants scheme and indirectly by supporting the work of Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT).

A part of the MESS division of MICT, Island Castaways has diverted more than 433 tonnes of waste from landfill and has donated more than £36,000 to local community groups and projects on Mull since 2006.

Revolve, Scotland's national re-use quality standard, aims to increase re-use by improving professionalism, customer experience and visibility of re-use organisations.



OTTER JOY: MOG's youngest members, Thomas, 8, and Robert Chalmers, 10, alongside the latest otter information board at Loch na Keal

Good sign for otter group

MULL Otter Group (MOG) has surpassed all its expectations by achieving targets in a busy and productive first season.

The past 12 months have been so successful that initial objectives identified in a five-year plan have already been met.

This has been attributed to the hard work and dedication of its members, particularly the management committee under the guidance of Jane Stevens, all of whom have worked tirelessly on behalf of the island's otters.

Information boards, located at known otter watching areas on the island, have been very well received and provide basic guidelines for responsible otter viewing.

Stories on the high seas

MEMBERS of Lorn Resource Centre Discussion Group and Oban library readers group are taking to the high seas to celebrate Book Week Scotland.

Dressed as Scottish literary characters, they will be reading from, and distributing free copies of 'Scotland's Stories of Home' launched on Monday at the beginning of Book Week Scotland with 250,000 copies given out free throughout Scotland.

Caledonian MacBrayne has offered free passage for a number of performers today (Thursday) to help with the distribution.

The event has been organised by Argyll and Bute council's adult literacy and numeracy service in Oban which has been working with a number of partners to organise events locally.

Book Week Scotland is now an annual event, initiated by the Scottish Book Trust.

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BE HEALTH-WISE THIS WINTER



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Court told how police broke down door during heroin raid

COURT REPORTER
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TWO packages of heroin were found in an Oban flat after police officers battered the door down during a drugs raid.

Oban sheriff court heard this week that police had obtained a warrant to search flat 3/1 at 19 High Street after receiving a tip-off.

Jennifer McIver, 38, and Dale Montague, 27, both unemployed and from Helensburgh, were found in the living room of the property and Andrew McKenzie, 33, who lived in the flat, turned up while the search was going on.

All three individuals are accused of being concerned in the supply of diamorphine (heroin) on August 8 at the flat in Oban's High Street.

McIver pleaded guilty on Monday, while Montague and McKenzie have denied the charge.

During the trial of the two men, PC Peter MacMillan said he, two other officers and a special constable had used a battering ram to break down the front door, which had been padlocked shut on the outside.

This unusual method of locking doors, he told the court, was consistent with other properties he had come across associated with drug dealing.

McIver and Montague were cautioned and later taken to Oban police office.

In a subsequent search of the flat, police officers found two knotted packages, one containing eight wraps and one 20.18g of a brown substance, later confirmed as diamorphine (heroin).

The first package was found on the floor, near a sofa, and the second under an open shelving unit in a corner of the living room.

Also found in various places in the kitchen and living room area of the Oban flat were three electronic scales, a torn plastic bag, the inside of a Kinder egg - known to be used to carry and conceal drugs - a burnt teaspoon, burnt NHS-issued spoons used by addicts, a packet of cigarette papers, a quantity of money and a number of mobile phone handsets.

The court was told that a search at Oban police office found Montague had £165.69 in cash on him. Under cross-examination, PC MacMillan agreed that where the drugs paraphernalia was found in the flat could not be directly linked to Montague.

Earlier, during a discussion of the pre-trial facts, the jury heard that DNA from all three was found on one or both of the knotted packages.

The trial before a jury of Montague and McKenzie continues. McIver is to be sentenced at the conclusion of the trial.

CCTV captured vandals' attack on Oban nursery

THE managers of an Oban nursery have asked the public to help catch vandals who damaged donated property in a 'mindless attack'.

A table used by young children at Soroba Young Families nursery was broken last weekend, with the perpetrators caught on CCTV.

Manager Janice Kay said: 'The item that was smashed was a table the children use for their outdoor kitchen and although it was donated, it would cost about £100 to replace as it was custom-built. 'All the people have done is purposely destroyed it for the sake of it. This isn't a victimless crime either, the children affected are between three and five years old.'

Rachel Turnbull, deputy manager, said: 'By the looks of the CCTV, it's young people, probably young teens, messing about. The thing they smashed is for young children to enjoy, so we just wonder why people would do it? It's mindless.'

'I think the people don't realise that there are real victims, that what they are doing actually matters and the stuff belongs to someone - it has a use and it's wrong.'

'It's just mindless and wilful destruction of property.'

The CCTV images have been handed over to the police and because of the apparent age of the people in the footage, the nursery has also passed it on to Oban high school in an attempt to help identify those involved.

Sergeant Mike Wood at Oban Police Station said police were looking at the CCTV images and urged anyone with any information to phone Police Scotland on 101.



SORRY SIGHT: heavy rainfall with water cascading from the nearby A85 and a swollen river led to flooding in Oban's Pennyfuir cemetery earlier in the month

Cemetery flooding misery

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A GRAVEYARD that was knee deep in water following this month's heavy rainfall is now at the centre of a joint operation to protect the cemetery from future flooding.

Visitors to Pennyfuir cemetery in Oban said the area closest to the A85 trunk road was at least 'knee deep in water' with torrents running off the nearby busy carriageway.

Memorial flowers were floating on the flooded grounds.

Some grieving relatives were unable to visit the cemetery be-

cause of the extent of the flooding while others said the ground was too soft to walk upon.

John Boyd, who was visiting a family grave, said he was horrified by the softness of the ground. The man, who had travelled from Stirling on the anniversary of his mother's death, said he was 'shocked by how soft the ground was'.

He continued: 'I don't like to be macabre about this - but I was very worried that at any point I might put a leg into the ground and not get it back out again without help.'

'It is very distressing to think that the ground felt so soft. I

couldn't see anything that looked out of place when the water subsided, but I had a few sleepless nights thinking about it.'

Mary MacCain, from Oban, whose grandfather is buried in the cemetery, said she was shocked by the amount of water that was lying at the top of the graveyard.

Argyll and Bute council, which owns the cemetery, and Transport Scotland say they are aware of the issue and the distress it has caused relatives and visitors.

Scottish Water staff were praised by relatives for attempting to drain the flooded water from the cemetery by lifting

manhole covers. A spokeswoman for Scottish Water said: 'I spoke to an engineer who was in Oban during the storm and he said a manhole cover had come loose because of surcharging water. A Scottish Water engineer attempted to put it back on to ease the situation.'

'The local council team put sandbags in place to try and hold the cover down later that day and put signs in place.'

She continued: 'All Scottish Water assets (Oban waste water treatment works and associated pumping stations) were fully operational during the storms and in no way related to the flooding

incident. It is our understanding that the flooding at the graveyard was due to the river bursting its banks following the heavy rainfall.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'We are aware of the issue and are working with Transport Scotland, responsible for the adjacent A85, to find a solution.'

A Transport Scotland spokeswoman said: 'We take all instances of flooding on the trunk road seriously and given the proximity of this latest instance to the cemetery, we shall be discussing the issue with Argyll and Bute council as soon as possible.'

Funds set to top £176,000

FUNDRAISERS for the new Oban community playpark are seeking input to the final design of the first and second stage after securing a major grant of more than £85,000.

Friends of Oban Community Playpark will seek opinions on the final design of the adventure play area for five to 15-year-olds and an upgrade of the garden.

But the eight-week build must be finished by next summer to meet the criteria of the Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund, which granted £85,725.

Fundraising group chairwoman Lyndsay Elliott said: 'Phase one is good to go and we are currently working on the consultation for phase one and two.'

'People can see the designs via Facebook or handouts available from committee members. We want people to have their say.'

With a cheque for £5,000 from Tesco coming in this week, the fundraising group can now call upon a pot of £176,000 with some funding applications still pending.

The group's first fundraiser

was three years ago. Mrs Elliott said the fund saw a huge boost after the existing playpark at Atlantis Leisure was condemned and closed down in February this year. Mrs Elliott explained the response to the campaign from the community had been overwhelming.

She added: 'We always tell each other to be patient, positive, and persistent. Most of the money we have raised is locally sourced, which is incredible. It has been humbling and inspiring getting these donations.'



CASHBACK: Tesco Oban store manager Kenny McCallum and staff hand over the cheque to young Oban community playpark supporters Alex Elliott and Erik Turnewitsch

Pioneering centre honours memory of fine academic

THE SCOTTISH Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunstaffnage has launched a research centre in the name of its former director who died in the summer.

SAMS will use the Laurence Mee Centre for Society and the Sea to improve understanding of how people interact with the marine environment.

It is hoped the research will improve the way marine and coastal areas are managed.

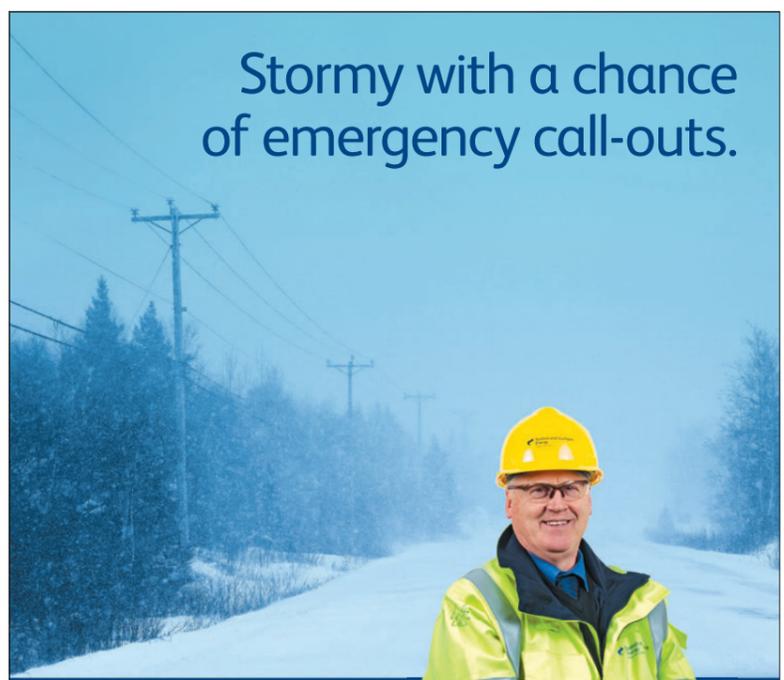
Professor Mee, the UK's first professor of marine and coastal policy, died suddenly in August at the age of 63. The



PIONEER: Laurence Mee

announcement of the foundation of the research centre, which will involve professionals from across the globe, came at a 130th birthday party of the Scottish Association of Marine Science at its annual general meeting two weeks ago.

Professor Axel Miller, acting director of SAMS, said: 'We have often been the first to explore new ways of doing research. I hope that from that perspective, through the launch of the Laurence Mee Centre, 2014 will take its own place in our history.'



Forecasting winter weather isn't easy. That's why it's always best to prepare for the worst.

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Global ambition will take time as marine science park first phase officially opened

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AN AMBITION to put Dunstaffnage at the forefront of global marine science research has taken a huge step forward with the official opening of the European Marine Science Park.

Malin House, the first of a potential three business units within the science park, was opened last Friday by Fergus Ewing MSP, minister for energy, enterprise and tourism, who praised the state-of-the-art, £7.5million building, saying: 'The easy thing to do would have been to build a shed.'

The new building sits opposite the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) and is currently home to two successful businesses, bio-reactor designer and manufacturer Xanthella and research company SAMS Research Services Ltd (SRSL).

Those at the opening, representing project leader Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), the Scottish government, Argyll and Bute council and the marine science industry, agreed the recent addition to the Dunstaffnage set-up reinforced a desire to establish a world-leading marine science 'cluster'.

Mr Ewing said: 'This is a golden opportunity for Argyll and Bute to build on its existing



OPEN FOR BUSINESS: Fergus Ewing MSP, left, declares Malin House open as tenants Dr Tracy Shimmield and Dr Douglas MacKenzie and HIE chief executive Alex Paterson look on

Photograph: courtesy of Perfect Images

pre-eminence in marine science. 'The presence of around 100 students a year at Dunstaffnage is the human feedstock for a marine science cluster, alongside work being done by existing tenants like Xanthella, Glycomar and SRSL. I am confident this

building will attract more and more interest and new tenants, although these things do take time.

'Overnight success stories may happen in story books but the basis for a marine cluster is here.'

The building was completed in December 2012 but did not take its first tenant, Xanthella, until May this year.

Science park owner HIE was forced to defend the project, admitting the nation's slip into recession had played its part.

But HIE senior development officer Morag Goodfellow said the centre was built with long-term gain in mind. She said: 'We didn't want to miss an opportunity to support this and we worked closely with the council and other partners to develop the idea.

'You need to be ambitious to grow the region and HIE is ambitious. It is our goal to be ambitious.'

This ambition is given hope by the global success of the new ten-

ants. Xanthella, which produces equipment that increases the concentration of algae for use in lipids, such as Omega 3 which is used in infant formula.

The company, founded by Douglas MacKenzie in 2009, plans to increase its workforce from

six to 20 and may look across to SAMS for its recruitment pool.

SRSL undertakes work around the globe and has plans to open an office in Abu Dhabi. It was formed in 2002 with SAMS as the single shareholder.

SAMS director at the time, the

late Professor Laurence Mee, recognised that SAMS had to be sustainable as research funding became more scarce in times of austerity.

The company is the world leader in deep sea tailings placement, which is a process of discharging marine waste into the deep ocean. Managing director Dr Tracy Shimmield said: 'The international marine science community recognises SAMS and knows that's Scotland.

'They ask where we are in Scotland and the answer surprises people. I think they expect us to be in Glasgow or Edinburgh.'

Dr Shimmield praised the work HIE had done in creating Malin House, adding: 'It is doing more than just creating the conditions for business growth. Without the business support of HIE we couldn't have achieved what we have.'

The 19,350-square-foot Malin House is capable of hosting three marine science businesses and supporting up to 119 jobs.

HIE contributed £4.5m of its own grant-in-aid budget from the Scottish government, and attracted the remaining £3 million towards this first phase from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Oban, Lorn and the Isles area committee chairman, councillor Roddy McCuish was also at the opening.

He said: 'Malin House is one of the key projects, not just for Oban, Lorn and the Isles, but for the whole of Argyll and Bute.

'I think the investment of HIE and its partners is a great show of confidence in this area.

'If Mr Ewing, the minister for energy, enterprise and tourism, is confident in this area then that confidence must trickle down to everyone that wants to come to Argyll and Bute and Oban, Lorn and the Isles.

'Our council officers are also working closely with all partners on the delivery of the Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) scheme, which will have a meaningful start for September 2015.'

A82 improvement business survey

TRANSPORT Scotland has commissioned a company to look at upgrading part of the A82 between Tarbet and Inverarnan.

Peter Brett Associates have been commissioned by Transport Scotland to carry out a business survey in the area to gather information on the potential business effects of upgrading a 17km length of the A82 adjacent to the western shore of Loch Lomond.

The company is keen to hear from as many businesses in the area as possible to provide information in understanding the local and wider economic impacts and in minimising any environmental impacts as it assesses route options.

For more information and to complete a survey on the proposals, visit: www.survey-monkey.com/r/A82

Trust talk bogged down in peat

THE ARGYLL and Lochaber group of the Scottish Wildlife Trust met to hear local ecologist Dr James Fenton give a presentation entitled 'Bogged Down in Peat'.

The talk was a fascinating account of the many and varied types of bog habitat, not only in Scotland but also in the Falkland Islands.

The next talk is entitled 'Interaction with Basking Sharks', presented by Shane Wasik of Basking Shark Scotland.

It will take place as usual at the Scottish Marine Institute, Dunstaffnage, on Thursday December 18 at 7.30pm.

Lifeboat launches to aid patient

OBAN's lifeboat was asked to go to Mull last week by Stornoway coastguard to take a patient from the island to the mainland.

Just before midnight on November 18, the lifeboat launched to Craignure and returned with the patient, who was transferred by ambulance to hospital in the town.



GRAND TOUR: Fergus Ewing MSP is shown around the SRSL lab at Malin House

Photograph: courtesy of Perfect Images



HIGH-TECH: Xanthella's algae expert Ana dos Santos Vejraska holds one of the company's main products, the Xanthella Goldlocks Unit

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WOMEN TALK: discussions groups get underway at the conversation cafe 15_148women01

Role of women now and in past times under discussion

THE ROLE women played in the history of Argyll has been celebrated at an event in Oban's Corran Halls.

The Women and History Conversation Cafe, organised by Women@Work, was attended by women from throughout Argyll, who heard first from museums and heritage consultant Catherine Gillies.

There was also discussion from Morag Smith of Glasgow Women's Library and Elaine McChesney, who displayed a Women's Charter banner held in Campbeltown Museum.

Liz Gaffney of felt-making business Heartfelt spoke about felt making and Dr Sharon Webb, director and curator at Kilmartin Museum, spoke on women

in prehistory. Charlotte Lee is Argyll and Bute' coordinator for Women@Work, which exists to 'strengthen the voice' of women in the area. Ms Lee said: 'This was an opportunity to hear about different topics, share ideas and discover if there is a need for a forum on 'women in history'. She said women in Argyll had done 'great things' in the past.

Oban to Fort Sunday bus fills service gap on route

THE OBAN to Fort William bus service will begin running on Sundays for the first time, following a successful funding application by Argyll and Bute council.

West Coast Motors - which runs the 918 route between the two towns in conjunction with Citylink - hopes to have the new service in operation before next May, providing a lifeline for isolated communities along the way.

Three buses are planned to run in each direction on summer Sundays, with two in the winter depending on how funding is allocated, following a £56,000 grant being made available by Transport Scotland's Bus Investment Fund (BIF).

The service will stop at all locations included in the week-

day timetable including Appin, Ballachulish and Onich.

Thomas MacLennan, councillor for Fort William and Ardnachan, believes filling the Sunday gap is a big step forward.

He said: 'I'm delighted to hear this news as areas in between, such as Kentallen and Duror, have a poor service at the moment.

'These communities have often raised bus access to Fort William as an issue so it is a positive result for them.'

A spokeswoman from West Coast Motors said: 'The Sunday buses should follow the same pattern as the current timetable.

'It is a very popular route, especially in the summer, so a Sunday service will be greatly appreciated by locals.'

Call to replace PO payment cards as deadline looms

POST OFFICE payment cards should be replaced by an alternative before next spring, says Argyll and Bute's MP Alan Reid.

Used to pay out pensions and benefits, the card account contract between the Department for Work and Pensions and the Post Office expires at the end of next March.

Mr Reid said: 'Millions of people collect their benefits and pensions from their local post office using a Post Office card account.

'I have been arguing for a post office bank account with more facilities to be in place when the present contract expires at the end of March.

'Time is running out and I will continue to put pressure on the Department for Work and Pensions to get an account with more facilities in place in time to take over from the Post Office card account.

'This would be of great benefit to both the Post Office and their millions of customers throughout the United Kingdom.'

Mid Argyll job seeker numbers on the up

JOB seekers in Mid Argyll have been hit hard by a slow-down in house building.

A 9.6 per cent rise in August of the number of people out of work in Lochgilphead has been attributed to fewer homes being

built. Latest jobless figures from Highlands and Islands Enterprise show that in Argyll and Bute there are 1,011 people out of work, compared with 1,985 people in the Highland region and 349 in the Western Isles.

Pupils' protest puts an end to foul play for school janitor

STEVEN RAE
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THE GRASS truly is greener at Park primary school in Dunollie, after a disgusting practise has been finally stamped out.

As reported four weeks ago, the pupils were fed up with irresponsible dog owners allowing their pets to foul on grassy areas in the school grounds, with 27 individual piles of dirt needing to be cleared up the day *The Oban Times* visited on November 4.

However, in an almost instant turnaround, after the issue was highlighted in *The Oban Times*, dog owners have curtailed their neglectful behaviour.

Primary four pupil Nicola Macniven, who is a member of the school's Eco group, said: 'There was only one piece of dog dirt to pick up the day the story was in the paper, then after that there's been none since.'

'It's great because we don't get it on our shoes when we're out in the playground now.'

Head teacher Gillian Carney said: 'We'd like to show our appreciation to residents for refraining from allowing their dogs to foul in the playground, please keep it up. And thanks to *The Oban Times* for letting the public know about this problem and helping us solve it.'

Janitor Ronnie Guthrie said he was glad people were finally being responsible for their dogs.



TAKING THE LEAD: Park primary school Eco group members Matthew Pollock, Aidan MacDonald and Nicola Macniven with school janitor Ronnie Guthrie 16_t48parkhappy01

Russell relishes backbench role

EUAN PATERSON
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FAR from being a casualty of First Minister Nicola Sturgeon's first cabinet reshuffle, Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell insists he decided the time was right to spend more time with his constituents.

He said he stood down from his cabinet post of education and life-long learning secretary to concentrate on constituency matters.

Mr Russell pointed to the demands of a cabinet role alongside serving a constituency as 'huge and varied' as Argyll and Bute in explaining his decision to leave the government post. He is succeeded by Angela Constance MSP.

He was a member of former First Minister Alex Salmond's cabinet for seven-and-a-half years, of which he served five as education secretary.

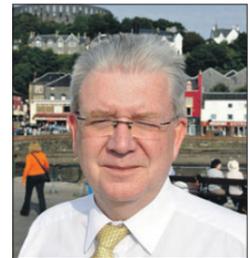
Mr Russell said: 'My five years as education secretary was a learning experience in every way but I recently decided that whilst I fully intend to stand again for Argyll and Bute at the Scottish parliament elections, I would not wish to go into government for a third term given the demands of serving this constituency as well as travelling the length and breadth of Scotland (and sometimes overseas) as a min-

ister. Nicola's election was bound to produce an early reshuffle so I took this ideal opportunity to step down.'

Mr Russell, who has lived in Argyll for more than 20 years, said that when he first became a minister in government, he was a regional member for the South of Scotland. But he said the move to succeed Jim Mather as Argyll and Bute MSP - his 'greatest honour' - in 2010 brought 'new responsibilities'.

'Not least,' he said, 'the imperative to hold surgeries, visit constituents and attend events in every part of the county. That presents particular challenges.'

He said serving his constituents had always been his first priority: 'I am now going to work even harder for everyone here in order to live up to the extraordinary trust this area has placed in me.'



STEPPED DOWN: Michael Russell

Man had knife at boxing screening

A MAN was arrested by police after he allegedly threatened people with a knife in an Oban pub.

The incident took place during the screening of a boxing match at around 12.15am on Sunday.

The 36-year-old man discarded the knife but it was recovered by police who have charged the man with a number of offences, including resisting arrest.

Shop trolley crash witnesses sought

POLICE in Oban are looking for witnesses to an incident in Tesco car park when the driver of a red Volkswagen Transporter is alleged to have driven into a trolley and damaged another car.

It is believed that the Transporter drove into a parking space, knocking a trolley into another car, causing damage, between 3.15pm and 3.45pm on Friday, November 7.

Anyone with any information should contact PC David Thurman at Oban police station on 101.

Police report man for shoplifting

A 40-YEAR-old man has been reported to the procurator fiscal following a shoplifting incident in a George Street outlet. Police were alerted on November 18 at 12.20pm and the property was recovered.

Money flows in for community energy

A COMMUNITY energy scheme in Lochaber is almost halfway to its funding target, bringing the plan closer to reality.

Sunart Community Renewables has offered stakes in a hydro-electric scheme for a previously untapped power source in Strontian and members say they have received £135,000 in shares since launching in October - almost half of the £284,000 required.

Once the investment is up and running, electricity will be sold to the national grid to create revenue for the community. Any surplus will be donated to a local benefit fund.

Project manager Dale Meegan said: 'Some other community schemes have mainly been financed by outside investors but we're delighted that more than half of our investors are local.'

'Sunart is hydro heaven - a greater depth of rain fell on Strontian in three weeks recently than throughout all last winter in England and it was the wettest October on record.'

Dave Thompson, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, has already invested in the scheme.

He said: 'Community shares are a fantastic way of raising money for community ventures and also bringing decent returns to investors.'

'However, it is not all about financial return for my investment. I support this exciting project as it will help in our drive towards a more sustainable future, and will help to raise money for local projects in the process.'

Planning permission for the scheme has been granted and construction is due to start early next year.

Infrastructure delay costing £2 billion

A SCOTTISH parliamentary committee has estimated that £2 billion extra could be invested in renewables projects in the Outer Hebrides if infrastructure was improved.

The Scottish parliament's economy, energy and tourism committee has written to Dermot Nolan, CEO of Ofgem, calling on him to address concerns that potential renewables projects on the islands are being undermined by on-going delays to the delivery of national grid infrastructure to the islands.

The £2 billion investment would be used to create jobs and boost the local economy, but the SNP claims that continued delays in establishing grid connections are holding such investment back.

Welcoming the committee's move, Highlands and Islands SNP MSP Mike MacKenzie said: 'Scotland's islands are home to vast energy potential, but in order to secure the jobs and investment that come with these resources, they need to be able to transmit their energy to the rest of Scotland and beyond. The years of delay in establishing the grid connections that are needed to the Outer Hebrides is a disgrace and is undermining the economy of the Western Isles.'

SNP MP for Na h-Eileanan an Iar, Angus MacNeil said: 'The Scottish government has been actively campaigning for interconnectors to our islands, but for too long there has been only delay after delay from Ofgem and Whitehall.'

'Ofgem needs to wake up to the damage that its delays and inaction in this area are causing and explain its failure to make progress.'

Fair Trade backed by Argyll scheme

ARGYLL and Bute council has launched a new Buy With Confidence scheme and logo aimed at supporting Fair Trade businesses.

The scheme provides consumers with a list of approved traders in their area that have given their commitment to Fair Trade.

Alan Morrison, the council's regulatory services manager, said: 'The scheme gives consumers in Argyll and Bute a list of traders that we endorse, that have undergone a number of detailed checks and who are supported by good references.'

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Ballachulish

BALLACHULISH community council met in the Jubilee Pavilion on November 4.

Matters discussed:

The transfer of ownership for the village boatsheds is in process. Ownership will soon be in the Ballachulish community company's name.

There has been no response from the Co-operative store's head office regarding safety concerns in the car park. Councillor Andrew Baxter confirmed the car park was the responsibility of the Co-operative as outlined in the lease. Head office confirmed the point of contact was the store manager.

A grant application for a war memorial had been submitted to Highland Council. A public meeting will be arranged soon to confirm details.

Councillor Baxter confirmed the sale of land had gone through for a new recycling point.

A Facebook page was to be set up to ask locals what speed limits locals would like to see in the village.

Councillor Baxter was going to ask Highland Council if a village resident can cut down a rotten tree at West Laroeh. Currently the landowner would not allow the tree to be felled.

The play park committee was still looking for new members, to join the community council.

Members of the community council would cut back vegetation on paths at the croft and on Park Road, volunteers were being sought to help.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday December 2. Everyone welcome.

Dunoon

TWO DUNOON Grammar school pupils have received recognition from celebrities for their performance of a song written by a Scottish folk singer.

Arlene MacKechnie and Abigail Pryde published a version of Eric Bogle's iconic song 'No Man's Land' on social media on Remembrance Day, November 11 2014, to commemorate the centenary of World War One.

Launched on YouTube, with a link to War Child's Just-Giving donation page, the song sparked massive interest across the country and achieved impressive statistics on social media within just three days - including huge interest on Twitter, a 20,000 Facebook post reach and attracting 1,750 direct views on YouTube from 30 different countries. Celebrities who have shared the song on their twitter feeds include; Jools Holland, retired footballer Colin Hendry and former First Minister of Scotland Jack McConnell.

Arisaig

ARISAIG and District Community Council met in Astley Hall on October 20.

Among the matters discussed were the following:

- The village notice board was now accessible but the community council was still looking for a new site for it.
- A landowner plans to lodge a complaint with Royal Mail about placing a post box on his land without seeking permission. The community council still hoped a larger box could be placed in the village.
- Despite plans for an expansion of the area's medical practice being shelved the temporary reduction of two surgeries per week in Arisaig had not been increased back to three. The secretary would contact the doctor to request further information.

The next meeting will be on January 19 2015.

Kilmore

THE BIG Christmas draw of Kilmore 100 Club will take place on Saturday, December 6 in Kilmore Hall at 5.30pm when prizes of £500, £300 and £100 will be won.

This will be done as the outdoor hall Christmas lights are switched on and Santa will be there to see the children.

Kilmore 100 Club winners: September, £200 K MacIntyre, £100 J Darby; October £100 D Wilson, November £100 H Whittle.

Port Ellen

THE DOCTOR'S surgery in Port Ellen in Islay has been bought by NHS Highland, giving more security to services in the Islay village.

The health board bought the property, Geirhilda, from the former GP Dr Jean Knowles.

An NHS Highland spokesman said the purchase ensured the health board could continue to provide services from the property.

Ulva Ferry

PUPILS at Ulva primary school, Mull, took part in a sponsored swim on November 13 for Children in Need.

Eight pupils swam an impressive 200 lengths of the Isle of Mull Hotel pool in Craignure and raised £155.



HIVE OF ACTIVITY: Kinlochleven primary school pupils were on their best 'bee-haviour', as they prepared to assemble and paint their adopted honey bee hives

Kinlochleven schools a hive of activity

THERE is a buzz around Kinlochleven as schoolchildren are doing their bit for bee conservation.

Both the village primary and high schools have each adopted a hive for honey bees to learn about the important part the insects play in the ecosystem.

Pupils will build and paint their hives in special colour schemes from a choice of four; world war one, Bannockburn, Commonwealth, before each one is placed into a designated bee colony near Duror. The project is run by Highland Titles, a group which sells small plots of land to members of the public for use as mini nature reserves.

Stewart Borland, a volunteer from the group, said: 'We are well aware of the decline of the world's honey bee population but children need to know too.

The presentations we've been running for local schools recently, with help from sustainability business Plan Bee, were an eye-opener for the kids.

'We have shown them that the supermarket shelves they see stocked with fruit and vegetables would be totally empty if there were no bees around.'

The Duror bee reserve will encompass 10 different hives from schools across the West Highlands, including Ballachulish primary.



GREAT TRIP: Plockton high school pupils enjoyed seeing the Eiffel Tower lit up

Plockton

PLOCKTON High School senior pupils enjoyed a visit to Paris, thanks to fundraising in the community.

Pupils and teachers held coffee mornings and bagpicks in supermarkets to help pay for the 20 language students' trip.

Once in France, the teenagers visited landmarks including the Eiffel Tower, River Seine and the Notre-Dame cathedral.

Strathfillan

THE ISSUE of patient transport was top of the agenda recently at the Strathfillan community council meeting.

Previously, the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) had provided transfer to appointments for patients who required it, but the comprehensive service was discontinued on August 26.

This has been a serious issue for people in the Strathfillan area, as some appointments in Stirling and Falkirk are impossible to attend and get home again the same day, using public transport.

Ken Mitchell, director of scheduled care from the SAS attended the meeting on November 10, advising those in attendance that the SAS is, and always has been, only responsible for the transport of patients who require clinical or medical assistance during the journey, such as oxygen or a stretcher, and that the need for patient escorts is now decided on a case-by-case basis.

At the moment, nationally, there are a number of small community transport providers, all of which have slightly different constitutions and rules.

NHS Forth Valley is now working to put in place a transport hub to co-ordinate transport arrangements, and is also working with Stirling council to address the problems with patient transport.

A Scottish Ambulance Service spokesman said: 'The patient transport service provides transport to and from healthcare appointments for people who have a medical or mobility need for transport.

'In the last 12 months the Patient Transport Service has undertaken 48 transfers to hospital for patients in the Strathfillan area.

'Requests for ambulance transport are assessed with the patient to ensure the fullest understanding of their needs so that we can respond appropriately to those patients, who for medical reasons need ambulance transport to their appointments.

'If a patient does not qualify for transport they have the opportunity to appeal and the decision will be reviewed.

'Where alternative transport is extremely limited, every effort will be made to transfer the patient.'

MORVERN lines

Death traps for unwary deer

AS THE year hastens towards its end and the wild red deer move down from their summer haunts to the low ground in search of food and shelter, there is more than mother nature ready to catch the unwary as the report on the front page of last week's *Oban Times* records.

If Dougie Gibson, Arisaig, had not arrived on the scene the young hind he found trapped in a wire fence, would have died a slow, terrifying and agonising death and probably not before its eyes were picked out by a raven or a hooded crow. The accompanying photograph taken in Morvern not long ago, shows the fate of a large stag caught in similar circumstances. He was less fortunate. Judging by the disturbance on the ground, he too must have been there for many days. No wild animal deserves such an undignified and stressful end.

Where deer have access to low ground, especially in winter, farmers and crofters and indeed anyone owning or managing land, should either inspect their stock fences on a regular basis or remove the single top wire altogether and insist new ones are built without them. There is no excuse for poor surveillance these days with so many quad bikes and all-terrain vehicles around.



STRESSFUL: A Morvern stag found dead in an old wire fence

Mammoth coastal walk

IF YOU see a figure dressed in army camouflage walking along the shores of one of Argyll's many sea lochs in the next few weeks and months carrying a huge rucksack, stop and say hello or even offer him a cup of tea and a hot bath.

His name is Adam Short and he is walking round Britain's coastline to raise money for Save the Children and the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). Adam, who is now in Sunart, set off from Southampton in March on his challenging 6,600-mile journey and is surviving in the wild. Unlike others who have attempted this gruelling route, Adam really is following the coastline all the way and taking no shortcuts.

His route, which has been up the east coast and round Cape Wrath, has not been without incident having fallen down three cliffs and managing to escape with just a few cuts and bruises. Considering the number of inlets and sea lochs there are along Argyll's rugged coastline, Adam will have his work cut out for him especially at this time of the year.

For further information about Adam's journey and how to make a donation to the charities he is supporting, Google 'Adam Short UK Coastal Trek'.

Few migratory birds

ACCORDING to the United Nations Environment Programme and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), migratory birds are on the brink of extinction in Great Britain.

Fieldfares and redwings were noticeably absent in their usual numbers in Morvern this year. Fieldfares are large, colourful thrushes, much like a mistle thrush in general size, shape and behaviour.

They are very social birds, spending the winter in flocks of anything from a dozen or two to several hundred strong. The redwing is most commonly encountered as a winter bird and is the UK's smallest true thrush. Its creamy strip above the eye and orange-red flank patches make it distinctive.

By now both species should be seen in large numbers around Loch Aline, Loch Teacuis and by the Sound of Mull feeding in fields and hedgerows and rarely visiting gardens and bird tables. By mid November they had usually gone altogether. RSPB and UN officials believe a lack of food and a shortage of safe nesting sites due to farming practices in the UK means some struggle to breed. Abroad, the birds face hazards on their migratory routes ranging from illegal shooting in Malta to deforestation and the degradation of land in Africa due to oil exploration and other industries. No doubt the hordes of pine-martins have not helped when these visitors finally reached Argyll.

A very special war memorial

MORVERN is unique among Highland parishes. Not only does it have two very handsome stone crosses to commemorate the fallen in both the First and Second World Wars, it also has a holiday cottage for ex-servicemen and women. The 'Cottage by The Shore' was the inspiration of Mrs M L Cameron, who belonged to an old Morvern family. The cottage, overlooking the entrance to Loch Aline, was built by The Glasgow Morvern Association to enable anyone from the parish who had served in the armed forces but had settled elsewhere, to return to their own land. It was opened in June 1950 before a crowd of about 500 by the Rev Archibald Mackenzie, president of the Association. In his address Mr Mackenzie recounted how Morvern's sons had fought with valour and distinction. 'It was,' he said, 'not only a memorial to the Fallen from their own parish, but a place of joy and gladness to those who had come home from the wars, and their descendants. Highlanders in faraway lands,' he told them, 'always hankered to get back some day to the place of their birth and now for Morvern people that would be possible.'

Iain Thornber
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Dalmally

THE CHILDREN of Dalmally primary school sang 'It's a long way to Tipperary' at the WWI concert 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' at St Conan's Kirk in Lochawe on November 7.

The evening also featured pipers from Oban high school, Tainuilt Gaelic choir and Ann Barlow on fiddle. Speakers read letters from local soldiers, written on the front line, as well as stories and a poem from *The Oban Times* during The Great War.

The event proved very popular and the Friends of St Conan's Kirk hopes to make it an annual event.



GENEROUS: members of Lochaber and District Canine Society with the cheque for £889.76 they donated to the Search and Rescue Dog Association

Dog club boosts rescue charity

LOCHABER and District Canine Society has donated almost £900 to a rescue dog charity.

The club presented a cheque for £889.76 to the Search and Rescue Dog Association's (SARDA) Tom Gilchrist. Of that amount, £472.50 had been raised through a sponsored walk in July and £417.26 from the canine society's annual dog show.

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Hundreds unite to back strongman

HUNDREDS of people from Lochaber united last Sunday to support a local strongman battling a rare form of cancer.

The Haldenby Strongman Classic held at Caol community centre saw the public raise more than £3,000 for Mark Haldenby, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma two years ago and will next week undergo a stem cell transplant in his fight to beat the disease.

Other athletes in the area, led by Stuart Whyte from Fort William, organised the event featuring a 14-man strongman contest, food and drink stalls, music, a raffle and auction to raise money for Mark and his family.

Mark was in attendance all day with his wife Caroline and their children Ebony, 13, Jorja, 10, and Priya, 5. He said: 'I'm just overwhelmed. I'm lost for words because we've got 14 of the strongest men in Scotland who have come from all over to raise money.'

Mark hopes his stem cell operation will be the last treatment he needs and it will cure him, following a gruelling period of chemotherapy.

One organiser, Kim MacMillan, said there were plans for an event every year to help other families dealing with similar illnesses. She said: 'Mark is a really modest guy and the only reason he wanted to do this was so we could raise money for another family next year.'

'We would like to thank all the businesses and everyone who took part.'

See page 26 for more.



Happy couple's delight at dive into life's biggest adventure

A SELF-confessed adrenaline junkie and her new husband made a splash last weekend when they had their recent nuptials blessed during a special ceremony at The Underwater Centre in Fort William.

Guests watched Dorota

Bankowska and new husband James Abbott tie the knot in a 1.5 million litre onshore seawater tank, which is normally used for subsea training. The bride wore a traditional wedding dress and veil for the ceremony, weighted down for the occasion, while her

teacher husband wore a kilt. Dorota, who trained as a commercial diver in Fort William, said: 'We're both very happy to be able to complete our wedding celebrations in such a unique way; James and I don't do things traditionally.'

Council tax rise the 'only way' to protect main services

BUT LEADER CLAIMS OPPOSITION 'ALL AT SEA'

LOUISE LEE
lee@obantimes.co.uk

“People have hit the buffers with what they are willing to lose”

Councillor Carolyn Wilson

HIGHLAND Council opposition is 'all at sea' with its plans to raise the council tax, says council leader Drew Hendry.

But opposition leader councillor Carolyn Wilson says the only way to protect front line services is to 'raise the council tax by five per cent'.

In a statement, councillor Wilson said she was determined not to let the people of the Highlands down - and the only way to do that was by raising the council tax by five per cent.

She says the rise would mean about £1 per household per week.

The Independent group leader said that while the 32-strong opposition group 'didn't have the time to prepare a full budget,' it did feel there were a number of 'red lines' in the budget proposals that were unacceptable.

She said those were changes to the school day, public toilets, winter gritting, libraries, swimming pools and leisure services.

'People have hit the buffers with what they are willing to lose from front line council services,' she said.

'It is a brave step to say we should raise the council tax - but one local authority has to be the first to do it.'

'Will all the other councillors be willing to say 'yes' to a

motion that will end the misery of budget cuts?' Claiming the now cancelled proposals for shortening the school week were 'only the tip of the iceberg', she said there was a number of other proposals that were 'equally unacceptable to the Highland community'.

The implications of a council tax increase for the local authority would mean the loss of an enhanced payment from the Scottish government to provide essential services.

At present Highland council receives a payment of £3.5 million to deliver certain aspects of the local authority's programme. A rise in council tax, the opposition group projects, would bring £2.5 million into the council's coffers.

Defending the shortfall between the Scottish government payment and the council tax, the group said it would put pressure on ministers to keep the enhanced payment in place.

In a statement on Tuesday, the group said there was 'no rush to

get the budget out in December'. 'This is a four-year budget,' councillor Wilson said, 'and the truth is that without the savings the SNP-led administration wanted to make from its cancelled plans to cut the school day - then it is just not going to be able to balance the budget in future years.'

Councillor Drew Hendry, council leader, dismissed the opposition plans for raising the council tax. He said: 'The opposition is completely at sea with this proposal. If we asked the people of the Highlands to pay more for their council tax they would in effect be paying twice. You would be asking people to pay twice for no gain whatsoever.'

'The idea that the Scottish government would simply accept to make the enhanced payment and accept a rise in the council tax is nonsense.'

'There were a number of proposals in the budget that went out to consultation. Some of these will be taken forward and some will be more painful to our communities than others. But the quality of services the council provides will not be diminished.'

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The Oban Times

& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

To quote Hannibal Smith, the inimitable star of the hugely popular 80s TV action adventure 'The A Team': 'I love it when a plan comes together.'

And there's no better example of a plan coming together than that of the Friends of the Oban Community Playpark.

Glasgow Letter

Glasgow Tiree Association

LESSER Partick Burgh Hall was filled to capacity recently for Glasgow Tiree Association's annual concert.

In a varied programme, the singers were Linda MacLeod, Alasdair Whyte and Darren MacLean with instrumental items from the Rowan brothers, from Tynault, and Kathryn Calendar. Chairwoman for the night was actress, comedienne, singer and playwright Isobel Rutter. Her humour throughout, as she regaled stories of her upbringing in Tiree and her time at Oban high school, made this a friendly and fun concert enjoyed by everyone.

The following evening Tiree celebrations continued when a large crowd danced the night away to the music of Skipinnish.

Gaelic drama

THERE will be a rare treat for Glasgow Gaels in the Sgoil Gaidhlig Glaschu this coming Saturday, November 29, at 7.30pm, when there will be a production of 'An Dileab' by the Tìre Players and then 'Na Bi Tursach' by Uist Drama Team.

Glasgow Skye Association

THE ANNUAL concert and dance of the Glasgow Skye Association will take place in Glasgow University Union on Friday December 5 at 7.30pm.

The guest of honour will be John Norman MacLeod, vice principal and director of studies at Sabhal Mor Ostaig.

Entertainment will be provided by singers Margaret MacLeod, Eilidh Munro, Seumas Campbell and Robert Robertson, fiddler Fiona MacAskill and the Glasgow Skye Association Pipe Band.

Choir dinner

MEMBERS of Glasgow Islay Gaelic Choir and friends came together last weekend to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the choir.

After an enjoyable meal Morag Nall, an original member of the choir, gave an insight into what life in the choir was like back then, prior to proposing a toast.

Choir president Robert MacNair was in charge of proceedings and during the evening dancing to the fine ceilidh music of Deoch 'n Dorus was interspersed with singing items.

College of Piping

THIS year's Echoes of Oban concert, featuring winners from this year's Argyllshire Gathering, will take place in the College of Piping, this coming Saturday at 7pm.

Your Letters

THE EDITOR welcomes letters of approximately 200 words in length for publication on this page.

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

Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact telephone number will not be printed.

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

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

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

Those piping will include Cameron MacDougall, Craig Sutherland, Willie McCallum, Decker Forrest and Roderick MacLeod.

The following Saturday, December 6, at 7.30pm, the college will host the next concert of the Pipers and Pipe Music of the Great War featuring music of the Black Watch. A quartet from the Army School of Piping and Drumming, together with professional pipers Donald MacPhee and Robert Wallace, will play and once again military historian and writer Colin Campbell will provide the commentary. Admission to this concert, which will be broadcast online, is free.

Congratulations

CONGRATULATIONS to Katie Ann MacDonald, better known to one and all as 'Nan', the 2014 winner of the Daily Record Best Contribution to Gaelic award.

Nan, from Point in Lewis, has led the Partick Glasgow playgroup for 25 years, in a volunteer capacity, and is an extremely worthy recipient of this award.

Diary dates

Thursday November 27: Comunnan Taobh an Iar Haggis Supper, Ellangowan Social Club - pre-booked.

Friday November 28: Glasgow Uist and Barra Association, annual reunion dinner dance, Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, 7.30pm to 12.30am.

Saturday November 29: Gaelic Drama - see above. Echoes of Oban, College of Piping, Otogo Street - see above. Phil Cunningham and Aly Bain with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Concert Hall, 7.30pm.

Tuesday December 2: Songs of Emigration with James Graham, Coffee and Craic, 74 Finnieston Street, Glasgow. Live at the Star, Admiral Bar, 72A Waterloo Street, 8pm, Barluath.

Thursday December 4: Glasgow Skye Association Annual Dinner, Glasgow University Union, 7pm for 7.30pm.

Friday December 5: Glasgow Skye Association annual concert and dance - see above. Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Scottish Night, 7.15pm.

Saturday December 6: College of Piping - see above. Tolbooth, Stirling, 8pm - Fred Morrison. Paisley Gaelic Christmas Carols, St Barnabas and Holy Trinity Church, 7.30pm, Gillebride MacMillan.

Pub scene

ROBERT Robertson and his band will be playing in the Park Bar on both Saturday and Sunday this weekend with Martin Pottinger/Nicky McMichan there on Friday.

In the Islay Inn it will be O'Cajunals on Friday and Twist of Fate on Saturday.

Neil Murray. Tel: 0141 954 8105. Email: neilmurray@yahoo.co.uk.



Oban Saints FC in action at 'Glen 2'

This week's flashback photograph comes from the files of The Oban Times and features an Oban Saints Football Club match at the town's 'Glen 2'. Matches are still played there today but the area separating the pitch from Oban and Lorne Rugby Club is now shielded by trees and bushes. Prints or emails of flashback photos sent to editor@obantimes.co.uk should be accompanied by a caption, name, address and telephone number. Anyone who wishes a print returned must supply a stamped, addressed envelope.

Letters to the editor

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Black Lynn flooding

Sir,
I write in reply to your article of Thursday November 13 headed 'Housing partly to blame', by Phil Moss.

I can remember the Black Lynn bursting its banks in 1980/81 and seriously flooding Malden Timber in the old laundry buildings (Co-op car park) and at the back of the old Ford garage (Co-op building). At that time the new hospital and houses were not built. Neither were there any commercial buildings in Lochavullin, only the mart.

The contributors to the Black Lynn start before the Whisky Dam and at the new mart Soroba. This is from memory only and I would be delighted to be corrected on this issue.

James Robertson, Balvicar.

Public must get a say

Sir
I would like to respond to an article in last week's edition.

The position of Friends of Loch Etive (FoLE) is clear. We support the opportunity for community councils to discover the plans that Dawnfresh has for Loch Etive. However, we believe everyone in the community should have the opportunity to see the plans.

It is the statutory duty of community councils to reflect the views of their population. If the population does not have the opportunity to discover and question the Dawnfresh plans how can they possibly form a considered opinion which then can be reflected by their community councillors?

FoLE believes the planning process should be clear, accessible, transparent and democratic.

FoLE appreciates that community

councillors are volunteers and that they work hard and tirelessly for their communities. If we have upset anyone, we apologise. This was not our intention.

We have never suggested these meetings were 'secret', merely that they were understood to be being held in private.

We understand the closed meeting between Dawnfresh and Connel community council and Ardchattan community council has now been cancelled. Hopefully, it can now be re-convened as an open meeting.

In the previous Dawnfresh application for its Etive 6 site at Sailean Ruadh, Dawnfresh was obliged by Argyll and Bute council to undertake an environmental impact assessment (EIA), which involved holding public meetings in the communities. Argyll and Bute council has decided it does not need to require Dawnfresh to carry out an EIA for its plans at Etive 3, Port na Mine, but FoLE believes the Etive public must have the opportunity to view and question Dawnfresh about its plans.

Keith Macmillan, trustee, Friends of Loch Etive.

Give community councils more power

Sir,
The devolution debate about more powers for Scotland really seems to have opened out.

Not only is there the campaign to get more powers to Holyrood, but there are two articles in *The Oban Times* of November 20, one calling for more powers for community councils and the second for major powers to be devolved to the three councils making up the 'Our Islands, Our Future' group.

It is obvious community councils would be better able to serve their areas in places such as Oban, Mull and the other isles if they had tax raising powers, or a devolved budget from Argyll and Bute council.

Small jobs could be dealt with by community council staff instead of what happens now which is that a community council has the power only to write a letter. A community council could build up a reserve for bigger projects such as a new play area, rather than leaving it all to volunteers to raise funds.

David Pollard, Salen, Isle of Mull.

Hospital care irony

Sir,
It was appropriate your reporter should comment on the death of Jim Bowman - a sad loss to Mull.

Jim and the Bowman family made, to my knowledge, an unprecedented gift of the land on which Mull's new hospital is built. It is consequently a sad irony that the excellent terminal care Jim received is not generally available to the Mull community in the very hospital which he and all his family did so much to make possible.

Drew Noble, Glasgow.

Key to Mull's future

Sir,
With regard to Val Ibsen's letter, would her community accept a holidaymaker telling the people of Bradford they should be living in a museum.

The beauty of our islands will always appeal to visitors, but the real future in any community is young people.

For there to be future generations of islanders, Mull needs its infrastructure to be brought up to standard.

Allan MacLean.



Beachd Ailein Ailean Caimbeul

THA MI A' CREIDSINN gum bi a' mhòr-chuid de mhuinntir Alba, ge b' e dè an taobh air am bheil iad a thaobh poilittigs, deònach meal-a-naidheachd a ghuidhe dha Nicola Sturgeon mar a' chiad Phrìomh Mhinistear boireann air Pàrlamaid na h-Alba. Mar a thuir am Mòrair Gill nuair a ghabh i a' bòidean, tha i air an dreuchd phoblach as àirde san dùthaich a ghleidheadh agus tha uallach mòr an cois an urrainn! Ach mura biodh comas aice tha mi cinnteach nach biodh i san dreuchd, agus nach inntinneach gum bheil i air tòiseachadh le gealltanais èisteachd ri beachdan bho gach partaidh eile agus co-obrachadh leotha uile airson math na dùthcha. 'S i a' cheist mhòr dè cho fada 's a mhaireas am modh obrach sin? Tha seanfhalac ann a tha ag ràdh gum faigh sith sith, ach gum faigh caise cothachadh!

Mas math leat sith, càirdeas agus cluain, èist, faic is fuirich sàmhach! Comhairle ghlic bho sheanfhalac eile ach 's e glè bheag de dhaoine dhàn biodh e comasach an stiùireadh sin a leantainn, agus shaoilinn nach maireadh neach-poilitigs balbh fada idir!

Bheil sin a' ciallachadh nach gabh an seòrsa co-obrachadh air an robh am Prìomh Mhinistear a' bruidhinn coileanadh? 'S e mo bheachd gum bheil mòran de shluagh na dùthcha beò an dòchas nach e a-mhàin gum gabh e dèanamh ach gun tèid a dhèanamh! Tha aitheamhan gan sgrìobhadh air cho beag suim 's a tha daoine a' gabhail ann an cuisean riaghailth na dùthcha, is cho leig 's a tha iad air bhòtadh ann an taghaidhean de gach seòrsa. Ach mar a tha mi air a ràdh roimhe an seo, tha mise gu mòr den bheachd gur e na bheil riochdairean nam partaidhean fa leth a' caitheamh de dh'ùine a' càineadh a chèile seach a bhith a' co-obrachadh as leth an t-sluagh a tha a' gràineachadh dhaoine bho phoilittigs. Nach bu mhadh gun dearbhadh gach taobh poilittigeach de Phàrlamaid na h-Alba gum bheil rùn agus comas aca gluasad air adhart ann an dòigh a choisinneas aire agus spèis a' mhòr-shluaigh agus nan soirbheachadh sin, cò aige tha fios nach fhadadh iad modh ùr ionnsachadh dhan fheadhainn a' bhios a' trod 's a' bòilich ri cùch a chèile ann an Westminster!

Leis na molaidhean aig a' Mhòrair Mac a' Ghobhainn air tuilleadh chumhachdan dha Pàrlamaid na h-Alba gu bhith a' nochdadh ann an beagan làithean, saoilidh mi gum bi cothroman gu leòr aig na partaidhean obrachadh còmhla!

IRRESPECTIVE of political affiliations most people will wish to congratulate Nicola Sturgeon on becoming the first female first minister of Scotland.

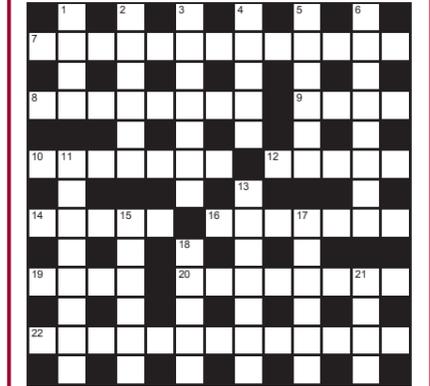
People will also welcome her commitment to listen to ideas from opposition parties as well as the Scottish electorate. Over the years voters have been put off politics by endless inter-party bickering instead of MSPs, and MPs, working together in the best interest of the country.

Lord Smith's recommendations on increased powers for the Scottish parliament should provide opportunities for cross-party co-operation at Holyrood!

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

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LAST week's SOLUTION



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Drivers reminded of new lower drink drive limit

HIGHLAND council is supporting a nationwide campaign to remind drivers of the new lower drink drive limit in Scotland and share advice on how to stay safe this festive period.

Scotland's drink drive limit is being lowered from 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood to 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.

The advice when it comes to drinking and driving continues to be that the best approach is not to drink any alcohol at all before getting behind the wheel.

Councillor Angela MacLean is encouraging drivers not to risk it this Christmas.

She said: 'The new lower drink drive limit for the whole of Scotland comes into force on Friday December 5 so we're working with Road Safety Scotland to make sure the message gets out to everyone.'

'One death as a result of drink driving is one death too many. Alcohol at any level impairs driving so the best approach is to have no alcohol at all if you're intending to get behind the wheel.'

'We want anyone going out to think about how they're going to get home, before they head out and to also remember to consider any journeys they make the morning after.'

Christmas festival and craft fair

THE ANNUAL Rotary Club Christmas Festival and Craft and Food Producers' Fair returns to Fort William's Nevis Centre this Saturday.

The fun-filled day will see Santa and his Cairngorm reindeer team start from the town's Cameron Square at 11am led by the Lochaber Pipe Band.

Outdoor entertainment in the recently refurbished Cameron Square will also be on offer from the Ben Nevis Allstar cheerleaders and the Tulloch Bellringers from Glen Spean.

The festival opens at 9.30am with a huge range of designer crafts and more than 70 stalls as well as Santa's Grotto, the Lochaber Community Windband, Buskers' Corner and a grand raffle.

Entry is free with all proceeds going to local charities.

Rotary Club President John Harvey said: 'The festival has now become Lochaber's premier event with more than 3,000 people attending last year. This is a great day out. There is something for all the family and by getting involved Lochaber's craft workers and worthwhile local charities are supported.'

Trust fundraising fashion show fun

BEN NEVIS Woollen Mill rang with laughter on Friday night as more than 100 people enjoyed the antics of some of the models who took part in a fashion show.

The show was a fundraiser for Lochaber Rural Education Trust and £738 was raised on the night.

Thieves on the lookout out for easy festive cash

POLICE in Lochaber have warned the public to be wary of opportunist thieves in the run-up to Christmas, particularly in secluded areas.

It follows a spate of break-ins to cars and commercial premises in November.

A vehicle was broken into outside Kilmonivaig parish church in Spean Bridge with a purse stolen from within, on the morning of November 13, after a similar incident when money was taken from a van in Claggan on the night of November 6-7 between 7pm and 7.30am.

Stewart James scrap merchants at Camaghael was broken into for the third time since September on the night of November 12-13, when a quantity of copper wire was taken.

Criminals had also forced entry into Chisholms garage in Ballachulish early on November 10 between midnight and 5am, escaping with a large amount of tools, and the public has been asked for any information about a white Ford Transit van that was seen in the area.

Police suspect that thieves travelling from central Scotland could be involved in the industrial break-ins.

David Campbell, acting inspector at Fort William police station, said: 'It's getting towards Christmas so thieves are looking for easy cash.'

'We are asking members of the public to ensure their property is secure, with no high value goods left within sight.'

Anyone with information about the incidents should contact the Police Scotland on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800555111.

Food bank battles to keep up with rising demand

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

LOCHABER'S food bank has fed more than 400 people in its first year of service.

The Fort William charity has increased all the time. For the first week while it was slow because people weren't sure how to go about getting food but now that the awareness is up we get more and more people in all the time.

He said: 'The numbers are increasing all the time. For the first week while it was slow because people weren't sure how to go about getting food but now that the awareness is up we get more and more people in all the time. 'With winter setting in we're expecting more people than ever because of the added expense of heating and Christmas.'

'It's terrible that people have to choose between putting on their heating or eating a meal. We had a pensioner in recently who had gone to bed on the Thursday night with no food or heating and had stayed that way until her neighbour brought her in here on Monday.'

The kind-hearted volunteer, who also works part time, said people from all walks of life fall on hard times and need their



HUNGRY: Lochaber food bank volunteers have fed more than 400 people in a year. From left, Pat Leslie, Alec McConachie, Donald Elder and Roia Wilson

help, including working families and students.

In the new year, the High Street food bank will be increasing its opening hours to three days a week to keep up with demand.

Despite millions of people all

over Britain relying on the lifeline service, food bank volunteers are still trying to shake the negative stigma attached to asking for help.

Mr McConachie said: 'A lot of people come in and they

don't want to talk about their circumstances because they're really embarrassed but they shouldn't be, it's not their fault.'

'We try to get them to sit down for a while and have a tea, coffee, or soup because if they haven't

been eating they feel the cold a lot more but most of them just want to get in and back out.'

A big problem facing families on the breadline is finding money to feed their children during the holidays, as many of them qualify for free school lunches but volunteers are hoping to set up a breakfast club by the summer to make sure Lochaber youngsters are eating when they're not at school.

Tesco in Fort William High Street will have collection trolleys in store next weekend and the shop has pledged to boost all food provided by 30 per cent, which Mr McConachie said was a 'massive help'.

He added: 'The people of Lochaber have been so generous, the donations have been fantastic. 'It's only thanks to their kindness that we're able to help as many people as we do.'

'It might look like we have a massive stock but you would be surprised how quickly it disappears, especially in the run up to Christmas.'

As well as donations, Lochaber food bank relies on volunteers. To help out or for more information contact Mr McConachie on 07778503276 or visit between 12 and 2pm on Mondays and Fridays.



Tea bar donates £6,000 to hospital

STAFF at Fort William's Belford Hospital have received a £6,000 donation from volunteer workers who run the tea bar.

The money was made up entirely from the cafeteria's proceeds and will go towards the purchase of specialist equipment in the combined assessment unit patient fund, including items such as wheelchairs and Christmas presents for patients.

Irene MacLean, charge nurse at the hospital, said: 'The patient fund relies entirely on donations and this is a large sum of money for us. We are really grateful.'

'It will benefit the patients hugely.'

Graduated driving licence would stop youths dying on roads, claims MSP

A GRADUATED driving licence should be introduced to stop youth deaths on the roads, says a Highland MSP.

Taking his idea to Westminster ministers for discussion, David Stewart has secured a face-to-face meeting with junior transport minister Robert Goodwill MP, to discuss his campaign to have a form of graduated licence introduced as a pilot in Scotland.

David Stewart said: 'For nearly five years now, I and my partners in the North of Scotland Driver Awareness Team (NOSDAT) have campaigned to have a form of graduated licence introduced as a pilot in Scotland.'

'We all know now that young and new drivers have come to be over represented in road collisions by the fact that they are both over confident and inexperienced.'

'Ten years of statistics can prove that up to 22 lives per year could be saved in Scotland alone

and up to £80million to the Scottish economy.'

'It's a no-brainer as far as we are concerned and I will be pushing the minister to follow our proposals which have recently been mirrored in a Department of Transport document relating to novice drivers.'

Mr Stewart's plan is that there is a 12-month learner phase for drivers at aged 17, with a requirement of 100 hours' daytime and 20 hours' night-time driving, all recorded in a log book.

At 18 years of age and after passing the theory tests, the driver would move to a probationary licence.

During this phase the driver would display a green 'P' plate and there would be a zero drink-drive limit and night time driving would be curtailed unless there was someone over 25 years of age in the car. After 12 months of a probationary licence the driver would proceed, aged 19, to a full unrestricted licence.

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Oban Winter Festival



OBAN Pipe Band played Jingle Bells as they led Santa and his reindeer in a parade to Oban's Station Square to kick-start the town's Christmas celebrations.

The reindeer parade was the climax to the opening weekend of this year's Oban Winter Festival and hundreds of people gathered to see primary school children Logan Watson (Dunbeg) and Iona Keys (Rockfield) turn on the town's lights. There was also entertainment from ceilidh band Ceol an Aire, Oban Spotlight Musical Theatre and an emotional tribute to their late Highland dance teacher by the Eilidh MacInnes School of Dance.

The 10-day festival began with Ballet West's Winter Wonderland concert in a packed Corran Halls last Friday night.

Before the reindeer parade on Saturday, there was dry slope skiing and mountain biking at Kilbowie Outdoor Centre, a science event, craft fayre in the Caledonian Hotel, a food market at Oban Distillery and a Disney Frozen sing-along at Oban Phoenix Cinema.

An enchanted trail through the Dunollie woods, organised by Tara

Coia of Dunollie Museum, attracted 300 people on Sunday.

Visitors to the town for the festival have helped to swell attendances at events and the interest in the festival this year is shown with the reach of social media: facebook posts recorded a reach of 35,000 people by Monday, compared with a total of 8,000 for the whole of last year's event.

A spokeswoman for the winter festival said: "We had 1,200 people through the door at the food market at Oban Distillery and the Victorian teas at the Studio Theatre in the Corran Halls were so busy they ran out of food."

"The reindeer parade was busier than ever and we surveyed a number of people who had come to Oban especially for the festival."

Attention now turns to this weekend's events, centering around St Andrew's Day celebrations on Saturday, including a Tartan Dash sponsored run, haggis hurling, an Oban pipe band ceilidh and Haggisfest, a search for Argyll's best haggis maker.



PARADE: George Street was filled with spectators as Oban Pipe Band led the reindeer parade to Station Square 16_148winter08



JOY: Competition winners, from left, Iona Keys, Logan Watson, Abbi Ferguson and Rhona Brunold on Santa's sleigh 16_148winter06

Left: Ballet West dancers Jonathan and Sara-Maria Barton. Photo: Stephen Lawson

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Winter Festival



COOL: These youngsters brought some sunshine to Ballet West's Winter Wonderland.
Photo: Stephen Lawson



CRAFT: Mary Stone from Taynult with some of her husband Graham's handmade clocks at the winter festival craft fair
16_148winter03



TRIBUTE: Dancers from the Eilidh MacInnes School of Dance performed an emotional tribute to their late teacher
16_148winter11



WINTER WARMER: Joy and Campbell Camerron watched the reindeer parade from the comfort of the Rowantree Hotel
16_148winter07



CAROLS: Singers from Oban Spotlight Musical Theatre entertain the crowd at Station Square
16_148winter10



THEME: Graham Fraser of Alba in Oban was one of the retailers embracing the Victorian theme last Saturday
16_148winter05

DRESSED TO IMPRESS: Ewen Munro manned his photography stand at the Victorian Market
16_148winter04



CREATIVE: Winners of the winter festival's Scottish-themed shoebox design competition are, from left: runner-up Jamie Wilson, winner Justin McIver and the Anderson/Clark family, third
16_148winter01

FAMILY FIRM: Mairi Fleck and daughter Katie at Mairi's Felt Unique stall at the Victorian market
16_148winter02

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HERE TO HELP: Colleen MacLean (left) and Kirsty Morrison from Ferguson Transport set up shop for the 'Around Lochaber in 80 Tables' event. Ferguson's was fresh from being named Scotland's environmental haulier of the year at the Scottish Transport News awards in Glasgow earlier this month



WINNERS: Six Lochaber businesses were presented with awards in the Moorings Hotel. From left, Finlay Finlayson and Lorna Finlayson, Crannog/Underwater Centre; Leslie Innes and Carol MacKinnon, Ferguson Transport; Lyndsey Bradley, head teacher; Andi Woodward, Delicraft; Alyson Smith, Lochaber Hope and Iain Ferguson, Nevis Radio

CHAMBER'S DELIGHT AS TURNOUT AT EVENT DOUBLES

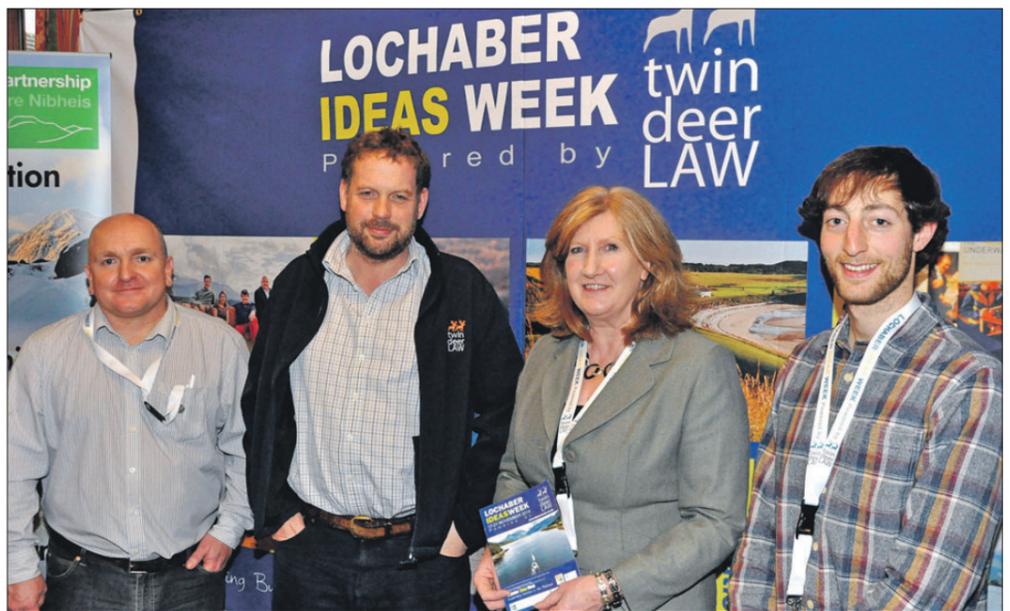
Ideas week just the business for Lochaber

GORDON WEBSTER
fort@obantimes.co.uk

FORT William celebrated both business and future opportunities as part of Lochaber Ideas Week. The second annual event, held between November 17 and 21, brought together budding entrepreneurs, prospering local businesses and motivational speakers to look at good practise in the town and beyond. Events were held in venues across Fort William and Banavie, celebrating business, education and community involvement. Around Lochaber in 80 Tables, a business speed dating event, held in Fort William's Alexandra Hotel saw representatives from 45 different businesses get together. Each had its own stall and spent the day visiting every other table in the room until all had an opportunity to meet one another. Lesley Benfield, chief executive of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, was pleased with its

impact. She said: 'We brought businesses together for the purpose of promoting their products and services, making new business contacts and identifying opportunities and markets. 'Businesses said it had been a very successful and worthwhile event. We more than doubled last year's turnout.' Events throughout the week included a Dragon's Glen, with four entrepreneurs presenting a local business idea to a panel of four judges. Oliver Millington was the winner with his Three Wise Monkeys climbing centre, due to open next year on Fassfern Road in Fort William. Thursday afternoon saw a presentation by author and adventurer Cathy O'Dowd, who spoke about being the first woman in the world to climb Mount Everest from both sides. Friday was rounded off with an awards ceremony to

recognise businesses which have significantly contributed to the region. The Underwater Centre in Fort William won the excellent customer focus award, while Alyson Smith from Lochaber Hope won the prize for local hero. Lyndsey Bradley, head teacher of both Acharacle and Ardgour primary schools, received a personal award for exceptional learning opportunity. Other winners included Nevis Radio, for outstanding business contribution to the community, Ferguson Transport as local employer and Deli Craft sandwich shop in the new business category. Lochaber Ideas Week project officer Will Rowland said: 'The event has doubled in size and quality from last year. 'There has been a good vibe, excitement and energy, while businesses gained valuable contacts. The question now is, what next?'



HIGH FLYER: Oliver Millington won Wednesday's 'Dragon's Glen' event for a presentation about his Three Wise Monkeys climbing centre opening next year. Oliver and four other contestants each had to pitch a business idea to the four 'dragons' at the table in the background (left to right) Anja Baak, Angus MacDonald, Alasdair Ferguson and Finlay Finlayson

SPONSORED: Lochaber Ideas Week was sponsored by Twindeer Law. Overseeing the opening day of the event were (left to right) Frazer Coupland, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce destination manager; Johnny Bell, Twindeer Law commercial lawyer; Lesley Benfield, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce chief executive and Will Rowland, Lochaber Ideas Week project officer.

“ There has been a good vibe, excitement and energy ”

Will Rowland
Ideas Week project officer



TOP LEFT: The 'Around Lochaber in 80 Tables' event was an innovative 'business speed dating' concept which allowed every firm in the room ample time to make contacts with everyone else present

ABOVE: Thursday saw author and adventurer Cathy O'Dowd present a talk about being the first woman to climb Mount Everest from both sides



LEFT: Monday's 'Around Lochaber in 80 Tables' event in the Alexandra Hotel saw 45 local businesses each set up a stall. A representative from each one spent 15 minutes at every other table in the room throughout the day until all companies had been given an opportunity to meet one another

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Author Beatrice Colin Workshop, Craignure Village Hall, 11am
Ramblers Walk, Sgurr Dhomhnuill & Druim Garbh, Contact 01855 821279
- FRIDAY 28TH NOVEMBER**
Oban Winter Festival, Various events, All day
Oban Art Society, An introduction to pastels, Lorn Resource Centre, Oban, 7.30pm
Grassroots Launch Party & Ceilidh, Skipinnish, Oban, 7.30pm
- SATURDAY 29TH NOVEMBER**
Oban Winter Festival, Various events, All day
Ramblers Walk, Gleann Rìgh to Glen Nevis - Onich, Contact 01855 821279
Christmas Baking Sale for Small Paws Rescue, Pets at Home, Oban, 10am-4pm
Christmas Fayre, Oban Congregational Church, 10.30am-2pm
2nd Oban Brownies, Playpark Fundraiser, Oban Guide Hall, 12-4pm
- SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER**
Oban Winter Festival, Various events, All day
Craft/Charity/Children's Market, Atlantis Leisure, Oban, 11am
Christmas Craft Fair, Seil Island Hall, Seil, 11am-4pm
Oban Winter Festival Lantern Parade and Finale Fireworks, 5pm Parade starts
- TUESDAY 2ND DECEMBER**
Ft William Accordion & Fiddle Club Musical Evening, Railway Club Inverlochy, 8pm
- THURSDAY 4TH DECEMBER**
Oban Accordion & Fiddle Monthly Club Night, Royal Hotel, Oban, 7.30pm
Ramblers Walk, Meall nan Damh - Glenfinnan, Contact 01855 821279

Email details of your event titled 'What's On' to whatson@obantimes.co.uk

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I wonder if anyone enjoys looking at the rows and rows of whisky in supermarkets in foreign lands as much as I do. On a recent visit to Paris, our local store - Franmarche had a surprising number of malts - both blends and single malts for extraordinary good prices. My friend Dot and I chose to try a Johnnie Walker Red Label at the discount price of 15 euro a bottle. I, as readers will know, do not generally drink Johnnie Walker - it was the name of my Dad's cousin who had a penchant for the alcohol. So it was with some caution that I was looking forward to finally tasting this whisky and discounting it from my favourites. When I am wrong I will say so...what an enjoyable drink. Shared with my friend-Dot on the balcony of our little pension it was deep delightful and very drinkable. Vive les Johnnie Walker - it was c'est magnifique.

Louise Lee

Meet the artist Fraser MacIver

FRASER MacIver is an ex-pat Canadian artist living and producing artworks in Scotland since 1991. Quite a character, a visit to his Crinan Canal side lodgings are quite a treat for first time visitors as he hands out a small 'embrolation' while works of art fill every wall. Fraser studied painting and printmaking at the Banff Centre school of Fine Arts in Alberta Canada, The Rhode Island School of Design faculty of painting and printmaking, and in his hometown, of Montreal Quebec at McGill University faculty of Art History, and also in Edinburgh at the Edinburgh Printmakers Workshop and Gallery. In the 1980s Fraser did several painting tours of California, and produced many fine

watercolours and a few interior murals in Pebble Beach, Los Angeles, Newport beach and Escondido to critical acclaim. Often rendering in fine detail such famous structures as, The Crocker Estate Pebble Beach, and notably the Ambassador Hotel and Coconut Grove Night-club in mid Wilshire Los Angeles for which work he was published in the Los Angeles Times in 1990. Living in an old Showman's Wagon on the Crinan Canal since 1997 gives him a unique and idyllic woodland setting for artistic inspiration, and over the past 17 years there he has produced many fine landscapes, florals and marine and boat renderings, and commissions in watercolour, oil, acrylic and copperplate etching. Throughout most of 2014, he has been publishing a series of buildings of note of the month in pen and ink. He has drawn a series of 12 interesting structures from various eras situated throughout Argyll, though he is presently concentrating on the Mid Argyll region. His work will be reproduced as limited edition prints for public and private sale, and the whole project is helping to record and re-sensitize people living in Argyll to the rich and varied architectural heritage in their very picturesque region. Another project under way since 2012 is a large private commission Fraser has undertaken on the Island of Salina, in the Aeolian isles north of Sicily. He is halfway through



Post-Mòd Ceilidh showcases talent

SKIPINNISH Ceilidh House hosted a post-Mòd cèilidh recently, showcasing some of the talented performers from this year's Royal National Mod in Inverness. Hosted by Gaelic singer Margaret MacLellan, the cèilidh was organised to raise funds for the 2015 Royal National Mod, which will be held in Oban. Performing on the night were some of the medal winners from this year's Inverness Royal National Mod, along with accordion player Ross MacPherson and piper Alastair MacLean. Pictured is Eilidh Cormack from Skye, performing the song An t-Aparan Goirid in Oban. Eilidh won the Gold Medal at the Royal National Mod in Inverness in October.

Votes streaming in for Trad Awards

THE MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards nominations' shortlist has had more votes in just one week than in the whole of last year. The premier traditional music awards has seen more than 100,000 votes since organisers, Hands Up for Trad, announced the 2014 nominees. The Trads will be announced at Inverness Leisure on Saturday December 13. As well as 16 prestigious awards being handed out, the evening will see performances from the best talent on the scene including Rura, 2014 BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Music Award winner Robyn Stapleton, Fiddlers Bid and Cruinn. Event founder and Hands Up for Trad's creative director, Simon Thumire, said: 'We cannot believe the response we have had. The number of votes is completely unprecedented. The fact that we're coming to Inverness definitely has effected this - the traditional music scene in the city is phenomenal and it's been a great year for music and culture. We're following closely behind the Royal National Mod which credited Inverness for it being their biggest and best event yet.' The public has until Friday November 28 to cast votes for who people want to see win in each category, including Event of the Year, Album of the Year, Composer of the Year and Instrumentalist of the Year, by logging online at www.scotstradmusicawards.com/voting. Winners who receive most industry and fan votes combined will then be unveiled on the night.



Fine night of music enjoyed on Skye



PIPER: Louise Hay MacBain entertained the Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club.

DESPITE the inclement weather, a large number of enthusiasts gathered in the Royal Hotel, Portree for the November meeting of the Skye Accordion and Fiddle Club. In the absence of a regular master of ceremonies, recently retired Jim Campbell returned to fill the breach for the evening and welcomed, to start the evening, fiddle tutor Laura Harrington and seven of her primary school fiddlers known as The Young Skye Strings to play a couple of sets. Following the young fiddlers, Laura went on to lead a group of her secondary age pupils of seven fiddlers and a cellist to entertain the delighted audience. Staying on a youth theme, 10-year-old Erin Baker played selections on her piano accordion accompanied on guitar by her dad, George. Another local fiddle tutor, Caerina Campbell with pupil Ellie MacPherson and Donald John Campbell on drums played several selections followed by Caerina playing some beautiful solos. To round off the first half of the evening Jim Campbell called on Ronnie MacRae to sing a few songs unaccompanied but with the audience joining in the chorus. The entire second half was devoted to the fine sound of The Colin Donaldson Scottish Dance Band which contributed a splendid and wonderfully varied session, much appreciated by the audience. Colin, based in Inverness, led his band on piano accordion, his wife Heather provided the drumming, on fiddle and bagpipe was Louise Hay MacBain, also from Inverness, and making up the last member of the quartet was Jimmy Cassidy from Scone on piano. There was variety aplenty with just one of the highlights being a lively set from Louise on the bagpipe, backed by the rest of the band, which had the room really jumping. A fine night of music came to an end and the club looks forward to its next meeting when guest group will be The Janet Graham Scottish Dance Band from Cumbernauld.

Ceilidh planned for Grassroots launch party

A CEILIDH is all set to do some good for those with very little this Christmas. The Grassroots launch party, to be held in Skipinnish Ceilidh House, Oban, is inviting those with an interest in the result of the referendum and to look towards the future of Scotland to the event tomorrow, Friday at 7.30pm. Those who come are asked to bring a gift for those who attend the Hope2Oban soup kitchen and receive help from The Lord's Larder for isolated and vulnerable adults. Cath Thomson, who runs The Lord's Larder, said: 'We try to ensure that every child in the community has a new toy and that vulnerable adults are looked after too, so we are looking for donations of toys for all ages, new not used, and not gift-wrapped as we need to be able to see what it is, as well as toiletries, hats, scarves and even boxes of biscuits.'

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Published on 11th December
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Lochaber High set to perform The Crucible

LOCHABER high school pupils will be giving a bewitching performance next month, as they present *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller. In a departure from the highly successful musicals of recent years, the teenagers are taking on a full-length play this year, the first the school has seen in decades. Based on real events and set during the time of the Salem witch trials, the play deals with major themes such as adultery, betrayal and revenge. Lochaber high school head teacher Jim Sutherland said this had been a 'major challenge' for the pupils but made assurances they were working hard to offer a great performance. Shows will begin at 7pm every evening from December 9-11 and tickets are available from the school library.

String duo in Kilmallie Hall

A STRING duo which came together from opposite sides of the globe will be visiting Lochaber to perform as part of this year's Music For All series. High Heels and Horse Hair compromises Australian violinist Alice Rickards and Scottish cellist Sonia Cromarty, who will take to the stage at Kilmallie Hall on Friday November 28 at 7.30pm.

Skye Festival recognised for community initiative



MADE IN SLEAT: The theatre show *Aiseag*, created by Gaelic singer and musician Mary Ann Kennedy, was among the attractions at the award-winning Skye Festival

THE SKYE Festival has received a community award after returning this year for the first time since 2008. The music and cultural event - resurrected this summer following a six-year gap - was named as community initiative of the year at the Highland Third Sector Awards held in Dingwall. It took place on the Sleat peninsula on Skye throughout July and August, with concerts, theatre shows, art exhibitions and minibus tours among the attractions.

The festival was staffed entirely by volunteers and run in conjunction with the week-long Made in Sleat exhibition, which showcased local artists and craft makers. Duncan MacInnes, from organisers Skye Events for All (SEALL), said: 'We are delighted to have won this award in recognition of the hard work and dedication of all our volunteers. 'We delivered a festival which appealed to local residents as well as visitors and helped bring significant business to the area.'

Hebrides to relive Call of the Gael

ARTEFACTS from the renowned In Flanders Fields museum in Ypres, Belgium, are to form part of a series of exhibitions commemorating the remarkable human sacrifice of the Hebrides population during World War I. Beginning later this month, the exhibitions are part of the Gairm nan Gàidheal or Call of the Gael project being run by Pròiseact nan Ealan/The Gaelic Arts Agency. The initiative aims to discover and retell the stories of the island communities who experienced the devastating impact of the First World War more than most other areas. With a population of less than 30,000, more than 6,500 Lewisians saw service between 1914 and 1919. In total, 1,151 men from the island's four parishes were killed on active service - around 17 per cent of those who left for war and one of the highest proportions of any community in the United Kingdom. The death toll was no less severe across the rest of the Western Isles, however, with small communities bearing the harshest toll of the Great War. Later in the year,

exhibitions will begin in North and South Uist, a place where 367 men from the Uists and Benbecula, serving with 2nd Service Battalion of the Camerons in the 9th Division, were killed in the opening days of the Battle of Loos in September 1915. Out of a total Battalion strength of 800, only 72 men survived. The devastating impact of war on the already small and fragile communities that were left behind - as well as recollections of what the men faced when they reached the front line - will be detailed through photos, words and memorabilia on show. Among these artefacts will be items on loan from the internationally acclaimed In Flanders Fields museum, whose research staff are supporting the project. Organisers have also worked across the islands to research the exhibitions and explore personal accounts handed down through the generations, all of which will go towards painting a picture of the effect the war had on the Hebrides. The exhibitions are the latest stage to the project, which has already seen drama productions held across the islands as well as

Seven days

Thursday 27

WHAT Meet the author WHERE Craignure Village Hall, Mull WHEN 11am -12.30pm COST free Share a morning workshop with author Beatrice Colin. Beatrice Colin is a novelist based in Glasgow. *Pyrate's Boy*, set in Scotland and the West Indies, has been short-listed for a Scottish Children's Book Award, 2015, and *My Invisible Sister* (2010), which was co-written with Sara Pinto, and has been optioned by Disney. The Luminous Life of Lilly Aphrodite/The Glimmer Palace (2008), a novel set in Berlin in the early 20th century, was translated into eight languages, was a Richard and Judy pick and was short-listed for several awards. Her most recent novel for adults, *The Songwriter* (2010) was set in jazz-age New York.

Friday 28

WHAT Ghost Walk WHERE Dunollie Castle, Oban WHEN 6.30pm COST £6 In the grounds of Dunollie House, Ganavan Road Oban. In the shadow of the trees something stirs... dark secrets and evil deeds. Follow if you dare! Outdoor clothing and footwear recommended. Over 12s only recommended, under 16s accompanied by an adult.

Saturday 29

WHAT Christmas Fayre WHERE Oban Congregational Church WHEN 10.30am -12.30pm COST tbc Come along and join in the fun, everyone welcome.



Sunday 30

WHAT Oban Winter Festival Lantern Parade WHERE Corran Halls, Oban WHEN 5 -6.15pm COST free Gather at the Corran Halls from 5pm. Bring a lantern or torch (no naked flames). Parade will feature large lanterns representing the Festival theme 'The Salmon, The Stag, The Wool and The Water' by Tara Coia. Parade leaves Corran Halls, led by Oban Pipe Band and joined by Festival Samba Group at 5pm.

Monday 1

WHAT World Aids Day WHERE Various Locations WHEN all day COST free World AIDS Day is held on December 1 each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. World AIDS Day 1988 was the first ever global health day.



Tuesday 2

WHAT Lunchtime Prayers WHERE Campbell Street Church WHEN 1-2pm COST Free A twice-monthly space mid-week for spiritual refreshing. Every first and third Tuesday. At 1.10pm, a service of Bible readings and prayers. From 1.30pm, teas/coffees/etc in adjoining hall. Before and after, time to reflect/read/pray in a quiet and pleasant atmosphere. The building is open for your use from 12.30pm till 2pm. From Argyll Square go up Albany Street. Turn first left at the council office. The church is 100 metres ahead opposite the white block of flats.

Wednesday 3

WHAT The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part One WHERE Oban Phoenix Cinema WHEN various COST various The Games are over. Now the Revolution is about to begin. The worldwide phenomenon of The Hunger Games continues to set the world on fire with *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1*, which finds Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) in District 13 after she literally shatters the games forever. Under the leadership of President Coin (Julianne Moore) and the advice of her trusted friends, Katniss spreads her wings as she fights to save Peeta (Josh Hutcherson) and a nation moved by her courage. The Hunger Games: *Mockingjay - Part 1* is directed by Francis Lawrence from a screenplay by Danny Strong and Peter Craig and produced by Nina Jacobson's Color Force in tandem with producer Jon Kilik. Runs until Thursday December 4.



What We Did On Our Holidays	Thurs 27th	15:15	Fri 28th	15:15
	Mon 1st	15:15	Tues 2nd	15:15
	Wed 3rd	15:15		
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part One	Thurs 27th	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
	Fri 28th	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
	Sat 29th	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
	Sun 30th	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
	Mon 1st	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
	Tues 2nd	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
	Wed 3rd	15:45, 18:15, 20:50		
Mr Turner	Thurs 27th	17:30, 20:25	Fri 28th	17:30
	Sat 29th	17:30	Sun 30th	17:30
	Mon 1st	17:30	Tues 2nd	17:30
	Wed 3rd	17:30		
The Drop	Fri 28th	20:30	Sat 29th	20:30
	Sun 30th	20:30	Mon 1st	20:30
	Tues 2nd	20:30	Wed 3rd	20:30
Frozen Sing-Along	Sat 29th	12:30	Sun 30th	12:30
The Book of Life	Sat 29th	13:10	Sun 30th	13:10
Dolphin Tale 2	Sat 29th	15:10	Sun 30th	15:10

What We Did On Our Holidays (12A) Rosamund Pike, David Tennant and Billy Connolly star in a heart-warming comedy about an eventful family holiday. Doug and Abi are going through a painful divorce. Doug's father birthday party couldn't have come at a more inconvenient time. Heading off for the Scottish Highlands, the bickering couple issue their three young children with strict instructions to keep the divorce a secret. However, this is more easily said than done. **The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part One (12A)** The Games are over. Now the Revolution is about to begin. The worldwide phenomenon of The Hunger Games continues to set the world on fire with *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1*, which finds Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) in District 13 after she literally shatters the games forever. Under the leadership of President Coin (Julianne Moore) and the advice of her trusted friends, Katniss spreads her wings as she fights to save Peeta (Josh Hutcherson) and a nation moved by her courage. **Mr Turner (12A)** Timothy Spall gives an award-winning performance in Mike Leigh's luminous drama about the great British painter. In the mid 1820s, J.M.W. Turner (Timothy Spall) shares a studio with his elderly father William (Paul Jesson) and housekeeper and occasional lover Hannah Danby (Dorothy Atkinson). The brilliant, if eccentric landscape artist avoids his aggrieved former mistress, Sarah Danby (Ruth Sheen) - Hannah's aunt. He also barely acknowledges the existence of their two daughters. Travelling to Margate incognito in search of artistic inspiration, he meets and forms a great passion for a widowed landlady. **The Drop (15)** Follows lonely bartender Bob Saginowski through a covert scheme of funneling cash to local gangsters - 'money drops' - in the underworld of Brooklyn bars. Under the heavy hand of his employer and cousin Marv, Bob finds himself at the center of a robbery gone awry and entwined in an investigation that digs deep into the neighborhood's past where friends, families, and foes all work together to make a living - no matter the cost.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Oban Congregational Church
Christmas Fayre Saturday 29th November
10.30am - 2.00pm
Tea, Home Baking, Coffee, Soup/Bread
Christmas Gifts, hand-made crafts, cakes, greetings cards, games, raffle
All proceeds to church funds

ST ORANS & DUNBEG CHURCH Christmas Fayre
Connell Village Hall on Sat. 6th December 11.00am to 3pm
Gift, baking, preserves, decorations, books
Coffee & Tea, Soup Lunch

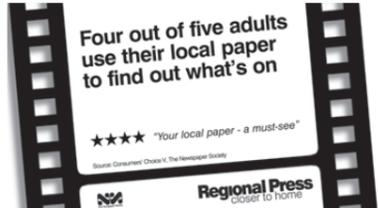
OBAN U3A
Please be aware that there will be no monthly coffee and chat meeting on Tuesday 2 December because we are holding our Christmas Lunch on that day. We extend festive greetings to all our members.

The Best of Scottish Comedy featuring Vladimir McTavish, Keir McAllister & Jim Park
Craignish Village Hall, Ardforn Friday 5th December 7.30pm
BYO booze/drinks/nibbles
Tickets £9/£6/£20
01852 500746,
cvh.artsevents@gmail.com,
www.ticketsource.co.uk

Friends of Craeae
A Christmas Musical Evening with The Dalriada Singers
Furnace Village Hall Thurs 11th December 7.30pm
Tickets £5.00 on door. Children Free accompanied by adult.
Mince pies, seasonal punch, soft drinks.
Reg. Charity no SC033244

FORT WILLIAM ACCORDION & FIDDLE CLUB
Musical Evening on Tuesday 2 December, 2014 at 8pm
GUEST ARTIST: Charlie Kirkpatrick
Railway Club Inverlochty All Welcome, Admission £4.00
Tea & Raffle Extra
In the event of a last minute cancellation by any guest artist the committee will find an alternative artist

Oban Accordion & Fiddle Club
Monthly club night Thursday 4th December 7.30pm
Royal Hotel (Please note change of venue)
Guest Artist: Iain Anderson Trio
Admission £4 All Welcome!



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For requests, competitions or questions please email: **studio@obanfm.org.uk** or call us on **01631 570057**

THIS WEEK'S LISTINGS	Made of This with Ken Hunter, 1300 The Quiz with Danni Hay, 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	& Ken, 2100 Gordon's Grooves	Craig, 2000 Friday Night with Innes, 2100 TF Friday with Jim Lawn
MONDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show, 0900 Monday Morning With Andy and Stephen, 1100 Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Jim Edge, 1700 Drivetime With Danni Hay, 1900 Rosie's Highland Fling, 2000 John McLucas's Show, 2100 David Cullen, 2200 Americana Show with Michelle	TUESDAY: 0800 AM on FM, 0810 Breakfast Show with Maggie May, 1000 Ken Hunter, 1200 Memories are	THURSDAY: 0800 Maggie May's Carousel, 1100 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Gordon Covey, 1700 Drivetime with DJ Taz, 1900 Christine's Collection, 2100 Ann's Ceilidh, 2200 Margot Till Midnight	SATURDAY: 0900 Maggie's Swingin' Sixties, 1000 Saturday Morning Live with Linda Crowscher, 1330 CLYDE 2, 1800 Sports View with the Dream Team, 1900 Marcus, 2000 Dave Lewis
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 and Coll, 1900 Country Meets Rock with Len	FRIDAY: 0800 Jean Ainsley Breakfast Show, 1000 Teeny and Tiny Show, 1300 CLYDE 2, 1500 Weekend Warmup with Ian Blair-Simmonds, 1700 Drive Show with Jim Lynch, 1845 Sports View, 1900 Country Meets Country with Jackie	SUNDAY: 0900 Sunday Morning with Breege, 1100 - 1400 Ailan, 1630 Archie Darling, 1800 Ken's Friends with Ken Hunter, 1900 New Country Show with David Entwistle, 2100 Drum & Bass with Graham Scott	

Christmas on the islands



CHRISTMAS is a special time to spend with loved ones and there is nowhere in the world finer to do that, than on the Scottish islands.

It is of course, the one way to get away from it all, switch off and simply enjoy the natural world in the midst and bliss of some of the most beautiful scenery in the world.

With no one on the doorstep, apart from some rather pesky sea eagles this is where those who want to put families first will want to spend the festive period.

In most places there will be community activities taking place that will be open to anyone staying on the islands.

For example the folks on Mull and Iona enjoy a fair few organised get-togethers including championships of the mainland versus island musical chairs championships on the island of Iona.

The reigning champion is currently an islander - but many will try to take her crown at this year's party in the village hall.

In Bunessan many musicians come to the area to stay for the festive period and there is no doubt that some of the music in the country will be played in the hall by the shore in the middle of the night.

Heading towards Skye and beyond to Eriskay there are some wonderful

experiences not only in the village hall but in outdoor activities that folks are always welcome to take part in.

In Islay there is a whole host of activities that are open to the very welcome visitors.

If there is not time to manage a get away to the islands over the festivities then this range of advertisers also can send presents, gifts and wee mindings to anyone anywhere in the world.

The message is the same wherever people travel on the islands - welcome and thanks for coming, and please come again.

The Islay Hotel

SPECIAL ROOM TARIFF from 1 November to 28 February including fully cooked breakfast
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- Ideal location to relax and explore the island
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'Christmas on the Islands'

Come join us in the Tiree Lodge Hotel this festive period where we have live music, a delicious festive menu, comfortable rooms, excellent service and the most beautiful views on the west coast.

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19th Dec - Christmas party night and disco
24th Dec - Live music with Tiree's own 'Dun Mor Ceilidh Band'
3rd Jan - Folk Singer 'Simon Kempston'

Plus festive dinner menu available and Hogmanay entertainment, please contact us for more details.

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Email - info@tireelodge.co.uk www.tireelodge.co.uk

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THE WESTERN ISLES HOTEL
Tobermory, Isle of Mull

Why not treat yourself and your friends to a Christmas celebration at the Western Isles Hotel, Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

Our delicious Christmas party menu is just £25.00 per person for 3 courses & £21.00 per person for 2 courses. Christmas party dates are available now so book early to avoid disappointment!

If you are travelling from the mainland we can also offer accommodation for just £25.00 per person to include full Scottish breakfast.

Call us on 01688 302 012 or visit us online at Mull.Reservations@Bespoke-Hotels.com
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FOOD & DRINK AWARDS BEST WINNER

MP CLAIMS SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S FERRY PRICING STRATEGY DISCRIMINATES AGAINST MULL, IONA, LISMORE AND BUTE

Call to treat all island passengers fairly

LOUISE LEE
lee@obantimes.co.uk

PLANS for discount fares on some Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) crossings have angered passengers on other Clyde and Hebridean routes who say they lived with a 'second class service' for years.

Islanders are aghast as passengers and drivers on the route between Rothesay and Wemyss Bay are being offered a 15 per cent discount on fares when the pier is closed next year.

They claim they have been 'putting up' with sub-standard piers and broken link spans at both Iona and Craignure.

The discounted fares are being offered for six weeks when travellers will be inconvenienced by the crossing being re-routed to Gourrock.

Transport Scotland said while there was no set procedure for making discount decisions, any community could ask for a review if they felt it was necessary.

The spokeswoman continued: 'All fares are already heavily

subsidised or discounted through current ferry services contracts. 'As part of the current Clyde and Hebrides ferry service contract, significant levels of funding are paid in respect of ports and harbour dues.

'Responsibility for the maintenance of ports and harbours is therefore a matter for the port owners.'

Alan Reid, Argyll and Bute MP, argued that already there was a disparity in the way fares were charged. He said: 'It is an utter scandal that the SNP

government are not treating all islands fairly. Bute, Mull, Iona and Lismore are being discriminated against. All islands should be given discounted Road Equivalent Tariff, RET, fares from the start of next summer's timetable.'

Now Jamie McGrigor, Highlands and Islands MSP, is questioning why constituents from the Western Isles have not been offered the same discount of 15 per cent with the planned closure of Ullapool harbour for six weeks next year. Transport Scotland said the long-term disruption

caused to places such as Iona, because of problems with a pier and the difficulties with the link span on the Craignure - Oban route, were the responsibility of the port owner. And it was up to the port owner to offer discounts or subsidies for any disruption to services.

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute council, which owns both Iona pier and the link span at Craignure, said: 'For Iona, we have been working hard to procure the necessary works which will provide the right

solution and keep disruption to a minimum.

'In the case of Craignure, we will be reporting to councillors in due course about initial investigations around what kind of works may be required.

'We will make sure that both communities know more details as soon as possible.

'It is important to point out, though, that these two situations are very different from the Bute ferry service, where work on the route has meant that passengers have to travel to a different port.'

£23m invested in roads upgrade reverses decline

ARGYLL and Bute council has dubbed a £23million roads upgrade a success, as the work nears completion.

In February 2012, the council voted to invest £21 million in road reconstruction over the three financial years to April 2015, with further funding from the Scottish government taking the total up to the £23 million.

The programme is now substantially complete, with the remainder of the work expected to finish before Christmas. The council has hailed the improvements to the road network a success.

Jim Smith, head of roads and amenity services for the council, said: 'Before this huge investment, our roads had been on a pretty sharp decline but I am pleased to see that alarming slide arrested and the curve now moving upwards. I look forward to our roads team delivering further improvements over the next financial year.'

The programme is set to continue into a fourth year with around £5 million of work planned, which will see 45 per cent of the council's 'A' roads and 35 per cent of its 'B' roads upgraded.

Lidl set to consult over Co-op move

THE CO-OP on Oban's Soroba Road closes its doors for the last time on Saturday, as Lidl prepares to build a new store on the site.

The German retail discount giant is to hold a community consultation to discuss construction plans this Monday, December 1. This will allow the public the chance to address any questions or concerns they have over the move.

The consultation will be held at the existing Lidl store in the Lochavullin industrial estate from 11am to 6pm.

The Peacocks clothing store, which is located in the Co-op building, will also close on Saturday, with the new Lidl store earmarked for completion some time in 2015.

Landmark Mull ferry in dry dock for upgrade

THE ISLE of Mull ferry is currently in dry dock in Greenock for four weeks to receive vital maintenance.

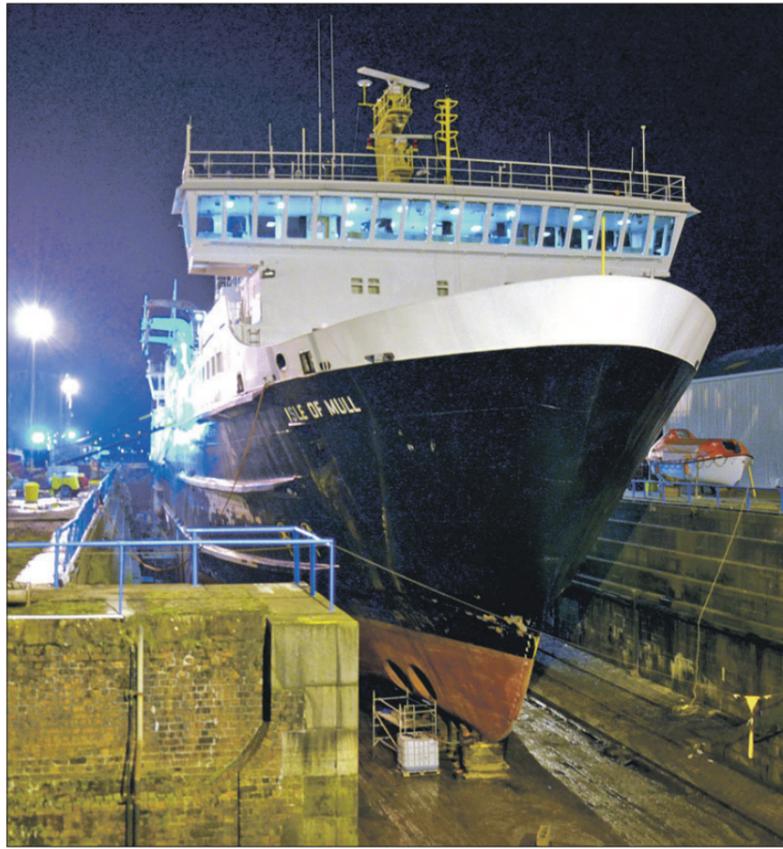
The purpose of the upgrade work is to extend the life of the landmark vessel.

The Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) ship is being given its annual overhaul, which also includes improvements to the propulsion and stabiliser control systems as the current systems are obsolete and are no longer supported by makers Rolls Royce.

The ferry will be in dock for four weeks instead of the usual two, due to the extensive works required to run electrical and control cables from the bridge to the engine control room.

The 90m vessel, launched in 1987 by Princess Alexandra, has a capacity of 990 people including crew, and 70 cars.

Now in its 26th year of operation for CalMac, it is scheduled to return to service between Oban and Mull on December 16.



Photograph courtesy of Stargate 42

Advertising feature Group together to stay warm for less

MORE and more domestic heating oil users are joining community buying groups to combat price increases.

Highland Fuels, which has outlets throughout Scotland including in Campbeltown and Oban, is encouraging its customers to offset delivery costs by harnessing the buying power of friends, family and neighbours.

By grouping deliveries together, ie in the same area and at the same time, transport costs can be significantly reduced and therefore savings made.

A company spokesman said: 'While it is advantageous for members to buy heating oil solely through the syndicate, they are also free to buy oil themselves as their individual needs dictate.'

'We offer a reduction in quoted schedule prices for larger volumes as it reduces delivery costs. The advantage of an oil buying group is that all members benefit from the total volume price reduction irrespective of the individual volume ordered.'

'An oil buying group of five houses has the potential to reduce the number of delivery tanker journeys in the area from five to one - which is better for the environment.'

'A local area for a group can be a street, village, a parish or defined by a postcode boundary.'

'The kind of information we need to know is: name, address, contact telephone numbers, email address, tank size, directions to property and the route to the tank.'

'Each group needs a co-ordinator and a deputy and they will be responsible for ordering for the whole group.'

'We understand that it is often difficult for someone in the community to run a group and deal with ordering, so we have a buying group co-ordinator at Highland Fuels that will be happy to take on this time-consuming role.'

'This means that once the group has been set up, our co-ordinator can make ordering hassle free by planning contact prior to the group order and dealing with all the members of the group.'

For more information call our sales team on 0800 224224 or email sales@highlandfuels.co.uk

Soroba Young Family Group: the heart of the Soroba Community

Local residents have often commented that Soroba Young Family Group is the heart of the Soroba Community and never so much so as recently when a wide variety of people from across Oban, Soroba and Edinburgh came together to improve the premises at 8a and 6b Scalpay Terrace. It is within these premises that a wealth of support to local families and agencies takes place.

FUN-FILLED

The children's nursery at 8a Scalpay Terrace operates from 8.35am to 3.30pm, educating 45 children aged three and four years through play in a warm, friendly, fun-filled atmosphere. Parent testimonials such as that from Kirsty Blainey about what she liked best about her child attending nursery was, 'the wide variety of activities and experiences made available to my child, constant opportunities for challenge and development'. Pauline Christie wrote: 'My child gets so many positive and interesting experiences and outings. I know he is safe and happy with staff who are consistent and responsive to his needs.'

Roslynn Gemmill felt 'staff took time to get to know my child, praised his strengths and worked on his weaknesses. I gave staff a flower bud and got back a flower, for that I'm grateful'.

The nursery has extended its service to offer wrap-around care which has been valuable to some parents.

The birth to three unit operates from the adjacent community centre, supporting 94 families on a weekly basis through a variety of morning sessions from 9am to 11.30am including respite crèche on a Monday and Friday, Stay and Play Tuesday, and the Best Start Group Wednesday and Thursday. Sessions cost £3.50 - £5.00 and are

a great source of fun - especially the Messy Play sessions!

TOGETHER

In partnership with the Early Years Collaborative we offer opportunities for the wider community to come together most afternoons between 1pm - 3.30pm through the following sessions: Monday Healthy Budget Cooking with our resident chef, Wednesday sees our Community Together Club and on Friday we offer a grandparent session. These sessions would not be possible without community support to keep them going.



Although both buildings are rented from ACHA, premises are not currently due for upgrades so staff and office bearers from Soroba Young Family Group nursery decided to take matters into their own hands and improve the premises themselves.

Our Senior Birth to Three Early Years Worker, Aileen Cameron, set out on a mission to transform the nursery kitchen from an eyesore with kitchen units over 30 years old into something beautiful. First she contacted How-

dens, Oban to see if they would donate a new kitchen. Howdens very kindly agreed but decided to go one better and donated a bright red and white laminate kitchen and red laminate units for the reception area along with work tops, handles and sink.

The parent of one of our children, George Gage, and his team kindly fitted the units free of charge, installed new appliances and a state of the art dishwasher.

Not content with this development Aileen approached her father, Freddy Morrison, to help develop the children's snack area.

Again Howdens was approached and, thanks to a hefty discount, the work began. By April 2014 we had a fantastic snack room with extended storage in the Birth to three-year community room.

While this work was going on the committee continued to fundraise and over a two-year period managed to raise £6,000 to pay our rental commitments to ACHA for one of the premises. Fundraising support came from a variety of local businesses who donated products, items for raffles, time and support. We are continually grateful to local businesses for their ongoing support.

PAINTING

Now, as the internal changes to the building were taking shape, it became obvious that the centre needed painting. Step aside Aileen and step in Gillian Farmer, Early Years Worker, who approached Jewsons for paint and emulsion to decorate every room in the nursery building. Children voted on which colours should be donated and which colour scheme should be in each room.

Gillian then roped husband Lorn



Farmer into painting the whole of the premises during the summer holidays - a mammoth task! Not content with the inside, Gillian was again looking for paint for the outdoor metal fence and again Jewsons generously donated a vast variety of bright coloured paint. So we moved outside.

It was now June and the inside was coming along nicely but the garden looked awful, so it was over to the manager Janice Kay to develop the garden. Janice approached The Landscaping Centre who kindly donated a raised bed plus top soil for one section of the garden. Jewsons again came up trumps and donated top soil for a second raised bed which the nursery had bought from fundraising activities.

When Janice's daughter-in-law, Liza Petch-Kay, heard what the group were doing she quickly sought permission from Lloyds Banking Group's Make a Difference in a Day team and gathered

together eight volunteers from Edinburgh to help develop the garden and paint the adjacent community centre using paint generously donated by Homebase. This was not an easy task but, with so many volunteers working together with staff, the unit was transformed both inside and outside in a day.

TRANSFORMATION

The transformation of both buildings has taken two years with the massive push in June bringing it all together and transform what were rather shabby buildings into something bright and clutter free that children and their parents love being involved with.

To make sure the building and garden were not destroyed, Gavin Blainey very kindly installed CCTV which has recorded only three incidents of mindless destruction of our garden by local teenagers. Video footage was passed to police to investigate. Once the



CCTV was installed Gavin and Kirsty Blainey roped in their friend Simon Smart to improve the windows ready for winter. Hopefully thermal clothing can be left on coat pegs this year!



This development would never have taken place without the kindness, gen-

erosity and support of local companies both large and small. It is difficult to express the extent of our gratitude. We have been overwhelmed by the responses from local businesses and, as a voluntary organisation continually searching for funding to enable our birth to three-year unit to survive, we are delighted with our achievement - but we are not finished!

THE FUTURE

Our next development is to try to raise enough money to install new windows and a new heating system, both of which are over 30 years old. We would like the children and families within the Oban community to enjoy Soroba Young Family Centre in comfort without sitting with their coats on in the winter!

If anyone is interested in helping us achieve this goal please get in touch by phoning 01631 565263 or email sorobayoungfamilygroup@gmail.com





help

MANY of us don't really appreciate the specialist services that are on our doorstep until it comes time to use them.

In life, you never really know what's round the corner, but it helps to have these services in mind when it comes time to deal with the surprises that life throws at you.

You could have a legal problem that requires some urgent, reliable advice. Your local Citizens Advice Bureau can help you resolve legal, financial and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice.

If you require more in-depth advice, chartered accountants are a good source of the sound financial advice that most of us require at some point in our lives.

RA Clements provides bespoke services - those that are designed to suit a client's needs - and also free, no obligation consultations.

As well as legal and financial advice, emotional and health services in the community, many of them charities, are part of the backbone of society, providing the support we need when we need it most.

Relationships Scotland is a network of local services that provide relationship counselling, family mediation, child contact centres and other family support services across all of Scotland, supporting 20,000 people including individuals, couples and families experiencing relationship difficulties.

When we get older or more infirm in life, our needs also change. Tower Mobility based in Oban, Argyll, supplies a wide range of mobility products from walking sticks to scooters, including a range of products on display in store, available for a free demonstration.

Care homes can provide a safe, comforting environment for people with specialist needs.

Lynn of Lorne care home in Oban provides support from people with dementia, physical disability, sensory impairment, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

The home is fully regulated by the Care Inspectorate, responsible for social care services in Scotland.

There is also a range of services available for people with needs at their own homes.

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Measures called for to combat dairy crisis

SCOTLAND'S leading winter agricultural event has been used to call for a range of measures to help Scottish dairying through the current crisis.

Speaking at AgriScot, the annual event held at Ingliston near Edinburgh, the National Farmers Union Scotland recognised that there was no quick fix to the worldwide volatility in dairy prices but mapped out short and medium term options that could help the Scottish sector move forward.

Responses to NFU Scotland's dairy farmer survey are still coming in but forms completed to date suggest member support for measures that stabilise the sector at an EU-level; promote the marketing of Scottish and British dairy produce; address the growing imbalance between exported and imported dairy produce into the UK and help Scottish dairy farmers with business planning in light of the substantial falls in farmgate prices for milk.

Out-going NFUS president Nigel Miller said: 'At an EU level, we need Europe to introduce intervention for milk powders at



CRISIS: Scottish dairy farming needs help

a realistic price level.

'That would lend vital stability to a market hammered by the worldwide crash in commodity values and the unforeseen im-

impact of the Russian food ban. 'Also of immediate benefit would be the Scottish government updating its whole farm review package to recognise the

impact that such severe price falls are having on dairy farming families by introducing a fast-track approach for Scottish milk producers.

'That will help facilitate some important business planning decisions faced by many farms.

'We also need to market, process and develop our way out of this crisis.

'We need the UK and Scottish governments along with AHDB and DairyCo to give immediate consideration to initiatives that can drive sales of Scottish and British dairy produce.

'The opportunities are stark. We have a dairy deficit of more than £1.35 billion - a balance of trade figure that is getting worse by the day with cheese and butter imports currently satisfying 64 per cent and 51 per cent of our home market requirements respectively.

'In the medium term, we need to look at how we future-proof producers. That means looking at the structure of producer groups and organisations and wider adoption of appropriate and transparent milk pricing formulas.

'The role of the voluntary code on milk contracts will be important and, if necessary, the producer element strengthened.

'The post-quota era is upon us and, judging from our survey, it is alarming how few milk purchasers have taken the time to discuss with their supplying farmers contractual arrangements from April onwards.'

NFU'S milk committee chairman Gary Mitchell, who chaired the dairy seminar at AgriScot, said: 'There is potential for Scotland's dairy supply chain to grow but firstly we need much more milk going into higher value markets along with increased processing capacity in Scotland to minimise the need for milk crossing the border.

'The breakdown in the balancing contract between First Milk and Muller Wiseman has exacerbated the problem and underlined the need for this to be addressed.

'It is apparent from this week's meeting in Brussels that all European dairy farmers are struggling with the level of volatility in the dairy sector and there was wide spread support for more robust market intervention measures to be introduced.

'In early December, union milk officials from Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland will meet in Edinburgh to discuss the current situation and seek common actions.

'Later next month we will also host a Scottish event looking to drive forward producer representation.

'A few days later we will bring together our milk committee and branch milk monitors for an event aimed at giving us a better appreciation of global, European and UK markets, but also examining pricing models, supply chain issues and the retail sector.'



ALARMING: few milk producers have discussed future contractual arrangements with supplying farmers

Dairy Hub launched to support farmers

A ONE-stop shop offering Scotland's dairy farmers information, advice and training has been officially launched.

The Dairy Hub is to provide bespoke advice to Scotland's dairy farmers to improve on-farm efficiencies.

It is a joint initiative between the Scottish Government and DairyCo and was established in line with a recommendation from the Scottish Dairy Review 'Ambition 2025'.

The service was officially opened by rural affairs secretary Richard Lochhead during a visit to AgriScot, at Ingliston in Edinburgh where he also announced £25,000 of Scottish government funding for the Dairy Growth Board towards

the development of a Scottish dairy brand.

Mr Lochhead said: 'I am very pleased to officially launch Scotland's new Dairy Hub, which is a great way for farmers to get advice on ways of managing finances and improving efficiency. 'Clearly, this is hugely important given current market conditions.

'Scotland's lush grass and fresh air means that the cheese and milk produced here is among the finest in the world - and I want to see Scotland's dairy sector flourish.

'The Dairy Hub will undoubtedly be a useful tool for farmers as they work towards achieving long-term stability and realising the sector's full potential.

'It is important that we work with processors, as well as producers, as we work to strengthen Scotland's dairy sector.

'I fully support the development of a Scottish dairy brand.

'It is an exciting opportunity for the whole industry that will enable us to explore new market possibilities.'

Dairy Hub manager Stuart Martin said: 'I would encourage all dairy farmers and industry service providers to come and speak to me to find out more about the hub.

'Our aim is to be the one-stop-shop for dairy advice and support so we are keen to help with any question you may have.' Visit www.scottishdairyhub.org.uk for more information.

Conservation grazing goals receive market endorsement

A TOP price of the day for cross heifers at Oban Mart has been a huge endorsement of the Forestry Commission Scotland's conservation grazing project.

The sale of 24, 18-month-old first-cross Whitebred Shorthorn cross Highland bulling heifers from the Commission's Cowal and Trossachs forest district were sold in October with the best three animals topping the 'bulling heifer' section of the sale.

They sold at £1,100/head and a further eight of them sold at £1,000 each.

Robin Waddell, the commission's agricultural adviser, said: 'The conservation grazing project uses cattle to help the process of natural regeneration of native woodlands and having our own fold in such a challenging environment requires close attention to stockmanship and animal husbandry.

'We only have the capacity for so many animals so, as they

breed, we have to sell off surplus stock.

'The fact that the demand for these beasts was high enough to fetch top price is a great endorsement of our efforts and our involvement in agricultural enterprise.

'It shows that we can produce quality, sought-after heifers whilst also achieving our conservation grazing goals.'

Stockman, Stewart Hendry, added: 'The commission doesn't accept any farming subsidies for its cattle grazing projects so the income generated from this sale of surplus stock from our well established Loch Katrine fold will help to cover the wider costs of the project.

'However, the return we get in terms of ecosystem services makes it more than worthwhile.

'It's very rewarding to have our stockmanship skills recognised in this way - it shows that we're committed to what we're doing and that we can produce qual-



TOP PRICE: Forestry Commission Scotland's first cross bulling heifers

ity livestock in the difficult and extensive terrain around Loch Katrine.'

The commission's Lochaber-based Highland cattle fold

also gained respect in agricultural circles earlier in the year by winning a number of cups and red tickets on the agricultural show circuit.

Farming Focus

Ewen Campbell, SRUC Kirkton and Auchtertyre research farms manager, gives an overview of current issues in the region

No damping of enthusiasm for farming

NOVEMBER has certainly been wet - and not only for us at SRUC's Kirkton and Auchtertyre farms.

We had 229 mm of rainfall over four days at the end of October, resulting in the river flooding many of our inbye fields and washing away part of a new track we had built alongside the river.

It also left some of our fences flattened and our sheep rather wet.

Unbeknown to us in advance, we had also arranged to hold our public open day, as part of a Scottish government-funded series of SRUC events, on Sunday October 26 - which unfortunately turned out to be one of the wettest days of that four-day period.

weather.

Those who made it through the rain were able to see and discuss how drones (unmanned aerial vehicles) can help with a wide variety of research data collection; take part in a demonstration of our sheep weighing equipment, which links to the electronic identification tags on the sheep and can record the weights of 480 sheep in 60 minutes; and see a methane detector in action and discover how much methane an animal is producing.

Visitors also had the opportunity to find out about hidden wildlife, heard more detail about the history of farming in the local area over past centuries and get hands-on with some wood based crafts.

So, whilst a few outdoor-based activities had to be cancelled (in particular my sheep dog demonstration) there was still plenty going on in the sheds to keep people busy.

More recently we had a visit from a number of the livestock farmers who are operating three of the four new Highland focus farms under the Scottish government-funded Farming for a Better Climate programme.

Their visit coincided with a lull in the wet conditions, so we were able to ensure that they saw and discussed with us the full range of the research we are doing here under our grassland improvement work and long-term sheep breeding and systems projects.

We also showed them how we use technology on our farms to help improve farm efficiency.

There was a good buzz among everyone on the day and I think what we are doing here

gave them some good ideas to implement on their own farms. Hopefully, they'll spread the word among other farmers and we look forward to working closely with these focus farms in the future.



FLOOD: fields were flooded during four days of torrential rain

Tupping time

IN the midst of all this, I have also been very busy with getting the rams and ewes ready for tupping time.

We have colour-taped the horns of all our rams and ewes so that we can keep track of which ram is in with which group of ewes and ensure that they all remain in the correct fields.

We have also weighed and body condition scored the ewes to check they were in ideal condition before mating starts.

The rams have been put with the ewes this week, and will stay with them until the end of December.

Hopefully the weather and the grass will be in good condition, meaning our ewes will all be pregnant with lambs for next year.

And so another year in the sheep farming calendar begins.



WET: the farms' open day saw a number of hardy locals visit

However, despite the weather being truly horrendous, with sheets of driving rain blowing in horizontally, up to 40 local hardy folk came out, all really intrigued to find out about the future of farming and what we were up to on the research farms.

It was great to see so many folk interested in the work here at Kirkton and Auchtertyre, but next time we will try and arrange better

ISLAY

AT UNITED Auctions' recent sale of lambs and sheep at Islay Auction Mart on Monday November 17, 2,578 head of all classes was sold.

Trade for all classes was buoyant with the sale averaging £55.71 per head or 163.1 pence per kilo against £51.97 per head or 157.2 per kilo at the corresponding sale last year.

Suffolk cross lambs from Kilchiaran Farm sold to £71.50 whilst Dunlossit Farming, Keills, topped the prices per kilo at 191 pence for Texel crosses.

The same home sold cast ewes to £83 per head. Blackface lambs were the dearest trade for the season.

Principal lots and prices:

Top prices per head:
Lambs: SUFFX: £71.50 - Kilchiaran: £70.50 - Ballimartin: £68.50 - Ardtalla Estate: £64.50 - Island and Craigfad: £63.50 - Lossit: TEXX: £69.50 - Coull: £67.00 - Lossit: £64.50 - 44 Stanalane: £62.50 - Dunlossit Keills: £60.50 - Craigfad: CHEVX: £67.50 - 44 Stanalane: £64.00 - Coillabus: £58.50 - Foreland.
Cross: £60.00 - Ballychattrigan: £59.50 and £58.50 - Coille: £57.50 - Lorgbaw: £57.00 - Braigo. Mule: £64.00 - Kinabus: £62.50 - Leorin: £62.00 - Corrary: £61.50 - Island: £60.00 - Lossit: £58.00 - Leorin & Corrary: £57.50 - Portantruan: £56.00 - Kinabus. BF: £65.50 - Kilchiaran:

CEANNACROIC AND LOSSIT:

159p - Finlaggan and Kilchiaran: 158p - Foreland No2 and Lossit: 157p - Kinabus: 156p - Ardtalla Estate and Coillabus: 155p - Dunlossit Ceannacroic and Leorin.

LOCHMADDY

LOCHMADDY'S Dingwall and Highland Marts Ltd sold 21 weaned calves and store cattle and 680 sheep of all classes on November 17.

Bullocks (5) averaged 235.8p and sold to 266.7p per kg for a 225kg Limousin cross from 1 Grenitote, Sollas, and £760 gross for a 330kg Limousin cross also from 1 Grenitote.

Heifers (16) sold to 223p per kg for a 305kg Limousin cross from 1 Grenitote, and £740 gross for a pair of 435kg Limousin crosses from 20 Baleshare, Lochmaddy.

Lambs (409) sold to £67 gross for Texel crosses from 3 Claddach, Kirkibost.

Ewes and gimmers (248) sold to £70 gross for Texel crosses from 3 Claddach.

Rams and widders (23) sold to £85 gross for a Texel ram from 71 Ardnamonie, Eochar.

Cattle: Other leading prices per head and per kg:

Bullocks: 201-250kg - 1 Grenitote, £600p; 251-300kg - 1 Grenitote, £720, 244.1p; 301-350kg - 1 Grenitote, £750,

HEIFERS:

201-250kg - 4 Eoligarry, Castlebay, £430, 200p; 251-300kg - 6 Borve, Berneray, £630, 221.1p; 301-350kg - 1 Grenitote, £680.

Other leading prices

per head: Store lambs: Chev - 9 £55. Illeray, Lochmaddy, Gimmers: BF - 27 £65; SuffX - 8 Clachan Locheport, £52.

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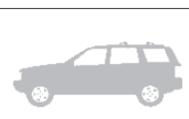
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58 VAUXHALL COMBO CDTI, Crew Van, Twin Side Doors, 5 Seats, White, 70K	£4,750
58 FORD RANGER Super Cab P/Up, 4WD, C/W High Capacity Canopy Fitted Workshop, White	£7,750

Many other vehicles in stock All above vehicles plus VAT at 20%
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Landrover Freelander 2 (2002)



Mot until March 2015 - no advisories on last mot. Car seldom used since last mot. Good condition.
£1000 o.n.o.
Tel: 01770 600716 or 07786145556 (Arran)

Ford Connect 90T200



2011, Reg DP11 KUO
58,896 miles
Radio/CD, Roof rack, Lined
MOT end of July 15.
FSH, One owner.
£4700+VAT
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WANTED ALL 4 X 4'S

Toyota, Mitsubishi, Landrovers etc, mileage no problem. Distance no object. Specialise in Vauxhall Brava and Isuzu pick-ups.
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NISSAN NAVARA DOUBLE CAB



54 Reg, Diesel, electric windows, cd, air con, Towbar, 1 owner, 1 years Mot.
£3250 o.n.o.
Contact: 07500 786612

Honda Jazz SE



2006 1.4 Auto
21000 miles
MOT 1 Dec 2015
FSH, Very clean car.
£4000 o.n.o.
Tel 01880 820222

WANTED

All types of 4 x 4 vehicles
Landrovers, any 4x4, Toyotas, Nissan, considered. Also non-runner and accident damaged, MOT failure, single or double cab. Genuine people to deal with.
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5/6 Berth, 2004 reg, 21000 miles FSH
Front dinette, rear lounge, large wash room, high spec, very good condition for age.
£22,000
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57 PLATE VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.9L



74,000 miles,
MOT until October 2015.
Reduced price for quick sale
£1950 o.n.o.
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URGENTLY REQUIRED



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2010, 27,000 Miles, MOT Nov 2015
Metallic Silver, Alloys, Air con, Sports seats, Leather Trim, Service History, Very Clean
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WANTED ALL 4 X 4'S

Any year or condition, would consider any kind of pick-up or jeep, will collect and pay cash.
Telephone 07925 715321

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10plate, SILVER, Towbar
New MOT, FSH and newly serviced. 47,000 miles
Very good condition, still under manufacturers warranty.
£30/year road tax
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BENFORD 3 TON DUMPER



4WD Electric start Anti roll bar Good tyres and brakes 4 speed box Good hydraulics Good workhorse/rarely used
£3000
Tel: 07889 54 60 17

WANTED

4 x 4's, all makes and models, Toyota, Landrover, Mitsubishi, high miles no problem, MOT or not, instant decision, same day payment.
Contact William 07730 130284 or 07923 091694 or email wlmotorhomes@outlook.com

Blue 3dr Freelander



With removable roof.
95k miles. 2.0TD4, diesel, manual, heated leather seats, 12 months MOT. two new tyres, new brake discs and pads.
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White Astra Van, 1.7 Di Club

2010, 76k miles, MOT July,
Rear Seat & Tow Bar,
Recently Serviced
£2,500+VAT
Tel 01880 820032/07879 452300

WANTED

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any make or model, from 1990 to new, also high mileage, non runners, MOT failures etc considered.
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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Vauxhall Corsa Sting: Urban: 39.2 (7.2) - 53.3 (5.3), Extra-urban: 62.8 (4.5) - 80.7 (3.5), Combined: 51.4 (5.5) - 67.3 (4.2). CO₂ emissions: 129 -110g/km.*
Offer available on orders or registrations between 8 October 2014 and 15 December 2014, subject to availability and is available to private individuals and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only, excluding B2B). All other sales categories are excluded; cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Prices shown are list price at time of publication, for details refer to Vauxhall's current price guide. UK-supplied vehicles only. *Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

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Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

FOR LEASE
SNACK BAR SITES, OBAN
GANAVAN SANDS CAR PARK, GANAVAN
MCCAIG'S TOWER CAR PARK, OBAN
Offers are invited for the lease of a mobile snack bar site at Ganavan Sands Car Park, Ganavan, for a three year period from spring 2015. Offers over £125 per week are invited for the site.
Offers are also separately invited for the lease of a mobile snack bar site at McCaig's Tower Car Park, for the 2015 season only. Offers over £40 per week are invited.
Closing date for offers is Friday 9th January 2015.
For further details:
Estates Office, Blairvadach, Helensburgh, G84 8ND. Tel: 01436 658957
propertysales-lettings@argyll-bute.gov.uk

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

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

FOR LEASE
BISTRO AT THE AQUALIBRIUM LEISURE COMPLEX, CAMPBELTOWN
The Bistro facility within the Aqualibrium leisure complex is being offered for lease and interested parties are invited to submit offers.
The Bistro comprises a fully fitted kitchen with serving/ seating area all extending to 264 sqm and is located on the second floor of the Aqualibrium leisure complex, Kinloch Road, Campbeltown. The length of lease available is negotiable but it is expected to be for a minimum period of 3 years. Offers are invited.
Closing date for offers is 12.30pm on 9th January 2015.
For an information pack please contact:
Estates Office, Argyll and Bute Council, Blairvadach, Helensburgh, G84 8ND. Tel: 01436 658957. propertysales-lettings@argyll-bute.gov.uk

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TO LET
Spacious 3 bed partly furnished ground floor flat with garden, £600 pcm plus bills, immediate entry, sorry no DSS or pets.
Phone 01631 562596 or 07767657219

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Beautiful 2 bedroom luxury semi furnished flat within Erines Historic house, between Lochgilphead and Tarbert
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Contact Lorraine loridubai@yahoo.com or Andy akmcilvrde@yahoo.co.uk, 07796 184004

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Tel: 01631 562 643 for further information.

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If you've got the energy, drive, determination and ambition, we can offer you an exciting and rewarding career with one of Scotland's foremost independent newspaper publishers.

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Please apply by email with full C.V and covering letter to: ali@wyvexmedia.co.uk

We are a market leading UK company which has a big impact on the timber industry, employing over 900 people and generating annual revenue in excess of £200m. With seven profit centres in the UK and one in Latvia, We are BSW.

Management Accountant (Dual Site Role)

Based Fort William (Plus Travel to Boat of Garten)
Competitive Salary + Benefits & Bonus Scheme

As the Management Accountant for our Fort William and Boat of Garten sites, you'll work closely with the operational management teams and Group accountants, with specific responsibility for providing financial, administrative and control support to these state of the art sawmills. With 5 direct reports across the 2 sites - which together form a combined £60m turnover operation - your role will focus on helping the management teams to understand the financial implications of their strategic and tactical decisions, with a strong emphasis on driving improved profitability.

Ideally we're looking for a fully qualified management accountant, with a good level of technical expertise, who can demonstrate a relevant background and successful track record in a similar role, gained within a related fast moving production/manufacturing environment. In addition, you'll have first rate leadership, communication and relationship building skills, coupled with proven people management experience plus a strong commercial outlook and the ability to tackle day to day, 'nuts and bolts' operational issues.

In return, you can look forward to a competitive package and genuine prospects in a rapidly developing business, with exciting plans ahead.

To apply, simply send your CV, detailing current salary, to Kathleen Woodhouse, Group HR Advisor at BSW: Email: kathleen.woodhouse@bsw.co.uk
Closing Date: Friday 5th December 2014.

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Incorporating Campbeltown Courier

Reporter

An enthusiastic, multi-skilled Reporter is required to join weekly newspaper, the Argyllshire Advertiser, part of the award-winning Oban Times newspaper group.

Joining the team at the Lochgilphead office, Mid Argyll, the successful candidate will have a solid foundation in journalism, good leadership qualities, excellent communication skills, a great deal of energy and at least two years experience. A full driving licence is essential.

This is an exciting opportunity with excellent salary and benefits package.

To apply, please send a covering letter of application with CV by email to: ali@obantimes.co.uk

Management Accountant
Fort William

Marine Harvest (Scotland) is the largest Aquaculture Company operating in Scotland. Our marine and freshwater sites are located throughout the West Coast, Outer Isles and Argyll.

We are seeking to appoint a Management Accountant to join our Accounts Department working in our offices based in Fort William. The successful candidate will be required to work closely with Senior Management.

The main tasks will involve supporting the line management structure through the analysis of financial information and agreeing focused actions to enhance financial controls typically, this would include budget preparation, variance analysis, capex review and forecasting.

The individual must be organised, dynamic, technically competent and fully qualified (ACA/CIMA/ACCA) with a minimum of two years post qualification experience of working in a similar role in a fast moving environment where business critical decision making is a key function. Excellent communication skills and a high level of IT literacy are essential, along with a flexible approach to work which may include travel.

Salary and benefits are commensurate with a leading organisation.

If you would like to be considered for this post, please apply in writing, no later than Friday 12th December 2014 to: Vicky Ferguson, Human Resources Manager, Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd, Business Resource Centre, Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Fort William, PH33 7PT.



Janitor/Cleaner (Permanent)
£13,697 - £14,970 pro rata Southend Primary School Ref: CME35244
This post is for 10 hours per week term time

Customer Services Centre Agent (Telephony) (Permanent)
£17,975 - £19,088 Campbeltown Ref: CTC00359
This post is for 35 hours per week

Joiner (Permanent)
£19,002 - £20,179 Lochgilphead Ref: CTF00743
This post is for 37 hours per week

Clerical Assistant (Permanent)
£14,599 - £15,457 Lochgilphead Ref: DVB00051
This post is for 35 hours per week

Refuse Collector (Permanent)
£15,433 - £16,340 Isle of Islay Ref: DVR00504
This post is for 37 hours per week

☎ 01546 604334

Closing date for all posts: 12 December 2014.
To apply visit our website



www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/jobs

TSL CONTRACTORS LIMITED

Purchasing Administrator / Receptionist

Due to continued expansion, TSL Contractors requires a Purchasing Administrator / Receptionist.

Reporting to the Purchasing and Materials Manager, this position will be based in the Oban office, with the requirement to travel to suppliers / the ferry / airport / post office / and client offices, and so a driving licence is essential.

Hours of Work will be from 7.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday; however some flexibility will occasionally be required to cover operational requirements.

Main responsibilities will be to provide reception duties at the Oban office, including fielding all incoming calls, taking messages, receiving visitors and deliveries, assisting the Purchasing and Materials Manager with all aspects of buying and ensuring the correct materials are delivered to site; processing paperwork, including purchase orders and invoices and credit notes, and other general administrative duties required to ensure the Oban office operates smoothly and efficiently.

The successful candidate will ideally have experience in relevant roles, particularly office administration, preferably within an industrial / construction environment and ideally in a buying role. You should be proficient in IT, particularly Microsoft Excel, Word and Publisher, and as mentioned, a driving licence is essential.

You will have excellent written and verbal communications skills, a good level of numeracy, and be highly organised and self-motivated.

Salary will be commensurate with experience, and a pension scheme is available, as well as a generous bonus scheme.

If you are interested in applying for this role, please email your CV to d.feeney@tslcontractors.co.uk
Closing date for applications is Friday 28th of November 2014.

Skilled PSV Mechanic

Based at Fort William bus depot
Competitive salary

With the continued development of our operations in the North of Scotland, an exciting opportunity has arisen for the role of Skilled PSV mechanic, based at our Fort William depot.

We are looking for a skilled PSV mechanic with PCV/HGV experience to work on our varied fleet in Fort William. You could enjoy the benefit of:

- an excellent salary,
- genuine job security,
- working for a large professional organisation,
- training opportunities and
- a friendly supportive team.

If you have the drive to succeed and wish to progress within the Stagecoach Group, and are interested in this role, please send a full CV and covering letter to: Ian Mackenzie (Engineering Manager) Stagecoach in Lochaber, 4 Ardgor Road, Caol, Fort William PH33 7PH

Or apply on line by completing the application form with a CV and a letter of application and forward to: Ian.Mackenzie@stagecoachbus.com
Interviews will be held locally.

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Friday 20th December 2014
Committed to Equal Opportunities.



Keyline BUILDERS MERCHANTS

Yard Sales Assistant
Oban Branch (Salary + benefits)

Great benefits and plenty of opportunities for career progression - join our expanding team at Keyline as a Yard Sales Assistant and share our success and good times with a hard-working, friendly bunch of people.

This is a key customer-facing role, so your people skills will have to be razor-sharp. As a Yard Sales Assistant you will service all our customers with a smile and complete all necessary paperwork accurately to make sure they are absolutely satisfied with the products they buy and the service they receive. Full product training will be provided so the most important thing is that you have a flexible and can do approach.

Keyline is the UK's number one supplier of civils, heavy building materials and drainage solutions, with a nationwide network of branches and our aim is to be 'Best in Town' for product knowledge, availability and customer service. We're part of the Travis Perkins Group a FTSE 100 Company that's been recognised as one of Britain's Top Employers since 2010. If you aim to be the best you can be, then we'd like to hear from you.

If you would like to be considered for these positions please apply in writing to Iain Hunter, Branch Manager, Keyline Builders Merchants, Soroba Road, Oban PA34 4HQ. No agencies please.

CUILFAIL HOTEL
KILMELFORD

Chef, full time post
Pay negotiable according to experience

Please send CV to
Yvonne, Cuilfail Hotel, Kilmelford, Oban, Argyll PA34 4XA or mail@cuilfail.co.uk
Tel: 01852 200 274

NATIONAL AQUACULTURE COMPANY

Several Management Positions

- Farm Manager
- Operations Manager
- Harvest Operations Manager
- R.O.N.C Net Cleaning Manager
- Land based Hatchery/Nursery Managers

World's largest barramundi sea cage operation and growing fast! Exciting work environment - Great career advancement opportunity - Attractive salary package - On the doorstep to Europe

NAQUA cultures premium quality barramundi in the Red Sea based in Saudi Arabia. The company's sea cage grow out site is situated at Al Lith south of Jeddah. This is an opportunity for a person seeking to kick-start their career in a growing environment, as well as the chance to get involved in a fast growing and exciting new aquaculture business.

What we are looking for: NAQUA fundamentally is a start-up business although already the world leader. The company is looking to industrialize its business and is seeking to inject large scale aquaculture experience. The ideal applicant would possess 3-5 years cage farming experience, possess a solid understanding of fish husbandry, have good knowledge in cage and net installations, Good experience in boat handling and crane/winch operations, a good basic knowledge for management, commerciality and strategic planning and have the foundational skills to commence a career in a growing company. These are all key positions supporting the senior management team and would really suit someone who wants to be part of a motivated team that is determined for success. The position attracts a competitive salary package for the right applicant.

If you are interested please forward initial interest to: hrd-recruitment@naqua.com.sa using the Subject: NAQUA Jobs + Position applied for.

We are a market leading UK company which has a big impact on the timber industry, employing over 900 people and generating annual revenue in excess of £200m. With seven profit centres in the UK and one in Latvia, We are BSW.

Maintenance Fitter
Excellent Salary Package • Fort William Sawmill

Working on a shift basis at this state of the art sawmill, you'll be a key member of our busy maintenance team, directly responsible for providing a prompt and responsive breakdown fault diagnosis and repair service, as well as undertaking routine mechanical maintenance, across a range of plant and machinery.

From a mechanical discipline and with a background in a related manufacturing/production environment, you will ideally have experience of fault finding and general mechanical fitting. Skills in hydraulics and pneumatics would also be advantageous. Alongside this, you must have excellent communication skills and the ability to interact at all levels, plus a good standard of literacy and numeracy.

In return, you can look forward to developing a long term career with one of the industry's leading employers. As well as the competitive salary, this position includes other benefits such as an excellent bonus, employer's contribution pension scheme and company sick pay.

To apply, please send your CV to: Kathleen Woodhouse, Group HR Advisor, BSW Timber Ltd. Email: kathleen.woodhouse@bsw.co.uk
Closing date: 11th December 2014.

We are BSW.  Five generations of investment, ensuring the future is safe for the sixth.

Experienced excavator driver/foreman-forewoman
required for busy civil engineering contractor in Argyll & Bute area.

Please apply by submitting your C.V. to vacancy.argyll@gmail.com

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ALIENERGY
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Education & Skills Development Officer

Working with secondary schools and project partners, you will promote career opportunities in renewable energy to secondary school pupils; develop work experience and education/training courses and help improve access to skills development opportunities in renewables.

35 hours per week; job share considered; location flexible within Argyll.
Salary: £24,509 FTE. Three year contract - may be extended.
Closing date: 5pm Friday 5th December,

Further information or job packs: www.alienergy.org.uk;
01631 565183 or m.peden@alienergy.org.uk

Home Help Required
Flexible hours (3-4 hrs/fortnight) to include cooking, cleaning & occasional emergency contact for basic shopping. Lochgilphead.
Tel 07768 924841

CAMPBELTOWN BOWLING CLUB
has a vacancy for a **GREENKEEPER** part time hours and terms negotiable. Please apply in writing to: The Secretary, Campbeltown Bowling Club, New Quay Street, Campbeltown PA28 6BA

LQS
LOCHALINE QUARTZ SAND

Lochaline Quartz Sand Ltd. is looking for a **Maintenance Electrician** (full time) for plant and underground operations at Lochaline silica sand mine

If you are interested, please send your cv to veronique@lqsmine.com or post to LQS, Lochaline Mine, Morvern, PA80 5LQ

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Roadworker

BEAR Scotland provides integrated road infrastructure services throughout Scotland, including managing and maintaining Scotland's Trunk Road Network.

A vacancy has arisen in our Inveraray depot for a Roadworker.

Applicants should preferably be experienced roadworkers with the necessary skills to carry out various road maintenance operations, have, as a minimum, an LGV Class 2 licence (HGV2) and be prepared to participate in our winter and emergency response service on a standby-rota basis.

Please apply online at www.bearsot.com, or telephone 01738 448600.

The closing date for applications is 12th December 2014.

experience that delivers

public notices

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 SHELLFISH FARM, SOUTH ARDNACLACH, LOCH CRERAN

Notice is hereby given that Creran Oysters has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of a shellfish farm at:

Cost	£5000-£50,000	
Location	Latitude Co-ordinates	Longitude Co-ordinates
South Ardnachlach, Loch Creran	56° 32.085 N	005° 20.507 W
	56° 32.063 N	005° 20.508 W
	56° 32.041 N	005° 20.261 W
	56° 32.183 N	005° 20.202 W
	56° 32.199 N	005° 20.294 W
	56° 32.185 N	005° 20.315 W
	56° 32.121 N	005° 20.287 W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at [insert address of the public building where the plans are deposited].

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to: Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email: MS.MarineLicensing@scotland.gsi.gov.uk, quoting reference: 05364 Creran Oysters

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A85 TRUNK ROAD (LOCHEARNHEAD TO LIX TOLL) (50 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2014

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS hereby give notice that they propose to make the above Order under section 84(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which will have the effect of imposing a 50 mph speed limit on that length of the A84/A85 Stirling - Crianlarich Trunk Road from a point 293 metres or thereby north of the extended centre line of its junction with the A85 Perth - Lochearnhead Trunk Road, north-westerly, to a point 152 metres or thereby west of the extended centre line of its junction with the A827 road, a distance of 7.856 kilometres or thereby.

Full details of the proposal are contained in the Order which, together with a plan showing the length of road involved and a statement of the Scottish Ministers' reasons for proposing to make the Order, may be examined free of charge during normal business hours from 27 November 2014 until 8 January 2015 at the offices of Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF; BEAR Scotland, Inveralmond Road, Perth PH1 3TW; and The Village Shop, Strathyre, Callander, Perthshire FK18 8NA.

Any person wishing to object to the proposed Order should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to the Director of Trunk Road and Bus Operations, c/o Sheena Murray, Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF quoting reference NW/A85/SM by 8 January 2015. A copy of the Order and this Notice will be available on the Transport Scotland website at <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/node/666#NorthWestDraft>

G EDMOND
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland,
Buchanan House,
58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow G4 0HF

The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A85 TRUNK ROAD (TAYNUILT TO CONNELL EAST) (50MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2014

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS hereby give notice that they propose to make the above Order under section 84(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which will have the effect of imposing a 50 mph speed limit on that length of the A85 Tyndrum - Oban Trunk Road, from a point (at Ordnance Map coordinates 299518, 731500) at Taynuilt, 30 metres or thereby west of its junction with the extended centre line of Airds Bay Road, generally northwesterly, to a point (at Ordnance Map coordinates 292494, 734252) at Connell, 62 metres or thereby east of its junction with the extended centre line of the access to the property known as Dunfuirny, a distance of 8.819 kilometres or thereby.

Full details of the proposal are contained in the Order which, together with a plan showing the length of road involved and a statement of the Scottish Ministers' reasons for proposing to make the Order, may be examined free of charge during normal business hours from 27 November 2014 until 8 January 2015 at the offices of Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF; and Oban Library, 77 Albany Street, Oban PH34 4AL.

Any person wishing to object to the proposed Order should send details of the grounds for objection in writing to the Director of Trunk Road and Bus Operations, c/o Robert McTaggart, Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF quoting reference NNW/A85/RMC by 8 January 2015.

A copy of the Order and this Notice will be available on the Transport Scotland website at www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/road-and-traffic-orders/traffic-orders

D MORRISON
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow G4 0HF
27 November 2014

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 at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AN, Monday to Friday 9am to 12:30pm and 1:30pm to 5pm. On Wednesdays, the Customer Service Points will open at 10am. At the alternative locations detailed below or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
14/02614/PP	Demolition of existing dwellinghouse and erection of replacement dwellinghouse	Stalkers House Glenforsa Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA27 6JN	Sub Post Office: Aros Isle of Mull
14/02628/PPP	Site for the erection of one dwellinghouse, formation of vehicular access including upgrading of existing access track and installation of private drainage system	Kentallen Farm Aros Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA27 6JS	Sub Post Office: Aros Isle of Mull
14/02673/PP	Renewal of planning permission reference 11/01944/PP - Replacement of previously existing seasonal small boat landing stage	Cardingmill Bay Landing Stage Gallanach Road Oban Argyll and Bute PA34 4LS	Oban Area Office
14/02747/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 11/01351/PPP (Site for the erection of acroft house)	Land East of Oakview Kirkton Taynuilt Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office: Taynuilt

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

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
14/02672/LIB	Erection of canopy in yard area	33 Main Street Tormory Isle of Mull Argyll and Bute PA75 6NU	Tormory Area Office

These applications listed below together with other related documents may be inspected between 09:00 - 17:00hrs Monday to Friday at 1A Manse Lochgilphead Brae PA31 8RD, at the alternative locations detailed below during their normal opening times or by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Written comments for the following list of applications should be made to the above address within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

Ref	Proposal	Site Address	Location of Plans
14/02615/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Plot 3 Land East of Cairn Cottage Port Ellen Isle of Islay Argyll and Bute	Sub Post Office: Port Ellen
14/02652/PP	Erection of wind turbine (24.8 metres to blade tip)	Land North East of Tarbert Lodge Tarbert Isle of Jura Argyll and Bute PA60 7XH	Sub Post Office: Craighouse Isle of Jura

Argyll and Bute council encourages planning applications to be made on-line through The Scottish Government website: <https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk>

The Council maintain a Register of planning applications which can be viewed during normal office hours at Planning and Regulatory Services, Central Validation Team, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD.

A weekly list of applications can be viewed at the above address and at all Council Libraries.

Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered.

DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
(STAFFORD STREET, OBAN - PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) AND (AIRDS PLACE, OBAN - ON STREET PARKING PLACES AMENDMENT) ORDER 2014

On Monday 24th November 2014, Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order in terms of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended.

The Order, which comes into operation on 9th January 2015, imposes a prohibition of vehicles on that section of Stafford Street, Oban that extends between its junction with George Street and the Coran Esplanade. Two on street parking bays on Airds Place will also be removed and replaced with a no waiting and no loading at any time restriction.

A copy of the Order is available for inspection during normal office hours Monday to Friday inclusive at the following offices:-

- Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban;
- Argyll and Bute Council Offices, Kilmory, Lochgilphead.

Any person, who wishes to question the validity of the Order or any provision contained in it on the grounds that it is not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or on the grounds that any requirement of that Act or any instrument made under it has not been complied with in relation to the Order may, within six weeks from 28th November 2014, apply to the Court of Session for this purpose.

Jim Smith, Head of Roads & Amenities Services, 1A Manse Brae, LOCHGILPHEAD PA31 8RD

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2008 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION PUBLIC EVENT
OBAN HIGH SCHOOL

Hub North Scotland, on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council, intends to construct a new secondary school (Oban High School), including associated parking, bus drop-off facility, playing fields and outbuildings. The proposed site for the development is within the existing Oban High School site and the land to the north-east of the existing grass playing pitches at Dalintart/Glencairn. A public event has been arranged to provide information on the proposals. The event will be held in:

McCaig Suite, Corran Halls, No 54 The Esplanade, Oban PA34 5AB
10am to 8pm Tuesday 2nd December 2014

The public are invited to come along, between the times noted above, to see the proposals and to meet with the members of the project team. Anyone wishing to make comments on the proposed development can do so in person at the public event. Alternatively they can write to Ryder Architecture, 221 West George Street Glasgow G2 2ND before 9th December 2014 or email aforbes@ryderarchitecture.com.

Please note that any comments made are not representations to the Planning Authority. There will be an opportunity to make representations to the Planning Authority should Hub North Scotland decide to submit a planning application for the proposals.

COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES
Councillor Roddy McCuish (E.W.4 Oban South and the Isles)
Councillor Roddy McCuish will be holding a surgery on Friday 5th December from 3.00pm - 5.00pm in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban.
He can be contacted by email roderickmccuish@argyll-bute.gov.uk or by telephone 01631 567854.

Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

NATIONAL FOREST LAND SCHEME

Forestry Commission Scotland wishes to notify Community and Environmental groups that it is proposing sale of the following properties:

Type of Property:	Surplus Buildings & Land.	Surplus Land.
Name:	Former Office & Depot	Potential House Plots
Area:	Approx. 0.53ha	Approx. 0.722 ha.
Grid ref:	NN 045 589	NM 675 452
Location:	Glenachulish, by Ballachulish	Lochaline, Morvern

Enquiries to Forestry Commission Scotland at - ronnie.lee@forestry.gsi.gov.uk Full details are being sent to the relevant Community Councils and Non Government Organisations.

www.forestry.gov.uk

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

www.highland.gov.uk

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined between the hours of 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) at the SERVICE POINT, LOCHABER HOUSE, HIGH STREET, FORT WILLIAM, PH33 6EL and online at <http://www.highland.gov.uk>

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
14/03785/FUL	Land 50m East of Garage House, Onich	Erection 12no. dwellings
14/04255/FUL	Land 90m East of Garadh Buidhe, Spean Bridge	Proposed new dwelling house
14/04290/FUL	Invernahyle, Duror, Appin	Amended design to 14/01289/FUL
14/04316/FUL	Bridge House, Invergarry	New road access onto A82 for single dwelling

Time period for comments is 14 days. Application reference 14/04316/FUL is 21 days.
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATIONS

Applicant, Croft, Extent/Purpose, Case number

Mr S F Cass & Mrs C Cass
Fennachrochan, Lismore & Appin
Whole croft
4.87.51518

Comments can be made to the Crofting Commission by any member of the crofting community within the locality of the land, within 28 days of the date of this newspaper.

Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW or info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Bruichladdich Distillery Co Ltd of Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay, Argyll PA49 7UN is applying for a licence to use Bruichladdich Distillery, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay, Argyll PA49 7UN As an operating centre for 2 goods vehicles and 2 trailers.

Owners or occupiers of land (Including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land will be affected, should make written representation to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF, stating their reasons within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioners office.

First registration of a croft.

Donald McAllister has registered his crofts 1/2 3 Cladach(A0519) and Port-A-Reidhleinn (A0521) Kilchoman on the crofting register held by the Registers of Scotland. Any person wishing to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 14 July 2015. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/registers/home The croft registration numbers are C657 (1/2 3 Cladach) and C312 (Port-A-Reidhleinn)

First registration of a croft.

Andrew MacDonald has registered his croft Ardchiavaig Kilfinichen & Kilvickeon 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 the 14th August 2015. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C698.

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Forestry Commission Scotland
Coimisean na Coilltearachd Alba

Invitation to notify interest in a lease for five years from 1st May 2015 of approximately 7 hectares of fenced hill land at Salachry, by Kilmartin, suitable for up to 30 sheep.

Invitation to notify interest for an Option Agreement to search for a site to quarry slate in Glenrigh, by Ballachulish.

To notify interest, please email t.garman@forestry.gsi.gov.uk, by 5th December 2014.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

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LOCAL SERVICES

Thank you

I wish to thank the doctors & staff of Ward A, Lorn & Isles Hospital for the care I received following my recent operation. Also, family, friends and customers for all the cards and good wishes. Thank you all.

Colin Galbraith, Esplanade P.O.

Honey Ann Neish

Ruaraidh and Siobhan are delighted to announce the safe arrival of baby Honey Ann Neish on 11th November at 9.58am weighing a healthy 7lb 1oz! A wee sister for Colbie and Murphy, first grandchild for Fiona and Iain Mitchell, Taynuilt and third grandchild for Brenda and Brian Neish, Kilchrenan. Huge thank you to all the lovely midwives at Oban and Lorn Hospital who delivered her and for all their support.

Oban Times TRADE CLASSIFIED

BIRTHS

FRASER - Ally and Eileen (McAllister), are pleased to announce the safe arrival on November 13, 2014 of twin girls Timera and Samira at Ninewells, Dundee. Two new sisters for Kelley, Scott, Liam, Steffan and Emmie. Thanks to all doctors and staff at NICU Dundee and SCBU Raigmore.

DEATHS

BRADFORD - Angela (née Graham) of 16 Kerrera Terrace, Oban. Passed away suddenly but peacefully surrounded by her family on November 22, 2014 at Lorn and Islands District Hospital, Oban. Beloved wife of James, dearly loved mum, sister, gran and great-gran. She will be sadly missed. Funeral service to be held at Oban Parish Church at 1pm on Wednesday, December 3, 2014. The family would also like to thank Dr F McLellan and all the staff of Ward B for all their help and support during this sad time.

CAMERON - After a short illness, at the Mid Argyll Hospital on November 23, 2014, Colin Cameron aged 84 years, of Embo, 5 Castle Park, Kilmartin. Beloved husband of Catherine MacGeachy, much loved father of Shona and Sheena. A much respected father-in-law of Gordon and Russell. Adored Shennair of Cameron, Sinclair, Craig, Julie and Rosie. Son of the late Dugald and Catherine Cameron, Lochgoilhead. A well loved character who will be sadly missed. Funeral service will be held in Kilmartin Parish Church on Friday November 28, 2014, at 10.30am, followed by interment at Lochgoilhead Cemetery at 1pm. Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired, to Glenaray Ward, Mid Argyll Hospital.

GORDON - Peacefully, at the Lynn of Lorne Care Home, Marjorie Hutchinson, aged 98 years and originally from Stoke on Trent. She was the beloved wife of the late Bill Gordon, Art Master, Oban High School and dear stepmother of Alasdair (Golspie), Marion, (Darwin, Australia), Isabel Banks and the late Angus, (Oban). A private cremation will follow.

KITSON - Peacefully at home in Ballachulish on Saturday November 22, 2014 aged 64 years, Eric Kitson. Beloved husband of Susan, devoted father of David and Andrew and loving father-in-law to Alison. Funeral service will be held on Saturday, November 29, at 12 noon in St John's Episcopal Church, Ballachulish. Flowers welcome and donations if desired to the Belford Hospital may be given at the service or forwarded to John McLellan Funeral Directors, Dudley Road, Fort William.

MACGILVRAY - Suddenly at Lorn & Islands Hospital, Oban on Monday November 17, 2014, aged 80, Angus MacGilvray (Angie), Cullipool, Luing. Sorely missed.

McNEIL - Neil (M.B.Ch.B). Peacefully at the Victoria Infirmary on Monday November 17, 2014, retired doctor and consultant in public health, Neil, husband of Florrie, father to Marian, Roderick and Neil and a loving grandfather. A private family service will be held at Mearns cemetery.

MILNE - Suddenly at home after a long illness Aleya (née Innes), formerly of 10 Lorn Drive, Glencoe. Dear sister of Jane and John, deeply loved and sadly missed.

SMITH - Peacefully on November 23, 2014, Jessie Anne Smith, aged 81, of "Lochussie", Pulpit Drive, Oban. Beloved wife of Kenny and dear mum to Lorna, Kenneth and Iona. Loving granny to Catriona and mother-in-law and friend to Donald and Paul. Funeral service will be held on Monday, December 1, at Oban Parish Church, Glencruitten Road, Oban, thereafter to Pennyfuir Cemetery.

CLARK - The family of the late Maureen Clark, special mum to Susan, Stephen and Michael would like to thank sincerely relatives and friends for their very kind support and expressions of sympathy during their recent sad loss. The family would also like to thank Macmillan Nurses, Marie Curie Cancer Support and minister Ian Miller for the lovely service. Thanks also to Hamish Hoey & Sons (Funeral Directors) for their help, support and funeral services. The sum of £345 was collected for Macmillan Cancer Support.

GIBSON - The family of the late Chrissie Gibson would like to thank everyone for their kind messages, flowers and support. Thanks to Tweeddale and Ballachulish Medical Practices, also Abbeyfield for their care and help given to our mother. Special thanks to Scott Greenlees and staff at John McLellan Funeral Directors for their care and consideration with funeral arrangements, and to Andrew Varwell at Duncansburgh/McIntosh Church for his kind words. The amount of £373 was raised for Abbeyfield, Ballachulish.

SERVANT - Jessie, Gordon, Lorna, Andrew and families wish to thank all relatives and friends for their expressions of sympathy and support over the loss of Leslie, a dear husband, father, grandpa and father-in-law. The support we have been given has been overwhelming and is very much appreciated. We would like to give special thanks to the ambulance crew and the staff of Ward B at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Rev Robert Brookes, Iain MacInnes of D & A Munn for all their care and support and Robert Campbell-Preston for his kind and thoughtful words at the service. A massive thank you to everyone who attended the service and who gave up their time to help make it a very special celebration of Leslie's life, just as he would have wanted. The very generous amount of £1,155 was collected for Muckairn Parish Church Fund.

WHYTE - The family of the late Iain Whyte formerly of Bowmore, Islay would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy extended to them following their loss. Very special thanks to Dr Pickering, Dr Abel and Dr Stevenson and all the staff of Islay Hospital for their kind care and attention. Sincere thanks to Rev Angus Morrison for leading a most comforting service, to Gordon Shaw for piping and to A J & Craig MacAffer for their funeral guidance. Grateful thanks to those who paid their last respects at the service and graveside. The sum of £254.34 was collected for Islay Hospital Fund.

CROOKS - In loving memory of Vera, devoted and loving mum and nana. Sorely missed.

- Love Kirsten, Donald John, Derek John and Jamie. xxx

GUNN - Duncan. November 24, 2004. Sadly missed these last ten years. Will remember you always. - Andrew and Susan.

MACDONALD - Marybell. Precious memories of my loving mum, who passed away on December 1, 2008. Always loved and remembered. - Angus, Morar.

MACDOUGALL - Colin. For my dear son Colin. A special person, a special face, someone we loved and can't replace never selfish always kind, these are the memories you left behind. All my love son - from Maw

MACDOUGALL - Colin. The years may pass but still you stay as near and dear as yesterday Love always - Brother Bob.

MACINNES - In loving memory of a dear mum and nana, Nancy, passed away November 25, 2005. Forever loved and missed. - Mairi, Donald and Sarah. xxx

MACINNES - In loving memory of my dear wife Ina, who passed away on November 28, 2010. No tears, no verse, no words can say how much I miss you every day. - Love Roddy xx

MACINNES - In loving memory of a dear mum and granny, who passed away on November 28, 2010. The good times we had as a family, a beautiful nature, a heart of gold These are the memories we will always hold. Love and miss you always. - Brian, Fiona, Brian, Euan. xx

MACGILLIVRAY - In loving memory of Hugh, a dear husband to Flora, father to Corinne and father-in-law to Alan, who died November 19, 2004. Always in our thoughts and forever in our hearts. - Corinne and Alan Barrie, Bridge of Marnoch, Huntly and Flora MacGillivray, Keith.

MACKENZIE - Cherished memories of Willie, who died on November 29, 2008. Always in our thoughts. - Neilean and family.

MAY - In loving memory of our dearest mum and granny Cathy, who died November 23, 2006. We hold you close within our hearts And there you shall remain To walk with us throughout our lives Until we meet again Sadly missed by her loving family.

McKECHNIE - Treasured memories of a much loved mum, Nancy, who passed away on November 30, 2013. Always in our thoughts - Fiona and Alex

Oban Times
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS
Oban Times
BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

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WEDDINGS



Heather Clarke and John Hannah were married at St Conan's Kirk, Loch Awe on October 11, 2014. They celebrated their marriage with family and friends at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban. Photograph by Perfect Images, Dunbeg, Oban.



MORROW - MORRISON Married at Low Park, Hamilton on August 16, 2014, Lynne, only daughter of Ricky and Beth, Carluke to David, youngest son of Colin and Joanne, Oban.



A Scottish Tenor who gave up his career in pop music to train to become a classical tenor is now giving a year of his life to raise money for children in South America. Martin Aelred is giving concerts to raise funds for the street children of Colombia. Last weekend saw him in St Columba's Cathedral Oban, and St Mary's church in Fort William.

Church of Scotland to leave Unite

STAFF at the Church of Scotland offices have voted to end the collective bargaining agreement with union Unite. The church will now be giving Unite six months' formal notice of the decision. Staff unhappiness with Unite's approach came to the surface following a dispute over pay earlier this year which asked them to strike during the church's annual meeting at the General Assembly. Pauline Weibye, secretary to the council of assembly, said: 'We will now be working closely with the whole staff group to ensure that we have robust collective bargaining arrangements for the future. 'Unite will continue to be able to represent individual staff union members.' A ballot of 220 staff saw an 80 per cent turnout and a vote of 93 to 80 in favour of an end to the eight-year-old recognition agreement.

Minister assigned Moderator Designate

A GLENCOE-born minister has recovered from ill health to return as Moderator Designate of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The Rev Dr Angus Morrison was originally ordained in the Free Church of Scotland before transferring to the Church of Scotland. Rev Dr Morrison said: 'It is a great honour to have been nominated as Moderator Designate for 2015. 'I am thankful that a very good recovery, following surgery, has made it possible for me to accept the nomination. 'My wife and I are deeply appreciative of the support and prayers of so many across the Church during this recent difficult period. 'In dependence on God's grace, I look forward to the opportunities and challenges of the year ahead. 'On various fronts these are difficult days for our Church, as they are for many other denominations. 'We may at times find ourselves perplexed and saddened, but as people of Christian faith there is no real place for discouragement. Rev Dr Morrison was born in Glencoe in 1953. As his father worked for the Northern Lighthouse Service, the young Angus went to school in Oban, Stromness and Edinburgh before progressing to higher education at the University of Glasgow. He undertook further studies at Pisa University and London University before a PhD at Edinburgh University (New College). Rev Dr Morrison's church career began when he was ordained in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1979. After ministries in Oban and Edinburgh he transferred into the Church of Scotland. He became the minister of St Columba's Old Parish Church in Stornoway and is now Minister at Orwell and Portmoak Parish Church. Rev Dr Morrison, who has a degree in Classics and speaks Italian and Gaelic, is married to Marion who is a primary school teacher in Fife. The couple have four children between the ages of 16 and 29.

Thought for the week

The message of Christmas

ADVERT wars and Christmas go hand in hand. This year war itself is the backdrop to one of the adverts. The ad takes us back 100 years to Christmas 1914 and the truce that was never supposed to happen. Fighting was all to be done by Christmas. That was what many folks in Britain were saying in 1914, and it seems in other parts of the world they were saying the same thing, in French, Russian, German, Hindi. One hundred years on we know with the benefit of hindsight that it was not. We know it as we rush around doing all our Christmas stuff. Buying here, wrapping there, writing this, opening that. We know it as we lose the reason for the season in doing the season. We know it as peace on earth is the last thing in our lives. The message of Christmas really did make people stop and think 100 years ago. In terrible places, some wee Christmas trees and Christmas carols briefly called some folk to sanity. To remember the reason for the season, to think of the Christ child, to celebrate in the exchange of gifts and the recognition of each others humanity. Christmas 1914 has much to say.

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Youngsters help fell town's Christmas tree

PUPILS from Barcaldine primary school helped on a very special mission last week when they felled the town's Christmas tree. The school was in Sutherland's Grove setting up its Sgoil na Coilltean, school in the woods when pupils were invited to help with the health and safety operations to bring down the tree. Children who were equipped with hard hats and hi-vis vests, put out the safety signs and made sure the public, and themselves were at a safe distance from the felling. Rory MacLean from Forestry Commission Scotland helped the youngsters as they warned anyone nearby by a very effective shout of 'timber'.



The Oban Times
& West Highland Times
THE REGIONAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE WEST HIGHLANDS, ISLANDS AND ARGYLL

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Back-to-back wins as Fort find their form

Fort William	2
Keith	0
Highland League	

FORT William celebrated back-to-back wins in the Highland League with a commanding 2-0 victory at home to Keith last Saturday.

It was the third win in six games for the rejuvenated Claggan Park men, who have shot up to 14th place in the league table sitting on 11 points - two points more than their entire total from last season.

Fort dominated the game throughout, with second-half goals from new signings Scott Davidson and Scott MacLean securing a well-deserved three points before Stuart Massie was red-carded for Keith.

Fort William manager Calum MacLean could not have been happier with his team's recent revival.

He said: 'It's a brilliant result,

I'm absolutely delighted for the boys.

'At half time I told them: just win it.

'The first 15 minutes we passed it well and I told them to get the game back to passing.

'We knew if we did that we'd win the game.'

The first 45 minutes was a scrappy affair but the hosts were dominant, with Sean Grant and Ryan MacDonald both firing wide of goal.

Unlucky not to be ahead by the break, a confident-looking Fort came out for the second half all guns blazing and finally broke the deadlock after 63 minutes.

A quick counter-attack move down the left saw Scott Davidson put through one-on-one with the goalkeeper and he slotted home with his second goal in as many games for the club.

The home side continued to pressurise Keith after the goal and scored again on 74 minutes.

Ryan MacDonald beat a Keith

defender with a beautiful nutmeg down the right wing and fired in a cross, which Scott MacLean connected with low in the penalty area to make it 2-0.

David Osbourne made a couple of superb saves to deny the visitors during the second period, in what was an outstanding display for Fort's trialist goalkeeper, but the hosts were rarely troubled.

Keith's hopes were then ended late in the game when Massie received a second yellow card for dissent.

After full time cheers could be heard ringing out from the home dressing room as MacLean looked ahead to his side's next match away to Huntly this Saturday.

He said: 'Huntly are one of the bottom ones that we're aiming to get at.

'We're going in on a high after taking six points out of six. Now we're going for nine out of nine.

'It's amazing what a win the previous week can do.'



DELIGHT: Fort William's Stefan MacRitchie takes on Bruce Milne of Keith during last Saturday's 2-0 win at Claggan Park

20_48footy01

Weightlifters break records in support of friend



Jeremy Vickers

LOCHABER athletes Stuart Whyte and Jeremy Vickers were delighted to achieve new Scottish lifting records last Sunday in the presence of their friend Mark Haldenby.

Both men smashed the national axle clean and press records for each of their weight categories at the Haldenby Strongman Classic event last Sunday - and dedicated the achievement to their colleague, who is fighting Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Whyte is now the strongest man in Scotland in the clean and press under 105kg body weight division, having lifted 145kg, beating a previous high of

Weightlifting

It meant even more... at Mark's event

Stuart Whyte

142.5kg. Vickers managed 140kg in the under 90kg division, beating the record of 130kg which he had previously set himself.

Whyte - who has competed three times in the Scotland's strongest man contest - and Vickers were part of the team that organised the special event in Caol community centre to raise money for Mark Haldenby and his family.

Whyte said: 'It meant even more that we both achieved this at Mark's event.'

'We also have a contest at an event every April for Cancer Research, so it's not just a strongman show, we are doing these things for charity too.'

Earlier this year, Vickers qualified for the world's strongest man competition though subse-

quently couldn't attend due to family commitments.

But he said doing something for his friend came over and above anything he had achieved.

He said: 'Mark is going through a bad time so it was nice to be able to achieve it in front of him with his wife and kids there.'

'I want to dedicate my win to him.'

Whyte and Vickers will both soon compete in the Strongman Champions League in Norway.

They will fly out in two weeks' time to battle it out in the champions league against 10 competitors from countries across the world.



Stuart Whyte

Skye gym plan gets a lift from grant award of £38,000

Gym

A NEW gym in north Skye is one step closer to reality as more than £38,000 in funding has been secured.

The facility, to be built in the attic of Staffin Hall, has been boosted by £33,350 from the People's Health Trust and £5,000 from Highland council.

A steering group of local residents will now be set up to develop the project.

Martin Perry, chairman of the hall association, said: 'Along with £5,000 from our own funds this should give us a good facility and a fitness instructor.'

'We now need to put together a group to manage the project and make decisions.'

Fitness equipment including aerobic exercise machines, treadmills, rowing machines and cross trainers are likely to be installed but weights are unlikely due to potential noise.

Anybody interested in joining the steering group can contact martinperry052@btinternet.com or message the Talla Stafainn Facebook page.

Sports gala day marks Active Schools landmark

Active Schools

A SPECIAL sports gala day was held in Kinlochleven last Saturday to celebrate 10 years of the Active Schools programme.

Active Schools offers a variety of lunchtime and after-school sports for children to encourage active and healthy lifestyles across Scotland.

The free event, held at the Leven Centre in Kinlochleven, offered an array of 'come and try' activities for youngsters from south Lochaber throughout the day, including gymnastics, football, volleyball and orienteering.

Jane Bruce, a coordinator with High Life Highland Active Schools, said: 'The kids in south Lochaber love the activities. They wouldn't come if they didn't enjoy it.'

'We're not sure how much sports curriculum activity they actually get so this helps keep them active outside school.'

Fast and furious take Leanachan forest trail

Cycling

THE SECOND round of the West Highland Wheelers winter league saw 28 cyclists compete on a fast and furious two-lap course at Leanachan forest.

Joe Barnes won his second league race in a row, pulling ahead of Liam Moynihan right at the death and finishing first on 42 minutes and 41 seconds.

Moynihan was only eight seconds behind in second place.

Fiona Beattie was the first lady home, with a time of 56 minutes and 9 seconds, while Alex Dent finished highest out of the juniors.

Top five finishers: 1 Joe Barnes 42:41; 2 Liam Moynihan 42:49; 3 Donald Paterson 44:18; 4 Gavin McLean 47:38; 5 Alan Dent 49:36.



FURIOUS: The second round of the West Highland Wheelers winter league gets underway at Leanachan forest

Ali Young Indoor League results

Indoor football

LAST Sunday's matches in the Ali Young Indoor League saw the Volley record one of the biggest wins, with an 8-3 scoreline against Inverlochly United, while Ali Young's team won 7-2 against Nevis Range.

The Goon Squad remain top of the league after a narrow 4-3 victory over Portwoy.

Other results were HWE 3-2 Harlem Globe Stoters, MHB 3-1 Outer Milan, Fiorentina Turner 1-3 Lochaber Leisure and Barowcy 9 - 7 Barcelochy.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

COMpetition

WIN £1250

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

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The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void.

If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company. In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company. The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time. Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.



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Please tape your £1 coin here

Name

Address

Tel No.

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

I Kennedy, Lochaber Road, Fort William

G Wright, Shuna Terrace, Oban

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE.

Sorry saints outplayed on their own turf

Oban Saints 2
St Joseph's 5
Scottish Amateur League Premier

Football

PREMIER League table-toppers St Joseph's FP from Duntocher were the visitors to Glencruitten last Saturday in what was a massive game for both clubs.

But in the end the Saints from Oban, last year's Premier Division champions, were well beaten by a better team on the day and can have no complaints, although the visitors must have thought Christmas had come early when the Oban side gifted them three goals.

Saints were without Ross Maitland, Myles McAuley, Dean Smith and Roy McLuckie for this important league game but welcomed back Allan MacKay and David Beaton into the squad.

The home team started off well knocking the ball about confidently and took the lead in the ninth minute after Dugal Graham and Allan MacKay combined to set up Donnie Campbell who thumped a great right foot shot past a helpless Kevin Connor.

Even at this stage you could see the visitors were up for the game as they were working hard and looked sharper than the home side and it took them only three minutes to draw level when Ryan Holmes, who tormented the Saints defence all afternoon, beat Jamie Graham before firing a low shot into the net.

After the whirlwind start the game settled down and the Oban side created a reasonable chance when Lewis Cameron squared the ball to Donnie Campbell but Donnie's shot sailed past the post. Then Lewis Cameron had a good effort well saved by the visiting net-minder.

The second half was barely a minute old when St Joe's took the lead. David Gallagher fired in a speculative shot which Daniel Cassells would have saved easily but the ball took a wicked deflection off Alex Craik and sailed past the Saints keeper and into the net. Lucky? Yes, but if you don't by a ticket you won't win a prize.

Four minutes later Saints found themselves 3-1 in arrears losing a very poor goal when John Paul Seagrave outjumped Alex Craik at the back post to head home a corner from the right.

The home side were shell-shocked and had no answer to a St Joe's side who were now dominating play all over the park. The visitors increased their lead in the 58th minute when Alex Craik lost a tackle in midfield and with the home side caught short at the back the ball was played to Blair Mulgrew who made no mistake slotting the ball past Daniel Cassells to make the score 4-1.

It's not often you see an Oban Saints team getting the run around and manager Iain Jackson was forced to make changes. On came new signing Ally McKerracher, Davie McArthur and young David Beaton.

The substitutions certainly made a difference as Saints came roaring back and started to take the game to St Joe's but it was always going to be a big ask to claw back three goals against the visitors.

Saints did pull a goal back through Craig MacEwan in the 71st minute and McKerracher then had good effort well saved



NEAR MISS: Substitute Ally McKerracher comes close to scoring for Saints. 07_148saints01

by St Joe's goalkeeper Connor.

Saints kept pushing forward and had a strong claim for a penalty when Craig MacEwan was brought down but referee Jimmy Litster, who had a good game, decided the infringement had taken place just outside the box.

Although Saints were playing a lot better and pushing forward in the closing stages of the game they never really troubled a well-drilled St Joe's defence.

With the referee playing time

added on at the end of the game the home team's misery was complete when St Joe's broke quickly and the Saints' defence, along with the goalkeeper, got in a terrible tangle with the ball breaking kindly for Ryan Holmes who knocked it home from close range to make the final score 5-2.

When the referee finally blew for full time it was a dejected Saints squad that trudged off the pitch knowing they had let themselves down by turning in a

below par performance.

Manager Jackson was devastated after the game. He said: 'I have no complaints, we were beaten by a better side today. This is the best St Joe's team I've seen for years.'

'They looked sharper and worked harder than we did and got their just rewards. I just hope our players learned something today.'

'Some of the goals we've given away this season have been crim-

inal and we did it again today. We've lost 13 goals in the last four games.

'When we won the league last season we never lost a game and only lost 19 goals in 18 games.'

'We need to get back to last season's form, and quickly, otherwise it's going to be a long, hard slog.'

Saints face another tough game this weekend when they travel to Glasgow Green Football Centre to take on Finnart. Kick-off 2pm.

Prizes handed out at sailing club

Sailing

OBAN Sailing Club's Round Mull Race prizewinners were presented with their trophies for the 2014 event at the club's annual dinner dance.

The top prize went north to Skye Sailing Club with John MacKenzie's team on Stoirm Mhor lifting the coveted Royal Bank of Scotland Trophy for the best performance of the weekend. John is a regular competitor and brings his Westerly Typhoon south during the season to compete in a number of west coast regattas.

The Round Mull Race, sponsored by Ardfern Yacht Centre and Owen Sails, saw an excellent turn out of over 40 boats for the popular circumnavigation of the island.

Stoirm Mhor set the pace on the first leg winning the Mishnish Bucket for the best overall time from Oban to Tobermory and the medium handicap class.

Fast class winners were John Hardie's Taz team from Oban with Alistair Pugh's Contessa 32 Marisca taking the slow handicap class whilst Alan Gent Whyte with his beautiful classic An Sulair won the restricted sail class.

Saturday's light north-westerly breeze finally filled in to give an excellent run to Bunnessan with the fastest boats taking around five hours over the course. Class 1 was won by Brian Robertson's Celtic Spirit from Mid Argyll with Class 2 by Brian Wiseman's Sorra of Appin with An Sulair again taking the white sail class. Hot Toddy, sailing two-handed,

clinched the Class 3 victory and the Bunnessan Hall Trophy.

Saturday night's ceilidh in Bunnessan was a great success with funds being raised for the Ross of Mull Historical Society.

The wind ran light into Sunday, particularly affecting the slower section of the fleet on the long leg into the finish off Frank Lockwood's Island. The faster boats held the breeze with Celtic Spirit finishing first in Class 1 and Amber Haze taking the silverware in Class 2. Old Flame from Skye was the only finisher in Class 3, the largest class in the fleet and therefore was awarded the overall Jolanta Trophy for the slow handicap class.

The fastest circumnavigation on elapsed time went to Spirit of Jacana, another visitor from the Clyde whilst the fastest overall on corrected time was Eric and Irena Chapman's Sigma 33 Amber Haze who lifted the Torran Rock.

The Bilgewater Shield for the best double-handed boat went to Hot Toddy sailed by Alison Chadwick and Thomas Smith. An Sulair lifted the best corrected time for restricted sail.

With three classes and one for restricted sail, the Round Mull Race has something for everyone. As well as competitive racing the event gives those who are more cruiser oriented the chance to take part in an event which has a strong focus on camaraderie and social sailing.

Commodore John Peden thanked those on the organising committee of the Round Mull Race (RMR), particularly se-



CELEBRATION: Round Mull Race prizewinners with Oban Sailing Club commodore John Peden (front row, right).

retary Billy Forteith and Tony Ratcliffe and North West Marine who supplied the committee boat Headcorn. North West Marine have been long term supporters of the Round Mull Race. Thanks were also accorded to Chris Owen who acted as race officer for the 2014 event, taking over from Phil Preston.

Said John: 'Without this team we couldn't run the race which is now one of the top west coast events. Sailing in great company amidst spectacular scenery with a great social programme, makes this one event not to be missed.'

As well as Ardfern Yacht Centre and Owen Sails sponsoring the event, Dimension Polyant supplied t-shirts to all competitors and Forteith Food Service hosted the pre-race reception. T. Barbour Fuels helped with fuelling the committee boat and

Forteith Refrigeration and Heat Pump Solutions also helped sponsor the event.

Full results on obansailingclub.org

Results: The Royal Bank of Scotland Trophy for best amalgamated points overall - Stoirm Mhor.

Bunnessan Hall Trophy - best corrected time Tobermory to Bunnessan - Hot Toddy.

Glencoe Trophy - best corrected time from Bunnessan to Oban - Amber Haze.

The Mull Plaque - Fastest circumnavigation on elapsed time - Spirit of Jacana.

Fastest circumnavigation on corrected time - The Torran Rock - Amber Haze

Overall times - Fast handicap Antique Schwepes Trophy Celtic Spirit Medium Handicap - Royal Bank of Scotland Cup - Amber Haze Slow Handicap - The Jolanta Trophy - Old Flame Fastest circumnavigation in restricted sail An Sulair.

High stakes as Oban Filling Station Cup gets underway

Pool

THE HIGHLY-anticipated Oban Filling Station Cup got underway last week and the four participating sides in round one didn't disappoint.

The Gluepot had home advantage against former cup holders Markie Dan's 'A', which many would have dismissed with the quality of opponent.

However, the Connel side have had their best start to a campaign in recent memory and seemed to relish their underdog status, matching their more experienced opponents blow by blow.

It was Markie Dan's 'A' who had to dig deep to gain the upper hand in the doubles, securing the draw and extending the contest. With the dreaded 'penalties' requiring composure under pressure, once again Markie's rightly regained their favourites tag.

Both sides missed their opening two efforts, which just intensified the drama for onlookers who could sense The Gluepot might just defy the odds and progress through to the quarter finals.

Despite falling behind, The Gluepot quickly responded with two potted blacks to leave Markie Dans in the unenviable position of having to pot their remaining black to stay in the competition - their inefficiency from behind the baulk line sparked jubilant celebrations echoing around Loch Etive.

For the first time ever The Argyll ventured up the A816 from Lochgilphead to take part in the competition and they faced off against Markie Dan's 'B' for the remaining quarter-final spot, albeit with a depleted side.

Last season's concluding event, The Shoot-Out Shield, welcomed Mid-Argyll's finest into the Oban Pool League set-up, for cup competitions only.

Their opponents, Markie Dan's 'B', have grown as a team over the past couple of years and a prolonged cup run would have been high on their list of objectives pre-season.

Again penalties were required to produce a winner and it was Markie Dan's 'B' who prevailed and will go into the quarter-final draw this week.

Two rescheduled league matches also went ahead last week with bottom-placed The Outreach losing to co-habitants The Lancaster 'A' and league leaders Lochavullin's Cellar rail-roading a lacklustre team from The Lochnell.

Results, November 20 OFS Cup: Gluepot 5-5 Markie Dans A; Markie Dans B 5-5 Argyll. Gluepot and Markie Dans B win on penalties.

League: Outreach 1-9 Lancaster A; Lochnell 3-7 Lochavullin's Cellar. League fixtures today (Thursday): Lancaster A v Markie Dans 'B', Markie Dans 'A' v Lochavullin; Lochavullin's Cellar v Gluepot; Lochnell v Lancaster B; Outreach have no game.

Winter league race

A FORTUNATE break in the rain on Sunday morning allowed Lochaber Athletic Club's second race of the winter league, the Drूमfada Chase, to get underway, with 93 runners competing.

Last week's winner Finlay Wild came first again with a time of 49 minutes, five seconds, while Scott Craighead was the runner-up on 51 minutes, three seconds.

Stephen Burns followed in third place 14 seconds later, while newcomer to the area Edie Hemstock was the first lady over the line on 57 minutes and 38 seconds.

Next league race is the Lاراig Mhor Long on Saturday, with registration at Mamore Lodge.

Top 10 finishers (Lochaber Athletic Club unless otherwise stated): 1 Finlay Wild 49:05; 2 Scott Craighead, Carnethy Hill Running Club, 51:03; 3 Stephen Burns 51:17; 4 Steve MacDonald 51:28; 5 Tom Smith 53:14; 6 Jon Gay 53:17; 7 Ryan MacKenzie, Highland Hill Runners, 53:30; 8 Allan Ross 53:32; 9 Aidan Donnelly 54:34; 10 Bruce MacLean 55:31.



THEY'RE OFF: Lochaber Athletic Club's runners get off the mark in the sunshine, on the Drूमfada Chase. 20_148athletic01

Creeping to the league summit

Ten-pin bowling

THE CREEPS now share top spot of the Lochaber Building Supplies ten-pin bowling league scratch division with two other teams.

Rotavators and Ardtoe/Nevis Radio have joined them in the lead, with all three sitting ahead on 30 points.

In the handicap division, Rotavators remain top with 33 points, followed by Ardtoe/Nevis Radio in second place with 29 points.

The top individual performance this week came from Pam Weller of Alleycats with 185, who also had the top two-game scratch series with a season high of 353.

Other good scratch games came from John Weller of Alleycats with 175 and Frank Sweeney of Council with 172.

Frank Sweeney also had the top handicap game of 244, while David Ogg of Ardtoe/Nevis Radio rolled the highest two-game handicap series with 439.

Other highs for the season saw Alleycats rolled the top scratch team game of the week with 632 and the top two-game scratch team series with 1,161.

3+1 had the highest handicap team score with 859 while Ardtoe/Nevis Radio rolled the top two-game handicap with 1,567.

Pam Weller of Alleycats holds the highest scratch average with 156 followed by Brian Johnstone of Alleycats, plus Steven Burns and Stewart Duncan both from The Creeps all on 144.

The Johnstones on form at Canal Bank

Athletics

IT WAS a double success for the Johnstone siblings who picked up prizes at the Canal Bank race.

Ben took first place in the under-15 boys category of Lochaber Athletic Club's first winter league race last Sunday.

The speedy teen finished the route in nine minutes and 35 seconds, almost two minutes faster than second place Fergus Fraser.

Not to be outdone by her big brother, Rebecca was first of the under-13 girls, zooming round the course in 11 minutes and 47 seconds.

Fastest overall was Daniel Teape of the under-11 category who completed the track in nine minutes and one second.

Results: Under 15 boys: 1 Ben Johnstone 09:35; 2 Fergus Fraser 11:28. Under 15 girls: 1 Robyn Blackhall 11:07; 2 Abbie Blackhall 12:31; 3 Mairi Bell 13:30. Under 13 boys: 1 Alasdair Poll 11:12; 2 Ben Farr 11:42; 3 Andrew Orr 14:30. Under 13 girls: 1 Rebecca Johnstone 11:47; 2 Erin Laurie 13:08. Under 11 boys: 1 Daniel Teape 09:01; 2 Innes Orr 09:02; 3 Euan Atkinson 09:22. Under 11 girls: 1 Molly Blackhall 11:16; 2 Elizabeth Morgan 12:32.

Kersley wins club championship

Squash



WIN: Jackie Kersley

OBAN Squash Club held its annual ladies club championship recently, with over 100 games played on the day.

In total, 16 women took part in the event on November 16 at Atlantis Leisure, with Jackie Kersley crowned champion after beating Nicola Morgan.

Laurie Cameron won the plate after she beat Charmaine Love in the final.

The ladies would like to thank Peter Strange, Paul Murphy and Colin MacNiven for refereeing the matches.

The winners will receive their trophies at club's annual prize giving and dinner dance at the Royal Hotel on December 6.



TROPHIES: Tobermory Golf Club prizewinners receive their trophies from Catherine Ann MacCrone, the captain's wife, and, far left, club president Dr. Bill Clegg.

Captain's luck at Tobermory prizegiving

THE ANNUAL prizegiving of Tobermory Golf Club took place in the clubhouse last Saturday, when The Hangover Trophy preceded the presentations and was won by club captain Ewan McCrone with 21 points (nine holes).

Second was John Weir on 19 points, and third was Donald MacLean (Do Do) on 17 points. The afternoon turned out to be very successful for the captain, as his wife Catherine Ann drew out the £1,000 first prize in the 64-club draw.

Second prize of £500 went to Derek McAdam.

Oban Over-35s

Football

WITH six teams in this year's Oban Indoor Over-35s League teams will play each other twice. This week's results are: Tainult 3, Trialists 11; Clements 1, D&K Lafferty 4; Tainult 6, Teachers 4.

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Oban MMA club champions impress at first tournament

MIXED martial art fighters from Oban have managed a shock upset in a national jiu-jitsu tournament, winning three medals after just 12 weeks' preparation.

The fighters from Oban Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) travelled to Motherwell at the weekend to take part in Scotland's premier Brazilian jiu-jitsu event, the Scotia Cup.

And despite having only started specifically training in jiu-jitsu three months ago, fighter Scott Mckeitch took gold, and team-mates Dawid Loukil and Jarek Cimoszuk both won bronze in their respective weight categories against 132 competitors from throughout the UK in the tournament on November 22.

Iain Potter, who runs the Oban club, said: 'It's made a lot of the bigger clubs take notice of Oban MMA.'

'Talking to other coaches they said they were really impressed that a group of guys from such a small area can go to one of the big national tournaments and get a result.'

'The medal wins are an unbelievable result and absolutely not expected. We really only went just to get some competition experience.'

The club began four years ago,

Mixed martial arts

when Iain started training with one other person, having previously trained in martial arts in Glasgow 10 years ago.

Iain, who is out of competing at the moment because of a knee injury, mentioned that the other coaches were impressed that the club didn't have a full-time coach.

'They have coaches who get paid full-time and which is a whole different kettle of fish. I just do this in my spare time for the guys,' he said.

'It was the first time they were down at a big jiu-jitsu tournament as we've concentrated on MMA up until now but the specialist training has paid dividends.'

'When it comes to future tournaments, the guys are definitely going in as medal contenders now.'

The club is now looking to 2015 when it aims to compete more regularly and build on the success of this event.

Iain invited anyone looking to try MMA to go along to training, held at Oban Martial Arts Centre on Soroba Road on Mondays and Fridays at 7.30pm.



MEDALS: Oban MMA club members, from left, Scott Mckeitch, club coach Iain Potter, Jarek Cimoszuk and Dawid Loukil. Scott took gold and Jarek and Dawid both won bronze in their respective weight divisions at the Scotia Cup jiu-jitsu tournament in Motherwell on Saturday

Scottish Amateur League results and fixtures

Football

SATURDAY'S results: Premier division - Campbeltown Pupils 3, Thorn Athletic 1; Oban Saints 2, St Joseph's FP 5; Premier Division One - Inverclyde 2, Dunoon 2; Premier Division Two - Neilston v Lochgilhead Red Star postponed. Division 1B - Carlton YM 7, Tarbert 6.

This Saturday's fixtures: Premier Division - Finnart v Oban Saints; Campbeltown Pupils no game; Premier Division One - Dunoon v Hillington; Premier Division Two - Lochgilhead Red Star v Paisley; Division 1B - Eaglesham v Tarbert.

Oban Saints youth results and fixtures

Youth football

SAINTS Youth results and fixtures:

Regional Cup - Under 13s 0, Bargeddie Colts 2; League - Under 13s 3, Westerton 1; on target for the Oban side were Aaron MacKay, Jamie Forgive and Euan Finlay. Regional Cup - Under 14s 2, Rossvale Madrid 4; Cameron Kerr and Scott Mossman with the Oban goals. League - Renton Craigandro 2, Under 15s 8; Saints goalscorers were Lewis Buchanan (3), Daniel McCuish, Ruairidh Horne, David Cameron, Kenneth MacDonald and Martin Rennie. Regional Cup - Campsie 5, Under 16s 0; Regional Cup - Blantyre SC 4, Under 19s 0.

This weekend's league fixtures: Baljaffray v Under 13s; Under 14s v Dumbarton Riverside; Under 15s v Riverclyde; Under 16s v Antonine; Clydebank v Antonine.

Big win for high school in Banavie

Youth rugby

OBAN high school S1/2s defeated Lochaber 82-10 at Banavie on Saturday.

The squad of 22 players impressed with some great rugby despite the poor conditions.

This week the S1/2s are away to Lomond School on Saturday and the S2s are taking part in a tournament hosted by Glasgow Hawks at Scotstoun on Sunday.

Fourth win in a row for Lorne juniors

Youth rugby

OBAN Lorne under-16s recorded their fourth consecutive win on Sunday by defeating Allan Glens/Lenzie 19-17.

Tries from Xavier Rush, Daniel Spiers and Corrie Barlow gave the Argyll team an impressive win.

This Sunday the team travel to take on Strathendrick.

Islay golf club

Golf

ISLAY Golf Club Winter League, three played on Sunday, November 23: 1 A. Livingstone 36 Pts; 2 G. Hamilton 34 Pts; 3 J. Rozga 28 Pts. CSS 73.

Charity bout go-ahead for near sell-out event

Karate

TICKETS are selling out quickly and around £2,000 is expected to be made from the charity bout between two Oban martial artists next month.

The fight between Robert Neil of the Shotokan-style Oban Kar@e Club and Wullie Rodger of Senshi-Do Kickboxing Oban will go ahead in the Corran Halls, Oban on December 13 at 1pm.

The pair have agreed a set of rules that combines aspects of their respective styles of karate.

The full contact match-up will give the winner the bragging rights but both fighters are keen to raise as much money as they can from the bout for Glasgow's Yorkhill Sick Children's Hospital, where Robert's son, Seoras, underwent major heart surgery.

Robert said: 'My partner Claire and I went through a horrendous ordeal when, in November 2011, our youngest son, who was only one week old, was airlifted from Oban hospital to Yorkhill for



GOOD CAUSE: Money from the charity bout is being raised to support Yorkhill Children's Hospital, where Robert Neil's son, Seoras (above), underwent major heart surgery

major heart surgery which saved his life.

'Proceeds from this fight is one way we can thank the hospital and staff for saving our son.'

'I am looking forward to the event and hope many people can come along and give each of us support.'

'It will be an exciting and challenging bout for two competitive fighting athletes.'

'Both Wullie and I have been in training to see who will be local champion on the day.'

Wullie is a former World United Martial Arts (WUMA) super heavyweight champion of Britain but Robert has been competing regularly over the past year, unlike his opponent.

Robert won a silver and a bronze medal at the last stage of the SKA WUKF Scottish Karate Grand Prix last Saturday in Ayr's Citadel leisure centre.

He said: 'I was rather disappointed, as I only got second place in the overall championship title of Grand Prix champion - I will try to better that next year.'



ACTIVE YOUNGSTERS: Argyll and Bute sports leaders with their conference certificates

Young sports leaders are put through their paces in Oban

SEVENTY pupils from nine high schools across Argyll and Bute attended the county's first Sports Leaders Conference, organised by Active Schools.

Held in Oban on October 30 and 31, the young sports leaders gained qualifications in a range of sports including football, rugby, shinty, athletics, badminton and also first aid.

Previously rural and island area schools have missed out on such conferences because they lacked the critical mass of pupils to be able to run courses to meet each sport's national governing bodies (NGB) minimum candidate numbers.

Oban Active Schools co-ordinator Karen MacCorquodale said: 'The conference helped to overcome the obstacle of a lack of numbers and also tied in with

Active Schools



Karen MacCorquodale

Active Schools and sports development performance targets, producing more qualified sports leaders to deliver and assist with extra-curricular and community clubs.'

Miss MacCorquodale added: 'It wouldn't have been able to happen without generous funding from SportsScotland and also without the support of Oban high school, especially the PE department, for letting us use their facilities and the canteen for great food.'

'This is our very first conference but we've had such a positive response from the pupils and their accompanying staff.'

'The social benefits for pupils and networking opportunities for staff are a big plus, so we are hoping to make it an annual event.'

On-form Oban Lorne face McLaren test

Rugby

OBAN Lorne are back in competitive action this Saturday as they travel to Callander to take on mid-table McLaren and will be aiming for full points.

But the Green Machine will recall a lucky win over the same

opposition in the first league game of the season, as two late tries sealed a 31-26 win at Glencruitten.

Oban got back to winning ways recently after an uncharacteristic dip in form and sit second in West Division 2, with leaders Cambuslang winning last weekend.

Coach Corrie Louw says a win

for his team is vital on Saturday to keep up the pressure at the top of the league.

Oban Lorne are building up to their biggest game of the season which takes place on Saturday, December 13 at Glencruitten when they take on West Division 1 leaders Carrick in the semi-final of the RBS Regional Shield.

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WEATHER

Thursday Cloudy with light rain showers
Winds light easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 4°C.

Friday Cloudy with light rain showers
Winds moderate easterly
Temperatures 9°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook Showers, some heavy on Saturday
Cloudy on Sunday
Winds moderate easterly
Temperatures 10°C to 7°C.

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, November 27, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am				pm			
Thur	02.34	1.0	08.33	3.8	15.10	1.2	20.49	3.4
Fri	03.28	1.2	09.28	3.6	16.10	1.4	21.47	3.2
Sat	04.30	1.3	10.37	3.4	17.18	1.5	23.00	3.0
Sun	05.40	1.4	12.22	3.4	18.31	1.6	***	**
Mon	00.48	3.0	06.57	1.5	13.47	3.5	19.43	1.5
Tues	02.15	3.2	08.12	1.4	14.47	3.6	20.47	1.4
Wed	03.10	3.4	09.16	1.2	15.37	3.8	21.40	1.2

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardrishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate



Ideas week just the business for Lochaber

see page 13



Hundreds unite to back strongman

HUNDREDS of people from Lochaber united last Sunday to support a local strongman battling a rare form of cancer. The Haldenby Strongman Classic held at Caol community centre saw the public raise more than £3,000 for Mark Haldenby, who was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma two years ago and will next week undergo a stem cell transplant in his fight to beat the disease. Other athletes in the area, led by Stuart Whyte from Fort William, organised the event featuring a 14-man strongman contest, food and drink stalls, music, a raffle and auction to raise money for Mark and his family.

Mark was in attendance all day with his wife Caroline and their children Ebony, 13, Jorja, 10, and Priya, 5. He said: 'I'm just overwhelmed, I'm lost for words because we've got 14 of the strongest men in Scotland who have come from all over to raise money.'

Mark hopes his stem cell operation will be the last treatment he needs and it will cure him, following a gruelling period of chemotherapy.

One organiser, Kim MacMillan, said there were plans for an event every year to help other families dealing with similar illnesses. She said: 'Mark is a really modest guy and the only reason he wanted to do this was so we could raise money for another family next year.'

'We would like to thank all the businesses and everyone who took part.'

See page 28 for more.

No receipts means taxpayer loses out

MORE than £4,000 a year has been lost to the taxpayer after councillors refused to hand over receipts for mileage.

A meeting of Highland Council in Inverness heard yesterday that fewer than six in every ten claims for expenses from elected members had a VAT receipt attached.

If receipts had been attached to all claims an additional £4,200 could have been recovered.



Happy couple's delight at dive into life's biggest adventure

A SELF-confessed adrenaline junkie and her new husband made a splash last weekend when they had their recent nuptials blessed during a special ceremony at The Underwater Centre in Fort William.

Guests watched Dorota

Bankowska and new husband James Abbott tie the knot in a 1.5 million litre onshore seawater tank, which is normally used for subsea training. The bride wore a traditional wedding dress and veil for the ceremony, weighted down for the occasion, while her

teacher husband wore a kilt. Dorota, who trained as a commercial diver in Fort William, said: 'We're both very happy to be able to complete our wedding celebrations in such a unique way; James and I don't do things traditionally.'

Council tax rise the 'only way' to protect main services

BUT LEADER CLAIMS OPPOSITION 'ALL AT SEA'

LOUISE LEE
lee@obantimes.co.uk

“People have hit the buffers with what they are willing to lose”

Councillor Carolyn Wilson

HIGHLAND Council opposition is 'all at sea' with its plans to raise the council tax, says council leader Drew Hendry.

But opposition leader councillor Carolyn Wilson says the only way to protect front line services is to 'raise the council tax by five per cent'.

In a statement, councillor Wilson said she was determined not to let the people of the Highlands down - and the only way to do that was by raising the council tax by five per cent.

She says the rise would mean about £1 per household per week.

The Independent group leader said that while the 32-strong opposition group 'didn't have the time to prepare a full budget,' it did feel there were a number of 'red lines' in the budget proposals that were unacceptable.

She said those were changes to the school day, public toilets, winter gritting, libraries, swimming pools and leisure services.

'People have hit the buffers with what they are willing to lose from front line council services,' she said.

'It is a brave step to say we should raise the council tax - but one local authority has to be the first to do it.'

'Will all the other councillors be willing to say 'yes' to a

motion that will end the misery of budget cuts?' Claiming the now cancelled proposals for shortening the school week were 'only the tip of the iceberg', she said there was a number of other proposals that were 'equally unacceptable to the Highland community'.

The implications of a council tax increase for the local authority would mean the loss of an enhanced payment from the Scottish government to provide essential services.

At present Highland council receives a payment of £3.5 million to deliver certain aspects of the local authority's programme. A rise in council tax, the opposition group projects, would bring £2.5 million into the council's coffers.

Defending the shortfall between the Scottish government payment and the council tax, the group said it would put pressure on ministers to keep the enhanced payment in place.

In a statement on Tuesday, the group said there was 'no rush to

get the budget out in December'. 'This is a four-year budget,' councillor Wilson said, 'and the truth is that without the savings the SNP-led administration wanted to make from its cancelled plans to cut the school day - then it is just not going to be able to balance the budget in future years.'

Councillor Drew Hendry, council leader, dismissed the opposition plans for raising the council tax. He said: 'The opposition is completely at sea with this proposal. If we asked the people of the Highlands to pay more for their council tax they would in effect be paying twice. You would be asking people to pay twice for no gain whatsoever.'

'The idea that the Scottish government would simply accept to make the enhanced payment and accept a rise in the council tax is nonsense.'

'There were a number of proposals in the budget that went out to consultation. Some of these will be taken forward and some will be more painful to our communities than others. But the quality of services the council provides will not be diminished.'



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Bid to let Lochaber take control

LOCHABER business and council leaders have urged the Scottish government to get rid of 'top to bottom' decision-making.

Members of NHS Highland health board and Highlands and Islands Enterprise were amongst those speaking to Holyrood officials as part of Parliament Day in Fort William on Monday.

The local government and regeneration committee attended Lochaber high school for the special meeting, headed by John

Wilson, MSP for central Scotland, and Anne McTaggart, MSP for Glasgow, to discuss the forthcoming Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill. Patricia Jordan, chairman of the Nevis Partnership, told the committee she wants the Lochaber community to take control of its own overall issues, whether these are transport, social or educational matters.

She said: 'You can't possibly have an area the size of the Highlands with everything controlled from Inverness.'

Indoor football league booze warning

LOCHABER'S indoor football league could be cancelled if players continue to take alcohol to the venue.

The Ali Young competition, played in the Nevis Centre on Sunday evenings, is on its last chance, according to league organisers and

venue staff. Since last month bottles of beer and spirits have been found in the hall twice. Nevis Centre manager Kenny McLaughlin said: 'About 75 guys play in the league so it would be a shame if they all have to suffer because of the actions of a few.'

Talks underway to extend cemetery

BURIALS in Arisaig could become a thing of the past if land is not found for a new graveyard.

The village cemetery is running out of space and if Highland council can't source a new spot soon people may have to lay their loved ones to rest at the nearest burial ground - five miles away at Morar.

A Highland Council spokeswoman said: 'We are in the process of negotiations with adjacent land owners to secure land adjoining the cemetery for the purposes of a burial ground extension.'

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Drivers reminded of new lower drink drive limit

HIGHLAND council is supporting a nationwide campaign to remind drivers of the new lower drink drive limit in Scotland and share advice on how to stay safe this festive period.

Scotland's drink drive limit is being lowered from 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood to 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.

The advice when it comes to drinking and driving continues to be that the best approach is not to drink any alcohol at all before getting behind the wheel.

Councillor Angela MacLean is encouraging drivers not to risk it this Christmas.

She said: 'The new lower drink drive limit for the whole of Scotland comes into force on Friday December 5 so we're working with Road Safety Scotland to make sure the message gets out to everyone.'

'One death as a result of drink driving is one death too many. Alcohol at any level impairs driving so the best approach is to have no alcohol at all if you're intending to get behind the wheel.'

'We want anyone going out to think about how they're going to get home, before they head out and to also remember to consider any journeys they make the morning after.'

Christmas festival and craft fair

THE ANNUAL Rotary Club Christmas Festival and Craft and Food Producers' Fair returns to Fort William's Nevis Centre this Saturday.

The fun-filled day will see Santa and his Cairngorm reindeer team start from the town's Cameron Square at 11am led by the Lochaber Pipe Band.

Outdoor entertainment in the recently refurbished Cameron Square will also be on offer from the Ben Nevis Allstar cheerleaders and the Tulloch Bellringers from Glen Spean.

The festival opens at 9.30am with a huge range of designer crafts and more than 70 stalls as well as Santa's Grotto, the Lochaber Community Windband, Buskers' Corner and a grand raffle.

Entry is free with all proceeds going to local charities.

Rotary Club President John Harvey said: 'The festival has now become Lochaber's premier event with more than 3,000 people attending last year. This is a great day out. There is something for all the family and by getting involved Lochaber's craft workers and worthwhile local charities are supported.'

Trust fundraising fashion show fun

BEN NEVIS Woollen Mill rang with laughter on Friday night as more than 100 people enjoyed the antics of some of the models who took part in a fashion show.

The show was a fundraiser for Lochaber Rural Education Trust and £738 was raised on the night.

Food bank battles to keep up with rising demand

EMMA CRICHTON
ecrichton@obantimes.co.uk

LOCHABER'S food bank has fed more than 400 people in its first year of service.

The Fort William charity has given the equivalent of 3,681 meals to those in need since it opened last November but manager Alec McConachie said the number of people relying on the help is on the rise.

He said: 'The numbers are increasing all the time. For the first wee while it was slow because people weren't sure how to go about getting food but now that the awareness is up we get more and more people in all the time.'

'With winter setting in we're expecting more people than ever because of the added expense of heating and Christmas.'

'It's terrible that people have to choose between putting on their heating or eating a meal. We had a pensioner in recently who had gone to bed on the Thursday night with no food or heating and had stayed that way until her neighbour brought her in here on Monday.'

The kind-hearted volunteer, who also works part time, said people from all walks of life fall on hard times and need their



HUNGRY: Lochaber food bank volunteers have fed more than 400 people in a year. From left, Pat Leslie, Alec McConachie, Donald Elder and Roia Wilson

help, including working families and students.

In the new year, the High Street food bank will be increasing its opening hours to three days a week to keep up with demand.

Despite millions of people all

over Britain relying on the lifeline service, food bank volunteers are still trying to shake the negative stigma attached to asking for help.

Mr McConachie said: 'A lot of people come in and they

don't want to talk about their circumstances because they're really embarrassed but they shouldn't be, it's not their fault.'

'We try to get them to sit down for a while and have a tea, coffee, or soup because if they haven't

been eating they feel the cold a lot more but most of them just want to get in and back out.'

A big problem facing families on the breadline is finding money to feed their children during the holidays, as many of them qualify for free school lunches but volunteers are hoping to set up a breakfast club by the summer to make sure Lochaber youngsters are eating when they're not at school.

Tesco in Fort William High Street will have collection trolleys in store next weekend and the shop has pledged to boost all food provided by 30 per cent, which Mr McConachie said was a 'massive help'.

He added: 'The people of Lochaber have been so generous, the donations have been fantastic.'

'It's only thanks to their kindness that we're able to help as many people as we do.'

'It might look like we have a massive stock but you would be surprised how quickly it disappears, especially in the run up to Christmas.'

As well as donations, Lochaber food bank relies on volunteers. To help out or for more information contact Mr McConachie on 07778503276 or visit between 12 and 2pm on Mondays and Fridays.



Tea bar donates £6,000 to hospital

STAFF at Fort William's Belford Hospital have received a £6,000 donation from volunteer workers who run the tea bar.

The money was made up entirely from the cafeteria's proceeds and will go towards the purchase of specialist equipment in the combined assessment unit patient fund, including items such as wheelchairs and Christmas presents for patients.

Irene MacLean, charge nurse at the hospital, said: 'The patient fund relies entirely on donations and this is a large sum of money for us. We are really grateful.'

'It will benefit the patients hugely.'

Graduated driving licence would stop youths dying on roads, claims MSP

A GRADUATED driving licence should be introduced to stop youth deaths on the roads, says a Highland MSP.

Taking his idea to Westminster ministers for discussion, David Stewart has secured a face-to-face meeting with junior transport minister Robert Goodwill MP, to discuss his campaign to have a form of graduated licence introduced as a pilot in Scotland.

David Stewart said: 'For nearly five years now, I and my partners in the North of Scotland Driver Awareness Team (NOSDAT) have campaigned to have a form of graduated licence introduced as a pilot in Scotland.'

'We all know now that young and new drivers have come to be over represented in road collisions by the fact that they are both over confident and inexperienced.'

'Ten years of statistics can prove that up to 22 lives per year could be saved in Scotland alone

and up to £80million to the Scottish economy.'

'It's a no-brainer as far as we are concerned and I will be pushing the minister to follow our proposals which have recently been mirrored in a Department of Transport document relating to novice drivers.'

Mr Stewart's plan is that there is a 12-month learner phase for drivers at aged 17, with a requirement of 100 hours' daytime and 20 hours' night-time driving, all recorded in a log book.

At 18 years of age and after passing the theory tests, the driver would move to a probationary licence.

During this phase the driver would display a green 'P' plate and there would be a zero drink-drive limit and night time driving would be curtailed unless there was someone over 25 years of age in the car. After 12 months of a probationary licence the driver would proceed, aged 19, to a full unrestricted licence.

Thieves on the lookout for easy festive cash

POLICE in Lochaber have warned the public to be wary of opportunist thieves in the run-up to Christmas, particularly in secluded areas.

It follows a spate of break-ins to cars and commercial premises in November.

A vehicle was broken into outside Kilmonivaig parish church in Spean Bridge with a purse stolen from within, on the morning of November 13, after a similar incident when money was taken from a van in Claggan on the night of November 6-7 between 7pm and 7.30am.

Stewart James scrap merchants at Camaghael was broken into for the third time since September on the night of November 12-13, when a quantity of copper wire was taken.

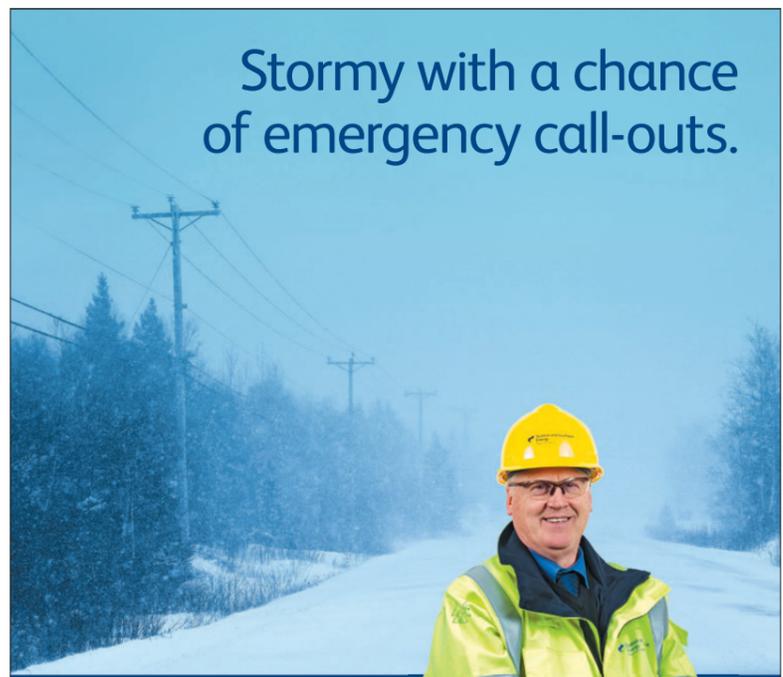
Criminals had also forced entry into Chisholms garage in Ballachulish early on November 10 between midnight and 5am, escaping with a large amount of tools, and the public has been asked for any information about a white Ford Transit van that was seen in the area.

Police suspect that thieves travelling from central Scotland could be involved in the industrial break-ins.

David Campbell, acting inspector at Fort William police station, said: 'It's getting towards Christmas so thieves are looking for easy cash.'

'We are asking members of the public to ensure their property is secure, with no high value goods left within sight.'

Anyone with information about the incidents should contact the Police Scotland on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800555111.



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Dancers in wonderland as they kick off festival

A WINTER Wonderland dance extravaganza at the Corran Halls kicked off this year's Oban Winter Festival in style.

The Ballet West performances, from principal dancers Jonathan and Sara-Maria Barton to the young outreach dancers, attracted a full house last Friday.

On Saturday, the festival got into full swing with events on throughout the town, including a food market and Victorian-themed craft fayre.

Later that day the town's Christmas lights were switched on after a reindeer parade through Oban, from the Corran Halls to Station Square.

Oban pipe band, which led the parade, played for hundreds of people who were also entertained by singers and dancers.

For more, see pages 10 and 11.



TIMESLINE

Gigha £3m debt prompts vote

ISLANDERS on community-owned Gigha will tonight (Thursday) take a vote of confidence in the chairwoman of its trust.

The vote is to gauge the confidence of the community in dealing with almost £3 million worth of debt recently revealed after a review of the community company's assets with Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

Fortnight of phone 'farce' on Colonsay

VODAFONE users on Colonsay were left without mobile phone coverage for two weeks on the island.

Islanders couldn't make calls from November 10 to 24, which community council member William Joll called 'utterly ridiculous' and 'a farce'.

Vodafone failed to comment on the technical problems.

Post Office closes as couple retire

COLIN and Lynn Galbraith, who have run Esplanade Post Office in Oban for 24 years, will retire when the business closes at 5.30pm on January 28.

The Post Office will re-open the following morning in McColl's on George Street. There will be no break in service.

Inquiry highlights C.diff 'failure'

AN INQUIRY into 34 deaths at Vale of Leven hospital, Alexandria over a Clostridium difficile (C. diff) outbreak in 2007 - 2008 has criticised NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC). Judge Lord MacLean said GGC had 'badly let down' patients. The health board has apologised.

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THE DEVASTATED FAMILY OF MURDERED OBAN MAN COLIN PENROSE IN SEARCH FOR ANSWERS FROM PRISON AUTHORITIES

Our son should have been safe in his cell, say parents

EUAN PATERSON
epaterson@obantimes.co.uk

THE DEVASTATED parents of a murdered Oban prisoner have this week continued their search for answers into his death after his killer was jailed for a minimum of 19 years.

A jury at the High Court in Glasgow last week found John Clark guilty of murdering Oban man Colin Penrose, 22, on March 20 when the pair shared a cell at Barlinnie Prison in Glasgow.

In handing down a life sen-

tence, Judge Michael O'Grady, QC, told Ayr man Clark, also aged 22, that he had committed an 'appalling crime' and that Mr Penrose's life had been 'snatched away by your wickedness'.

But the murdered man's parents believe their son should have been safe in prison and have employed Glasgow law firm Irwin Mitchell to investigate.

Following the trial, Mr Penrose's parents, Thomas and Linda, said: 'We are devastated by the loss of our son and remain convinced that more could have been done to protect him in

prison and ultimately prevent his death. The trial has provided important answers regarding what our son went through and our legal team is now continuing with investigations into the events surrounding his death.'

Last Wednesday, the High Court in Glasgow heard that Clark bound his victim's hands and then put a shoelace round his neck before throttling him in the early hours of March 20 in the cell they shared.

Clark did this after discovering, through official paperwork he found in the cell, that Mr Penrose



MURDERED: Colin Penrose

had convictions for sex offences. The judge told Clark: 'You acted as judge, jury and executioner, quite literally in this case.'

In evidence, Clark denied murder and claimed it was an elaborate fake hostage set-up which went disastrously wrong.

Clark said the intention was that he would get moved to another prison and Mr Penrose could claim compensation from the authorities.

But the jury didn't believe his story and the judge passed a life sentence on Clark, and told him: 'This was an appalling crime.

Mr Penrose must have suffered a frightful and terrifying death at your hands. Mr Penrose was a young man who had his life in front of him, a life snatched away by your wickedness.'

The jury heard that prison officers rushed to the cell at 2am, where they found Mr Penrose lying on his back with his hands tied and a shoelace round his neck. Clark was watching TV.

Police, who searched the cell, found a sheet of notepaper on which Clark had written: 'F*** all beasts.' He had signed it and put his prison number on it.



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Court told how police broke down door during heroin raid

COURT REPORTER
editor@obantimes.co.uk

TWO packages of heroin were found in an Oban flat after police officers battered the door down during a drugs raid.

Oban sheriff court heard this week that police had obtained a warrant to search flat 3/1 at 19 High Street after receiving a tip-off.

Jennifer McIver, 38, and Dale Montague, 27, both unemployed and from Helensburgh, were found in the living room of the property and Andrew McKenzie, 33, who lived in the flat, turned up while the search was going on.

All three individuals are accused of being concerned in the supply of diamorphine (heroin) on August 8 at the flat in Oban's High Street.

McIver pleaded guilty on Monday, while Montague and McKenzie have denied the charge.

During the trial of the two men, PC Peter MacMillan said he, two other officers and a special constable had used a battering ram to break down the front door, which had been padlocked shut on the outside.

This unusual method of locking doors, he told the court, was consistent with other properties he had come across associated with drug dealing.

McIver and Montague were cautioned and later taken to Oban police office.

In a subsequent search of the flat, police officers found two knotted packages, one containing eight wraps and one 20.18g of a brown substance, later confirmed as diamorphine (heroin).

The first package was found on the floor, near a sofa, and the second under an open shelving unit in a corner of the living room.

Also found in various places in the kitchen and living room area of the Oban flat were three electronic scales, a torn plastic bag, the inside of a Kinder egg - known to be used to carry and conceal drugs - a burnt teaspoon, burnt NHS-issued spoons used by addicts, a packet of cigarette papers, a quantity of money and a number of mobile phone handsets.

The court was told that a search at Oban police office found Montague had £165.69 in cash on him. Under cross-examination, PC MacMillan agreed that where the drugs paraphernalia was found in the flat could not be directly linked to Montague.

Earlier, during a discussion of the pre-trial facts, the jury heard that DNA from all three was found on one or both of the knotted packages.

The trial before a jury of Montague and McKenzie continues. McIver is to be sentenced at the conclusion of the trial.

CCTV captured vandals' attack on Oban nursery

THE managers of an Oban nursery have asked the public to help catch vandals who damaged donated property in a 'mindless attack'.

A table used by young children at Soroba Young Families nursery was broken last weekend, with the perpetrators caught on CCTV.

Manager Janice Kay said: 'The item that was smashed was a table the children use for their outdoor kitchen and although it was donated, it would cost about £100 to replace as it was custom-built.'

'All the people have done is purposely destroyed it for the sake of it. This isn't a victimless crime either, the children affected are between three and five years old.'

Rachel Turnbull, deputy manager, said: 'By the looks of the CCTV, it's young people, probably young teens, messing about. The thing they smashed is for young children to enjoy, so we just wonder why people would do it? It's mindless.'

'I think the people don't realise that there are real victims, that what they are doing actually matters and the stuff belongs to someone - it has a use and it's wrong.'

'It's just mindless and wilful destruction of property.'

The CCTV images have been handed over to the police and because of the apparent age of the people in the footage, the nursery has also passed it on to Oban high school in an attempt to help identify those involved.

Sergeant Mike Wood at Oban Police Station said police were looking at the CCTV images and urged anyone with any information to phone Police Scotland on 101.



SORRY SIGHT: heavy rainfall with water cascading from the nearby A85 and a swollen river led to flooding in Oban's Pennyfuir cemetery earlier in the month

Cemetery flooding misery

LOUISE LEE
lee@obantimes.co.uk

A GRAVEYARD that was knee deep in water following this month's heavy rainfall is now at the centre of a joint operation to protect the cemetery from future flooding.

Visitors to Pennyfuir cemetery in Oban said the area closest to the A85 trunk road was at least 'knee deep in water' with torrents running off the nearby busy carriageway.

Memorial flowers were floating on the flooded grounds.

Some grieving relatives were unable to visit the cemetery be-

cause of the extent of the flooding while others said the ground was too soft to walk upon.

John Boyd, who was visiting a family grave, said he was horrified by the softness of the ground. The man, who had travelled from Stirling on the anniversary of his mother's death, said he was 'shocked by how soft the ground was'.

He continued: 'I don't like to be macabre about this - but I was very worried that at any point I might put a leg into the ground and not get it back out again without help.'

'It is very distressing to think that the ground felt so soft. I

couldn't see anything that looked out of place when the water subsided, but I had a few sleepless nights thinking about it.'

Mary MacCain, from Oban, whose grandfather is buried in the cemetery, said she was shocked by the amount of water that was lying at the top of the graveyard.

Argyll and Bute council, which owns the cemetery, and Transport Scotland say they are aware of the issue and the distress it has caused relatives and visitors.

Scottish Water staff were praised by relatives for attempting to drain the flooded water from the cemetery by lifting

manhole covers. A spokeswoman for Scottish Water said: 'I spoke to an engineer who was in Oban during the storm and he said a manhole cover had come loose because of surcharging water. A Scottish Water engineer attempted to put it back on to ease the situation.'

'The local council team put sandbags in place to try and hold the cover down later that day and put signs in place.'

She continued: 'All Scottish Water assets (Oban waste water treatment works and associated pumping stations) were fully operational during the storms and in no way related to the flooding

incident. It is our understanding that the flooding at the graveyard was due to the river bursting its banks following the heavy rainfall.'

A spokeswoman for Argyll and Bute council said: 'We are aware of the issue and are working with Transport Scotland, responsible for the adjacent A85, to find a solution.'

A Transport Scotland spokeswoman said: 'We take all instances of flooding on the trunk road seriously and given the proximity of this latest instance to the cemetery, we shall be discussing the issue with Argyll and Bute council as soon as possible.'

Funds set to top £176,000

FUNDRAISERS for the new Oban community playpark are seeking input to the final design of the first and second stage after securing a major grant of more than £85,000.

Friends of Oban Community Playpark will seek opinions on the final design of the adventure play area for five to 15-year-olds and an upgrade of the garden.

But the eight-week build must be finished by next summer to meet the criteria of the Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund, which granted £85,725.

Fundraising group chairwoman Lyndsay Elliott said: 'Phase one is good to go and we are currently working on the consultation for phase one and two.'

'People can see the designs via Facebook or handouts available from committee members. We want people to have their say.'

With a cheque for £5,000 from Tesco coming in this week, the fundraising group can now call upon a pot of £176,000 with some funding applications still pending.

The group's first fundraiser

was three years ago. Mrs Elliott said the fund saw a huge boost after the existing playpark at Atlantis Leisure was condemned and closed down in February this year. Mrs Elliott explained the response to the campaign from the community had been overwhelming.

She added: 'We always tell each other to be patient, positive, and persistent. Most of the money we have raised is locally sourced, which is incredible. It has been humbling and inspiring getting these donations.'



CASHBACK: Tesco Oban store manager Kenny McCallum and staff hand over the cheque to young Oban community playpark supporters Alex Elliott and Erik Turnewitsch

Pioneering centre honours memory of fine academic

THE SCOTTISH Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Dunstaffnage has launched a research centre in the name of its former director who died in the summer.

SAMS will use the Laurence Mee Centre for Society and the Sea to improve understanding of how people interact with the marine environment.

It is hoped the research will improve the way marine and coastal areas are managed.

Professor Mee, the UK's first professor of marine and coastal policy, died suddenly in August at the age of 63. The



PIONEER: Laurence Mee

announcement of the foundation of the research centre, which will involve professionals from across the globe, came at a 130th birthday party of the Scottish Association of Marine Science at its annual general meeting two weeks ago.

Professor Axel Miller, acting director of SAMS, said: 'We have often been the first to explore new ways of doing research. I hope that from that perspective, through the launch of the Laurence Mee Centre, 2014 will take its own place in our history.'

CCTV captured vandals' attack on Oban nursery

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The CCTV images have been handed over to the police and because of the apparent age of the people in the footage, the nursery has also passed it on to Oban high school in an attempt to help identify those involved.

Sergeant Mike Wood at Oban Police Station said police were looking at the CCTV images and urged anyone with any information to phone Police Scotland on 101.

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FW

Oban MMA club champions impress at first tournament

MIXED martial art fighters from Oban have managed a shock upset in a national jiu-jitsu tournament, winning three medals after just 12 weeks' preparation.

The fighters from Oban Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) travelled to Motherwell at the weekend to take part in Scotland's premier Brazilian jiu-jitsu event, the Scotia Cup.

And despite having only started specifically training in jiu-jitsu three months ago, fighter Scott Mckeitch took gold, and team-mates Dawid Loukil and Jarek Cimoszuk both won bronze in their respective weight categories against 132 competitors from throughout the UK in the tournament on November 22.

Iain Potter, who runs the Oban club, said: 'It's made a lot of the bigger clubs take notice of Oban MMA.'

'Talking to other coaches they said they were really impressed that a group of guys from such a small area can go to one of the big national tournaments and get a result.'

'The medal wins are an unbelievable result and absolutely not expected. We really only went just to get some competition experience.'

The club began four years ago,

Mixed martial arts

when Iain started training with one other person, having previously trained in martial arts in Glasgow 10 years ago.

Iain, who is out of competing at the moment because of a knee injury, mentioned that the other coaches were impressed that the club didn't have a full-time coach.

'They have coaches who get paid full-time and which is a whole different kettle of fish. I just do this in my spare time for the guys,' he said.

'It was the first time they were down at a big jiu-jitsu tournament as we've concentrated on MMA up until now but the specialist training has paid dividends.'

'When it comes to future tournaments, the guys are definitely going in as medal contenders now.'

The club is now looking to 2015 when it aims to compete more regularly and build on the success of this event. Iain invited anyone looking to try MMA to go along to training, held at Oban Martial Arts Centre on Soroba Road on Mondays and Fridays at 7.30pm.



MEDALS: Oban MMA club members, from left, Scott Mckeitch, club coach Iain Potter, Jarek Cimoszuk and Dawid Loukil. Scott took gold and Jarek and Dawid both won bronze in their respective weight divisions at the Scotia Cup jiu-jitsu tournament in Motherwell on Saturday

Charity bout go-ahead for near sell-out event

Karate

TICKETS are selling out quickly and around £2,000 is expected to be made from the charity bout between two Oban martial artists next month.

The fight between Robert Neil of the Shotokan-style Oban Karate Club and Wullie Rodger of Senshi-Do Kickboxing Oban will go ahead in the Corran Halls, Oban on December 13 at 1pm.

The pair have agreed a set of rules that combines aspects of their respective styles of karate.

The full contact match-up will give the winner the bragging rights but both fighters are keen to raise as much money as they can from the bout for Glasgow's Yorkhill Sick Children's Hospital, where Robert's son, Seoras, underwent major heart surgery.

Robert said: 'My partner Claire and I went through a horrendous ordeal when, in November 2011, our youngest son, who was only one week old, was airlifted from Oban hospital to Yorkhill for



GOOD CAUSE: Money from the charity bout is being raised to support Yorkhill Children's Hospital, where Robert Neil's son, Seoras (above), underwent major heart surgery

major heart surgery which saved his life.

'Proceeds from this fight is one way we can thank the hospital and staff for saving our son.'

'I am looking forward to the event and hope many people can come along and give each of us support.'

'It will be an exciting and challenging bout for two competitive fighting athletes.'

'Both Wullie and I have been in training to see who will be local champion on the day.'

Wullie is a former World United Martial Arts (WUMA) super heavyweight champion of Britain but Robert has been competing regularly over the past year, unlike his opponent.

Robert won a silver and a bronze medal at the last stage of the SKA WUKF Scottish Karate Grand Prix last Saturday in Ayr's Citadel leisure centre.

He said: 'I was rather disappointed, as I only got second place in the overall championship title of Grand Prix champion - I will try to better that next year.'

On-form Oban Lorne face McLaren test

Rugby

OBAN Lorne are back in competitive action this Saturday as they travel to Callander to take on mid-table McLaren and will be aiming for full points.

But the Green Machine will recall a lucky win over the same

opposition in the first league game of the season, as two late tries sealed a 31-26 win at Glencruitten.

Oban got back to winning ways recently after an uncharacteristic dip in form and sit second in West Division 2, with leaders Cambuslang winning last weekend. Coach Corrie Louw says a win

for his team is vital on Saturday to keep up the pressure at the top of the league.

Oban Lorne are building up to their biggest game of the season which takes place on Saturday, December 13 at Glencruitten when they take on West Division 1 leaders Carrick in the semi-final of the RBS Regional Shield.



ACTIVE YOUNGSTERS: Argyll and Bute sports leaders with their conference certificates

Young sports leaders are put through their paces in Oban

SEVENTY pupils from nine high schools across Argyll and Bute attended the county's first Sports Leaders Conference, organised by Active Schools.

Held in Oban on October 30 and 31, the young sports leaders gained qualifications in a range of sports including football, rugby, shinty, athletics, badminton and also first aid.

Previously rural and island area schools have missed out on such conferences because they lacked the critical mass of pupils to be able to run courses to meet each sport's national governing bodies (NGB) minimum candidate numbers.

Oban Active Schools co-ordinator Karen MacCorquodale said: 'The conference helped to overcome the obstacle of a lack of numbers and also tied in with

Active Schools



Karen MacCorquodale

Active Schools and sports development performance targets, producing more qualified sports leaders to deliver and assist with extra-curricular and community clubs.'

Miss MacCorquodale added: 'It wouldn't have been able to happen without generous funding from SportsScotland and also without the support of Oban high school, especially the PE department, for letting us use their facilities and the canteen for great food.'

'This is our very first conference but we've had such a positive response from the pupils and their accompanying staff.'

'The social benefits for pupils and networking opportunities for staff are a big plus, so we are hoping to make it an annual event.'

Scottish Amateur League results and fixtures

Football

SATURDAY'S results: Premier division - Campbelltown Pupils 3, Thorn Athletic 1; Oban Saints 2, St Joseph's FP 5; Premier Division One - Inverclyde 2, Dunoon 2; Premier Division Two - Neilston v Lochgilhead Red Star postponed. Division 1B - Carlton YM 7, Tarbert 6.

This Saturday's fixtures: Premier Division - Finnart v Oban Saints; Campbelltown Pupils no game; Premier Division One - Dunoon v Hillington; Premier Division Two - Lochgilhead Red Star v Paisley; Division 1B - Eaglesham v Tarbert.

Oban Saints youth results and fixtures

Youth football

SAINTS Youth results and fixtures:

Regional Cup - Under 13s 0, Bargeddie Colts 2; League - Under 13s 3, Westerton 1; on target for the Oban side were Aaron MacKay, Jamie Forgive and Euan Finlay. Regional Cup - Under 14s 2, Rossvale Madrid 4; Cameron Kerr and Scott Mossman with the Oban goals. League - Renton Craigandro 2, Under 15s 8; Saints goalscorers were Lewis Buchanan (3), Daniel McCuish, Ruaridh Horne, David Cameron, Kenneth MacDonald and Martin Rennie. Regional Cup - Campsie 5, Under 16s 0; Regional Cup - Blantyre SC 4, Under 19s 0.

This weekend's league fixtures: Baljaffray v Under 13s; Under 14s v Dumbarton Riverside; Under 15s v Riverclyde; Under 16s v Antonine; Clydebank v Antonine.

Big win for high school in Banavie

Youth rugby

OBAN high school S1/2s defeated Lochaber 82-10 at Banavie on Saturday.

The squad of 22 players impressed with some great rugby despite the poor conditions.

This week the S1/2s are away to Lomond School on Saturday and the S2s are taking part in a tournament hosted by Glasgow Hawks at Scotstoun on Sunday.

Fourth win in a row for Lorne juniors

Youth rugby

OBAN Lorne under-16s recorded their fourth consecutive win on Sunday by defeating Allan Glens/Lenzie 19-17.

Tries from Xavier Rush, Daniel Spiers and Corrie Barlow gave the Argyll team an impressive win.

This Sunday the team travel to take on Strathendrick.

Islay golf club

Golf

ISLAY Golf Club Winter League, three played on Sunday, November 23: 1 A. Livingstone 36 Pts; 2 G. Hamilton 34 Pts; 3 J. Rozga 28 Pts. CSS 73.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

COMPETITION

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1.

If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by 12noon Tuesday.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the competition and no correspondence will be entered into. The final decision rests with the Company.

In the event of more than one correct entry, the jackpot will be shared equally between all winning entries. Any decision regarding the awarding of a prize is entirely at the discretion of the Company. The Company reserves the right to declare the competition null and void at any time, subject to its discretion and to make full refund of the price of the coupon to any person who has entered the competition at that time.

Employees of Wyvax Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter.

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE.

This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:

I Kennedy, Lochaber Road, Fort William

G Wright, Shuna Terrace, Oban

I enclose £1 for 20 crosses (tick box) The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Name

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Back-to-back wins as Fort find their form

Fort William	2
Keith	0
Highland League	

FORT William celebrated back-to-back wins in the Highland League with a commanding 2-0 victory at home to Keith last Saturday.

It was the third win in six games for the rejuvenated Claggan Park men, who have shot up to 14th place in the league table sitting on 11 points - two points more than their entire total from last season.

Fort dominated the game throughout, with second-half goals from new signings Scott Davidson and Scott MacLean securing a well-deserved three points before Stuart Massie was red-carded for Keith.

Fort William manager Calum MacLean could not have been happier with his team's recent revival.

He said: 'It's a brilliant result,

I'm absolutely delighted for the boys.

'At half time I told them: just win it.

'The first 15 minutes we passed it well and I told them to get the game back to passing.

'We knew if we did that we'd win the game.'

The first 45 minutes was a scrappy affair but the hosts were dominant, with Sean Grant and Ryan MacDonald both firing wide of goal.

Unlucky not to be ahead by the break, a confident-looking Fort came out for the second half all guns blazing and finally broke the deadlock after 63 minutes.

A quick counter-attack move down the left saw Scott Davidson put through one-on-one with the goalkeeper and he slotted home with his second goal in as many games for the club.

The home side continued to pressurise Keith after the goal and scored again on 74 minutes.

Ryan MacDonald beat a Keith

defender with a beautiful nutmeg down the right wing and fired in a cross, which Scott MacLean connected with low in the penalty area to make it 2-0.

David Osbourne made a couple of superb saves to deny the visitors during the second period, in what was an outstanding display for Fort's trialist goalkeeper, but the hosts were rarely troubled.

Keith's hopes were then ended late in the game when Massie received a second yellow card for dissent.

After full time cheers could be heard ringing out from the home dressing room as MacLean looked ahead to his side's next match away to Huntly this Saturday.

He said: 'Huntly are one of the bottom ones that we're aiming to get at.

'We're going in on a high after taking six points out of six. Now we're going for nine out of nine.

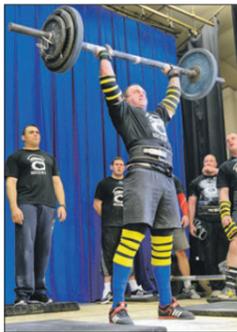
'It's amazing what a win the previous week can do.'



DELIGHT: Fort William's Stefan MacRitchie takes on Bruce Milne of Keith during last Saturday's 2-0 win at Claggan Park

20_48f00y01

Weightlifters break records in support of friend



Jeremy Vickers

LOCHABER athletes Stuart Whyte and Jeremy Vickers were delighted to achieve new Scottish lifting records last Sunday in the presence of their friend Mark Haldenby.

Both men smashed the national axle clean and press records for each of their weight categories at the Haldenby Strongman Classic event last Sunday - and dedicated the achievement to their colleague, who is fighting Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Whyte is now the strongest man in Scotland in the clean and press under 105kg body weight division, having lifted 145kg, beating a previous high of

Weightlifting

It meant even more... at Mark's event

Stuart Whyte

142.5kg. Vickers managed 140kg in the under 90kg division, beating the record of 130kg which he had previously set himself.

Whyte - who has competed three times in the Scotland's strongest man contest - and Vickers were part of the team that organised the special event in Caol community centre to raise money for Mark Haldenby and his family.

Whyte said: 'It meant even more that we both achieved this at Mark's event.'

'We also have a contest at an event every April for Cancer Research, so it's not just a strongman show, we are doing these things for charity too.'

Earlier this year, Vickers qualified for the world's strongest man competition though subse-

quently couldn't attend due to family commitments.

But he said doing something for his friend came over and above anything he had achieved.

He said: 'Mark is going through a bad time so it was nice to be able to achieve it in front of him with his wife and kids there.'

'I want to dedicate my win to him.'

Whyte and Vickers will both soon compete in the Strongman Champions League in Norway. They will fly out in two weeks' time to battle it in out in the champions league against 10 competitors from countries across the world.



Stuart Whyte

Skye gym plan gets a lift from grant award of £38,000

Gym

A NEW gym in north Skye is one step closer to reality as more than £38,000 in funding has been secured.

The facility, to be built in the attic of Staffin Hall, has been boosted by £33,350 from the People's Health Trust and £5,000 from Highland council.

A steering group of local residents will now be set up to develop the project.

Martin Perry, chairman of the hall association, said: 'Along with £5,000 from our own funds this should give us a good facility and a fitness instructor.'

'We now need to put together a group to manage the project and make decisions.'

Fitness equipment including aerobic exercise machines, treadmills, rowing machines and cross trainers are likely to be installed but weights are unlikely due to potential noise.

Anybody interested in joining the steering group can contact martinperry052@btinternet.com or message the Talla Stafainn Facebook page.

Ali Young Indoor League results

Indoor football

LAST Sunday's matches in the Ali Young Indoor League saw the Volley record one of the biggest wins, with an 8-3 scoreline against Inverloch United, while Ali Young's team won 7-2 against Nevis Range.

The Goon Squad remain top of the league after a narrow 4-3 victory over Portoway.

Other results were HWE 3-2 Harlem Globe Stoters, MHB 3-1 Outer Milan, Fiorentina Turner 1-3 Lochaber Leisure and Baroway 9 - 7 Barcelochy.

Sports gala day marks Active Schools landmark

Active Schools

A SPECIAL sports gala day was held in Kinlochleven last Saturday to celebrate 10 years of the Active Schools programme.

Active Schools offers a variety of lunchtime and after-school sports for children to encourage active and healthy lifestyles across Scotland.

The free event, held at the Leven Centre in Kinlochleven, offered an array of 'come and try' activities for youngsters from south Lochaber throughout the day, including gymnastics, football, volleyball and orienteering.

Jane Bruce, a coordinator with High Life Highland Active Schools, said: 'The kids in south Lochaber love the activities. They wouldn't come if they didn't enjoy it.'

'We're not sure how much sports curriculum activity they actually get so this helps keep them active outside school.'

Fast and furious take Leanachan forest trail

Cycling

THE SECOND round of the West Highland Wheelers winter league saw 28 cyclists compete on a fast and furious two-lap course at Leanachan forest.

Joe Barnes won his second league race in a row, pulling ahead of Liam Moynihan right at the death and finishing first on 42 minutes and 41 seconds.

Moynihan was only eight seconds behind in second place. Fiona Beattie was the first lady home, with a time of 56 minutes and 9 seconds, while Alex Dent finished highest out of the juniors.

Top five finishers: 1 Joe Barnes 42:41; 2 Liam Moynihan 42:49; 3 Donald Paterson 44:18; 4 Gavin McLean 47:38; 5 Alan Dent 49:36.



FURIOUS: The second round of the West Highland Wheelers winter league gets underway at Leanachan forest

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WEATHER

Thursday Cloudy with light rain showers
Winds light easterly
Temperatures 6°C to 4°C.

Friday Cloudy with light rain showers
Winds moderate easterly
Temperatures 9°C to 7°C.

Weekend Outlook Showers, some heavy on Saturday
Cloudy on Sunday
Winds moderate easterly
Temperatures 10°C to 7°C.

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday, November 27, 2014** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Date	am			pm		
Thur	02.34	1.0	08.33	3.8	15.10	1.2
Fri	03.28	1.2	09.28	3.6	16.10	1.4
Sat	04.30	1.3	10.37	3.4	17.18	1.5
Sun	05.40	1.4	12.22	3.4	18.31	1.6
Mon	00.48	3.0	06.57	1.5	13.47	3.5
Tues	02.15	3.2	08.12	1.4	14.47	3.6
Wed	03.10	3.4	09.16	1.2	15.37	3.8

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardishaig	-5.35	Mallaig	+0.25
Campbeltown	-5.30	Portree	+0.55
Crinan	-0.47	Tobermory	+0.16
Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Dover	+5.30
Lochboisdale	+0.30		

Ferry Crossings/Sea States

Oban to Barra/South Uist	Moderate
Oban to Coll/Tiree	Moderate
Kennacraig to Islay	Moderate