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Disabled driver counts cost of vandalism spree

Tesco jobs at risk

by Fiona Scott
 fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A disabled driver has been left stranded after vandals broke into his Peugeot 306 last weekend and destroyed the electrics.

William Rodger, who has a degenerative spinal disc disorder, was one of several car owners in the area to have been targeted between Friday night and Saturday morning.

Affected

Mr Rodger's car was parked at the Soroba Road end of Sinclair Drive, while vehicles in Quarry Road and Mossfield were also affected.

'It's not much of a car but it was fine for getting me around,' said Mr Rodger.

'Whoever broke in to it pulled the indicator stalk off and in doing so has blown the electrics and I can't drive it at all now.

'This has virtually stopped me doing anything as I rely on my car heavily to get out and about.'

Despite having his only mode of transport completely



William Rodger beside his vehicle. Vandals broke off the indicator lever and destroyed the car's electrics in the process.

15_T05_William RodgerCarVandalism 1

trashed, Mr Rodger urged the perpetrators to seek help.

'There must be something wrong with them to be lashing out like that, so I would like them to get the help that they need,' he added.

In total seven cars were reported to have been targeted during the spree, with the damage ranging from broken

mirrors and windscreen wipers to doors being badly dented and damaged.

Broken parts found strewn around the affected areas have been collected for DNA testing and, although they believe that last weekend's incidents were opportunist, police are asking drivers to be mindful of how they leave

their unattended vehicles.

Community sergeant Iain MacNicol said: 'Some of the cars involved in the attacks last weekend were unsecured and we would advise everyone leaving their car unattended to make sure it is locked. 'Parking in well-lit areas can also act as a deterrent.'

Police are investigating

these incidents and are appealing for anyone with information to contact them on 101 or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Staff at Oban's Tesco store are waiting to find out if their jobs are safe following an announcement this week that the supermarket giant is to cut thousands of roles.

As part of a major shake-up of in-store departments, Tesco also confirmed 90 stores across the UK will close their deli, meat and fish counters, while around 200 staff canteens, which have been run by outside companies since 2017, are also at risk of closure.

When asked by The Oban Times if the town's store would be affected, Tesco's head office said no details of stores have yet been revealed but will be once staff have been spoken to.

A spokesman said: 'Overall, we estimate up to 9,000 Tesco colleague roles could be impacted, however, our expectation is that up to half of these could be redeployed to other customer-facing roles.'

'Contrary to media reports over the weekend, we do not plan to make any significant changes to bakeries this year.'

There will also be a streamlining of head office staff with resulting job losses.

When contacted by The Oban Times, Tesco Oban was unable to comment on the situation.

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3 JAN SOROB ROAD

OT

Ian Rankin to headline Islay Book Festival

Author Ian Rankin has agreed to appear at this summer's Islay Book Festival in a major coup for the island event, writes Angus MacKinnon.

The creator of the Inspector Rebus books will take part in several sessions during the August 29-September 1 festival and is looking forward to his first visit to the whisky isle.

'All I know about Islay is basically the whisky,' he said. 'So I'm really looking forward to exploring, driving around and meeting the people.'

Festival chairwoman Isla Rosser Owen said: 'Ian's as popular here as he is everywhere, so we're delighted he is coming and we're anticipating a lot of interest from locals and visitors alike.'

'He is an international best-seller, a master of crime fiction and one of Britain's leading writers in any genre.'

Last year's festival featured 19 authors and saw more than



Author Ian Rankin.

Photograph: Hamish Brown

event. After agreeing to take part in this year's Islay Book Festival, writer Ian Rankin spoke to the festival's Angus MacKinnon about his love of whisky and writing during a time of great change in Scotland.

A longer version of the interview below can be found at www.islaybookfestival.co.uk

Q: Ian, your writing success has made you a well-travelled man and you're well known as a whisky buff, so how come you have never been to Islay before?

IR: It's true, the Hebrides are a bit of a mystery to me. I travel through to Glasgow fairly irregularly and almost never get to the islands - I've always lived on the east coast and I have pretty much stuck to that side of the country.

Q: You do know Islay whiskies well though?

IR: Yes. I like a kind of

rich, strong, peaty flavour, which is why I tend to go for the Lagavulins and the Laphroaigs of this world.

Q: Rebus too?

IR: Well with him it depends on who's buying! If someone else is buying Rebus will go for an expensive malt, but if he is buying himself, he tends to go for the cheaper stuff. But he has always got a couple of decent bottles at home and last thing at night he'll have a whisky or two - a bit like myself.

Q: Your novels have charted how Scotland has changed over the last three decades...

IR: Yes, I guess the biggest change in my lifetime and certainly in the time of the Rebus books has been devolution. And who knows what happens next.

The thing is I'm not a science fiction writer so until stuff has happened I cannot speculate or write about it. Brexit gets a

very brief mention in the latest book but that is as much as I can do...I can't write about independence until it happens.

All this flux, all the uncertainty in the world; it is not easy for writers to deal with that. The real world at the moment seems so incredible that fiction writers are scratching their heads and going 'well, how do I make sense of this?'

Q: I believe there is change on the home front too, so your writing is on hold this year?

IR: Yes, we're downsizing, so the first half of this year is going to be taken up with selling the house and moving to an apartment.

There is a lot of decluttering to be done. So I can't get my head into a space where I can imagine writing a book. But hopefully that will all done and dusted by the summer and that will allow me the autumn and winter to think, do I want to start a new book?

HSCP launches mental health Facebook page

A mental health Facebook page has been launched by Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP).

The social media page will include information, tips and advice, plus signposting to digital resources for people and their carers.

Nicola Gillespie, HSCP's local area manager for mental health, said: 'I am really pleased that the HSCP is expanding its use of social media. This is an excellent platform to reach more people in our rural communities and will help share awareness of mental health problems.'

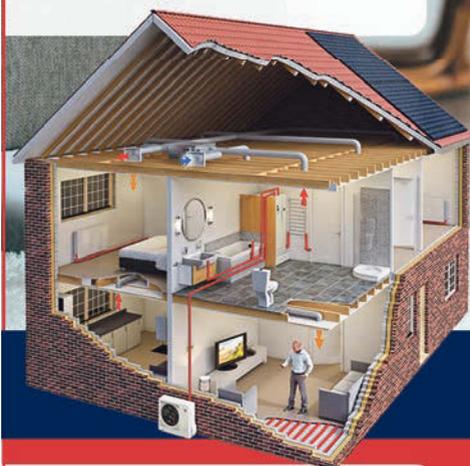
'The HSCP's Mental Health Facebook page (@mentalhealthargyllandbute) is overseen by HSCP staff and only provides health and wellbeing information that is trusted and readily available on the NHS inform website and national mental health organisations and partners. This means that people accessing the service can be assured of the accuracy of the information they view.'

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The new temporary road on the A82 near Tyndrum.

Interim road keeps traffic flowing in Tyndrum

by Fiona Scott

fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Commuters can breathe a sigh of relief now that a new two-lane temporary diversion road has opened at Tyndrum.

Part of the £1.1 million A82 Clifton culvert replacement scheme, this interim measure will allow vehicles to safely pass by ongoing works without a lengthy wait at traffic lights.

Work is now under way to replace the existing deteriorating culvert, on the western edge of Tyndrum. The replacement structure has been designed to have a 120-year life span, helping to ensure the road will contin-

ue to function safely while new safety barriers will also be installed.

The temporary two-lane diversion road will remain in place until the culvert replacement works are completed.

Traffic lights will be used to control the flow of traffic while the temporary road is being removed during the final stage of the project in the spring.

The works are due to be completed in May.

A reduced speed limit of 30mph is in place on the temporary diversion road for the safety of workers and motorists.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's north-west rep-

resentative, said: 'We are delighted that the scheme at Clifton culvert is progressing well, and the installation of the two-lane temporary diversion road will help ensure that any disruption to motorists is kept to a minimum while we carry out this essential project.'

'We encourage all road users to follow any signs or traffic management that is in place for their own safety as well as that of our teams and remind them to plan ahead and leave some extra time before they travel.'

Real time journey information is available from Traffic Scotland at www.trafficscotland.org or twitter @trafficscotland.

Son defies heartbreak to triple cash raised

by Kathie Griffiths
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A man who conquered a gruelling bike race, raising almost £3,000 for a childhood friend battling a devastating illness, has told of the family heartbreak that fueled him through the finishing line.

Steven Groom's mum Helen from Barcaldine died from a short cancer illness the night before he and North Argyll Cycle Club team-mate Nick Charlton took part in the 24-hour Strathpuffer endurance event.

Out of 120 pairs who entered the mountain-biking challenge, the duo still came in at seventh place despite Mr Groom's tragic loss.

A self-employed joiner from Benderloch, Mr Groom had originally set a target of £1,000 to help a charity supporting an old high school



friend diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease, but by the end of the race on January 20 he had managed to triple it.

His donations page at justgiving.com/fundraising/steven-groom1 is still open for one more week. Money will go to MND Scotland, helping Mr Groom's friend and mum-of-one Ruth

Williamson who was diagnosed with the terminal illness in November 2017.

Mr Groom's own mum was diagnosed as being terminally ill just after Boxing Day and passed away on Friday January 19.

'The weekend of the race was the most difficult of my life. I had to say goodbye to

Steven Groom with Strathpuffer team mate Nick Charlton.

my mum on the Friday afternoon and get through the race for Ruth the next day. I knew my mum would've wanted me to do it and I knew everyone who had sponsored me would not want their money back if I didn't do it, but in the end I went ahead with my dad and sister's blessing.

'I knew my mum would have told me to give it my all and my dad said to go and smash it for her - so that's what I did.

'The race was tough, it was about as hellish as its sounds. Between the two of us Nick and I managed to keep it going through the 24 hours, I did 12 laps and Nick did 14. It was 100 per cent team effort, with friends DJ Barr and Ronald Gordon as our pit-stop crew, who kept us

watered, fed and on the road. I found that by my 11th lap I was 100 per cent wrung out, I'd hit the wall. It was Ron who sat beside me and said you have to do one more. I don't know how I managed to do it but I did. Mum would be proud.'

Ruth Williamson's brother Tom Gibson said: 'I am amazed at Steven's grit and determination and very touched that under the circumstances he went ahead with the event and completed in such a good time.'

To find out more about MND Scotland, email info@mndscotland.org.uk, call 0141 332 3903 or visit mnd-scotland.org.uk

GETINTOUCH
email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk
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POLICE FILES

About 2am on January 21 police were called to an address in North Connel after reports of a disturbance. On arrival they found a male had been stabbed. A 34-year-old female was later charged, held in custody for court and a report submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

On Tuesday January 22 police were called to assist a male at Lorn and Islands Hospital after he had been stabbed at a flat in Oban.

A 28-year-old female was later traced, charged and held for court and a report submitted to the Fiscal.

On January 25 police received a number of complaints in relation to a car being driven dangerously in Soroba Road, Oban. Officers are following positive lines of enquiry and the incident is being dealt with by Constable McBeth who is keen to speak to anyone who might have further information. Contact him at Oban Police Station or by phoning 101 and quoting incident number 2191.

Damning report highlights savings shortfall in Argyll health and social care

A bid by health chiefs to save more than £11 million in the next financial year in Argyll and Bute is likely to fall more than £5m short, a new report has revealed.

A meeting of the integration joint board (IJB) which runs Argyll and Bute's Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), is due to hear that less than half of projected savings for 2018/19 are expected to be achieved.

The figures are revealed in a report by the HSCP's interim head of finance, Kirsty Flanagan, and were due to be discussed at a meeting yesterday (Wednesday January 30).

Ms Flanagan's report highlights a lack of clarity over which official was responsible for delivering each saving - but says that particular issue has now been resolved.

Ms Flanagan says in her report: 'It is very disappointing to note the lack of progress with the savings options.

'Against an overall savings target of £11.471m [in 2019/20], only £6.437m is

anticipated to be delivered, a shortfall of £5.034m.

'Against the officer target of £10.954m in 2018/19, only £3.777m of savings are estimated to be achieved, resulting in a shortfall of £7.177m.

'The overspend (overall

'It is evident a number of savings options were not developed enough'

by the HSCP) is currently £4.398m and, therefore, there has been £2.779m of other in-year savings that have reduced the overspend.

'In addition to the savings target, there was also £1.6m of unidentified savings at the beginning of the financial year, which therefore increases the other in-year savings identified to £4.379m.

'It is evident that a number of the savings options were not developed enough when put forward for approval, and there is £3.898m of savings

that are not achievable that reduces the savings plan to £7.573m.'

Ms Flanagan's report states that 'savings owners' have now been agreed for each option, but adds: 'However, the savings options that officers are working to are higher than the original approved plan.

'The revised profile of savings has been factored into the budget outlook, including the savings shortfall within the 'being developed' category and alternative savings will require to be identified.

'Now that this monitoring process has been established, progress with the savings plan will be reported to the Integrated Joint Board as part of the routine finance reports.'

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OT

Work to start on Oban linkspan

Work starts tomorrow (February 1) to replace the linkspan at Oban harbour.

Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) says the closure of berth number one will take until February 28 to re-open.

During the planned work, all services will continue from berth number two but passengers are being warned there could be adjustments to sailing times and they should check CalMac's website for the latest information.

This is the next stage of the Oban harbour project.

CMAL senior civil engineer Ruairidh Campbell, said: 'The linkspan, which is the terminal's original linkspan and is predominately used by the Mull ferry service, has reached the end of its serviceable life and needs to be replaced. The existing support structures will also be strengthened. We have worked closely with the contractor and CalMac to ensure there is as little disruption to services as possible.'

Confidence in Oban as businesses invest

Burger restaurant to open up in former Kitchen Garden

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A gaping hole left in Oban's busiest street after the popular Kitchen Garden deli shut down last year is about to be filled by a 100-seater burger restaurant and ice cream bar.

The venture is being brought to George Street by multi-business owner Paul Sloan, who already has the Waterfront Fishhouse restaurant, Cuan Mor, Oban Bay Brewery and Ranald Hotel.

Elsewhere across the town, shops and hotels are also investing in refurbishments, which Bid4Oban chief executive Andrew Spence says is good news.

The new Premier Inn in

Shore Street is due to open next month, Oban Bay Hotel is being revamped and what was the Rowantree Hotel in George Street is due to open next month as The Scot after being fully refurbished, and it has started taking bookings for its 24 ensuite guest rooms.

Callum McLeod, who owns Eusk and Piazza on the North Pier, bought the former Rowantree Hotel from the owners of the Oban Inn last November. He had been planning to build a new hotel on the site of the demolished Argyll Hotel on the Esplanade.

Mr McLeod's wife Andrea said the family-run business had 'stripped and emptied' all the Rowantree

rooms with plans to give a nod to Oban's history in The Scot's new-look lounge, putting black and white images on the walls. Piazza has also just had a refurbishment,

'Callum and his dad always loved to bring more people to Oban'

including a new bar.

'Callum and his dad always loved to bring more people to Oban and give them the best of Oban and this is what Callum is continuing to do,' she said.

Workmen are also busy inside the former Oban Bay Fish Bar and Restaurant in George Street turning it into

two new retail units.

Clothing retailer Fat Face is believed to have shown interest in taking one of the units but there has been no confirmation from the store's headquarters.

Over in Oban Retail Park, Argos has just had a full refit, and work is ongoing at the Rockport Hotel in Tweeddale Street, better known as The Woody. When it last shut its doors, five jobs were lost. It is understood it has been bought by a former director of a Glasgow-based wine distributor, who has plans to turn it into a boutique hotel.

Mr Spence said: 'This is all a good news story for Oban. The fact that all these significant investments are being

made in the town shows there's lots of confidence in Oban.'

He also said it was 'great to learn that something different is coming to town': 'We wish Paul Sloan every success in this venture,' he added.

Mr Sloan said all the legal work was nearly concluded and Gelatoburger, with 15 different types of burgers and cold beer included on the 'affordable' menu, should open around May 'all things allowing'.

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Adventurous moggy returns after two-week absence

A feline fugitive has been reunited with his owner thanks to a cast of thousands and the Oban Times, writes Fiona Scott.

Cat lover Deborah Gray had almost given up hope of ever finding missing moggy Gisli after the curious kitty failed to return from an afternoon stroll with his brother Egil.

However, unlike his namesake – an Icelander forced to stay on the run for 13 years – Gisli was discovered in the roof void above McColl's on George Street two weeks after going AWOL.

Oxfam volunteer Deborah said: 'I can't describe how relieved I was to hear that he had been found and that he was alright.'

Gisli was discovered when McColl's worker Debbie Gibb and colleague Jemma heard noises from the roof. Further investigation led them to Gisli who appeared to have got himself stuck.

Debbie's daughter Natasha gave the cat refuge for the night but it wasn't until Oban FM presenter



Gisli is reunited with delighted owner Deborah Gray.

Margo Marr went into the shop to buy her Oban Times that the identity of the cat in the attic was discovered.

'I work beside Deborah in Oxfam and she had put an appeal out on the radio when Gisli went missing,' explained Ms Marr.

'If I hadn't popped in to buy a paper and heard the ladies talking about the cat they had found, who knows where he may have ended up.'

Gisli is now back at home

with his brother and a delighted Ms Gray who thanked everyone who had gone out to look for her cat during his absence.

'I have been overwhelmed by the kindness of people,' she said.

'I appealed over social media and the response was amazing. I don't think he was in the roof all that time as he seems to have been fed and is suffering no ill effects from his adventure. If only cats could talk.'

Liz booked by royal command

Dalmally felt maker doing work for some of the world's most collectable books

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



From her studio at Dalmally Railway Station, felt maker Liz Gaffney-Whaite is working on a rolling-stock royal commission for some of the world's most collectable books.

It is eight years since she was first approached by Addison Publication, England's last handmade book publishing house, to make bespoke felt covers for a two-volume botanical book, costing £12,950, that records the flora at the Prince of Wales's Highgrove Garden in Gloucestershire – and she is still making them on demand.

It takes one kilo of wool to make each of the green-coloured covers with maroon ties for The Highgrove Florilegium and the task can take two to three days.

Specialist leading artists from around the world were invited to paint plants from



the royal garden in watercolours and there is a limited edition of 175 numbered sets. Prince Charles, who wrote the preface for it and has signed each one, holds Number 1 in his personal book collection and royalties go to his charitable trust.

Last year Addison's also commissioned Liz to make covers for another fine-art florilegium, this time celebrating the flora at Prince Charles's properties in the

Saxon village of Viscry and from more remote Zalanpatak in Transylvania.

The books are hand-bound in leather and marbled paper, finished with gold leaf before being slipped into Liz's protective covers made again from two types of wool, mostly from British Bluefaced Leicester sheep.

Demand for Liz's expertise has also come from America after she got a call from the prop master of a new



Liz, left, with the book cover; and above, with her husband Graham.

Angelina Jolie film out later this year called Come Away – a fantasy mix between Peter Pan and Alice in Wonderland set in Victorian times.

'There's a scene where one of the characters makes a hat from felt. He couldn't understand the process so found me online and asked me to explain it – they even paid me. I'd hoped to make the hats for the film but in the end I put them in touch with some felt makers in New York,' said Liz. 'I never know who I'm going to

hear from next. I've made covers for other collectors' books. I even had an enquiry from Johannesburg for a high-end book all about golf,' added Liz, whose Heartfelt studio is in part of what used to be the ticket office at the sandstone and granite station buildings.

It is the last remaining station house on the old Callendar to Oban line and is being painstakingly restored to its former Victorian glory by her husband Graham, who bought the property at an

auction back in the 1990s and now runs its former waiting rooms and postroom as five quirky Airbnb rooms.

Graham also keeps sheep to provide Liz with wool for her felt and in the garden they have plant beds that produce dye for her botanical printing on textiles.

The couple, who are collecting stories from Dalmally Station to eventually create an online archive, also gather artefacts from bygone railway days, including part of the old ticket counter at Taynuilt station before it burned down and the mother clock from Kentallen station, which once renovated to working order will be installed to run the old Dalmally Station clock.

'That will be a big occasion when we have the original clock running again, it'll definitely be party time,' said Liz.

To find out more about what happens at Dalmally Station go to heartfeltbyliz.com or dalmallyrailwaystation.co.uk

Charges set to rise for residential and 'sleepover' care in Argyll and Bute

Residents who use sleepover or residential care in Argyll and Bute are set to be hit with big fee increases if proposals are approved by health chiefs.

The area's health and social care partnership (HSCP) is looking to increase sleepover care charges by 18 per cent to bring staff pay in line with the living wage.

And a six per cent increase would be applied for residential care in order to help meet the costs of providing the service. A standard three per cent inflation increase is to be applied to a number of other services.

The proposed changes were due to be discussed at a meeting of the HSCP's integration joint board (IJB) yesterday (Wednesday January 30).

David Forshaw, principal accountant for social work, states in a report on the issue: 'The weekly charge for sleepover services has been increased by 18 per cent to reflect the increased cost of buying sleepover services after the pay rates are brought into line with the Scottish

living wage from March 2019.

'The impact on service user charges is likely to be very limited as charges for sleepover services are means tested and service users contribute based on their financial circumstances and their ability to pay.

'The weekly charge for residential care provision in the partnership's older people care homes has been increased by six per cent to bring the weekly charge into line with the average weekly cost of providing the service across the partnership's care homes.

'The impact of this increase will be limited to residents who own capital and assets exceeding the upper capital limit set annually by the Scottish Government, currently standing at £27,250 for 2018/19, and other local authorities who place their service users in the partnership's care homes.

Members of the IJB will also be asked to endorse new charges for services, including £4.50 a week for non-resi-

dential services' Telecare care assist system.

Any decision by the IJB will be for the council to ratify as it has the authority to set fees and charges for social care.

Councillor Kieron Green, who is IJB vice-chairman, told The Oban Times: 'Fees and charges help us fund social care at a time when demand on services provided by the health and social care partnership is increasing faster than funding available to us.

'Dependent on individual circumstances, there may be means tested support available to help with the costs of certain services.

'Additionally, following agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA, this year will see free personal care, which is currently only for over-65s being extended to cover all ages.'

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OT

Ferry price hike plan makes waves on isles

A proposal to increase peak time fares on west coast ferry routes has been received with alarm and dismay.

Transport Secretary Michael Matheson insists the price hike was among a number of proposals being looked at by the Scottish Government after ferry operator CalMac faced capacity issues during last summer.

Island communities, however, are making a counter call for more ferries and better management of demand during peak times.

CalMac community board chairman Angus Campbell commented: 'Bearing in mind the continuing demographic challenges faced by our island communities, it is surprising to think of damaging that success by curtailing demand and increasing prices rather than addressing the core issue of investment in fleet capacity and resilience.'



'This increased economic activity has significantly contributed to the Scottish economy and increased the tax revenues from our islands.'

'The board questions whether such a proposal has been island-proofed against the legislation contained in the Islands Act 2018 which is designed to prevent further disadvantage to the island communities.'

Mr Campbell insisted the board consistently offered to work with Transport Scotland, CalMac and CMAL, not only to explore ways of dealing fairly with the immediate challenges but also to help develop a new long-term ambitious Ferries

Plan to help grow the islands and communities to the benefit of all.

'We recognise that there is a need for urgent action to address the capacity constraints on the ferry network but do not believe that this proposal is an acceptable solution,' he added.

Councillor Uisdean Robertson, chairman of Western Isles local authority Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar's transport committee, said: 'This is very concerning indeed and shows a lack of understanding for the needs and aspirations of our island communities.'

'What we continue to look for from CalMac and Transport Scotland is an

increase in capacity on the various routes, not an increase in fares.'

Councillor Robertson and many other island representatives feel that the principle of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET), a Scottish Government scheme that links ferry fares to the cost of travelling an equivalent distance by road, should be stuck to.

'RET has made quite a difference to people coming to the Western Isles and we are heavily dependent now on tourism,' he said.

'I think it is important that prices stay at the level they are at the moment.'

Councillor Robertson is now seeking a meeting with Mr Matheson to discuss the issue.

'I am sure that the cabinet secretary would find a locally based perspective helpful, in addition to the other advice he will be receiving,' he concluded.

Hebrides energy customers safeguarded by Ofgem

Hebrides Energy, the community interest company set up to secure cheaper electricity for island consumers, is seeking to reassure customers of the 'Hebrides Energy' tariff following the announcement that its supply partner, Our Power, has stopped trading.

Our Power, a not-for-profit energy supplier with 38,000 domestic customers, has been unable to continue trading due to a sharp increase in the wholesale price of electricity over recent months.

Under the OFGEM Safety Net, which is funded by a levy spread across all energy suppliers, the energy regulator will immediately appoint a replacement supplier to continue providing services to Our Power customers.

Electricity supply for those customers will not be interrupted, credit balances will be protected, pre-payment meters can be topped up as normal and the replacement supplier normally ensures that adopted customers pay the same price for their electricity as they were before.

Ofgem's message to Hebrides Energy customers is: 'There is no need to worry, as under our safety net we will make sure your energy supplies are secure and your credit balance is protected.'

'We will now choose a new supplier for you, ensuring you get the best deal possible.'

'While we are doing this, our advice is to sit tight and don't switch. You can rely on your energy supply as normal.'

'We have seen a number of supplier failures over the last year and our safety net procedures are working as they should to protect customers.'

Hebrides Energy customers should take a meter reading for when they are contacted by their new supplier.

As soon as the identity of Ofgem's chosen replacement supplier is known, Hebrides Energy will engage with it to ensure the Hebrides Energy brand continues to offer a value-for-money supply for island consumers.

More information is available at www.ofgem.gov.uk

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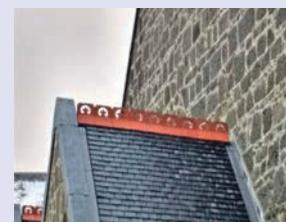
Oban groups banish winter blues

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk

WHERE IS THIS?



I can't believe we're at the end of January already, just February to get through now and then we're into spring.

I know that I'm not alone in finding this time of year a struggle. It has its moments with the beautiful snowy day we had – and to be honest it's been one of our milder winters so far – but by now I'm fed up with the dark and cold.

I find the best way for me is having something to look forward to each week, even if it's tea and a chat with a friend, a quiz or a visit to the cinema.

We're very lucky in Oban to have lots of clubs and societies no matter what

your interests are. This week I have the Scottish Women's Institute on Tuesday night in the Guide Hall to look forward to and a choice of two quizzes in The Lorne and The Oban Inn, so my cup is running over.

On Sunday the cinema is showing Sister Act, which is one of the ultimate feel-good films. It also has lots of other good films to transport you to another time and place, such as Mary, Queen of Scots and Mary Poppins Returns,

a wee bit of escapism is just what the doctor ordered sometimes.

We're also lucky enough to have groups in town to offer support when you're struggling a bit. Martyn's Monday Club meets in Hope Kitchen for men to meet and chat, and on Tuesday the ladies have their group. It's fantastic to know that they are there with a listening ear and a chance to talk things over, often that's all it takes to lighten the load.

Whatever it takes to get you through the winter I think Oban has something to offer – and we've not got long to go now until it's spring.

Last week's photograph was the bike stand at the pontoons, for this week you just need to look at it from the right angle.

Anyone fancy a top-up?

Residents and visitors to Oban will soon be able to top up their water bottles in town with the installation of a new water station.

The five-foot high blue water dispensers will be installed by Scottish Water, pending planning approval, down near the pier as part of

a project to encourage people to 'top up from the tap' using refillable bottles.

The unit will be plumbed into the public water supply and fitted with technology which will enable it to digitally track water usage, transmitting the data via cloud technology to the specialists

managing Scotland's water networks.

Data loggers inside will provide information that can be translated into cost and plastic savings and the volume of water used. They will comply with public health and legislative requirements and will be inspected regularly.

Oban man served with non-harrassment order

An Oban shopkeeper is now the subject of a non-harrassment order to last for five years, preventing him from contacting a former partner and her children.

Richard Alan MacDougall, of 10 Corran Brae, Dunollie, was also sentenced to a community payback order by Sheriff Patrick Hughes at Oban Sheriff Court on Monday.

MacDougall admitted that between September 23 and October 16 last year, at a number of locations around Oban he engaged in a course of conduct that caused his ex-partner fear and alarm.

She had advised him that she did not want anymore contact with him but he approached her, sent electronic messages, shouted to her in her place of work among other actions.

'The accused and the



complainer had an on-off relationship since 2015,' said procurator fiscal Eoin McGinty. 'The accused didn't accept the relationship was over and continued to attempt to get back together with the complainer, even when the complainer informed him she did not want any contact at all and blocked his number on her mobile phone and Facebook.'

The incidents included contacting her outside her places of work and one time going into where she worked and shouting to her.

On another occasion he stood in the middle of the road and she had to swerve her car to avoid him.

The fiscal said that 'several of the occasions' had been captured on the town's CCTV system.

MacDougall, aged 42, who is the owner and manager of Dunollie Stores, also followed her and went to her home.

'She received a phone call from the accused asking where she had been the night before; he was aware she wasn't at her home address due to having been there.'

The fiscal said that a witness to one incident described her as 'paralysed with fear'.

Sheriff Hughes had called for reports to be prepared on MacDougall at an earlier hearing.

His defence agent Laura McManus said that these showed MacDougall was at a low risk of ever offending again: 'It was never his intention to hurt her or cause her any concern or distress.'

She added that MacDougall had approached the matter from a very different angle to the complainer: 'It was very

much an on again, off again relationship.'

Sheriff Hughes placed MacDougall on a community pay back order to include 12 months' supervision: 'You will work with them to make sure an offence like this does not happen again.'

The order also includes 200 hours of unpaid work in the community to be completed within 12 months.

The crown asked for, and was granted, a non-harrassment order to be put in place preventing MacDougall from contacting the woman and her children in any way or going onto the road where she lives.

'This is a particularly serious offence,' said Sheriff Hughes.

'If you come back to court for any breach of this order it is very difficult to see how custody can be avoided.'

Win free council tax for a year

People in Argyll and Bute are being given the chance to win a year's free council tax if they sign up to the council's new e-billing service.

Everyone who joins the online portal and signs up for e-billing before Sunday March 24 will be entered into a prize draw to win 12 months of free council tax.

The service allows users to access their council tax account online 24/7. It also enables them to check their balance, see previous payments, access copies of letters, view their current instalment plan, and check which benefits they receive.

To be eligible for the lucky draw, users must sign up to council tax e-billing through the new online portal by March 24, and not have any council tax arrears on Tuesday March 26 – the date of the prize draw.

Everyone who has already enrolled for the service will be automatically entered.

Visit: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/myaccount-register



Primary six pupils with class teacher Claire Campbell, ASN assistant Tracey McCaig, and Scottish Water representatives Lynne Edgar and Laura Boyce.

Rockfield pupils make time to consign plastic to history

Pupils at Rockfield Primary School are putting their plastic in the past while looking forward to a pollution-free future, writes Fiona Scott.

Working together with Scottish Water, children at the school are gathering items, drawing pictures and writing notes to put in a time capsule which will be buried in the new Tullich Water Treatment Works within the next two months and opened in 50 years' time.

The historic cache will contain items such as plastic water bottles and writing from the children with the

aim of communicating with people and to help future archaeologists, anthropologists and historians understand what life was like in Oban in 2019.

capsule

During a visit to the school last Thursday, a team from Scottish Water encouraged the children to think about all things water and about the items they would like to include in a time capsule.

Lauren Allan, Scottish Water corporate affairs officer, said: 'We came here today to talk to the children about the Your Water Your

Life campaign which Scottish Water has just launched.

'Part of that campaign is about reducing single-use plastics and replacing them with things such as refillable water bottles.

'We thought it would be a good idea to put some of these items, along with notes from the children into a time capsule to help people in the future understand what harm they could do.

'The pupils at Rockfield have really got behind this project and are coming up with some really interesting ideas.'

BUSINESS START-UP WORKSHOP

A workshop for anyone looking to start-up a business. During the workshop you will learn the need for a business plan, how to manage a profit and loss account, produce a cash-flow, identify customers and the role of marketing in business.

5 Feb (0930-1630hrs) and 6 Feb (0930-1230hrs) Lochgilphead

PINTEREST, INSTAGRAM AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Learn how Instagram and Pinterest could benefit your business and which is the most appropriate one for you to use to engage your audience and grow a following. Recognise what makes successful photographic content and how important visual storytelling is and improve your photography skills.

Thu 7 Feb 2019, 1000-1330hrs, Lochgilphead

WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

Google Analytics is a powerful tool for all businesses who have an online presence. By the end of the workshop you should be able to improve your website's performance with more conversions and more visitors to your site becoming customers.

Fri 8 Feb 2019, 1000-1330hrs, Oban

To book on a workshop or if you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss starting a business or growing a business with one of our business advisers contact the

Business Gateway team on

01546 604030 or email
bg@argyll-bute.gov.uk



OT

Oban Burns Club toasts the Bard at Regent Hotel

Burns Club of Oban had its annual supper on Friday January 25 at the Regent Hotel.

More than 80 folk attended and were treated to a wonderful five-course meal with excellent service from the Regent Hotel staff.

They were entertained with three excellent speeches and great singing and music. The immortal memory was given by Professor Gerard Carruthers, who is the Francis Hutchison professor of literature at the University of Glasgow, and a renowned Burns scholar.

The toast to the land we live in was given by Reverend Roderick Campbell minister at Inverary. The toast to the lassies was given by Ian Steele from Taynuilt. Kenneth Pearson was the singer, Calum McPhail was on fiddle and Torquil Telfer and Calum Garvin were the pipers for the evening. The chairman was John MacLean and



The top table, above; Calum McPhail on fiddle; Torquil Telfer was one of the pipers for the evening, piping in the guests; all the speakers were excellent.

the vote of thanks was given by Douglas Small.

More Burns on page 10.



Mairi tours Scotland's most famous song

Mairi Campbell brings a post-Burns supper treat to Benderloch tomorrow (Friday) with her five-star show directly from Edinburgh Fringe 2018, revealing the mysteries and stories buried deep in Scotland's world famous song – Auld Lang Syne.

Although Mairi now lives in Edinburgh, juggling songwriting, teaching and live performance, her Victory Hall stop on a 17-date tour of her one-woman show brings her close to Lismore where she started a fiddle school and runs weekend courses.

She has sung for former US president Bill Clinton, Sean Connery and has supported Joan Armatrading in Scotland, and now it is Argyll's turn. Tickets for the



Mairi will perform at a number of venues in Argyll, and will start off in Benderloch tomorrow.

February 1 show at 8pm in Benderloch are £12 on the door or £10 in advance on 01631 720247.

This Saturday Mairi will also be performing at Tayvallich Village Hall at 7.30pm. A haggis stovie supper is included in the ticket price. On Friday March 8 she will be at Luing's Atlantic Islands Centre where tickets are available by calling 01852 314096.

Mairi said: 'I'm excited

to be touring village halls across the country, feeling into the folk and the place, and offering up this wonderful show.

'Robert Burns, who is so famously associated with the original poem, did much the same thing 200 years ago, touring as a performance poet from the Highlands to the Borders.

'I really fancy doing it horse and cart style – but maybe not in winter.'

Councillor defends local produce proposal

An Argyll and Bute councillor has insisted that proposals for supermarkets to sell locally-sourced produce would not be damaging to smaller businesses.

Alastair Redman, who has retail experience on his native Islay, was responding to comments by Helensburgh and Lomond Chamber of

Commerce, which said that the idea was 'potentially damaging' to independent retailers.

Conservative MSP Brian Whittle (South Scotland region) had expressed the idea that larger shops could have dedicated shelves or aisles directing customers to local produce.

Councillor Redman, who previously ran a post office and small shop in Portnahaven for 12 years, said: 'It is not compulsory, it is more advisory than anything else.'

'The Conservative party is immensely pro-business, pro-employee and pro-employer.'



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Dalmally garden gets fit for bumper crop of visitors

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Dalmally Community Garden has 'worked out' a great way of keeping residents and visitors in good shape.

Thanks to a grant, the garden, which started out as an orchard project back in 2012 to share fruit with the community, has now installed some gym equipment so people can exercise even more in the great outdoors.

The garden, on land owned by the Church of Scotland, has become a top destination for people of all ages living in the village – especially the primary and nursery school, and for some older residents who cannot get up to the hills any more but want a stroll out, said Janet Buchanan, who is one of the original founders.

One not-so-welcome visitor to the garden recently was roe deer, who used the garden's work-in-progress willow



structure to rub the velvet off their antlers and have a sly munch.

Over Christmas the garden, which also has a bird hide and a beautiful wooden bench sheltered by a drystone wall overlooking the river fondly known as Dalmally swim-

ming pool, was featured on Cameron MacNeish's Roads Less Travelled programme on BBC2 Scotland.

TV's popular Beechgrove Garden series has also had a hand to play in the making of the garden, which is used as a frequent hub for events by

Janet Buchanan using a piece of the outdoor gym equipment.

local groups putting a wooden open-side shelter to good use.

Craig Lodge put on a nativity there at Christmas and other events have included barbecues, a treasure hunt and Hallowe'en spooktacular.

'We have been so lucky with funding and still are. Our project ticks lots of boxes,' said Mrs Buchanan.

Volunteers are always needed to help out in the garden which has purposefully been designed to be low-maintenance with its wild woodland area and bog garden.

'We don't have an official count of users but we know the garden and the gym equipment are being well used.

'We've also seen an increase in the birds coming to visit and we've got red squirrels.

We've no flower beds so everything is wild. The trees are doing well even though we had to give them a harsh pruning – there's apple, pear and damson. We got quite a crop last year. We've also got trees up at the schools, at the front of the church, down the wall, and on the golf course, and we're trying to establish more fruit trees at the Bridge of Orchy.'

Seven years after it started, the original garden project has grown so much that it is branching out again, this time working on creating a new community garden on the site of the old tin church at Portsonachan and is hoping to generate lots of interest to get more helpers.

'The project is growing arms and legs all the time,' said Mrs Buchanan.

To keep up to date with the project visit Facebook.com/GlenorchyandInnishailCommunityOrchard/

Broadband speeds in Argyll among slowest in Scotland

Argyll and Bute has one of the slowest broadband speeds in Scotland, according to new figures.

A study released by the consumer magazine Which? states that only the Orkney and Shetland Islands have slower-running internet access.

The issue of broadband service in rural parts of Argyll and Bute was raised at December's environment, development and infrastructure (EDI) committee of Argyll and Bute Council meeting by Councillor Alistair Redman.

Councillor Redman said: 'The rural areas have been sidelined, and Argyll and Bute is one of the worst. As much as it should not be that way, it is not surprising. People in rural areas are paying the same for the internet as people in urban areas, but receiving a sub-standard service.'

A petition for better rural broadband can be signed at www.conservatives.com/scotlandsuperfastbroadband

Argyll and Highland causes to share multi-million pound funding boost

Community groups in Mull and the islands are set to share a funding boost after the Co-op welcomed the latest beneficiaries to its Local Community Fund.

Forty-five causes are set to benefit Argyll and the West Highlands, including Tobermory High School Pipe Band, Bowmore Lunch Bunch and Tisee Community Business Limited, with each in line to receive several thousand pounds at the end of the year. Last year, 41 groups in Oban and the West Highlands shared £240,430.

Recent figures from the Charity Commission show that 40 per cent of all charities survive on an income of



less than £10,000, meaning that the funding raised by Co-op members will have a significant impact on the difference causes can make in their community.

Co-op members receive a five per cent reward for

themselves with a further one per cent going to local causes when they buy own-brand products. Members can decide how the money is allocated, and are encouraged to select the causes they wish to support online.

Rebecca Birkbeck, director of community engagement at the Co-op, said: 'Last year we invested £19 million in more than 4,000 groups UK-wide, supporting a wide range of initiatives from village halls and community spaces to skills initiatives and neighbourhood watch schemes, all of which are helping to make communities across the UK safer, happier, and healthier places to live.'

Women urged to take cervical smear test

Women are being urged not to ignore invite letters and reminders for cervical screening.

According to the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), the number of people going for smear tests is lower than ever.

Argyll and Bute (HSCP) wants to remind people that screening is a way of identifying health problems in people with no symptoms at an early

stage when it can be easier to treat.

The cervical screening test only takes around three minutes to complete. A sample of cells is taken from the cervix and sent for testing to check for anything out of the ordinary.

Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust, the only UK charity dedicated to women, can be contacted on its helpline to answer questions

about all aspects of cervical cancer. Argyll and Bute HSCP is championing Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust campaign #SmearforSmear on social media platforms to increase cervical screening uptake.

The helpline's opening hours depend on the availability of volunteers. Messages for return calls can be made.

Go to jostrust.org.uk or NHS Inform to find out more.

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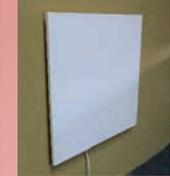
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OT

Rabbie Burns remembered

A number of Burns' events took place across the region, including Ulva School Community Association's Burns lunch on Saturday and at Oban Lorne Rugby Club.



Cameron Williams, 13, of Tobermory High School, pipes in the haggis carried by Kate MacKay.



USCA member Jean Scarlett replies to the Toast to the Lassies.



Moray Finch, general manager of Mull and Iona Community Trust, proposes the Toast to the Lassies wearing a fetching tartan tie, made from paper napkins by Kate MacKay.



Alasdair MacCrone (artistic director, Mull Theatre) recites the terrifying tale of Tam O'Shanter.



John McMahon and Rab Woods provided the music at Oban Lorne RFC Burns' Supper.

MacPhail

ANGUS MACPHAIL

angusmacphail@yahoo.co.uk



As touched on briefly in my article from January 3, occasions such as New Year, birthdays and anniversaries are catalysts for reflecting on our life progress set against the unchanging motion of time.

A common aspect of that reflecting process is the feeling that time is running out.

Most people at some points in their lives are susceptible to the wee growling self-created gremlin chastising them for not having done this or done that and 'where have the last 20, 40 or 70 years gone?'

A great tonic for such futile worries is meeting those who, despite being at the higher end of the age spectrum, are as enthusiastic for life and as excited for new projects and the future as the most vigorous teenager.

The three octogenarians who were the main guests at Carmichael's Ceilidh, (covered in last week's article) - John Carmichael himself, Alasdair Gillies and Fergie MacDonald - are all shining examples of people who

seem to be paying little attention to their age in years and continue to exude the charisma and energy that made them stars in their respective fields throughout their careers.

In the last couple of weeks, by unrelated coincidence, I have had contact with both Fergie and John. When you speak to these guys, even on the phone, their energy and excitement is such that when you put the phone down it feels like you've just had a treble espresso, a can of Red-Bull and pep-talk from Churchill.

At the age of 81 new endeavours and different career directions are generally low down on the priority list of most.

Not so with Fergie! New tunes, possible single releases and growing his portfolio of published books reflecting the addition of being a writer to his wide range of already mastered pursuits are all in the pipeline.

This enthusiasm is not to say Fergie is blind to his own mortality. Conversely,

having gone through a major bypass operation a few years ago, he is very aware of how lucky he is to be in good health and I think that is a key ingredient to much of the type of optimistic energy that people like Fergie have.

None of us knows how long we are going to have in this life, so when we are here we may as well approach it with positivity.

The futility of worrying that time is running out is borne out by the fact that whether we are 18, 40, 60 or 81, what is gone is gone, what is done is done and the important thing is that we have our whole lives ahead. That life ahead may be one day or it may be many decades but never will we know. Right up to that unknown time, we have the chance to try new things and to follow the winds of fulfilment and happiness.

If I am lucky to make it to my eighties, I hope I still have the energy to be writing new tunes and trying new careers! Slàinte Fergie!



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The Oban Times

Playpark post gives campaigners the blues

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



The company responsible for the sinking Oban Community Playpark fiasco found itself in further deep water with the community last week.

A post on Wicksteed Playgrounds' Facebook page urging visitors to, 'Brighten up your #bluemonday with a trip to your local Wicksteed Playground!', had the exact opposite effect on parents in Oban and the surrounding area.

The accompanying hashtags, #play #fun #happiness did nothing to alleviate the mood.

The post was removed on Tuesday but not before receiving a deluge of comments from resentful relatives who have been waiting a year for the park for five-to-15-year-



olds to reopen after being closed in March 2018 due to health and safety issues.

Jo-Anne Baker, who's son climbed up Ben Nevis with his dad at the age of eight to

help raise funds to install the playpark, said: 'It's so sad to see our playpark in Oban left in the state it's in.'

'My son now sees this playpark left in an unusable

The playpark has been closed for almost a year due to a long-running dispute with Wicksteed.

state, closed for safety reasons with no sign of it reopening anytime soon.

'Is that a great example to set for children?'

Wicksteed replied to many of the comments with a 'party line' response: 'As a result of unforeseen circumstances on this site, this issue is currently in the hands of our insurance company who are in the process of seeking a resolution.'

Jo-Anne continued: 'I'm pretty sure Wicksteed will have paid a healthy premium for the insurance for situations like this yet we are still left waiting.'

'I think it and its insurance company need to get this sorted once and for all

and stop delaying this any further.' Lyndsay Elliott, Friends of Oban Community Playpark (FoOCP) chairwoman, was asked to contact Wicksteed administrative director Katherine Perkins on Tuesday for an update on the situation but received the same response.

'I expressed the community's feelings about this excessive delay, highlighting that my daughter was at pre-school when I started fundraising and she'll be going to high school later this year,' explained Ms Elliott, who expressed regret that the company was no closer to a decision or a time frame.

'I think all we can do is keep reminding the people involved that our children are growing up fast and are being denied their right to play while red tape abounds,' she added.

Argyll and Bute MP welcomes U-turn

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara has welcomed the UK Government's U-turn on its settled status fee for EU citizens.

Last week, Mr O'Hara wrote to EU citizens in Argyll and Bute regarding the prime minister's settled status scheme that had planned to charge EU citizens a £65 administration fee for their right to continue residence in the UK.

Another bank closure hits Argyll

The last branch of Santander in Argyll and Bute will close in Helensburgh on April 25.

Santander has said 90 per cent of its customers use additional ways to complete their banking – 22 per cent at another Santander branch and 59 per cent online, by mobile or by telephone.

Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara said: 'I have written to Santander to express my dismay at this latest closure. I am not aware of any public or customer consultation to assess the impact of this closure.'

SCOTTISH FIELD
MARCH 2019

Reiver country
Borders under the spotlight

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Rugby's Gregor Townsend

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Training scheme placement to care home manager

The Oban Times is running a series of articles championing the work carried out by Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in the Oban, Lorn and the Isles locality. Each article features a specific service provided by the HSCP and focuses on the staff who provide that service and the role they play in making a positive difference for the people living in Oban and surrounding areas. This week we look at the work of Angela Webster.

Angela Webster is Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership's (HSCP) registered manager of Eadar Glinn Residential Care Home in Oban. She has gained 20 years' health and social care (HSC) experience throughout her career. Her role is to ensure the provision of services reflect on the individual residents' care needs in conjunction with National Care Standards.

Angela's career in health and social care started when she enrolled in a Youth Training Scheme (YTS) after leaving school at 16. Her first placement was in Eadar

Glenn followed by another placement in Willowview House, which was a residential home for adults with learning difficulties. She secured a permanent care officer post in Willowview House and remained there gaining further experience for a number of years.

Angela then took a career break and went to work abroad for a couple of seasons. She returned to Oban in her early 20s and secured employment once again at Eadar Glinn as a catering assistant. Shortly afterwards she was appointed a social care worker role. Her career advanced to role of senior social care worker which she remained in for a number of years and then progressed to registered residential care home manager.

Angela's role involves closely working with staff, residents, family members and carers to ensure residents can be supported to achieve the best possible outcomes. She also manages financial budgets, staffing levels, admissions, discharges and continually monitors dependency levels in ratio to staffing levels and competencies. She is also



Angela Webster.

active in promoting and following policies and procedures ensuring all staff are appropriately trained in accordance to their roles.

Angela said: 'I am proud of my continuous work with staff in developing the service and maintaining excellent relationships with other professionals and the

network of friendships and support services that we have built with community groups which are integrated with our residents.'

'Commitment and effective leadership are strong values that I carry. Gaining positive feedback from family members and carers on the care given to their

loved ones makes me feel very proud to be a part of the Eadar Glinn workforce.'

Angela's role makes sure that residents' needs are being met appropriately, that they feel safe and secure in their environment and ensuring all staff are confident in their abilities to achieve the demands of daily routines effectively. She oversees, plans and manages all daily pressures ensuring the home is professionally managed.

Angela said: 'Being part of the Health and Social Care Partnership and advocating on behalf of the service is what I feel is the best way forward to provide and further develop future valuable services.'

'I also meet with residents, family members, friends and carers on a regular basis to gain feedback on their views and ideas to make improvements. I collate and cascade information back to them and to our staff group.'

Angela has to ensure staffing levels are appropriate to meet residents' and service needs at all times to ensure the care needs of all residents are being met which she reviews on an ongoing

basis. She is very supportive of staff to achieve their full development potential.

Eadar Glinn operates with an action plan which identifies areas to be further developed. The plan is reviewed and updated regularly and shared with staff members and other health and social care professionals. There are also tools to monitor operational quality assurance areas.

Angela continued: 'There is a requirement to prioritise workloads throughout each day. This often includes diverting from planned workloads to respond to the requirements of the residents and the service in order to ensure person-centred care is being delivered to high standards.'

Angela likes the community feel of Oban and has grown up locally. She knows many people living in the community which gives her a sense of familiarity and a feeling safe. She also likes working in Oban due to the commitment of staff and outside agencies supporting people from the community.

It is evident that people in Oban really do care about others.

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Taynuilt nursery springs to life

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Snowdrops are springing up at an old garden nursery brought back to life in Taynuilt after decades of lying abandoned.

Dave Croucher who lives in the village is a man with a plan to make the old buildings and greenhouse, close to the historic Bonawe furnace, a growing hub again.

It is all systems go for Mr Croucher, mulching seaweed from Kelly's pier, chitting potatoes and soon sowing seeds.

His passion for organic gardening saw him featured in The Oban Times when he was 26 and starting to cultivate what was then Taynuilt's first organic commercial garden – he still has the diary entry for when the reporter came to call.

Now 28 years later and after a stint living on Seil, he is back in Taynuilt and back in the news again after buying the Old Garden Nursery that was once part of the Bonawe estate.

He signed for it in March 2017 and has had his hands full ever since, nurturing the site, repairing shattered greenhouses to be ready to work again and clearing



light-blocked land from self-seeded trees.

'When I first took it over my first job was to clear it and cut down trees to let light in and to make a sales area. I love trees and I was reluctant to take any down but I needed light and air for other plants to grow. I've re-done the greenhouses as best I can. One has been reglazed and the other covered with plastic – the third greenhouse

had self-destructed. I'm still picking up trillions of bits of broken glass now,' said Mr Croucher, who has worked as a gardener for the family who previously owned the land.

This year he has plans to create a car park for visitors and to develop an orchard, as well as grow herb and edible plants and other things not so easily found at garden centres.

Interesting formations of

Dave Croucher is breathing new life into the abandoned nursery in Taynuilt.

wood are being turned into wigwams and benches, the whole garden is a magnet to birds, from treecreepers to owls, under the watchful eye of Ben Cruachan.

The snowdrops are in full bloom, carpeting parts of the garden, and pots of the pretty white and scented buds have already been making their way across Argyll as gifts for gardens elsewhere.

'Word of mouth that I'm here is getting around. We'll be opening soon.

'Some people will remember the nursery from when it was here way back, it must have been abandoned for about 25 years. Some people don't know it ever existed.

'I've been selling pots of snowdrops from the garden. They've been popular as gifts. I think they are so loved because they are signs of spring and new life. It's nice to think these little flowers from Taynuilt are growing in other gardens around Argyll maybe even further!'

If anyone would like to know more about the garden, email david.croucher52@gmail.com

Champion night for young farmers



North Argyll Young Farmers had a good turnout for their stock judging fundraiser at Oban Livestock Centre on Friday night. People were queuing up to buy marking cards to see how close they could get to the expert judge's marks in three classes of sheep and three cattle. The visiting judge for the evening was James Graham from Thornhill, Stirling.

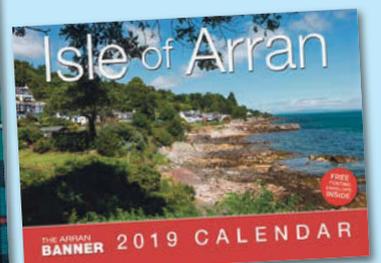
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Videos showcase apprentices

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) West Highland, hosted by Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, has released a series of inspirational and educational video case studies showcasing apprenticeship programmes in a diverse range of industry sectors across Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross.

They are being released in advance of Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2019, March 4-8, to inspire young people to focus on the 'earn while you learn' route as a credible 'Plan A' career path.

By featuring first-hand accounts of young apprentices working in a variety of businesses across the West Highlands, the five three-to-six-minute videos effectively outline why apprenticeship programmes offer a credible alternative pathway to young people seeking a high-flying career.

They also demonstrate the wide range of industry sectors, apprenticeship programmes and career opportunities available in the region.

In the interviews, the apprentices talk about their day-to-day work



Padraig McNeil (19), apprentice saw doctor, BSW Timber Group (Fort William Mill). Padraig was a pupil at Lochaber High School.

Photographs: Digital Studios.

said: 'Businesses know that apprenticeships give young people the practical skills and qualifications that their business needs and young people are finding they can become valued employees early in their working careers by using the apprenticeship route to qualification.'

'Learning whilst earning has become an increasingly attractive alternative to full time academic study and employers are reporting that taking on apprentices is resulting in growth and increased productivity in their business.'

For the wider business community, the case studies highlight the strength and depth of talent to be found within schools and colleges that can be nurtured by employers through apprenticeship programmes; leading to a thriving regional economy.

Ms Benfield added: 'We hope that the videos will encourage more

experiences, what drives their enthusiasm for their apprenticeships, the excellent opportunities they have been given and their hopes for the future as a direct result of their

apprenticeships. Their employers are also featured highlighting the fantastic on-the-job training and other career opportunities their employees gain on apprenticeship

programmes, as well as the benefits of apprenticeships to their organisations.

Lesley Benfield, DYW West Highland programme director,

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Apprenticeships in West Highlands

businesses to harness the amazing fresh talent we have here in the West Highlands and realise the potential of using the apprenticeship framework to upskill existing employees.'

The young apprentices, aged between 19 and 22 years, include Robert, who works in business administration, and Mathew, who is an aspiring HGV mechanic at Ferguson Transport & Shipping, and Emily, who is working in electrical engineering at Mowi (formerly Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd). Corpach Boat Builders has also taken the opportunity provided by this DYW West Highland video project to promote apprenticeships and careers available within its organisation.

Ian Blackford, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, said: 'Young people are our future and every effort must be made to allow them an accessible pathway into a prosperous beginning in the world of employment.'

'The Developing the Young Workforce West Highland programme has done exceptional work in producing these videos to high-



Left, Emily Connolly, 20, apprentice electrical engineer, Mowi (formerly Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd), and right, Matthew Weir, 19, apprentice HGV mechanic, Ferguson Transport & Shipping.



light the magnitude, and quality, of the apprenticeship programmes available to young people across Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross.

'As you can see and hear from the young adults featured, there is a di-

verse range of opportunities available across various professional sectors. Apprenticeships are an invaluable resource in making pathways into skilled careers affordable to people. I couldn't recommend

this project enough. I would urge any young person in Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross to take inspiration from those featured in these videos and consider for themselves the benefits that an apprenticeship

programme could have on the rest of their lives.'

The short films, produced by Digital Studio, will be easily accessible online and can be shared with young people still in school and further education to assist them when making informed choices about their future careers.

There are more than 80 types of modern apprenticeships in Scotland across hundreds of jobs.

The video case studies truly capture and celebrate the exciting range and diversity of career opportunities in Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross.

DYW West Highland is expecting to complete and launch another seven apprentice films throughout 2019.

View the videos at www.youtube.com on the Developing the Young Workforce West Highland channel.

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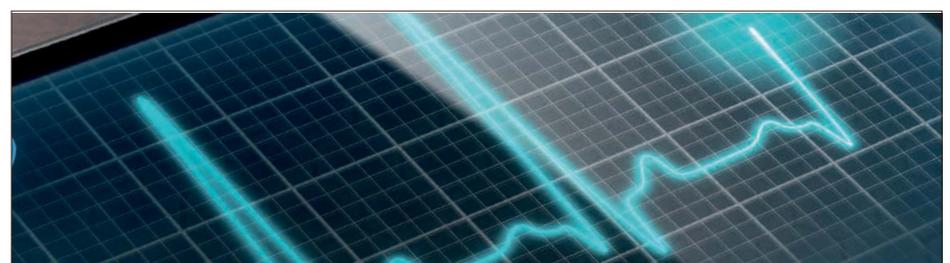
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BUSINESS NEWS

IN BRIEF

A number of hotels and their staff in the West Highlands have received regional and people of excellence awards in the 2019 Scottish Hotel Awards. Among the recipients were The George Hotel, Inveraray; Glenfinnan House Hotel; Taychreggan Hotel, Kilchrenan; Inverloch Castle Hotel, Fort William; The Lodge on Loch Lomond; Glengarry Castle Hotel; Skeabost House Hotel, Skye; Hotel Eilean Iarmain, Sleat; Duisdale House Hotel, Skye; Loch Leven Hotel, Ballachulish; Bridge of Orchy Hotel; Ardarnaiseig Hotel, Kilchrenan; Isle of Eriska Hotel, nr Oban; and Loch Melfort Hotel and Restaurant, Arduaine. The regional ceremony event took place on January 15.

Perle Hotels, which owns the Marmalade and Bosville Hotels on the Isle of Skye, and the Perle Oban Hotel, has purchased Lochardil House Hotel in Inverness for an undisclosed sum. Set in its own gardens, the 28-bedroom hotel is regarded as one of the finest in the Highlands. Twelve of the bedrooms are in the original Victorian hotel building, with 16 bedrooms in the adjacent Garden Wing.

Total new orders growth picked up in the three months to January 2019, according to the latest Industrial Trends Survey for Scotland, with export and domestic orders both strengthening following declines in the previous quarter. But total new orders are expected to fall in the next three months, with expectations at their weakest since October 2015.

New Game of Thrones whiskies set for release

Multi-award winning, internationally-acclaimed TV series Game of Thrones is coming to an end – and it is being marketed with the release of Johnnie Walker whiskies.

The limited edition Games of Thrones single malt whisky collection is available to pre-order from the eight Diageo distilleries: Oban, Talisker, Lagavulin, Cardhu, Dalwhinnie, Glen Ord (Singleton), Royal Lochnagar and Clynelish. For those who order early, the Games of Thrones single malt whisky collection will start to land on doorsteps from February 19.

The collection is inspired by the iconic characters and the creative world of Westeros and beyond, and features eight Scotches, each paired with one of the iconic Houses of Westeros, as well as the Night's Watch, giving fans an authentic taste of the Seven Kingdoms and beyond.

The full collection is:

Game of Thrones The Night's Watch – Oban Bay Reserve

The Oban distillery sits beneath the steep cliff that overlooks the bay in the frontier between the West Highlands and the islands of Scotland, separating land and sea, just as Castle Black, home of The Night's Watch, sits between Westeros and the lands beyond The Wall. The liquid's richness is balanced with a woody, spicy dryness that The Night's Watch could enjoy even on the coldest of nights.

Game of Thrones House Tully – The Singleton Glendullan Select

House Tully located at Riverrun, rules as the lord of The River lands. The power of water flows through both House Tully and The Singleton Glendullan Select as it is made on the banks of the River Fiddich in the wooded hills of Dufftown.



Game of Thrones House Targaryen – Cardhu Gold Reserve

Fuelled by the same fiery spirit of the fierce female leadership of Daenerys Targaryen, this single malt celebrates legendary women and their unwavering perseverance.

Game of Thrones House Lannister – Lagavulin Nine-Year-Old

Lagavulin is one of the most legendary single malt brands and has been crafted on the shores of Islay for more than 200 years – mirroring the meticulous calculation and tenacity employed by the Lannisters in their rise to conquer the Iron Throne. This single malt whisky is a roaring single malt that recalls the Lannisters' riches and is best served neat or with a single drop of water.

Game of Thrones House Stark – Dalwhinnie Winter's Frost

House Stark's resiliency, strength and ability to thrive under the most intense situations are greatly shaped by Winterfell's frigid temperatures. Dalwhinnie, known for being one of the highest distilleries in all of Scotland, is cold and remote much like The North where House Stark calls home, making the two an iconic pairing.

Game of Thrones House Greyjoy – Talisker Select Reserve

House Greyjoy rules the Iron Islands and worships the Drowned God. Talisker was a natural pair for House Greyjoy as this single malt is distilled on the Isle of Skye, one of the most remote areas of Scotland. The layered flavours and signature maritime character of Talisker Select Reserve are the result of its wave-battered shores. This liquid is an intense smoky single malt Scotch with spicy, powerful and sweet elements combined with maritime flavours.

Game of Thrones House Baratheon – Royal Lochnagar 12-Year-Old

Royal lineage drives the iconic pairing between House Baratheon and Royal Lochnagar. Similar to Robert Baratheon ruling the Seven Kingdoms upon the Iron Throne, Royal Lochnagar was deemed a whisky worthy of a royal family as it was granted a Royal Warrant after Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visited the distillery in 1848. Balanced with delicate fruits and spices, this taste of royalty is best enjoyed neat.

Game of Thrones House Tyrell – Clynelish Reserve

House Tyrell of Highgarden rules over the Reach, the lush and fertile region of Westeros. Like the Reach, Clynelish is positioned among green pastures and rolling hills, with scenic views of the North Sea. This vibrant, golden Scotch is light and floral, like House Tyrell, and it is not to be underestimated with its underlying complex combination of Highland and maritime qualities.

To learn more about the collection, visit www.Malts.com and follow the conversation using #GOTSingleMalts

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Hebridean Food Company signs deal with Lidl

Lidl has announced a new partnership with The Hebridean Food Company.

Working with the small business since 2018, Lidl is selling its premium fresh chowders and soups.

The Hebridean Food Company was established by Douglas Stewart, a lobster fisherman's son from the picturesque isle of North Uist. His passion for the Hebrides began at an early age on fishing boats, weekends spent sorting lobsters and helping his granddad out with the sheep. His passion now is to let everyone enjoy a small slice of the Hebrides.

Douglas said: 'Lidl has a large number of stores with a great geographical reach in Scotland, which allows us to bring our fresh soups and chowders to a wider audience.'

'Like Lidl, we are committed to working with the best Scottish suppliers to bring customers the very finest fresh produce we can. We are a relatively small-scale business so this relationship is helping us to grow our offering and put back into the local economy.'

Lidl will be selling The Hebridean Food Company's soups (Lentil & Bacon, and Leek & Potato) as well as Scottish chowders (Crab & Sweetcorn, and Smoked Salmon). The sumptuous soups and chunky chowders will retail at £1.49 and £1.69 respectively, and are available in store now while stocks last.



Douglas Stewart is a lobster fisherman's son from North Uist.

CalMac signs up to green scheme

CalMac has signed up to the Prince of Wales's Waste to Wealth Commitment organised by his Business in the Community network.

Leaders from business, government, academia and civil society joined Prince Charles at the initiative's launch in London.

The pledge is designed to help tackle the challenges of climate change by committing to actions to prevent the destruction of natural habitats. The target is to double the nation's resource productivity by using them more efficiently and to reduce avoidable waste by 2030.

CalMac already has in place environmental and procurement strategies to minimise waste, increase recycling and promote sustainable procurement.

CalMac environmental manager Klare Chamberlain said: 'We are delighted to be the first transport operator to sign up to this commitment. As a company we are already changing the way we work to make more use of the resources we use through reducing, reusing and recycling.'

'By the end of the first year of our Waste to Wealth Commitment we will have defined an action plan and will be working to identify innovative solutions.'

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Cameron calls on Westminster to sign convention

Longstanding calls for the UK Government to sign up to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Culture Heritage have received backing from Scottish Conservative MSP Donald Cameron.

The Highlands and Islands MSP, who also sits as vice convenor of the cross party group on Gaelic, made the call on the same day that Bòrd na Gàidhlig hosted an event in the Scottish Parliament to mark 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

In March 2018, the Scottish Parliament unanimously agreed to the motion that 'the parliament notes the terms and purposes of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Culture Heritage, which was adopted by UNESCO in 2003, and calls on the UK Government to ratify it'.

'Gaelic language has an important place in Scotland'

Mr Cameron has written to the secretary of state for digital, culture, media and sport, Jeremy Wright QC MP, to urge him to look again at the convention and has asked him, if the UK does decide to ratify it, whether the UK Government will lobby for the inclusion of Gaelic language and culture on the list.

Mr Cameron said: 'The UK has a rich and diverse history, with many unique languages and cultures spread across these isles.'

'Gaelic language and culture has a significant and important place in Scotland, and while it is encouraging that there are new Gaelic schools opening up and more investment is being made into areas like Gaelic media, we need to be mindful of protecting Gaelic for the long term. That is what signing up to the convention has the potential to do.'

'There is rare support across all political parties here in the Scottish Parliament for this to happen, so I hope for a positive response from the secretary of state in the coming weeks.'

The Campbells of Canna their precious legacy

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IAIN THORNBER

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When devolution was talked about in the late 1970s there was scepticism and growing concern among those living in the Highlands and Islands that they would lose out badly to the highly populated central belt if Edinburgh, and not Inverness, became the seat of government – even a devolved one.

Were their fears justified? I believe so.

In 1978 the former Highlands AND Islands Development Board chairman and chief planner for Scotland Sir Robert Grieve announced: 'Glasgow is one joker in the pack; the Highlands are the other.' Coming from the former chairman of the government agency charged with developing the region economically and industrially, this comment did little to quell a feeling in the UK that it was on its knees and controlled by a gang of tartan ne'er-do-wells.

In 1935, one of the region's most progressive lairds, Donald Walter Cameron of Lochiel KT (1876-1951), wrote in a letter to Highland development campaigner and provost of Inverness Sir Alexander MacEwen: 'I heartily distrust Glasgow and the Lowlands far more than I do London.' A sentiment echoed by an elderly gentleman in Sutherland who, when asked if he would be voting for devolution in the 1979 referendum, said: 'Well, in London they don't give a damn about Highlanders, but in Edinburgh they hate us.' Shades of advice given by Edinburgh minister Lord Macleod of Fiunary to his son in the late 1980s: 'Never do business north of Crianlarich!'

Political tension has always existed between the land of the Gael and all parts south of Perth. Others have written about the reasons – too numerous to go into here except to say most of them were, and still are, based on culture, independence, language and, above all, a sense of identity found nowhere else in the UK.

Perhaps Ada Goodrich-Freer (1857-1931), clairvoyant, Scotophile and author of the Outer Isles (1902), was right to remind her readers that the Hebrideans were Christianised long before

St Augustine and sending scholars to establish European universities two centuries before the existence of Oxford. And who, according to early Gaelic poems, were drinking wine and burning wax candles, while the Sassenach kings slept on straw, and bought wine as a cordial from the apothecaries.

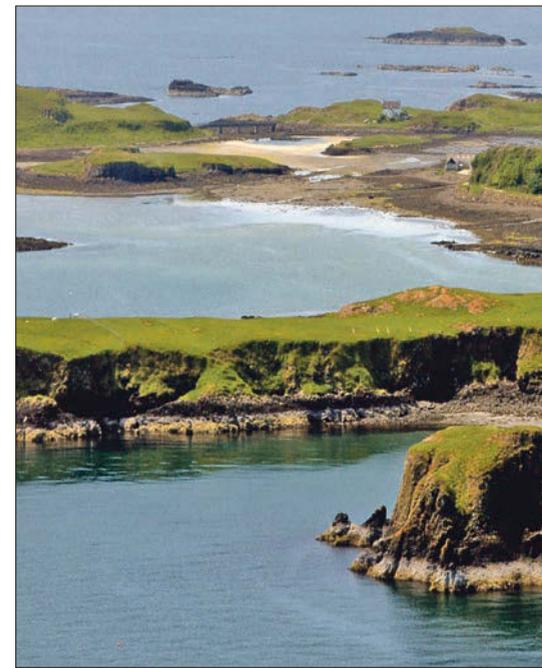
There is a story, probably apocryphal, told about John MacDonald, fourth Lord of the Isles, who was negotiating with King Edward IV of England in 1461 to overthrow the Scottish government. On one of his visits to London he was invited to the lord mayor's banquet and placed near the foot of the table where a simple squire might perch. Half way through the proceedings someone told his host that he was, in fact, a great prince in his own country working out a deal with the King. The anxious mayor sent a footman inviting John to come up and sit at his right hand – the place reserved for honoured guests. The reply was: 'Tell your master not to worry. Wherever MacDonald is sitting, that is the head of the table.'

Nothing namby-pamby about this man's vocabulary!

If there was one champion of the Gaidhealtachd in modern times it was John Lorne Campbell of Canna (1906-1996), Scottish historian, working-farmer, environmentalist and Gaelic folklorist. A man of learning with a rare passion for the land he walked on, JLC had one of the ablest brains in the country and used it well to speak out against civil service humbug wherever it reared its unwanted head in the Hebrides.

In the late 1930s the Westminster government, under pressure from the Scottish Office, appointed a committee to examine economic conditions in the Highlands and Islands. Their report contained a large amount of information and statistics. It was a start, but as far as JLC was concerned it had so many recommendations there was a danger that some of the most urgent would not receive the attention they deserved.

In 1939 he and Sir Alexander MacEwen (1875-1941), chairman of the Inverness County Education Committee and first leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party, attacked the report in a 56-page booklet called Act Now for the Highlands and Islands. They did not hold back.



Their first and strongest recommendation was to establish a Highland Development Board of four members, one of whom would have to be a Gaelic speaker and another qualified to deal with crofting and fishing. The chairman was to be a Highlander who would command general confidence. The duties of the board were: to collaborate with the Ministry of Transport and Department of Agriculture, to make additional grants for new roads and the repair of unclassified, parish and township ones; to collaborate with other authorities in setting up land, sea and small-holders' residential training centres and to encourage the study of co-operative schemes.

Where steamer services were concerned, comfortable waiting rooms were called for. Provision of adequate notice of time of arrival in stormy weather was also recommended. Crippling freight charges, which were strangling the economic life of the Highlands and Islands, were to be lowered to halt shipping companies putting their profits before the needs of the districts affected. As for the postal



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Canna and cy



service, it was recommended that inter-island mail should be speeded up by being sorted aboard the mail boats allowing for late posting on the piers until within five minutes of sailing.

The 1938 development board soon fell apart, leaving JLC to abandon his great vision and settle in Canna with his wife Margaret Fay Shaw. There they spent the rest of their lives recording and saving Gaelic and Highland culture and jousting with Inverness County Council and the Scottish Office in Edinburgh about the transport problems of the Inner and Outer Hebrides.

The Campbells were unique in the annals of landownership in Scotland. So, too, are their records which are now at risk. To allow their legacy to flourish, their entire accumulation of papers, books, photographs and sound-recordings need to be removed from Canna, which is without a reliable ferry service and lacking in study facilities, to a mainland locality but still in Lochaber, where they would be more accessible.

Canna was John Lorne Campbell and John Lorne Campbell was Canna. Now that he has

Canna Harbour. Photograph Iain Thornber

gone there is an emptiness about the island which will never be replenished. The National Trust for Scotland and his executors should work with the Inverness Highland Archive Centre to house the Canna collection in Fort William in a building that will meet the high UK Standard for Archives Accreditation. Above all, it must be open to the general public.

The Canna papers are precious but they are not religious icons to be put away and brought out on high days and holidays. Sabhal Mor Ostaig on Skye has been suggested as a long-term repository. It would be wrong if they went back to another island and were squirreled away by academics to be taken out now and again for visiting professors to coo and caw over. The information they contain came from the indigenous people and should go back to the people. I doubt if the Campbells would want it any other way.

Iain Thornber

iain.thornber@btinternet.com

DOWN MEMORY LANE

We delve into The Oban Times archives to bring you faces and places from yesteryears



This photograph appeared in The Oban Times in November 1996. There are no details with it so we'd love to know who the people were and what the occasion was – and why there was a team of huskies. Email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



Banavie and Loch Linnhe – from the Roamer archive.

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LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HBCommunity spirit
abounds in Argyll

The sheer volume of community spirit in and around Oban never fails to hearten us.

And this week, few will fail to have been touched by Steven Groom, who took part in the 24-hour Strathpuffer endurance event in aid of a childhood friend – only a few hours after his mother passed away the night before.

In Taynuilt, gardener Dave Croucher is breathing new life into the old garden nursery.

And farther down the road, at Dalmally Railway Station, Liz Gaffney-Whaite has been hiding her light under piles of wool. For the felt maker has been quietly working away on a rolling-stock royal commission for some of the world's most collectable books. She has also been making bespoke felt covers on demand for a two-volume botanical book costing £12,950 that records the flora at the Prince of Wales's Highgrove Garden in Gloucestershire.

Thanks to a grant, Dalmally Community Garden has installed some gym equipment so people of all ages can exercise even more in the great outdoors. It is particularly good for older people who perhaps cannot get out on the hills the way they once did.

All these stories, and the people and communities behind them, really do help make this a fantastic place to live and work.

Businesses boost

It was great to read about all the investment that is currently going on in Oban.

From the new Gelatoburger that is set to open in the former Kitchen Garden deli premises, to the former Rowantree Hotel, which has been given a total revamp and new name, The Scot. On top of these, the Premier Inn is set to open on Shore Street, and Fat Face is believed to be interested in one of the new retail units that will be created where the former Oban Bay Fish Bar and Restaurant used to be in George Street.

This confidence in the town's future is to be welcome, as is the jobs boost and extra spending power that hopefully the whole town can benefit from.

Holyrood's willingness
to tackle problems

Recently Radio 4 reported the numbers of rough sleepers had risen in England and Wales but fallen in Scotland, a difference it attributed to Scottish Government initiatives.

Since devolution, Scottish governments have distinguished themselves by their willingness to tackle problems that Westminster seems to prefer to ignore. Smoking and alcohol initiatives are cases in point.

I therefore feel that Andrew Green of Ardtoe was being more than a little harsh on the devolved administrations. I haven't seen any serious evidence the NHS in Scotland is performing worse than the service south of the border. Often it seems to do a little better in terms of targets to be met.

Nobody will claim that any education service in the UK has no issues to face, but it is a masterpiece of hyperbole to say that the Scottish Government has an appalling record in education, especially against a background of austerity and central government cuts.

I wish the UK economy was one of the most successful of all time, but sadly the indicators just don't support Mr Green's claim.

Britain has a long-term, chronic, trade imbalance. There is a real danger that this problem will be exacerbated by Brexit, as we turn our backs on our main trading partner, with a resulting fall in the value of the pound and a rapid rise in inflation.

It should be remembered that Scotland has some very strongly performing export industries, of which whisky is but one. The UK also has dangerously high levels of personal debt, unimpressive productivity levels and large numbers of people surviving on low wage.

Should the good people of England consider ejecting us from the UK, I for one won't be too worried and I have never voted for the SNP.

Ronald Cameron, Banavie.

Deer management is factor
in managing Lyme disease

Great credit is due to the Scottish Government for increasing awareness of Lyme disease by issuing card-sized tick removers and advice and by supporting NHS research into the disease.

It is to be hoped that the estates in the Uists will finally acknowledge the responsibility they have to dramatically and rapidly reduce their red deer herds, in an area with 165 cases

YOUR PICTURES



We know our readers love to take photographs so we are happy to create this space to showcase people's images each week. If you have a photograph you would like to see published here, send

it to editor@obantimes.co.uk, post it to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB or hand it in to our offices in Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, or in High Street, Fort William.

of Lyme infection over a period of four years.

Red deer do not carry the disease but act as blood food banks for the ticks. When deer numbers were properly managed in the past, they stayed up on the high ground all summer and had sufficient food. Now that North Uist has close to twice the recommended numbers, deer can be seen foraging all over the low ground, spreading the dangerous ticks where locals, walkers, fishers and cyclists become their targets.

Too many innocent victims on the islands, including my wife, have had the rest of their lives drastically affected by debilitating, per-

manent pain and a wide range of neurological side effects, all caused by Lyme disease.

If the estates do really care about residents and tourists they should commit now to taking the necessary action, which Scottish Natural Heritage has also recommended.

Alasdair Maclean
Househill Gate, Nairn

Debate about deer culling

I am surprised at the response from the Scottish Wildlife Trust's representative about

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This week's image was sent in by Fiona McCuish who said: 'A lovely morning on Thursday at Crinan harbour when out with Ted, my dog. Good to get a bit of light after such dark, moody days.'

killing deer on the Rahoy Nature Sanctuary for the first time in 40 years. ('Deer are damaging to Rahoy Hills Wildlife Reserve', Letters, January 24).

Contrary to Mr Foxwell's statement, Christopher Cadbury did not want any shooting to take place. I ought to know as I was party to the initial 1975 negotiations.

If, as Mr Foxwell states, parts of the reserve are being trampled, sheep from a neighbouring property are responsible - not deer.

For a century and more almost a 1,000 ewes have grazed on what is now the reserve without damaging it or the plants. Killing the

few deer which are still hefted to the ground for purely political reasons, will soon bring about under-grazing which, in the absence of muir-burning, is a far greater threat to wildlife.

Iain Thornber, Knock House, Morvern, Argyll.

People who drop their litter should be ashamed

I agree with Martin Laing (At Random, The Oban Times, January 17) that Oban was looking very untidy at the start of the new year and this generated a flurry of activity on Oban's Community Forum Facebook page.

Apparently, according to a comment from Councillor Elaine Robertson, 'there were three bin lorries off the road with breakdowns and no mechanics available to do repairs. But whatever remains of the fleet will be working over the weekend to clear the backlog.

On the street sweeping side it's worse - two road sweepers currently sick and two more on extended absence, but a road sweeping machine should be working in Oban next week'. This was posted on Facebook a couple of weeks ago.

It's easy to attack the council for not clearing up and, fair enough, there should be a scheme in place to cope with unexpected crises as mentioned above, but surely the real problem, very rarely mentioned, is that there is a certain section of the community who drop the litter in the first place. It is they who should be targeted. I intend to bring up the matter of 'social education' at the next community council meeting.

Keep Oban Beautiful cleaned up Hill Street - and several other places - recently, yet when I drove down there soon afterwards there was already more rubbish in the road, obviously thrown out of vehicles.

McCaig's Tower, Star Brae and Jacob's Ladder are constantly cleaned up by various volunteers, but unless something is done to prevent littering, nothing will ever change.

On the last weekend in March, Keep Oban Beautiful will be organising an Oban spring clean for the second year running, but this is simply a holding operation. We, the community, have to find a way of telling the litterers that this behaviour is simply not on.

Maurice Wilkins,
Oban Community Council,
Keep Oban Beautiful.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Cuir dhachaigh e nuair a bhios e ochd-deug! Ged 's ann ri fealla-dhà a bha an tè a bha a' fàgail balach tri bliadhna a dh'aois cuide ri nàbaidh fhad 's a bha i fhèin ag obair bha oidheam air uallach togail teaghlaich anns na briathran aice. 'S e tiodhlac iongantach a th' ann an clann dha dachaigh sam bith agus tha dleasan mòr a' tighinn nan lùib ged nach biodh ann ach tèarainteachd fàsaidh, blàiths, agus bidh. Cha robh togail teaghlaich riamh furasta agus tha gach linn a' dùsgadh thrioblaidean ùra ris am feum oigridh fàs cleachdte agus cothachadh. Tha mi air sgrìobhadh tric mum chuimhne air burraidheachd anns a' bhun-sgoil agus cho tàmailteach 's a bha mi aig aois chòig bliadhna nach b' urrainn dhomh dad a dhèanamh gus stad a chur air feadhainn na bu shine. Sin a dh'fhàg mi bhon uairsin cho gràineil air burraidheachd ann an riochd sam bith!

Tha bliadhnaichean bhon a bha mise nam fhianais air an droch-rud ud ach, chan e a-mhàin gum bheil daoine òga a' fulang leithid sin fhathast ann an sgoiltean

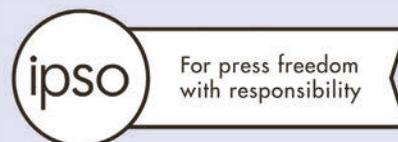
is an taobh a-mach dhiubh, tha cuideachd adhartas teicneòlach air cothroman iargalta eile a cheadachadh dhan fheadhainn a dh'iarras an cuid cho-aoisean a bhuaireadh. Bho chionn ghoirid tha sinn air a bhith a' faicinn is a' cluinntinn pàrant a' caoidh nighean a ghabh a beatha aig ceithir bliadhna deug a dh'aois air sgàth, tha a h-athair ag ràdh, buaidh olc na bha ga ruigheachd tro mheadhanan didseatach. Cò aig nach bi co-fhaireachadh leis an duine bhochd agus cò cuideachd nach fairich tomhas den aon fheir ris a thaobh 's mar a tha buidhnean eadar-nàiseanta a' cosnadh fortan ann an sanasachd a th' air a shnìomh mu sheallaidhean agus bheachdan oillte a dh'fhaodas inntinn chloinne (agus inbheach) a chur ceàrr. Mar a bha riamh fìor tha ana-caitheamh ga dhèanamh air goireas luachmhor agus buannachdail dha mac an duine agus tha an seòrsa leamhachadh 's a bh' ormsa nam bhalach a' bualadh oirnn uile is sinn a' faighneachd ciamar a ghabhas smachd a chur air an olc seo. Cluinnear buaidh cumhachd

beartas a' ghnìomhachais mhòir ann am briathran flodach an Riaghaltais, gum bheil iad a' coimhead agus a' maoidheadh gluasad mura dèan na buidhnean fèin-smachdachadh! Cha mhòr feum sin dhan chloinn a tha am feum taic an-dràsta fhèin!

Chuala mi aon bheachd gur còir fònaichean-làimhe a chasg a sgoiltean, agus ged is dòcha gun dèanadh e cuideachadh air choreigin tha e dol a chur tuilleadh uallaich air luchd-teagaisg a tha mar-thà, na mo bheachd, a' giùlan cus den dleasan a bhaineas dhan dachaigh! Chan iongnadh iad a bhith a' sireadh aithne nan tuarastal!

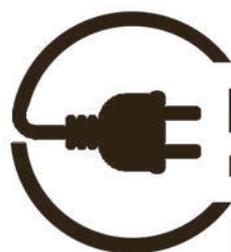
Parenthood is a privilege but it involves major challenges not least in supporting young people to cope with ever-changing external pressures.

Exposure to internet bullying is a major concern and it seems unfair and inadequate to expect schools to be an effective regulatory process. Big business control requires 'big' legislation!



The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve 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 phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters or those supplied without a contact phone number will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB. Fax: 01631 568001.

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DISTRICT NEWS

ARDHATTAN

More than 40 people turned up to support Ardhattan Community Centre's first pop-up tearoom of the year event on January 20 – including a baby who arrived by bike trailer. Sian Griffiths from the tearoom project said: 'Our regular teas are proving very popular with cyclists enjoying a wee spin down the Bonawe road, who are delighted to be able to enjoy a cuppa and a piece of homemade cake and a loo stop.'

The next pop-up afternoon tea will be on Sunday February 17.

APPIN

Appin Scottish Women's Institute tucked into basic recipes at its first meeting of the new year. Three of its number gave mouthwatering demonstrations of favourite recipes. Agnes Thomson shared her recipe for pancakes, Chrissie Malone delighted with her treacle scones and Ellen MacQuorquodale's girdle scones bowled members over. All the treats were thoroughly enjoyed with a cuppa.

CRIANLARICH

The next meeting of Strathfillan Community Council is at Crianlarich Hall on Monday February 4, at 7.30pm.

GLENCRUITTEN

Oban Inner Wheel is having a tea dance in aid of the Dove Centre in the town on Saturday February 9, 2-4pm.

GLENORCHY & INNISHAIL

The next community council meeting is on Wednesday March 6 at 7.30pm at Dalmally Community Centre.

LOCH AWE

Members of Glenorchy and Innishail Community Council heard at its meeting on January 9 that a community speedwatch programme

is being looked into and discussions are ongoing with BEAR Scotland about speed monitoring devices. Residents spotting speeding cars should report any incidents to police on 101 and keep a record of the log number.

The meeting also heard that both Strae and Orchy bridges are due inspections by the council in 2019. Transport Scotland is being contacted about a possible crossing from the railway station exit to Kilchurn Castle.

The war memorial at St Conan's Kirk has had a clean-up requested and community council members unanimously agreed a £250 funding request for Glenorchy Curling Club.

LISMORE

This year's agricultural show on Lismore will be on Saturday July 20 at Croft 5 Craiganich. Judging will start at 10.45am. Admission for adults is £3, children free.

NETHERLORN

Netherlorn Piping Society has a recital by Angus Nicolson tonight (Thursday January 31) at 7.30pm at the Argyllshire Gathering Halls, Oban. Adult entry is £3, children can get in free.

TAYNUILT

Taynuilt Primary School is looking for donations for its loose parts play area. On the wish list are tractor tyres, planks of wood, pallets, logs, old kitchen utensils, pots and pans, crates, guttering and anything else that promotes creativity and an ability to risk assess while playing.

A replacement boat for the children to play on and nets to re-net the school's football goals would also be appreciated, if anyone can help.

Taynuilt Musical Memories meets alternate Wednesdays from 2.30pm to 4pm at the sports pavilion for a light-hearted singing session. Next dates are February 6 and February 20, for mature singers and non-singers alike.

MSPs launch online petition to push for phonelines upgrade in Crianlarich

Two MSPs have been active in trying to have repairs made to phone lines in Crianlarich.

Dean Lockhart, pictured right, has launched an online petition to upgrade or replace the telephone exchange in the village and Bruce Crawford has met the chairman of Openreach, Brendan Dick to discuss the issue.

The petition follows numerous incidents where residents and businesses have been cut off from all telephone communications, often for extended periods, he said.

This includes access to the emergency 999 and 111 systems which has the potential to result in delays to emergency response times.

BT Openreach, which is responsible for the maintenance of the phone exchange, has also informed elected representatives that the frequency of the disruptions has meant two vulnerable residents have now been issued with mobile phones.

The petition has so far attracted around 300 signatures and was presented to BT Openreach by Mr



Lockhart when he met representatives last week.

He said: 'The situation in Crianlarich is now simply unacceptable with residents and businesses facing disruptions on almost a weekly basis.'

'Since I was elected in 2016, I have been working with community representatives, residents, councillors and the Member of Parliament to put pressure on BT to improve the reliability of the exchange.'

'However, I have been informed that the permanent solution will require an extensive upgrade or replacement of the exchange.'

'The residents of Crianlarich

and the surrounding areas have been extremely patient under the circumstances, but enough is enough. I encourage as many people as possible to sign the petition to put pressure on BT to accept their responsibilities and invest in a permanent solution.'

In response to ongoing phoneline problems, MSP Bruce Crawford has held discussions with the chairman of Openreach, Brendan Dick.

Mr Crawford said: 'The situation in Crianlarich has not improved for many people and the outage of a telephone line for extensive periods clearly needs immediate attention.'

'I have been corresponding with Openreach for a number of months now, which is why it was important that I discussed this directly with Openreach chairman Brendan Dick.'

'I have been assured that these concerns will be taken forward by senior management teams and a permanent solution will now be sought.'

Taynuilt has a whist drive planned in the village hall tomorrow Friday January 25 in aid of this year's flower show. Admission is £3 for adults and £1 for children.

OBAN

Oban Congregational Church in Argyll Street is holding a coffee morning on Saturday February 2. The event, from 10.30am till 2pm, will have homebaking, soup and sales stalls. Everyone welcome.

TOBERMORY

Tobermory Scout troop is looking

for a new volunteer to help with weekly meetings. Help is needed so the scouts can finish their Challenge badges and achieve their Chief Scout Gold Award. Also an occasional Beaver helper is needed. Full training and support will be given. Interested? Go go Facebook.com/mullscouts

PLOCKTON

A sale in the Kyle Lighthouse Centre on Friday January 18 raised £960 for the refurbishment of Kyle Free Church.

After more than 30 years as convener of the poppy collection

for the Earl Haig Fund in the Plockton area, Charlie M Macrae has decided to retire. His successor is Jim Greer. Also retiring is Jonathan MacSween, convener for several years for the Dornie area. His successor is Davina Nicholson. Ann Gordon, convener for the Balmacara area for many years is handing over to Fiona Talbot. Last year a record £4,902.21 was raised in the Lochalsh, Glenshiel and Stromeferry area.

Plockton Harbour CIC held its AGM recently in Plockton Hall. Twenty-one members attended and treasurer Gill Bennett submit-

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At random



MARTIN LAING

mlaing@obantimes.co.uk

Oban's finest

We reported last week on the retirement of a long-serving Oban police officer Charles 'Big Chick' Masterson.

Chick had 30 years before the mast and was given a rousing send-off by his colleagues in Albany Street, as the photo we published illustrated only too well.

My colleague Stephen Day, who is our head of IT here at The Oban Times, responded splendidly to a request from Sergeant Karen MacLennan, who had asked if it was possible to access a back copy of the newspaper from the week Chick started in 1989.

Sadly, it was not possible but Stephen, as is often the case, was thinking outside the box and took the trouble to photograph every page of the issue in question from our bound files and create PDFs so that Chick could see a copy of that week's Oban Times from January 1989.

I was more than pleased to be able to hand it over to Karen's husband, Stuart, also a police officer in Oban.

What I had not foreseen, however, was to be given a large box of chocolates as a thank you from the troops at the police station. It was most unexpected but welcome.

I am a great admirer of our police service and the work they do to keep us all safe in our communities. The chocs only serve to reinforce that opinion. Cheers, guys.

Variety of life

I am indebted to Joanne Simms from Bridge of Awe for pointing out the astonishing variety of items for sale in the classified pages in The Oban Times.

As Joanne says: 'I doubt there is anywhere else in the UK that you can buy a marmalade shredder, a rifle, a sit-under hair dryer and a builders' wheelbarrow that has only been used for three weeks and also help someone find a Canadian canoe.'

All human life, as they say, is here.

What do you think?

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HAVE YOUR SAY
email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



Castlebay Community School pupils Uilleam MacDougall and Calum Denehy, along with their teacher, Lisa MacNeil and Cànan Graphics Studio project manager Floraidh Forrest at Tech Fest.

Barra students visit Google HQ for Europe in Dublin

Two Barra students had the opportunity of a lifetime when they visited Google headquarters for Europe to attend a Creative Tech Fest.

Castlebay Community School pupils Uilleam MacDougall and Calum Denehy went along to the event in Dublin which encourages young people to get involved in Digital Media and Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths.

The pair were accompanied by their teacher Lisa MacNeil.

This event is held annually as a national showcase for TechSpace, a creative education network. The day included workshops, inspirational speeches and interactive exhibitions.

The trip was made possible by a collaboration between Cànan Graphics Studio, MG ALBA and the organisation in Ireland which delivers the TechSpace project, Camara Ireland.

Uilleam, who hopes to pursue a media career, said: 'School trips are always fun but when it's related to a subject that you feel passionate about it's even more exciting.'

'From start to finish the day was inspiring, the speakers really made you think about your role in the wider world and the workshops pushed your creativity. It was also pretty special being in the Google headquarters; the building is very cool!'

Cànan Graphics Studio project manager

Floraidh Forrest hopes there will be more opportunities to spark new ideas and other ways of getting Gaelic speakers in Scotland and Ireland to work together.

She said: 'We are always looking for ways to create new opportunities for young Gaelic speakers and teach them that Gaelic can be relevant and useful across lots of different fields.'

And Murdo MacSween, communications manager for MG ALBA, which helped fund the trip, added: 'It's fantastic to see young Gaelic speakers participating in the digital creative industry and experiences like this will lead to further Gaelic content and hopefully inspire innovation from a young age.'

ted a satisfactory report despite a turnover of £53,778.

However, a new shed is to be built, four second-hand pontoons for the fishermen are to be installed, and Highland Council has reduced the

comfort grant for the toilets by 53 per cent. It was agreed to move the bank account from the Royal Bank to the Bank of Scotland. Six directors resigned and were re-elected. Three new directors were elected.

Office bearers: Jimmy Fergusson (chairman), Pete Davies (vice chairman), Kevin Baird (secretary), Gill Bennett (treasurer). Previous treasurer Ed Stanley resigned in October 2018 and was

thanked for all his work over many years. Directors: Calum MacKenzie, Gary Phoenix, Geoff Webster, Mick Greay, James Krisp-Camp. Duncan McAndrew was co-opted as fishermen's rep.



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OUTDOORS

Wedded bliss in Argyll and Bute

More than 600 marriages are conducted by Argyll and Bute Council's registrars each year – that's almost two weddings every day.

In 2002, the law changed in Scotland, allowing people to get married anywhere. Since then, the registrars in Argyll and Bute have seen an influx of people tying the knot in a variety of beautiful locations across the area.

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for corporate services, Councillor Rory Colville, said: 'It's so great to see that people are choosing to get married in Argyll and Bute. We have some stunning scenery and ceremonies have been held in a huge range of locations, from beaches and castles to the more intimate surroundings of a couple's home or garden.'

'Being a registrar isn't a nine-to-five job and they will do whatever it takes to try to make a couple's wedding the special day they dreamed of. They can also help with other important family events such as naming ceremonies and rededication of marriage vows.'

There are a range of different ceremonies to inspire people to create a special day they will never forget.

To find out more about getting married in Argyll and Bute, and designing a ceremony that's tailor-made, see the guide on the website - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/marriage/>



Rob Everitt, 36, and Rebecca Holdstock, 29, were married on Ben More – Mull's highest mountain.

Project to save Loch Goil woodlands

Cormonachan Community Woodlands between Lochgoilhead and Carrick Castle by Loch Goil, Argyll, are being conserved for education, recreation and conservation.

The community facility comprises 58.9 ha of ancient Atlantic oak and hazel woodlands termed as Ancient Semi Natural Woodlands, and first recorded on Roy's Map of 1747.

Over the last 20 years, the volunteer membership of more than 100 has created 2.5 km of circular paths, with a car park, red squirrel hide, contemplation shelter, outdoor sculptures and a resource centre – Jan's Hideaway – for outdoor education for primary school children visiting the Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre, where more than a 1,000 children a year benefit from learning about the outdoors.

The woodlands future plans are to extend the paths by another 2km and open up the southern end of the woodlands at Upper Cormonachan with access to the forest road, the old village and the waterfalls with another access car park. The paths would have five bridges and four viewpoints overlooking the beautiful waterfalls and views over Loch Goil.

The community woodlands are maintained by the Cormonachan Woodlands Association's (CWA) volunteer members. The association is a not-for-profit organisation and relies on its members to support its work and volunteer. With no income stream other than annual subscriptions, all its projects have to be funded by donations and grants.

This latest, large project will cost £323,484 and the CWA is trying to raise five per cent by donations from the Loch Lomond and Trossachs and Cowal area in order to obtain grants of 95 per cent for the balance of the project.

A spokesperson said: 'We are grateful to the Friends of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs for helping to support this project, which has written support from the Argyll and Bute MP and MSP, Cowal ward councillor, Lochgoil Community Council, Forest Enterprise



Above, volunteers Sue, Rebecca, Steve and Liz at Cormonachan Woodlands waterfalls; and, left, the view of Loch Goil from Upper Cormonachan.

Scotland, the Community Partnership of Loch Lomond, Community Woodlands Association and other local organisations and businesses.

'We hope you will come and enjoy these

existing wonderful walks and help support us with our Upper Cormonachan Paths Project Fund.'

For more information see visitcormonachan-woodlands.co.uk

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This week's walks



The new project will showcase some of Scotland's wonderful wildlife via their riverside cameras.

Otter family helps launch Wildlife Watcher feature

The Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (SISI) has this week launched its new monthly Wildlife Watcher feature, which will showcase some of the wonderful wildlife seen around Scotland's rivers and burns.

The project has been using wildlife cameras at riverside locations to help detect the presence of the invasive non-native American mink.

But these cameras have also been capturing a range of other, often secretive, native animals as they go about their business.

SISI project manager Callum Sinclair said: 'We want to celebrate Scotland's stunning freshwater wildlife and to raise awareness of the special nature of these river habitats and the importance of conserving them. Many of us may

never be lucky enough to see some of the more secretive wildlife that visits our rivers, so we wanted to share these videos for all to watch and enjoy.

'Everyone can follow the Wildlife Watcher, which will appear every month on our website and social media channels.

'We'll be featuring a different animal each month throughout the year. As we hope to feature contributed clips too, we'd encourage people to share their videos with us via social media.'

Vicky Hilton, SISI volunteer and communications officer, said: 'We've been gathering a number of brilliant videos of some of our most loved and beautiful animals, so it was a difficult choice as to which animal clip to use to launch our Wildlife Watcher feature.

'We decided to go with an otter, as it is a true semi-aquatic mammal and although found in most Scottish river catchments, it is rarely seen and such a delight to get a glimpse of a one - even if it's only on film.'

SISI project officer Al Reeve said: 'When we downloaded the video in the office we were delighted - it was such a surprise to see we'd captured not just an adult otter, but two juveniles as well. Otters are quite shy creatures and most river otters are largely nocturnal, so not many people get to see a family of otters like this.'

Anyone interested in finding out more about SISI or volunteering with the project can contact the team by emailing sisi@nature.scot, visit www.invasivespecies.scot or follow on social media.

LOCHABER AND LORN RAMBLERS

The walk leader is to be contacted beforehand for meet-up and start times. Car sharing usually possible and people can try before they buy. Further information at www.lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk. Lochaber and Lorn Ramblers Group can be contacted by email on info@lochaberandlorn-ramblers.org.uk

Saturday February 2:

Beinn Churalain, Loch Creran

A pleasant walk with lovely views across Loch Creran and beyond. There are several historical sites in the vicinity: St Cairell's Well at NM980449. Cladh Churalain (burial ground) at NM983452. Abandoned farmstead at NM983451. Kiln at NM983449. Buildings and enclosures at NM982450. Graffito carved on rock at NM989450. (Source: Appin Historical Society).

Park at the Creagan Inn, NM973445 and take the cycle track E. Before the roundabout, follow a track through a gate on the left. A short steep ascent through the trees leads to the line of the old railway and the hillside above. Further up, a gate in a stone wall gives access to the more open hillside. Follow the broad ridge NE, ignoring the trig point at about 490m, to the summit of Beinn Churalain, 549m. Head NW down to a col, across a fence, then up to a small summit at 430m. Follow a ridge SW down to about 200m alt, then head W to reach the track at about NM968456. Follow the track down to the A828 and head E on the cycle track back to the Creagan Inn.

Grade: M; distance: 9km; height to climb: 589m; map(s): LR49, EX376. Meet at Longsdale CP, Oban, at 9.30am, or N Ballachulish PS at 9.25am for start of walk at 10am. Leader: Andrew Gilbert 07808 924722.

Thursday February 7:

Inverscaddle to Corrlarach Bothy, Cona Glen

A walk by the Cona river in a lovely glen. The landscape is varied, with many pools and waterfalls and some 700-year-old trees.

Start at the estate road entrance at NN022686, where parking is availa-

ble. Head W on the estate road, soon turning N past some dwellings and turn left at the junction. Continue NW on the track into Cona Glen to reach Corrlarach Bothy, NM958720. Return by the same route.

Grade: L; distance: 16km; height to climb: 140m; map(s): LR40/41, EX391. Meet at Corran Ferry slip for 9.45am sailing, for start of walk at 10.10am. Leader: Gerry Gilbert 07765 830203.

NEVIS HILLWALKING CLUB

Full walk details at www.nevis-hillwalking.club. If anyone would like to go out on the walk please contact club secretary Suzanne Theobald on 01397 701783 or email enquiries@nevis-hillwalking.club.

Sunday February 3:

Sgurr a' Mhaim, Glen Nevis

An unconventional ascent of this prominent hill, which occupies a commanding position in Glen Nevis.

Start from the Upper Falls car park at the end of the public road in Glen Nevis at NN167691. Head E on the footpath through the Nevis Gorge and continue to the Wire Bridge. Cross the bridge and head WNW up through deciduous woodland to reach a spur above the tree-line at NN1742468535.

Head SW up the spur, turning S up steeper and rockier ground to the summit of Creagan Eun, 483m. Continue S up a steep rocky slope to the tip of a NE orientated spur at 740m alt, NN171677. Head SW along the spur, almost level at first, curving S and rising steeply on rocky ground between Coire Sgorach to the W and Coire nan Cnamhex to the E. The spur terminates on a ring contoured, 960m alt, NN167670, overlooking the vast expanse of the magnificent Coire a' Mhail. The summit of Sgurr a' Mhaim lies 450m SW of here, a climb of 150m up a steep rocky ridge. Descend W at first, soon curving N around the rim of Coire Sgorach.

A rough path may be found, which facilitates a sustained, steep descent NW to Achriabhach.

Transport required. Six mins from start. Total of 8km, 1000m ascent. Suggested by Gavin Theobald; coordinated by Andrew Gilbert.

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SCOTTISH CARAVAN AND CAMPING



About The Show

The only place to start your next adventure is at Scotland's largest caravan, motorhome and holiday home show.

Here you'll find the latest models and widest selection of caravans and motorhomes from the country's leading manufacturers and dealers in one destination, offering the perfect opportunity to compare models, layouts

and specifications before choosing which one's for you.

On site there will be a fantastic selection of holiday homes from luxury lodges to eco pods where you're invited in to view layouts and finishes, right next to the Holiday Park Village where staff are on hand to provide advice on your next escape.

And that's not all; on show will be marine products, tents and awnings as well as a huge range of the very latest and essential 'must have' accessories.

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With so many show-only offers and discounts, it's the perfect destination for all enthusiasts or those thinking about caravanning for the first time.

COMPETITION

WIN TICKETS to the Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show

We're delighted to have 4 pairs of tickets to give away to the Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show, taking place at the SEC, Glasgow 7th-10th February 2019. Read on to find out how to enter!



How To Enter

Hop on over to Facebook.

1. Pop on over to the Oban Times Facebook page, make sure you're following The Oban Times then like and share the competition post which will be live from 6am on Thursday 31st January.
2. Once you have liked and shared post comment with the word 'done' and you will automatically be entered.

Competition Terms & Conditions

- Prize is one pair of tickets per winner to the Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show (travel not included)
- Prize is only valid for one day and can be redeemed on either Thursday 7th, Friday 8th, Saturday 9th or Sunday 10th February 2019, tickets to be collected on arrival at the box office.
- The prize has no cash alternative, is non-refundable and non-exchangeable
- The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show reserves the right to refuse entry without explanation
- Competition ends on Tuesday 5th February, 4pm GMT
- The winner will be notified via Facebook messenger. Winners will be announced after the closing date on Facebook.

GOOD LUCK!

The perfect setting for your next adventure

The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome and Holiday Home Show makes a welcome return to Glasgow's SEC from February 7 - 10, 2019.

Sponsored by BC Motorhome, it's the largest exhibition in Scotland and the perfect setting for visitors to see thousands of products and get all the ideas and inspiration for their next adventure. Taking over the entire SEC centre, visitors can explore the widest selection of caravans and motorhomes from the UK and Europe's leading manufacturers and dealers. Brands on show include Elddis, Swift, Lunar, Bailey, Compass, Freedom, Autocruise, Rollerteam, Hymer, Coachman, Knaus, Rapido, Autotrail and Autosleeper. The extensive range on display includes the latest and most popular models and has something to suit all tastes and budgets.

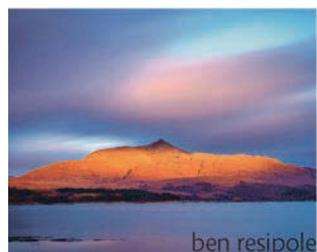
Visitors will also have the opportunity to step inside their dream holiday home with a fantastic selection on show from luxury lodges to quirky eco pods.

The major clubs and associations will be on hand, together with a number of holiday parks, to provide you with all the information and advice on the fantastic locations to holiday across the country. For those looking for the 'must-have' accessories and awnings, the Accessory Superstore will be bursting with gadgets and essential products for every tourer. The Camping Village will return with a range of the latest and favourite family tents, and there will be marine products on show including jet skis and dinghies as well as a selection of marine accessories. All this plus a fabulous Farmers' Market with market stalls selling a selection of products.

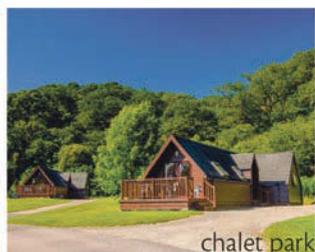
The show really is the perfect destination for outdoor enthusiasts or those thinking about touring for the first time. Experts from The Caravan and Motorhome Club will be offering FREE tuition so, if you're an experienced



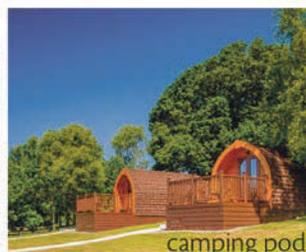
view from touring park



ben resipole



chalet park



camping pods

Resipole Farm Holiday Park is a unique place where you can enjoy the peace and stunning views of the West Highlands of Scotland. Whether you come to simply relax and unwind, or to explore the vast outdoors, you won't be disappointed.

From the Holiday Park you can hike to the top of Ben Resipole, a Corbett at 845m, or ramble along paths fringed with rare flora and fauna. Maybe you'll find a secret nook from which you can spot the abundant wildlife, including red deer and eagles, or wander along the shoreline and watch otters, seals and porpoises in their natural habitat.

Resipole Farm Holiday Park is set on a working farm on the shores of Loch Sunart and cattle graze in the ancient oak woods. Our farm produce is available to purchase in the shop, along with all your essential supplies. The site has modern facilities, a laundrette, a slipway to access the loch, a range of touring pitches as well as seasonal and static caravan pitches. Our comfortable self-catering lodges are available all year round.

We have a variety of plots on site for holiday home ownership. We would be delighted to assist you in the process of purchasing a new caravan holiday home and would make all the necessary arrangements to have it installed on the park. Each plot is fully serviced allowing you to relax in the knowledge that all your holiday home needs are taken care of. You can visit Resipole Studios Fine Art Gallery during your stay, which has an ever changing exhibition calendar throughout the year.



Our family business has been welcoming visitors for nearly 50 years. We are always on hand to help you make the most of your time here. Resipole Farm Holiday Park offers you an unforgettable time in spectacular surroundings. Come and experience it for yourself!

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tourer looking for a refresher or new to touring and want to learn how to tow or manoeuvre safely, bring your driving licence and sign up on the day from the club stand (subject to availability). What's more, visitors can take advantage of fantastic show-only offers and discounts, not to be missed!

Tickets are on sale now and by booking early you'll save on entry! Kids under 16 go free!

Kid's activities

We'll have lots of fun entertainment to keep the kids entertained including face painting, arts and crafts, guest appearances from your favourite superheroes and much more and, with entry free for kids aged 16 and under, it's the perfect family day out.



Come and see us at The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome & Holiday Home Show at Stand HP10

Mains of Taymouth Village

Luxury lodges for sale in Kenmore, Perthshire, Scotland. The new plots that will be released for 2019 at the exclusive Mains of Taymouth Country Estate and Golf Course offer a unique lifestyle opportunity to purchase your own luxury holiday lodge in Scotland's most prestigious area. Exclusive access to Mains of Taymouth Golf Course, Mains of Taymouth Riding Stables, Courtyard Shop, Bar & Brasserie and Loch Tay Boating Centre.

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

The three yurts are set around an orchard filled with wildflowers.

You can walk from there to the beach, up into forests or to the Lagg Hotel for refreshments.

For more details on glamping on Arran, go to

www.runacharainn.com

Get ready for the biggest and best show

One of the biggest consumer shows in Scotland caters for a huge growth market as more and more people discover the joy of caravans, motorhomes and holiday homes

The Scottish Caravan, Motorhome and Holiday Home Show fills the Scottish Exhibition Centre in Glasgow - and then some.

Get ready for the big one, the largest consumer show in Scotland, when the UK's top companies gather to display and sell their holiday and leisure products.

That is a floor space of 25,000sq metres with an additional marquee of another 1,200 sq metres - all packed with the best that is on offer today to make holiday dreams come true.

'This is the biggest consumer exhibition in Scotland. It is the only event that takes over the whole of the venue. Research we carry out at the show reveals that people come from as far north as Shetland to the north of England in the south to visit the show,' said Jamie Taylor, director in charge of the show. He and his team are putting the finishing touches to the event as we go to press.'

He added: 'We're the only exhibition in Scotland where visitors can compare and

contrast the latest caravans and motorhomes from the country's leading manufacturers without having to travel miles from one dealer to another across the country.'

More than 200 companies selling motorhomes, caravans, and holiday homes from static caravans to luxury lodges, plus accessories will be there along with the owners of all varieties of venues.

'The joy is that you can choose from the smallest, most remote destination to a holiday park with swimming pools, cinemas and bars. We have the products and the destinations and between them people can create their own bespoke holiday,' he said.

Post-show research in previous years has revealed that one exhibitor sold £1million of caravans and another £2½million in motorhomes at the show and in the following couple of weeks as visitors finalise their research and make their purchasing decisions.

The big brands and dealers from all over the UK are there, some with dealer specials; a high-spec model made especially for them by top brands giving customers incredible value for money.

Leading organisations like the Caravan and Motorhome Club UK and Caravan and Camping Club are also at the show with demonstrations and practical advice to help people get the most out of their investments.

Sweeping lochs, majestic castles and awe-inspiring hills – Scotland has plenty to offer the intrepid camper/caravanner. But what to take with you on your adventure?

Obviously what you take depends on the following factors:

Who you are travelling with – friends, family, children?

Where you are going – if it's wild camping then you'll need a different list than if you're visiting a park

How long you'll be away for – a weekend trip may mean you decide to ditch the cooking utensils and eat out

What type of leisure vehicle you own / hire / are visiting and how it is equipped

What the weather is likely to be like – although in the UK it's best to plan for all eventualities.

- Take an old bath-mat (or two!) to leave outside to wipe feet on – they are much lighter and absorbent.
- Sporks – combined spoon, knife and fork – are the best invention, saving space and washing-up.
- Cheap disposable glow-lights (make sure you take them away with you) are a safe and fun alternative for kids instead of torches.
- Before you pack games equipment such as footballs, Frisbees or tennis rackets, check your campsite doesn't already supply them as part of the package.
- It's probably worth checking out where the first aid help is when you arrive. The campsite should provide first aid supplies, and have details of the nearest doctor and hospital.
- Write down the menu for all meals for your trip. This way you'll know what you need to take and what you can wait to buy.
- If you only do one thing, make sure you are warm at night – cold, sleepless nights are no-one's friend and are the one thing guaranteed to make you think twice before venturing out again...



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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Was this a performance of parody, pun and side-splitting pantomime perfection? Oh yes, it was!



Seil Drama Group's Snow White and the Seven Seilachans was community entertainment at its best. The smiling faces filing out

of the packed community hall after Saturday afternoon's matinee performance were proof of that, no doubt the evening session

had an equally positive effect.

Who wouldn't? The multi-talented group delivered it all: Wicked Queen, Jan Wolfe, was

the epitome of haughty naughtiness; PC Percy Posy would not have been misplaced in Whisky Galore; and Snow White, Gillian MacKechnie,

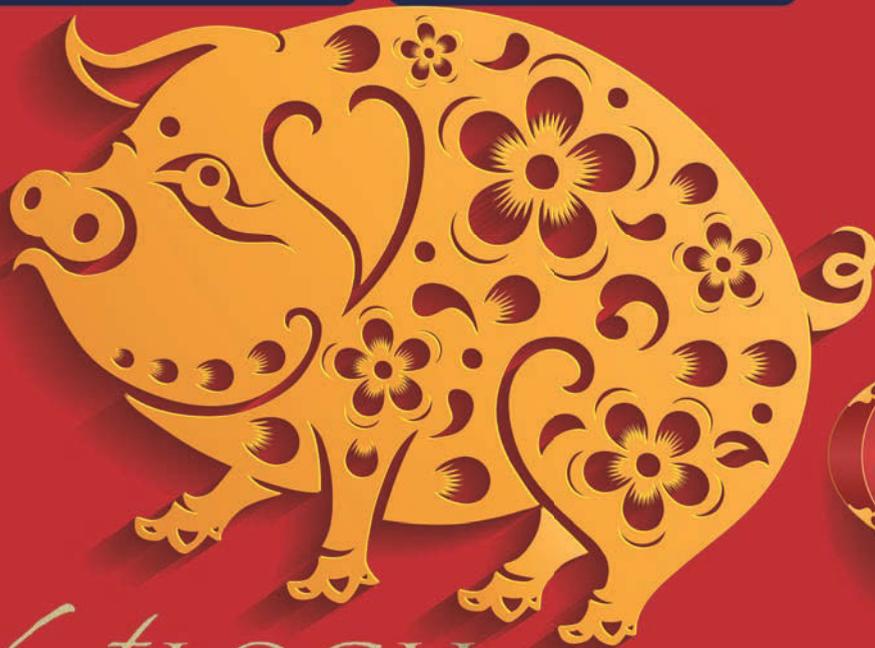
wowed the crowd with some stunning vocal performances.

The Seven Seilachans themselves more than lived up to

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DRAGONS BEARD CANDY

lived up to their adjectival names, while the performances of the children showed that the future of the group was in safe hands.

First-time director Mary Freer was delighted that the show had been so well received.

She said: 'We have a tremendous cast. They come back year after year and it just keeps growing.'

'They are always enthusiastic. We have had our horrendous moments and I have had some sleepless nights but, as ever, on the night they have come together and I am very proud of everyone. I hope we have entertained the community.'

Ms Freer also praised all the people who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to enable the show to go on. One in particular was wardrobe mistress Helen Glennie, who, along with

a small team, transformed duvet covers, curtains, pillow cases and other household paraphernalia into credible and incredible costumes.

John Colston, who penned the parody of the Grimm classic, added: 'I was very pleased with today's performance. They were a great audience and they laughed and boomed and hissed in all the right places.'

'It is really fun creating the pantomimes and everyone throws in their own little bits. We like to make sure that there are references to the area so that the show belongs to the island.'

The Seil Drama Group would like to thank the hall committee for all its support and the many people who helped to bring the production to fruition. Also thanks to Wendy at the Balvicar Store for organising the refreshments. DVDs, by GHProductions

Argyll, will be available at the Balvicar Store in the next few weeks.

In March this year the group will be staging a one-act play at

the Corran Halls as part of the Lorne Drama Festival. Look out for more details in The Oban Times. More photos at www.obantimes.co.uk

Cast: Snow White - Gillian MacKechnie; Fairy Dust - Jenn Brunner; Wicked Queen - Jan Wolfe; King George - George Houston; PC Percy Posy - Alastair Mill; Timmy the Crocodile - Jan Fraser; Plook aka Guy Walker - Ailsa McLean; Mirror - Wendy Dugdale; Paisley - Daisy Dugdale; The Selachans, Wrinkly - Ernie Brittain Dodd; Squinty - John Colston; Leaky - George MacKenzie; Snoozy - Caroline Morgan; Psycho - John McLean; Windy - Denise McLean; Cranky - Gill Shand; The Children, Ricky - Connor MacLean; Primrose - Emma McDougall; Poppy - Eildh MacFadyen; Blossom - Charlie MacKechnie; Holly - Loli MacLean; Buttercup

- Molly Robertson. Director/front of house - Mary Freer; music - Maggie Thorpe; set design - Maura Rae, Mary Macpherson; set construction - Chris Dugdale, George Houston, Alastair Mill, Alastair Robertson; stage management/props - David Glennie, Alan Coutts; costumes - Helen Glennie, Else Mellor, Jenny Bowles, Eileen Colston; make-up - Charlotte Rees; lighting - James Fenton; filming and sound - Gary Hamilton, Stuart Abercrombie (GHProductions Argyll); choreography - Wendy Dugdale; prompt - Eileen Colston; programme - Robert Rae, Helen Glennie; tickets - Sue Fenton.



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14th February 2019

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Mull Historical Society releases new single



Colin MacIntyre and Bernard Butler touring Colin's new album *Wakelines*.

Mull singer-songwriter Colin MacIntyre, the man behind Mull Historical Society, has released his new single from his acclaimed album, *Wakelines*. Little Bird is a

new mix by producer Bernard Butler, formerly of the band Suede. Colin says of the track: 'It is about my daughters and is very close to my heart.'

The band played Celtic Connections, Glasgow, with Bernard Butler last Thursday, with a further show on January 27 at the Cathedral Arts festival in Belfast.

Barra Dìleab song and video goes live

A song featuring pupils from Castlebay Community School in Barra, along with local musician Willie Campbell, is now available online along with an accompanying video.

On a Wave to the West was showcased at a concert last November which, as part of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's engagement in Year of the Young Person and the Dìleab (Legacy) project, had a theme of emigration.

Mr Campbell said it was genuinely a pleasure working with the children from Castlebay School.

'They approached the songwriting workshops with enthusiasm and the level of musical ability within the school is superb,' he added.

'The kids helped me refine the broad ideas that I had for the song about emigration and the devastating effect it had on the island. They were totally engaged and the great performances of the songs on the night of the concert really reflected that.'

The video, produced by



Willie Campbell

Stephen Kearney of Little Day Productions, also features pupils from the school. Mr Kearney said: 'I was honoured to be involved in such an important project. The staff and pupils of Castlebay school were a joy to work with throughout, and of course Willie's beautiful and poignant song was a gift to put visuals to.'

Evelyn Coull Macleod, multi-media manager at

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, added: 'The Barra concert in November was a fitting commemoration on an important topic which still impacts the community of Barra.'

Plans are already afoot for the production of the Dìleab EP and further collaboration with creative industry experts in the islands. Readers can view the video, courtesy of Little Day Productions, on the Oban Times website.

Oban High School dancers prepare for annual show

The Oban High School annual dance show will be performing to the Corran Halls next week.

Three performances over two days will see more than 200 youngsters take to the stage - not forgetting the OHS staff who have a record number of 24 in their routine.

The event will include

members of OHS School of Dance, the gymnastics club, Highland Dancers, S1, S2 and S3 choreography led by senior dance leaders, P6/7 dancers, and Ballet West Outreach.

There will also be solo performances and small group performances, and performances by sports coaches and staff dance will

ensure a highly entertaining programme to remember.

There will be two evening performances - Wednesday February 6 at 7.30pm and Thursday February 7 at 7.30pm, as well as a Thursday matinee performance starting at 12.15pm.

Tickets are available to buy now from the Corran Halls.



A typical day - At last, an eating plan that fits into your life



Breakfast

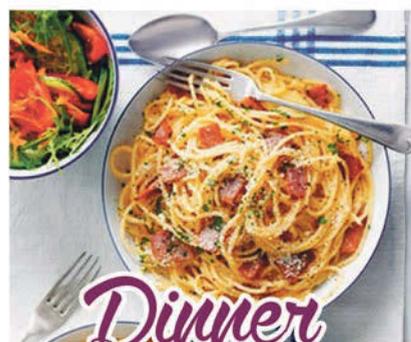
Overnight Oats

Lots of people have been going bonkers for overnight oats. We have to agree, they're absolutely amazing! **10mins**



Tuna and sweetcorn jacket potato

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Dinner

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Glasgow Letter

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Tiree Association toasts the Bard

I took a night off from Celtic Connections last Saturday night as I was making a speech at the Tiree Association Burns Supper in the Ralston Community Centre in Paisley. It was a great, relaxed night with great food cooked by the committee and some superb entertainment. A real highlight was Kenneth MacLeod's rendition of Tam O' Shanter which had the whole company hanging onto his every word as he paced up and down the floor revealing various props as the poem progressed.

Gaelic rap and electronica

On Sunday evening, I attended Baile Air Bhoil, a brilliant gig in Glasgow University's Queen Margaret Union with The League of Highland Gentlemen, Griogair Labhruibh, and Inyal. The league started the evening off in style; and, by style, I mean

tartan trews, plus fours, and sunglasses! Griogair's Gaelic rap has been the talk of the trad music world ever since his performance at the Trad Awards in December, so it was great to hear it live. Inyal are the young band of the minute and they had the audience on their feet right up until the end of the night. The lighting show for all three bands was immense and really added to a fantastic concert.

Last weekend of Connections

Only one weekend left now of Celtic Connections and, could I teleport myself to numerous different places at the same time, here is where I would go... On Thursday night: Josie Duncan in the Mitchell Theatre at 7.30pm; Blazin' Fiddles with Karen Matheson in the King's Theatre at 7.30pm; Gillebrìde MacMillan in the Tron Theatre at 8pm. On Saturday night: Rura in St Luke's at 7.30pm; Alasdair White and Vox with Kim Carnie in the Strathclyde Suite at 8pm;

or Mairearad and Anna with Jamie MacDonald and Christian Gamauf in the Drygate Brewery at 7.30pm. Sunday, the festival's final night, has a host of great concerts including a New Voices commission by Megan Henderson in the Strathclyde Suite at 1pm; and a concert from Siobhan Miller in the New Auditorium of the Concert hall at 7.30pm.

Some up-coming cèilidhs

Just in time for Celtic Connections finishing, there are a host of cèilidhs taking place in Glasgow and nearby throughout February - details for which are below. The line up for the Comunn Tir nam Beann Dun Èideann Cèilidh which takes place this weekend is an interesting one which includes Joy Dunlop singing Gaelic songs, and Silver Solas - a band featuring Gaelic songs, Scots songs, and Tenor horn. Lili MacShea and Bronwen Stahl will play the Clarsach and Andrew MacIntyre the



The League of Highland Gentlemen (left to right): Alec Dalglish, Ewen Henderson, Mike Katz, and Ross Wilson.

Highland pipes. I will include details of the line-ups for the Stirling cèilidh, and the two Glasgow-based cèilidhs next week.

What's on

Saturday February 2: Comunn Tir nam Beann Dun Èideann Cèilidh

in Augustine United Church, George IV Bridge, 7.15pm-7.30pm.

Thursday February 7: Comunn An-Taobh-An-Iar Spring Cèilidh in the Ellangowan Social Club.

Friday February 8: Clydebank and District Highland Association Cèilidh in the

Napier Hall, Old Kilpatrick, at 7.30pm.

Saturday February 9: Stirling An Comunn Cèilidh in Lesser Albert Halls at 7.30pm.

Saturday February 16: The Mull and Iona Association Annual Gathering in the Glasgow University Union.



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BREAKING NEWS

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M'ALBA

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DIARDAOIN 31 AM FAOILLEACH THURSDAY 31 JANUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 O Mo Dhùthaich (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 Còisir Shoisgeulach (rpt)
21.00 Air a' Chanàil (rpt)
22.00 ÙR/NEW: Nochd S2
22.30 Losgadh air a' Phàp (rpt)
23.25 ÙR/NEW: Belladrum Highlights 2018
23.30 Mach à Seo (rpt)

DIHAOINE 01 AN GEARRAN FRIDAY 01 FEBRUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.35 Machair (rpt)
19.00 An Là – News
19.25 ÙR/NEW: Women's Six Nations – Scotland v Italy
21.30 An Lot S3 (rpt)
22.00 An Klondike (rpt)
22.50 Dhan Uisge (Gaylet Pot) (rpt)
23.00 Nochd S2 (rpt)
23.30 Ceòlmhor@Piping Live! (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 02 AN GEARRAN SATURDAY 02 FEBRUARY

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17.45 An Là – News
18.00 ÙR/NEW: Scottish Premiership – Hibernian v Aberdeen
20.00 Machair (rpt)
20.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
21.00 Port S4 (rpt)
22.00 Ceòlmhor@Piping Live! (rpt)
22.30 ÙR/NEW: Nochd S2

23.00 Scottish Premiership – Hibernian v Aberdeen (rpt)

DIDÒMHNAICH 03 AN GEARRAN SUNDAY 03 FEBRUARY

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18.15 An Là – News
18.30 Seachd Là – News Review
19.30 Alleluia (rpt)
20.00 Còisir Shoisgeulach (rpt)
20.30 Leugh Mi (rpt)
21.00 Scotstar: Teasairginn Eiginneach (rpt)
21.45 Sgeul Slàinte (rpt)
22.00 Port S4 (rpt)
23.00 An Klondike (rpt)
23.50 Dhan Uisge (Gaylet Pot) (rpt)

DILUAIN 04 AN GEARRAN MONDAY 04 FEBRUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Eileanan Fraoich – Èirisgeidh (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 FilmG – Mar a Thachair Do Dh'fhear a Sgur a Dhol Dhan Eaglais (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 An Lot S3 (rpt)
21.00 Trusadh – An Tinneas Tuiteamach (rpt)
22.00 ÙR/NEW: TradFest
22.30 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
23.30 Nochd S2 (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 05 AN GEARRAN TUESDAY 05 FEBRUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 O Mo Dhùthaich (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 FilmG – Bho Clach gu Clach (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
21.00 Frances: A Strì ri MS (rpt)

22.00 ÙR/NEW: Mach a Seo
22.30 Trusadh – An Tinneas Tuiteamach (rpt)
23.30 Alleluia (rpt)

DICIADAIN 06 AN GEARRAN WEDNESDAY 06 FEBRUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 Eileanan Fraoich – Èirisgeidh (rpt)
19.25 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 FilmG – Coig Puing a Tri (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 ÙR/NEW: Leugh Mi
21.00 ÙR/NEW: Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach
22.00 ÙR/NEW: Scottish Premiership – Dundee v Kilmarnock

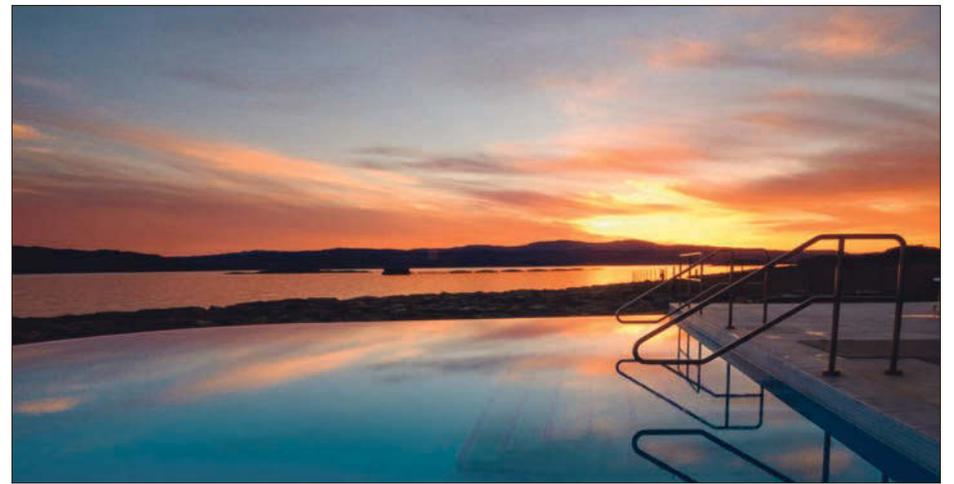
DIARDAOIN 07 AN GEARRAN THURSDAY 07 FEBRUARY

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19.00 O Mo Dhùthaich (rpt)
19.30 Speaking our Language (rpt)
19.55 FilmG – Mar a Thachair Do Dh'fhear a Sgur a Dhol Dhan Eaglais (rpt)
20.00 An Là – News
20.30 ÙR/NEW: Eòrpa
21.00 Air a' Chanàil (rpt)
22.00 ÙR/NEW: Nochd S2
22.30 Reagan & Gorbachev (rpt)
23.25 ÙR/NEW: Belladrum Highlights 2018
23.30 Mach à Seo (rpt)



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Portavadie – making any occasion special

by Susan Windram
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Having almost forgotten about my 30th wedding anniversary – I know, I know – my husband was more than a little upset, particularly as he thought I was planning a surprise!

So needless to say, I had to pull out the big guns at very short notice one week before Christmas. A pretty tall order, or so I thought. It turned out to be one of the easiest things I've organised.

Argyll is a fantastic place to live, offering adventures and experiences too numerous to list. But on a cold December weekend, when the wind is blowing a hooly and the freezing rain – of course it's raining – stings your face, where do you go?

Portavadie. My husband was over the moon when he found out. Major Brownie points for me. But really, it was the staff and facilities at the Loch Fyne complex that were the real stars.

We arrived late on a Friday night after a two-hour drive in the pitch dark to be met by a warm reception – both staff and facilities – and a lovely bottle of bubbly, a surprise gift from my colleagues.

We had booked two nights in The Lodge, which has a relaxed Scandinavian feel, a restaurant and bar, and en-suite rooms that are contemporary and cosy. Perfect for relaxing.

That night we ate in the Lodge kitchen and bar rather than heading to the main Marina Restaurant and Bar, only five minutes from the Lodge. It was very relaxed – the Christmas tree and log fire did wonders for the ambience – and our fish and

burgers, plus a bottle of wine hit the spot.

One of my key tests of a good hotel is the shower. If they have a good shower you know all will be well. Our room had a great shower.

So after sleeping like there was no tomorrow and a hot power shower, we headed over to the Marina, where we ate breakfast looking out onto the boats moored at the pontoon.

When I booked the weekend, there was only one thing I really had to remember – my swimming costume. What did I forget? Yes, really. Thankfully when we headed across to the spa and leisure complex there was a range of swimwear for sale, saving me a round trip to Dunoon.

'When I booked the weekend there was only one thing I had to remember...'

It is such a treat to have Portavadie right on our doorstep. While relocating to Tighnabruich is not an option, I wish it was just so I could swim in the pool every morning.

While visiting Portavadie in the spring, summer or autumn must be fantastic, one good thing about visiting the week before Christmas is that on this occasion it was relatively quiet. Everybody visiting was there to do one thing, chill.

Having upgraded to include the spa experience, we went straight upstairs for some exclusive relaxation. The award-winning spa features therapeutic spa treatments, hydro pool, Scandinavian sauna, steam room and a relaxation

space that has breathtaking floor to ceiling views across to Arran. While I didn't indulge in a facial or massage, or even thought about using the gym, they will be on my list next time – well, maybe not the gym, although I really should.

While loving all the luxury upstairs, what I was most looking forward to was spending time in the infinity pool. And despite, or maybe because of, the weather it was fantastic.

Outside the weather was vicious, but we braved the icy rain and bolted from the door into the gorgeously warm pool. The view not withstanding, it is particularly relaxing on a dark, winter afternoon, with the coloured lights under you and the warm water enveloping you as you gaze out onto a stormy Loch Fyne. Bliss!

The day was happily spent split between the swimming pool in the main facilities, the infinity pool and outdoor Jacuzzi, and upstairs relaxing with a book in the spa, occasionally using the hydrotherapy pool to ease our wearied muscles, or in the sauna.

That evening we ate in the Marina bar and restaurant, joined by Christmas revellers, which made for an enjoyable atmosphere. Again the food was delicious, and we later relaxed with our coffees beside the fire.

Although only there for a full day and two nights, we felt like we'd been away for longer, and were thoroughly relaxed as we headed home on the Sunday.

Portavadie is the perfect venue for a special occasion, but really, who needs an excuse? Just go and make any occasion special. Trust me, it is worth it.

What's on at The Nevis Centre

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WHAT'S ON IN OBAN

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THURSDAY 31ST JANUARY

Slimming World

Salvation Army Hall, Fort William
3.00pm, 5.00pm & 7.00pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

Oban Health Walk

Oban Congregational Church Hall
10am - 11.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

FREE JUKEBOX EVERY THURSDAY

FRIDAY 1ST FEBRUARY

Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading

Glencruitten Church Hall
All Day

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

From 9pm

Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

From 9pm
Free Entry

SATURDAY 2ND FEBRUARY

Oban Dance Academy - Cheerleading

Glencruitten Church Hall
All Day

parkrun

Ganavan Sands, Oban
9.30am

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

From 9pm

Open till 2am

Live Music & Entertainment @ The Lorne Bar Oban

From 9pm

Free Entry

SUNDAY 3RD FEBRUARY

Live Music & Entertainment @ Markie Dans

QUIZ NIGHT at 9.30pm

£1 per person, max of 6 per team
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MONDAY 4TH FEBRUARY

Slimming World

Union Street/Argyll Street,
Lochgilphead
5.30pm & 7.30pm

Tel: Rhona 07880 878906

WEDNESDAY 6TH FEBRUARY

Slimming World

Glencruitten Church Hall, Oban
9.30am, 11.30am, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Gillian 07796 040803

The electrifying Mr Johnston comes to the Corran Halls

Following the world premier at Mull Theatre on Fri 8 Feb, Mull Theatre brings its latest production to Oban.

The Electrifying Mr Johnston is a new play about one of Scotland's great unsung heroes, Tom Johnston, focusing on his vision to bring 'light to the glens'.

Through incredible feats of engineering and political manoeuvring, he sought to transform the lives of everyone in the north of Scotland by bringing hydroelectric power to the Highlands and islands. A story of power – and the struggle for it.

This will be followed after the interval by BITE-SIZE, an informal programme of

script-in-hand readings of new plays and works-in-progress. Readings, encounters, questions and answers, feedback and chat offer audiences the chance to be part of and enjoy the fun of the creative process.

The performance is on

Saturday Feb 9, at 7.30pm in the Corran Halls Studio Theatre.

Tickets for the double-bill are on sale now from the Corran Halls box office, or online via www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/oban



Events may charge. Please visit www.obanwhatson.co.uk for more details. To list your event, please call 01631 568000

WHAT'S ON AT YOUR LOCAL CINEMA THIS WEEK

Tel: 01631 562905 or see

www.obanphoenix.com for more details

FRIDAY 1

14:00/19:15 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15
16:30 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
16:45 STAN & OLLIE PG
19:15 THE FAVOURITE 15

SATURDAY 2

12:00 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
12:30 BUMBLEBEE PG
15:00 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
17:30/20:00 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15
17:45 STAN & OLLIE PG
20:00 THE FAVOURITE 15

SUNDAY 3

12:00 BUMBLEBEE PG
12:00 MARY POPPINS RETURNS U
14:30 THE YUKON ASSIGNMENT PG
14:45 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
16:15/19:45 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15
17:30 STAN & OLLIE PG
19:00 THE FAVOURITE 15

MONDAY 4

14:30/16:45 STAN & OLLIE PG
16:30 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
19:15 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15
19:15 THE FAVOURITE 15

TUESDAY 5

14:30 THE YUKON ASSIGNMENT PG
16:30 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
16:45 STAN & OLLIE PG
19:15 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15
19:15 THE FAVOURITE 15

WEDNESDAY 6

14:00/19:15 THE FAVOURITE 15
16:30 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
16:45 STAN & OLLIE PG
19:15 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15

THURSDAY 7

14:00/19:15 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 15
16:30 MORTAL ENGINES 12A
16:45 STAN & OLLIE PG
19:15 THE FAVOURITE 15

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High school pipe band's festival success inspires Skerryvore special release

International trad-fusion band Skerryvore released a new music video and a special edition of their EVO album tracks Soraidh Slàn and The Rise on Burns Day, January 25, with all proceeds going to Oban High School Pipe Band (OHSPB).

The project was inspired by a collaboration between the two bands at Skerryvore's signature music festival Oban Live, in June 2018.

The slow, respectful air Soraidh Slàn, a farewell to loved ones lost in 2017, plays before The Rise, an upbeat note delivered by all eight Skerryvore musicians playing at full pelt. Both were written by the band's co-founder Martin Gillespie (Highland bagpipes) and produced by Alan Scobie (keys).

The six-minute music video was directed and filmed by Dòmhnall Eòghainn MacKinnon and stars Skerryvore and members of OHSPB.

In the video's atmospheric opening, Soraidh Slàn plays as viewers hear spoken words from William Blake's Introduction to the Songs of Innocence 'Piping down the valleys wild', while watching stunning drone footage of the Isle of Tiree and Oban. It then leads into the track The



Skerryvore and Oban High School Pipe Band perform at Oban Live.

Rise with footage of OHSPB at Oban's McCaig's Tower and the moment that inspired the project, on stage with Skerryvore at Oban Live 2018.

Around 4,500 people at Oban Live 2018, and 93,000 viewers on Facebook, witnessed the unique moment when the 25-strong OHSPB joined Skerryvore on stage. Around 17 pipers performed Soraidh Slàn.

The haunting atmosphere was soon switched up to full adrenaline-pumping speed when 15 drummers from the school band joined the pipers and all eight Skerryvore musicians for an extraordinary performance of The Rise, including a spectacular drum solo accessorised by LED drumsticks and stage-lighting production.

Since it was founded in 2005,

Oban High School Pipe Band, led by Pipe Major Angus MacColl, has had unprecedented success, claiming the titles of Scottish, European and World Champions in Novice Juvenile, and being crowned Champions of Champions in 2010.

Pipe Major MacColl said: 'We are really grateful to Skerryvore to have this track and video released with proceeds going to OHSPB. Joining them on stage for such an exciting spectacle at last year's Oban Live, as well as featuring in this stunning music video, has been a real highlight for OHSPB.'

'Working with Skerryvore on this project has brought fantastic and well-deserved opportunities for the young people to showcase their hard-earned talents to thousands

of people and provided them with an experience that they will never forget.'

Martin Gillespie added: 'Huge credit and thanks goes to Angus and all the young people in OHSPB. Their professionalism, talent and enthusiasm are very impressive and inspirational. They are a joy to work with.'

'We were delighted to collaborate at Oban Live and give them such a valuable opportunity and experience which was equally memorable for us in the band too. We are delighted to donate the proceeds of this release to OHSPB, a great cause that provides many opportunities for young people in traditional music.'

The full length music video, featuring OHSPB, is available to watch on Skerryvore's YouTube and Facebook page.

Arts coming to Duart Castle in a song

A traditional 17th-century Mull song will be part of a new arts programme exploring Gaelic culture.

Musicians Ross Whyte and Alasdair Whyte will create a virtual reality installation at Duart castle on Mull inspired by the song A' Chnò Shamhna that dates back to around 1649, lamenting the death of Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart.

The installation will include a three-dimensional stereo audio recording of the song and a performance at the castle.

The Mull song installation is one of four projects just announced by a new Gaelic arts programme called GUIR using performance, dance, music and digital arts.

The other projects will be exploring the historical migratory routes from Scotland's now uninhabited

Gaelic islands, a mythological Gaelic creature and the disconnection between Gaelic and the mainstream.

It is part of Glasgow Life's Gaelic Art Strategy (GAS) 2018 - 2022 and the projects are being supported by the National Theatre of Scotland, Royal Conservatoire Scotland, Tramway and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig college in Skye.

The four pieces will be developed during short residencies at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig followed by a period of developing and learning for the artists, all culminating in Glasgow this year when the city hosts the Royal National Mòd.

Councillor David McDonald, chairman of Glasgow Life and deputy leader of Glasgow City Council said: 'Gaelic culture



Commissioned work also includes a solo outdoor performance by contemporary dancer Rob Heaslip re-imagining the mythical creature the Brollachan.

is central to the story of Glasgow and Scotland's past, and continues as a vibrant, contemporary strand which enriches our lives.

'This innovative new programme aims to explore and

develop Gaelic culture using traditional and new artforms. The first four works chosen are diverse and fascinating and provide an invaluable opportunity to open up Gaelic culture to new audiences.'

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



MONDAY: 08.00 am on Fm, 08.10 breakfast show, 9.00 Monday morning with Stephen, 11.00 Ian Simmonds Monday Mix, 17.00 Drivetime, 19.00 Rosie's Highland fling with Rosie MacColl, 20.00 John McLuckie's show, 21.00 David Cullen show, 23.00 Through the night with Clyde 2
TUESDAY: 08.00 am on Fm, 08.10 Breakfast show, 10.00 Ken Hunter's Tuesday morning, 13.00 Macky on Fm, 17.00 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 19.00 Highest praise with Stuart Chalmers, 20.00 Clyde 2 through the night with the Greatest Hits.
WEDNESDAY: 08.00 am on Fm, 08.10 breakfast show, 09.00 Sounds Scottish repeat, 10.00 The Comfort Zone with Lesley Blair Simmonds, 13.00 Doug Carmichael in the afternoon, 17.00 Drivetime with Campbell Cameron, 19.00 Country meets Rock & Roll with Len Ford & Kenny MacLachlan alternating, 21.00 Gordon's Grooves with Gordon Macintyre, 22.00 Midnight through the night with Clyde 2.
THURSDAY: 08.00 - 11.00 Breakfast with Andy and Sarah, 11.00 Molly's Mix with Molly Black, 15.00 Drivetime with Stephen McPhee, 19.00

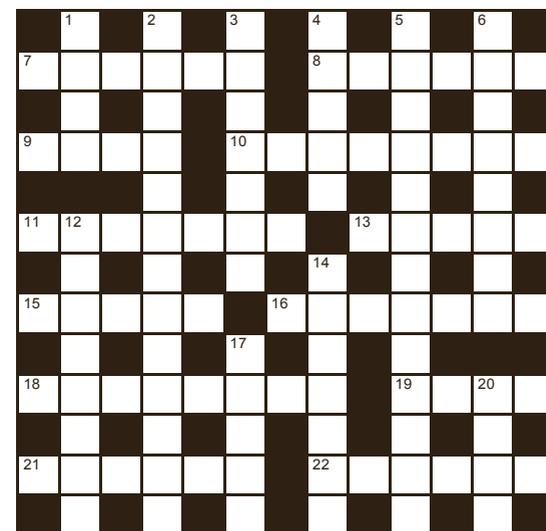
Christine's collection, 21.00 Ann's Ceilidh, 22.00 Margo till midnight then Through the night with Clyde 2.

FRIDAY: 08.00 breakfast show with Laura, 10.00 Teeny and Tiny aka Harry, Janet, and Anna, 17.00 Drivetime with Jim Lynch, 18.45 Sports View, 19.00 Country meets Country with Jackie Craig, 21.00 Peter Rainnie 12.00 Midnight through the night with Clyde 2.

SATURDAY: 08.00 The Breakfast show with Stephen MacPhee, 10.00 Saturday Morning live with Linda Crosher, 13.00 Clyde2 Sports and the Greatest hits, 18.00 Sports view - Oban Fm Dream team, 19.00 Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling, 20.00 Dave Lewis, 22.00 Margo till Midnight then Through the night with Clyde 2 and the Greatest Hits.

SUNDAY: 09.00 Sunday Morning with Breege, 11.00 Sunday brunch with Allan MacKechnie, 13.00 Clyde 2 on a lazy Sunday afternoon with the Greatest Hits, 19.00 New Country show - David Entwistle, 21.00 Drum & Bass - Graham Scott, 23.00 Clyde 2 through the night with the Greatest Hits.

Crossword



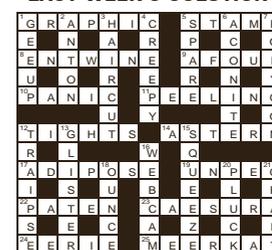
Across

- 7 Up-to-the-minute (6)
- 8 Showy bloom (6)
- 9 Bubbly (4)
- 10 Animal (8)
- 11 Really bad (7)
- 13 Night light (5)
- 15 Moan (5)
- 16 Rocket launcher (7)
- 18 Expunge (8)
- 19 Rose from slumber (4)
- 21 Exit (3,3)
- 22 Whip (6)

Down

- 1 Monkey type (4)
- 2 Intermediate voice to contralto (5-8)
- 3 Place to put the feet up (7)
- 4 Words of wisdom (5)
- 5 Consequently (13)
- 6 Mouth adornment (8)
- 12 Without shoes (8)
- 14 Impish (7)
- 17 Dirt (5)
- 20 Smooch (4)

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Maintenance Engineer

Location: Marybank
Salary: Competitive salary & benefits on offer

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- £150 million turnover
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The Scottish Salmon Company produces Scotland's Finest Sea Loch Fresh Salmon with Pride and Passion.

With our head office in Scotland's capital, Edinburgh, we breed, rear and process superior salmon exclusively in the pristine waters of the Scottish Western Highlands and Islands. Our customers appreciate our product quality, service excellence and provenance guarantee. We are also the proud recipients of multiple industry awards recognizing our commitment to Scotland, our industry and staff.

We are always looking for ambitious and motivated individuals to join our passionate team so if you want to test yourself in a challenging workplace, look no further...

An opportunity, with an immediate start date available, has arisen for a Maintenance Engineer to join the team in our processing plant in Marybank. Applicants will have a mechanical background with experience of electro-and mechanical repair maintenance including Fit and Turn and TIG. Individuals must have a hands-on approach and aim to make a positive contribution to the continued success of the team by reducing downtime due to mechanical issues.

Skills/Experience:

- Experience in a food processing environment and knowledge of food hygiene protocols would be useful but not essential as training will be given.
- Ideally, you will have worked in a similar role where you have proven experience of immediate and planned maintenance/repair of plant and machinery including mechanical handling equipment
- Work well under pressure

In return we offer:

- Competitive salary package
- Market leading pension scheme
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How to Apply:
To APPLY please email a copy of your CV to: workwithus@scottishsalmon.com
Alternatively, you can visit our website www.scottishsalmon.com
Closing Date: 5th February 2019

www.scottishsalmon.com



Environmental Opportunities

Scottish Sea Farms are an internationally recognised farmer of superior quality Scottish salmon. We pride ourselves in providing industry leading and highly personal development paths which build into fulfilling professional careers. If you are committed to developing our industry and are driven to put your strengths to work we would very much like to hear from you.

Our Environment Department is vital role in contributing to regulatory compliance, business growth and sustainability of our operations. The team play a critical role in the delivery of our environmental regulatory workload with the objective of meeting agreed targets.

We are currently looking to enhance our existing Environment Team. Educated to degree level in scientific or environmental discipline, candidates are expected to have experience in marine survey and monitoring work to meet the requirements of our various regulators. As such, familiarity with the regulatory regimes affecting Scottish aquaculture would be beneficial.

The successful candidates will divide their time between working in the field at our marine farms and our regional production offices. They will enjoy contributing and communicating as part of a team and will be practical, computer literate with excellent oral and written skills. Data analysis and reporting will be an integral part of this role and experience in the use of GIS would be advantageous.

The posts will be based at our offices at South Shian, by Oban or Scalloway, Shetland but will require periods of survey work at our company sites across Argyll, Highland, Orkney and Shetland.

In return we will offer an attractive salary dependant on experience along with pension scheme, life cover, occupational health support, subsidised gym membership and cycle to work scheme.

A current driving licence is essential.

We are an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons; however you must be able to provide documentation of your right to work in the UK.

To apply, please visit the careers page on our website:
<https://www.scottishseafarms.com/our-people/careers>.

Closing date for applications: 15th February 2019

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- Ensuring works are constructed in accordance with contract drawings and specification
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Please send C.V. to
jobs@mkmacleod.co.uk
or call 01546 602989 for further details.






Commis Chef

The Tayvallich Inn

We are looking for a new addition to our fantastic team, starting in March.

Full time hours are available working with our chefs to prepare and serve our highly reputable food which focuses on locally sourced seafood and produce. Accommodation available and salary based on experience. Check out Tripadvisor to read our great food reviews.

**Please get in touch with us on
01546 870282 or by emailing your CV
to info@tayvallichinn.co.uk
or via our Facebook page.**

FULL TIME STALKER / GHILLIE AND PART TIME HOUSEKEEPING ASSISTANT, COUPLE REQUIRED

Benmore Estate are looking to recruit a full time stalker/ghillie and a part time housekeeping assistant to join our estate team on the Island of Mull.

Applicants must be keen and experienced and willing to work to the highest standards as part of a small team.

In the first instance please email CV and accompanying letter to: julian@benmoreestate.co.uk



Chair of the Board of Management
Cathraiche a' Bhùird Stiùiridh

West Highland College UHI is seeking a new Chair for its Board of Management.

West Highland College UHI is a growing, dynamic and successful provider of higher and further education in the West Highlands, supported by a Board that collectively helps guide the strategic direction of the College and fosters an environment which maximises the potential of learners.

As Chair of the Board, you will be well-connected and bring your expertise and skills used in business or in the community to play a key role in ensuring that the governing body works effectively. You will have particular responsibility for providing strategic leadership to the Board and for ensuring it successfully discharges its overall responsibility for the activities of the College. You will also play a leading role in the College's relationship with the University of the Highlands and Islands and other key stakeholders.

The commitment is an average of 2-3 days a month. The post is not remunerated but out of pocket expenses will be paid. There is a small honorarium of £200 per annum.

Closing date: 9am Monday 25 February 2019

For further information please contact the secretary to the Board:
Email: claire.wylie.whc@uhi.ac.uk Tel: 01397 874525 (Monday to Thursday)
or see the College's vacancies page at www.whc.uhi.ac.uk/vacancies

In line with our Equality and Diversity policy, West Highland College UHI is committed to ensuring that all candidates are treated on the basis of their merits and abilities, and that unfair and unlawful discrimination is eliminated. We positively welcome applications from all sections of the community.

West Highland College UHI is a company limited by guarantee (SC153921) with charitable status (SC024193)
Registered Office: West Highland College UHI, Carmichael Way, Fort William. PH33 6FF

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH HIJOBS

WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003
WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2011
APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF AUTHORISATION
GEASGILL MARINE CAGE FISH FARM, LOCH NA KEAL, ISLE OF MULL

An application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) by The Scottish Salmon Company Ltd to vary water use licence number CAR/L/1000808 authorising the carrying on of a controlled activity at, near or in connection with Geasgill Marine Cage Fish Farm, Loch Na Keal, as follows:

Description of change to controlled activity	Waters affected	National grid reference
Change to the discharge of trade effluent arising from the increased production of salmon at an existing cage fish farm.	Loch Na Keal	NM 4363 3763

SEPA considers that the above controlled activity may have a significant adverse impact on the water environment.

A copy of the application and any accompanying information may be inspected free of charge, at the SEPA Registry below. Alternatively, the application may be viewed on SEPA's website at: <http://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/consultations/advertised-applications-under-car/>

Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement, by email to registrydingwall@sepa.org.uk or to the following address, quoting reference number CAR/L/1000808:

Registry Department, SEPA, Dingwall Office, Grasser House, Fodderty Way, Dingwall Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9XB

Written representations received by SEPA within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining the application. Any such representations will be placed in a public register unless the person making them requests that they should not be. Where such a request is made SEPA will include a statement in the register indicating that representations have been made which have been the subject of such a request.

Before determining the application, SEPA will:

- assess the risk to the water environment posed by the carrying on of the activity or activities;
- assess the indirect effects of that impact on any other aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected;
- consider any likely adverse social and economic effects of that impact and of any indirect environmental effects that have been identified;
- consider the likely environmental, social and economic benefits of the activity;
- assess the impact of the controlled activity or activities on the interests of other users of the water environment;
- assess what steps may be taken to ensure efficient and sustainable water use'; and
- apply and have regard to relevant legislation.

SEPA will then either grant or refuse to grant the application.

PUBLIC NOTICES



Scottish Government
 Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

THE A83 TRUNK ROAD (FURNACE TO CUMLODDEN) (TEMPORARY 40MPH SPEED RESTRICTION) ORDER 2017

THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS hereby direct under section 15(3) of the Road Traffic Regulation 1984 that the above order will continue in force until 8th August 2019.

The A83 Trunk Road (Furnace to Cumlodden) (Temporary 40mph Speed Restriction) Order 2017 came into force on 8th August 2017 and ceases to have effect on 8th February 2019.

The order imposes a temporary 40mph speed restriction in the interest of road safety following the outcome of the speed limit review which was carried out on that length of the A83 Taret - Lochgilphead - Campbeltown Trunk Road from a point 1.242 kilometres or thereby south west of the extended centre line of the junction with the C36 Furnace Side Road to a point 130 metres or thereby south west of the point where it meets the extended western gable wall of Number 1 Cumlodden Cottages a distance of 1.558 kilometres or thereby.

The order will expire on 8th August 2019 if no further direction is given and the order is neither revoked nor amended.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

An alternative route for traffic during the restriction is not required. A copy of the Direction and this Notice will be available on the Transport Scotland website at <https://www.transport.gov.scot/road-orders/?roadorderregion=1291>

For information about roadworks on motorways and trunk roads visit www.trafficscotland.org.uk

A SOMERVILLE

A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
 Transport Scotland, Buchanan House,
 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0HF



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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 online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>; or electronically at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development	Address	Proposal Description
19/00273/PIP	Land 35M West Of Braeside, Arisaig		Erection of house
18/05968/FUL	Camus South Cuil, Duror, Appin		Erection of house, yoga studio and extension to house
19/00161/FUL	Erracht Lodge Banavie, Fort William		Conversion of store to self-contained unit

Time period for comments is 14 days

ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
 Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF DECISION KILFINICHEN FARMS LLP MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 THE MARINE WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)

Notice is hereby given that Kilfinichen Farms LLP, registered at Kilfinichen, Isle of Mull, PA69 6ER has been granted by the Scottish Ministers a marine licence with conditions attached under section 20 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 to construct a timber loading pier at Kilfinichen, Isle of Mull, co-ordinates below (WGS84):

Latitude	Longitude
56° 22.834° N	006° 03.217° W
56° 22.832° N	006° 03.213° W
56° 22.829° N	006° 03.214° W
56° 22.801° N	006° 03.159° W
56° 22.799° N	006° 03.192° W
56° 22.797° N	006° 03.192° W
56° 22.799° N	006° 03.158° W
56° 22.794° N	006° 03.149° W
56° 22.784° N	006° 03.164° W
56° 22.783° N	006° 03.161° W
56° 22.793° N	006° 03.146° W
56° 22.790° N	006° 03.140° W
56° 22.780° N	006° 03.163° W
56° 22.774° N	006° 03.168° W
56° 22.770° N	006° 03.166° W
56° 22.765° N	006° 03.160° W
56° 22.764° N	006° 03.152° W
56° 22.765° N	006° 03.142° W
56° 22.783° N	006° 03.094° W
56° 22.776° N	006° 03.079° W
56° 22.773° N	006° 03.083° W
56° 22.768° N	006° 03.072° W
56° 22.778° N	006° 03.057° W
56° 22.783° N	006° 03.068° W
56° 22.780° N	006° 03.073° W
56° 22.787° N	006° 03.088° W
56° 22.793° N	006° 03.085° W
56° 22.799° N	006° 03.089° W
56° 22.836° N	006° 03.182° W
56° 22.839° N	006° 03.194° W
56° 22.840° N	006° 03.198° W
56° 22.837° N	006° 03.207° W
56° 22.835° N	006° 03.216° W

The decision notice outlining the reasons and considerations on which the decision is based together with related documentation are available for inspection online at <http://marine.gov.scot/ml/kilfinichen-pier-development-isle-mull> and <http://kilfinichen.com/> or upon written request to The Scottish Government, MS-LOT, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB.

WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003 WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2011 APPLICATION FOR VARIATION OF AUTHORISATION TULLICH WATER TREATMENT WORKS, OBAN

An application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) by Scottish Water to vary water use licence number CAR/L/1011647 authorising the carrying on of controlled activities at, near or in connection with Tullich Water Treatment Works, Oban, as follows:

Description of change to controlled activity	Waters affected	National grid reference
Proposed reduction in the volume of water being delivered downstream of the River Nell measuring weir from 18,180 m3 per day to 8,500 m3 per day (the "Hands Off Flow" or HOF) and provision for temporary emergency HOF waiver in drought conditions.	Feochan Mhor (or River Nell)	NM 8837 2641

SEPA considers that the above change(s) to a controlled activity may have a significant adverse impact on the water environment and on the interests of other users of the water environment. Other activities are included in the application that are considered not likely to have such an impact and are not listed here. Details of all the activities applied for can be seen in the application.

A copy of the application and any accompanying information may be inspected free of charge, at the SEPA Registry below, between 9.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except local and national holidays). Alternatively, the application may be viewed on SEPA's website at: <http://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/consultations/advertised-applications-under-car/>

Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement, either by email to registrydingwall@sepa.org.uk or to the following address, quoting reference number CAR/L/1011647.

Registry Department, SEPA, Dingwall office, Graesser House, Fodderty Way, Dingwall, IV15 9XB

Written representations received by SEPA within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining the application. Any such representations will be placed in a public register unless the person making them requests that they should not be. Where such a request is made SEPA will include a statement in the register indicating that representations have been made which have been the subject of such a request.

Before determining the application, SEPA will:

- assess the risk to the water environment posed by the carrying on of the activity or activities;
- assess the indirect effects of that impact on any other aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected;
- consider any likely adverse social and economic effects of that impact and of any indirect environmental effects that have been identified;
- consider the likely environmental, social and economic benefits of the activity;
- assess the impact of the controlled activity or activities on the interests of other users of the water environment;
- assess what steps may be taken to ensure efficient and sustainable water use'; and
- apply and have regard to relevant legislation.

SEPA will then either grant or refuse to grant the application.

WATER ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES (SCOTLAND) ACT 2003 WATER ENVIRONMENT (CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2011 APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISATION – CHOIRE NAM MUC HYDRO SCHEME, SALLACHAN, ARDGOUR

An application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) by Corrigan Contractors Limited for authorisation to carry on controlled activities at, near or in connection with Choire Nam Muc Hydro Scheme, namely:

Description of controlled activity	Waters affected	National grid ref.
Construction of impoundments		
Earth Embankment Dam	Allt Lice	NM 9624 6513
Intake 1	Tributary of AlltnaFhaing	NM 9759 6456
Intake 2	Tributary of AlltnaFhaing	NM 9738 6473
Intake 3	Tributary of an TuimUidhir	NM 9724 6480
Intake 4	Tributary of an TuimUidhir	NM 9703 6494
Intake 5	Tributary of an TuimUidhir	NM 9692 6499
Abstraction (m3 of water per day)		
Earth Embankment Reservoir (36118)	Reservoir	NM 9624 6513
Earth Embankment Allt Lice (29290)	Allt Lice	NM 9624 6513
Intake 1 (1116)	Tributary of AlltnaFhaing	NM 9759 6456
Intake 2 (2887)	Tributary of AlltnaFhaing	NM 9738 6473
Intake 3 (925)	Tributary of an TuimUidhir	NM 9724 6480
Intake 4 (803)	Tributary of an TuimUidhir	NM 9703 6494
Intake 5 (1098)	Tributary of an TuimUidhir	NM 9692 6499
Return of abstracted water		
From intakes 1-5	Tributary of Allt Lice	NM 9670 6520
From tailrace discharge	Allt an t-SeanaBhaile	NM 9708 6383

SEPA considers that the above controlled activities may have a significant adverse impact on the water environment and on the interests of other users of the water environment.

A copy of the application and any accompanying information may be inspected free of charge, at the SEPA Registry below, between 9.30 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday (except local and national holidays). Alternatively, the application may be viewed on SEPA's website at: <http://www.sepa.org.uk/regulations/consultations/advertised-applications-under-car/>

Any person affected or likely to be affected by, or having an interest in, the application may make representations to SEPA in writing within 28 days beginning with the date of this advertisement, either by email to registrydingwall@sepa.org.uk or to the following address, quoting reference number CAR/L/1175090.

Registry Department, SEPA, Fodderty Way, Dingwall Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9XB

Written representations received by SEPA within 28 days of this advertisement will be taken into consideration in determining the application. Any such representations will be placed in a public register unless the person making them requests that they should not be. Where such a request is made SEPA will include a statement in the register indicating that representations have been made which have been the subject of such a request.

Before determining the application, SEPA will:

- assess the risk to the water environment posed by the carrying on of the activity or activities;
- assess the indirect effects of that impact on any other aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected;
- consider any likely adverse social and economic effects of that impact and of any indirect environmental effects that have been identified;
- consider the likely environmental, social and economic benefits of the activity;
- assess the impact of the controlled activity or activities on the interests of other users of the water environment;
- assess what steps may be taken to ensure efficient and sustainable water use; and
- apply and have regard to relevant legislation.

SEPA will then either grant or refuse the application.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

Argyll and Bute Council

Councillor Jim Lynch (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)

Councillor Lynch will be holding a surgery on Friday 8th February 2019 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 2.00pm - 4.00pm. He can be contacted by email - Jim.Lynch@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567893

Councillor Elaine Robertson (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)

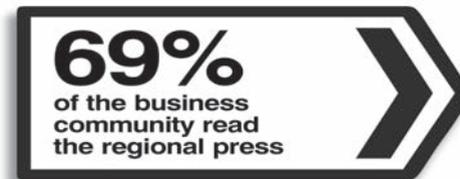
Councillor Robertson will be holding a surgery on Friday 22nd February 2019 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 10.00am - 12 Noon. Councillor Robertson can also be contacted by email - Elaine.Robertson@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Councillor Sir Jamie McGrigor (E.W. 4 Oban South and the Isles)

Councillor Sir McGrigor will be holding a surgery on Friday 22nd February 2019 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 2.00pm - 4.00pm. He can be contacted by email - Jamie.McGrigor@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 567853

Councillor Kieron Green (E.W. 5 Oban North and Lorn)

Councillor Green will be holding a surgery on Friday 15th February 2019 in the Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban from 2.00pm - 4.00pm. He can be contacted by email - Kieron.Green@argyll-bute.gov.uk and by telephone 01631 562 444



**CROFTING COMMISSION
COIMISEAN NA
CROITEARACHD
DECROFTING
APPLICATION**

G Macarthur
3a Caoles
0.08 ha – Site for a dwelling
house
95051

Written comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 01/03/2019. Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot

The Crofting Commission takes the protection of your privacy seriously. To safeguard your personal data and make sure that it is accurate, we only collect and/or store the data necessary to carry out our functions as a regulatory body. You can find a copy of our Privacy Notice at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/openness-and-customer-care.

First registration of a croft

Frank Beaton has registered their croft 21 Airds Bay, Airds Bay, Ardchatten & Muckairn on the Crofting Register held by the Register of Scotland. Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 20th September 2019. Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C5555

**Oban Times
PUBLIC NOTICES**



**Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot**

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND

**ROADS (SCOTLAND) ACT 1984
ACQUISITION OF LAND (AUTHORISATION PROCEDURE) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1947
THE A830 TRUNK ROAD (SHLATACH RAIL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 201[]**

Notice is hereby given that the Scottish Ministers, in exercise of the powers conferred by the above mentioned Acts, on the 23 January 2019 prepared the above mentioned Compulsory Purchase Order which affects the land described in the Schedule hereto for the purpose of improving the A830 Fort William to Mallaig Trunk Road, lying between Glenfinnan and Ranochan in the vicinity of Glenfinnan, Inverness by replacing the Shlatlach Rail Bridge.

The Order is about to be made and comes into operation only if made. If the Order is made, a conveyance registered in implement of the Order may vary or extinguish rights to enforce real burdens and servitudes affecting the land.

Copies of the draft Order and of the map referred to therein have been deposited at the following offices and may be seen there without payment of fee during normal business hours from 31 January until 14 March 2019:- Transport Scotland, 5th Floor Reception, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF; The Highland Council, Charles Kennedy Building, Achintore Road, Fort William, PH33 6TZ and Arisaig Post Office, The Spar, The Harbour, Arisaig, PH39 4NH.

ANY PERSON may object to the making of the Order, by notice in writing, to the Director of Roads, c/o Karl McAreavey, Transport Scotland, Network Administration, 4th Floor, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF quoting reference NW/A830/SHLATACH RAIL/CPO/KM and stating the grounds of objection. Any objections must be received on or before 14 March 2019.

SCHEDULE

In this schedule the plot references and areas referred to below correspond to those given in the Schedule and the map annexed to A830 Trunk Road (Shlatlach Rail Bridge Replacement) Compulsory Purchase Order 201[].

Plot Nos.	Land in the County of Inverness.
1, 2 and 3	Moor land/rough ground/woodland lying to the north-east of the A830 and north of the West Highland Railway Line.
4 and 14	Moor land/rough ground lying to the south-west of the A830 and north of the West Highland Railway Line.
5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19	Moor land/rough ground/private track lying to the south-west of the A830 and south of the West Highland Railway Line.
8 and 15	Rough ground, woodland and track lying to the north-east of the A830 and south of the West Highland Railway Line.
17 and 22	The verges and solum of the A830 lying to the north-west and south-east of the West Highland Railway Line.
21	Land forming part of the West Highland Railway Line lying to the west of the A830 at Shlatlach Rail Bridge.

**A830 TRUNK ROAD SHLATACH RAIL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
DETERMINATION BY THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS UNDER SECTIONS 20A AND 55A
OF THE ROADS (SCOTLAND) ACT 1984**

The Scottish Ministers hereby give notice that they have determined that their proposal to carry out a full replacement of the Shlatlach Rail Bridge on a length of the A830 Fort William to Mallaig Trunk Road in the vicinity of Glenfinnan, Inverness is - (a) not a project which falls within Annex I of Council Directive No. 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment as amended by Council Directive No. 97/11/EC and Council Directive No. 2003/35/EC of the European Parliament and Council;

(b) a relevant project within the meaning of Sections 20A(9) and 55A(7) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, and falls within Annex II of the said Directive but that having regard to the selection criteria contained in Annex III of the Directive it should not be made subject to an environmental impact assessment in accordance with the Directive, and accordingly the project does not require the publication of an Environmental Statement.

**ROADS (SCOTLAND) ACT 1984
THE A830 TRUNK ROAD (SHLATACH RAIL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT) 201[]
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Scottish Ministers propose to make the following Orders:**

1. The A830 Trunk Road (Shlatlach Rail Bridge Replacement) (Trunking) Order 201[] under section 5(2) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, the general effect of which will be to provide for the construction of new trunk road at Shlatlach Rail Bridge in the vicinity of Glenfinnan, Inverness.

2. The A830 Trunk Road (Shlatlach Rail Bridge Replacement) (Side Roads) Order 201[] under sections 12(1), (5) and 70(1) of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, the general effect of which will be to provide for the stopping up of existing roads, stopping up of a private accesses and the provision of a new means of access when the new trunk road is opened for the purposes of through traffic.

A copy of the proposed Orders and accompanying plans may be inspected, free of charge until 14 March 2019 during normal business hours at the offices of Transport Scotland, 5th Floor Reception, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF; The Highland Council, Charles Kennedy Building, Achintore Road, Fort William, PH33 6TZ and Arisaig Post Office, The Spar, The Harbour, Arisaig, PH39 4NH.

ANY PERSON may object to the making of the Orders by notice in writing to the Director of Roads, c/o Karl McAreavey, Transport Scotland, 4th Floor, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow, G4 0HF quoting reference NW/A830/SHLATACH/KM by the 14th March 2019. Objections should state the title of the Order, the name and address of the objector, the matters to which they relate and the grounds on which they are made.

A copy of the Order and this Notice will be available on the Transport Scotland website at <https://www.transport.gov.scot/road-orders/?roadorderregion=1291>

H D GILLIES
A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers
Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road,
GLASGOW G4 0HF



Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

These applications listed below may be inspected between 09:00-12:30 -13.30-16:00 hrs Monday to Friday at Municipal Buildings Albany Street Oban PA34 4AW, 1A Manse Brae Lochgilphead PA31 8RD, your Local Customer Service Point and by logging on to the Council's website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING
(LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997**

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
19/00033/PP	Alterations and partial re-roofing, formation of vehicular access and rebuilding of entrance wall and change of use of outbuildings to class 6 (Use for Storage only) - part retrospective	Former Highland Arts And Monaveen Lodge Ellenabeich Isle Of Seil Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 4RF
18/02734/LIB	Installation of 1 no. (double sided) customer information screens on 1 No. gallow column located on platform 1.	The Railway Station Station Road Bridge Of Orchy Argyll And Bute PA36 4AD
18/02735/LIB	Installation of 2 no. (double sided) customer information screens on 2 no. gallow columns located on platforms 1 and 2.	Dalmally Railway Station Dalmally Argyll And Bute PA33 1AA
18/02737/PP	Erection of replacement 2 storey side extension	Duncraig Isle Of Iona Argyll And Bute PA76 6SP
19/00084/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 15/03318/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Garden Ground Of Jawe (Plot 1) Fishnish Craignure Isle Of Mull PA65 6BA
19/00046/PP	Use of land to allow the continuation of siting of food hut and formation of decking area to facilitate external seating area	The Creel Fionnphort Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
19/00085/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 15/03319/PPP (Site for the erection of dwellinghouse)	Garden Ground Of Jawe (Plot 2) Fishnish Craignure Isle Of Mull PA65 6BA
18/02721/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	The Pottery Baugh Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute PA77 6UN
18/02717/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Land South East Of Fascalade (Plot 7) Baliscate Tobermory Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
18/02720/PPP	Site for proposed residential development	Site At Lonan Drive Oban Argyll And Bute
19/00023/PP	Installation of replacement door and installation of window (retrospective)	The Old Byre Main Street Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA48 7TX
18/02777/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of access	Land South Of Allwyns Lotts Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute

Written comments can be made to the above address or submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed at all Area Offices, Council Libraries and on the Councils website.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



PUBLIC DROP-IN SESSION

LOCHALINE FEBRUARY 2019

**ALIGNING STRUCTURE
REPLACEMENT- LOCHALINE
FERRY TERMINAL**

Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) will be carrying out work at Lochaline Ferry Terminal to replace the aligning structure, as well as creating extra marshalling space.

A public drop-in session has been arranged to share details of the work and alternative service arrangements during a planned six-week closure period.

Lochaline Village Hall

Tuesday 19th February

3.30pm - 6.30pm

Individuals are welcome to drop in at any time during the session.

Representatives of Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL), ferry operator CalMac Ferries Limited (CFL), project manager/engineer Royal Haskoning DHV and the appointed contractor, George Leslie Limited will be available to discuss details of the work, scheduled to begin in May 2019, with a six-week closure period in October 2019.

Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd, Municipal Buildings, Fore Street, Port Glasgow PA14 5EQ

01475 749920 | operations@cmassets.co.uk

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Mission to boost Highlander sales

Organisers of the Highland Cattle Society's sales and shows are out to re-invigorate the commercial side of its great gatherings once again at Oban Livestock Centre.

They hope by broadening and expanding the event to include commercial animals, more sellers and buyers will come and with them bring an even bigger buzz back to the town.

The 128th Spring Show and Sale is on February 10 and February 11 and rooms have already been booked up weeks in advance at the town's Royal Hotel, where the society has its dinner, prizegiving and ceilidh.

People come to the society's shows and sales from across the world, particularly Germany, Denmark, Austria and Finland.

There are 132 animals coming into the ring next month including a draft of 14 in-calf heifers.

Highland cattle and Oban have a very long connection. The breed is synonymous with Oban. It brings so much revenue to the town at times of the year when it needs it most, in February and October,

said society council member and show judge Angus MacGillivray.

Fellow council member and judge Angus Mackay, who has his own Highlanders and is keeping a track of the society's history, added: 'It would be quite impossible to calculate all the amount of business the shows and sales have brought to Oban over 128 years.'

The commercial side to the society's sales was re-introduced, after a long break, at its October show last year.

'We have to broaden the appeal of our Highland cattle sales. Because we have been here so long doesn't mean we can rest on our laurels,' said Mr MacGillivray.

A phenomenal demand for Highland cattle some decades ago created a whole raft of new breeders wanting and getting good prices for their pure animals but it meant the eye was taken off the commercial side – the majority of commercial animals were Highland crosses.

World record sales for top types at peak of the interest sat at 20,000 guineas in the 1990s.

Decades on and changing



Highland Cattle Society council members and judge Angus MacKay and Angus MacGillivray want to see the Oban connection stay strong, bringing more sellers and buyers to the town.

times are once again bringing Highlanders to the fore. Mr Mckay said: 'I believe hill-farmers are about to be faced with dramatic changes in the face of us leaving the EU and how agriculture is going to be supported. If they are going to remain in the cattle business it's vital their cows can be kept at a minimal cost and the Highlanders and their various crosses fit that bill.'

Highlanders have high green credentials. They are easy-

kept, they are the hardiest of all the British beef breed, are instinctive foragers and have long productive lives which can have a big saving on replacement costs.

One breeder who will be at next month's show is Duncan Buchanan whose family have been rearing Highland cattle at Shenavallie Farm near Benderloch for three generations and long before that elsewhere on the Lochneil Estate.

Mr Buchanan, who has almost 100 cattle on the farm including 37 purebred Highlanders, will be taking his rare white heifer yearling calf Bhoideach Raibheach 36th to the spring show in the hope of a 'reasonable' price, he said.

As well as the pure breeds, he also crosses some of his Shenavallie Highlanders with Blonde Aquitanes and is experimenting a cross with a Belgian Blue hybrid.

To find out more about the breed and society, go to highlandcattlesociety.com

Oban market report

Oban: Tuesday January 22

United Auctions held its annual new year sale of cattle and sheep at Oban Livestock Centre. All classes of stock sold well at levels in keeping with current trends.

Principal lots and prizes:

Top prices per head:

Bullocks:

£570 – Balvicar Farm: £550, £545 and

£520(2) – Keill Farm.

Heifers:

£500 – Balvicar Farm.

Top prices per kilo:

Bullocks:

226p – Balvicar Farm

Heifers:

205p – Balvicar Farm.

Cast ewes:

Cross:

£77 – Hillcrest, Tیره: £63 – Gott Farm,

Tیره: £61 – 4 Gott, Tیره: £59 and £56 –

Gott Farm.

BF:

£29 – Dunolliebeg Farm : £25 – Torloisk

Farm & Dunach Estate.

Cast rams

TEXx:

£75 – Achnacree Beag: £64 – Newfield:

£48 – Strontoiler Farm.

BF:

£46 – Ardachy

CHEV:

£72 – Barndromin : £56 – Ensay Farm :
£52 – Barndromin.

Cross:

£54 – Dunach Estate.

BF:

£54 – Ederline Estate: £50 – Croft One,

Fanmore: £50 – Musdale Farm.

Hoggs:

Cross:

£72 – Gott Farm, Tیره: £66 – 4 Gott,

Tیره: £60 – Strongorm.

SUFFx:

£67 – Treshnish Farm.

TEXx:

£58 – Balvicar Farm.

CHEVx:

£57 and £56 – Strongorm Farm: £56 and

£54 – Gallanachmore.

BF:

£47.50 and £42.00 – Corrylorn: £41.00 –

Ederline Estate: £40.00 – Castles Estate.

Wedders:

SUFFx:

£64 – 3 Killeen, Lismore.

TEXx:

£49 – Kilpatrick Croft.

CHEV:

£60 – Cuan Croft.

CROSS:

£63 – 4 Gott Tیره.

BF:

£48 – Ederline Estate.

Call for government to tackle winter feed crisis

The Scottish Conservatives have written to Fergus Ewing calling on the SNP government to urgently set out plans for addressing the winter feed crisis looming in Scottish agriculture at present.

Production of winter feed has been severely affected by a harsh winter followed by a dry summer last year.

This has left farmers facing a choice between extremely expensive food bills, or a reduction in livestock.

Donald Cameron, Scottish Conservative shadow rural economy secretary, has asked the cabinet secretary for the rural economy how the Scottish Government will ensure that Scottish farmers have access to winter feed supplies at reasonable prices.

He has also asked Mr Ewing what action the government plans to take to support

livestock farmers affected by this crisis.

Mr Cameron said: 'Once again livestock farmers face being neglected by this government due to a winter feed crisis which is having devastating effects on their farming operations.'

'That's why I have written to Fergus Ewing requesting he immediately sets out the Scottish Government's plans for addressing these issues.'

'The SNP must listen to farmers and ensure that they have access to winter feed supplies at reasonable prices.'

'After such a hard and late winter for livestock farmers last year, many farmers continue to struggle.'

'This is crucial for livestock farmers and the rural economy as a whole. The SNP must act now before it gets any worse.'

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North Argyll Branch Blackface Sheep Breeders Association

AGM

Wednesday 6th of March at 8pm
in the Falls of Lora Hotel, Connel

The annual stock judging will be held on
Friday 8th February at 7.30pm at Dalmally Auction
Mart (by kind permission of United Auctions).

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SUBARU XV - 4X4 MAGAZINE'S CROSSOVER ESTATE OF THE YEAR

Subaru UK is pleased to announce the Subaru XV has been awarded 4x4 Magazine's 'Crossover Estate of the Year 2019', a testimony to Subaru's on-going commitment to build cars that are incredibly safe, extremely capable and unfalteringly reliable, too.

Beating off strong competition in its category, XV impressed the judging panel at 4x4 Magazine across the board. The safety credentials and suitability of the XV as a family car were praised, with reference to XV being Euro NCAP's highest-scoring vehicle of all time for child occupant protection at the time of its launch.

XV was also admired for its off-road credentials, the unique combination of Subaru's permanent Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive and Boxer engine proven to provide unrivalled capability in mud and rough terrain. X-Mode with Hill Descent Control, standard on all models in the range, was also noted to be very effective in particularly challenging conditions.

4x4 Magazine also recognised that Subaru's new Global Platform, which will underpin all new model introductions going forward, results in further improvements to the sure-footed combination of grip, feel and sharpness for which Subaru is famed, giving XV exceptional ride and refinement.

Alan Kidd, Editor of 4x4 Magazine, said: "The new XV builds on the company's already formidable strengths. It's a very, very fine vehicle with a price tag that makes it the best 4x4 estate you can buy."

Subaru UK Managing Director Chris Graham commented: "We are delighted that the XV has won 4x4 Magazine's Crossover Estate of the Year 2019. This award is testimony to a great product that our customers love and trust to get themselves, and their families, safely from A to B, whatever the conditions. We're proud to produce some of the safest, most capable and reliable vehicles on the market today."



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE SUBARU XV RANGE PLEASE VISIT
www.sandsservices-subaru.co.uk/new/subaru/xv/offers

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Vehicles shown: XV 2.0i SE Premium OTR price of £29,060, Forester 2.0i XE OTR price £30,550 & Outback 2.5i SE Premium OTR price £33,560. Prices include optional special paint finish [£550]

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ŠKODA IS ON TOP OF THE WORLD WITH LATEST FLEET AWARD WINS

ŠKODA



Milton Keynes, 28 January 2019 – The Superb continues to outshine the competition as ŠKODA's flagship was once again named Best Upper Medium Car for an incredible fourth consecutive year at the Great British Fleet Event. The awards, which is run by leading business-to-business publication, Fleet World, also awarded the title of Best Fleet Large SUV to the ŠKODA Kodiaq.

A popular choice among fleet operators, the Superb features a fleet-focused SE Technology trim that includes adaptive cruise control, SmartLink connectivity, and Alcantara/leather upholstery at no extra cost above the SE model. The cavernous interior adds to its comfort, with 660 litres of boot space that extends to 1,950 litres with all rear seats folded down; the Superb has enough space for even the most space-hungry of fleet drivers.

The Kodiaq, which collected the title of Best Fleet Large SUV

thanks to its winning combination of style and value, continues to grow in popularity among fleet drivers. At up to 2,065 litres of luggage space with the rear seats down, no other car in its segment offers the same level of practicality.

Henry Williams, Head of Fleet for ŠKODA UK, commented: "ŠKODA had a recording-breaking year in True Fleet last year and the brand continues to grow from strength-to-strength. The Superb remains in high demand for fleets and I'm delighted it continues to be recognised across the industry. The ŠKODA brand is synonymous with strong design and innovative technology which is often the reserve of premium brands, which is why our cars stand out as the smart choice for businesses."

For further information on ŠKODA's fleet product line-up and to the latest offers, visit www.skoda.co.uk/fleet

- ŠKODA brings home the trophies at the inaugural Great British Fleet Event
- Fleet World magazine names the ŠKODA Superb as Best Upper Medium Car
- Kodiaq is crowned Best Fleet Large SUV



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*At the end of the agreement there are three options: i) pay the optional final payment and own the vehicle; ii) return the vehicle: subject to excess mileage and fair wear and tear, charges may apply; or iii) replace: part exchange the vehicle.

With Solutions Personal Contract Plan. 18s+. Subject to availability & status. Excludes SE Technology. T&Cs apply. Ordered by 1 April 2019 from participating retailers. Indemnities may be required. ^Service plan covers first two consecutive services limited to 1x Oil and 1x Oil and Inspection service. Accurate at time of publication. ŠKODA Financial Services. #£500 voucher available for orders placed between 20 December 2018 – 31 January 2019 and registered by 31 March 2019. Subject to availability. Retail customers only, excluding SE Technology models, CITIGO S Trim & KODIAQ vRS. Excludes Channels Islands and Isle of Man.

Official fuel consumption WLTP for the ŠKODA OCTAVIA MY19 range in mpg (litres/100km): Combined 58.9 (4.8) to 35.3 (8.0). NEDC derived CO₂ combined emissions for the ŠKODA OCTAVIA MY19 range are 156 to 103 g/km.

Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO₂ figures (known as WLTP). The CO₂ figures shown however, are based on a calculation designed to be equivalent to the outgoing (NEDC) test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. For more information, please see www.skoda.co.uk/owners/wltp-info or consult your retailer. Data correct at December 2018. Figures quoted are for a range of configurations (including non-UK) and are subject to change due to ongoing approvals/changes. Please contact your retailer for further information. For fuel consumption data based on the outgoing test cycle (NEDC equivalent data), which is the 'official' UK fuel consumption data until 31.12.18, please consult your retailer.

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DEATHS

BERRY - Peacefully after a short illness at the Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on January 28, 2019, aged 90 years, Catherine née Boyd, beloved wife of the late George, loving mother of George and the late Michael, a dear granny, sister and friend. R.I.P.

CAMERON - Peacefully with his family by his side, at the R.A.H Paisley, on January 25, 2019, Sandy Cameron, aged 72 years, of North Park Cottage, Glenburn Road, Ardrishaig. Beloved husband of the late Susan Cameron, loving father of Charles and Duncan and much loved and adored grandpa of Colin, Cara, Lilly and Georgia. Respected father-in-law of Catherine and Katie and a dear brother-in-law, uncle and cousin to all the family. Funeral service will be held in Lochgilphead Parish Church today, Thursday January 31, 2019, at 12noon, thereafter to Achabreac Cemetery. Family flowers only please. Donations to Macmillan Nurses, Mid Argyll, Scottish Air Ambulance Service and M.S Centre, Lochgilphead.

FLETCHER - Suddenly but peacefully at home, 1 Dochas Place, Lochgilphead, on January 23, 2019, Mary Margaret, nee MacLeod, in her 81st year. Beloved wife of Hugh Malcolm Fletcher, dearest mum of Christine and Morag, loving granny to Mhairi and Nicholas, and a dear mother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law and aunt to all the family. Funeral service will be held at Lochgilphead Parish Church on Friday February 1, 2019 at 12 noon, thereafter to Achabreac Cemetery. Flowers or donations to The Dochas Centre. All friends are respectfully invited to attend.

HEGARTY - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital on January 23, 2019 with all his family by his side, Denis Redmond Hegarty, eldest son of the late John and Jean Hegarty (Newlands, Glasgow), devoted husband of Linda, dearest dad of Simon, Denise, Theresa and Eilidh, stepdad and best friend to Jordan, proud papa, loving brother, brother-in-law and uncle. Sorely missed. R.I.P. Funeral will take place at St. Columba's Cathedral, Oban on Friday, February 1 at 10am, thereafter to Muckairn Cemetery, Taynuilt.

HOUGHTON - Peacefully after a short illness on January 28, 2019, at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, David in his 86th year, beloved husband of the late Muriel, a much loved Dad to Linda and the late Michael, Grandpa to Isla, father-in-law to Hugh and a dear friend to many. Funeral service will be held on Friday, February 8, 2019 in Langbank Church at 1.30pm thereafter, Clydebank Crematorium at 2.30pm.

LAIRD - Peacefully at Erskine Park Nursing Home on Friday, January 25, 2019 Mary (May) MacIntyre MacKay Laird aged 82, formerly of 10 Cullipool, Isle of Luing, beloved wife of the late John Laird, dearly loved mother of Sheena and Alison and devoted granny to Iain, Sarah, Rebecca, Hannah and Angus. Funeral service will be held at 12.00 noon on Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at Kilchattan Church Luing, thereafter to Kilchattan Cemetery. Family flowers only. A retiring collection will be held in aid of Alzheimer Scotland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BRECHIN - The Brechin family would like to thank everyone for the many cards and expressions of sympathy received following their recent sad loss. Our heartfelt thanks to all carers, district nurses and staff of Glenaray Ward for their compassionate care. Sincere thanks to Rev Hilda Smith for her personal and uplifting service and to organist, Catherine Paterson. Thanks also to Richard and staff at Kilmartin Hotel for excellent catering, to Morna for the beautiful floral tributes and to Donald MacDonald, Funeral Directors, for their professional and caring service. Finally, thank you to all who paid their last respects to Gordon in church and at the graveside, especially those who travelled a great distance in difficult weather conditions. All very much appreciated by his family. The collection for Glenaray Ward and the Macmillan Suite raised £400.

CANNON - Roger. Mabel and family would like to express their sincere thanks to family and friends for the many cards, flowers and kind expressions of sympathy following the recent sad loss of Roger. Also to the Rev Louise McClements for an uplifting service. Thanks to GP

Doctor Mary Harris, district nurses and the Care team. Thanks to all who attended the funeral and generously donated the sum of £863.25 for Parkinson's UK. Also to J & D Lawson, Funeral Directors for their support and guidance.

CULVER - The family of the late Elizabeth (Betty) would like to thank Dr Cairns and the community nurses at Appin for their care and assistance over the last few years. Thanks also to Duncan Gunn for the funeral arrangements. To all the people of Lismore, sincere thanks for their condolences and support. In Lismore Betty found a home where she was welcomed, could take an active role in the life of the community and made firm friendships. Tapadh leibh.

REID - The family of the late Margaret Reid would like to thank all family and friends for all the many cards, telephone calls and visits following their loss. Special thanks to the Home Carers who supported Margaret at home. Thanks to Belford Hospital, the Doctors and District Nurses of Glen Mhor Medical Practice for the care shown to Margaret over the years. Grateful thanks to McLellan Funeral Directors for making a very stressful and emotional time so much easier with their care, compassion and professionalism. Finally, thank you to everyone who attended the service and gave so generously the amount of £458.67 which was donated to Lochaber Macmillan Nurses. Margaret's passing has left a huge void in the family's lives but the support they have received will help them going forward.

WARD - Kate, Iain and Martin would like to give their sincere thanks to all relatives and friends for the kindness and support shown to them during Alan's illness and after his passing on January 19. Thanks to all who attended the funeral service, many having travelled very far to be there. Heartfelt thanks to all doctors and nursing staff and in particular Glen Mhor Practice, Derek MacBride Macmillan Nurse and also Highland Hospice. Special thanks to Rev Dr. Gordon Gatward OBE and Rev Dr. Malcolm Kinnear for the wonderful profound service also to Nairn MacArthur for the reading, Rose Young and Mary Michie for the music, McDonald Bros for the flowers,

to Loch Leven Hotel for the catering and many thanks to Scott, Linnie and co, McLellan Funeral Directors for their professional and caring services. Finally to all who generously donated the sum of £1090 to Highland Hospice and Macmillan Nurses.

MEMORIALS

CAMPBELL - David (The Bear). 2/10/60 - 5/2/12.

Think of you every day
Memories are with us and here to stay
In our hearts always.

- Mary, David, Maree and Hamish, Glenn and Drew.

CAMPBELL - My dear son David, always remembered with love. RIP

CAMPBELL - In loving memory of my young brother David (the Bear), who passed away February 5, 2012. Who is in our thoughts each and every day. Remembering you is easy, we do it every day, but missing you is heartache, that never goes away.

- Diana, Mel, Gwen and Lorna, sister, brother-in-law and nieces.

Oban Times
ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAMPBELL - David (Bear) taken on February 5, 2012. In loving memory of those who are forever present in our hearts.

- Marina, David, Davina and Iona, sister, brother-in-law and nieces.

KENNEDY - Angus, passed away February 1, 2015.

I watched you suffer
But all I could do
Was sit close by
God eased your pain
But broke my heart.

- Fiona.

MACCOLL - Remembering with love our mother who passed away at Kilmore on January 29, 2013.

- Morven, Christina, Deirdre, Duncan and families.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of my dear wife Catherine MacDonald, Churchfield House, Kinlochewe who passed away on February 1, 2007. Also remembered at this time my dear cousins Hugh MacDonald, Stronaba Farm, Spean-Bridge who passed away on February 1, 1984 and Robert MacDonald who passed away on January 17, 1990 at Maidstone, Kent.

Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.
- Malcolm MacDonald.

MACLACHLAN - In loving memory of uncle Ian who died February 2, 2005.

Lovingly remembered.

- By nephew Gordon, London SW4, Joseph and cousins Sheena, Joyce and Rosine.

McCOMBIE - In loving memory of a dear father, father-in-law, grandad and great-grandad Bert, who died January 31, 2015.

If tears could build a stairway and memories a lane
We would walk the path to Heaven and bring you home again
Sadly missed.

- Teenie, Peter and John.

You are always in our thoughts Grandad

- Fraser, Fiona and Kevin.

Gentle Jesus up above
Give Granddad Bertie all our love xx

- Kyle and Summer.

PORTER - Precious memories of wife and mam, Flora Porter (Patsy) who was taken from us on February 2, 2016.

Too far away for sight or speech
But never too far for our love to reach.

- Dick and Dixie.

Oban Times
ANNOUNCEMENTS



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New group to tackle loneliness

The Scottish Government has announced the membership of a new group to advise on addressing social isolation.

In December 2018 MSPs launched the first strategy focused on social isolation and loneliness in society, backed by £1 million of funding.

A range of public, third sector organisations and experts who helped develop the strategy will now put it into action.

Minister for older people and equalities Christina McKelvie announced the members of the group on a visit to Dunbar Grammar School's Cross Generation intergenerational project. This project has been running at the school for 16

years and includes monthly sessions for lunches, day trips and a film club with older members of the local community.

Ms McKelvie said: 'As one of the first governments in the world to address the issue of social isolation in society, we want to promote positive attitudes and tackle the stigma associated with loneliness. It can affect any one, at any stage, or from any walk of life and that's why we invited charities like Youthlink Scotland to be members of the group.'

'The membership of the new group has valuable experience to help with this important work.'

'Projects such as Cross Generation

are exactly the kind of activity which can help to beat loneliness. It was great to see the interaction between the generations, both learning from each other and enjoying each other's company. Contact between different generations can help build understanding, strengthen communities and allow the sharing of invaluable skills, experiences and perspectives.'

Alison Clyde, director of Generations Working Together, who help to organise the Cross Generation group, said: 'We were thrilled that the minister could visit an intergenerational project herself to see it in action. The projects bringing younger and older people together are beneficial for both gen-

erations. They also tackle loneliness and isolation as well as being highly beneficial for all the community.'

Full membership of the national implementation group includes:
Scottish Government
COSLA
Voluntary Health Scotland
Befriending Networks
Campaign to End Loneliness
Transport Scotland
Architecture and Place Scotland
Age Scotland
Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland
Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Youthlink Scotland
NHS Health Scotland
Generations Working Together
sportScotland

THOUGHT for the week

We were on holiday on the morning that the result of the first Commons vote on Brexit came through.

I had already been out on the beach with the dogs before I picked up a newspaper in the hotel lobby to read about what had happened. Brexit had, of course, dominated the headlines and continues to do so.

It is probably fair to say that nobody knows what the implications are for the country, whatever the eventual outcome. Unfortunately, as always, there will be losers and, as is generally the way of things, these are likely to be those who are least well off.

Somehow political situations can become all-consuming; some of the media keep searching for different angles, new people to interview and other ways to spread alarm. I saw a cartoon recently with two pictures. In the first, a man is watching television and a reporter is saying: 'What can we do to stop living in fear?' In the second, the man smiles smugly and switches the television off.

We can't just put our heads in the sand and pretend everything is okay. On the other hand, going back to my early morning walk, the waves will still roll in regardless.

Rev Sandy Stoddart,
Minister of Duror linked with
Glencoe: St Munda's Church of
Scotland.

Service raises young carers' awareness



North Argyll young carers at play on the beach.

North Argyll Young Carers Service will be at Oban High School today to mark Young Carers' Awareness Day.

They will be manning a stall in the foyer and running a quiz with prizes to be won.

January 31 this year recognises children and young people who provide unpaid care for a family member with a physical or mental

illness or disability including addiction.

North Argyll Young Carers Service gives support to local young carers aged eight to 18 and young adult carers aged 18 to 25 offering individual emotional support, advice and guidance, group activities, training, respite and bereavement support.

The service also runs weekly after

school clubs and lunchtime groups giving young carers the chance to socialise, get help with homework, build confidence, have fun and try new activities. They also organise day trips and residential adventures during school holidays.

More than 80 young carers are being helped in this area to feel valued and supported in the community.

The service works closely with

other professionals in health, education and social work.

However, there are estimated to be many more unidentified young carers who are not receiving this much-needed support.

Anyone who would like to make a referral or wants more information should contact Arlene on 01631 564 422 or arlene@northargyllcarers.org.uk.

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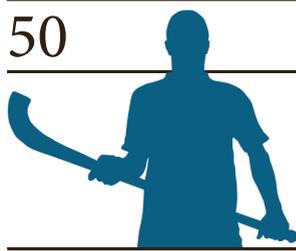
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Cameron is the captain

Oban Camanachd manager Stephen Sloss has explained why he decided to continue with Daniel Cameron as Oban Camanachd team captain for this coming season.

'Daniel Cameron was the natural choice as captain. There are certainly others who could do the job but, as well as being a good player, Daniel is a natural leader and the boys listen when he speaks. He also does a lot of work for the club off the park and he's a great example to the younger players.'

This is Cameron's second successive season as skipper after leading the side to Scottish Sea Farms Glasgow Celtic Society Cup success last year.

Sloss has tough decisions to make

Oban Camanachd manager Stephen Sloss knows he has some tough decisions to make as he prepares his squad for the new season.

When asked about the competition for the goalkeeping position, with both Cameron Sutherland and Gavin Stobbart in contention, Sloss said: 'I'm very lucky to have two terrific goalkeepers.'

'It's great to have that choice and I would be happy with either one of them to be honest but it's a choice I'll need to make.'

'However, we are strong in most positions all over the park. There is a first team pool of 19 players who can all make a case to play but that's a good headache for me to have.'

Sloss also took time to pay tribute to those at the club working behind the scenes. He said: 'Oban Camanachd run four teams and that takes a lot of work. There's a big support behind the scenes. The club's committee is very strong; probably as strong as it has ever been.'

The club have released more details regarding their pre-season friendlies.

Sloss and his first team squad are joined by Brian MacCallum's Lochside Rovers in a training session at Ganavan on Saturday February 2.

The following Saturday, the meeting between the Oban Camanachd and Glasgow Mid Argyll first teams takes place at Mossfield whilst Lochside Rovers take on the GMA seconds at Ganavan. Both matches throw up at 1pm.

On Saturday February 16, Oban Camanachd travel to face Ballachulish at the Jubilee Park. Lochside Rovers host the Kilmallie seconds at Mossfield that same day with a 1.30pm start.

The final pre-season friendlies take place on Saturday February 23. Oban Camanachd are on the road again as they take on Newtonmore at the Eilan. Meantime Lochside are

also in action with Ballachulish this time visiting Mossfield.

Taynuilt in focus

New Taynuilt manager James McLaren is pushing his side for a higher placed finish in Marine Harvest South Division 1 this coming term.

Taynuilt finished last season in seventh place; only a point behind sixth placed Ballachulish. They started the year with a win over the Inveraray seconds before earning a draw at Tayforth. Their only other league victories in what was a competitive division came against Col Glen and Ballachulish. They also drew with 2017 champions Lochside Rovers which was arguably their best result of the season.

Reflecting on the season, James McLaren said: 'It wasn't too bad although I felt we could have finished the season higher up the table.'

James McLaren takes over as Taynuilt boss from Davie Thomson and Gerry Kilmurray who took the side in 2018. The duo stepped in to replace Neil Gillies who took on the role in 2016 and 2017 but had to step down at the beginning of last year.

Davie Thomson previously managed the side from 2007 to 2015.

James McLaren will be assisted by Neil Gilles and they are looking forward to the new campaign. McLaren said: 'I'd like to think we can end 2019 higher up the league. Ideally we could secure a top three finish as that would get us into the Macaulay Cup which would be a boost for the club.'

The Taynuilt squad will be a mixture of youth and experience and McLaren picks out some of the young yet key players. 'Ryan Gillies at full back is a very solid player whilst our keeper Brian Logan has a seriously good eye for the ball. They both give us a solid base. Also Blair MacFarlane is only 16 years old and he would fit into any Premiership side. He takes after his grandfather.'

James McLaren's early shinty memories are playing for Glenorchy at Mart Park in Dalmally. He went on to skipper the side, without losing a game, to the Marine Harvest South Division 1 title as the side flirted with top flight shinty.

Glenorchy were also twice runners-up in the Glasgow Celtic Society Cup final during his time with them, losing out to Inveraray both times.

He first became involved at the Taynuilt Sports Field around eight years ago and is well aware of the challenges a club such as Taynuilt face. He said: 'Well, like most clubs, we are looking for more commitment from the players every week as that makes such a difference. There's also not so much young blood com-



Oban Camanachd captain Daniel Cameron in action against Lochaber.

ing through as we'd like and we also have to guard against local teams poaching our best players.'

Taynuilt's facilities are excellent and the Taynuilt Sports Field, which hosted the 2014 Balliemore Cup final between Skye Camanachd and Ballachulish, is now the preferred setting for the Scottish Sea Foods Glasgow Celtic Society Cup Final. McLaren agrees: 'We have the best facilities in the west of Scotland.'

McLaren also acknowledges that the club requires a number of important people behind the scenes to survive.

'David Thomson, Steven Campbell, Donald MacFarlane and Isla MacColl are Taynuilt's committee and they all do a power of work behind the scenes to keep the club moving forward.'

Taynuilt play Oban Celtic for the Robert Wylie Memorial Trophy at the Taynuilt Sports Field on Saturday February 9.

Badenoch Ladies lift Johnstone Rose Bowl

Badenoch won the Johnstone Rose Bowl at the Nevis Centre, Fort William on Saturday 26 January.

There was the usual full house for this popular annual indoor tournament run by Glengarry Ladies.

The teams were split into two sections. Lochaber came top of their group, which included Fort William, finishing ahead of holders Skye Camanachd, who qualified for the semi-finals in second position.

Badenoch won the other section, which also included Ardnamurchan and Aberdour, scoring an impressive 29 goals without reply in the process. Glengarry came second.

In a repeat of last year's final, Badenoch defeated Skye Camanachd 3-2 in their semi to reach the final where they faced Glengarry who edged out Lochaber in their last four tie.

Badenoch, who last won the competition in 2017, beat Glengarry 5-2

in the final with their play-maker Kirsty Deans scoring a hat-trick and Rona Stewart and Megan Ralph getting the others. Kirsty Deans rounded off a good day for Badenoch when she was named player of the tournament.

The Johnstone Rose Bowl was donated to the Glengarry Girls' Shinty Club in 1998 (a year after the team was formed) by Mrs Ailsa Johnstone of DA Johnstone & Son Contractors, Invergarry, which has been a loyal sponsor ever since.

Kilmallie plans

Marine Harvest Premiership side Kilmallie have firmed up their pre-season schedule with the new shinty season just over four weeks away.

The club recently held their AGM at Caol Community Centre with Alastair MacIntyre continuing as club chairman and Linda Campbell as secretary.

The club also noted their gratitude at receiving a donation of £850 from the proceeds of a retiring collection at the funeral of Lynsey MacPherson, wife of Kilmallie stalwart Mark MacPherson. The club recorded Lynsey's contribution to Kilmallie and again offered their sympathies to the family. The Lochaber Artistic Roller Skating Club received the same amount from the collection.

On the field, the Kilmallie first and second teams have been training twice a week at Lochaber High School.

New first team manager John Stewart, assisted this season by Mark MacPherson, trainer Ryan Stewart and First Aider John Wallace, starts his term in charge against Inverness at the Bught Park on Saturday February 9. Throw-up is at 1pm.

Kilmallie then travel to Braeview Park to face Beaully on Saturday February 16. Throw up is at noon.

Kilmallie's final pre-season friendly match takes place on Saturday February 23 and it's a cracker as Fort William visit the Canal Park to

contest the BSW cup. Throw-up is at 1pm for that one.

Kevin Toye carries on as Kilmallie second team manager and his side take on Ballachulish at the Jubilee Park on Saturday February 2 with a 1pm throw up.

The Kilmallie seconds also play Lochside Rovers in Oban on Saturday February 16.

Dignan joins Balla'

Ballachulish are pushing ahead with their plans for the new season.

Balla', managed by Morgan Smith and Alan Clark this term, were given a boost when former Lochaber player Jack Dignan joined the side.

Dignan has previously represented Scotland at U17 level.

The Marine Harvest South Division 1 side play the Kilmallie reserves at the Jubilee Park on Saturday February 2 with a 1pm throw-up.

Balla' take on the Fort William reserves the following week before being tested in an Oban double-header, first at home to Oban Camanachd and then away to Lochside Rovers a week later.

Glenorchy get set

Glenorchy began their pre-season training in the Dalmally Community Centre at 7.30pm on Wednesday January 30.

Glenorchy, who finished third in Marine Harvest South Division 2 at the end of last season, say new players are welcome to attend.

Caberfeidh boss sets pre-season

Caberfeidh manager Jodi Gorski has put together a challenging pre-season for his side.

Caberfeidh host Lovat at Castle Leod on Saturday February 2.

Newtonmore are the visitors a week later and Kingussie complete a Badenoch double-header on Saturday February 16 as the sides compete for the William MacPherson Memorial Plate. Kingussie are the holders having beaten Cabers on penalties last year.

The Caberfeidh second team have arranged friendlies against Strathspey Camanachd on Saturday February 2 and against the Kingussie seconds a fortnight later.

The Cabers reserves then take on their Lovat counter-parts at Balgate on Saturday February 23 as part of Lovat's celebrations as they officially open their new clubhouse.

Cabers have also carried out repairs to their goalmouths at Castle Leod whilst also purchasing a defibrillator for installation at Castle Leod in association with the Lucky2BHere charity. The club hope

to train all players and committee members in the use and associated CPR, of the defibrillator.

Caberfeidh would also welcome any donations towards the cost of the defibrillator.

Strathglass set for busy month

Marine Harvest National Division side Strathglass have arranged three pre-season friendly matches for the month of February.

Strathglass welcome Lochaber to Cannich on Saturday February 9 to contest the Murdo MacKenzie Memorial Cup.

'Glass then head for Craigard to face Glengarry on Saturday February 16.

There follows a double header at Cannich on Saturday February 23 as the Strathglass and Glenurquhart first teams meet with the MacDonald Cup at stake whilst the club's reserve sides contest the Ali Ban Cup.

Fraser stays on at Lochcarron

Murdo John Fraser will stay on as manager at Lochcarron for next season following the club's annual general meeting.

Gregor Cushnie and Kenny Cushnie are expected to return to the Lochcarron squad for their Marine Harvest North Division 2 campaign after a spell with Aberdeen University. However, key player Michael MacMillan is unlikely to be available.

Ard' re-join league

Ardnamurchan will field a side in Marine Harvest South Division 2 next season, returning to league shinty after a seven-year absence. They will join 2018 champions Strachur who have opted not to step up to South 1. However, the GMA seconds have been promoted in their place.

There will be nine teams in the Marine Harvest National Division following Bute's promotion. Inverness, who finished bottom last year, will continue to play national shinty.

Aberdeen University ended last year bottom of Marine Harvest North Division 1 but they have successfully made the case to remain in the division where they will be joined by newly promoted Lovat reserves.

Pre-season friendlies begin

Glasgow Mid Argyll 2 Aberdour 1

Glasgow Mid Argyll were 2-1 winners against Aberdour in their pre-season friendly meeting at Yoker.

Former Kinlochshiel player Oliver MacRae made his first start for GMA whilst Nathan Whear, who played for the 'Shiel seconds last season, and former Lochcarron player Matthew Young, also featured for the Glasgow side.

David MacKenzie gave Aberdour

the lead but GMA levelled soon after when 'Dour keeper Tom Bowerman saved from Calum McLay but Oliver MacRae forced home the rebound to make it 1-1 at the break.

Aberdour goalie Tom Bowerman made a number of good saves in the game but GMA's Iain Luke scored from another rebound in the second half to give new GMA boss Mark Bain a winning start.

This weekend's pre-season friendlies

The pre-season friendlies begin in earnest on Saturday February 2.

Oban Celtic make their first appearance of the season as Glengarry visit Mossfield. This will be a first game in charge for new Oban Celtic boss Dougie MacIntyre and the match throws up at 1pm.

There is an all-Premiership meeting at Castle Leod where Caberfeidh and Lovat clash in what should be a testing match for both teams.

Kinlochshiel were to host Inverness but the match has been switched to the Bught Park, Inverness with a 12.30pm throw up.

Ballachulish take on the Kilmallie second team at the Jubilee Park with a 1pm start.

Boleskine have home advantage against Aberdeen University as do Badenoch & Strathspey against the Caberfeidh seconds.

The Glenurquhart second team take on the Inverness second team.

Skye A and Skye B meet for the Ewen Morrison Memorial Cup at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree. Throw-up is at 1pm.

WCA Opening day fixtures announced

The Women's Camanachd Association has issued its fixture list for the 2019 shinty season.

The Marine Harvest National Division programme gets off to a stunning start on Saturday February 23 as Skye Camanachd and Badenoch, who contested the title race until the final day of last season, meet at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Newly promoted Glenurquhart host Ardnamurchan, promoted at the start of the 2018 shinty season, the same day.

The following day, Lochaber journey south to Silversands to face Aberdour whilst Glasgow Mid Argyll have home advantage against Strathspey.

The regional league fixtures commence a week later.

There is a derby meeting in Marine Harvest North Division 2 between Glengarry and Fort William at Craigard whilst Lochaber travel to play Strathglass. There is another derby as the Skye Camanachd second team and Kinlochshiel clash at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree whilst Inverness have home advantage against Lovat.

The Marine Harvest South Division 2 opening fixtures that same day see Oban Lorn host Cowal and Bute whilst Ardnamurchan journey to take on Tayforth.

Uddingston host the first round of Central League development fixtures.

SPOT THE SHINTY BALL

THIS WEEK'S JACKPOT £1000

We have removed the shinty ball from the photograph opposite. Now look carefully at the position of the players and use your skill and judgement to place a cross at the exact point where you think the centre of the ball was. You may have a maximum of 20 attempts on this coupon at a cost of £1. If you wish to have more attempts, you must enter on separate coupons.

The game starts with a jackpot of £500 and will increase by £50 per week until it is won outright. To win the jackpot, the centre of your cross must be in the exact centre of the ball. If the crosses overlap the entry will be void. If no correct entry is received, two 'near miss' prizes of £25 will be awarded. When the jackpot is won, no other prizes will be awarded that week.

Easy to enter

Cut out your completed coupon and put your entry plus £1 per 20 attempts into a sealed envelope and post it to "Spot the Shinty Ball" Competition, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB by noon Tuesday. No refunds will be given for entries received after the deadline.

You may hand it into The Oban Times Head Office, Lochavullin, Oban by the same time. Otherwise all entries must be posted.

Competition rules

No responsibility will be accepted for entries which are delayed, mislaid or lost, and proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery.

The Company's decision is final on all matters relating to the 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. Winners agree to have their photograph taken for publicity purposes.

Winners' names and home towns will appear in the newspaper. Employees of Wyvex Media, their immediate relatives and any person otherwise connected with the competition are ineligible to enter. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/destroyed within 30 days of the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.



Please remember to enclose £1 for 20 crosses. The maximum number of attempts on this coupon is 20, but you may enter on separate coupons as many times as you wish. No photocopies allowed. You agree to abide by the rules. How to enter: Mark your crosses using a ballpoint pen. Twenty crosses may be put on this coupon for £1. Send to 'Spot the Shinty Ball' Competition, The Oban Times, P.O. Box 1, Oban PA34 4HB

Name

Address

Tel No.

Please tape your £1 coin here (only if posting)

LAST WEEK'S SHINTY BALL WAS HERE...



This week's nearest the ball winners, who each receive £25 are:
A MacNee Killin
T Brown Oban

OT

BADMINTON



Prizewinners at the recent Argyll and Bute championships held at Oban High School.

Feathers fly at Argyll and Bute championships

Oban High School hosted the Argyll and Bute Scottish Schools Badminton competition last week with Oban High School, Tobermory High School, Dunoon Grammar and Campbeltown Grammar all taking part.

Events included U-14, U-16 and U-19 boys' and girls' singles, level doubles and mixed doubles. Matches were, as always, highly competitive, extremely skilful and played in a great sporting manner.

All pupils were a credit to their schools and the winners go on to represent Argyll and Bute in the Scottish Schools finals in Perth on March 8.

Results: Under 14: Boys' singles - winner Morgan Gemmill, Oban; runner-up Scott Graham, Campbeltown. Girls' singles - winner Nuria Clowes, Tobermory; runner-up Anneloes Hutton, Tobermory. Boys' doubles - winners Scott Graham and Scott Oman, Campbeltown; runners-up Morgan Gemmill and Innes MacCallum, Oban. Girls' doubles - winners Nuria Clowes and Anneloes Hutton, Tobermory; runners-up Wiktorija Ryszka and Katie MacLennan, Oban. Mixed doubles - Morgan Gemmill and Chloe Campbell, Oban; runners-up Wiktorija Ryszka and Innes MacCallum.

Under 16: Boys' singles - winner Finlay France, Oban; runner-up Fergus Carmichael, Oban. Girls' singles - winner Jane Scott, Campbeltown; runner-up Jessica Ronald, Campbeltown. Boys' doubles - winners Finlay France and Fergus Carmichael; runners-up Marcus Keith and Rory Oxland, Dunoon. Girls' doubles - Jane Scott and Jennifer McMurchy, Campbeltown; runners-up Lauren McKinnon and Jessica Randal, Campbeltown; Mixed doubles - winners Lauren McKinnon and Kyle Patterson, Campbeltown; runners-up Rory Oxland and Amy Laidlow, Dunoon.

Under 19: Boys' singles - Alan Mollins, Dunoon; runner-up Alisdair Ferguson, Campbeltown. Girls' singles - Kirsty MacArthur, Oban; runner-up Susan Shaw, Campbeltown. Boys' doubles - Alan Mollins and Ciaran Danks, Dunoon; runners-up Angus Neil and Alistair Trafford, Oban. Girls' doubles - Kirsty MacArthur and Claire Reid, Oban; runners-up Rosie MacDonald and Lauren Keith, Dunoon. Mixed doubles - Susan Shaw and Fraser MacBrayne, Campbeltown; runners-up Kirsty MacArthur and Angus Neil, Oban.

HOCKEY

Over the sea to Skye

Skye	0
Oban	1

West Coast League

Oban hockey team got off to a flying start after the winter break with a 1-0 win over Skye in the West Coast mixed hockey league. The game took place in Portree on Saturday January 26.

Despite frozen pitches midweek and biting winds and rain on the day both sides were in high spirits and fired up for the match.

Skye made a strong start putting pressure on the Oban defence. Coach and goalie David Love was a force both in voice and in play at the back and with some excellent performances from the back line, Oban managed to keep the ball out of the net.

Defence turned into attack towards the end of the first half as Oban began to

string some good passing play together and were in the ascendancy as the half time whistle blew.

Play restarted promptly given the weather conditions and the threat of snow in the air. A quick reshuffle of positions and Oban began as they had left off.

An immediate attack on Skye's goal resulted in a short corner opportunity. Despite not converting, it gave the team extra confidence. Oban's man of the match, Stuart Head, in a new role in defensive midfield, showed his true colours as an excellent play-maker. Inspired defending from Skye's back line kept the game at 0-0 until 10 minutes to go then Andrew Hodge, fired the ball into the back of the net from a rebound for a hard fought 1-0 win for Oban.

Bankies have no answer to a slick Green Machine

Clydebank	15
Oban Lorne	42

Tennent's West Division 2

Oban Lorne travelled to Clydebank on Saturday for their latest game in West Division 2 hoping to build on recent good performances against fifth-placed Clydebank. The teams had met at Glencruitten earlier in the season with Oban running out 71-7 winners.

With a lot of rain falling across the central belt a number of games across the leagues were cancelled due to the weather and ground conditions.

This was never going to be an issue for this game as Oban were welcomed to Clydebank's fantastic new 4G artificial pitch and new clubhouse facilities. It did not look like it had rained with no water on the pitch at all and by the time the game kicked off the game was actually played in great conditions for the type of rugby Oban strive to play.

Oban had to ring the changes yet again with Robin MacQueen and Tommy Sutherland answering the SOS and bolstering the front row - a huge thank you was given to them for stepping up.

Coach Andrew Johnston was also forced into a last minute reshuffle of the backline with Craig Wright being replaced by Andy 'Bozza' Ritchie.

The game started well with Oban on the front foot but a



Oban Lorne's first team squad.

lack of accuracy saw a couple of early opportunities lost with the ball not going to hand.

This allowed Clydebank to get a foot hold in the game and it was the home team who got the first points on the board with a well-taken penalty after Oban had been penalised at a ruck.

Oban responded well and bounced back with a well taken try from captain Iwan Roberts as he split the home defence and scored under the posts with Finlay Carmichael stepping up to convert the extra two points 3-7.

Surged

Oban were to extend their lead soon after when vice captain Stephen Povey surged over the line after another fantastic spell of play from the Oban team; Carmichael was on target again with the conversion for Oban to lead 14-3.

Clydebank were to come back again and score a try of their own before half time.

After a series of lineouts close to the Oban line they managed to drive the maul over the line and touch the ball down.

Half time came with Oban leading 14 points to eight.

Oban started the second half brightly but the lack of accuracy and errors were still there as they continued to miss opportunities to stretch the lead.

Fergus McCoss eventually extended Oban's lead with another well-taken try. His pace and footwork are proving to be a real addition to the Oban backline while his presence outside is really helping young David Cameron to develop at inside centre.

With 20 minutes of the second half played and the game not put to bed coach Andrew Johnston introduced Craig Wright, Michael Mackinnon and a surprise return for prop Callum MacLachlan who made his return after surgery early in December.

MacLachlan was quick to

RUGBY

show exactly what Oban have been missing with one his trademark runs through the opposition with the big prop breaking a number of tackles.

Craig Wright was next to show why he is the team's top try scorer when he took the ball out wide and outpaced the defence to score yet another try in a stellar season for the full back.

This was the bonus point try for Oban and they took their eye off the ball for the next 10 mins or so when Clydebank came back at them and Oban's indiscipline at the breakdown allowed Clydebank to play the touchline and edge closer and closer to the line. After yet another catch and drive the ball was spun wide and a missed tackle allowed the Clydebank centre to score right under the posts with the try converted. This brought the score to Clydebank 15 Oban 28.

Oban responded yet again and Lorne MacLachlan was next to score as he powered over the line after some great link-up play between forwards and backs.

Oban were to finish the game on a high when they were awarded a penalty inside their own 22. The quick tap penalty found its way to Calum MacLachlan and he took off from inside his own 22 breaking a number of attempted tackles and after crossing the halfway line off-loaded the ball to Craig Wright, who once again romped in for the final score of the day. Finlay Carmichael was on target again with a 100 per cent record for the day converting each of Oban's six tries.

Oban's next fixture is away to Bishopton on February 16 with the next home game the following weekend against Millbrae.



Kris Burney (SRU) Gordon Binnie (Oban) Chris Reid (SRU) Karina Oszanca Jameson (Etive Vikings) Laura McCormick (Oban) Iona Whyte (Mull) Stuart Laurie (Etive Vikings) Allan Wright (Argyll DO) and Nathan Robinson (Cowal).

Argyll based Mini Rugby coaches completed their UKCC Level 1 Coaching Qualification after attending two days of last weekend's course hosted by Oban Lorne RFC at their Glencruitten clubhouse.

The coaches from Oban Lorne RFC, Etive Vikings RFC, Isle of Mull RFC and Cowal RFC were put through their paces by Scottish Rugby coach educators Chris Reid and Kris Burney, who put on a very informative and fun based course.

Argyll and Bute Rugby Development Officer Allan Wright commented: 'It was great to have some fantastic input from Chris and Kris over the weekend. Their experiences and delivery practices that were shared will give our coaches a huge confidence boost when delivering back at their local clubs. It will be interesting to see the progression of the coaching standard at our mini rugby clubs throughout the second half of this season.'



Three young rugby players from Oban High School received financial help from the Rotary Club of Oban.

Rotary club helps out young rugby players

As part of its Youth Development Programme the Rotary Club of Oban provided financial support for three Oban High School youngsters to visit Perpignan in France as part of the Glasgow Thistle summer Rugby Training Camp.

The three boys selected - Angus Neil, Tommy McQuade and Ross McCaskill - are seen above in Glasgow Airport prior to their departure.

The three boys from Oban were part of a group of 35 students selected from schools across the West of Scotland and attended several training sessions in Glasgow prior to their two-week stint in Perpignan which involved

YOUTH RUGBY

intensive rugby training and individual assessment supported by professional grade coaches and facilities.

The boys were also allowed time to visit historic sites in Perpignan and Carcassonne and each received a National 5 Qualification in Sports Coaching and Leadership.

Running along side this financial support, Oban Rotary also contributed to the cost of Veronica Spiers from Conneltio visit Malawi and Zambia for four weeks as a rugby coach volunteer under the auspices of the Bhubesi Pride Foundation which supports sports activities in developing countries.



Rotary club president Iain MacIntyre, Veronica Spiers and Walter Burton.

Mixed results for youths

Oban Lorne's youth rugby sides had mixed results at the weekend with the start of the West Regional Cup competitions.

The U18s travelled with confidence to Whitecraigs RFC on Saturday boasting a healthy complement of 21 players.

Despite a narrow 12-0 scoreline at half time Oban disappointed in the second half going down 37-0. The U16s had a better day on Sunday winning 36-15 also at Whitecraigs.

Both sides welcome West of Scotland RFC to Glencruitten this weekend in the next round of pool fixtures.

Martial arts

IAIN RODGER

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Kyokushinkai Karate

The Scottish Open preparation is in full swing with entries coming in from all over the UK and Europe.

Elsewhere, Paul MacKay is training hard towards his second dan grading which will take place on March 23.

For further information on the Kyokushinkai Karate club please contact Iain Rodger (6th dan) for a friendly chat on: 07584 166542 or iain@ikku.co.uk, alternatively send a message to Caledonia Kyokushin on Facebook.

Kickboxing

Coach Wullie Rodger said: 'Wednesday January 23 saw Lewis May aged 13 and Adam Bratton aged nine, who has been training at the club since he was four years old, take on the challenge of the junior black belt grading. Both were understandably nervous and excited about the task ahead of them, but went full steam ahead and met all the technical requirements, which left only the 20 fights to do to see them achieve the grade.'

'Lewis and Adam were both physically tired going into the fights where they face a fresh opponent every minute and it takes a lot of heart, determination and spirit to battle through the 20 minutes.'

'Lewis had some very tough fights and still kept going despite the pounding his body was taking (plus a near KO from a head kick by Cody McCulloch). Adam, who took a few hard knocks resulting in two dead legs and an arm kept fighting on regardless.'

At the end, which saw a few tears shed - not just from the fighters, personally I just got a bit of dust in my eyes - both boys emerged victorious passing the grade with flying colours.'

Training continues as usual on Wednesdays, five-14yrs 4.30pm until 6pm, 15 years-and-over 6pm until 7.30pm. Find the club on Facebook Senshi Do Kickboxing or email shihanwill@gmail.com for details.



Front, from left: Adam Bratton, Lewis May. Back, left to right: Logan Galbraith, Billy Bratton, Robbie Bratton, Callum Morrison, Cody McCulloch, Joe Roberts.

Shukokai Karate

The clubs are now all back up and running after the Christmas break.

All the Shukokai clubs are taking on beginners until the middle of February and anyone looking for more details on these clubs should contact Kenny Gray (5th dan) on: kenni.gray@btinternet.com or 07884 183905.

BJJ & MMA

Oban MMA has had a busy few weeks over Christmas. Coach Coogie Potter attended a two-day seminar at Higher Level Martial Arts in Bathgate, which is home to fighters from the UFC, Bellator and many other organisations from around the world.

Classes have restarted with BJJ on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays at 7.30pm. Students are working towards competing in a tournament in Ravenscraig at the end of February.

Then at the end of March, the club will have three representatives at the popular Scottish grappling invitational.

This young and every-growing event is held in Maryhill Glasgow.



BJJ students drilling back takes.

Coach Coogie Potter said: 'We are very happy to confirm over the next couple of months we have a number of seminars with top coaches and black belts including Marcos Nardini, James Doolan, Cammy Donnelly and John Nicolson. All will be coming to Oban to share their skills.'

'If anyone would like to come and try out BJJ or MMA (Tuesdays and Thursdays) 2019 is the perfect time to get involved.'

'Brazilian Jujitsu and MMA are great ways to get fit, have fun and learn one of the world's most popular martial arts. Go along and join the team. Everyone is welcome.'

'Lastly, the club is delighted to announce another year of sponsorship with Scottish Sea Farms, a fantastically supportive company at the heart of the community.'

'This support has allowed us to invest in the club, enter more competitions and grow with the changing methods of training.'

If anyone would like to try out BJJ or MMA, Oban BJJ can be found on Facebook or email using coogiepots@gmail.com.

Wado Kai Karate

Both Park and Dunbeg parts of the Wado Kai club are working towards gradings at the end of January.

Around 16 students are preparing for the events, ranging from yellow to Brown belt grades.

Classes during January will be at the usual times (Park Primary on Mondays at 3.15pm and Dunbeg School 6.30pm) and will be structured around the curricula of specific students.

Park Instructor Mike Falkner said: 'If you are thinking you might want to take up Karate this year, it might be easier to join us in February, when lessons will be more diverse and relaxed.'

Use the details below if anyone would like more information about Wado Karate or would like to talk someone about interest in the sport.

Park School: Mike Faulkner m.faulkner6@btinternet.com
Dunbeg School: Sensei Chris Bruce (7th Dan) at crb999@btinternet.com

Knights Of The Tower - Medieval Combat Oban

Classes are back to normal. Anyone wanting to give this a go are welcome to turn up and try out the sport of medieval combat.

The club trains on Tuesday nights from 7pm until 9:30pm above Stoddart's of Oban, in the old Crofters.

OT

GOLFER



Robert MacIntyre. Photograph: Bounce Sports.

Ninth place finish for MacIntyre in Dubai

Oban golfer Robert MacIntyre, who just failed to make the 132-man field for the Omega Dubai Desert Classic last week, took part in the two-round Mena Tour Omega Dubai Desert Classic Shootout at the Dubai Hills Golf Club instead.

The 22-year-old had to go straight on to the course without a practise round and this proved costly as he carded a one over par 73 in round one which featured five birdies and four bogies.

Five birdies and only two bogies saw the Glencruitten golfer card an excellent three under par 69 in round two to see him finish in joint ninth place with a two-round total of 142.

Robert will now set his sights on the prestigious Saudi International held at the Royal Greens Golf and Country Club in King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia starting today (January 31).



Royal Greens Golf and Country Club.

SCOTTISH AMATEUR LEAGUE

Results and fixtures

Last Saturday's results: Jimmy Marshall Cup, first round – Lochgilhead Red Star 0, Oban Saints 2; Premier Division – Dunoon v Motherwell Thistle, postponed; Premier Division One – Campbeltown Pupils 1, Ferguslie Star 2. Premier Division Two – Tarbert 1, Glynhill Moorcroft 1.

Next Saturday's fixtures: Premier Division - Dunoon v Oban Saints; Premier Division One - Lochgilhead Red Star v Campbeltown Pupils; Premier Division Two - Glenburn Athletic v Tarbert

OBAN SAINTS YOUTHS

Results and fixtures

Last Sunday's results: League – Clyde SOF 4, Under 13s 2. Scorer for Saints was Zander Craik (2). Under 14s v Rutherglen Glencairn, postponed; Under 15s v St Patrick's Sports Academy, postponed; Scottish Cup – Rowallan (Kilmarnock) 1, Under 16s 0.

This Sunday's fixtures: Under 13s v Milton Rovers; Thistle Weir v Under 14s; St Rochs v Under 15s; Under 16s v Helensburgh.

Saints come out on

Lochgilhead Red Star	0
Oban Saints	2
Jimmy Marshall Trophy -1st Round	

Last Saturday at Lochgilhead Joint Campus Oban Saints gained revenge for last season's Jimmy Marshall Trophy exit at the hands of Lochgilhead Red Star by dumping their nearest neighbours out of this season's competition in the last-ever meeting of the two old rivals to be held under the auspices of the Scottish Amateur Football League.

Second half goals from Donald Campbell and Fraser MacFarlane finally broke Red Star's stubborn resistance and saw Saints progress to the second round of the competition in which they have reached the final in four of the past six seasons.

Six changes

Saints management duo Donald Campbell and Willie Gemmell made six changes to the starting line-up from the previous week's West of Scotland Cup win over Thorn Athletic and also gave three teenagers a place on the substitutes' bench.

Graham Douglas lined up in goal behind a back four of Ruaridh Horne, captain Dene Cassells, Dougal Graham and Scott Maitland. Matthew Kelly and Kerr Newbigging occupied the holding mid-field roles with James Ford



Saints' young substitutes - Aaron McKay, Keir MacLean and Kenny Black.

tucked in behind a front three of Fraser MacFarlane, Craig MacEwan and David Beaton. Donald Campbell and Jamie Graham provided the experience on the bench alongside teenagers Kenneth Black, Aaron McKay and Keir MacLean.

Saints kicked off attacking the Kilmory end in a light drizzle which had thankfully replaced the heavy rain which had fallen all morning.

After a sluggish start Saints mustered the game's first strike on target when Fraser MacFarlane slipped James Ford in from a ninth minute free kick just outside the Star box. From a tight angle on the left Ford shunned the better option of a cutback in favour of a shot on goal which Star

keeper Luke Kalache blocked with his outstretched left leg.

Two minutes later Ruaridh Horne made a strong run on the right and whipped over a tempting cross which David Beaton did well to meet but couldn't redirect on target.

James Ford picked out Craig MacEwan in a good position with a 13th minute cutback from the left but a heavy first touch from MacEwan allowed Luke Kalache to come off his line and make the block.

Struggled

Wayward efforts followed from Matthew Kelly and Fraser MacFarlane as the much-changed Saints line-up struggled to find any kind of rhythm.

After closing out a Star break the Saints defence were

caught trying to play out from the back and were relieved to see former Saint Martin Bonar lift a shot from 20 yards well over the crossbar.

After good work on the right James Ford had a goal bound shot deflected into the side netting by Star player/manager Luke Naisby with Craig MacEwan diverting Fraser MacFarlane's resulting corner kick across the face of goal and wide of Luke Kalache's right hand post.

Legitimate

A harsh decision by referee Donald McCallum to penalise James Ford for what appeared a legitimate challenge on Ryan Caskie gave Colin Weir the chance to whip the ball left footed into the danger area in the 29th minute however the Saints defence repelled Weir's delivery with ease.

Star skipper Aaron Moore exploited the time and space afforded him in the 37th minute to thread the ball through for Stuart McLean however Dougal Graham, in for the injured Steven MacLeod, read the signs well to come across and snuff out the danger.

Luke Kalache in the Star goal required all of his height and reach advantage to tip a James Ford cross behind for a corner with Craig MacEwan ready to connect with a header. Fraser MacFarlane's corner kick from the right was placed invitingly into the six-yard box where David Beaton was unable to get any power behind his effort on the stretch allowing Kalache to gather comfortably.

Referee McCallum left the Saints players and officials mystified when he dismissed their appeals for a 40th-minute penalty kick when James McGuinness dived in studs up on James Ford.

Mr McCallum heightened the feeling of injustice among the Saints contingent when he penalised and cautioned Dougal Graham for a similar challenge two minutes later fortunately, however,



Red Star goalkeeper Luke Kalache saves from James Ford.



David Beaton can't get enough on his sliding effort to beat the big Aussie keeper.

top in Argyll derby



This Dene Cassells' header was just off target. Match report and photographs: Derek Black.

further insult was avoided when Aaron Moore lifted his free-kick high over the Saints crossbar.

At the other end Saints also had an opportunity with the dead ball after James Ford was sent crashing to the deck just outside the Star box. Kerr Newbigging's free-kick smashing straight into the wall was the final action of the first half which left the Saints management duo far from impressed and demanding a big step up in effort from their charges for the second half.

The improvement was clear from the first whistle with Kerr Newbigging winning possession and sending James Ford racing into the Star box where Aaron Moore was on hand to help out his defence with a timely interception.

Two minutes into the second half Craig MacEwan beat the Star offside trap but not Luke Kalache who threw up a strong left hand to beat MacEwan's shot behind for a corner kick. From Fraser MacFarlane's delivery from the right Saints skipper Dene Cassells climbed above opposite number Aaron Moore but couldn't direct his header on target.

Overlapping

Ruaridh Horne's overlapping run and cross in the 50th minute narrowly evaded David Beaton with the pair combining well two minutes later to set Matthew Kelly up for a shot which flew inches wide of Luke Kalache's left hand post.

Saints co-manager Donald Campbell came on in the 57th minute to replace James Ford and immediately tee'd up Fraser MacFarlane for a shot from 20 yards which Luke Kalache, diving high to his left, did extremely well to push behind for a corner kick.

Ruaridh Horne made way for Jamie Graham in the 69th minute as Saints continued to keep their hosts pinned back in their own half.



Donald Campbell opens the scoring from the penalty spot.

The Saints pressure eventually told when Ben Forbes, who had a good game at the centre of the Star defence, made his only mistake of the afternoon and sent Matthew Kelly sprawling in the box with a mistimed tackle from behind. Donald Campbell made no mistake from the spot sending the keeper in the wrong direction and giving Saints the lead which their second half endeavour deserved.

With 13 minutes remaining Saints introduced Aaron McKay at the expense of David Beaton and the youngster was quickly involved, linking up well with Donald Campbell who curled a delightful left-foot effort inches wide of the junction of post and bar with Kalache rooted to the spot.

The big keeper was equally deceived by Fraser MacFarlane's low 83rd minute snap shot from 22 yards which nestled in the bottom corner to seal victory for Saints.

This proved to be MacFarlane's last involvement as he and Dougal Graham, who produced a solid performance alongside skipper Dene Cassells at the heart of the defence, were withdrawn to give Kenneth Black and debutant Keir MacLean a brief run out.

Premier Division One strugglers Red Star, who despite succumbing to their 10th consecutive defeat, will be encouraged to have kept their top flight opponents at bay for 72 minutes, also gave

valuable game time to young substitutes Neily Russell, Gregor McGeachy and Alisdair Provan.

Mr McCallum had Saints scratching their heads once again when he saw nothing wrong with Luke Naisby's tackle through the back of MacLean which sent the young striker sprawling in the 18-yard box.

Cynical

Tempers flared shortly afterwards when Ryan Caskie's cynical late challenge on Kenneth Black earned the Star wide man a deserved yellow card.

Mr McCallum's grip on the match slipped a little further with a controversial award against Scott Maitland which saw Donald Campbell cautioned for dissent.

With the match entering time added on for stoppages another questionable

FOOTBALL

refereeing decision lead to the premature end of Jamie Graham's involvement.

Despite this not being Mr McCallum's finest 90 minutes he was well within his rights to give Graham his marching orders for an injudicious comment which a player of his experience should have known better than to make.

Referee McCallum's final whistle shortly after the restart understandably brought only muted celebrations from the Saints contingent who will now turn their attentions to league duties and another Argyll derby this Saturday when they travel to the Cowal peninsula to face Dunoon in the Scottish Amateur Football League Premier Division - kick-off 2pm at Dunoon Stadium.



Youngsters Neily Russell and Ruaridh Horne in action.



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WEATHER

Thursday
Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
1°C to 3°C.

Friday
Sunny interval and a moderate breeze
Temperatures
0°C to 4°C.

Weekend Outlook

Saturday
Sunny and a gentle breeze
Sunday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures
2°C to 4°C.



FRIDAY

TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday January 31, 2019** are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	02.36	3.0	08.34	1.7
	15.48	3.0	21.38	1.7
Fri	03.22	3.2	09.48	1.6
	16.16	3.2	22.25	1.5
Sat	04.15	3.4	10.42	1.5
	16.43	3.3	23.04	1.3
Sun	04.55	3.6	11.24	1.4
	17.14	3.5	23.39	1.2
Mon	05.32	3.8	12.00	1.3
	17.48	3.7	***	**
Tues	00.13	1.1	06.08	3.9
	12.35	1.2	18.21	3.8
Wed	00.48	1.0	06.43	4.0
	13.08	1.2	18.53	3.8

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

Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Saints come out on top in Argyll derby

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OBAN TIMES WEATHER
AND TIDES - SEE PAGE 55

Clyne delivers at Oban's squash club

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Scottish international squash player Alan Clyne proved a big hit last weekend when delivering coaching sessions at Atlantis Leisure.

The eight-times national champion took time out of his busy schedule to drop by the courts and share some top tips with Oban Tennis and Squash Club members.

'This is the first time I have been to Oban and the standard of squash is pretty good,' he told The Oban Times.

'There is a great squash community here and everyone is keen and really wants to play.'

'The sport is in a really

healthy state in Scotland at the moment. There has been an increase of juniors coming in as well which bodes really well for the future.'

Ranked 25 in the world, the 32-year-old from Inverness is currently Scotland number two and is aiming for the top spot this season.

'I have spent a lot of time in America recently and am working hard to improve my ranking,' he added.

'I have a tournament in Edinburgh this weekend and then I am back off to the states to prepare for the World Championships which are being held in Chicago at the end of February.'

'The National Championships take place in March

SQUASH

and I will be looking to defend my title at that and if I get some good wins on the PSA tour then my ranking at both world and Scottish levels should head in the right direction.'

Jackie Kersley, Oban Tennis and Squash Club, said: 'It was such a privilege to have Scotland's number two player come to our club.'

'We don't get many people coming to the club because of how far away we are, so for him to take time out of his hectic schedule to come to us is such an honour.'

'The adults had individual sessions with him, and loved it and the juniors had a ball.'

Oban Squash Club runs monthly ladies' team competitions at ladies' nights on Mondays, monthly gents' team competitions at club nights on Wednesday nights and a junior club on Saturday mornings, which is run by squash leaders, 9.30am -10am (aged four-seven); 10am -11am (seven-10); 11am-noon (10 years and upwards).

There is also a ladies' and a mixed league. Both are run over a six-week period. Twentynety-four ladies are in the league, sponsored by Rutherfords Hair Salon of Oban. The mixed leagues are sponsored by Atlantis Leisure. For more information and contact details go to www.atlantisleisure.co.uk/atlantisleisure/racket-sports/tennis/oban-tennis-and-squash-club/



Alan Clyne with the 12-plus age group and Kenny Drummond, Oban Tennis and Squash Club.



Lesley Fraser, Oban Tennis and Squash Club, and Alan Clyne with the seven-10-year-old age group.



Grant Addison, Oban Tennis and Squash Club, and Alan Clyne with the 10-12-year-old age group.

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Residents' outrage bins Corpach waste proposal

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

It looks as if local outrage has binned the possibility of Highland Council building a waste transfer station in Corpach, after Ferguson Transport boss Alasdair Ferguson said the local authority would need to find an alternative site instead of an area of land owned by his company.

Highland Council had approached Ferguson Transport to explore the possibility of leasing a small parcel of its industrial-zoned land in the village for the badly-needed new waste operation.

With all Scottish local authorities facing a nationwide ban on municipal waste going to landfill after January 1, 2021, the clock is ticking on Highland Council's efforts to find an alternative to the dump at nearby Duiskey on the shores of Loch Eil.

The Corpach site ticks a lot of boxes on Highland Council's wishlist for a cen-

tral waste handling facility dealing with all of Lochaber's green, blue and brown bins.

But Monday night's meeting of Kilmallie Community Council saw so many angry Corpach and Banavie residents turn up, it had to be shifted to a bigger hall in the venue.

Senior Highland Council officials told the meeting that if the Corpach scheme became a reality it would see the construction of a building about a quarter of the size of a football field, into which refuse lorries would enter to dump their rubbish for sorting and onward shipping to Inverness.

Andy Summers, head of environmental and amenity services at Highland Council, tried to reassure residents that nothing had been decided and no planning application had been submitted.

'We are interested in the site at Corpach because we believe there is no alternative

Continued on page two

Bard brought to book by Lochaber stalwart



Life long Burns enthusiast and Lochaber Burns Club member Robert Cairns produced a strictly limited-edition book featuring past presidents of the club which he presented to each of the past presidents who attended the club's supper last week. Pictured are Allan Reid (2015, 2016, 2018), Iain Robertson (2008, 2009, 2010), Robert Cairns, author of the Lochaber Burns Club book, Bill Cameron (2019), Jim Sutherland (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017) and Philip Nolan (2005, 2006, 2007). Full story, page 10. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

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3 JAN
SOROBA ROAD

Residents' outrage sees Corpach waste disposal proposal binned

Continued from page one

to that site,' said Mr Summers, who confessed the council had no 'Plan B' if the Corpach site was ruled out and admitted the council should have tackled the issue sooner.

But resident after resident, standing up to grill Mr Summers on the proposal, vented their fury that a village which already suffers from considerable disruption due to various existing industrial and commercial operations, could be faced with even more noise, odour problems and increased lorry traffic.

'I can't believe we are actually talking about building a refuse handling plant just 400 yards from a major housing development,' said resident of 53 years, Roddy Mainland.

'I have no faith in reassurances there won't be problems with noise and smell. This site would be totally inappropriate.'

It was actually Mr Ferguson, group managing director



The packed meeting in Kilmallie on Monday night.

of Ferguson Transport and Shipping which is headquartered in Corpach, who requested the issue be added to the community council agenda to gauge local feedback.

The day after the meeting, he told the Lochaber Times the company would not ignore the 'groundswell of strong local opposition' from residents.

He added: 'The domestic waste has to go somewhere in time and the proposed building is designed and

built to mitigate the main concerns such as noise, odour and manage any issue of pest control.

'However, we will now look to seek a meeting at the earliest opportunity with the relevant Highland Council representatives and local councillors to discuss further with a view that they look for an alternative site for their waste transfer operations taking into account the mood of the meeting and evidently the concerns that people locally have now raised.'



Some of the volunteers who turned out in the rain to help clear up the fire damage, pictured below, at Stramash outdoor nursery. Photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

Community out in force to help Stramash

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Despite the incessant rain and driving wind, more than 100 people throughout the day lent a hand at Stramash's clean-up day on Saturday (January 26) following the devastation caused by a fire at the nursery last week.

People of all ages turned out in force to help clear the wreckage at the outdoor nursery in Fort William after its hand-built wooden yurts, used by toddlers to learn and play, were burned to the ground on the night of Sunday January 20.

Digger, tractor and chain-saw operators were all called into action to help clear the remains of the huts and to fell trees on site to get them ready for chipping in order to cover the scorched area of nursery ground.

Among the team of volunteers were parents of nursery-goers, friends of Stramash staff and even a band of students from Fort William's West Highland College UHI, who gave up their entire Saturday to help with the clear-up. A temporary tea hut was also set up to keep the workers going in the cold, wet conditions.

Stramash team leader Cameron Sprague said he was



'humbled' by the turnout, adding: 'The community has been amazing, coming together to get the nursery up and running and move past the tragedy and the remains left there. We've had a local business providing tractors, people with diggers, people have been here all day, even before 10am. It's been a real community effort and we're so grateful.'

A JustGiving fundraising page has since been set up and has already generated almost £3,000 for the nursery to help with the cost of rebuilding the outdoor facility.

Lyndsay Boyd, lead practitioner at Stramash, said the response has given the team a renewed sense of pride in their work.

She said: 'It's made us feel really proud of what we've built up over the years, seeing

how everyone comes together and is willing to help without being asked. We've had so many offers of support and help since the fire.'

When asked about when she first heard about the fire, she said: 'I honestly didn't know what to do, really, thinking about all the work we put in over the last four years to get the yurts up and running - we were so close to getting it finished. But seeing all the support, we're just thinking about how we can move on.'

Caol and Mallaig councillor Ben Thompson, who was also at the clean-up day, praised the 'fantastic' support shown on the day.

He said: 'I'm a really strong supporter of outdoor play and Saturday emphasised just how much support there is for it from people in the area.'

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Fort traffic cop slams council after accident

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A veteran police traffic officer is threatening to take legal action against Highland Council after he injured his shoulder in a motorcycle accident in the local authority's newest car park.

Constable Iain Young has been on the force for 17 years, the last four as a traffic officer based in Fort William.

Accident

The accident happened in November at the council's car park at its new offices in the town's Achintore Road.

Coming into the car park, Constable Young told the Lochaber Times how he had slowed his machine to just 5mph after noticing the icy road conditions and what looked like drops of spilled fuel.

'But I felt the tail of the



Constable Iain Young and his own motorcycle at the spot in the Highland Council car park in Fort William where he had his accident.

Photograph: ABrighside Photography.

bike start to go and rather than struggle with it, I just pushed it away from me and went down to avoid it landing on me and possibly breaking my leg,' he told the Lochaber Times this week.

And Constable Young

blames the fact the car park had not been gritted in the icy conditions and says the local authority has just been fobbing off his claim for compensation for the damage to his bike.

'The council has been

shambolic in dealing with this which happened on November 19,' he told us.

'But I have been passed to three different people already, even although the staff in the building admitted the area was not

yet on the gritting list. I damaged my bike, helmet, and tore a muscle in my shoulder.

'I told them I was prepared to not pursue a claim for compensation over my injury if they just paid for the damage to my bike and gear.

'They said they were conducting an enquiry but its been ages and in an email, incredibly as it may sound, the council told me people should not expect car parks to be gritted.

'As a local traffic policeman in Fort William this is extremely concerning.'

Asked to comment, a Highland Council spokesperson said: 'The council is unable to consider a claim for compensation as, following investigation, the council determined that it was neither negligent nor in breach of its statutory obligations.'

Five months for refusing sheriff's order

A man who told social work staff that he was not prepared to comply with a sheriff's order to do a number of hours of unpaid work in the community, was given a five-month prison sentence as an alternative this week.

Gary Wallace, 45, appeared at Fort William Sheriff Court from custody as he is currently serving a two-month prison sentence in connection with a separate offence.

He had been ordered to do the unpaid work last September after being convicted of behaving in a threatening or abusive manner at a pub in Fort William earlier that month, when he had also admitted assaulting police officers.

Wallace's statement that he would not do the unpaid work prompted Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald to remark 'that makes it simple then'.

Sheriff MacDonald sentenced Wallace to five months' imprisonment.

Morar music tutor fined and handed three-year driving ban

A Lochaber music tutor was banned from driving for three years and fined £720 when she appeared this week at Fort William Sheriff Court.

Anne Barbara Maclean, of Loch Morar House at Beoraid, pleaded guilty to a charge of drink driving at Glenfinnan Railway Station car park on August 19, 2018.

Maclean's plea of not guilty to a further charge of failing to give police officers information about the driver of a car at Lochailort Inn later that same day was accepted by the Crown.

Procurator Fiscal Martina Eastwood told the court it was around 1.15pm on the day of the offence that Maclean was at the Glenfinnan Dining Car restaurant and was observed to be in what appeared an intoxicated state.

'When she left, she walked across the car park and got into a car and went to drive off,' said Mrs Eastwood.

'But she appeared to be struggling to manoeuvre and when someone offered to assist her and was waving at her, she refused to put down her window. This person was so concerned that the police

were contacted. It was at 2pm that police found the vehicle they were looking for at the Lochailort Inn - they went inside and saw the accused at the bar with a glass of red wine, which she had not started drinking yet.

'She was asked if she had been the driver of the vehicle at Glenfinnan and she confirmed it was her.'

Cautioned

Mrs Eastwood said on being cautioned by the police, Maclean had said her friend had driven her, that she could lose her job as a result, and that she had only driven on the grass road.

The breath test carried out at 3.26pm gave a reading of 92mgs of alcohol in 100mgs of breath - more than four times the legal limit of 22mgs.

The court heard that Maclean, 44, who is single and lives with her parents, had an analogous conviction from some years previously when she had been banned from the roads for three months after failing to supply a specimen for a drink driving procedure after being found by police officers sleeping in a motor vehicle in Dumfries.

Defence agent Hamish Melrose told the court that Maclean had attended Glenfinnan Highland Gathering the day before the offence occurred and that she had stayed with friends later that evening.

'She accepts she was the driver and drove the 10 miles from Glenfinnan to Lochailort,' said Mr Melrose.

'When she was seen at Lochailort Inn she had not consumed any alcohol but clearly was suffering the considerable effects from the previous night and early morning.

'My client has been driving for 22 years and is a Lochaber-based/Highlands music tutor and a disqualification will severely restrict her income.

'She co-operated fully with the police and is aware there will be a minimum three-year ban because of the analogous offence.'

Sentencing Maclean to the period of disqualification and imposing the fine, Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald commented: 'This was a significant reading and you have breached the drink driving law previously.'

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Findings should 'act as warning', says councillor

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

A new report which predicts a drastic fall in the working age population in Lochaber should 'act as a warning', according to a local councillor.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) published a report last week which outlined that the working age population in Lochaber was projected to decline by 19 per cent in the next 20 years, compared with 12 per cent across Highland Council area. The area's overall population is also projected to decrease by seven per cent.

The report also shows that the number of 65-to-84-year-olds living in Lochaber has increased by 13 per cent since 2016, while the number of people aged 85 or above has increased by 18 per cent.

Lochaber councillor Ben Thompson welcomed the



findings of the report but said it should act as a warning that more needed to be done in addressing problems in the area, such as housing.

'It points out that there's work to be done. I think Lochaber is the best place in the world to live but moving here and staying here can be

really difficult.'

He continued: 'The report highlights that we need to step up with things like rural affordable housing so people who want to stay in Lochaber can and are not priced out of the market by holiday homes.'

Councillor Thompson also said that the projected decline

Councillor Ben Thompson welcomed the report and said there was work to be done.

in working age population was a cause for concern, not only for the area's economy but for the council as well, considering its ageing work force.

'We need to make sure we are selling a good offer when it comes to recruitment,' he continued. 'Again, it comes down to not just the job on offer but the lifestyle here as well.'

Significant public and private developments are under way in Lochaber, including the proposed alloy wheel factory, by the GFG Alliance (Liberty), which is expected to create up to 400 jobs and bring many other benefits to the local economy. Other investments include a new hospital in Fort William led

by NHS Highland, and West Highland College's plans to establish a Centre for Science and Technology.

Alastair Nicolson, HIE's programme manager for the Lochaber, said: 'Official population projections do not take into consideration any planned investments or new developments in a community. This piece of research was undertaken to help us understand what is likely to happen if some or all of the planned investments in and around Fort William take place in the coming years. The findings tell us that significant population growth is highly likely in the near future.'

'Lochaber is already a fantastic place to live, work and study, and with planned investments in housing, local infrastructure and industry, its appeal to potential new residents will only increase.'

WHAT'S ON in Lochaber

■ The Fort William and district branch of Royal British Legion Scotland is holding a potted sports evening at Sunny's Bar on Thursday January 31 at 7pm.

■ Join the Highland Bookshop in Fort William this Friday (February 1) as it welcomes Fiona J MacKenzie, Ray Perman and Hugh Cheape as they present the Campbells of Canna.

To celebrate the recent release of Eilean: The Island Photography of Margaret Fay Shaw, the trio will give an illustrated talk on the lives and legacies of both Shaw and John Lorne Campbell.

The evening begins at 6.30pm and will be held upstairs in the shop.

For further details visit highlandbookshop.com/events.

■ Staff and volunteers from Caol-based charitable organisation Lochaber Sensory Care for sight and hearing support will be paying an outreach visit to Mallaig on Tuesday February 5.

The LSC team will be based in Mallaig Medical Centre from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

They will offer support and advice to those with a sight loss or hearing loss and will also re-tube and maintain NHS hearing aids and supply batteries for these. No appointment is needed for this free service.

■ Fort William Accordion and Fiddle Club is hosting a musical evening on Tuesday February 5 at 7.30pm at the Railway Club Inverlochry.

The guest artist is Duncan Black and Marie Fielding. All welcome. Admission is £5.

In the event of a last minute cancellation by any guest artist the committee will find an alternative artist.

■ Fort William Cricket Club is holding its AGM on Wednesday (February 6) from 7pm to 10pm at Lochaber Rugby Club.

Glencoe hydro scheme proposal proceeding despite opposition

Plans to build a river hydro scheme near the site of the Massacre of Glencoe look to be going ahead, despite concerns from residents, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

The hydro scheme developer Glen Hydro, part of ventoludens Ltd, said that because no statutory consultees had formally objected to the plans, the planning application was now awaiting approval from Highland Council.

A public meeting took place last week (Wednesday January 23) about the proposals following a backlash from the community.

Residents fear for the area's heritage and wildlife and voiced their objections to the planned hydro scheme, which would be situated within the Ben Nevis and Glencoe National Scenic Area, just 200 yards from the ruins of Inverigan House, a significant location in the Massacre of Glencoe.

Nick Forrest, senior project developer at ventoludens Ltd, the company behind Glen Hydro, said he felt the meeting 'went very well' and although there were some

tense moments he said it was 'generally respectful and well-received'.

He told the Lochaber Times: 'The community council expressed its support - and many of the local residents who attended - and were very positive, and will have a choice of how to spend the community benefit payments. I showed photos taken from the ruin of Inverigan House and demonstrated that there would be absolutely no visibility of the turbine house site.'

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) came under fire from residents who felt the organisation was not doing enough to protect Glencoe's heritage.

'The Highland Council has not received any objections from statutory consultees. SNH said it was satisfied with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and "agree that there will be no adverse impact on the integrity of the NSA". So even if the project goes to the planning committee, we are hopeful that it will be approved before the March 31 deadline,' said Mr Forrest.

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Businessman's £1,800 fine for Fort flat breach

The owner of a flat in Fort William's High Street, that was being used for multiple occupancy without a licence, was fined £1,800 when he appeared in the town's sheriff court this week.

Harjinder Singh Randhawa, 56, who lives in Somerset, had pleaded guilty that between March 1, 2015, and October 11, 2017, at 39 High Street, Fort William, the property above what was formerly known as Nico's chip shop – which he also received income from – was used for multiple occupation, despite there being no licence in effect for such use.

His plea of not guilty to a further charge that he had failed to register as a landlord was accepted by the Crown.

A second accused, Gurbhagat Singh, 48, from Glasgow, had his plea of not guilty accepted to a charge of acting as an agent for a property not licensed for multiple occupation and that he had



The multiple occupancy use of the property above the chip shop came to light after a fire.

also facilitated a number of people to take up residence there and collected rent from some of them.

Procurator Fiscal Martina Eastwood told the court that it was following a fire in the chip shop in October 2017, that Highland Council's environmental health officers had attended the premises and it was then that the mul-

ti-occupancy use of the flat came to light.

'It was mainly foreign nationals who were occupying the rooms, which varied in price from £70 to £100 per week,' said Ms Eastwood.

'The flat had three bedrooms and sometimes the rooms would be shared by two occupants.'

Defence agent Brian Cooney

'He has no other business interest and his sole income is from the chip shop'

told the court that the chip shop had been undergoing renovations and was due to open in a matter of weeks.

Mr Cooney said Randhawa, who is married with two children, received about £1,000 a month in income from the chip shop.

'But he has no plans to apply for a licence to rent out the property above in the future,' said Mr Cooney.

'He has no other business interests and his sole income is from the chip shop.'

Quizzed by Sheriff Eilidh MacDonald on what liabilities his client had in the way of mortgages, as well as any savings, Mr Cooney told the court Randhawa had £100,000 in savings.

Sheriff MacDonald fined Randhawa £1,800.



Lochaber Housing Association project has been given the go ahead by Highland Council.

Council approves Spean housing development

Lochaber Housing Association has been given permission to start the construction of 20 new houses in Spean Bridge after submitting a planning application to Highland Council.

The proposed development at Tigh Aran, just outside the Lochaber village, would see a mix of two and three-bedroom properties being built on the site in an attempt to ease the escalating housing pressure in the area.

Spanning a site adjacent to the A82 just south of Spean Bridge, the apartments will

be spread between four housing blocks of two or three-storeys.

The issue had to go back to the Highland Council's south area planning applications committee for reconsideration as there was an amendment to the developer contribution to be paid. Councillors approved the revised contribution of £50,280.

The Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry Community Council has previously shown its support for the development.



Caol and Mallaig ward councillor Ben Thompson outside the Co-op in Corpach where work is ongoing to create a new Puffin crossing. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

Councillor says Corpach crossing 'a must'

The new pedestrian crossing being built at Corpach is 'a must', according to Lochaber councillor Ben Thompson, who said that any disruption caused would be worth it in the long run, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

Work recently started on the new £90,000 puffin crossing on the A830 in Corpach.

There were some minor complaints made about the disruption caused by the works and the reduction in number of parking spaces outside the Co-op supermarket.

Councillor Thompson thanked everyone who had been disrupted by the works for their patience.

'It's great getting a crossing there,' he said.

'There is a lot of pressure on the A830 and the number of heavy lorries has increased in the last few years. 'So there's been pressure from the community councils to do something to make it safer.'

He acknowledged that the new crossing would reduce the number of parking spaces for Co-op shoppers but said that it was worth it for improved road safety,

adding: 'When I've been out campaigning, road safety issues is the number one issue across my ward.

'Everyone feels having a safer crossing at the Co-op is a must.

'Crossing that road is difficult so this will have the affect of narrowing the road and allowing people to stop traffic.'

As well as the installation of the new traffic signals, work will also include drainage improvements, carriageway resurfacing, footway reconstruction, new road markings and signage improvements.

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Highland Council rents to increase by three per cent

The average weekly rent charged by Highland Council to its 13,411 council house tenants is set to increase by three per cent for the coming financial year 2019/20, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

The average weekly rent will rise from £73.22 to £75.42 - an increase of £2.20 per week.

The increase will be applied across the region to residential rents, traveller site pitches, service charges and garage and garage sites.

In 2019/20, the council's proposed budget for housing repairs and maintenance is £17.811 million, an increase of 5.9 per cent on last year's repairs and maintenance budget.

The rent collected goes into an account called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and this money is only used for services which benefit council tenants, such as repairs to houses. It

does not pay for roads, street lights, refuse collection or services other than housing.

Councillor John Finlayson, chairman of the council's Care, Learning and Housing Committee, said: 'This report shows that the council's Housing Revenue Account is in a healthy position and this small rise in rents will help to ensure that we are able to increase the amount of money we spend on environmental improvements to our housing estates, which is something we know is a priority for tenants.'

'The council continues to work hard to keep rent increases as low as possible for tenants while continuing to provide a high level of front line services and investment in our housing stock, and we have had rent increases well below the national average for a number of years.'

CalMac cash to aid west coast youngsters

Ferry operator CalMac is launching a new community fund to help boost opportunities for young people in communities up and down the west coast, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

The fund is open to non-profit organisations and applications must be for a project or activities that benefit children and young people aged 26 and under living in a mainland port or island the company serves. Organisations can apply for £500 to £2,000.

CalMac's director of community and stakeholder engagement Brian Fulton said: 'The scope of use for this money is extremely flexible and I'm really looking forward to seeing some creative applications on how it can be used to help positively impact young people's lives



Brian Fulton, left, launches the new fund with chairman of the community board Angus Campbell.

within our communities. We are targeting 30 awards in year one, and will monitor interest levels in the fund over the course of the year, with each application being judged on its own merits.'

Community awards will be made across six separate areas by region and will be made in three rounds during the course of the year. Each application will be judged by a screening panel of young people recruited from across

the company's network in partnership with Young Scot.

Organisations can access an online application form and see full terms and conditions.

The first round of applications are being accepted from non-profit organisations based in the Western Isles and Ullapool from March 1.

Applications for Skye, Raasay, the Small Isles, Inner Hebrides, Oban and ports serving these communities, will open on May 1.

PPI scam warning

Trading Standards are warning residents about a PPI Refund scam which is currently circulating in the islands. An initial cold call claims people are due a PPI refund for more than £4,000 and asks for some personal detail including name, address and how long they have been living at their address.

Shortly after, a subsequent caller states they are due an even larger refund, and informs them that a cheque will be hand delivered to their home and they are given a date and time for delivery.

The caller then instructs the person to buy a £150 Google gift card at a local supermarket to cover their administration fees. They are told to buy this card prior to the delivery date.

A spokesperson said: 'Anyone wanting payment by gift card is a scammer. The fraudsters want the code on the back of the gift card, it's an easy way to steal money. Do not to engage with cold callers, do not give any personal details, end the call.'

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The current prison in Inverness exceeded prisoner capacity in 2018.

New Inverness prison is not top priority, justice secretary admits

The Scottish justice secretary Humza Yousaf confirmed this week that the construction of a new prison in Inverness has dropped down the priority list, despite admitting continued overcrowding at HM Prison Inverness is a 'great shame'.

This admission was made

following a parliamentary question from Highlands and Islands MSP Edward Mountain, who asked whether HMP Inverness exceeded prisoner capacity in 2018.

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice said: 'It did. The average population during

2018 was 113 people. That is an average occupancy level of just over a 120 per cent.'

Mr Yousaf added: 'It would be fair to say that a priority at the moment is the female custody real estate, then a replacement for Barlinnie, then a replacement for HMP Inverness.'

Councillors back 30mph order for Ballachulish

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Councillors have now given the green light to the preparation and advertising of a draft traffic order after the recent successful campaign for a 30mph speed limit on a stretch of the B863 road at North Ballachulish.

Members of Highland Council's Lochaber Area Committee, meeting last week in Fort William, officially approved the request, made on behalf of Nether Lochaber Community Council to cut the existing speed limit from 40mph to 30mph.

St Bride's Primary School lies within the speed limit zone, which has a temporary 20mph speed limit during the start and end of the school day.

But widespread concerns have been raised about road safety in general, especially for pedestrians walking on the stretch of road where there is no footway.

Councillor Andrew Baxter, MSP Kate Forbes and Nether Lochaber Community Council chairman Iain Jenner all lent their support to the community efforts.

As a result of this request, a

speed survey was carried out recording a mean speed of traffic of 34.9mph.

Council official Pauline Donaldson informed councillors that Police Scotland had confirmed its officers would enforce a 30mph limit on this section of road.

Lochaber Area Committee members approved the preparation and advertising of a draft order and the making of the order.

Asked by Councillor Baxter, who chairs Lochaber Area Committee, what the timescale would be for getting the order implemented and new signage erected along the road, Ms Donaldson said there was some uncertainty.

'We have to buy new signs and countdown markers, which are quite expensive, so I will need to get back to you on that,' she said.

Councillor Niall MacLean asked if signs could be erected before the draft order was advertised and then made, but Ms Donaldson responded that this would be unenforceable by the police.

Mr Baxter called for an additional recommendation to be added – which was agreed – that early confirmation be sought from officers that the



MSP Kate Forbes, resident Katie Daynes and other protestors calling for a reduced speed limit.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

necessary expenditure would be approved to allow early implementation of the traffic orders.

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Only one week to go until our Lochaber Tourism Roadshow comes to a venue near you!

If you're involved in Lochaber's booming tourism economy, this is the perfect chance to come along to ask the questions that you want answered by key players in the industry.

We've kept the format very informal – join us for a cuppa and chat to the industry players that you would most like to hear from.

It's not only a great way to find out more about how trends and changes in tourism might affect your business, it's also a good way to give your feedback directly to VisitScotland and Highland Council about what you see as the highs and lows for the industry in Lochaber.

Chat to Stephanie from Expedia and Iain from freetobook online booking platforms to get a feel for the future of online tourism



booking and discuss how they can help you grow your business.

Find out more about the proposed tourist tax with Chris Simpson, Highland Council's principal officer – Europe, Tourism and Film; and discuss future trends with Chris Taylor and Cassie McEwan from VisitScotland.

Chat to Frazer Coupland, the new CEO of Lochaber Chamber about what's new at the chamber and how the Outdoor Capital of the UK brand can benefit your tourism business.

Lisa, Mark and Jess from

our marketing and membership teams will also be there to show you how to get the best out of your Chamber benefits.

The events are free, but please book on Eventbrite to ensure your space – just search for Lochaber Tourism Roadshow. Join us on the stop that is most convenient for you:

■ Wednesday February 6: 9am-noon, Ballachulish Hotel.

■ Wednesday February 6: 1-4pm: Ariundle Centre, Strontian.

■ Thursday February 7: 9am-noon, Arisaig House, Arisaig.

■ Thursday February 7: 1-4pm, The Moorings Hotel, Fort William.

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Mallaig Gaelic catchment area proposed

Highland Council is to seek the views of local communities on a proposal to establish a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Mallaig Primary School.

The change is being proposed in line with statutory guidance on Gaelic Medium Education.

Members of the Care, Learning and Housing Committee have agreed to undertake a public consultation on the proposal.

The views of parents, the community and others will be sought from February 4 to March 22.

A public meeting will be held in Mallaig Primary School on Wednesday February 20.

The consultation will take place under procedures set down in The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

The proposal paper and associated documentation will be available on the Highland Council website from Friday February 4.

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Kinlochleven pupils enjoy visit to Inverness mosque

Kinlochleven High School head teacher Mrs Machin writes about the school's S3 pupils' visit to Masjid Mosque in Inverness.

A drive through the majestic snow-capped mountains of the Highlands provided the perfect, serene start to what was to be a welcoming, informative and insightful visit to the Masjid Mosque in Inverness.

Upon our arrival, we received a warm welcome from the Imam who outlined our programme of events. The first session involved a brief history of Islam, with the Imam detailing the key beliefs and principles that underpin the Islamic religion, highlighting the many similarities that are shared by world religions and pointing out the key differences.

Our students were treated to a presentation outlining the Islamic faith from its inception to present day, with a key feature being



Pupils kneel in prayer during a visit to Masjid Mosque in Inverness.

that much of being a Muslim is between the individual themselves and God.

When it came to the question and answer session, the Imam welcomed a variety of questions, both positive and negative. In great form, the S3 pupils rose to the occasion, posing questions of a challenging nature that had previously been researched in the classroom, although the Imam was equal to the task, deftly fielding tough questions, taking great care when dealing with both sensitive issues and the common misconceptions that arise due to incorrect interpretations of the Qur'an. Time and again, he revisited the theme of peace as being at the very foundation of Islam.

Following an impressive lunch

that Muslims are monotheistic, believing only in Allah. The faith is based on the belief that God sent many prophets to the Earth, with Muhammad being the last one. The prophet Muhammad also brought the Qur'an, the holy book of Muslims, as a philosophy on how Muslims should live their

lives. We also witnessed the Imam recite a passage from the Qur'an, a text that he had memorised by the age of 11.

The overarching theme throughout being that Islam is a religion of peace and charity, which are two of the non-negotiable elements of Islam. Our students also learned

that was kindly provided by our hosts at the mosque, we were invited to witness some of the local residents taking part in afternoon prayer, facing in the direction of Mecca, as is the custom. This act of worship was respectfully observed by our students. Following the prayer, we were invited into the prayer room, where once again the Imam invited questions, discussing issues from terrorism to the Five Pillars of Islam.

It was now time to be on our way and we thanked the Imam for his warmth, generosity and openness, before embarking on the journey back home. It is fair to say that our S3 students acquitted themselves with distinction, gaining a great deal of knowledge with regard to Islam in particular, while deepening their understanding of world religions in general.

Our sincere thanks go to everyone at the Masjid Mosque for a fantastic and enlightening experience.

Lochaber causes to get share of million-pound fund

Community groups from Knoydart to Kinlochleven are to share a funding boost after the Co-op welcomed the latest beneficiaries to its Local Community Fund.

Forty-five causes across Argyll and the West Highlands are set to benefit, including Caol Play, Knoydart Hall, Ewen's Room and Kinlochleven Men's Shed, with each in line to receive several thousand pounds at the end of the year. Last year, 41 groups in Oban and the West Highlands shared £240,430.

Recent figures from the Charity Commission show that 40 per cent of all charities survive on an income of less than £10,000, meaning that the money raised by Co-op members will have a significant impact on the difference causes can make in their community.

Co-op members, receive a five per cent reward for themselves with a further one per cent going to local causes when they buy own-brand products. Members can decide how the money is allocated, and are encouraged to select the causes they wish to support online.

Rebecca Birkbeck, director of community engagement at the Co-op, said: 'Last year we



invested £19 million in more than 4,000 groups UK-wide, supporting a wide range of initiatives from village halls and community spaces to skills initiatives and neighbourhood watch schemes, all of which are helping to make communities across the UK safer, happier, and healthier places to live.'

Other Lochaber groups that are to benefit include Rainbow Baby and Toddler Group, 4th Lochaber Scouts, Lochaber Sensory Care, Caol Regeneration Company Limited, Fèis Lochabair, Nevis Community Radio Limited, Second Lochaber (Kilmallie) Scout Group, Kinlochleven Community Secret Garden, The Island Park Community Field SCIO and Mallaig Primary School EM and GM Nurseries.

Fish farm firm ranks as top performer

Mowi Scotland, formerly Marine Harvest Scotland, has been recognised as a top performing company in the newly released Scottish Business Insider's Top 500.

The company, which re-branded to its original name Mowi which it used when it was founded more than 50 years ago, was ranked 31 of 500 by the SBI.

Mowi Scotland Ltd employs 1,250 people in a business that includes feed milling, fish farming, processing and sales.

New armed forces website launched

A new website, aimed at supporting members of the armed forces community in the region, was launched on January 24 at Highland Council's headquarters.

Council convener Councillor Bill Lobban welcomed the launch of armedforces-morayandhighland.co.uk.

Information provided on the website includes local services and the assistance available to the armed forces' community, including schools and learning, employment and training, money and financial advice, health and wellbeing and housing.

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Lochaber Newton Room will be first in Scotland

by Neill Bo Finlayson
nfinlayson@obantimes.co.uk

Work is under way to create one of Scotland's first Norwegian-style learning centres in Fort William.

A new science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) centre is in the pipeline for Lochaber in the next two or three years but, in the meantime, an interim Newton Room is being created at Caol Youth Centre.

Designed to encourage more young people into careers in STEM subjects, the new facility is now being fitted out with a teaching room, auditorium and a laboratory.

A network of Newton Rooms in Norway work in collaboration with schools and local employers to provide inspirational STEM education in the most rural parts of the country.



The similar network of rooms is being created in the Highlands by the Science Skills Academy, a partnership project led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), with £3million from the Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal.

Other organisations behind the initiative include Skills

Development Scotland, the University of the Highlands and Islands, Highland Council and NHS Highland.

Organisations behind the project are developing Newton modules to match STEM sectors in the Highlands and Islands.

These will complement the school curriculum and allow

Newton Rooms will inspire more young people into STEM subjects.

Photo: Alison White/HIE.

families and communities to use the Newton Rooms to enhance and grow STEM activities within the Lochaber area.

Lochaber councillor Allan Henderson, chairman of Highland Council's environment, development and infrastructure committee said: 'The Lochaber Newton Room is a prime example of how the City-Region Deal is benefitting the wider Highlands at a local level.'

'Young people studying STEM subjects in Lochaber will find their learning experiences and opportunities improved greatly when the Newton Room opens.'

The first two Newton Rooms in Scotland, in Thurso and Fort William, will officially open in the spring. Andrew Johnston, HIE's director for the Science Skills Academy, said: 'It's great to see work start on Lochaber's Newton Room.'

'The centre will aim to inspire young people across the whole of Lochaber who are interested in STEM subjects. 'We are working with partners in the field to provide a coherent STEM learning experience throughout a young person's education.'

'This in turn will provide opportunities for young people to pursue careers in some of the emerging and future technological developments.'

'We very much look forward to opening the centre.'

UHI appoints new vice principal to strategic role

The University of the Highlands and Islands has announced the appointment of Dr Gary Campbell as vice-principal (strategic developments).

This new position aims to make the university more responsive to the needs of the businesses and communities in the region.

Dr Campbell will help to develop education and training in the locations it is needed, as well as harnessing the university's research capacity and knowledge exchange in areas industries require.

Based at Moray College UHI in Elgin, Dr Campbell previously held the post of Dean of Science, Health and Engineering. His new role will see him work with colleagues around the university partnership to lead strategic academic developments, including those associated with computing, aerospace and engineering.

Blackford pledges support for Holocaust Memorial Day

This week Ian Blackford MP signed the Holocaust Educational Trust's Book of Commitment, writes Neill Bo Finlayson.

In doing so, he has pledged his commitment to Holocaust Memorial Day and honouring those who were murdered during the Holocaust, as well as paying tribute to the extraordinary Holocaust survivors who work tirelessly to educate young people today.

Anniversary

Holocaust Memorial Day is marked annually on Sunday January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of the former Nazi concentration and death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

In the lead up to and on Holocaust Memorial Day, thousands of commemorative events were being arranged by schools, faith groups and community organisations across the country, remembering all the victims of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides. The theme for this year's commemorations is Torn from Home.

After signing the Book of Commitment, Mr Blackford said: 'Holocaust Memorial Day is an important oppor-



Ian Blackford signing the Holocaust Educational Trust's Book of Commitment.

tunity for people from Ross, Skye and Lochaber, and across the country, to reflect on the tragic events of the Holocaust.

'As the Holocaust moves from living history, to 'just' history, it becomes ever more important that we take the time to remember the victims and also pay tribute to the survivors. I would encourage my constituents to show their support for such an important day.'

Karen Pollock MBE, chief

executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust, said the trust was 'very grateful' to Mr Blackford for signalling his commitment to remembering victims of the Holocaust as well as challenging antisemitism.

She added: 'The Holocaust did not start in the gas chambers but with hate-filled words. Our mission is to educate young people from every background about the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance.'

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As touched on briefly in my article from January 3, occasions such as New Year, birthdays and anniversaries are catalysts for reflecting on our life progress set against the unchanging motion of time.

A common aspect of that reflecting process is the feeling that time is running out.

Most people at some points in their lives are susceptible to the wee growling self-created gremlin chastising them for not having done this or done that and 'where have the last 20, 40 or 70 years gone?'

A great tonic for such futile worries is meeting those, who despite being at the higher end of the age spectrum, are as enthusiastic for life and as excited for new projects and the future as the most vigorous teenager.

The three octogenarians who were the main guests at Carmichael's Ceilidh, (covered in last week's article) - John Carmichael himself, Alasdair Gillies and Fergie MacDonald - are all shining examples of people who

seem to be paying little attention to their age in years and continue to exude the charisma and energy that made them stars in the respective fields throughout their careers.

In the last couple of weeks, by unrelated coincidence, I have had contact with both Fergie and John. When you speak to these guys, even on the phone, their energy and excitement is such that when you put the phone down it feels like you've just had a treble espresso, a can of Red-Bull and pep-talk from Churchill.

At the age of 81 new endeavours and different career directions are generally low down on the priority list of most.

Not so with Fergie! New tunes, possible single releases and growing his portfolio of published books reflecting the addition of being a writer to his wide range of already mastered pursuits are all in the pipeline.

This enthusiasm is not to say Fergie is blind to his own mortality. Conversely,

having gone through a major bypass operation a few years ago, he is very aware of how lucky he is to be in good health and I think that is a key ingredient to much of the type of optimistic energy that people like Fergie have.

None of us knows how long we are going to have in this life, so when we are here we may as well approach it with positivity.

The futility of worrying that time is running out is borne out by the fact that whether we are 18, 40, 60 or 81, what is gone is gone, what is done is done and the important thing is that we have our whole lives ahead. That life ahead may be one day or it may be many decades but never will we know. Right up to that unknown time, we have the chance to try new things and to follow the winds of fulfilment and happiness.

If I am lucky to make it to my eighties, I hope I still have the energy to be writing new tunes and trying new careers! Slàinte Fergie!

Lochaber celeb

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Scotland's national bard has been celebrated across Lochaber with a series of Burns luncheons and suppers being enjoyed by young and old alike.

The 'big event' saw Lochaber Burns Club hosting its annual event for the first time in Ben Nevis Distillery in Fort William.

As part of the supper, life-long Burns enthusiast and club member Robert Cairns produced a strictly limited edition book featuring past presidents of the club over a 20-year period through pictures taken at the annual Burns Supper, supplied by Iain Ferguson of The Write Image.

Many well-known names, faces and characters from the club's history are displayed, bringing back memories of times past and spectacular performances of Burns' work enjoyed.



Donald MacLeod with Burns club president Bill Cameron and top table guests at the haggis supper in Ben Nevis Distillery. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Mr Cairns presented his book to each of the past presidents who attended last week's supper, held on the Bard's birthday in Ben Nevis Distillery - a venue to which no doubt Rabbie himself would have given his approval.

Many primary schools held Burns-themed lunch-

eons, with parents invited along as guests and also treated to renditions of Burns' songs and poetry.

Mallaig Burns Night was jointly organised by the West Highland Hotel - where it was staged - and Mallaig Pool and Leisure, and was held as a fund-raiser for the leisure centre.



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brates the bard



Above left, Bunsgoil Loch Abar pupils; above, children from St Columba's primary school; left, Inverlochy youngsters, and far left, Lunduvra pupils entertained family and friends at their Burns lunch.

All photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos, and Abridgeside Photography.



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Nominations sought for community councils

Nominations are being invited from people seeking election to Morvern Community Council and Stromeferry and Achmore Community Council.

The need to hold interim elections has come about due to the resignation of some members which have brought the community councils down to below half of their memberships.

To stand for election potential candidates must be entered in the current Electoral Register for the Community Council area.

The deadline for sending in a nomination is 4pm on Wednesday February 6.

CONTACTUS
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Skye crofter to head up crofting federation

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A crofter from Kingsburgh on the Isle of Skye, has been appointed to lead the Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF).

Yvonne White was confirmed as the new head of SCF at a board and council meeting held in Inverness last Friday, in which two new vice-chairmen were also nominated and approved.

'It is a great honour to be appointed to this important role and not a little daunting,' said Ms White.

'I have to fill the shoes of our immediate past chairman Russell Smith and also follow on from an impressive line of previous chairmen.

'However, they have all helped to build a vibrant



Yvonne White.

federation that is the only organisation solely dedicated to fighting for crofting. We have our work cut out but we have a strong team to represent our members.'

Mrs White crofts with her husband at Romesdal, on Skye. They keep a fold of pedigree Highland cattle and Cheviot sheep. Mrs White is also chairwoman

of the Kingsburgh common grazings committee and sheep-stock club, and acts as secretary for community woodland trust Kingsburgh Forest Trust.

Mrs White continued: 'I have two vice-chairs, Donald MacKinnon and Brendan O'Hanrahan, based in Lewis and Assynt respectively. Both have specialist input to the organisation and will provide an invaluable supporting resource. Russell Smith will remain heading up our agriculture working group. I am looking forward to working with all the directors and members of our advisory council.'

Mrs White will serve for two years and she has already served on the board of directors for four years. All SCF

office-bearers are unpaid.

'This is a very difficult time for rural Scotland and for crofting. Crofters need dedicated representation to look out for their interests. As the future unfolds the one thing that is certain is that governmental budgets will not increase and competition for resources will therefore be even stronger.

'The significant thing about the SCF is that it only represents crofting households; we have no competing alliances. At the meeting last week we also agreed our objectives for this year, which include increasing our lobbying voice on agricultural issues that affect our members and ensuring that crofters' views are heard in the legislative reform process.'

Skye MSP issues rallying call to young Gaelic speakers

Young Gaelic speakers have a 'duty to pass on the language' to the next generation, Kate Forbes MSP said in a keynote speech last week.

On Thursday evening, the MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch delivered the

inaugural John Macleod memorial address in Gaelic at the University of Edinburgh.

For a decade the late Mr Macleod was president of An Comunn Gàidhealach, which organises the prestigious Royal National Mòd each year,

and had a particular passion for encouraging young people in the Gaelic community. He passed away suddenly in 2018.

Ahead of the event, Ms Forbes said she was honoured to be giving the first John Macleod memorial address at

the University of Edinburgh. 'He was a man who recognised his responsibility to safeguard and invest in the language,' she said. 'Most critically, he saw that the next generation needed to pick up the baton.'

She added: 'The title of the

address captures the sense that as we have inherited a great heritage, we have an even greater responsibility to pass it on.

'I will be discussing the role of young people in taking the language beyond the school

gates and into their daily lives.

'We have seen a beautiful musical and cultural revival in Scotland - and it seems fitting that the lecture should fall during Celtic Connections - but we want that to include the language.'

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Plockton example of holiday home pressure, says MSP

Plockton has been held up as an example of what happens to a Highland village when too many of its houses end up in the hands of those only wanting them for holiday homes.

MSP Kate Forbes used the picturesque village – made famous by 1990s television series *Hamish Macbeth* – as an example when welcoming new figures that show the number of second homes in Scotland have reduced over the past six years, which industry experts have partly attributed to taxation.

Scottish Government figures show that the number of second homes in Scotland stood at 40,599 in 2012, but in September 2018 (the latest available figures) it had drastically reduced to 24,907. Over the same period second homes in the Highlands dropped from 4,520 to 3,891.

Ms Forbes said: 'These figures are excellent news for the Highlands, where there is a housing challenge. This has been significantly exacerbated by second homes.'

'In some villages, like Plockton, there are very few homes left which are not used as holiday homes. This has absorbed housing stock, making it harder for local residents and first-time buyers to stay in the area.'

'The Scottish Government introduced additional taxes on second homes, and these figures show that it is freeing up housing and reducing the number of second homes.'

And Ms Forbes continued: 'Just last week, we increased the additional dwelling supplement by a percentage again and I hope this continues to free up homes for local residents.'

'This has to go hand-in-hand with house building too, because there is not one single solution.'



An artist's impression of the development on the former golf course in Portree.

MSP pushes for kidney dialysis on Isle of Skye

Kate Forbes MSP has welcomed a commitment from NHS Highland that it is actively seeking a local solution for kidney dialysis patients in the area.

Currently five patients are travelling three days a week from their homes on the island to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, which the constituency MSP described as 'intolerable'.

It is understood that until two years ago, no patient from the area had required haemodialysis for more than a decade, and some have now raised this with Ms Forbes in a bid to find a solution.

She wrote to NHS Highland's interim chief executive Dr Gregor Smith, who confirmed that in light of the increased numbers, the health board was now seeking to 'provide a local dialysis service that can respond to the current need'.

Ms Forbes said: 'I was unhappy to learn that some were travelling from Skye to Inverness for dialysis, which is an additional burden on them.'

'I recognise that need comes and goes and there have been times when there are no patients in Skye, but there are now and it's important that services are provided locally. This is excellent progress.'

Green light for Skye luxury pods

Plans to transform the former golf course in Portree into a luxury camping pod resort hotel have been given the green light by Highland Council.

Councillors granted planning permission for the ambitious project, which will see 27 luxury en-suite 'glamping' pods being installed on the site of the former golf course in Portree, providing what the developers describe as an 'ecological resort hotel'.

At a meeting of the north planning applications committee last Tuesday, councillors generally welcomed the plans, but one of the main points of contention was access and road safety issues.

However, Skye councillor John Gordon commended the 'excellent' proposal, despite these concerns: 'I think this is a great project. It's

been really well thought out, it does fit into the landscape. I think the big issue is road safety – Struan Road onto Dunvegan road.

'It's a different style of accommodation and it certainly will bring more employment to the area. We'll just continue to look at the road network.'

Planners said the pattern of tourism traffic was different to residential or local traffic, which was important to consider. It was also pointed out that new footpaths at the junction was a condition of the development and there were plans to enforce a 20mph speed limit.

Skye councillor Calum MacLeod added: 'I think as a whole it's much welcomed and will contribute to Skye being a luxury destination. I'm also pleased to see staff accommodation is being catered for, be-

cause there has been much of this reported shortfall for people working in Skye in the past. Hopefully, it won't deter the developer looking to employ people from the island.'

The glamping pods will be positioned in three clusters across the site and are designed to be in-keeping with the surrounding landscape. As well as the single accommodation pods, a hotel 'hub' will also be built which will include a bar, restaurant, sauna and swimming pool. Plans have also been drawn up for the main car park, situated opposite the West Highland College, which would accommodate up to 50 cars.

The application was submitted by Charlie and Miranda Garton Jones.

The couple also currently own the Cow Shed, a boutique bunkhouse in the north of Skye.

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LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to editor@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB**Stramash clear-up
was brilliant effort**

It was great to see so many people turn out to help staff at Stramash.

It was miserable weather, but that didn't deter folk of all ages, including a band of students from Fort William's West Highland College UHI, who gave up their entire Saturday to help with the clear-up.

Businesses also got on board with digger, tractor and chainsaw operators all coming down to the site to help clear away the burned debris and cut down and chip trees to help cover the scorched nursery ground.

Stramash team leader Cameron Sprague said he was 'humbled' by the turnout, and it certainly was a fantastic response from the community in general as well as the Stramash 'family'.

Well done to everyone involved.

**Puffin crossing is
vital for road safety**

It seems there have been a number of complaints about the roadworks on the A830 in Corpach, where the new puffin crossing outside the Co-op is being built.

It is a big undertaking and there will be a fair amount of disruption, including loss of parking spaces at the supermarket, but we are with Councillor Ben Thompson – the pedestrian crossing is vital.

With the amount of traffic now on the road, including heavy lorries, the narrowing of the road and this crossing is badly needed to improve safety for anyone crossing the road here.

As well as the installation of the new traffic signals, work will also include drainage improvements, carriageway resurfacing, footway reconstruction, new road markings and signage improvements.

It all adds up to improved road safety for everyone – pedestrians and drivers.

**Holyrood's willingness
to tackle problems**

Recently Radio 4 reported the numbers of rough sleepers had risen in England and Wales but fallen in Scotland, a difference it attributed to Scottish Government initiatives.

Since devolution, Scottish governments have distinguished themselves by their willingness to tackle problems that Westminster seems to prefer to ignore. Smoking and alcohol initiatives are cases in point.

I therefore feel that Andrew Green of Ardtoe was being more than a little harsh on the devolved administrations. I haven't seen any serious evidence the NHS in Scotland is performing worse than the service south of the border. Often it seems to do a little better in terms of targets to be met.

Nobody will claim that any education service in the UK has no issues to face, but it is a masterpiece of hyperbole to say that the Scottish Government has an appalling record in education, especially against a background of austerity and central government cuts.

I wish the UK economy was one of the most successful of all time, but sadly the indicators just don't support Mr Green's claim.

Britain has a long-term, chronic, trade imbalance. There is a real danger that this problem will be exacerbated by Brexit, as we turn our backs on our main trading partner, with a resulting fall in the value of the pound and a rapid rise in inflation.

It should be remembered that Scotland has some very strongly performing export industries, of which whisky is but one. The UK also has dangerously high levels of personal debt, unimpressive productivity levels and large numbers of people surviving on low wage.

Should the good people of England consider ejecting us from the UK, I for one won't be too worried and I have never voted for the SNP.

Ronald Cameron, Banavie.

**Deer management is factor
in managing Lyme disease**

Great credit is due to the Scottish Government for increasing awareness of Lyme disease by issuing card-sized tick removers and advice and by supporting NHS research into the disease.

It is to be hoped that the estates in the Uists will finally acknowledge the responsibility they have to dramatically and rapidly reduce their red deer herds, in an area with 165 cases

of Lyme infection over a period of four years.

Red deer do not carry the disease but act as blood food banks for the ticks. When deer numbers were properly managed in the past, they stayed up on the high ground all summer and had sufficient food. Now that North Uist has close to twice the recommended numbers, deer can be seen foraging all over the low ground, spreading the dangerous ticks where locals, walkers, fishers and cyclists become their targets.

Too many innocent victims on the islands, including my wife, have had the rest of their lives drastically affected by debilitating, per-

manent pain and a wide range of neurological side effects, all caused by Lyme disease.

If the estates do really care about residents and tourists they should commit now to taking the necessary action, which Scottish Natural Heritage has also recommended.

**Alasdair Maclean
Househill Gate, Nairn**

Debate about deer culling

I am surprised at the response from the Scottish Wildlife Trust's representative about

YOUR PICTURES



We know our readers love to take photographs so we are happy to create this space to showcase people's images each week. If you have a photograph you would like to see published here, send

it to editor@obantimes.co.uk, post it to The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, PA34 4HB or hand it in to our offices in Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, or in High Street, Fort William.

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DISTRICT NEWS



Lochaber High School's Connie MacLennan has won the Glasgow and West of Scotland District Rotary Young Chef competition.

Connie wins regional chef award

Congratulations to Connie MacLennan, Lochaber High School S3, winner of the Glasgow and West of Scotland District Rotary Young Chef competition.

Connie travelled to South Lanarkshire College, East Kilbride, to take part. Her winning dishes were: quenelles of smoked salmon and horseradish pate on Melba toast triangles accompanied BY drizzled red and yellow pepper vinaigrette.

Ben Nevis chicken: oven baked chicken breast filled with haggis, fondant potatoes, asparagus spears wrapped in bacon, butterfly batons

of carrot and turnip with a creamy Ben Nevis whisky, Lochaber honey and mustard sauce, and garnished with parsnip crisps.

Sicilian Lemon Curd Cream topped with a swirl of whipped cream and garnished with raspberries, lemon rind and a sprig of mint, with rounds of stem ginger shortbread.

This is a fantastic achievement for Connie, well done indeed! Grateful thanks were made to the Rotary Club of Lochaber, LHS home economics staff and Connie's family for their support and assistance.

ARISAIG



The new electric vehicle charging point in Arisaig.

New electric vehicle charging points have now been installed at the Land, Sea and Islands Centre in Arisaig.

The second part of the installation of the electric vehicle charging points at the centre was completed last week. The next stage is the commissioning process with Charge Place Scotland.

The new facility comes about through funding awarded to Arisaig Community Trust from the Climate Challenge Fund for its two-year Eco Project.

The main themes of the project are encouraging local food production and consumption, reducing waste and promoting greener transport.

PLOCKTON

A sale in the Kyle Lighthouse Centre on Friday January 18

raised £960 for the refurbishment of Kyle Free Church.

After more than 30 years as convener of the poppy collection for the Earl Haig Fund in the Plockton area, Charlie M Macrae has decided to retire. His successor is Jim Greer. Also retiring is Jonathan MacSween, convener for several years for the Dornie area. His successor is Davina Nicholson. Ann Gordon, convener for the Balmacara area for many years is handing over to Fiona Talbot. Last year the total raised in the Lochalsh, Glenshiel and Stromeferry area was a record £4,902.21.

Plockton Harbour CIC held its AGM recently in Plockton Hall. Twenty-one members attended and treasurer Gill Bennett submitted a satisfactory report despite a turnover of £53,778.

However, a new shed is to be built, four second-hand pontoons for the fishermen are to be installed, and Highland Council has reduced the comfort grant for the toilets by 53 per cent.

The meeting agreed to moving the bank account from the Royal Bank to the Bank of Scotland. Six existing directors resigned and were duly elected. Three new directors were proposed and seconded.

Office bearers: Jimmy Fergusson (chairman), Pete Davies (vice

chairman), Kevin Baird (secretary), Gill Bennett (treasurer). Previous treasurer Ed Stanley resigned in October 2018 and was thanked for all his work over many years.

Directors: Calum MacKenzie, Gary Phoenix, Geoff Webster, Mick Greay, James Krisp-Camp. Duncan McAndrew was co-opted as fishermen's rep.

Mooring fees for 2019 will remain unchanged.

LOCHALINE

Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL) is preparing to begin a year-long programme of work at Lochaline ferry terminal to replace the aligning structure and create extra marshalling space.

A public drop-in session has been arranged to share details of the work and alternative service arrangements during a planned six-week closure.

The session will take place at Lochaline Village Hall on February 19, 3.30pm-6.30pm.

Individuals are welcome to drop in at any time during the session. George Leslie Limited will start work on site in late April/early May 2019, and the project is expected to take 12 months.

Some early site clearance may take place before the project gets fully under way.

Barra students visit Google Europe HQ

Two Barra students had the opportunity of a lifetime when they visited Google headquarters for Europe to attend a Creative Tech Fest.

Castlebay Community School pupils Uilleam MacDougall and Calum Denehy attended the event in Dublin which encourages young people to get involved in digital media and science, technology, engineering, art and maths.

The pair were accompanied by their teacher Lisa MacNeil.

This event is held annually as a national showcase for TechSpace, a creative education network. The day included workshops, inspirational speeches and interactive exhibitions.

The trip was made possible from a collaboration between Cànan Graphics Studio, MG ALBA and the organisation in Ireland which delivers the TechSpace

project, Camara Ireland. Uilleam, who hopes to pursue a media career, said: 'School trips are always fun but when it's related to a subject you feel passionate about it's even more exciting. From start to finish the day was inspiring, the speakers really made you think about your role in the wider world and the workshops pushed your creativity. Google headquarters is very cool!'



Castlebay Community School pupils Uilleam MacDougall and Calum Denehy, along with their teacher, Lisa MacNeil and Cànan Graphics Studio project manager Floraidh Forrest at Tech Fest.

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Club president Iain Johnston, John Hutchison and Angela Nolan, above, while right, musicians welcomed guests with a medley of songs.

Photographs: Iain Ferguson.



Lochaber Rotarians enjoy Burns lunch

Twenty Rotarians and guests sat down to enjoy a novel Burns Supper at their weekly business lunch meeting last week at the Alexandra Hotel in Fort William.

Following a welcoming medley from the club's in-house musicians, the hotel's Angela Nolan carried the haggis aloft into the dining room where past-president John Hutchison gave a stirring Address to the Haggis.

The traditional Selkirk Grace was delivered by past president John Gooddall after which everyone enjoyed a hearty meal of haggis,

neeps and tatties. Ian Nicol then entertained everyone with a humorous rendition of What happened to Kate, written in the style of Burns' Tam O'Shanter.

After the lunch, Mr Hutchison led singing of Burns' Of a the airts, Killiecrankie O and finally Auld Lang Syne.

The musicians then bade farewell with a foot-tapping medley of Scottish reels.

Club President Iain Johnston thanked everyone, including the hotel staff, for their contribution to a very successful lunch event.

Retro Roamer

fort@obantimes.co.uk

More Roamerisms from the early 1990s

The Pulp Mill Club's first quiz night was more social and sociable than serious and sedate, and raised a few chuckles as a result.

Jimmy Lamond, for example, insisted that the only soul band worth hearing belonged to the Salvation Army. And 'The Hit of the Seventies' was...himself! Then there was the team called The Alphabets - Men and Women of Letters. All post persons, in fact. Not forgetting the Glesca Keelies, Ally, Bally and Bee. The Mill had a couple of teams in the fray.

Joe Gillies is now thinking of going into the quiz biz in a big way. So much so that he was spotted at the weekend affixing a unique mailbox to the gates of Island View in Bonnie Glenfinnan. The installation is designed to save the post person, weighed down with entry forms for various quizzes and contests, having to open the gates to make each delivery, and then having to shut them again. And Joe's unique mailbox? It's an old, enamelled breadbin.

Meanwhile, down in Seagull City, the locals are seeking to improve their word counts. A notice has gone up outside the village hall exhorting everyone to join - and I quote - Mallaig Scrabble Club. Perhaps one well-known balladeer along the Road to the Isles will be joining Mallaig Scrabble Club to while away the nights till he recovers fully from the flu and finds his singing voice again?

Highland Region's planning committee rents Lochaber District Council's chamber in Lochaber House in Fort William for its monthly meetings. Last week its members and officers found themselves 'in the cold'. No amount of pre-planning could have legislated for the fact that the heating controls in the chambers are monitored - ironically - by the Lochaber House landlords, the Post Office - in Inverness! So the absence of central heating was not because the region didn't have 'the benefit of planning permission'. Councillor Michael Foxley, as chairman, apologised to everyone for the unprecedented lack of hot air in the chamber. And, by the end of the meeting, he declared that, despite being a GP, he had no feeling left in his feet.

Next day it was the turn of the full district council. Obviously, precautionary measures had been taken to ensure there was some warmth for the protracted proceedings. But not enough, apparently, as the administrative attire was exchanged for flak jackets.

The saga continues. In these very chambers, 'Q Day' came along. Advertised as a meeting of Lochaber District Licensing Board but the queue of licensees and their agents - 75 in all - found there was something of a quandary over the quarterly meeting. Only five members of the board formed the day's quota. So that brought into the equation that quaint word 'quorate'. Council decorum requires six to make up the licensing board quorum. The result? No quarterly meeting. After apologies on behalf of the quintet by the quintessential chairman Councillor Eddie Hunter, applicants and agents quietly dispersed. To, among other places, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Grangemouth, Lochaline, Kilchoan, aye and even Queensferry (South). Lots of legal ramifications now have to be interpreted with regard to licence granting, renewals, extensions and transfers. Quickly.

Ah, but 'Well Done' to Lochaber District Council - and Fort William FC which, between them, made such a grand job of co-ordinating the arrangements for last Saturday's Scotland v Holland Schoolboys International at Claggan Park. The only aspect for which nobody could cater was the Lochaber weather. Yet, despite the elements, the best part of 2,000 spectators turned up on the pouring wet day.

And they weren't disappointed. Scotland put on a great display to record a well-merited 2-0 victory. After the match, bottles, gifts, ties, banners and other items of goodwill were exchanged. It fell to Drew Purdon to hand over a hefty bottlesworth of Dew of Ben Nevis to the referee. Said he: 'I should ask Les Mottram to accept this from me in my capacity as chairman of Lochaber District Council. But I'm not going to.' There were quite a few perplexed expressions at that. But then Drew continued: 'Instead, I'm going to present it to him in my role as president of the Fort William Branch of the Partick Thistle Supporters Club!'

SFA secretary Jim Farry broke into a smile, despite the rain, when confronted by Drew Purdon's tie. It transpires that the SFA has some newly designed official neckwear, and it was having its first airing by being sported by - Jim Farry. However, by sheer coincidence, the council chairman's tie was almost identical - except that it also featured a motif of Bugs Bunny.

Perhaps it's because of what passes for my sense of humour, but I was tickled by the names of the winners of the 'Travelling Prizes' at the Treslaig Beetle Drive. Alastair Cook and Donald Campbell.



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GOLFER



Robert MacIntyre. Photograph: Bounce Sports.

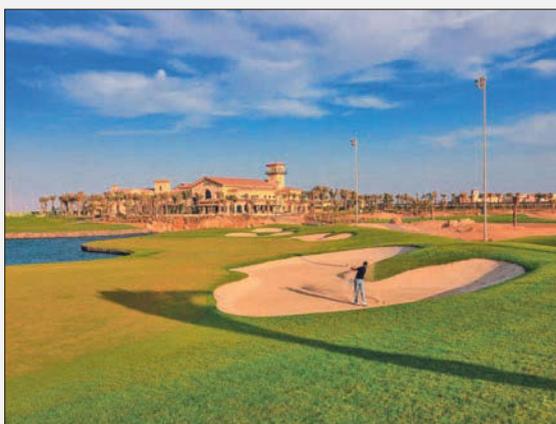
Ninth place finish for MacIntyre in Dubai

Oban golfer Robert MacIntyre, who just failed to make the 132-man field for the Omega Dubai Desert Classic last week took part in the two-round Mena Tour Omega Dubai Desert Classic Shootout at the Dubai Hills Golf Club instead.

The 22-year-old had to go straight on to the course without a practise round and this proved costly as he carded a one over par 73 in round one which featured five birdies and four bogies.

Five birdies and only two bogies saw the Glencruitten golfer card an excellent three under par 69 in round two to see him finish in joint ninth place with a two-round total of 142.

Robert will now set his sights on the prestigious Saudi International held at the Royal Greens Golf and Country Club in King Abdullah Economic City, Saudi Arabia starting today (January 31).



Royal Greens Golf and Country Club.

SCOTTISH AMATEUR LEAGUE

Results and fixtures

Last Saturday's results: Jimmy Marshall Cup, first round – Lochgilhead Red Star 0, Oban Saints 2; Premier Division – Dunoon v Motherwell Thistle, postponed; Premier Division One – Campbeltown Pupils 1, Ferguslie Star 2. Premier Division Two – Tarbert 1, Glynhill Moorcroft 1.

Next Saturday's fixtures: Premier Division - Dunoon v Oban Saints; Premier Division One - Lochgilhead Red Star v Campbeltown Pupils; Premier Division Two - Glenburn Athletic v Tarbert

OBAN SAINTS YOUTHS

Results and fixtures

Last Sunday's results: League – Clyde SOF 4, Under 13s 2. Scorer for Saints was Zander Craik (2). Under 14s v Rutherglen Glencairn, postponed; Under 15s v St Patrick's Sports Academy, postponed; Scottish Cup – Rowallan (Kilmarnock) 1, Under 16s 0.

This Sunday's fixtures: Under 13s v Milton Rovers; Thistle Weir v Under 14s; St Rochs v Under 15s; Under 16s v Helensburgh.

Dieguno narrowly misses out on title

Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club's Josh Dieguno came agonisingly close to lifting the Scottish Schoolboy Intermediate title last weekend when he faced Jason Duffy of Auchengeich boxing club lost in the final.

Twelve-year-old Dieguno came flying out of the blocks in the first round, using double phases to force Duffy on to the back foot.

He continually switched ranges and areas of attack and Duffy struggled to find an answer to Dieguno's offense.

Duffy turned things in his favour in the second round when Dieguno inexplicably abandoned his tactics from the previous round and used only his jab and straight backhand.

This enabled Duffy to catch Dieguno with uppercuts when he put his weight too far forward when jabbing and also force the Lochaber lad backwards as he comfortably defended the two punches coming his way.

Both boxers knew whoever won the final round would win the contest and because of this both put in a tremendous effort as first one then the other took ring centre.

Dieguno persisted with his jab and straight backhand while Duffy, who won silver at last year's GB Championships, tried to use the strength advantage of being a year older.

At the end of the contest there really wasn't the width of a cigarette paper between



Josh Dieguno.

the two boys' successes and unfortunately for Dieguno, while two judges voted in his favour, three judges went the way of Duffy.

This was a great learning contest for Dieguno as he enters both the Northern District Championships next month together with

BOXING

the full Scottish Open Championships.

Lochaber mauled by Medics

Glasgow Medics	94
Lochaber	0
West Region Division 3	

An under-strength Lochaber side succumbed to one of the club's heaviest defeats in recent years away to league leaders Glasgow University Medics on Saturday.

It was not a good start for Lochaber when two players failed to show up for the game meaning they travelled without a full team but had to play regardless.

For the first 15 minutes

Lochaber managed to repel the constant Medics attack.

The aggression in defence was good with attack after attack being stopped, until eventually the Medics found a crack in the defence to score their opening try.

Things did not get any easier for Lochaber. The Medics were well drilled and with their pace and offloading game they were starting to find holes throughout the Lochaber defence. When Lochaber did get possession they were unable to keep hold of the ball to really build on any attacks. The medics were

able to run in four more tries in the first half to make it 33-0 at half time.

The only real positives for Lochaber were with only seven men in the scrum they were able to regularly push the Medics' scrum back and won a few penalties at scrum time. Line-outs were going well and they were able to disrupt the Medics' mauls continuously. Matt Murray stood out in defence with several big hits, unfortunately it was a big hit where Lochaber lost another man to the sin bin when the referee adjudged McCook had lifted the player

RUGBY

past the horizontal so showed him the yellow card.

The Medics ran in another nine tries in total in the second half to make it 94-0 at full time.

Due to other fixtures not being played on Saturday, Lochaber are still third in the league. Lochaber will now gather themselves for their final league home game of the season when they host Hyndland on February 16, for a 3pm kick off at Banavie.



All the teams that took part in the Johnstone Rose Bowl indoor tournament at the Nevis Centre on Saturday.

Glengarry lose out in Johnstone Rose Bowl final

Badenoch Ladies' Shinty Club won the Johnstone Rose Bowl 2019 at the Nevis Centre on Saturday after an exciting day of shinty.

Hosted by Glengarry Ladies' Shinty Club and sponsored by Ailsa Johnstone of Invergarry, the annual indoor tournament saw some of the best female shinty players in Scotland pit themselves against one another as teams from across the Highlands and as far as Aberdour in Fife travelled to Fort William to take part.

The Johnstone Rose Bowl was donated to the Glengarry Girls' Shinty Club in 1998 (a year after the team was formed) by Mrs Ailsa Johnstone of DA Johnstone &

Son Contractors, Invergarry, which has been a loyal sponsor ever since.

The games started at 12.30pm and teams competed in two leagues which were selected at random, with two top teams from each qualifying for the semi-finals.

In league A Badenoch cruised through to the semi-finals with maximum points, scoring 29 goals with no reply, and Glengarry came in second place with only one defeat against Badenoch.

League B winners were on-form Lochaber, qualifying for the semi-finals with maximum points. Skye secured second place with one defeat from Lochaber.

In the semi-finals, Badenoch



Finalists Glengarry and Badenoch.

caused an early upset as they knocked out last year's winners Skye with a score of 3-2.

This set up an enticing final with Glengarry, who battled hard against Lochaber ladies in their semi-final to win 4-2 and boost their hopes of listing silverware on home soil.

However, Glengarry came up against Badenoch's Kirsty Deans, who was on magnificent form and bagged a hat-trick in the final – a feat made all the more impressive as the star player wasn't brought on until the second half of the match. Deans' imperious displays throughout the day earned her the player of the tournament award.

Badenoch's Megan Ralph and Rona Stewart were also on the scoresheet to round off the scoring for Badenoch and secure a comfortable 5-2 in the end.

Glengarry Ladies are indebted to Mrs Ailsa Johnstone

for her sponsorship since the beginning of the tournament.

The club thanked referees Graham Cameron and Ian Kennedy and Catherine Cameron for all her help on the day and to all the teams participating to make the day such a success.

The 2020 date is already set as Saturday January 25, at the Nevis Centre, Fort William.



Badenoch captain Mairi Stewart with the trophy.



Badenoch captain Mairi Stewart, left, with player of the tournament Kirsty Deans, also from Badenoch.



The winning Badenoch team.

LT

TEN-PIN BOWLING



Lochaber ten-pin bowlers.

Recent Lochaber ten-pin bowling league results

After week 11 of the Lochaber Building Supplies ten pin bowling leagues at the Nevis Centre in Fort William, Alleycats continue to lead the scratch division with 51 points followed by Council on 46 points and British Legion Fort William in third place with 40 points with the top four teams all taking the maximum five points this week. Alleycats also continue to lead the handicap division with 40 points despite dropping two points to The Dominos. The Empire are in second place with 37 points with Rotavators in third place with 35 points.

In a good week for individual high scoring scratch games the best went to Brian Johnstone (Alleycats) with the season high of 201. Also this week Kevin Fraser (Council) had 182, Gus Fraser (Council) 176, Pam Weller (Alleycats) 175 and Paul Brian (Rotavators) 174.

Brian Johnstone also had the top two-game scratch series with 351 while Paul Brian had the top handicap game of 254 and the top two-game handicap series of 466.

The best team scores of the week came from Council, who had the top scratch game of 634, the top handicap game of 862 (the season high) and the top two-game handicap series of 1599 whilst Alleycats had the top two-game scratch series of 1,161.

The top scratch averages are currently held by Brian Johnstone on 161 followed by Pam Weller on 145 and Gus Fraser on 144.

LOTTERY

Lottery numbers

This week's Fort William Golf Club lotto numbers were 10, 16 and 17. There were no winners this week. The jackpot for the draw today (January 31) will be £500.

Ballachulish Shinty Club's lottery numbers for this week were 2, 4 and 8.

There were no winners this week. Next week's draw will have a prize of £1,800.

The Caol Community Centre bingo club lotto numbers this week were 4, 7, 10. There were two winners of the £300 jackpot this week: O Gunn and F MacDougal. Next week's jackpot will be £100.

The numbers for Lochaber Camanachd Club's lottery draw on Tuesday January 15 were 8, 9 and 15. There was no winner so the jackpot for Tuesday (January 29) is £500.

FOOTBALL

Jags lose in extra time

South Lochber Thistle's campaign in the West of Scotland Cup came to an end on Saturday when they lost out 2-1 to Neilston, after extra time.

The Jags were leading 1-0 thanks to a Martin Munro goal but the home side equalised in the 93rd minute through a Nicky McCarron header to take the game into extra time.

Paul McLean put Neilston ahead in extra time but sadly the Lochaber side could not find an equaliser to take the game to penalty kicks.

Neilston will now travel to play Oban Saints for a place in the last eight of the competition.

Future stars shine at prim

PRIMARY SHINTY

After a series of tight and exciting matches at the recent Lochaber Primary Shinty Tournament, Caol emerged victorious in the P4/5 category, with Inverlochty taking the P6/7 title.

Both teams will go on to represent the area at the national finals to be held in Fort William on February 16.

In the P4/5 tournament, all the teams played each other in a round-robin competition, before the four best teams went head to head. In the first semi-final Ardnamurchan beat Ballachulish 2-0, in a game which looked like it could go either way. Caol put in a convincing performance to beat Inverlochty 5-0 in the other semi-final. Some great play from both teams in the final kept the spectators entertained, with Caol beating Ardnamurchan 2-1 to take the title.

In the P6/7 age group, defending champions Inverlochty Primary beat Bun Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch

Abar 7-4 in the first semi-final, a hugely entertaining, high-scoring game which could have finished either way. In the second semi-final Caol won out over Lochaber 2-1, a narrow win from a team who had been playing consistently well throughout the round-robin phase of the tournament. Inverlochty took the win in a tight and somewhat nervy final, with a second score late in the match, beating Caol by just one goal.

High Life Highland's active schools co-ordinator Bridget Thomas, who helped to organise the event, said: 'Some excellent shinty skills were on display from the youngsters, which bodes well for the future of the sport in the area. Massive thanks go to all of the schools' coaches who give up their time to train the teams and especially to Willie, Iain and Bruno for refereeing at the tournament.'

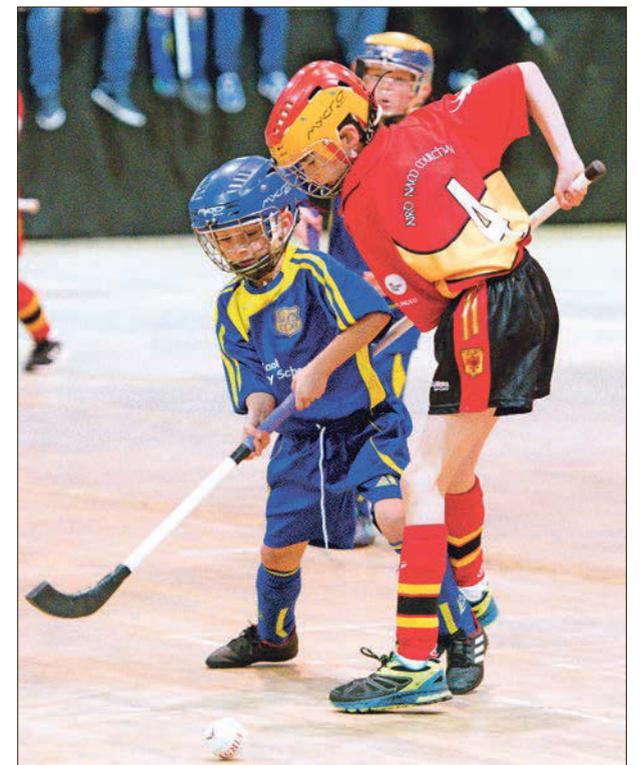


Group shot of P4/5 teams. Photos: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Caol Primary School won the P4/5 area qualifier.

Photo: Abrightside Photography.



Action from Caol v Ardnamurchan in the P4/5 final.

Photo: Abrightside Photography.



P6/7 teams line up before the first qualifier. Photo: Abrightside Photography

Primary shinty tournament



Caol from Caol v Inverlochy in the final of the P6/7 area qualifiers. Photo: Abrightside Photography.

Inverlochy Primary School, winners of the P6/7 area qualifiers. Photo: Abrightside Photography.




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WEATHER

Thursday
Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 1°C to 3°C.

Friday
Sunny interval and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 0°C to 4°C.

Weekend Outlook
Saturday
Sunny and a gentle breeze
Sunday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 2°C to 4°C.



TIDAL INFORMATION

Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday January 31, 2019 are listed below with differences for major ports listed on the right. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	02.36	3.0	08.34	1.7
	15.48	3.0	21.38	1.7
Fri	03.22	3.2	09.48	1.6
	16.16	3.2	22.25	1.5
Sat	04.15	3.4	10.42	1.5
	16.43	3.3	23.04	1.3
Sun	04.55	3.6	11.24	1.4
	17.14	3.5	23.39	1.2
Mon	05.32	3.8	12.00	1.3
	17.48	3.7	** ** *	**
Tues	00.13	1.1	06.08	3.9
	12.35	1.2	18.21	3.8
Wed	00.48	1.0	06.43	4.0
	13.08	1.2	18.53	3.8

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

Stop Press: New pontoons at Ulva Ferry and visitor moorings installed at Lochaline by North West Marine Ltd



INSIDE THIS WEEK:
Future stars shine
at primary shinty
tournament

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AND TIDES - SEE PAGE 55

Macmorran looking forward to debut on Fort touchline

Newly appointed Fort William FC interim manager Russell Macmorran says he is looking forward to making his debut on the touchline this Saturday after his first week in charge of training.

The 42-year-old Glencoe-based police officer took over the reigns at the Lochaber side after the board terminated the contract of Kris Anderson earlier this week. He has been a familiar face at Claggan Park in the last year after he replaced Marie McMillan as club secretary last September.

Macmorran has had to

wait to make his debut on the Fort's touchline after Saturday's fixture with Keith was postponed due to a frozen pitch. He now has the unenviable task of facing title challengers Brora Rangers at Claggan Park this Saturday in his first match as manager.

'It's great to take charge of the club albeit on an interim basis,' Macmorran said. 'The board considered all the options and I was one of them and that's what they went with. It's only an interim period so if anyone comes in between now and the end of the season then I'm happy to



New interim Fort Manager Russell Macmorran enjoyed his first week of training. Photos: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Fort manager Russell Macmorran.

step aside.

'At the end of the day, the position we are in the league, we are where we are. The board won't make any rash decisions just to fill the role and the aim is just to get to the end of the season.'

The caretaker manager said that, although his experience of coaching senior football is limited, he is in the process

of obtaining his coaching badges.

'The main reason for me coming in is to give the club a bit of stability and give the boys a bit of confidence again. I've got to give them credit, week in, week out they keep pulling on the jersey. And they've been on the end of some big scorelines.'

Fort William prop up the

bottom of the Highland League with just two draws in 23 matches and without a win so far this season. Macmorran will now lead the team into the second half of the season with a goal difference of -149 in the league after conceding 165 goals so far.

He added: 'I've got big respect for Kris Anderson for what he did at the club. He

stepped up to the mark when nobody did at that time. He fielded a team and did that every Saturday. Without him then we never know where the club may have been.'



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