



Bunnies bring Easter surprise for children



Chip, chip hooray! for emergency workers

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MAKE THE SWITCH

Oban hospital staff pledge first-class COVID care

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A viral specialist, volunteer junior doctors and staff giving up retirement are among the hospital team pulling together to get Oban through the coronavirus crisis.

Lorn and Islands Hospital has put out a reassuring and confident message to the community it serves, saying its staff can cope with the COVID-19 challenge and anyone needing its help will get 'first-class' treatment.

Treatment areas and wards have effectively been split into two, red for COVID and green for patients not showing symptoms of the virus.

Measures to keep patients and staff safe are in place and working, says the message, which gives out practical guidance on what to do if you, your family or neighbours need hospital help and what to expect.

Hardworking staff are also making a heartfelt plea to peo-



Staff at Lorn and Islands Hospital are touched by well-wishers' appreciation.

ple to keep showing front line workers support by heeding COVID-blocking advice and stay safe at home.

And a huge thank you has gone out to all the well-wishers, individuals, organisations and businesses sending in gifts and

donations, from fish suppers to Easter eggs, protective kit and handcream, to stop hands drying out from antibacterial gel.

Under the lead of Dr Colin Millar, who is in charge of Oban's COVID-19 clinical team, usual staff numbers have been bolstered.

A new consultant anaesthetists who has worked abroad with Ebola patients has arrived and two military officers with logistical expertise have also been assigned to NHS Highland, visiting the hospital in Oban to give specialist input and advice.

Nursing staff are 'working hard in difficult circumstances but are rising to the challenge and are a credit to their profession', says the message.

Other services that have been stepped up include extra cover in the labs and X-ray departments, with two radiographers on call 24/7.

Because the usual day-to-day work in the hospital has changed dramatically over the past few weeks, some staff have been redeployed to other departments facing more pressure.

Emergency operations are

still going ahead but other procedures such as endoscopies have been postponed so theatre nurses have taken charge of distributing supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), with supplies arriving regularly.

The hospital's Senior Management Team is leading the entire strategy to make sure care at Lorn and Islands Hospital 'will be available, should you need it and will be of the highest standard', said the message.

Porters, domestics, staff in catering, laundry and supplies, clerks and IT workers are all part of the team effort.

Major changes have been made inside the hospital to keep patients confirmed or suspected to have the virus separate from people who still need to be seen and treated with other conditions.

The accident and emergency and outpatients departments

Continued on page five

A Thank You from Brendan O'Hara MP, Argyll & Bute

On behalf of the people of Argyll and Bute I would like to thank NHS staff and all key workers for helping our communities through this Covid-19 crisis.

I would also like to thank YOU for playing your part by staying at home.

Although unable to hold regular advice surgeries, I'm still available to you on brendan.ohara@parliament.uk or 01436 670587.



STAY HOME. STAY SAFE. PROTECT OUR NHS.



OT



Scott Wilson, P7, with NHEggs.



ELC winner George Bannatyne with Lily Lamb.

Taynuilt residents crack lockdown blues with Easter competition

An Easter Egg competition in Taynuilt has proved so popular organisers have been asked if it can be made an annual event, writes Fiona Scott.

Villagers were asked to create an egg and send a photograph of it to organiser Charlotte Reffin who posted them on the Taynuilt Facebook page, without names, for the community to vote for their favourites.

Sixty entries were received, with winners receiving a chocolate egg donated by an anonymous benefactor.

'I received lovely messages of thanks for brightening peoples' days,' said Charlotte, 'and I've been asked if it could become an annual thing.'

Results: ELC - Lily Lamb by George Bannatyne; P1, The Bunny family by Eilidh Reid; P2, Stay home, save lives by Megan Reffin; P3, Stay home by Esme Corns; P4, Be terri-fried of Minnie the egg and Dennis



Megan Reffin, P2, with Stay home, Save Lives.

the meggnace by Scorcha Bryden; P5, Eggs-exution by Emma Bannatyne; P6, Loch Egg Monster by Lily Robinson; P7, NHEggs by Scott McPhee; High school, Eggs-hausted by Sarah Cameron; and Adults, A craickin pair of Gilbert's finest by Donna Bannatyne.

Ulva Ferry upgrade parked up

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Work on a £250,000 project to improve Ulva Ferry has come to a halt just before completion - because of coronavirus.

The parking scheme is another victim of COVID-19 and will have to wait for restrictions to ease before labourers can return to finish it.

The money to improve parking had come from the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism and Infrastructure Fund set up to help communities cope with the demand of growing visitor numbers.

Mull and Iona Community Trust applied through Argyll and Bute Council to get help from the fund, administered by VisitScotland.



The new Ulva Ferry car park.

Lack of an official car park and bad parking on verges and in ditches was putting visitors and locals at risk, as well as causing problems for fishermen and deliveries getting to Ulva, said Moray Finch, general manager of Mull and Iona

Community Trust (MICT). The new area, close to the ferry point, will double the previous parking capacity and make room for three motor home standings with facilities to get rid of chemical toilet waste.

Mr Finch said: 'We are pretty devastated it will hardly be used this year, depending on how long coronavirus restrictions last for.'

'We hope everyone comes through this safely and we know the facilities will be there when this is done. The project was nearly finished.'

All that remains to be done is to complete some hard-surfacing and soft-landscaping, added Mr Finch.

He said people on Mull and its islands were looking forward to welcoming visitors back, but it was a worrying time for residents.

'There's a lot of people here whose livelihoods are threatened but what's shining through is amazing community spirit,' said Mr Finch.

Easter Bunny helps Wendy and Daisy hop to it

Wendy Dugdale and her daughter Daisy from Balvicar Stores were on a secret mission on Easter Sunday, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The pair, and a team of helpers, were up early to give the Easter Bunny a hand and deliver chocolate eggs and treats to 62 children living on Seil, Luig and Easdale.

Balvicar Stores has also set up a Give A Little fund, backed by donations from residents, to

buy shopping for individuals or families who are struggling to afford food and other life essentials during the COVID-19 crisis.

Wendy and her daughter Daisy with the Easter bunnies which were delivered to children on Seil, Luig and Easdale.



Coronavirus update

In order to better protect our staff and clients from Coronavirus we have started with the following measures

- All annual vaccine boosters cancelled (low risk to go 3 months overdue)
- All routine neuters, dentals, nail clips, pet health checks, weight checks cancelled
- All remote clinics cancelled

If we haven't yet contacted you about a pre-existing appointment please accept our apologies, we are working through a long list!

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POLICE FILES

About 1.20pm on Monday April 6, at a property in Albany Street, Oban, a man, 33, was arrested for allegedly behaving in an abusive manner and damaging a table and a television. The man was charged and a report submitted to the fiscal.

About 1pm on Friday April 10, in Catalina Avenue, Oban, a 28-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly behaving in an abusive manner and assaulting a man. The woman was charged, held for court and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 9.45m on Sunday April 12, in Burnside, Connel, a 29-year-old man was arrested for allegedly behaving in an abusive manner. The man was charged and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

If any member of the public has information in relation to the above, or to any incident, they can contact their local Police Station on telephone number 101, or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Oban lockdown party lifts coronavirus gloom

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Mick Jagger and David Bowie once got the world rocking with their song, Dancing in the streets.

But closer to home in Oban it was a Saturday night lockdown party that got the neighbours bopping in their gardens.

It all came about after DJ Paul Harvey hatched a plan to see if there was a way he could lift the coronavirus gloom and ensure sure social distancing was respected.

The 40-year-old usually hires out his services for special parties and events from Mull to Dalmally and Dunoon under the name DJ Harv3y, but for those living in Laggan Road and Iona Drive, he has given new meaning to the term 'resident DJ'.

Paul realised that with the streets separated by long ad-



Paul and Michelle – Paul's 'garden party' was huge success with his neighbours.

joining back gardens to create a natural barrier, there was a safe way of uniting everybody if they all stayed put on their own turf.

Despite concerns from partner Michelle MacDougall that Paul's earth-shaking 2,000-watt speakers might attract curiosity from the boys in blue, he ploughed ahead to put on a

show which has already passed into legendary status.

The keen fan of electronic music compiled a set-list to appeal to neighbours young and old, from Sixties classics to Scottish party anthems.

A dedicated Facebook page was set up to spread the word and the music was strictly limited to a 10pm finish so as not

to push his luck. Come 7pm, Paul was ready to go with his mixing decks set up outside, fog machine primed and colourful strobe lights streaking the terraced streets.

Around 40 residents came out from tots to grandparents and the fun spread across the internet with Paul livestreaming his entire set on YouTube.

Michelle, the lead singer with Oban four-piece covers band The Fold, even cast aside her initial concerns and joined in. She belted out crowd-pleasers Don't Stop Me Now, Dancing Queen and a hair-raising Hallelujah.

But tune of the night was when Paul dropped Runrig's 1979 Scottish classic Loch Lomond.

Speaking to The Oban Times afterwards, the stunned DJ recalled neighbours 'dancing on coal bunkers and oil tankers', and youngsters begging for

one more song as neighbours cheered and clapped.

'All the feedback was really positive,' said an understated Paul. 'They all said it was brilliant and it had given them a real lift. I still have people telling me that they saw my garden party on YouTube!'

Michelle said everyone respected the restrictions and the night proved a massive boost to the close-knit community in hard times.

'Everyone said it was just what they needed,' said Michelle, aged 38. 'Paul deserves all the acknowledgement for all the work he put in. He didn't listen to me – he just followed his heart and went for it!' she said.

MOREPHOTOS
www.obantimes.co.uk

Police visit Lismore property over lockdown concerns

Police cracking down on suspected lockdown breakers have been to Lismore, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Officers called at a property on the island on Saturday, a day after Marks & Spencer chairman and former Tory MP Archie Norman dismissed rumours he and his family had arrived after lockdown.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'On Saturday 11 April 2020, officers attended at a property on the Isle of Lismore and reiterated crucial advice to the occupants about the current restrictions in place to stay indoors, take pressure off the NHS and save lives.'

'The legal instructions on not leaving your home without a reasonable excuse apply to everyone and social distancing is the key intervention to curtail the spread of coronavirus. It is vital everyone adheres to these requirements and does their duty during this public health emergency.'

Police said no fine was handed out in this instance.

Following local speculation and a call from The Oban Times, a M&S spokeswoman said Mr Norman had not trav-

elled to the island and was fully aware of the restrictions.

She said he had no plans to travel to Lismore but added his 35-year-old daughter was there self-isolating on medical grounds and that she had received permission [from her doctor] to make the journey with all the necessary paperwork to show on the ferry. When asked, the spokeswoman said no other members of the family were with Mr Norman's daughter.

The Norman family have owned property and land on the island for more than a generation.

Between March 27 and April 9, Police Scotland has issued 47 fixed penalty notices to people failing to comply with lockdown regulations. CalMac has revealed it turned away 66 passengers in the last two weeks across its network.

Concerns have been growing on islands close to Oban and on the mainland about people still travelling to second homes and holiday houses.

Lismore Community Trust chairman Sebastian Tombs said people arriving on the island after lockdown was

causing 'a bit of heat', adding: 'People are feeling a little upset if new people arrive on the island and it has caused a bit of heat. We don't have a doctor or nurse on the island. If we need to get medical help or care to sick people quickly, it's an extra challenge for us.'

The island has set up an emergency response group and it has issued a statement pleading with second homers and off-island family members to stay away to keep Lismore safe. The group believes on April 8 there were 198 people on the island, with 25 adults and nine children among them who are not residents, adding: 'It is up to individuals to behave responsibly to protect the whole community. The strain on emergency support, primarily the NHS, is vastly increased with more people on the island compared to our normal resident population. The threats should not be underestimated: limits on the number of ventilators in Oban, for example, mean that capacity is already stretched. And transport to Glasgow or other centres may be difficult due to a shortage of ambulances,' said the group.



Wylie & Bisset giving free business advice to steer Scottish businesses through Coronavirus lockdown

We have launched a helpline to help steer companies through the Coronavirus lockdown period.

We want to assist those businesses that, through no fault of their own, find themselves confronting various pressing business problems as a direct result of the government restrictions to quell the spread of COVID-19.

There are various options available to businesses and if you need a sounding board or to speak to a financial expert about your options, we are here to listen and offer free advice.

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OT

Aid worker in plea to keep up donations and prayers

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Aid worker John Murphy is back home in quarantine after a COVID-19 mercy mission to virus stricken Italy.

John, who lives in Taynuilt, spent two weeks volunteering with Christian charity Samaritan's Purse helping run a 68-bed field hospital in Cremona, Northern Italy.

Tired but feeling well, John is asking people to keep up prayers for his co-workers still in Italy and at hospital in Central Park, New York.

And he is urging people to dig deep if they can and make a donation towards the much-needed work.

John, a self-employed maintenance man, will have to keep taking his temperature until he is out of quarantine, reporting



John at home taking his temperature.

it into the international relief charity's HQ to be monitored until he gets the all clear.

He said: 'It was very strange and eerie to be out there, in the middle of a city that was like a ghost town apart from when you heard an ambulance screaming through.

'I see the best of the world too when people step up and want to help others.'

'We stayed in a hotel. There was about 60 of us from the hospital working 12-hour day and night shifts, just going backwards and forwards to work then sleep. It was an overwhelming experience, not just the work but the kindness and generosity we were shown by people.

'People would send us baking. One man heard we were cold and went out and bought us coats. Another man who helped was a pizza chef who could not work at his restaurant so came to work in our hotel and served us food.'

John, who has travelled to

numerous disaster zones with the charity, added: 'Because of what I do, people expect me to see the worst of the world, but I see the best of the world too when people step up and want to help others.'

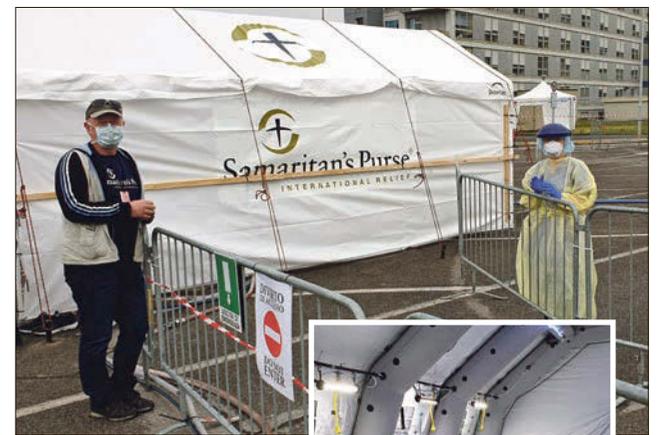
In one week, the hospital where John was based got five people off ventilators.

'The day before I left, we got to wave goodbye to a patient who got off ventilation – it was an amazing feat.

'We need donations to keep up this work. Some people see danger and run away from it, but our volunteers run towards it to help others.

'I'd also ask for peoples' prayers to protect our staff and volunteers. They are wonderful people, so caring, who are putting themselves at risk for the sake of healing others.'

To make a donation go to www.samaritans-purse.org.uk



Above: John with a colleague in Italy.



Right: The makeshift wards set up by Samaritan's Purse in Italy.

MAY ISSUE

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OUT NOW!

Advice for students during coronavirus pandemic

Whether it is worry over money, exams or family and friends – perhaps all three – the COVID-19 pandemic is a stressful time for students.

While many will be at home with their families, and subsequently isolated from their natural peer support, many others will be unable to leave their student accommodation or, in some cases, be unable to return to their home country.

HISA depute president for the Scottish Association for Marine Science UHI Marie-Louise Korte said: 'HISA is operating online where our staff and officers will continue to serve students' needs. Our main priority is the welfare of our students and we will continue to ensure they are supported to study in this new digital environment.

'Communications from SAMS and the university has been immensely helpful in easing student concerns in Oban. Things may not be running

as smoothly as they usually would, but we appreciate the hard work of our module leaders and student support teams in making the transition to online as easy as possible. Our health and well-being has been prioritised by staff and for that I am grateful.'

If you are feeling anxious or stressed, contact HISA, your student support officer, friends or family. You can also take simple steps to reduce the impact of isolation:

Get on that group chat

Okay, you can't meet face to face, but group chats and video calls are the next best thing. You'll be amazed at the different ways in which people are coping with being housebound.

Stay safe

It is already a well-worn mantra, but regularly washing hands and maintaining social distancing will hugely reduce your risk of contracting the virus and subsequently passing it on. Staying indoors makes this a lot easier but in the Highlands and Islands we are blessed with space, so get your daily exercise too.

Give your mind some time off

At times of stress and uncertainty, our minds can wander and often arrive at some worst-case scenarios. Reassure yourself you are taking all the precautions to stay healthy and that your university is working hard to ensure you are not being disadvantaged in your studies. It's a scary time, but it's not forever. Even if you do need to keep up to date with the latest coronavirus news, listen to one bulletin per day.

Coronavirus will be in the news for weeks and months to come, so pace yourself and consider whether push notifications and 24-hour news channels are a good idea.

Listen to experts

With so much coronavirus news and advice on social media, it is difficult to know what to believe. Make sure your facts are from a trusted source, such as the NHS and public health outlets, and always think before you share.

For the latest information on the university's response to the coronavirus outbreak, see www.uhi.ac.uk/coronavirus

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Oban hospital staff pledge first-class COVID care

Continued from page one
have been combined into one unit, but divided into COVID and non-COVID areas. Wards have also been changed.

Masks, gloves and aprons are being worn by staff during all clinical situations and that is now the new normal.

To help alleviate some people's concerns and put minds at ease, the message sets out what people coming to the hospital can expect and what they need to do.

Although most out-patient appointments have been postponed, ultrasounds, CT scans and some chemotherapy treatments are still going ahead. Anyone coming for an appointment will be asked to phone the department when they arrive and stay in their car or outside until they get a return call to come in through the outpatients entrance where they will be asked to use alcohol gel on their hands and wear a mask before being escorted to their appointment.

Accident and emergency is open 24/7 for all non-COVID urgent cases. If you have symptoms of coronavirus, please

ring NHS111 first and they will advise whether you need to come to the hospital and, if required, give you details of when to attend the special assessment area.

COVID patients who need more intensive treatment will go to Glasgow, but if a patient's condition deteriorates quickly they can be looked after and ventilated at Oban until safe transfer can happen.

'In these unusual times, we can be reassured that staff at Lorn and Islands Hospital are pulling together as a team with a binding and united sense of purpose to make sure care is maintained at the highest standard locally. We can have confidence they are doing everything they can to provide appropriate treatment for the community they serve,' ends the message. By Tuesday this week there were 168 positive cases confirmed across NHS Highland, which includes Oban and Lorn. Lorn and Islands Hospital is not sanctioned to give out numbers of cases it has confirmed, treated or transferred for intensive care help.

Concern lockdown will raise abuse risk

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Rape Crisis workers in Argyll are expecting a significant increase in the numbers of people turning to them for help during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pressures of lockdown and no escape from abusive situations in the home will take their toll, warns Jean Campbell, senior support and advocacy worker at Oban's Rape Crisis.

As well as women and men struggling with abusive situations happening now, workers also expect to see an increase in historic cases.

Jean said: 'At the start of the crisis, people we were supporting were not engaging with us as much because they, like everyone else, were distracted by making preparations for lockdown. Now they are continuing to pick up support and we have been receiving new



Support and advocacy worker Ailsa MacEachen earlier this year.

referrals. Our expectations are we will get more as the crisis goes on.

'Being in lockdown is also likely to trigger people who have not reported historic abuse to want to talk it out.

'We are expecting a fairly significant increase in people looking for our support and we are here to give it.'

She added: 'People will be struggling to share space, especially if before they were going out to work, meeting up with friends or going to play groups. It gave them some-

thing to get away to but they don't have that escape now we are in lockdown.

'It does not make it easy for people to get the privacy to ask for help but we are here. We are not able to meet face to face but we can still offer our full support, talking on the phone or do video calls and we can still support people who go to the police if they want to report a rape or sexual abuse,' said Jean.

More alcohol and drug taking is another concern.

'There are other pressures

now, boredom, frustrated children, money worries. If there's a split parenting situation, people might be worried about children being at risk in the other home. There's more drinking going on at home and drug taking that can also add to stress and danger,' added Jean.

The Scottish Government has responded quickly to concerns during the crisis by making extra funding available to Rape Crisis and Women's Aid. The organisations' staff have also been recognised as essential workers. And there is reassurance domestic abuses cases across Scotland will continue to be processed vigorously by police and judicial systems during the pandemic.

Helpline numbers are 07741 645539 for Rape Crisis or 01369 706636 for Women's Aid. Anyone needing help can also email info@ab-roc.org.uk. If in immediate danger, call 999.

Atlantis Leisure: at home

The past few weeks have brought a new vocabulary into our daily conversation.

Words including 'unprecedented', 'self-isolation' and 'quarantine' have gone from rare to common place. These are unprecedented times, with historic firsts happening almost daily. But in the midst of so much change, it is interesting to note what remains unchanged and to be struck by what's being enhanced by coronavirus.

For the Atlantis family, we're seeing that in the overwhelming demonstration of Oban's community spirit.

Whether it's the little things like our staff coming together in a bumper WhatsApp group, sharing notes of encouragement to help each other through a situation that can seem pretty alien to some, or in the bigger gestures as they volunteer their time and collective resources to help the community. Together we're showing that while we might all be physically distancing, that doesn't mean we are socially distanced. In fact, we are



closer than ever.

At Atlantis, we are rising to the challenge of digitally reimagining our centre life. Recorded video workouts, livestreamed morning yoga and the sharing of daily gentle encouragement from our friends at Healthy Options are helping maintain an atmosphere of inclusion and togetherness.

Rob at Healthy Options is becoming something of an internet sensation, taking Oban national with practical tips to stay active that are now being shared by former colleagues supporting their communities in Newcastle.

This community spirit has its quieter side too though and it is here it is perhaps at its most powerful. It goes in small unnoticed gestures, the quick call to a friend or neighbour that you know is alone and in need of human interaction.

It's in using the reach of our close-knit network to give gentle heads up on those in our community that are in need and would otherwise struggle on in silence. It's in the little things that cost us nothing but can transform someone's day.

Oban is community embodied. At Atlantis we are privileged to see that every day.

But in these small gestures, we're seeing it even clearer and learning to listen to its reassuring message: there's something on the other side of all this.

There's a return to a new kind of normal, to the familiar comfort of stretching days that announce spring is getting ready to give way to summer. Our community spirit is taking us all there together.

Maybe because of that, Oban will come out of this stronger.

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OT

Emergency accommodation to be made available for homeless

Argyll and Bute Council is helping homeless people to find accommodation during the Covid-19 pandemic, a report has revealed.

The authority's business continuity committee (BCC) is due to meet via Skype for the first time today, Thursday April 16, to discuss a range of additional measures taken by the council, detailed in a report, which also states that redeployment opportunities are being sought for staff.

More than 1,000 council workers are performing their duties from home as social distancing measures remain in place in the fight against coronavirus.

Councillor Aileen Morton, the council's leader, will chair the committee, with deputy leader Gary Mulvaney also deputising in that role.

Completing the committee will be Councillors Sandy Taylor, Lorna Douglas, Kieron Green, Yvonne McNeilly, Robin Currie, Rory Colville and Douglas Philand.

Worldwide congregation tunes into Seil service

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A new church channel streamed live from Seil and Luing has got congregation flocking from as far away as New Zealand and America.

Thanks to the power of Facebook and computer software, the Sunday services broadcast via YouTube have attracted more than 600 viewers since they started.

The livestream services were the idea of Gary Hamilton and his partner Stuart Abercrombie who run a wedding photography and videography business from home on Seil.

Neither are churchgoers but they reached out to Netherlorn's Kilbrandon and Kilchattan Churches on Seil and Luing to help stay-at-home parishioners keep in touch with their church family during the COVID-19 lockdown.



Gary and Stuart are using their technical skills to good use during the lockdown to help the church broadcast its Sunday services.

But the services, which have been taken by worship leaders Jean Alexander and Maura Rae and reader Martin Waddell, have also reached out to an extended family worldwide.

'We know lots of other churches have their ministers doing similar things, but I think we are the only parish actually doing it ourselves,' said session clerk Mrs Alexander.

'Gary and Stuart are doing all this work voluntary and we are eternally grateful to them,' she added.

The churches are also hoping the online services will help them find a new minister as they have been without one for over a year.

Anyone wanting to tune in



Brendan O'Hara MP reads during one of the online church services.

to the services needs to contact Gary by email at ghproductionsargyll@gmail.com. People will need to subscribe free of charge to the YouTube channel.

Gary and Stuart use Facebook messenger to link up with the weekly worship leader.

'We'd usually be live streaming football or shinty or recording people's weddings but that stopped with coronavirus, so we wanted to find a way of staying busy and being helpful.

'It's a real team effort, us

putting our skills to good use and the church community coming up with the content.

'The response has been incredible so far. We're reaching people in New Zealand, America, Belgium, as well as closer to home.

'We know people have been watching from their homes around here and also from Oban hospital,' said Gary.

More and more people are getting involved in the services. Argyll and Bute MP Brendan O'Hara has done a reading and Seil bard and author Kenneth Stevens took part on Easter Sunday.

As well as a sermon and readings, there are also hymns, with music from church pianist Maggie Brooks.

'The Archbishop of Canterbury got 2.5million views for his live streamed Mothering Sunday service. We've got a bit to go before we can beat that but we're thrilled with the 662 views we've had in three weeks,' added Gary.

The services viewed on GH Production Argyll's YouTube Channel start 15 minutes early to give people a chance to chat.

If people do not have laptops, they can still connect on TV if they have SKY or another provider with access to YouTube.

Keeping our community informed

What we are doing to help

- We are continuing to bring you accurate and trustworthy news in-paper and online
- We are working with our wholesale and retail partners to make sure that your newspaper is still in the shops

All the information on our website is available free - you don't have to log in

If you want to get the "page turner" version of the newspaper and can't get to the shops we have halved the price of our digital edition for the next 3 months. We will review this on an ongoing basis.

Stay safe, we're in this together

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Flower show blooms online

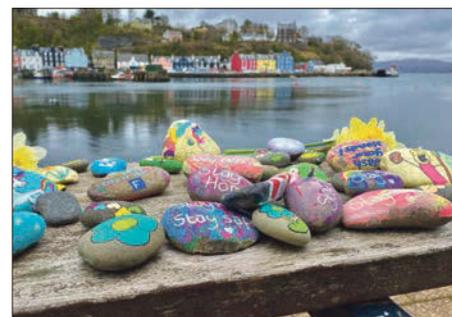
People on Mull, Ulva and Iona still have time to make sure entries grow for an online flower show, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Disappointed organisers of Tobermory Horticultural Society's Spring Show had to cancel the real thing because of coronavirus but came up with a cyber challenge instead.

The plan is for grown-ups and children to send in photographs of their exhibits to the society's Facebook page where they will be displayed in an online gallery. There are no entry fees and the theme is arty crafty gardens.

The show was scheduled for Saturday April 18 at the Aros Hall.

For the first time, there is a category for painted rocks. Tobermory Rocks is a hide-and-seek craze that started three years ago in the harbour town with people painting rocks and leaving them for people to find then hide again. The rocks from Mull have



Painted rocks and blooms are just some of the classes in the online version of Tobermory Horticultural Spring Show coming soon.

made it all over the world. 'The online show is just for fun and to help people show off what they've come up with. There won't be any proper judging but we might be able to award the odd well done sticker,' said the society's vice president Margaret Macgregor.

Mrs Macgregor added: 'Our Facebook page is usually just for notices but people are definitely interested in the online show and are looking at it. We're just asking people to enter for fun, make up their flower arrangements, paint

their rocks and send us a photograph so we can put it in a gallery and bring a bit of cheer.

'People don't have to worry about perfection. It's taking part that counts.'

For the time being, the Summer Flower Show is still in the diary for this August.

When sending in photographs, people must write the section they are entering. Entries have to be in for April 18. If anyone struggles to get their entry online, they can email it to Moray Honeyman at clanhoneyman@aol.com

Coronavirus

Help is here for those that need it most.

Staying at home stops the spread of coronavirus,
and some need extra help.

If you:

- **Have received a letter advising you to stay at home for the next 12 weeks**
- **Are a disabled person**
- **Receive mental health support**
- **Have dementia**
- **Are over 70, pregnant or received the flu vaccine for health reasons**

We've created a helpline to assist you with essential things like food deliveries, medication or practical and emotional support.

If you can't get this help from family, friends or neighbours, call now on: **0800 111 4000**

Or go to [readyscotland.org](https://www.readyscotland.org) for more information.



OT

Stay active with a daily walk, urges charity

Scotland's walking charity is urging the public to stay active and take a walk everyday amidst the coronavirus outbreak, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Paths for All says it is more important than ever that people who feel well should walk alone or with those they live with to protect their physical and mental health.

Exercising once a day is one of only four reasons why people are allowed to leave their home. The charity believes that those not experiencing symptoms and not in the high-risk groups should go out for short, local walks as long as they minimise social contact.

Paths for All has also launched new online guidance and links to resources which can help people stay active indoors, connect with nature outside and encourage those working from home to move more.

Ian Findlay CBE, Chief Officer at Paths for All, said: 'Now more than ever it's important for people to look after their physical and mental health.'

'Fresh air, being outdoors and connecting with nature is not only positive for your physical health, but it can help your mental health by improving your mood and reducing stress and anxiety. We believe it's important for people to continue to enjoy short, local walks provided you are well and where it's safe and appropriate to do so.'

The official advice is to stay local and choose routes right from your own front door if you can to avoid non-essential travel.

Try to visit places you know will be quiet, away from hot-spots, and remember to keep a distance of at least two metres from other people, advises the charity.

If you are unable to go outside for a walk, then keep moving at home.

To find out more go to Paths for All go to pathsforall.org.uk

GET INVOLVED
email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk

Vulnerable gran appeals to teens

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk

A Soroba mum has appealed to parents to keep an eye on their teenagers during the coronavirus lockdown.

Mum-of-six Sheila Brown, aged 58, was alarmed to see a group of young people in the car park of Oban Tesco linking arms and not maintaining the two-metre social distancing rule – despite being from different households.

Mrs Brown, a grandmother to eight, is concerned about teens not taking the rules seriously.

She said: 'There were about three to five girls all linking arms, chatting and laughing and wandering about. It made me wonder what the parents are thinking.'

'Why allow them out in the first place?' she asked. 'This is serious. If people are starting to congregate around Tesco, I ex-



Sheila Brown suffers from COPD and lung infections.

pected to see the police there.'

Mrs Brown has only left her home in Colonsay Terrace three times for food and prescriptions since March 4. As well as being 'at risk' due to suffering from COPD and lung infections, she also had to self-isolate for more than a fortnight after husband Andy showed coronavirus symptoms earlier last month.

Although Mr Brown, aged 60, has now recovered, witnessing the toll it took on him has made Mrs Brown only too well aware of how

harmful the virus can be.

On her own street, Mrs Brown said parents of younger children had immaculately observed the rules since schools sent pupils home by keeping them safely indoors.

Councillor Julie McKenzie, the SNP member for Oban North and Lorn, has warned that constituents have raised concerns with her about a 'minority' of people of all ages mixing with friends or visiting family outside their homes.

Councillor McKenzie, a member of Argyll and Bute

Council, said: 'The rules are clear. Contact at this time should only be between people who live in the same house. No one in our community should be visiting other houses or meeting up with anyone socially.'

She urged anyone with concerns to contact Police Scotland on the 101 number so they can enforce new rules allowing officers to impose fixed penalty fines and move people on.

In the last week, Oban Police said officers had been on patrol to engage with the community and explain the risks to public health and the need to adhere to social isolation. It had also encouraged some people to 'go home and stay indoors,' in line with government guidance, it said.

Police Scotland confirmed it had issued nine fixed penalty notices in the first six days of the new regulations across the sizeable Argyll and West Dunbartonshire area.

Wonderful sense of community and togetherness has come to light...

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk

WHERE IS THIS?



What a strange three weeks this has been, some parts of it have been really hard, like not being able to visit family and friends, and shopping - I used to love shopping but now it's something to be endured.

Not everything has been bleak though, a wonderful sense of community and togetherness has come to light and the true heroes of our society have shone through and it's not anyone famous or rich, it's the people who keep the lights on and the shops open and the ones who help out in a crisis.

I really hope when things start returning to normal everyone remembers what mattered during this time and how important our NHS proved to be, and all the people who kept us fed and

safe and sane. The weather has been a saving grace lately, things would have been much worse if we'd have to endure wind and rain for the entire time, both for those stuck in lockdown and those still working and having to venture out every day.

The photographs of our beautiful bay that I've posted on Facebook have resulted in some lovely comments about how much people are missing being able to visit us and looking forward to coming

here when they can. Those comments have reminded me that this isn't going to last forever and one day, hopefully in the not too distant future, our town will be open for business again and we'll all be pulling together to get up and running, providing the warm welcome that Oban is famous for.

Last week the photograph was of Fancy That at the top of George Street and this week's involves a walk along the seafront.

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Community cottons on to gowns for GPs appeal

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



An appeal has gone out from Oban to turn sheets and duvet covers into much-needed protection for GPs.

Any cotton or easy-washable material once washed at 90 degrees will do, says Jane Churchill and Aideen Shields who are helping co-ordinate aid across Argyll.

So far the appeal has received requests for more than 100 gowns from doctors' surgeries around our region and from Lorn and the Islands Hospital.

The Gowns for GPs appeal comes hot on the heels of a national effort, For The Love of Scrubs, where people have been making scrubs for hospital workers.

The need for GPs to have a fresh change of kit for protection was identified after



Helen Lawson, of Oban, is just one of a number of people who are sewing scrubs for local medics.

a plea from the GP Survival Scotland group due to the government is not supplying them.

A dressmaker friend of Jane and Aideen's in Caithness got in touch to see if they could help organise a response.

The friend was already supporting For The Love of Scrubs but they were overwhelmed by requests. Jane and Aideen offered to help make gowns for GPs and put out a call in our area.

Aideen, who runs the Garden Tearoom and bunkhouse on Kerrera, has already donated bundles of duvets so her sewing-savvy neighbour can turn them into gowns.

And the Owen Sails team

at Benderloch are also on the case, responding to a request for help from Lochgilphead Hospital. Owen Sails has bought £2,000 worth of material and the team are using their special cutting machine to cut pieces from the fabric ready for their team and volunteers to make the gowns from home.

The gowns need to be long-sleeved with elasticated or rib-cuffing, down to the knees or below. Just a simple neck, no pockets with ties around the waist or at the back.

Anyone wanting to help can post on the Facebook page, searching Gowns for GPs, putting sewers in touch with area co-ordinators to get the gowns to where they are needed.

The idea is to limit contact and travel as much as possible, linking gown making groups with their nearest demand.

Bonawe's Breege Smyth and her network of sewers, who have also been making masks, have offered to make 50 gowns.

Campaigners from the national For The Love of Scrubs scheme say the request and demands they receive from GPs and hospitals is 'heart-breaking' and they have had stories of GPs having to attend COVID-19 patients wearing bin bags as gowns.

In just over one week, the campaign has raised nearly £25,000 but more is still needed. They have the sewers and the structure to make the scrubs but need money to buy material.

Any GPs wanting gowns should visit fortheloveofscrubs.scot/gownsrequest

To donate money to help buy material, visit gofundme.com/f/for-the-love-of-scrubs

Coronavirus

BID4Oban are working to provide information to the business community of Oban as regularly as possible.

We are working with our Key Partners Argyll & Bute Council, Business Gateway, AITC and OLTA on a daily basis.



To enable us to keep in touch, please follow BID4Oban on **Love Oban Facebook page** and website www.bid4oban.co.uk for regular updates.

Email info@bid4oban.co.uk



Oban Business Improvement District
www.bid4oban.co.uk



OT

LETTERS

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

NHS workers, thank you!

Our story from Oban Hospital will hopefully put many people's minds at ease after staff spoke to reporter Kathie Griffiths to reassure local residents that they can cope with the COVID-19 challenge and anyone needing their help will get 'first-class' treatment.

As you would expect, treatment areas and wards have been separated, so people suspected or with coronavirus can be treated safely, while people with no symptoms who need medical treatment can also be treated safely.

If we didn't know it before, we certainly should now – our NHS staff are incredible people, and we are extremely blessed to have a health service that is available to all – no matter who you are and what your income, we will all receive the same expert care.

Prior to COVID-19 arriving in our communities it was no secret that NHS workers were overworked, underpaid and under-appreciated. Yet, when we needed them, with no thought for themselves, they have been there, giving their all to their patients.

We hope when all this is over, our governments recognise all our NHS workers' worth and pays them accordingly, because if nothing changes, all we can say is, shame on you!

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.

At the Oban Times we endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If we have published anything that is factually incorrect, please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephone on 01631 568000; or email editor@obantimes.co.uk. We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



Tesco deliveries

Last week you published an article listing complaints from islanders regarding the difficulty of getting deliveries from Tesco. Sadly the same situation exists on the mainland.

I am in the "vulnerable" group and I am not supposed to leave home for 12 weeks and so deliveries are important to me. I have a delivery plan with Tesco which is pointless as no slots are available.

Having contacted the chief executive for Tesco, Dave Lewis dave.lewis@uk.tesco.com, I was eventually told new delivery and pick-up slots are made available each night at midnight but are quickly booked up. I stayed up till midnight on two nights and logged into the Tesco website before midnight to be put in a queue for a slot. On the first occasion I was transferred to the booking site at around five past midnight to find that all the delivery slots were full, but I managed to get a pick-up slot in the car park for three weeks ahead. At my second attempt I was put through to the booking page at five past midnight only to find there were no delivery and no pick-up slots.

These are difficult times for all of us, including Tesco, but surely they can do better than this!

Colin Davidson, Ardfern

Open for essential care

We wanted to write to reassure local people we are open for emergency and essential care, despite temporarily closing our doors for routine sight tests. This includes helping our fellow key workers stay on the front line to support all of us at this challenging time, and we would like to thank all of them for all that they are doing. To recognise their sacrifice, we are prioritising their needs.

If you have any changes to your vision, or have a problem with your glasses or contact lenses, please call us on 01631 567770. We will help you over the phone, and only ask you to come to the store if it absolutely necessary. We are following government guidelines to keep everyone safe.

We are committed to the community here in Oban, and look forward to the time when our town centre returns to normal and our community comes back together, stronger than ever.

Until then, please give us a call if you need us on 01631 567770. Take care and stay safe.

Ken Macdonald, Specsavers, Oban

Open letter to council leader

Dear Councillor Morton

We appreciate that Argyll and Bute Council are working under considerable stress and difficulty at the moment so we hesitate to ask for more, but are interested to know what planning is being done in the event the present crisis proves more

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

Tha luach leithid an eadar-lìon agus fòn follaiseach, ach 's ann air sgìrean iomallach na dùthcha as luachmhoire iad buileach. Ann am baile-mòr tha cuideigin nas dualtaiche bhith faisg, seach mar eisimpleir, mar a bhiodh an àiteigin air rathad aonranach air Ghàidhealtachd. Ach far am bheil feallsanachd calpachais a' riaghladh tha feumalachdan sheirbheisean èiginn tric air deireadh ann an roinn na maraig ionmhais phoblach!

Chan eil teagamh nach eil cothroman gu bhith ann cuid a rudan a dhèanamh ann an dòighean eadar-dhealaichte, agus nas goireasaiche, nuair a bhios sgrios a' chorònbhiorais seachad. Bidh na fiachan aig mòran bhuidhnean cho trom agus gum bithear a' lorg a h-uile caomhnadh. Sin is coireach gum bheil mi den bheachd gum bi fada bharrachd dhaoine ag obair bhon dachannan seach mar a bha. Gu ruige seo b' e rud a bh' ann a thachradh corra uair seach gu h-àbhaisteach, ach ma tha e dol a dh'fhàs nas bitheanta dh'fhaodadh cothrom leasachaidh math a bhith an sin dha coimhearsnachdan an iomaill.

Fad bhliadhnaichean tha draghan air nochdadh a thaobh 's mar a tha daoine òga gan sioladh a-mach à sgìrean nan oirean ri linn dìth chothroman cosnaidh agus ghoireasan de gach seòrsa. Ged a tha Comhairlean a' dèanamh an dichill a thaobh sheirbheisean dha

na coimhearsnachdan sin tha buaidh mhòr aig neart eaconamach na sgìre air an seòrsa taice a gheibh i. Ma ghabhas dearbhadh gum faod fichead cosnach obrachadh à baile cruite air taobh siar Alba, pailt cho furasta 's a bhiodh air iomall baile-mòr am meadhan Alba neo fiù 's Shasainn, carson nach fhaodadh sin tachairt? Agus an cois ùrachadh eaconamach nan sgìrean sin carson nach fhaodadh beatha chultarail, Ghàidhlig, nan coimhearsnachdan sin a bhith air am beothachadh aig an aon àm. Tha mi mothachail gum bheil mi a' cur air adhart an seòrsa argamaid a bhiodh aig mo charaid Iain Noble nuair a choinnich mi ris an toiseach còrr air dà fhichead bliadhna air ais, agus nuair nach robh fiù 's goireasan fòn dòigheil ann an iomadh sgìre. Ach seallaibh an dileab a dh'fhàg feallsanachd Iain ann an ceann a deas an Eilean Sgitheanaich!

Tha a-nise còraichean laghail aig dachannan agus gnìomhachasan seirbheise dhòigheil eadar-lìon agus fòn iarraidh fo Dhleastanas Seirbheise Uile-choitcheann a tha Ofcom a' stiùireadh às leth an Riaghaltais. 'S e cothrom sònraichte a tha seo dha Buill Pàrlamaid agus dha Comhairlean sàr ghoireasan eadar-lìon agus fòn iarraidh dha na sgìrean iomallach, agus gun tèid sanasachd a dhèanamh air na cothroman a th' ann dha companaidhean aig deas a bhith a' stèidheachadh fastaich aig tuath!

severe than we all hope. Recent experience shows the danger in governments being under-prepared and too casual in their assessment of risk.

We are not pessimists, but it is not hard to imagine a long lockdown resulting in difficulties over food supplies. It would only take cross-channel ferry companies to cease importing, European providers to keep produce to themselves or British labour shortages to make our harvesting inadequate. Have the council made any contingency plan, for instance by encouraging local food provision as it is now planting season.

Equally, we have, in our coastal waters, an abundance of marine life which could be directed to feed local people. It is unfortunate that, currently, there seems to be little or no fishing out of Oban. The fare on offer at our local fishmonger is almost exclusively farmed, which ideally we would not eat. The export market has collapsed. Can the council find a way to support the devel-

opment of a local one? By its nature, climate and geography, Argyll is not well placed to feed its population entirely, but the food it does produce is world-renowned. Other parts of Scotland are better endowed. Is the country as a whole making any plans to exploit these wider resources? Can we trust Westminster to plan adequately for more difficult times? One would like to feel that Argyll is taking some initiative here.

Argyll and Bute Greens recognise and are grateful for the tremendous efforts being made across the region by NHS Highland workers, by our council members and employees, community volunteers and local businesses, and getting us safely throughout this crisis is our principal goal. We write to you openly in the hope local people will take a personal interest in their future well-being.

Cathy Cameron and Dennis Archer
Co-convenors, Argyll & Bute Branch
Scottish Green Party

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DISTRICT NEWS

COMMUNITY SHOUT OUTS: REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

Sea cadets pay tribute to essential workforce

While the world was clapping last Thursday night, Oban Sea Cadets took part in a National Cadet Salute to all NHS, key and essential workers.

Members of the T S Pharos 635 Oban Sea Cadets Corps are taking part in online training and physical activity classes during lockdown.

'They have been eager to participate in all restricted activities, including praising, deservedly so, all our NHS and key workers for all their brilliant work,' said PO 1st

Lieutenant and unit training officer Rab Neil who, along with unit commanding officer Malcolm MacNeil, has implemented the online interaction with Oban Sea Cadets.

'We should also praise all the youngsters who are in lockdown and are also going through this episode of fear and anxiety.

'Their resilience at accepting their new reality by staying at home and going online for school studies, leisure pursuits and contacting fam-

ily and friends has my utmost admiration.

'I can't imagine how I, or most adults, would have coped during this dilemma when we were younger. So a shout out to all the youngsters. Well done!'

Anyone who wishes to join Oban Sea Cadets Juniors (10 to 11 years) or Seniors (12-17 years) can still do so, although during the coronavirus lockdown everything will be online. For further information contact Rab at trainingobansea cadets@gmail.com.



Ordinary Cadet Cameron Johnston.



Left: Cadet Kieran MacIntyre.



Left: Cadet Aisling Duncan.



Left: Cadet Marc Robertson.



Junior Cadet 1st Class Lucy Sykes, Cadet 1st Class William Sykes.



From left: Cadet Rhys Neil, Junior Cadet 1st Class Bethan Neil and Cadet 1st Class Callum Neil.



Ordinary Cadet Christopher Denheijer, left, and Cadet Lori Denheijer.



Cadet 1st Class Charis Simpson, left, and Junior Cadet Niamh Simpson.

At random

MARTIN LAING

m laing@obantimes.co.uk



Your community spirit knows no bounds

Necessity, as the old saw has it, is the mother of invention and I continue to be much taken with the degree of invention displayed across the country during the coronavirus crisis.

On the odd occasion that I have ventured out of my home, there has been a distinctly dystopian sense of surrealism as I tread virtually deserted streets, with people very obviously giving each other the widest possible berth.

However, reading The Oban Times has been revealing the lengths folk go to in order to help others in our communities.

Last week's paper reported upbeat stories across a variety of areas, including a COVID-19 fund set up on the isle of Luing to help vulnerable residents and the online efforts of community midwives to assist pregnant women.

Then there was the tale of gifts given to staff at Benderloch's Etive House Care Home as a thank you for their efforts. The staff were said to have been overwhelmed by the generosity.

There were also other accounts of the various ways in which people have been showing their appreciation for the NHS workers, in addition to the Thursday night 8pm Clapping for Carers initiative. Among them were Teresa Russell ringing the old St Columba's Primary School bell and Innes MacQueen playing his bagpipes on Luing.

Oban lifeboat volunteer Leonie Mead has come up with the simple but ingenious idea of creating 'blue hearts for the NHS' that people can download and display anywhere but especially in their windows to let health service workers know they are appreciated.

There are countless other schemes and ideas people have come up with to show their gratitude to the NHS staff, emergency services and key workers, and to find ways to help the elderly, vulnerable and isolated among us.

It has been the strangest of times but the care shown for each other has been humbling.

What do you think?

Write to me at mlaing@obantimes.co.uk or The Oban Times, Crannog Lane, Oban PA34 4HB or call 01631 568021.

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Cowboy Hotpot



SYN FREE | Takes 55 minutes | Serves 4

You don't have to be a cowboy to enjoy this campfire classic. Topped with sliced potato, our Syn-free sausage casserole recipe makes a hearty, healthy dinner

Ingredients

- 4 large potatoes, peeled and halved
- Low-calorie cooking spray
- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 8 Slimming World frozen Syn-free Pork Sausages, each cut into 3 pieces
- 2 large carrots, peeled and finely diced
- 150ml hot vegetable stock
- 400g can chopped tomatoes with herbs
- 415g can baked beans
- 410g can mixed beans, drained and rinsed

Method:

1. Cook the sausages according to the packet instructions then cut each sausage into three pieces and keep warm.
2. At the same time, cook the potatoes in a large pan of lightly salted boiling water for 10 minutes or until tender. Drain and set aside.
3. Meanwhile, spray a deep, non-stick casserole pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 3-4 minutes. Add the sausages and cook for a further 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the carrots, stock and chopped tomatoes. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Stir in the baked beans and mixed beans and cook for a further 5 minutes to heat through.
4. Preheat your grill to hot. Spoon the sausages and beans into individual heatproof serving dishes or a shallow casserole dish. Slice the potatoes and arrange over the top of the sausage mixture. Spray with low-calorie cooking spray, season lightly and grill for 2-3 minutes, or until browned.
5. Serve hot with a mixed salad.

PLEASE NOTE:

ALL CLASSES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Your consultant for Lochaber and Oban is Gillian on 07796 040803, Lochgilphead & Campbeltown Rhona 07880 878906. Available for Slimming World phone support and guidance.



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A Puma crewman supports the SAS doctors and paramedics as they load an Epishuttle. Photograph: UK MOD Crown Copyright 2020

RAF and isolation pods to aid islanders

A pledge has been made that islanders will get emergency intensive care help in the coronavirus crisis.

With the islands miles away from specialist intensive care facilities, there are concerns how poorly patients will get access to urgent treatment.

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman MSP has given reassurances after fears were raised by Alasdair Allan MSP who represents Na h-Eileanan an Iar, a vast area of seven constituencies including Shetland and Orkney, and Argyll and Bute. Angus B MacNeil MP, who represents part of the same area in Westminster, has also raised similar concerns.

The Scottish Government, Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) and others are said to have worked in partnership to address the problem.

Plans have included the procurement of special 'Epishuttles' which are single patient isolation pods used to transport highly-infectious patients and protect flight crews and health staff.

Eight have been purchased but they are not yet all in place.

The RAF is also providing cover for any transfers off the islands using three helicopters usually based in South Oxfordshire which have been deployed to RAF Kinloss. In the event of aircraft being re-

quested and Epishuttles not being available, paramedics will also deploy a specialist team to help existing health workers on the islands to prepare a patient for speedy transfer.

Regional airline company Loganair is also providing two additional aircraft kitted out with Epishuttles.

Those patients on islands without landing facilities for fixed-wing aircraft would receive airlift by helicopter, officials have said.

Mr MacNeil MP said he had been 'encouraged' by the efforts of the Scottish Government, Scottish Ambulance Service, Loganair and the military.

'At this time it is good to remember the amount of co-operation taking place among many statutory bodies,' said Mr MacNeil.

Mr Allan added: 'This is a very welcome confirmation of extra capacity for patient transport at what is set to be a difficult time for island communities.'

By yesterday, Monday April 6, the killer bug had claimed the lives of more than 220 people in hospital and 200 in intensive care.

Ninety five of Scotland's islands are occupied by a total of 103,000 people but ICU's tend to be at university-affiliated hospitals or large general hospitals.

Stars aligned to save Otter Karma

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A little over a year ago, Paul and Grace Yoxon were enjoying a walk round Plockton, when they stumbled across a tiny shivering otter cub.

It was a stroke of good fortune for the little female otter, as the Yoxons only decided on a walk at Plockton in a last-minute change to their normal routine.

That stroke of luck was compounded by the fact that, for over a quarter of a century, the Yoxons have run the Skye-based International Otter Survival Fund.

With possible cosmic forces at work, the young otter was christened Karma.

More than a year later and Karma, now a fully grown sleek fish-eating machine, has been released back into the wild.

'Usually we will only keep a cub for 12-15 months, just as long as they would stay with their mother, but because of the time of year Karma came in, it had to be delayed to this spring to allow her the best weather for her first time out on her own,' the Yoxons told the Lochaber Times.

'Fortunately, the weather has been perfect lately, so we had no problems deciding it was time for Karma to move out and find her own place. Unfortunately though, it seems like Karma was a bit used to having set meals and a bed already made up for her - she was reluctant to go!'

Karma soon realised the sea and shore were her home



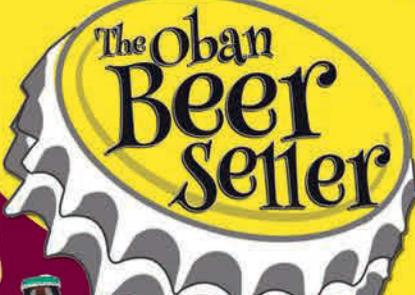
Karma was rescued as a tiny cub and looked after until it was time for her to be released back into the wild recently. Photograph: IOSF.

and set off exploring after the Yoxons picked an ideal stretch of the coastline near where she had been found.

The IOSF originally started as a local environmental

centre offering wildlife tours to Skye visitors. In its 27 years, the IOSF, which has now cared for more than 200 otters, has established a reputation as one of the world's leading otter

charities. In the UK, it is the only charity solely dedicated to the conservation, protection and care of otters based on years of scientific research in the UK and around the world.




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BUSINESS NEWS

Crumbs! Island Bakery's COVID care packages take off

Organic biscuits from Mull are being sent to hospitals and care homes all over the UK as well as wishers show support for front line health workers, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The care packages are being bought as part of a special offer from award-winning Island Bakery.

One of those who has put in an order was a nurse in Norway, said bakery warehouse manager John Norman.

'The nurse in Norway got in touch and said she wanted to give the biscuits from one nurse to another. We were really touched by that,' he said.

The number of mail orders to thank and cheer up medical and care staff have already exceeded Christmas orders, added John.

'We've already sent out well over 100 of these COVID care packages. More orders keep coming in. Some people are giving us details where to send them while others are asking us to choose for them. Our biscuits are like a kind of comfort blanket. We hope receiving the packs lets people know just how appreciated they are.'

To find out more about sending the massively-discounted £12 packs of biscuits, go to islandbakery.scot.



Bakery warehouse manager John Norman with the care packages.

Island firm plays critical role in ventilator surge

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A Rothesay technology firm is playing a vital role in the worldwide surge in demand for ventilators during the coronavirus pandemic.

Flexible Technologies Limited (FTL) on the Isle of Bute expects to produce around 100,000 printed circuit boards for one of the world's leading manufacturers of actuators – a key component in the production of ventilators.

To enable the majority of its highly-skilled staff to continue to work, strict social distancing and public protection equipment measures have come in at the plant, it said.

Orders currently stand at 65,000 units, with one unit used per ventilator, and FTL is anticipating orders for a further 35,000.



Flexible Technologies Limited and inset, Peter Timms.

Peter Timms, chairman and managing director of FTL, said: 'This is an exceptional time for all of us and our outstanding workforce are pulling out all the stops to meet increased demand

for the flexible circuits used in the critical medical equipment.' FTL produces a range of circuit boards and related technology and was established 40 years ago. Highlands and Islands Enterprise

(HIE) has worked closely with FTL for several years.

Morag Goodfellow, area manager at HIE in Argyll, said: 'There are many examples of companies across the Highlands and Islands that are working on various aspects of tackling the COVID-19 crisis.'

'FTL is a long-established firm and an important employer on Bute. It's a great example of a company able to respond quickly to an urgent international need.'

Their expertise in this high-tech field is proving vital and we wish them every success in meeting the increased demand while protecting their employees.'

Is your business helping out during the coronavirus? Let us know by emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk or calling 01631 568000.

Oban food depot's bid to help out during crisis

An important food wholesaler based in Oban has stepped up to help the public after seeing demand from the private sector fall away, Ellis Butcher.

Bidfood Scotland, which has a depot on Glengallan Road, usually deals directly with restaurants, pubs, hotels, and schools.

Since the coronavirus, the company has switched its business model to delivering vital food packages for vulnerable people struggling to get to the shops.

It has also as rolled out a new click-and-collect service allowing residents to buy direct online and receive vital deliveries to the door.

Jon Mack, general manager for Bidfood

Scotland, said: 'Bidfood Scotland's Oban depot is proud to be offering the click-and-collect service which we launched to consumers last week. Consumers can log on to our website www.bidfood.co.uk where they are able to register and purchase a wide range of frozen, chilled and ambient goods from our core range.'

It is also playing a role in a wider Scottish Government initiative to see that those needing food do not go hungry.

'We're working in partnership with Brakes Scotland to make this happen. We began delivering these food packages out of our Oban depot this week,' he added.

The company said it had taken a number of steps to ensure the safety of the products it supplies and protect its workforce during the pandemic.

'While putting in place comprehensive plans for our customers, we've also looked at how best we can support the general public and their requirement for food,' said Mr Mack.

'As we are seeing many outlets sadly close their doors for the foreseeable future, the pressure is mounting for retailers and this doesn't seem to be slowing.'

The company also has depots in Edinburgh, Larbert and Inverness.

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Oban hotel is now 'home' for key workers

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A prominent town centre hotel in Oban has provided a base for key workers helping on the front lines of the coronavirus crisis.

The Royal Hotel on Argyll Square has opened its rooms to those from the NHS, police and military providing extra hands to support vital services.

Usually the 91-bed property hosts up to 160 visitors and would have been fully booked for Easter and looking forward to a strong summer season.

But following the coronavirus, owners the Strathmore Hotels Group decided to make rooms available to those essential workers keeping the country running, saying: 'More so than ever, they need our support.'

Strict social distancing guidelines have been put in place at the hotel as well as a restructure of the food and drink offering to adhere



The Royal Hotel has opened its doors to key workers, while strictly adhering to social distancing guidelines to keep everyone safe.

to protocols and keep staff and residents safe, explained manager John Horne.

Guest numbers had been strictly capped at the five-storey property to a maximum of 30 to ensure safe distancing, he said.

However, it had only ever had under 20 guests staying at any one

time, with numbers down to just three or four on occasions, said Mr Horne.

Despite the crisis, a number of staff had been kept on at the hotel.

Mr Horne said: 'Absolutely everybody is happy to be here to try and still keep a normal life going as much as you can in these

times and to do our bit to help.'

Contact is being kept to a minimum with stringent guidelines in place and safe distances observed, with everyone in good spirits, he said.

Mr Horne has worked in the trade for 25 years and while the future of tourism remains uncertain going forward, he is optimistic that places such as Oban will bounce back once the crisis is over due to its stunning location and loyal customer base.

Mr Horne said: 'We are hopeful our industry can get through this with much support being made available through the government but the main thing is everyone's safety,' said Mr Horne.

'We will worry about the industry when all of this has passed,' he said.

■ Is your business helping out during the coronavirus? Let us know by emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk or calling 01631 568000.



'Chip, chip, hooray' for front line workers

A family chip shop has shown it is the salt of the earth by rustling up 50 free fish suppers for emergency workers in Oban.

The heartfelt gesture was made by Nories Fish and Chips on George Street, run by father-and-son fryers Renato and Anthony Ciacca. They boxed up the whopping order at the weekend and arranged for it to be delivered to those working on the front line of the coronavirus crisis. Police and fire crews, along with staff at the Lorn and Islands hospital, gratefully dug in.

Photographer Kevin McGlynn who shared the news via Facebook called it a 'tremendous gesture'.

It goes to show that when the chips are down, any 'fin' is possible!

Oban woman helps firm make £10,000 'gin gesture' to hospital

A free consignment of top quality hand sanitiser costing £10,000 has made a cross country trip from Aberdeenshire to Argyll - all thanks to a local link, writes Ellis Butcher.

Oban-born Caroline MacIntyre, pictured right, an investment director with Deeside Distillery in Banchory over in the north-east, made it all happen after finding herself self isolating in her home town with parents Iain and Jane.

The privately-owned distillery she works for is famed for its high quality single malt whisky but its range also extends to gin, which uses



pure alcohol and is a vital ingredient of highly protective hand sanitiser.

Recently the NHS gave the green light for the distillery's hand sanitiser as the product is urgently needed after a huge run worldwide following the coronavirus pandemic.

Caroline was determined that NHS staff working hard at the Lorn and Islands District General Hospital in Oban did not miss out on a batch, after the care she received there.

Having already donated to many schools and hospitals, distillery owner Mike Bain was more than accommodating and arranged for a special

palette to be duly delivered to the Glengallan Road centre this week, where it has been greatly appreciated.

Caroline said: 'I am so delighted that our distillery could provide the hand sanitiser to the Lorn and Islands and across Argyll and Bute because apart from Oban being my hometown, I will never forget the care and attention given to me many years ago by all concerned at Lorn and Islands District General Hospital when I was very ill.'

'I always believe that if I had not come home to Oban I wouldn't be here today.'

The Deeside batch apparently use the world's strongest gin with an ABV of 87 per cent.



The distillery donated a palette of hand sanitiser to Oban hospital.

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Remembering the man who mapped the world

On Tuesday, April 14, a modest but brilliant Scotsman: a cartographer who welcomed the greatest explorers to Scotland from all corners of the earth; and who, quite literally, mapped the world, was remembered, writes Jo Woolf.

In 1860, when John George Bartholomew was born at 10 Comely Green Place, Edinburgh, his family's maps had been guiding travellers for two generations; and by the age of 28, when he took over the company, he already had the enthusiasm and far-sightedness that would yield great rewards in the years to come.

Bartholomew enjoyed close acquaintance with leading explorers and academics of the time, including Sir Ernest Shackleton, Dr William Bruce, H. M. Stanley, Sir John Murray and Cecil Rhodes, and he worked with many of them to represent their discoveries in map form. In 1910 he was invited to become Geographer and Cartographer to the King for Scotland.

Tuesday marked the centenary of Bartholomew's death. A three-day gathering had been planned in Edinburgh for more than 130 of his direct descendants and cousins to celebrate the occasion, but this has been postponed to April 2021, due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Asked about what he feels is his great-grandfather's greatest legacy, John Eric Bartholomew, himself a cartographer, says: 'Without a doubt, his perfection of coloured layer shading on maps, a technique for showing heights now adopted the world over by mapmakers.'

Another significant legacy is the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, of which Bartholomew was a co-founder in 1884.

RSGS' Chief Executive, Mike Robinson, said: 'Back in 1884, aged only 24, John George Bartholomew was the driving force behind the founding of the RSGS. This small charity continues to deliver for Scotland, producing publications, journals, magazines and 100 public talks a year, and with a continuing network of some of the greatest minds, and most adventurous spirits of our age.'

Jo Woolf is RSGS Writer-in-Residence and author of *The Great Horizon – 50 Tales of Exploration*, published by Sandstone Press.

Calum of the Glen

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

ain.thorner@btinternet.com



Iain Thornber continues this three-part series based on the unpublished manuscript from the late Alastair Cameron – known locally as 'North Argyll' and a regular contributor to *The Oban Times* for over 50 years – about his next-door neighbour Calum Sinclair.

'To the residents lavish entertainment existed all around them; and affluent well-known personalities visited it as invited guests, particularly during the stalking season. I asked him during our long acquaintance, and possibly on more than one occasion, which was his best and most difficult stalk there. He always replied that it was with Sir Robert Hermon-Hodge, who I believe became afterwards, Lord Wyfold, and the venue in Gleann-na-Earradh – Harris Glen.

The incident, unconnected with his vocation he liked to recall, referred to when he received orders to get a bottle of water from Eas Choire na Grund and give it to the Rev Mr Sinclair to take south with him when going to baptise Sir George and Lady Bullough's daughter. The reason, of course, was to use it for the baptismal ceremony.

In 1910, Calum came to reside at Salen, Sunart where he bought a house, which himself and his wife conducted as a boarding house.

He had been in the district once before to take some wild goats from the farm of Ardey near my residence, to Rum, but though he told me he passed with the goats in front of Bunalteachan cottage, I was at too tender an age to know what such an animal was. I certainly have recollections later of some of the herd which were left behind. I wonder if there are still descendants of these goats in Rum. Wild goats were also taken to the island from Glenlyon about the same time. [13]

Shortly after coming to Salen, he got employment as a keeper on the Sunart estate. In 1913 the shootings on his beat were let to a Captain Austin who happened when the stalking began to be making bad misses with his initial shots. Every time he did this Calum would remark in Gaelic, "A bhogair bochd" (You poor b****r). Anyway he happened one Saturday morning to grass the stag with the first shot, turned to Calum and said, "Am I a bougair bochd now?"

Resipole farm where I worked was on his ground, so he called fairly frequently there, sometimes to give a hand at sheep-shearing at which he was quite



Calum Sinclair's Croft near Resipole; Ben Resipole and Loch Sunart near Strontian.

Photograph: Iain Thornber.



expert and on other occasions on his way home from the hills. As I write these reminiscences, I clearly see in my mind him sitting one evening in late April in an armchair in the farmhouse kitchen and looking very attentively for about five minutes at a big tom cat sitting on the fender at the fire, then turning to the housekeeper he said, "Anne, I think there are kittens in that cat".

She looked at him rather amazed before exclaiming, "What! you're not wise, how can there be kittens in the cat and he is a tom cat." Without the slightest hesitation he replied, "That makes no difference at this time of the year".

Similarly I see him on another occasion after he became tenant of the croft beside me, preparing the tea for a joiner putting a new floor in his kitchen. Seeing Calum slicing the bread with a dirk some gentleman sportsman had given him, the joiner rather of a nervous type said to me, "Look! Look! what is he slicing the bread with?" "It's all right" came the reply, "It only killed one man".

I am quite certain from that moment the appetite of the joiner for his tea degenerated.

After the death of his wife, Calum sold the boarding house and when he attained the age of 70, retired from keeping and became the tenant of the croft beside me in which he was succeeded by Miss Wendy Wood – two interesting personalities though of different character, and kind neighbours.[14]

Here he settled, contented and happy, growing older in body but remaining young in spirits. For a few years his sole companion was Col Hew Charles French, a grey rather tiger striped cat. I can assure that more than one real colonel called to enquire for Col Hew's welfare. Neighbours and passers-by of all classes frequently called on him.

The farm children stopped regularly to and from school when he regaled them with stories of the colonel's night activities but more so with the exploits of his imaginary housekeeper, Flora Livingstone on aeroplane flights.

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday April 16, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed underneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	00.25	2.8	06.39	1.7
	14.36	2.6	19.21	1.7
Fri	02.13	2.9	08.33	1.7
	15.45	2.7	20.51	1.6
Sat	03.11	3.1	09.37	1.5
	16.09	2.9	21.45	1.4
Sun	03.46	3.3	10.17	1.4
	16.13	3.2	22.26	1.2
Mon	04.19	3.5	10.49	1.2
	16.38	3.4	23.01	1.0
Tues	04.52	3.7	11.18	1.0
	17.07	3.6	23.32	0.9
Wed	05.26	3.8	11.46	0.9
	17.37	3.7	** **	**

Tidal Constants: (Add or deduct from High Water at Oban)

Ardishaig	-5.35	Islay Port Ellen	2.00	Portree	+0.55
Campbeltown	-5.30	Lochboisdale	+0.30	Tobermory	+0.16
Crinan	-0.47	Mallaig	+0.25	Dover	+5.30

WEATHER

THURSDAY

Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 7°C to 15°C.

FRIDAY

Sunny intervals / moderate breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 13°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

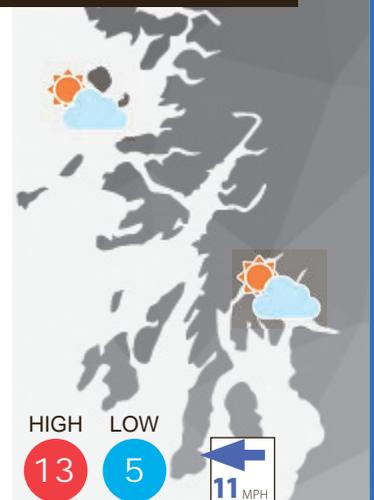
Saturday

Sunny with a moderate breeze
Temperatures 5°C to 13°C.

Sunday

Sunny intervals / gentle breeze
Temperatures 6°C to 13°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST



- part three



Wendy Wood who took over Calum's Croft after he died. Photograph: the estate of Wendy Wood; Quick water colour sketch of the Strontian Stores by Wendy Wood. Photograph by Iain Thornber



If he had lived in this space time I am sure he would have made her the first woman astronaut.

His weekly outing was to Salen, three miles away, to collect his pension, visit many of his old acquaintances there and, in the summer time, make a few new ones. Every year he went to the Oban Games, how many he had attended in his lifetime I forgot to ask him, but they must on his reminiscences of them have been considerable.

The years till he was well over the four score mark visited him lightly but in the autumn of 1946 the legs which had carried him triumphantly on the peaks of Glenorchy, Glenfinlas and Glenlyon as well as those of Rum, Sunart and north Morvern began to fail.

'After New Year 1947, he 'toddled doon the brae' rather rapidly and had to be removed to Oban, where he did not survive for long. Strangely, he passed away in the town where he was born, venerable in age, well known to young and old.

Calum of the Glen's interesting life came to an end, but to me and no doubt others, his memory remains.'

Notes

[13] Wild goats are still present on Rum although their numbers have been much reduced lately by Scottish Natural Heritage because of their eating habits. Of all the superlatives inherited by SNH on Rum there are none more so than the herds of wild goats. Although all goats are descended from domestic stock it is possible that those on Rum come from stock brought to

the island thousands of years ago by Neolithic farmers, or later by Norse invaders who are known to have carried them alive in their long ships as a source of food and clothing.

14] Wendy Wood (1892-1981) was a campaigner for Scottish Independence. In 1928 she was one of the founders of the National Party which grew into the Scottish National Party, but in the 1930s decided that a non-party approach to Home Rule was more effective, although it often created controversy.

On Bannockburn Day in 1932, she led a group of nationalists into Stirling Castle, then an Army barracks as well as being open to tourists, to tear down the Union Flag and replace it with Scotland's lion rampant. Eric Linklater, the writer and poet, wrote that she flushed the Union Jack down the lavatory, and she sued him for libel, eventually settling out of court for a farthing damages. In 1972, Wendy went on a hunger strike for home rule which effectively failed but as a result, in 1979, Scotland was given a referendum on the matter.

A colourful figure who marched to the beat of a different drum, she was also a gifted artist, sculptor and writer. She wrote 10 books, three of which, 'Mac's Croft', 'Moidart and Morar' and 'From a Highland Croft', were written when she lived in West Lochaber - the last mentioned being Ledaig - Calum's croft. Alastair Cameron wrote, 'In her Scottishness, Wendy may have on occasions displayed a fiery spirit but I can in all sincerity pay her the compliment of a good neighbour and a friendly personality'.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Here are another couple of photographs from 1996. There are no details given with either of these, but the top one is obviously a retirement. But who is the lady retiring? If you know who the people are in either photograph, email and let us know at editor@obantimes.co.uk or email us any of your photographs which you think would be of interest to Oban Times' readers.

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Killin Highland Games cancelled for 2020

Due to the on-going uncertainties over the COVID-19 virus, the Killin Highland Games have been cancelled for this year.

Games chairman Charlie Grant said: 'We take the health and safety of our local community, visitors, exhibitors and contestants very seriously and need to plan many months in advance. Even though government restrictions may be lifted, we cannot take the risk that we may have to cancel the event at short notice, and as such, and with great regret, we have taken the decision to postpone the event until August 2021 when we hope that we can give a warm welcome to our followers and all Highland Games fans.'

The Killin Highland Games is one of the most popular highland games in the circuit and is very well attended due to its idyllic rural location, combined with its relative proximity to the Central Belt. This will be the first time in 25 years that the games will not be proceeding.

The Killin highland Games recognises that Highland Games events make a substantial contribution to the Scottish tourist industry and sincerely hope that tourist will be drawn back again in huge numbers when the pandemic crisis is over.

Making your food go extra mile in lockdown

Kerry MacKay from the GRAB Trust dishes out some good advice on how to make the most of your food waste during the coronavirus for the second of our weekly recipe features.

You heard the news, we are in lockdown. Being a good citizen you plan to follow the rules and will save lives in doing so.

You stocked up on food to help see you through and felt a sense of reassurance that whatever happens, you can eat. You planned to cook and freeze a load of meals to make things last.

But then reality set in, the kids need constant entertaining, you still have to put in the hours for work, there's more housework than ever, and not to mention the constant lure of social media to get your fix of socialisation and a good dose of procrastination.

You suddenly realise the days have flown by and a big chunk of



that beautiful stockpile of food is alarmingly near their use-by dates. How can you possibly eat it all in time?

Let's start here. Check the dates on the labels. Make sure you check the right date; 'Best before' is just a guide, the produce will be tastiest before the date shown but is still perfectly edible after it. 'Use by' is the one to watch, once passed this

date the product may not be safe to eat.

Dig out the food that needs used in the next couple of days and lay it on the table. If things can be frozen, now's the time. Freezing them will give you much longer to get round to using it.

So what's left on the table? Maybe a bag of salad that's gone a little slimy in the corner, some stale bread, a few sprouting potatoes... What on earth can you make out of that?

My favourite way to use up stale bread is good old eggy bread.

Leftover mashed potatoes? Make some quick and easy potato scones.

Cooking in bulk is a great effort saver too. Soups and stews are ideal for bulk cooking then freeze in convenient portions for when you don't feel like cooking.

So there you have it, single out the produce that really needs used, freeze what you can, find a few

recipes that tickle your taste buds, cook in bulk, and freeze for later.

Get the children to help, too, cooking is a valuable life skill in surprisingly short supply. The perfect way to combine home schooling with housework. Stay safe and have fun cooking!

Eggy bread

- 2 medium eggs
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 2 slices of white or brown bread
- 1 tablespoon butter

Lightly beat the egg in a shallow bowl along with the milk. Season with salt and black pepper.

Dip each slice of bread into the egg mixture, making sure it has soaked up all of the liquid. Heat a frying pan over a medium heat and add the butter. Swirl the butter around the pan and when it's beginning to foam, add the bread and fry on each side for until golden brown.

Transfer to a plate and serve with crispy bacon or fruit.

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Source: YouGov 2018



Heavy heart as board forced to cancel 2020 Cowal Highland Gathering

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Cowal Highland Gathering 2020 cancelled

The Board of Cowal Highland Gathering (CHG) has taken the decision to cancel this year's event, as a result of the ongoing coronavirus situation.

CHG chairman Ronnie Cairns stressed it was the right one to protect the safety of the competitors and visitors who come from across the globe to be part of the 126-year-old event, as well as protecting the integrity of the world-famous event.

'This is the announcement we desperately hoped we wouldn't have to make,' he said.

Cowal Highland Gathering is home to the World Highland Dancing Championships, Cowal Pipe Band Championship and Cowal International Heavy Athletics Championship, attracting in excess of 1,000 competitors each year.

Mr Cairns added: 'Up until the last moment we have been working hard to put together a Gathering which delivers the spectacle we are famous for, while also supporting local businesses which benefit from the number of people the event brings to the area.'

'However, it has become clear that substantial travel restrictions will remain in place for some considerable time. This would have a devastating effect on our international Highland Dancing competitors in particular and would damage the integrity of the World Highland Dancing



Championships. At the start of this pandemic we were hopeful we would be able to host this year's event. As time went on we looked at ways of staging the Gathering in a different format for 2020 but there are just too many uncertainties, together with the potential impact that staging the event could have on the emergency services and other key partners, and the time is now right to cancel this year's event.

'We are extremely sorry to disappoint all the thousands of people who compete in, visit

as spectators or volunteer at the Gathering - as well as the wider Cowal population who so look forward to the event every year.

'We share their sadness, but will look forward to welcoming everyone back here in August next year.'

The decision to cancel this year's Gathering has been made in discussion with key stakeholders and organisations.

Chairman of the Royal Scottish Official Board of Highland Dancing (RSOBHD) Christine Lacey MBE said:



Cowal Highland Gathering is home to the World Highland Dancing Championships, Cowal Pipe Band Championship and Cowal International Heavy Athletics Championship, attracting in excess of 1,000 competitors each year.

'This has been a heart-breaking decision.

'There are Highland Dancers across the world who have been practicing all year to have the opportunity to dance on Cowal's famous dancing boards.

'However, as much as we all love the World Highland Dancing Championships, the health, the safety and the well being of all dancers, teachers, adjudicators, pipers, event supporting colleagues and the general public must absolutely be our paramount concern.

We also have to be mindful of the economic situation going forward from this pandemic both from the financial aspect from everyone's perspective and from the ability for anyone to travel safely both domestically and internationally.

'We hope this cancellation will mean that we can all meet up again in 2021 where we can embrace the love and respect we all have within our Highland Dancing global community and all be able to compete safely against the best in the world.'

Tickets already purchased for this year's event will be valid for 2021, but if anyone has any questions please contact the CHG office at info@cowalhighlandgathering.com

People have been gathering in Dunoon on the last weekend of August since 1894, and this is the only time the event has been cancelled apart from the War years.

The 2021 Cowal Highland Gathering will return to Dunoon Stadium from Thursday 26-Saturday 28 August.

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M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 16 An Giblean/ THURSDAY 16 April

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
19:30 Beul Chainnt (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 Taigheadas Dùthchail/Rural Housing (rpt)
21:00 Iùl a Chiuil (The Musical Path) (rpt)
22:00 Mach a Seo! (rpt)
22:30 Ameireaga air Film (rpt)
23:20 Dhan Uisge (Isle of Arran) (rpt)
23:30 Na Millenni-Gaels (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 17 An Giblean/ FRIDAY 17 April

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
18:35 Machair (rpt)
19:00 An Là – News
19:25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
19:30 Fianais (rpt)
20:00 Togaidh Sinn Fonn (rpt)
20:25 Binneas – Na Trads – The Shee (rpt)
20:30 Kerry is Kirsty: Stafainn (rpt)
21:00 Opryan Luir (rpt)
21:50 Eadar Chluich (rpt)
21:55 Eadar na Dha: 1918-1935/ Clash of Futures: 1918-1935 (rpt)
22:50 Dhan Uisge (Isle of Arran)
23:00 ALT (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 18 An Giblean/ SATURDAY 18 April

16:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
17:45 An Là – News
18:00 ÙR/NEW: Spors – Scottish Challenge Cup
19:00 Mach a Seo (rpt)
19:30 Fianais (rpt)

20:00 Machair (rpt)
20:25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
20:30 Dreach Ur (rpt)
21:00 ÙR/NEW: ALT
22:00 Ameireaga air Film/America in Colour (rpt)
22:45 Belladrum – Cridhe Tartan (highlights) (rpt)
23:00 Spors – Scottish Challenge Cup (rpt)
00:00 Belladrum 2019 (Highlights) (rpt)

DIDÒMHAICH 19 An Giblean/ SUNDAY 19 April

16:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
An Là – News
18:15 Binneas – Na Trads – Duncan Chisolm (rpt)
18:35 Sgeul Slàinte (rpt)
18:50 Ar N-Aran Làitheil/ Spiritual Service (rpt)
19:25 Sorchar nan Reul (rpt)
19:55 Earran Eachdraidh (rpt)
20:00 Taigheadas Dùthchail/Rural Housing (rpt)
20:30 Fuine S5 (rpt)
21:00 An Lan – Beò leis an Lan (rpt)
22:00 ALT (rpt)
23:00 Eadar na Dha: 1918-1935/Clash of Futures: 1918-1935 (rpt)
23:55 Eadar Chluich (rpt)

DILUAIN 20 An Giblean/ MONDAY 20 April

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Puirt-adhair (Highland Airports) (rpt)
19:30 Beul Chainnt (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 Kerry is Kirsty: Morar gu Arasaig (rpt)
21:00 Trusadh – Nar Lamhan Fhin... (In our own hands) (rpt)
22:00 Tìree Music Festival/ Feis Chiuil Thiriodh (rpt)
22:30 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
23:30 Mach a Seo (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 21 An Giblean/ TUESDAY 21 April

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
19:30 Beul Chainnt (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 Fuine S5 (rpt)
21:00 An Lan – A' beartachadh an Lain (rpt)
22:00 Trusadh – Nar Lamhan Fhin (In our Own hands) (rpt)
23:00 Earran Eachdraidh (rpt)
23:05 Togaidh Sinn Fonn (rpt)
23:30 Sorchar nan Reul (rpt)

DICIADAIN 22 An Giblean/ WEDNESDAY 22 April

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Puirt-adhair (Highland Airports) (rpt)
19:30 Beul Chainnt (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 ÙR/NEW: Dreach Ur
21:00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)
22:00 Na Milleni-Gaels (rpt)
22:30 Tìree Music Festival / Feis Chiuil Thiriodh (rpt)
23:00 Iùl a Chiuil (the Musical Path) (rpt)

DIARDAOIN 23 An Giblean/ THURSDAY 23 April

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
19:00 Vets: Gach Creutair Beò (rpt)
19:30 Beul Chainnt (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News
20:30 Taigheadas Dùthchail/Rural Housing (rpt)
21:00 Iùl a Chiuil (The Musical Path) (rpt)
22:00 Mach a Seo! (rpt)
22:30 Ameireaga air Film (rpt)
23:15 Belladrum – Cridhe Tartan (Highlights)



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Top musicians tune up for virtual music fest

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



One of Scotland's leading traditional arts organisations, Fèis Rois, has lined up some of Scotland's top musicians and singers for an online traditional music festival.

Fèis Rois ran its first Adult Fèis in 1990 and sadly had to cancel its 30th anniversary event, which usually takes place in May, due to the pandemic.

The Junior Fèis, a week-long residential for Primary 4-S1 pupils, which runs during the Easter holidays, also had to be cancelled, leaving many participants and tutors disappointed.

In a bid to cheer them up, Dingwall-based Fèis Rois has organised an online event which can be enjoyed by people of all ages, from all around the world.

The very first Virtual Fèis Rois will take place from Friday May 1-Sunday May 3 via Facebook Live and will see the likes of Highland-based fiddlers Duncan Chisholm and Lauren MacColl, BBC Radio Scotland Traditional Musician of the Year 2020, and former Fèis Rois participant, Ali Levack and multi award-winning Scots singer Siobhan Miller lead music and song workshops during the day.

Each night there will be a different concert, as there would be during the actual events.

The first night will see acclaimed singer songwriter duo, Brian Ó hEadhra and Fiona Mackenzie, perform some of the songs on their new album, Tuath while, on the Saturday night, Lauren MacColl and Ewan Macpherson will delight the audience with some beautiful Highland fiddle melodies



Lauren MacColl, a former Fèis Rois participant, will be one of the musicians performing and leading workshops.

and a few good sing-along songs.

The final night will see the famous Fèis Rois Tutor Concert come to life with a three-hour concert featuring some of the best duos around, kicking off with Capercaillie's Karen Matheson and Donald Shaw.

Fèis Rois chief executive Fiona Dalgetty commented: 'Like so many other organisations and festivals, we were devastated to have to cancel our Junior and Adult Fèisean, which are key events in our calendar.

'Fèis Rois is in the business of bringing people together; we are about building community and friendships, as well as passing on tradition and teaching music skills to people of all ages and abilities and we didn't want the current situation to stop that from happening this year.

'Using the technology we have at our fingertips, this is a way that we can still achieve these things in the virtual world, allowing even more people to get involved.'

The workshops will provide

people, both participants and tutors, with the unique chance to peek in on other classes they might not have usually got to enjoy – fiddlers can join the pipe workshop and learn some good Highland pipe tunes.

'We wanted this virtual weekend to represent the breadth of work we do here at Fèis Rois and I think the range of workshops, calibre of tutors and performers participating does just that,' added Fiona.

All workshops will be pitched at approximately an intermediate+ level but everyone is encouraged to get involved. A suggested minimum donation of £5 for each workshop or concert you view can be made on the Fèis Rois Just Giving page, www.justgiving.com/feisrois, or via Paypal, www.feisrois.org/get-involved/support-us/. There is no obligation to make a donation.

More information on the timetable of workshops and concerts can be found at www.feisrois.org. Updates will also be posted on Facebook, where all the events will take place – www.facebook.com/feisrois.

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Robert in lockdown!

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Lockdown lethargy

Since my column last week about mice nesting in the engine of my Dad's lawn mower, emails and messages have been flooding in from around the globe! Well, from around Torlundy at least. And so, I feel it only right that I provide readers with an update.

Since I last wrote, my relationship with my father has become strained because I have somehow completely broken his lawn mower. On switching on the engine, it now just belches out oil onto the grass. Self-isolation is tough under any circumstances, but it is 10 times tougher when shared with a father who won't speak to you on account of you breaking his beloved mower.

The grass continues to grow and we now have no means of cutting it, so you can understand that tensions are running



high. For the sake of my mum, however, and the sanity of the household, we decided eventually to put our differences aside and shake hands. Or, should I say, to maintain a safe social distance and nod reservedly to each other.

My Dad has never been one to let the grass grow under his feet, so to speak, and the inactivity brought about through lockdown has been frustrating him. I suggested, therefore, that while we can't cut the grass, we

could play a board game. So out came the classic quiz – Trivial Pursuits.

Both very competitive people, and having so recently got over our lawn mower feud, we sat down to play. With a wry smile, Dad asked me the first question: 'Who was the last British male to win Wimbledon?' 'Easy!' I laughed. 'Andy Murray!' I was triumphantly reaching across the board for the dice when Dad replied in one breath that the answer was Fred Perry and that he should probably have told me before we began that this was the 1983 edition of the game! My Dad once again falling back on that favourite quote of his: old age and treachery will always overcome youth and exuberance.

Single success

Massive congratulations to the Skerryvore boys for the success of their charity single for the

NHS, Every Day Heroes. I enjoyed being involved in a very, very small way and, I have to admit, when Martin asked me to film myself playing along for their video, I certainly did not expect that the track would be sitting at the top of the iTunes charts the following week!

As I wrote recently, with so many gigs cancelled, the only thing for us musicians to do has been to go live on social media. When fans have been asked to donate to charity during performances, they have rallied to the call and pledged very generously indeed.

This Skerryvore single is the latest example of that and is unique in that it brought so many different bands together to contribute. A great idea from Martin and the boys and, most importantly, for a tremendous cause supporting all of those risking so much on the front line of the NHS.

Skerryvore cancel Inveraray Castle concert due to COVID-19

Skerryvore have been forced to cancel their anniversary concert, XV, which was due to take place at Inveraray Castle on June 6.

The band said in a statement last Tuesday night (April 7): 'We are devastated to announce we will have to cancel our 15th Anniversary concert XV at Inveraray Castle.'

'This was not a decision taken lightly but is ultimately the right decision given the global pandemic and implications

of that on everyday life. We explored numerous alternative dates but sadly could not manage to get all the elements already secured for June 6 to once again align.

'We want to say a massive thanks to the Duke and Duchess of Argyll for accepting our request to host our anniversary concert at the castle and thank the estate team and all of our event team for the work and planning that has already taken place to

make this event possible. The blow of cancelling this concert obviously has huge financial implications for us as a band but the biggest loss without doubt is not being able to welcome all the fans from around the world that had purchased tickets to join us at Inveraray on June 6.

'All tickets purchased will be refunded 100 per cent in the next 10-14 days by the ticket platform Eventbrite. Your patience is greatly ap-

preciated while this process is completed.

'We look forward to getting back on the road soon to continue our 15th year of touring and we have lots of exciting shows to announce for later in the year, as well as a very special new track called Everyday Heroes (released on Thursday April 9). Until then, stay home and stay safe.

'Thanks once again for all your support and messages during this time.'

Organisers 'heart-broken' as Piping Live! Glasgow International Piping Festival 2020 cancelled

Organisers of the 2020 Piping Live! Glasgow International Piping Festival have today announced that this year's festival has been cancelled – hours after reaching out to thousands of pipers across the world to pipe up as a poignant salute to key workers in the battle against COVID-19.

The festival, which was due to take place from August 8-16, was expected to welcome 40,000 visitors to Glasgow, with 5,000 performers due to put on more than 150 events throughout the city.

But, due to the ongoing and unprecedented effect of coronavirus, organisers have now made the "heart-breaking" decision to cancel, encouraging fans to focus on the wellbeing of themselves and their families instead.

The programme for this year's Piping Live! was still to be announced and tickets had yet to go on sale, but festival sponsors, partner venues and performers have been informed of the cancellation.

Ahead of the decision, Finlay MacDonald, artistic director for Piping Live! 2020, posted a video on Twitter, inviting pipers across the UK to take to their doorsteps and play Scotland The Brave in support of the ongoing work by key workers during this pandemic.

The rally cry went viral, with more than 2,500 pipers globally showing their support in an emotional display at 8pm on Thursday April 2.

Mr MacDonald said: 'Last night, we were on our doorsteps, piping up in honour

of our family and friends in key service roles – applauding their heroic work and extending our humble gratitude. Today, we share this heart-breaking news.

'This hasn't been an easy decision, but it's one we feel is entirely necessary to help safeguard the health and wellbeing of our staff, performers, volunteers and attendees.

'Year on year, Piping Live! attracts crowds from across the world and we believe it's our responsibility, as a tourism hotspot, to do our bit in helping reduce the further spread of this pandemic.

'We are ever hopeful the situation gets better quickly. If that happens, we will consider the possibility of a smaller event later in the year.

'The piping community

really is like no other and we consider ourselves incredibly lucky to have thousands of the most loyal fans. People who we know will continue to do their part in getting one another through these challenging times.

'As a festival, we're committed to making 2021 our biggest and best year yet. As a community, we'll continue to do what we can to keep spirits high and the pipes playing.'

Piping Live! Glasgow International Piping Festival receives support from public bodies including Glasgow Life and EventScotland, part of VisitScotland's Events Directorate – each playing an essential role in the continuing strength of traditional music in Scotland's cultural scene.



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In these unprecedented times Oban Fm are maintaining Breakfast and Drivetime shows with a Covid19 News update in each. This helps keep our volunteers and listeners safe and healthy

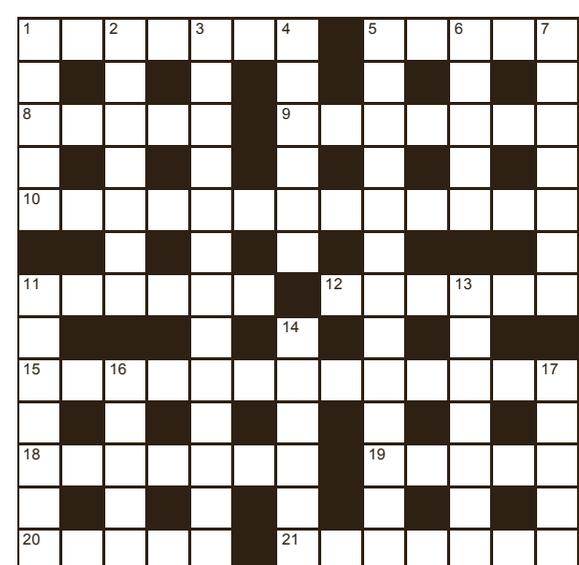
We are broadcasting these hours in association with BID4OBAN and the Oban Times, supported by the Scotland's Towns Partnership. Providing resilience for our local business community.

The Oban Times podcast airs as usual on Wednesday Drivetime and Argyll Talking Newspapers appears through the week.

Radio Clyde 2 will keep you entertained with your favourite hits and National news too.

	Breakfast 8am-10am	Drive Time 5pm-7pm
Monday	Stephen	Marcus
Tuesday	Stephen	Karen
Wednesday	Stephen	Campbell
Thursday	Andy and Sarah	Stephen
Friday	Stephen	Margo

Crossword



Across

1 Boss (7)

5 Smallest (5)

8 Unbending (5)

9 Crisp fabric (7)

10 Of the genus Varanus (7,6)

11 Tiers of hens? (6)

12 Get away (6)

15 Ones who attended the sacred fires on their altars (6,7)

18 'Silly idea' exclamation (7)

19 Nothing is created from nothing (5)

20 Record holder? (2-3)

21 Relating to the lymph glands (7)

Down

1 Meeting place for discussion (5)

2 Body in charge during absence of sovereign (7)

3 One who comes from area between north Africa and Southern Europe (13)

4 Inherent character (6)

5 Ones cover (4,9)

6 Where the action takes place (5)

7 Rubbish spoken (7)

11 Endearing (7)

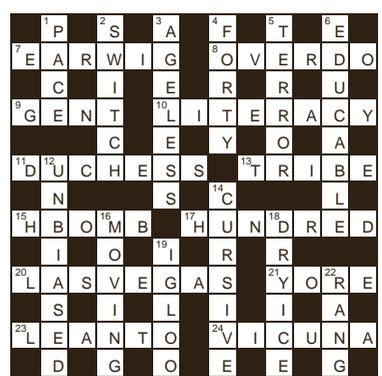
13 Sneeze sound (7)

14 Collection of sacred writings, e.g. the Gathas (6)

16 Relating to sound - the hedgehog? (5)

17 Unwavering (5)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



OPEN FOR BUSINESS

We realise that many more businesses would love to be open, serving locals and visitors alike – our deepest empathy goes out to these businesses and we look forward to seeing their doors wide open when this is all over. Please feel free to get in touch with us if you would like to feature your business, or know a business that should be included. Email nmurphy@obantimes.co.uk or get in touch via our Facebook page on messenger. Let's spread the word as much as we can!

SUPERMARKETS & FOODHALLS

Most superstores in town are operating crowd control measures to help manage social distancing and product quantity limits are in place. They are working tirelessly to restock shelves daily. Please be patient and kind.

TESCO

Mon-Sat 8am-10pm
Sunday 10am-8pm
Older, Vulnerable Customers - Mon, Wed, & Fri 9am-10am
NHS Staff Tesco Staff - Tues, Thurs & Sun 9am-10am
Petrol Filling Station shop is closed but you will still be able to pay at the hatch.

LIDL

Mon-Sun 8am-8pm

ALDI

Mon-Sat 9am-7pm
Sunday 9am-6pm
All day everyday key workers in the NHS, Police and Fire Service will take priority ahead of queues into stores upon showing a valid ID. This is in addition to early access on a Sunday, where they can enter stores 30 minutes prior to opening.
• 4 units on all products
• 2 units per customer on nappies and baby products
• 12 units per online order on wines or spirits, 4 units instore.

MARKS AND SPENCER

Mon-Fri 8am-8pm
Sat 8am-7pm
Sun 9am-6pm
Older & Vulnerable Customers Mon & Thurs 8am-9am
NHS & Emergency services Tues & Fri 8am - 9am

FARMFOODS

Mon-Fri 8am-8pm
Sat 8am-7pm
Sun 9am-6pm

BOOKERS CASH AND CARRY

Booker in Oban are still supplying retailers and caterers throughout Oban and Argyll both through normal collect and existing delivered business.

Open hours as follows:

Mon-Fri 7.30am-3.00pm
Sat 7.30am-2.00pm
Sunday Closed

Social distancing measures are in place with hand sanitiser for customer and colleague use to ensure we remain as safe as possible whilst trading through this situation.

We are publishing this information in association with BID4OBAN and ObanFM, supported by the Scotland's Towns Partnership. Helping to provide resilience for our local business community. Many of these businesses are working under extreme pressure to bring quality products and services to the people of Oban and beyond. Please remember to exercise caution when shopping and only shop for essential supplies. Along with our wonderful NHS staff and carers, our local food, fuel, news platforms and home supply businesses are our community champions!

LOCAL FRESH FOOD SUPPLIERS

Argyll has a unique natural larder and a range of passionate artisans and suppliers to choose from. With home deliveries too!

JACKSON BUTCHERS

Opening Hours
Monday - Closed
Tuesday to Friday 9am - 4pm
Saturday 9am - 2pm
Offering FREE home delivery to Oban - daily
Kilmore and Dunbeg - Wednesday
Connel, North Connel to Appin Thursday
Card Payments preferred. Call the shop on 01631 562016 to place your order. We are open for customers who wish to visit the shop. Also taking phone orders for collection.

IAIN DARLING/WYNNE BUTCHERS

9am-3pm
To place orders call 01631 567400
Cards payments preferred

TASTE OF ARGYLL

Mon-Sat 9am-4pm
Deliveries
OBAN & KILMORE - Daily
TAYNUILT - Tuesday
BENDERLOCH & BARCADDINE - Friday
To place your order call 07882226675.
Fresh and frozen fish, meats, veg, milk, breads, jams, coffees, soaps, flours, pasta, cakes, etc...
*Pre ordered ready meals available

MILLSTONE WHOLEFOODS

Closed but orders can be made by phoning 01631 562704
Orders will be gathered, payment is taken via phone call.
Orders can be collected from the shop between 9.30am-2pm, Mon-Sat.
Delivery can be arranged.

OBAN BEER SELLER

Shop closed but order before 6pm for next day supply - email obanbeerseller@gmail.com for current list of stock
0779 6418973

OBAN FOOD HUB

Order by midnight Tuesday for pick up Thurs 4pm-6pm at the Rockfield Centre
***VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE: COLLECTION @ ROCKFIELD CENTRE**
If you are collecting a veg or fruit box from Go Naked Veg tomorrow please bring a bag to take your veg/fruit home in. Due to the phenomenal amount of orders there are not enough boxes. Check out the Oban Food Hub Facebook page for strict guidelines on collection and delivery.

TASTE OF ARGYLL KITCHEN

From Langoustine Curry to Highland Beefburgers - lots in between
Friday night deliveries (free to Oban, £3 on outskirts)
Tel: 07882226675

TAKE-AWAY FOOD

Featured take-away food businesses are offering collection or delivery. Collections require strict adherence to social distancing regulations with maximum 2 people entering the outlet at any one time:

GEORGE STREET FISH RESTAURANT AND TAKE-AWAY

Open 12pm-8pm daily
Tel 01631 566664
Take-away only

OBAN GRILLHOUSE

Open 7 days, 5pm-11pm
Tel: 01631 358246
Collection or delivery

CORIANDER

Fri, Sat, Sun from 5pm
Tel: 01631 570806
Collection or delivery

PIAZZA

From 5.30pm, Thurs-Sun
Tel: 01631 563628
Collection or delivery

TASTE OF ARGYLL KITCHEN

From Langoustine Curry to Highland Beefburgers - lots in between
Friday night deliveries (free to Oban, £3 on outskirts)
Tel: 07882226675

OBAN FILLING STATION

Hot filled rolls, pies and sausage rolls etc
Open 7am-6pm

BIRCHWOOD FILLING STATION

Hot filled rolls
Open 7am-6pm

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Delivery or collection

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Essential supplies only
PPE equipment reserved for frontline personnel only
Click and Collect service only
Mon-Sat 8am-5pm, Sun 9am-4pm Sun
Tel: 03330 112112
www.screwfix.com

HIGHLAND FASTENERS

Mon-Fri, 8am-12pm
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Tel: 01631 570584

HOWDEN'S JOINERY

Essential supplies for the trade, housing associations etc.
Closed doors but open 9-3 Mon-Fri via telephone/email.
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Email: oban@howdens.com

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FLIT

Essential vehicle hire only for front line staff
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Email: flit@btconnect.com
Tel: 07810391753

KERRIE'S TYRES

We are staying open or available for anyone that needs assistance.
Open 9am-1pm contactable by phone thereafter
Tel: 07876762631

MCCONECHY'S

Open as usual: Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm
Sat until 12.30pm
Tel: 01631 570047
Email oban@mcconechys.co.uk

MUNRO'S GARAGE

Must pre-book, no walk-ins
Tel: 01631 564463 to book your vehicles in.

MORRISON MOTORS

Long term vehicle rentals
Tel: 07825 581171

FIN'S PLACE

Open for essential servicing
Tyres, brakes, batteries etc
Tel: 01631 566 220 or 07766 757 013

TRAILWEST

Closed doors but open for essential services for repair plus new supply and hire to the agricultural industry by telephone.
Tel: 01631 563638

LEGAL SERVICES

DM MACKINNON - SOLICITORS & NOTARIES

If you need to get in contact please call us on 01631 563 014. If you are put through to our answering machine, we will get back to you as soon as possible. Alternatively, please email us at info@dmmk.co.uk and your email will be directed to an appropriate member of staff who will respond to you at the earliest opportunity.

ANDERSON BANKS SOLICITORS & ESTATE AGENTS

(OBAN AND BENBECULA)
Due to Government guidelines our offices are currently closed to the public but our staff are working remotely from home to continue to offer the highest level of service.
Contact us on our usual numbers for telephone appts or Skype/Facetime video calls can be arranged.
Contact us:
www.andersonbanks.co.uk
Anderson Banks Facebook page.
Oban Office: 01631 563158 Email: info@andersonbanks.co.uk
Benbecula office: 01870 602061 Email: uist@andersonbanks.co.uk
Our legal services include: Conveyancing, Wills, Trusts & Executives, Power of Attorney,



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



Family law, Commercial leases and all aspects of private client work plus estate agency for residential sales and leases.

BANKS

ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND

Open for essential business:
Tues, Wed, Thurs
10am-1pm
Tel: 0345 724 2424

BANK OF SCOTLAND

Open for essential business:
Mon-Fri
10am-2pm
Tel: 0345 602 0000

CLYDESDALE BANK

Open for essential business
Mon-Fri
10am-2pm
Tel: 0345 602 0000

TSB

Open for essential business:
Mon-Fri
10am-4pm closed 12.30-1.30 for lunch
Tel: 01631 399 998

TAXIS - ESSENTIAL JOURNEYS ONLY

ARGYLL TAXIS

Tel: 01631 565293

LORN TAXIS

Tel: 01631 564744

OBAN TAXIS

Tel: 01631 564148/566676/564666

ETIVE TAXIS

Tel: 01631 566880

FUEL/SERVICE STATIONS

BIRCHWOOD GARAGE

Mon-Sat 7am-6pm

OBAN FILLING STATION

Mon-Sat 7am-6pm, Sun 8am-6pm

HALFWAY HOUSE

Mon-Sun 7am-7pm

WEST HIGHLAND GAS

Delivering to your door
Gates closed but open Tues-Fri, 8am-4.30pm.
Please call with your order
Tel: 01631 564050

CHEMISTS & HEALTHCARE

Try to avoid contacting your pharmacy by telephone, unless it is essential.
Most in town are operating crowd control measures to help manage social distancing:
• Only order medication 1 week in advance of needing it;
• Let your GP Practice know which pharmacy you'd like to collect this from;
• And please be understanding of small delays at this time.

BOOTS THE CHEMIST, GEORGE STREET

Mon-Sat 9am-4pm
Closed 1.30pm-2.30pm for lunch

BOOTS THE CHEMIST, BESIDE DOCTORS

Mon-Fri 11am-6pm
Closed 1pm-2pm for lunch

GORDON'S CHEMIST

Mon-Sat 10am-5pm
Closed 1pm-2pm for lunch

JOHN WALLACE OPTICIANS

OBAN PRACTICE
Telephone consultations only
Tel: 01631 563170

SPECSAVERS

Reduced staff and hours, for emergency and essential eye care services.
We are here behind closed doors for phone and video consultations and onward emergency referral to hospital eye service when needed.

CONVENIENCE STORES/NEWSAGENTS

ALBANY STORES

Mon-Sun 7am-6pm

SOROBA SHOP

Mon-Sun 10am-8pm

McCOLLS Oban

Mon-Sun 7am-8pm

DUNOLLIE SHOP

Tues-Sat 10am-8pm, Sun & Mon 12pm-6pm

DUNBEG STORES

Mon-Sun 8am till 8pm

CONNEL SHOP

Mon-Fri 6am-4pm
Sat 7.30am-1pm, Sun 7.30am-1pm
In store post office Mon-Sat 9am till 1pm

THE PINK SHOP, BENDERLOCH

Mon-Sun 9am till 9pm

BALVICAR STORES

Mon - Thurs 8.30am - 6.00pm
Fri 8.30am - 7.00pm
Sat 9am - 7.00pm
Sun 9.30am - 2pm
A little light entertainment from Wendy on their Facebook page...

PET SUPPLIES

PETS AT HOME

Mon-Sat 9am-6pm
Sun 10am-5pm
Crowd control system in place to help manage social distancing in stores

CREATURE COMFORTS

Mon, Wed, Fri 9am-1pm
Creature Comforts is your local pet shop for Oban & surrounding area. We stock feeds & accessories for all kinds of pets & wild birds. Mail order deliveries available.

KINTALINE FARM

Mon-Sun 10am - 5pm by arrangement

OFFICE/IT SERVICES

MATRIX COMPUTERS

Computer Support
providing telephone and remote support to home and business customers, new and existing. Tel: 01631 571571
Email info@matrixcomputers.co.uk

OBAN COMPUTER SERVICES

Limited service for essential assistance
Tel: 01631 566561

ONLINE SHOPPING

OBAN MUSIC SHOP

Oban Music is still trading through its web site: www.musicscotland.com
Tel: 01631 566304

ORSAY

Trading online at www.orsayoban.co.uk.

OTHER INFORMATION

WEST COAST MOTORS

is now offering FREE travel to NHS and workers. The company is also working with local communities and offering a delivery service for those most vulnerable. Well done WCM!

ROYAL MAIL

Royal Mail have restricted sorting office hours to 9am-11am
Closed Wed and Sun.

HOME-START LORN

Are you finding it difficult with your children at home all day, need some adult conversation - our volunteers are here to help
Tel: 07718 768305

HOPE KITCHEN

Hope Kitchen is now delivering/providing food assistance to people who are experiencing financial difficulty at this time. Please don't hesitate to get in touch either via messenger or on 01631 565730 if you find yourself short of essentials.

Those who can afford to pay for food but are self-isolating and unable to get supplies, Argyll and Bute Council has a dedicated phone line 01546 605524 to help you.

Information correct at time of going to press. Check www.obantimes.co.uk/openforbusiness for updated information. This page will run in the Oban Times every week for as long as necessary - printed information will be updated weekly.



West Highland Housing Association would like to thank all our tenants and residents for their understanding during these difficult times. Our organisation is following the Government guidelines and the office is closed but our staff are taking calls and working as much as possible in the circumstances.

We will try and provide as much help and assistance during this crisis. We can help make claims for universal credit and other benefits and provide a listening ear if you just need to have a chat with someone.

Please contact us either by phone on our FREE number **0300 3231170**

Email us
mail@westhighlandha.co.uk
or login into your My Home account online

WEST HIGHLAND HOUSING ASSOCIATION SUPPORTING OUR TENANTS AND COMMUNITY.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



Spend in Oban to help local businesses survive

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



The boss of Oban's leading business group has saluted the firms which have managed to remain open in the midst of the coronavirus crisis.

Andy Spence, chief executive of Oban BID, said those which had kept going or diversified their offer, had shown 'amazing' resilience.

And he issued an urgent appeal for people in Oban to spend money locally rather than online.

Many local firms remain vulnerable because tourism has been wiped off the face of the map for a major chunk of the year at least.

Small businesses need to be backed like never before or Oban could risk losing them, was his clarion call.

Mr Spence spoke out as Oban entered a fourth week of shutdown.

With the sun shining on Oban Bay and barely a cloud in the sky, the pavements are deserted save for dog walkers, hour-long exercisers and those fetching vital food or medicines.

Asked to describe the atmosphere in the business community, Mr Spence said: 'Everyone is still in a bit of a shock at what is going on and they are all trying to find their feet.



This does have huge implications on a town like Oban which relies on tourism and is now telling people to stay away for their own safety – and that's the right thing to do.'

'What puts us in a good position to come back is the strength of the business community here. They are versatile and they can rise to the challenge, although we've never had a challenge as big as this.

'We really have to pull together over the next couple of months.'

'The most important thing people can do is to continue to spend money locally and before purchasing online they should seriously consider 'can I get that locally?' he said.

A number of firms, from family

enterprises to high street giants have continued to keep the wheels of commerce turning in a month like no other.

But in a crisis as fast-moving as the coronavirus, there are no guarantees every business will be standing by the time the restrictions are lifted or government grants run out.

Other companies have had to swiftly adapt their offering as loyal customers and staff are confined to their homes.

Restaurants such as Piazza have become takeaway firms and local butchers Jackson Bros and Wynne and Son had been getting orders out safely, said Mr Spence.

Oban was set to welcome 22,000 visitors by cruise ship before the lockdown.

Supermarkets and banks have also risen to the challenge, he added. In addition, accountants, insurance brokers, the BID group itself and The Oban Times have all remained operational despite the pandemic paralysis.

Mr Spence believes Oban is well placed to come back but is crucially aware that it will take time.

The scare has wiped out Oban's summer calendar of events, which was being hailed as the 'biggest ever'.

With visitors expected from all corners of the UK and the town high on the list for wealthy American and Indian visitors, worldwide travel restrictions have sparked a flood of cancellations and postponements.

Oban was expecting to welcome 22,000 people alone from cruise ships docking over the summer – bringing visitors who fill the tills, help create jobs and sustain shops and services which could not survive without the tourism pound.

In August, Cunard Line's Queen Mary 2 was due for a day visit, bringing a maximum 2,800

guests and more than 1,200 crew. The Bid4Oban group consists of 550 businesses which pay a levy so that the group has a pot of money for staging local events, bankrolling improvements to the street scene and waving the flag for the town.

However, the Bid4Oban group and the Oban and Lorn Tourism Alliance are now picking up the reins to be a conduit for important information and funding opportunities available to struggling businesses.

A £30,000 application has been made to the Scotland's Town Partnership, which has been awarded £1 million by the Scottish Government to share with business improvement districts nationwide.

The grant for Oban will help the BID group assist with the 'resilience' for businesses and communicate which businesses are still open.

A decision is expected in the next fortnight, he said.

Tony Cave, chairman of BID4Oban, added: 'It is essential that the BID is working alongside Argyll and Bute Council and other agencies to ensure businesses are kept up-to-date.'

£3.6m boost as council works round the clock to pay out grants

Some £3.6 million of grants have been paid out to local businesses across Argyll and Bute in just a few short weeks, according to new statistics.

It follows a flood of more than 1,800 inquiries to Argyll and Bute Council which is administering a Scottish Government scheme, said Bid4Oban.

Businesses needing to protect jobs, prevent closures and promote economic recovery can apply for grants for between £10,000 and £25,000 through the council, with a deadline of March 31, 2021.

Figures accurate as of last Thursday (April 9) show that 530 claims have been processed by the council's finance department which has come under huge pressure, said Mr Andrew Spence, chief executive of Bid4Oban.

'So far they've done an excellent job – as have all departments across the council,' said Mr Spence.

'I would like to pay tribute to the work they have had to do to keep the community safe and the business community supported.'

Many businesses remain con-

cerned about the outcome of their application but Mr Spence advised that if people had not had any queries raised by the council, then the chances are it would be paid once processed.

So far, the council has approved 447 grants for between £10,000 and 42 for £25,000, and is working round-the-clock to get through the applications, he said.

The BID group is also actively lobbying for more support for sole traders and those businesses associated with tourism which do not always qualify for the grant help,

to ensure they did not fall between the cracks of support, he added.

Mr Spence called on local residents to throw their support behind those local firms still operating – either on skeleton staffing levels or from home.

Accountants, legal firms, banks, insurance brokers and travel agents are still working after facing a flood of customer concerns, he said.

Supermarkets and small businesses including local butchers and takeaways are adjusting to stay afloat, while nimble-footed

restaurants and cafes have also turned to getting out deliveries from Piazza in Oban to the Taste of Argyll, among others.

Mr Spence's message to Oban was that customers must back those local businesses open at this time as they remained 'very vulnerable' to the lockdown.

'Support them now like never before,' said Mr Spence.

The Oban Times has a dedicated page online promoting the businesses seen here, which are still open for business – visit www.obantimes.co.uk/openforbusiness

West Coast MOTORING

✓ GARAGES ✓ DEALERSHIPS ✓ PRIVATE SALES ✓ NEWS

ROLLS-ROYCE CHALLENGES YOUNG MINDS TO DESIGN THEIR OWN LUXURY CAR

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a brand that encourages the pursuit of dreams, and now a new generation of aspiring designers are being encouraged to bring their automotive dreams to life through a special Young Designer Competition.

Launched to provide parents and children with a welcome distraction during the worldwide coronavirus outbreak, Rolls-Royce is calling on aspiring designers up to the age of 16 to design their dream Rolls-Royce of the future. The competition enables designers of the future to let their imaginations and creativity run free, even while they remain bound to their homes.

Rolls-Royce designs and builds the world's most extraordinary cars, each a unique expression of the owner's personality, imagination and creativity. From paint to embroidery, Starlight Headliner to art and design installations, anything is possible.

Aspiring designers entering the challenge can now draw on their own creativity and desires to imagine the design of their very own super-luxury car.

The new competition is an extension of that which is run each year at the Rolls-Royce employees' Family Day Celebration, held at the Home of Rolls-Royce in Goodwood, England. This eagerly anticipated activity delights creative young minds, as well as proud parents and grandparents.

Rolls-Royce is opening up the competition to a worldwide audience to: stimulate design talent; inspire greatness; and provide a welcome distraction from self-isolation and social-distancing measures being adopted by many countries around the globe.

The marque's design team will



Rolls-Royce challenges young minds to design their own luxury car

judge all entries and select an overall winner, who will receive a rendered illustration of their design – a true once-in-a-lifetime, money-can't-buy prize – as well as a chauffeur-driven journey in a Rolls-Royce Phantom for their first day back to school, with their best

friend. Runners-up will receive a hand-signed certificate from Torsten Müller-Ötvös, the Chief Executive Officer of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars.

Two additional prizes will be awarded to one lucky UK entrant: Travel to school in style

in a chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce once the UK's own Coronavirus countermeasures draw to an end, and a new Greenpower electric car kit will be donated to the recipients' school, thereby enabling participation in the Greenpower Challenge – the

UK's number-one motorsport competition for schools across Britain.

Young designers can share their innovative designs for a future Rolls-Royce on the website: rolls-royceyoungdesignercompetition.com

<p>NEW CAR INDEX</p>	 <p>SUZUKI Gordon Motors UK Dealer Of The Year 2014 Comrie Rd, Crieff, Perthshire PH7 4BQ Tel.01764 652125 Delivery throughout the West www.suzuki.co.uk/gordonmotors</p>	 <p>W.D. Semple www.wdsemple.com Inveraray Shore Street Tel.01499 302150 Lochgilthead Highbank Park 01546 606767/ 606272</p>	 <p>ISUZU</p> <p>S & S Services Old Bridge Road, Heathfield, Ayr 01292 880080 01292 880440</p>	 <p>Great Wall</p> <p>S & S Services Old Bridge Road, Heathfield, Ayr 01292 880080 01292 880440</p>	 <p>SUBARU</p> <p>S & S Services Old Bridge Road, Heathfield, Ayr 01292 880080/880440</p>
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Around the markets

United Auctions, Stirling, Monday April 13: sold 978 store cattle at their annual "Perth" sale.

Bullocks (536) – averaged 224.8p to 276.6p per kg for a 375kg LimX from Monzie Farms and £1225 for a 610kg CHX from South Kirklane.

Heifers (442) – averaged 218.9p to 298.3p per kg for a 362kg LimX from Coilavoulin and £1320 for a 494kg LimX from Coilavoulin.

Leading prices per head and per kg:

Store Cattle

Bullocks: 251-300kgs- Tallant £580, 222.20p; 301-350kgs- Ballimartin £860, 253.70p; 351-400kgs- Monzie Farms £1040, 276.60p; 401-450kgs- Monzie Farm £1090, Ballechin Farms 262.40p; 451-500kgs- Monzie Farms £1150, 245.10p; 501-551kgs Castle Cary Mill £1190, Wester Bonhard 229.00p; 552-601kgs- Letham £1210, Stanley 213.00p; 602-651kg- South Kirklane £1225, 200.80p.

Heifers: 251-300kgs- Tallant £610, 234.60p; 301-350kgs- Kilchiaran £770, Monzie Farms 232.30p; 351-400kgs- Coilavoulin £1120, 298.30p; 401-450kgs- Ballechin Farms £1160, 260.70p; 451-500kgs- Coilavoulin £1320, 267.20p; 501-551kgs Little Inch £1110, 211.80p; 552-601kgs- Kilmux £1120, 195.10p.

Caledonian Marts Ltd, Thursday April 9: sold 124 Cattle comprising of 61 Bullocks, Heifers and Young Bulls, and 63 OTM Cattle.

Prime Heifers sold to 248ppkg for a Limousin from A A & J Brand, Nethermyres, Auchtermuchty purchased by G Kirk & Son, Butchers, Denny and to £1462 for a Limousin from W Dandie, Learielaw, Broxburn purchased by Buffalo, Butchers, Kirkcaldy.

Prime Bullocks sold to 230ppkg for a Limousin again from Nethermyres purchased by T Johnston, Butchers, Falkirk and to £1485 for the same beast.

Other Leading Prices

Bullocks per kg
228p Learielaw
225p Nethermyres
220p Dullomuir
Heifers per kg
245p Carriston
240p & 235p (Twice)
Learielaw 225p Carriston
222p Westwoodlane
Bullocks per Head
£1454 Learielaw
£1453 Nethermyres & Croftgarry £1409 Loanrigg
£1387 Croftgarry
£1380 Nethermyres
Heifers per Head
£1443 Westwoodlane
£1433 Learielaw
£1408 Nethermyres
£1341 Carriston

Also forward were 63 OTM Cattle, with 80% of the OTM's forward being feeding types.

They averaged 120ppkg selling to 147ppkg for a Limousin from R Johnston, Balaclava, Islay and to £1080 from the same home.

Dairy Cows averaged 96ppkg selling to 108ppkg from W Waugh, North Bankhead, Avonbridge and to £750 from J & J Kinloch, Walton, Cardross.

Other Leading Prices:
Beef OTMs per kg
142p Westwoodlane
135p & 133p Knockhouse
132p Balaclava
131p Westwoodlane
Beef OTMs per head
£1010 Westwoodlane
£970 Balaclava
£900 Dalchirla
£890 Waterloo (Wick), Balaclava & Kincaple
Dairy Cows per head
£660 Walton
£650 North Bankhead
£640 North Bankhead & Wharlawhill



The photographs have been cheering up everyone who has passed by Coull Farm on Islay, and further afield thanks to social media.



KEEPINTOUCH
email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01631 568000

All things baa baa bright and beautiful

An Islay farmer and his family have been brightening up the lambscape in honour of NHS staff both on the island and further afield, writes Fiona Scott.

Andrew Jones, his girlfriend Sophie MacGill and farm hand Katie Keenen have been spray painting the new spring arrivals and their mums in individ-

ual brightly-coloured designs on the family-run Coull Farm.

'The sheep are in a field next to the road so the hope is it will put a smile on the faces of NHS workers and other essential travellers on their way to and from work,' said Andrew.

'I put the pictures up on both the farm and the island

Facebook pages at the weekend and have received a load of positive comments and shares, and we're so pleased they are cheering people up.

'The NHS are working so hard to keep us all healthy during these extreme times, so if there are small things we can do to let them know that their efforts

are appreciated it's a no-brainer really.'

Andrew's father, who has worked and lived on the farm for the past 46 years, took a bit of convincing that having multi-coloured livestock was a good idea. He has since conceded that it wasn't such a baad idea after all.

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Argyll farming leader appeals for public help

by Colin Cameron
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

Kintyre farmer Duncan Macalister is asking residents and visitors to Argyll to act responsibly when using the countryside for exercise during the COVID-19 restrictions.

Mr Macalister, who farms at Glenbarr, is the NFU Scotland Argyll and the Islands regional chairman.

He said: 'For farmers and crofters across Argyll, the countryside is our place of work and spring is a particularly busy time of year for us. Calving is well under way and many will also be lambing, or about to start.

'This is always a stressful time for farmers and the coronavirus pandemic is adding extra strain.

'We appreciate members of the public, who are having to adhere to the current



lockdown restrictions, will be wanting to take their daily walk locally. Of course, we would normally encourage people to seek fresh air and appreciate the nature Scotland provides. However, the increasing number of walkers on farmland, particularly around our villages and rural towns,

is putting ourselves and our businesses at risk. As livestock owners, we also want to protect our livestock from disturbance caused by dog walkers, some of whom do not act responsibly.

'As an industry we are acutely aware what an important role we have to play in keeping food production going during

Kintyre farmer and NFU Scotland Argyll and Islands regional chairman Duncan Macalister.

this current crisis. As essential workers providing the primary product for food supplies, we cannot afford to put our health at risk.

'It is a requirement of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code that we all behave in a responsible way that is considerate of other people. We would ask therefore that you respect the health and safety of farmers and others working the land. Please follow requests and signs to avoid particular areas, such as farmyards, fields with pregnant or young livestock and other busy working areas. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code requires that people walking dogs act responsibly, take notice of any signs and

prevent their dogs from scaring or attacking any livestock.

'We also have a duty of care to our staff and families and we need to keep them safe during the coronavirus outbreak. We may have no, or limited, access to back-up staff, and an outbreak in a farming area could have a devastating impact on our ability to produce the food the nation needs.

'Our message is the same as the government's - stay at home, do not get in your car to travel to the countryside and when you take your daily exercise please stay on public roads and footpaths and avoid farmyards wherever possible.'

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

Farmers' and crofters' video of support

As the Covid-19 lockdown looks set to continue, farmers and crofters from every corner and sector of Scotland have come together to produce a video to reassure the general public that they will do all they can to keep food and drink on everyone's table.

The video sees 23 farmers, crofters, their families and their workforce, filming their small messages of encouragement from their farms.

The project was voluntarily developed by dairy farmers Colin Ferguson, NFU Scotland Dumfries and Galloway Chairman, and David McMiken, who sits on NFU Scotland Milk Committee, as well as Rebecca Dawes from Jane Craigie Marketing.

Following the launch of the video, Colin Ferguson said: 'In these worrying times it is important that the Scottish public know that farmers and crofters are still doing all they can to keep healthy, high welfare food and drink on their tables.

Visit vimeo.com/405842047

Ewing calls for greater support for farming sectors under pressure

Rural Economy Secretary Fergus Ewing has written to Minister of State at DEFRA George Eustice to call for greater support for farming sectors under pressure due to the impacts of COVID-19, highlighting key sectors already under pressure, such as dairy and red meat.

He has highlighted the need to see all the major retailers making immediate payments to small suppliers to help with cashflow during this difficult period and for the UK Government to ensure farmers benefit from any EU measures and funding made available to EU member states at this time.

Mr Ewing said in the letter: I am aware both Edwin Poots and Lesley Griffiths have written to you concerning the impacts faced by the agri-food sector, which is starting to face significant challenges, with many traditional and long-standing market supply chains having to readjust rapidly.

'Whilst we are all rightly focused on actions to protect people's lives, protect the NHS and prevent the spread of the virus, I whole-heartedly agree with both Edwin and Lesley that we

all need to be fully committed to support our vitally important sectors in a co-ordinated approach at the UK level.

I have welcomed the sharing of information between our officials and ourselves on many common issues that are now starting to impact specific sectors. Impacts such as the absolute collapse the out-of-home drinks market is having on all our dairy sectors and the issue of achieving carcase balance in our beef and sheep sectors whilst prices are starting to fall to potentially unsustainable levels.

Similar difficulties are of course being experienced across all agricultural sectors, affecting both processors and primary producers, who I must commend for rising to the occasion to keep our nations supplied whilst adhering to the tight guidelines required to operate and protect staff in a safe manner.

I am pleased our red meat levy bodies have agreed to share marketing assets and make use of the Ring Fence Funding to launch a national marketing campaign that will be tailored by each region and

help encourage additional sales in some sectors. I understand that AHDB will require Defra's approval, and trust that this will be provided rapidly.

As we have discussed, we also need to see all the major retailers making immediate payments to small suppliers to help with cashflow during this difficult period and use their collective consumer reach to help promote all our UK primary produce at this time.

These initiatives will all be helpful but we must also make best use of all available powers to protect our sectors. I therefore also seek your commitment to making use of any current or new emergency measures from the European Commission under the Common Market Organisation Regulations during the transition period and that funding for such measures would be continued at the end of this period as required, and should any EU funding emerge to accompany such measures but the UK Government cannot, or chooses not to access such funding, the UK Government should provide the devolved administrations with equivalent funds.

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The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements

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- Includes all joining pins/stakes

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Comes with an 80-foot holding pen and 10-foot race, 2x 2-foot swing gates and all joining pins/stakes included. Our system will safely hold 100 fully grown sheep (approx.)

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- 12 x Joining pins/stakes
- 2 x 2-foot swing gates



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The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements. Also ideal for TB testing and the cattle sliding gate gives full control of the livestock from outside the race and stops the race from spreading out.

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Ronnie Finney 07789 276354
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- Ensure the adherence to all standard operating procedures (SOP's).
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- Provide input into and control the total site expenditure to meet or better the budget.
- Achieve the highest welfare, husbandry, biosecurity, food safety and quality standards from the site.
- Maintain accurate and up to date site records relating to livestock, feed use, environment, bio-security etc.
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PLANNING

The applications listed below together with the plans and other documents submitted with them may be viewed electronically through Argyll and Bute Council website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk. Having regard to Schedule 6, Part 3, s10 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, documents are only available to inspect electronically at this time. Customers requiring assistance can contact us by e-mail: planning.hq@argyll-bute.gov.uk or tel. 01546 605518.

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
20/00542/PP	Erection of garage with gym above	Point Park Cottage, Taynuilt Argyll And Bute PA35 1JQ
20/00538/PPP	Renewal of planning permission in principle reference 17/00491/PPP - Site for the erection of a dwellinghouse	Land At Kilvaree Connel Argyll And Bute
20/00406/PP	Change of use of land for the siting of a catering vehicle	Land North East Of Kilchurn Castle Dalmailly Argyll And Bute
20/00334/PP	Use of land for the siting of a modular building to facilitate temporary office accommodation for a period of 3 years	Atlantis Leisure Dalriach Road Oban Argyll And Bute PA34 5JE

Written comments can be submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> or to Argyll and Bute Council, Development Management, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT 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 on the Councils website. Customers are requested to use electronic communication where possible during the coronavirus pandemic as our ability to process postal mail is restricted.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:

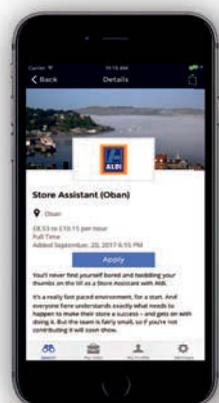
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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at <http://wam.highland.gov.uk>.

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
20/01406/FUL	Land 80M SE Of Dal-Ghorm Ardtoe, Acharacle	Erection of house and formation of access
20/01401/FUL	Land 265M SW Of Scotia Lodge, Invergarry	Siting of 13 holiday letting pods and erection of toilet block and reception buildings

Time period for comments is 14 days
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

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Clerk to the Governors, Charles and Barbara Tyre Trust,
The Old Surgery, School Road, Tarbert, PA29 6UL Tel: 01880 820 277

Charles And Barbara Tyre Trust, SC031378

DEATHS

FORBES - Peacefully at home with her family, on April 6, 2020, age 61 years, Margaret (née Stewart), much loved mum, granny and sister. Sadly missed by all who knew her. A memorial service for Margaret will be held when the current restrictions are lifted.

HENDERSON - Catherine Elizabeth Henderson, age 89, Former Health Visitor and Nursing Officer, Lochaber, passed away peacefully into the presence of the Lord on April 13, 2020 in the RNI, Inverness. Beloved mother of Donald and loving mother-in-law of Anne. Adored grandmother of Stuart, Alasdair, and Mairi-Anne and loving great-grandmother of Finn, Megan and Joshua. "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain". Arrangements by William T. Fraser and Son, Culduthel Road, Inverness.

MACCALLUM - Suddenly on April 5, 2020, Dougie MacCallum passed away peacefully at the Lorn and Islands Hospital. The family send their love and thanks to all the staff at the hospital for their care and

attention. A wonderful father to Amanda, David, Susan and son-in-law Ashley, a loving generous papa, brother-in-law, uncle and father-in-law. He will be greatly missed by all.

MACCUISH - Flora (née MacIntyre) formerly of Eriskay. Passed away peacefully at Greenfield Park Care Home, Glasgow on Wednesday, April 8, 2020, loving wife of the late Norman MacCuish, much loved sister-in-law to Effie, Anne and John Angus. Much loved auntie and great-auntie and good friend to many. A memorial service and celebration of Flora's life will be held in due course.

MACLEAN - Niall Iain, aged 91 years, died peacefully on April 8, 2020, at Mid Argyll Hospital, Lochgilphead, after a short illness. A loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, sadly missed. A private family committal will take place at Glen Shira Cemetery. With grateful thanks to doctors and nursing staff, for their loving kindness and unflinching attention.

ROBB - Suddenly but peacefully at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary on April 2, 2020, aged 86 years, James Robb, Lochdon, Isle of Mull. Loving husband of Julie, dear father of Julie and Hamish and father-in-law of Geoff and Lisa. Much loved Grampa Mull to Cameron and Emilie. Sadly missed by all his family and friends. Funeral service was held at Balure Cemetery, Isle of Mull on Wednesday, April 15, 2020.

SCOTT - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on Wednesday, April 8, 2020, Jessie (McKinney), beloved

wife of the late Jimmy, dear mother of James and Adrian, much loved mother-in-law, sister, auntie and a dear friend to many. Devoted granny to James, Lee-Ann and Claire and much loved great-granny to Charlie, Savannah, Ryan and Rachel. The family would like to thank ward B for their exceptional care of Jessie. A special word of thanks to NHS staff for their care and comfort everywhere. May Jessie Rest in Peace. A memorial service and celebration of Jessie's life will be held in due course.

TAYLOR - In loving memory of Alfie Taylor who passed away peacefully on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at Etive House Care Home, Benderloch. Beloved husband to Ann, father to Christopher and Carol, father-in-law to Claire and Angus. Adored by his grandchildren Ashleigh, Isla, Libby and Fraser. Brother to Ann, Irene, Harry, Gladys and Angus. You will be forever missed and your fun memories shared by all.

THOMSON - Peacefully at home, after an illness borne bravely, on Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020, Hector Bruce Thomson, aged 75 years, of The Anchorage, Ardpatrik by Tarbert. Beloved husband of Elaine and of the late Betty; cherished father of Graeme, Andrew and Suzanne, and dear step father of Gaener and Karen. A much respected father-in-law of Amanda, Tara, Gavin and Fraser. Dearly loved grandfather of Kristofer, Scott, Shaun, Calum, Erin and Eadie, and proud great-grandfather of Mia. A dear brother, uncle and cousin to all the family. In line with current regulations, a private funeral service will

be held at Carrick Cemetery. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

WALKER - Peacefully, at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, on April 9, 2020, Anne Walker (née Kennedy), aged 84 years, Riverside Road, Kinlochleven. Much loved wife of the late Willie, Mum to Diane, Vicki and Derek, and Granny to Erin, Max, Iona, Alex, Abby and Catherine. A private graveside service will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2020, 2 p.m. at St. John's Graveyard, Ballachulish. A celebration of her life will be arranged at a later date. Arrangements by Manson & MacBeath.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CAMPBELL - The family of the late Ruby Campbell would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their outstanding professional care, love and yes, humour while treating Ruby through her illness. All the wonderful staff at Oban, Lorn and Islands hospital. In particular staff in wards A and B, the Macmillan Day Ward, Ancillary Staff and the Oncology Department. The staff of Tayside and Connel medical practices, district nurses and the daily carers who brightened up Ruby's day with humour, professionalism and respect for her dignity. The Marie Curie nurses Amanda O'Donnell and Janine Johnston. Catriona and staff at Hamish Hoey and Son, whose job has been so difficult with

the Government restrictions. Council staff and Reverend Tom Telfer for his beautiful graveside service and committal. The family sincerely thank you all from the bottom of our broken hearts.

MACLELLAN - Fiona and family of the late Michael MacLellan thank most sincerely relatives, friends and neighbours for all the cards, flowers, messages and home baking following their recent loss. Many thanks to Catriona and everyone at Hamish Hoey's for their caring and professional service and special thanks to Canon James MacNeil for a memorable and fitting service. Thanks to John Joe MacNeil for amazing music and to Mary Catherine and Lovisa for beautiful singing, also Kenny McLeod for his recording of the service and Gavin MacMillan for his pipe tunes at the church and graveside. Thanks to Petals of Oban for the beautiful flowers and to the Royal Hotel for their excellent catering. Finally a huge thank you to all who travelled from near and far to attend Michael's service and graveside and donated generously to the retiral collection for The Maxie Richards Foundation which raised £1,100. God bless you all.

MITCHELL - Alison and Iain and their families would like to thank all relatives and friends for their kind expressions of sympathy in their recent loss of their mum, Mary. We would also like to express heartfelt gratitude to all the doctors, nurses, carers and friends, who

supported mum through her illness over the years and to all the staff who looked after her so well in her latter years at Etive House Care Home. Thanks also to Rev. Telfour and D & A Munn Ltd.

SCOLAR - Karen, Johnny and all the family wish to sincerely thank all who have offered such kind expressions of sympathy following the loss of our dear Dad, Alistair. Special thanks to John McLellan Funeral Directors for their assistance and professionalism, to the Rev. Donald McCorkindale for a comforting family service, and to Eilish Brown for making our beautiful family wreaths. Finally, thank you to all those who kept us in their thoughts despite being unable to attend the funeral due to current restrictions. All cards, letters, phone calls, flowers and messages received have been of great comfort to us all, and we are so grateful to everyone for their kindness. All family and friends will be invited to join us at a memorial service to celebrate Dad's life at a later date.

MEMORIALS

JOHNSTON - John Harry Trivett, April 22, 2015. The pain of losing you never goes away. We love and miss you more every day. Sleep easy John Boy. - Mum, Dad, Janine, Eilidh, Kenny, Lois, Halle and Kenneth xxx

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MACDONALD - Precious memories of my darling husband Archie, who passed away April 15, 2017.

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We walk side by side.
Until we meet again, rest in peace.
God bless and love you always.
- From your loving wife Eileen.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of our darling dad and papa, who passed away April 15, 2017.

In laughter and in sorrow
In sunshine and in rain
We know you're watching over us

Until we meet again
Love always.
- Brian, Anne, Marie, Eileen, grandchildren and great grandchildren. xx

MACINTYRE - In memory of our dear parents, Duncan, who passed away on December 19, 1981 and Betsy, who passed away on April 16, 1988.

Your life was love and labour
Your love for your family true
You did your best for all of us
We will always remember you.
- Inserted by the family, late of Kilvaree Farm, Connel, latterly of Cruachan, Strathyre, Perthshire.

SHAW - Treasured memories of Willie, a dearly loved husband, dad, father-in-law and papa, who died April 19, 2019. Sorely missed.

Gu Brath Nar Cridhe
- Rhona, William, Ailsa and family.

MEMORIAM

Linda O'Brien (née Ball)
09/08/1954 - 17/04/2019



April 17, 2020 commemorates the first anniversary when Linda sadly left us.

A devoted "Darling" wife of Peter and loving mother to Lucy and Martin.

Granny to J&E.

Not a day goes by that I don't shed a tear for my Darling wife who led "team O'Brien" from Bahrain to The Highlands.

Too many to mention but special thanks to her sisters who were there when it mattered.

Belford Hospital and Macmillan are not forgotten either.

My love Linda, always.

Peter
xx



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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

'Do not be afraid...
He has risen'
- Matthew
28:5-6



We are living in strange times. It feels as if an unseen enemy is lurking around every doorway, every street and every shop ready to pounce on the unsuspecting victim.

I travelled to town for essential shopping after two weeks isolation and all I could sense was apprehension and fear. The buzz of voices in the shops had disappeared. Folk didn't want to hang around, there was no chit chat at the tills.

Currently, there is no cure for coronavirus, no vaccine or drug to counteract this terrible disease which has resulted in lockdown and in some cases, total isolation from friends and family.

Fear is a powerful emotion which can have devastating effects on individuals, especially when we know of family and friends and neighbours who have been affected, and some not making it through. That is the reality of our life today.

In the midst of all this, Christians have just celebrated Easter when we remember the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, even then, there was great fear. Jesus falsely tried and crucified and laid in a tomb. What of the disciples' future, how safe were they from the authorities who wanted to kill them?

The women who ran to the tomb that Sunday morning didn't know what to expect. They saw the tomb opened and the guards lying 'like dead men'.

The first thing the angel said was, 'Don't be afraid.. HE HAS RISEN'. Those three words changed their future, the disciples' future and ultimately, ours too.

That evening, the disciples were locked behind closed doors, in isolation, and very fearful. Suddenly Jesus appeared to them and His first words were 'Peace be with you'. He knew they were terrified and only He could allay their fears. After that, as they say, is history.

The Christian church was established and Christ's Holy Spirit has remained with mankind since then bringing peace and hope where none existed. He also defeated an unseen enemy, Satan, who thought the cross was the end of Christ whereas it was just the beginning of hope for mankind.

None of us can tell what will happen in the next few months. But one thing I am sure of is that this risen Christ, who conquered death and the grave, is still offering His peace and love and a hope for the future for all who seek Him as Saviour.

Do not be afraid..He has risen!

Dr Stuart Chalmers
Oban Baptist Church

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RUGBY

The 2019/20 domestic rugby season in Scotland has been classified as null and void, with Scottish Rugby joining its Irish, Welsh and Italian counterparts in coming to this outcome.

This decision follows the earlier interim suspension then final closure of the season based on government advice on coronavirus.

The decision to declare the 2019/20 season null and void - meaning there will be no automatic promotion or relegation - was reached following an extensive consultation process involving participating clubs, championship and competition committee members and Scottish Rugby's Rugby Development Department.

Five possible scenarios were presented, with around half of the clubs favouring the null and void option.

The remaining clubs were split between the other four options. The second most favoured option - finishing the season based on the league positions at the time of shutdown - received the support of around a quarter of clubs.

Scottish Rugby president Dee Bradbury said: 'It was clear from the outset that, in terms of the consequential impact on the various leagues in terms of promotion/relegation there would be no 'right' solution, particularly once it was clear our preferred option of completing the season would no longer be possible. We fully accept some clubs will be dis-

appointed with this decision and we share their frustration that, for wider societal reasons beyond our control, their hard work to push for success this season hasn't yielded the rewards they deserve.'

Oban Lorne were sitting in seventh place in Tennent's West Region Division Two, but with games in hand on the teams above them, when the season was declared null and void.

'We fully accept some clubs will be disappointed with this decision and we share their frustration.'

SHINTY

Shinty's top official says the sport is working to come to terms with the financial and wider impact of the coronavirus lockdown.

The summer shinty season began on March 7, but wet weather put paid to the opening fixtures for most teams including Oban Camanachd, Lochside Rovers and both Oban Celtic teams before competition was suspended ahead of the lockdown on March 23.

In a message to clubs, Camanachd Association chief executive Derek Keir paid tribute to staff, committees and association directors for the 'incredible support they have provided during this time'.

In common with many other sports, shinty faces financial challenges around commercial income, gate money, television income and membership fees.

Staff at the Inverness-based governing body are working from home and options have been explored to reduce costs.

Mr Keir also revealed the association's finance committee has agreed the organisation should access government support where appropriate.

He added: 'Six members of staff are already funded by the Scottish Government and are therefore not eligible for additional government support. The remaining three have been offered and accepted to be furloughed to support the efforts to protect our sport.'

The Camanachd Association, said Mr Keir is 'still very much operational' and is looking to understand the needs of member clubs in the present situation. To assist clubs and ensure income is maintained, the association is also 'exploring creative solutions' for subscriptions.

Mr Keir concluded: 'In common with all other sports, we cannot predict when it will be safe to resume playing matches.'

'We are discussing various options based on assumed start dates.'

'We will make every endeavour to make the best use of any time available.'

'Please be assured we will be working hard and acting in the best interests of our sport, clubs and members.'



Scottish Rugby president, Oban's Dee Bradbury. Photograph: SRU

FOOTBALL

The Scottish Football Association board met via video conference last Thursday to discuss the implications of the most up-to-date government and medical advice on the governing body's suspension on football.

Based on this advice, it was unanimously agreed to extend the suspension at all levels of the game from professional to recreational until at least June 10.

The board had initially suspended football until further notice, with a stipulation of

April 30 at the earliest, to give member clubs greater certainty on player welfare and well-being, as well as financial clarity.

Since the announcement on March 19, the Joint Response Group has received daily updates from the Scottish FA's medical consultant Dr John MacLean, based on his discussions with medical colleagues in Scotland and the United Kingdom, as well as within UEFA and the World Health Organisation.

It was after full consideration of all these facts that the board

decided to extend the suspension of all football, which also applies to all training and conditioning of players.

Oban Saints club secretary David Buchanan said: 'This is the correct decision to extend the suspension of all football until June 10. Hopefully, by that time, we might have turned the corner and can get back playing again, although there are still tough times ahead.'

'I have a video conference with the Central Scottish AFL executive committee this week to discuss how we would restart the current league programme if and when we are permitted to do so'

'Our first team are presently sitting top of Central Scottish AFL Division 1B with a 100 per cent record - 14 wins out of 14 - and we were almost certain to gain promotion to the Premier Division, being nine points ahead of second placed Blantyre RGM and with two games in hand.'

'The second team are lying in third place in the Greater Glasgow Division Three, just one point behind the leaders.'

Saints' four youth teams are also in lockdown, with the youngsters desperate to get back playing again at the earliest opportunity.




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Jenny's face mask idea is plastic fantastic



Labrador Wolfie home safe after lucky break

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Coastal communities are in 'absolute crisis' due to virus

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The collapse of markets for sea-food catches and the enforcement of a lockdown to tackle the coronavirus pandemic has plunged coastal communities in Lochaber and elsewhere across the west Highlands into 'absolute crisis'.

So says Allan Henderson, Highland councillor for Caol and Mallaig, speaking to the Lochaber Times this week after the Scottish Government's announcement of a £7.2 million Scottish Crown Estate fund which is devolved to councils.

The 26 councils in Scotland which have coastlines can use their remaining share of the fund which they have not yet allocated to offer direct support to struggling coastal enterprises and organisations.

This is on top of the £2.2 billion package of business support already announced by the Scottish Government.

But the coronavirus pandemic has seen a massive slump in

demand for seafood with some of the worst hit areas, according to the Fishermen's Mission welfare charity, being small scale lobster and crab fishing operations on the west coast.

And Councillor Henderson says many of Lochaber's businesses, including small fishing boats, are in the category of not receiving small business

'The only way many people will get anything is through food banks.'

rates relief, as they pay no non-domestic rates, so will only qualify for self-employed help.

'And this will also be weeks down the line when HMRC [Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs] gets its scheme going. Some fishing boats have also employed foreign nationals that they have to keep paying,' said Councillor Henderson.

'It's an absolute crisis for coastal communities in Lochaber and the rest of the Highlands,' he told us.

'With all the hotels closed and markets shut, the bulk of local small boats – albeit not all – are now tied up. And there is a vast number of other businesses in Lochaber which are small to medium-sized and don't pay non-domestic rates, so don't qualify.'

Mr Henderson said that while the newly announced money was still welcome, it only equated to about £2.5million for the whole of the Highlands.

'Once that is divided up between coastal communities it's only going to last for a very short period of time. Most people will fall into the hardship category – there will be no other way of getting any funding.'

'The only way many people will get anything is through food banks and Universal Credit. A lot of people are going to be in danger of falling through the cracks.'

Age no barrier as Chloe breaks mould



At the age of just 25, Chloe Malcolm is helping break the mould of the traditional idea of farm managers, as she takes charge of more than 12,000 acres of hill farm in the Inverlair and Glenshero areas for land owners, Jahama Highland Estates. For the full story, turn to page two. Photograph: Mark Runnacles/PA Wire.

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LT

Help on crofts could be lifeline, says federation

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) has welcomed the launch of the Skills Matching Service (SMS) as a 'lifeline' which could alleviate lack of help on crofts at this crucial time of year.

'It is the busiest time of year on crofts and help is in short supply due to the pandemic,' said SCF chairperson, Yvonne White. 'Traditionally family members gather to help out and crofts welcome working guests from volunteer agencies. This is not happening due to travel restrictions, and the possibility of illness in crofting families poses a real threat to livestock welfare which can very rapidly become critical.'

'It is therefore very welcome to see this essential initiative being launched by Scottish Government and Lantra.'

Set up by Lantra Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government, the SMS has been developed with the support of a range of organisations, including the Scottish Crofting Federation.

It will focus on providing skilled and semi-skilled paid and unpaid labour for livestock and animal welfare purposes to land-based businesses, including crofts and farms, animal welfare organisations, animal charities, zoos and others in need of help during the COVID-19 emergency.

Jahama new farm manager is part of 'inspiration' vision

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Jahama Highland Estates (JHE) says it wants to become a 'beacon of inspiration' for landscape-based asset management and its hiring of a 25-year-old female farm manager to oversee 12,000 acres is the latest step in delivering that vision.

Chloe Malcolm is the new manager of Jahama's upland farming operations in the Glenshero and Inverlair areas.

Born and brought up on a local Highlands farm, she has experience in farming in Devon, Dumfries and on Bute.

Her appointment, at one of Scotland's largest hill farming operations, represents a departure from the usual demographic for a farm manager. Only 16 per cent of farm managers in Scotland are female, and only four per cent are under 35.

Ms Malcolm, who is based at Killiechonate, has been brought in with a mandate to innovate and to enhance Jahama's meat offering – including focusing on rearing good quality native sheep, with the possibility of expanding



Chloe Malcolm, 25, has been appointed as manager of one of Scotland's biggest upland farming operations.

Photograph: Mark Runnacles/PA Wire.

Cairngorm National Park to Kinlochleven, taking in the Mamore, Killiechonate and Glenshero estates.

Asked to explain more about her decision to employ a dedicated farm manager, Ms Stoddart told us: 'Jahama Highland Estates' management focuses on genuine sustainability.

'Each management decision is taken holistically, considering the three pillars of sustainable development: the environment, the economy and society. No single issue is dealt with in isolation, and by taking this

approach, we can ensure long-term viability.

'We aim to position JHE as a beacon of inspiration for landscape-based asset management. Employing a dedicated farm manager is a significant step in delivering our vision for JHE; our current native breed

sheep farming enterprise will be optimised to expand our

local meat offering into native cattle and possibly venison. As well as providing local food, this will also help us to enhance our carbon-rich grazing land.

'I needed a farm manager with upland experience and practical know-how, who also thinks outside the box and is keen to manage our farmland in an adaptive way.

'Chloe brings exactly those skills, along with energy and passion for the Highlands. Chloe and I will work together with the rest of the staff team to drive forward our vision for the whole estate.'

And Ms Stoddart added: 'Chloe was born and raised in the area but has worked away to broaden her experience. She has been providing assistance to the JHE sheep flock on a part-time basis as an agricultural contractor,

but she wasn't shy in coming to me with innovative ideas for the farm.

'Our recruitment of Chloe is testament to the fact that we have talented and ambitious young people in Lochaber, who we believe must be encouraged to stay and thrive in the area wherever possible.'

into native cattle and venison.

Jahama's farms have nearly 600 sheep reared on land close to settlements in the glens where conditions permit. Over time, the company hopes to create more opportunities for partners to farm on Jahama's land in order to enhance economic opportunities for local communities.

Ms Malcolm commented: 'I'm thrilled to be taking on this new challenge. Our goal is to produce good quality livestock as part of our sustainable estate business – while taking good care of the landscape and of natural resources.'

Jahama's chief operating officer, Julia Stoddart, said Ms Malcolm will bring energy and enthusiasm to the farming operation, which was of vital importance to the local economy and environment.

Jahama is part of the GFG Alliance, which also owns and manages the Alvanca aluminium smelter based in Fort William.

Ms Stoddart is based at the smelter, from where she leads the strategic oversight and direct management of the staff and the whole landholding that stretches from the western edge of the

crown vets Coronavirus update



In order to better protect our staff and clients from Coronavirus we have started with the following measures

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Mr Johnson believes the thermal survival clothing carried on every commercial vessel in the UK could be turned into much-needed protective wear for health and care workers.

Could marine survival kit help health workers?

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Lochaber outdoor pursuits expert has suggested health chiefs should examine the possibility of turning the marine industry's countless sets of thermal survival clothing into desperately needed scrubs for front line health and care workers.

Niall Johnson, from Mallaig, currently works on offshore fish farms but also has decades of experience running his own outdoors pursuits centre in the Outer Hebrides and as a mountaineer.

He says the Thermal Protection Aid (TPA) which can take the form of a suit with arms and legs, or resemble a large sleeping bag, might be one possible solution to the national shortage of scrubs.

Mr Johnson told the Lochaber Times this week: 'Every commercial vessel in the UK is required to carry TPAs for all passengers and crew.'

Thermal protective aids are plastic suits which cover all body except face and hands.

'They're waterproof with

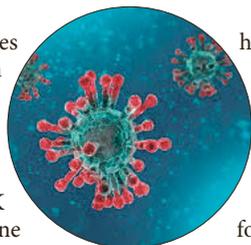
elasticated ankles and wrists. I am sure they could be used for NHS scrubs and there are millions of them in the UK in vessels, marine chandlery, stores, oil rig helicopters, etc, and come in sealed bags.

'Can you ask the question if this can be made to work, to health professionals, maritime bosses, health secretary, anyone else? It must be worth a shot?'

TPAs are designed to reduce heat loss in survival situations. But they are not thickly lined and, while Mr Johnson admits they might be a bit sweaty to wear indoors, so are scrubs and had to be better than nothing.

And he added: 'Even if you cut the bottom off the sleeping bag-style TPA at floor level, it would still afford protection, like a plastic ankle-length dress.'

Asked if this was something worth considering, NHS Highland told the Lochaber Times it has been 'overwhelmed' by the support it



has received from the local community from both companies and individuals.

'We are also incredibly grateful for the offers of

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other gifts that have been made over recent weeks,' said an NHS Highland spokesperson.

'As an organisation we have to ensure that any PPE issued to staff in NHS Highland is in line with national guidance and standards to ensure that our staff are provided with the highest standards of protection.'

'With this in mind we have set up a page on our website where any donations of this kind can be catalogued in a central location. This can be accessed at: www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/COVID19/Pages/EquipmentDonations.aspx

'The influx of support and offers of help we have been receiving has been truly amazing. Thank you again for all your support.'

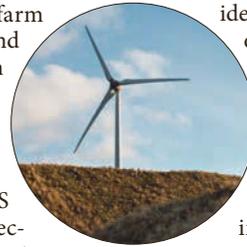
Wind farm donates historic sum of £40,000 to islands NHS

Community wind farm charity Point and Sandwick Trust on Lewis this week made the biggest one-off donation in its history – and it went to NHS Western Isles, in recognition of the heroism of front line staff and to support islanders suffering during the coronavirus pandemic.

The charity, which owns the largest community-owned wind farm in the UK in terms of output and reinvests all its income back in the local community, made a donation of £40,000.

It is the first grant awarded from Point and Sandwick Trust's newly set up pandemic community fund, announced last month, and NHS Western Isles is now looking at best ways to spend it.

The money is to be mainly used to support front line staff and COVID-19 patients, and will hopefully also benefit cancer patients. Front line staff are to be consulted about



ideas and a member of staff within NHS Western Isles has been tasked with leading the decision-making process.

Initial ideas include therapeutic pamper packs, including some local products so the money can be reinvested in island businesses, and emergency items for patients who are admitted in a rush, without personal belongings and without the possibility of receiving them later on from a friend or relative due to the ban on visitors.

Emergency admission items could include nightwear, underwear, toiletries, phone chargers and other essentials.

Consideration is also being given to upgrading rest areas for front line staff and to funding access to external counsellors for staff struggling with the impacts of the pandemic.

If funds allow, some money could also be used to bolster the budget for cancer patients,

including island patients in hospitals on the mainland who have been cut off from the family visits that would normally be a source of emotional and physical support.

However, these are all preliminary ideas and NHS Western Isles stressed staff would be very much involved in the decision making.

NHS Western Isles chief executive Gordon Jamieson said: 'We have been overwhelmed and humbled by the generosity of businesses, organisations and individuals across our local communities, who have demonstrated such kindness and have pulled together to help at the toughest time we have faced in the history of the health service.'

'The donation from the Point and Sandwick Trust was completely unexpected but so incredibly generous. I would like to thank the trust on behalf of our staff and the health board. We will be involving our staff in deciding how to make the best demonstrable use of this very kind gesture.'



Wylie & Bisset giving free business advice to steer Scottish businesses through Coronavirus lockdown

We have launched a helpline to help steer companies through the Coronavirus lockdown period.

We want to assist those businesses that, through no fault of their own, find themselves confronting various pressing business problems as a direct result of the government restrictions to quell the spread of COVID-19.

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Quiet Easter for CalMac shows public sticking to guidelines

The 'stay at home' message would appear to be working if trips to Scotland's west coast islands are a reflection of wider travel patterns.

Ferry operator CalMac had just 163 people travelling on Easter Sunday compared to 21,570 last year – a 99.2 per cent drop in numbers.

'Thankfully the guidance not to travel unless absolutely necessary seems to have been accepted,' said CalMac's director of operations, Robert Morrison.

Over the four-day period from Friday to Monday, just 1,837 people made a ferry journey on one of CalMac's 28 routes compared to 112,000 for the same period in 2019.

'Reports from ports over the weekend showed no vehicles were stopped from boarding. This combined with the extremely low passenger numbers tells us people are listening to government guidelines to stay at home,' added Mr Morrison. 'We are only carrying lifeline supplies and essential workers.'

Free home disinfection service for key workers

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Fort William window cleaning firm has re-equipped itself with specialist equipment and chemicals and says it will disinfect the homes of health and care workers for free during the coronavirus pandemic.

Before launching Fort William Window Cleaning a number of years ago, Steve Cameron worked in the industrial cleaning industry and as a result has wide experience in this field.

'I worked in industrial cleaning for a number of years, tackling premises with issues including Hepatitis B, influenzas, norovirus and airborne pathogens,' Steve told the Lochaber Times.

'So I have experience with this kind of equipment and the necessary protocols. In the



Steve Cameron, of Fort William Window Cleaning, demonstrates his new equipment.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

last month or so, I could see the way the tide was going with coronavirus, so got this fogging machine for my own use

to protect my family. When the lockdown was announced, we decided we should put it to good use and do what we can

to help in these difficult times. We are prepared to disinfect the home of any health or care worker for free.'

Mr Cameron told the Lochaber Times the fogging machine can disinfect an entire house in less than an hour using a product that kills all known bacteria and viruses,' he added.

'We've had quite a lot of interest via Facebook.'

Mr Cameron said anyone wishing their house disinfected would need to place all electrical items in a room where they can be covered with a sheet.

'And people need to be able to vacate the house for about an hour while we do this,' he explained.

'We can do an entire house in an hour or so and are prepared to travel as far as Oban and Inverness, as well as across Lochaber.

'We are ready to provide the service free to health and care workers who are all doing such an incredible job during these challenging times.'

MAY ISSUE

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OUT NOW!

Spean Bridge resident turns her hand to coronavirus mask making

Spean Bridge resident Jenny Keane has started manufacturing face masks after becoming concerned there might not be enough if the government decides to advise people to start wearing them in an effort to stop the spread of coronavirus.

She told the Lochaber Times the mask, made out of a plastic bottle, might not be especially pretty but would give some protection until commercially made masks were available for everyone.

'It is basic but it could save lives,' said the former Fort William taxi firm boss who spent 30 years in Devon before moving to Invergarry, then Fort William, a number of years ago.

'One bottle will make two masks for small faces or one for average adult.

'You can wash it, disinfect it with Dettol/Savlon or whatever you have to hand,' she explained.

'You could line the inside edge of the mask if you wish. I used window draught proofing tape and some elastic for the straps.'

Asked why she felt the need to start making her own masks, Jenny told the Lochaber Times:



Jenny Keane with the masks she made at home using plastic bottles. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

'I listen to the BBC World Service on the radio and it seems at some point soon we might all be told to wear face masks when we go outside.'

'Given the problems finding enough face masks for medical staff and care workers, I thought this is something people could do for themselves.'

She has now made about a dozen of the masks, which

she has distributed mostly to friends.

'It also gives you something useful to do in the lockdown.'

Jenny, who ran Clansman Taxis in Fort William for a number of years, said the problem now is getting enough elastic to enable her to make more masks: 'I have people across the country on the hunt for elastic for me!'



Kate Forbes.

'Light at end of coronavirus tunnel' if people stay home

MSP Kate Forbes believes 'there is light at the end of the tunnel' as the coronavirus lockdown sees its fourth week.

Acknowledging the hardship caused by restrictions, Ms Forbes said it was 'challenging to adapt' but stressed it was of the utmost importance Highlanders stay at home as much as possible to prevent the spread of the virus.

To date, more than 160 cases have been confirmed in the NHS Highland region – though that area stretches from Wick to Campbeltown.

Adapt

The SNP MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch said: 'It has been three weeks since the lockdown was announced and I know it has been challenging to adapt.

'The impact on families, livelihoods and schooling has been profoundly difficult but there is a light at the end of the tunnel, of that, there is no doubt.

'But that light will be a lot brighter if we follow the rules now and stay at home.'

She continued: 'I am well aware of people's concerns, as they are frequently raised with me as their MSP. There are many things that are difficult, but can be fixed.

'The one thing we can't do is turn back time to save lives so it is essential we continue to do everything possible to protect people by staying at home.'

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Man jailed for frenzied attack on police officer

'She could feel his finger behind her eyeball and believed her eye was going to come out'

A police constable thought she was going to die in a 'unprovoked, sustained and frenzied attack' on her by a man who tried to gouge her eye out.

Adam Wright also tried to choke Siobhan Sharkey and pulled out clumps of her hair as he rained 'haymaker' punches on her head and body in Fort William on August 22 last year.

Despite another officer trying to stop the assault as 'back-up' was 10 minutes away, it was only thanks to the intervention of on-lookers in the garage forecourt that Wright was pulled off her.

Wright, now aged 24, appeared at Inverness Sheriff Court on Wednesday April 8 for sentencing by Sheriff Sara Matheson.

She told him no other disposal other than custody was

appropriate saying: 'This was an unprovoked, sustained and frenzied attack on a female officer. All members of the emergency services are entitled to the protection of the courts.

'The reasons for the sentence are that you have shown a lack of remorse and your immediate reaction in the aftermath was that this officer deserved it. Also, you present a risk to the public and you have no respect for authority.'

The sheriff jailed him for 32 months, backdated to August 23, and on his release, he will be supervised for a further year.

His lawyer, Graham Mann, accepted a jail sentence was inevitable but said his client had been diagnosed with autism and a psychosis.

He added: 'There was a trigger in this for him when he

was stopped by the police. He had an obsession about finding somewhere he could live where he was away from people.

'When he was stopped by police in a car he should not have been driving his perception was that the police were removing him from his sense of peace of mind and calm.

'The psychologist's report, I would hope, puts his actions in context.

'I accept it was a traumatising incident for the police officer and he shows a lack of empathy.'

Previously, fiscal depute Karen Aitken said Wright, who comes from England and admitted assault to severe injury, complained he wasn't strong enough to fight them off so he could continue his onslaught on the helpless Constable Sharkey. Mrs Aitken

told the court that PC Sharkey had seen Wright in a car which had been seized by the police a few days earlier and went to speak to him. He angrily got out of the car and the officer called for assistance but was told it was 10 minutes away.

She warned Wright about his conduct but he carried on when another police constable arrived. When PC Sharkey decided to arrest Wright, he punched her on the face and grabbed her in a choke hold so she couldn't breathe.

Mrs Aitken said: 'He seized her hair, pulled her down while repeatedly punching her on the face, described by witnesses as 'haymakers'.

He then thrust his left hand into her left eye socket and attempted to gouge out her eyeball, causing her to scream in agony. 'She said she could feel

his finger behind her eyeball and believed her eye was going to come out. She later indicted she thought she was going to die. Both constables tried to block the blows but due to the ferocity of the attack, they were unable to stop him,' said Mrs Aitken. 'He ripped out clumps of her hair and struck her repeatedly in the face with his knee. Members of the public came to the officers' assistance and overpowered Wright, who later told police PC Sharkey "deserved it".'

The officer was badly injured, suffering multiple bruises, scratches to the corneas of her eyes, significant swelling and only returned to work full-time last week.

Mrs Aitken said Mrs Sharkey also suffered from anxiety and depression and needs regular eyesight check-ups.

Call for newspaper support measures

Scottish Conservatives' shadow finance secretary, Highlands and Islands MSP Donald Cameron, has urged his SNP counterpart Kate Forbes to work with the UK Government to ensure action is taken to help the country's regional media survive the coronavirus pandemic.

He said a 100 per cent rates holiday was essential and that the Scottish Government should direct more advertising towards newspapers.

He also suggested investing in a similar scheme to the Danish government, which has introduced a fund for media organisations during the crisis.

A similar initiative by the Scottish Government, he said, could be replicated for around £25 million.

A trusted media loan scheme has also been floated, which established titles could sign up to.

As well as providing a vital public service, news publishing supports around 4,000 jobs in Scotland.

'It would be regrettable if newspapers, having played such a critical role during this health and economic emergen-

cy, were allowed to collapse immediately afterwards,' he said.

Ms Forbes commented: 'Local newspapers play such a vital role in communities and Highland papers like the Lochaber Times do an exceptional job of reporting on news of local and national interest. It is clearly a challenging time for them, as it is for so many small businesses.

'The Scottish Government has introduced a number of ways to support local newspapers – including designating reporters and printers "essential workers" to allow them to continue working.'

But she questioned the Conservatives' stance on this issue, saying the Tories were simultaneously calling for increased support in multiple sectors and asking for greater support in sectors that already have support.

'At the same time, our funding allocation from the UK Government is based on the Barnett Formula which is population based and doesn't cover the full cost of the need by any stretch of the imagination,' Ms Forbes added.

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Expert climber rescues missing Mallaig dog



Wolfie was definitely pleased to see Kate again.

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Missing Mallaig Labrador Wolfie had a lucky break when he plummeted down a slope as wet ground gave way and he had his fall broken by a ledge high above the sea.

The much-loved family pet of Kate and Simon MacLennan had a second stroke of luck when, after being missing for 24 hours, he was rescued from his precarious position by someone who happens to be an expert mountaineer and an experienced outdoor pursuits instructor.

The five-year-old dog had run after another dog during a walk in Mallaig on Saturday.

A relieved Ms MacLennan told the Lochaber Times earlier this week: 'I am the new English teacher at Mallaig High School and we haven't been here that long.

'My partner was walking Wolfie in Mallaig Bheag when he ran off after a spaniel. My partner couldn't give fast chase as he had our toddler son with him.

'Wolfie doesn't know the area that well so we were worried he might not find his way back.'

The current coronavirus lockdown meant efforts to search for Wolfie were hampered, although a number of local people out for their permitted daily exercise or own dog walks kept their eyes peeled for the missing pooch.

On Sunday, Niall Johnson, a neighbour of Kate and Simon, who was out for his daily exercise, heard a noise that at first he took for a seal.

'When I finally spotted him, he was perched on a precarious ledge and could not go forwards or back.'

'I heard a faint noise and thought at first it could've been a seal on the shoreline. But then I heard it again and realised it was a dog whining and whimpering.

'I knew Wolfie had been missing and had been keeping my eyes peeled while I was out. When I finally spotted him, he was perched on a precarious ledge and could not go forwards or back.'

Mr Johnson said the ground was steep and with all the recent rain, it appeared Wolfie had ventured onto an overhang of moss and peat which had given way under him and he'd ended up on a ledge about 30 feet below the edge and high above the sea.

Mr Johnson said what he did

next was something he would never have recommended to all the students he taught during more than a quarter of a century teaching climbing and other outdoor skills at his outdoor pursuits school in the Uists.

'It wouldn't be advisable but I did a risk assessment and, although I didn't have any equipment with me like ropes, I knew I had the skill set to get down to Wolfie reasonably safely,' he told the Lochaber Times.

'Wolfie is a big heavy dog and he was quite stressed and anxious. It took me about 10 or 15 minutes letting him get to know me before I could attempt to lift him up towards the slope where I thought he could get some traction and get himself up.

'Once I got him up, I put my shoulder under his backside and heaved him up. Once he was up, I started hauling myself up and just when I was at the most precarious part, Wolfie leapt down on me to start licking my face in gratitude - he couldn't have picked a worse time!

'There was a fair bit of swearing at that point and I'm sure the folks in Glenfinnan could have heard me!'

Mr Johnson then walked Wolfie home, as luckily he'd taken a strap used to secure kayaks to his roof rack on the chance he came across Wolfie.

Ms MacLennan said Wolfie recovered quickly and was none the worse for his overnight ordeal.

'He's fine but he was definitely pleased to be home and tucked into two tins of Chappie dog food, a plate of spaghetti bolognese and a slice of fresh cream cake I had made for Easter.

'We can't thank Niall enough. He is an absolute star.'

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER



Uncertainty is the enemy of business - remember when uncertainty about Brexit's implications for our economy was the biggest worry on most business-people's minds?

That uncertainty is now utterly dwarfed by our current situation and how to best find a way through it.

At the moment all that businesses can do is take all the steps open to them to get through the shutdown and try to be adaptable in approach: creating new ways to keep going such as adapting product delivery or services where possible, working from home, scaling back, furloughing staff and applying for all applicable government assistance while getting ready for a return to activity and what could be a whole new business reality.

One of the simple but most important things Lochaber Chamber of Commerce can offer at this unprecedented time is community. Our monthly networking lunches have temporarily evolved into weekly informal 'cuppa and cake' virtual meetings and we are in daily contact with our members by phone, video call and emails.

Last week we ran an interactive members' session on furloughing workers with employment law specialists from one of our member businesses Ledingham Chalmers Solicitors. This gave members the chance to ask their questions directly to those who make it their business to understand the details of the new job retention scheme.

With so much information flying about, it was great to be able to look at the reality of what putting staff 'on furlough' really means for employees and employers.

As a business organisation with strong roots in Lochaber, we are here to support our members personally and to help businesses support each other.

As part of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, we have also got the wider support of being part of Scotland's biggest business network, a strong business voice that speaks up for the needs of its 30 chambers representing 12,500 businesses throughout Scotland.

Stay safe, stay in touch and stay connected with your Chamber of Commerce.

Keeping our community informed

What we are doing to help

- We are continuing to bring you accurate and trustworthy news in-paper and online
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Stay safe, we're in this together

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Rise in virtual appointments

All GP practices, hospitals and other care settings across Scotland have been asked to increase use of remote consultations by telephone or video, through the Near Me service.

NHS Western Isles has been using this service effectively for several years, but has expanded its use.

In terms of the use of Near Me in the last two weeks, there were 163 virtual appointments totalling 37 hours of consul-

tation time across nine health specialities.

As part of the remote access to services, NHS Western Isles has also set up a virtual reception service to help patients access appointments.

The virtual reception is staffed by members of the patient services team who answer calls and transfer patients to the right virtual waiting room for their Near Me appointment.

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Pictured are Katie Morag and Seonag from Scalpay with their drawings – well done, girls!

Health chief issues appeal for rainbow pictures

Over the past few weeks pictures of rainbows have appeared in windows across the Outer Hebrides as a way to cheer up people and as a message of thanks to local front line NHS staff.

NHS Western Isles is now appealing for people to get in touch and send in photographs of their rainbow pictures so they can be shared online (with some in print) – particularly for those who are self-isolating indoors.

Gordon Jamieson, NHSWI chief executive told us: 'We are inviting children to share their rainbow drawings which we will promote on our social media channels and within various NHS sites across the Outer Hebrides.'

'The aim is to bring a smile to people's faces during this difficult time, as well as providing something for the children to do while they are off school and missing their friends.'

There is no set criteria, but your images of rainbows should feature bright colours – something that will brighten everyone's day and bolster community spirit.

To take part, images can be sent as a private message to the NHS Western Isles Facebook page, Twitter account (@NHSWI) or by emailing coms.wi@nhs.net

However, the public are asked not to send in their pictures by post.

A Cry For The Wild

HOLLY GILLIBRAND

fort@obantimes.co.uk



I have been sitting at home, wondering what to write, so I decided to come up with four books I recommend you read during lockdown.

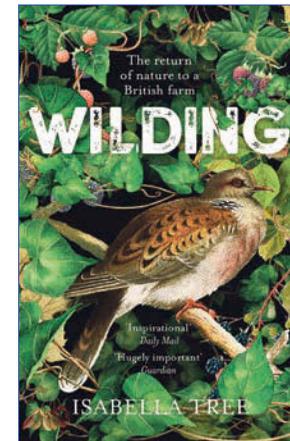
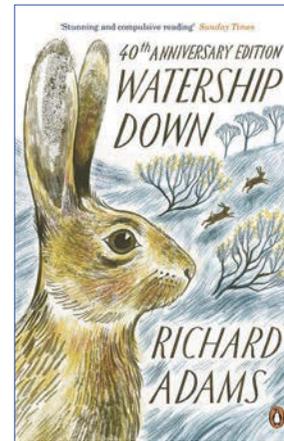
There was something in these books that drew me to them, whether that was an underlying message they told, a positive story of action and hope, or the everyday struggles of ordinary people. I hope you find something in these books that appeals to you too.

Number one on my list is *Watership Down* by Richard Adams. This is a story of bravery, leadership and survival. It follows the journey of Hazel, Fiver, Bigwig and their small band of rabbits as they search for a new home, facing fear-some cats, the bloodthirsty General Woundwort, and humans.

Despite its apparent childish nature, *Watership Down* is a superbly written book from the perspective of rabbits, which makes for a refreshing read in this anthropocentric world.

The second book on my recommendations list is *Wilding*, written by Isabella Tree. *Wilding* documents the return of nature to an intensive farm in Sussex, when owners Isabella Tree and Charlie Burrell decided to let the wildlife come back.

Knepp is



now home to turtle doves, nightingales, purple emperor butterflies, white storks and many more rare and wonderful creatures.

People, too, are flocking there to experience the rich bounty of life that now abides on the once desolate farm, and after reading *Wilding*, I travelled to Knepp to see for myself what nature can do if given the chance. *Wilding* is a story of regeneration and hope in a time of mindless ecological destruction.

Number three is one we all know: *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. For this one, I struggled to find something to write that would do this novel justice.

In my experience, women in books are often only there to tell the story of the (usually male) protagonist, but instead, *Little Women* is entirely focused on the

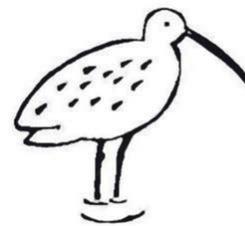
daily struggles, lessons and triumphs of the four March girls - Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy - in 19th-century America.

Books like this are rare and precious. In light of a recent comment from someone I know, I also hasten to add that *Little Women* can be read by men too...

The fourth book I would like to share with you is called *Sky Dancer* by Gill Lewis. This book is very close to my heart because it helped open my eyes to an issue that, for a long time, I was ignorant of: driven grouse shooting.

Sky Dancer brilliantly portrays the tension between grouse estates and those who are against them, and the hen harriers that are caught in the middle. This is a children's story, but nevertheless, I think it is one that everyone, whatever their age, should read.

I encourage you to give each of these books a try - if you haven't already. It will be time well spent.



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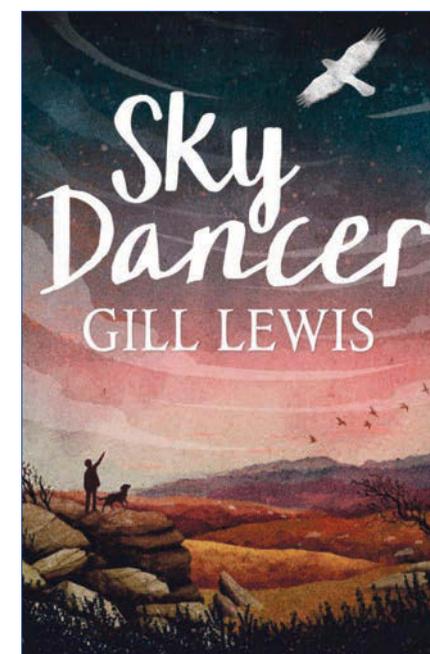
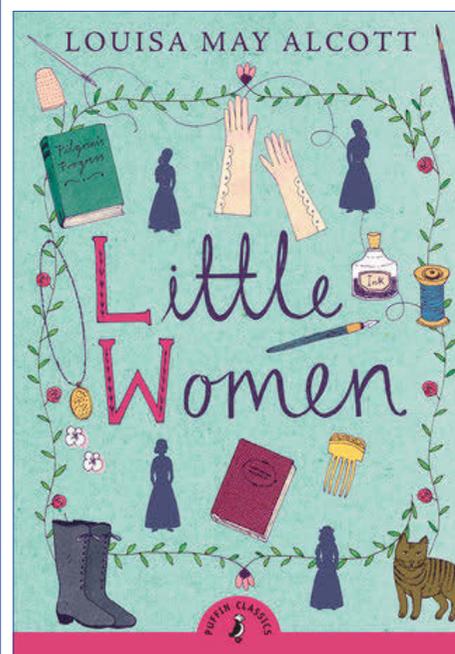
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Wild Words

KIRSTEEN BELL

fort@obantimes.co.uk



Usually we hear them before we see them. Riding on air gusting from the North, their 'thumb' feathers lifting to smooth the wind under a steady span of moth-like wings.

I have been watching deliberately for the buzzards all day. I am focused mainly on a pine tree above which, on another bright day with wind for lift, a pair looped and dived. It is the time of year that they could be courting, the male bird's rollercoaster flightpath designed to impress. Binoculars trained now on the bushy bowl of upper branches, I'm hopeful that it could have been a pair beginning to nest.

Birdwatching with small, noisy children can become an almost pointless exercise, which is perhaps why I spend most of my time with an eye on the sky for buzzards and ravens. Sitting in our garden, the larger birds can be clearly heard over the shouts of the



kids playing around me; the buzzards glide on thermals high above all the activity, their call piercing through the clear air. Their latin

name, Buteo Buteo, echoes the peeoo peeoo cry. The species in Scotland, however, have little to cry about these days. Their population had

declined over the course of the 19th century, until by the mid-20th they had all but disappeared from our skies; pesticides and

'I laugh when a curve of brown and cream drops quietly out of the broad, flat top of the wind-snapped pine tree just over the fence.'

persecution decimated their numbers. Changes to farming practices and new laws, such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981, have resulted in a widespread recovery, and there are now an estimated 60-70,000 breeding pairs across the UK.

The brindled wings are usually spotted tipping over the roof of our house long after the buzzard has been heard, but the bird can still surprise. Having spent all weekend finding ways to gaze at the tip of the lone western pine in the distance, I laugh when – standing at my

east-facing kitchen window – a curve of brown and cream drops quietly out of the broad, flat top of the wind-snapped pine tree just over the fence.

As I go about my morning, getting breakfast for the kids, tidying up, I catch sight of the birds, swinging to and fro between the pine and the belt of oak and birch further up. They return trailing long twigs, sometimes swinging round to come at the tree from a different angle and hopping up the interior boughs to their chosen site.

I can't see the nest itself, hidden by a tangled curtain of conifer branches. Just the occasional glimpse, the shouldering of a wing, a stooping shadow – but it's enough to know they are there.

KEEPINTOUCH
email us at fort@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01397 703003

Coronavirus

BID4Oban are working to provide information to the business community of Oban as regularly as possible.

We are working with our Key Partners Argyll & Bute Council, Business Gateway, AITC and OLTA on a daily basis.



To enable us to keep in touch, please follow BID4Oban on **Love Oban Facebook page** and website **www.bid4oban.co.uk** for regular updates.

Email **info@bid4oban.co.uk**



Oban Business Improvement District
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LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to fort@obantimes.co.uk
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

What an inspiration...

Most of us are in lockdown and dealing with the situation in hand, in what can often be quite difficult circumstances.

But despite that, many of you are not thinking of yourselves, but of others.

The word unprecedented has been used so many times in regard to the challenges the country faces, but it can also be used when describing the selflessness, ingenuity and care shown in our communities, by our neighbours and by strangers to us.

In this week's paper, we hear about Jenny Keane from Spean Bridge who has started making face masks out of plastic bottles, and Steve Cameron of Fort William Window Cleaning who, having worked as an industrial cleaner for many years, dealing with premises with issues including influenza, norovirus and airborne pathogens, is offering to disinfect the home of health and care workers for free.

And in Lewis, Community wind farm charity Point and Sandwick Trust this week made the biggest one-off donation in its history – to NHS Western Isles, in recognition of the heroism of front line staff and to support islanders suffering during the coronavirus pandemic.

If we didn't know it before, we should do now, the Highlands is a fantastic place to live and work.

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.

At the Oban Times we endeavour to ensure that all our reports are fair and accurate and comply with the Editors' Code of Practice set by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If we have published anything that is factually incorrect, please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephone on 01631 568000; or email editor@obantimes.co.uk

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



Tesco deliveries

Last week you published an article listing complaints from islanders regarding the difficulty of getting deliveries from Tesco. Sadly the same situation exists on the mainland.

I am in the "vulnerable" group and I am not supposed to leave home for 12 weeks and so deliveries are important to me. I have a delivery plan with Tesco which is pointless as no slots are available.

Having contacted the chief executive for Tesco, Dave Lewis dave.lewis@uk.tesco.com, I was eventually told new delivery and pick-up slots are made available each night at midnight but are quickly booked up. I stayed up till midnight on two nights and logged into the Tesco website before midnight to be put in a queue for a slot. On the first occasion I was transferred to the booking site at around five past midnight to find that all the delivery slots were full, but I managed to get a pick-up slot in the car park for three weeks ahead. At my second attempt I was put through to the booking page at five past midnight only to find there were no delivery and no pick-up slots.

These are difficult times for all of us, including Tesco, but surely they can do better than this!

Colin Davidson, Ardfern

Open for essential care

We wanted to write to reassure local people we are open for emergency and essential care, despite temporarily closing our doors for routine sight tests. This includes helping our fellow key workers stay on the front line to support all of us at this challenging time, and we would like to thank all of them for all that they are doing. To recognise their sacrifice, we are prioritising their needs.

If you have any changes to your vision, or have a problem with your glasses or contact lenses, please call us on 01631 567770. We will help you over the phone, and only ask you to come to the store if it absolutely necessary. We are following government guidelines to keep everyone safe.

We are committed to the community here in Oban, and look forward to the time when our town centre returns to normal and our community comes back together, stronger than ever.

Until then, please give us a call if you need us on 01631 567770. Take care and stay safe.

Ken Macdonald, Specsavers, Oban

Open letter to council leader

Dear Councillor Morton

We appreciate that Argyll and Bute Council are working under considerable stress and difficulty at the moment so we hesitate to ask for more, but are interested to know what planning is being done in the event the present crisis proves more

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Tha luach leithid an eadar-lìon agus fòn follaiseach, ach 's ann air sgìrean iomallach na dùthcha as luachmhoire iad buileach. Ann am baile-mòr tha cuideigin nas dualtaiche bhith faisg, seach mar eisimpleir, mar a bhiodh an àiteigin air rathad aonranach air Ghàidhealtachd. Ach far am bheil feallsanachd calpachais a' riaghladh tha feumalachdan sheirbheisean èiginn tric air deireadh ann an roinn na maraig ionmhais phoblaich!

Chan eil teagamh nach eil cothroman gu bhith ann cuid a rudan a dhèanamh ann an dòighean eadar-dhealaichte, agus nas goireasaiche, nuair a bhios sgrios a' chorònbhiorais seachad. Bidh na fiachan aig mòran bhuidhnean cho trom agus gum bithear a' lorg a h-uile caomhnadh. Sin is coireach gum bheil mi den bheachd gum bi fada bharrachd dhaoine ag obair bhon dachannan seach mar a bha. Gu ruige seo b' e rud a bh' ann a thachradh corra uair seach gu h-àbhaisteach, ach ma tha e dol a dh'fhàs nas bitheanta dh'fhaodadh cothrom leasachaidh math a bhith an sin dha coimhearsnachdan an iomaill.

Fad bhliadhnaichean tha draghan air nochdadh a thaobh 's mar a tha daoine òga gan sioladh a-mach à sgìrean nan oirean ri linn dìth chothroman cosnaidh agus ghoireasan de gach seòrsa. Ged a tha Comhairlean a' dèanamh an dichill a thaobh sheirbheisean dha

na coimhearsnachdan sin tha buaidh mhòr aig neart eaconamach na sgìre air an seòrsa taice a gheibh i. Ma ghabhas dearbhadh gum faod fichead cosnach obrachadh à baile cruite air taobh siar Alba, pailt cho furasta 's a bhiodh air iomall baile-mòr am meadhan Alba neo fiù 's Shasainn, carson nach fhaodadh sin tachairt? Agus an cois ùrachadh eaconamach nan sgìrean sin carson nach fhaodadh beatha chultarail, Ghàidhlig, nan coimhearsnachdan sin a bhith air am beothachadh aig an aon àm. Tha mi mothachail gum bheil mi a' cur air adhart an seòrsa argamaid a bhiodh aig mo charaid Iain Noble nuair a choinnich mi ris an toiseach còrr air dà fhichead bliadhna air ais, agus nuair nach robh fiù 's goireasan fòn dòigheil ann an iomadh sgìre. Ach seallaibh an dileab a dh'fhàg feallsanachd Iain ann an ceann a deas an Eilean Sgitheanaich!

Tha a-nise còraichean laghail aig dachannan agus gnìomhachasan seirbheise dhòigheil eadar-lìon agus fòn iarraidh fo Dhleastanas Seirbheise Uile-choitcheann a tha Ofcom a' stiùireadh às leth an Riaghaltais. 'S e cothrom sònraichte a tha seo dha Buill Pàrlamaid agus dha Comhairlean sàr ghoireasan eadar-lìon agus fòn iarraidh dha na sgìrean iomallach, agus gun tèid sanasachd a dhèanamh air na cothroman a th' ann dha companaidhean aig deas a bhith a' stèidheachadh fastaich aig tuath!

severe than we all hope. Recent experience shows the danger in governments being under-prepared and too casual in their assessment of risk.

We are not pessimists, but it is not hard to imagine a long lockdown resulting in difficulties over food supplies. It would only take cross-channel ferry companies to cease importing, European providers to keep produce to themselves or British labour shortages to make our harvesting inadequate. Have the council made any contingency plan, for instance by encouraging local food provision as it is now planting season.

Equally, we have, in our coastal waters, an abundance of marine life which could be directed to feed local people. It is unfortunate that, currently, there seems to be little or no fishing out of Oban. The fare on offer at our local fishmonger is almost exclusively farmed, which ideally we would not eat. The export market has collapsed. Can the council find a way to support the devel-

opment of a local one? By its nature, climate and geography, Argyll is not well placed to feed its population entirely, but the food it does produce is world-renowned. Other parts of Scotland are better endowed. Is the country as a whole making any plans to exploit these wider resources? Can we trust Westminster to plan adequately for more difficult times? One would like to feel that Argyll is taking some initiative here.

Argyll and Bute Greens recognise and are grateful for the tremendous efforts being made across the region by NHS Highland workers, by our council members and employees, community volunteers and local businesses, and getting us safely throughout this crisis is our principal goal. We write to you openly in the hope local people will take a personal interest in their future well-being.

Cathy Cameron and Dennis Archer
Co-convenors, Argyll & Bute Branch
Scottish Green Party

0%

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FORT WILLIAM

Fort William Town Team has put all its planned activities on hold until further notice in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

'We know our volunteers were eager to make the town look lovely again this summer but our main priority is everyone's health, so to meet social distancing and essential travel guidelines we must not continue,' the group's committee said in a statement.

'We must work within government guidelines so until these are relaxed or lifted what we do is not essential and therefore cannot take place.

'This means we will not be planning any volunteer meetings, our Big Spring Clean or other activities in the near future. We will, as a committee, review this decision regularly between now and our next meeting.

'We also plan to assess and make a decision on 'Adopt a Plot' planting and our hanging basket project at our early May meeting. We are holding virtual committee meetings via video conferencing so we are following the guidelines by working from home.

'If we are able to do any planting this year, including hanging baskets, we will not be asking for donations or sponsorship as everyone is experiencing difficult times.

'Whatever we are able to do will be a gift to the town from the Town Team funds as a gesture for all the support we have been shown over the years. We hope to be able to do a little to brighten up Fort William but let's see how the situation evolves over the next few weeks.'

Anyone can still register as a Town Team volunteer or associate member but they need to complete a registration form. For further information email secretary@fortwilliamtownteam.co.uk or visit the team's Facebook page.

ARDGOUR

Ardgour Community Council met on Thursday March 12 at the Abernethy Centre, Kilmalieu.

Community councillors present were Samantha Thomson; Claire Bennett-Levy; Louise White; Kendra Turnbull; Michael Foxley; Lyndsey Boyd; Tricia Kennedy and Elizabeth Carmichael. Two members of the public were also present. Among the items discussed were:

Road signs: The roads department has offered to install red triangle 'road liable to flooding' signs on A861 but is unable to offer a drop-down sign for when the road is dangerous to use. It was agreed to pursue options for improvements to the worst affected sections.

Trees: A community councillor will check with

Locksmith presents cheque to Marie Curie



Margaret Laidlaw of Lochaber Locksmith, right, hands over £50 from the sale of Santa Keys last Christmas to Joan MacKintosh of the Lochaber Fundraising Group for the Marie Curie charity.

'Donations from the people of Lochaber are vital to the fundraising effort here and are greatly appreciated by everyone at Marie Curie,' said Joan.

'With so many sponsored and fundraising events postponed or cancelled at the moment, every donation, large or small, is wonderful and I thank Stuart, Margaret and their customers for this donation.' Photograph: A Brightside Photography.

Highland Council about trees in North Corran. A check will also be made with Ardgour Estate about a tree in Buchanan Place. The community council has been offered a log splitter for a community wood day.

Police: PC Campbell emailed an update on plans for improved A861 road signs and pedestrian warning signs around the Abernethy Centre in Kilmalieu. Resurfacing is planned for parts of the B8043 later this year. A speed survey is planned for Achaphubuil.

Dail Mhor: Elizabeth Carmichael reported information about Highland Hospice is available for noticeboards. Claire Bennett-Levy has copies and will put them up. Elizabeth Carmichael referred the group to the recent update in De tha Dol and reported there are plans to develop a 40-50 year plan for the care needs of the peninsula.

Corran Ferry: A consultation exercise has been undertaken and a risk assessment for the two options carried out. Tricia Kennedy and Michael Foxley are keen for a steering group to organise a consultation evening, ideally to coincide with an Ardgour Memorial Hall meeting of Ardgour Community Council. Michael Foxley has explored funding options for developing the slipways and shared this information. It was agreed priority should be given to continued delivery of a reliable service in the short term as well as exploring longer term options. Tricia

Kennedy and Michael Foxley are pushing for community consultation on long term options and suggest this consultation should be led by community councils. There are plans to hold every second meeting of the steering group at the Sunart Centre.

Annat Industrial Estate Environmental issues: Samantha Thomson reported that, following a number of complaints from residents and a visit from environmental health officers, BSW has said it will improve screening on the lochside of its premises within the next four to six months. Michael Foxley said residents are still experiencing noise nuisance from Boyd Brothers and concern remains around working hours and Sunday working. Michael Foxley highlighted a recent planning application from Gael Force for a graded slipway at Annat.

FW 2040: Michael Foxley reported on the most recent FW 2040 meeting. Neither Corran Ferry or the A861 were being included and he recommended these were added to the plan.

Fort William, Inverloch and Torlundy Community Council meeting: Louise White and Samantha Thomson reported back from this meeting which included a presentation from Lochaber Environmental Group and Highland Council Waste Services. It is now planned Duiskey landfill will operate until 2025 but there was confusion over how blue bin

waste is sorted and recycled. It was suggested a representative from HC Waste Services is invited to a future Ardgour Community Council meeting to discuss these issues. It was also noted compost bins are available free of charge to residents. There was a proposal to reconvene the community council partnership through monthly meetings. Tricia Kennedy and Elizabeth Carmichael offered to attend on behalf of Ardgour Community Council.

Community defibrillators: Tricia Kennedy reported the former Ardgour shop has a defibrillator but no longer has a power supply. It was suggested Ardgour Memorial Hall be asked to relocate the defibrillator there. It was suggested a defibrillator be bought for Kingairloch and that Ardgour Community Council host first aid training at Ardgour and Treslaig Halls.

Speed warnings for North Corran: Elizabeth Carmichael reported there are a significant number of children living in and around James Carmichael Way and speed signs would be beneficial.

Financial report: Community benefit payments have been received from Broadland Renewables for Callop and Duiskean, £1,1998, and Garvan and Duiskey, £1,660.05. Current balance: £12,662.01

Questions public - a request for bottle banks at Camusnagaul to be relocated and made bigger. Achaphubuil cattlegrid or Treslaig Hall were suggested as possible alternative locations. It was reported the bottle banks are not emptied often enough and have fallen over twice. Samantha Thomson to progress with Highland councillors. Kendra Turnbull suggested contacting the Climate Challenge Fund for funding to screen and protect the bottle banks.

Request for replacement noticeboards for Treslaig, Camusnagaul and Achaphubuil: Elizabeth Carmichael to contact the Men's Shed about making these.

Concern was raised about current state of the A861, particularly Stronchreggan corner and Gorsten bridge.

Applications for funding: £300 granted to Mod Aird nam Murchan; £150 to Ardgour Parish Church Easter Egg Hunt; £1,000 to West Lochaber Hospital Transport Project and £50 granted towards individual snowboard lessons.

As a result of the coronavirus outbreak community council meetings have been cancelled until further notice. Members of the community can still get in touch about local issues and funding applications. Secretary: Claire Bennett-Levy secretary.ardgourcc@gmail.com 07749553096; chairwoman: Samantha Thomson samanthak-thomson@hotmail.com 07595415052.

Cowboy Hotpot



SYN FREE | Takes 55 minutes | Serves 4

You don't have to be a cowboy to enjoy this campfire classic. Topped with sliced potato, our Syn-free sausage casserole recipe makes a hearty, healthy dinner

Ingredients

- 4 large potatoes, peeled and halved
- Low-calorie cooking spray
- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 8 Slimming World frozen Syn-free Pork Sausages, each cut into 3 pieces

Method:

1. Cook the sausages according to the packet instructions then cut each sausage into three pieces and keep warm.
2. At the same time, cook the potatoes in a large pan of lightly salted boiling water for 10 minutes or until tender. Drain and set aside.
3. Meanwhile, spray a deep, non-stick casserole pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 3-4 minutes. Add the sausages and cook for a further 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the carrots, stock and chopped tomatoes. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Stir in the baked beans and mixed beans and cook for a further 5 minutes to heat through.
4. Preheat your grill to hot. Spoon the sausages and beans into individual heatproof serving dishes or a shallow casserole dish. Slice the potatoes and arrange over the top of the sausage mixture. Spray with low-calorie cooking spray, season lightly and grill for 2-3 minutes, or until browned.
5. Serve hot with a mixed salad.

- 2 large carrots, peeled and finely diced
- 150ml hot vegetable stock
- 400g can chopped tomatoes with herbs
- 415g can baked beans
- 410g can mixed beans, drained and rinsed

PLEASE NOTE:

ALL CLASSES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Your consultant for Lochaber and Oban is Gillian on 07796 040803, Lochgilhead & Campbeltown Rhona 07880 878906. Available for Slimming World phone support and guidance.



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Detailed recipes available at:

slimmingworld.co.uk   

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

We are publishing this information in association with Lochaber Chamber of Commerce. Featuring the businesses in Lochaber that are open and able to offer vital products and services to our community during the current Covid-19 pandemic. Many of these businesses are working under extreme pressure to bring quality products and services to the people of Lochaber and beyond. Please remember to exercise caution when shopping and only shop for essential supplies. Along with our wonderful NHS staff and carers, our local food, fuel, news platforms and home supply businesses are our community champions!

We realise that many more businesses would love to be open, serving locals and visitors alike – our deepest empathy goes out to these businesses and we look forward to seeing their doors wide open when this is all over. Please feel free to get in touch with us if you would like to feature your business, or know a business that should be included. Email nmurphy@obantimes.co.uk or get in touch via our Facebook page on messenger. Let's spread the word as much as we can!

SUPERMARKETS AND FOODHALLS

MARKS & SPENCER FOODHALL

Open 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, until 6pm Sun
Mon and Thurs 8am-9am elderly customer priority
Tues and Fri 8am-9am NHS staff only
Social distancing measures in place
Tel: 01397 600208

MORRISONS

Open Mon-Sat 7am-8pm
7am-8pm Sunday
Weekdays 7am-8am for NHS workers priority and 7am-8am Sunday

All colleagues with an NHS badge will be able to get into the store to stock up on the products they need. Please note all our cafes are now closed.
Tel: 01397 700333
Tel: 0345 6116111 option 5 for doorstep deliveries for elderly and vulnerable

LIDL

Open Mon-Fri 8am-10pm
Sun 8am-8pm
Tel: 0800 977 7766

ALDI

Open Mon-Sat 8am-8pm
Sun 9am-8pm
8am-9am for example plus key worker priority at tills
Tel: 0800 042 0800

FARMFOODS

Open: 8am-8pm Mon-Fri
Sat: 8am-7pm
Sun: 9am-6pm
Tel: 0121 700 7160

CO-OP STORES

CAOL, CORPACH, MALLAIG
Mon-Sun: 7am-8pm
Key worker priority shopping: 8am-9am (Sun 10am-11am)
Tel: 01397 703302

TESCO EXPRESS

Open: 7am-9pm Mon-Sat. Sun: 10am-5pm
NHS/Key Worker Priority Hour: Tuesday/Thursday 9am-10am Sunday 9am-10am.
Vulnerable customers Monday 9am-10am, Wednesday 9am-10am, Friday 9-10am

TAKEAWAY FOOD

THE GEOGRAPHER

Open for orders Fri-Sun, from 4.30pm
Order from 2.30pm
See FB page for full menu
Delivery service
Tel: 01397 705011

SPICE TANDOORI

Open daily from 4pm
Phone orders only
Payment preferred over telephone by card
Deliveries from 5pm
Tel: 01397 705192

MACARI'S FISH & CHIPS

Order via JustEat
Order from 3.30pm for collection from 4pm.
Social distancing rules apply for queuing customers
Tel: 01397 703333

BEN NEVIS TAKEAWAY

Inverlochey
Pizza!
Place your order via JustEat or
Tel: 01397706171

THE STABLES RESTAURANT

Extensive takeaway available with weekend specials.
Tel: 01397 700730, Wed-Sat, 5pm-9pm
Contactless collection service.

LOCAL FRESH FOOD SUPPLIERS

LOCHABER LARDER

Blar Mhor Ind. Estate
Collection or delivery
Shop open: 9am-1pm, Tues to Sat for collection
In conjunction with Iain Stewart Fishmonger, JM Breckenridge and Glen Spean Brewery
Great selection of meats, fish, vegetables, eggs, milk, butter and flour
Check out FB for list of details
Order by 1pm for next day delivery
Fort William and surrounding area, Mon-Sat
Mallaig Tues & Thurs
Strontian & Acharacle Wed
Kinlochleven & Ballachulish Thurs
Spean Bridge & Roy Bridge Sat
Telephone orders: 01397 703070

IAIN STEWART FISHMONGER

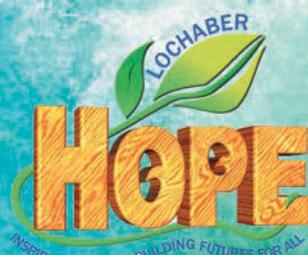
Collection or delivery – Blar Mhor Ind. Estate
Open 9am-1pm Tues to Sat
lobster, langoustine, kings scallops, mussels, also fresh in from peterhead fish Market
wild halibut, monkfish, Haddock, lemon sole, hake, cod
Deliveries available outwith these hours
Check out Facebook for updates
Tel orders: 07795 232324

THE WILDCAT

Fort William
Open 11am-4pm
Tues, Thurs, Sat
Doors closed but we will assist at the door
Usual selection of delicious vegan food
Ordering in advance helps.
Wildcat.groceries@gmail.com

FOOD LOCHABER

We're back soon!
Orders for locally grown fresh produce open on Thursday 23rd April, and we'll deliver safely to your doorstep on the 30th. There's never been a more important time to shop locally and support small scale growers in the community.
Visit: www.foodlochaber.org for more info.



VOLUNTEER AT LOCHABER HOPE! - THE COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU -

At Lochaber Hope we are hosting groups on Zoom for people to stay connected during this difficult time. Great news! We need more awesome volunteers to host these groups to meet the need in the community!

Do you want to help your community?

Contact us on

**reception@lochaberhope.org.uk,
call 01397 704836 or message us on
Facebook!**

[facebook.com/LochaberHopeFortWilliam](https://www.facebook.com/LochaberHopeFortWilliam)

Lochaber Hope offers hope - we provide a service that supports people in Lochaber to cope with a wide range of sensitive and personal issues.

www.lochaberhope.org.uk

WILDCAT

Vegetables!
Deliveries can be arranged locally please pre-order fruit and vegetables. Check FB for catalogue. Please place orders by 2pm Sundays for delivery to us the following Thursday. If you can't collect, have a delivery from us on the Thursday, we can keep fruit and veg for you for the Saturday or following Tuesday.

ARDSHEALACH SMOKEHOUSE & FINE FOODS

Glenuig
Order online: www.smokedproduce.com
Tel: 01687 470266

NEVIS BAKERY

Fort William shop closed to the public but products available from Road to the Isles filling station, Spar Claggan, Grange Stores, Co-op stores in Caol, Corpach and Mallaig
Tel: 01397 772087

BUILDING, PLUMBING, DIY SUPPLIES

LBS

the shop floor is closed to non-staff. emailed orders/ enquiries preferred. alternatively by phone
sales@lochaberdiy.co.uk or 01397 700350
orders will be left out the back of our yard at a pre-arranged time.
deliveries may be possible but please enquire first. we will try our best to accommodate.

H.I.S

Call/email to order then collect
Open 8am-5pm Mon-Fri for collections
Telephone your order ahead on 01397 705159
Visit: www.hisLtd.co.uk

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Open for essential workers and commercial freight organisations
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Sat 8.30am-12.30pm
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www.mcconechys.co.uk

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Open 7 days, 24 hours
Jet wash, shop and off license
Tel: 01397 703406

ESSO GARAGE

Open 24 hours, 7 days
Tel: 01397 702706

GLEANERS

(Ben Nevis Filling Station Fort William and Onich Services)
Tel: 01397 702346 ahead of travelling for opening hours

MORRISONS SERVICE STATION

Open 6.30am-10.30pm,
Tel: 01397 700333

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Tel: 01855 811308

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Car Hire 01687 462118
Recovery 01687 462118
E. morarmotors@aol.com (Mallaig)
E. contact@morarmotorskyel.. (Kyle)

STRONTIAN FILLING STATION

Open Mon-Sat 8am-7pm. Sun 10.30am-6pm
Tel: 01967 402135

TAXIS

For essential travel only:

A&A TAXIS

Available 24/7
Tel: 01397 701702

SPEEDERS CABS

Available 24/7
Tel: 01397 704000

CHEMIST & HEALTHCARE

BOOTS THE CHEMIST

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Please call ahead to ensure repeat prescriptions are ready
Tel: 01397 705143

CONVENIENCE STORES/ NEWSAGENTS

STRONTIAN STORES

Free delivery for those unable to leave their homes
Telephone orders to 01967 402268
Email stromtiashop@gmail.com

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Fruit, veg, meat, lottery, wines, beers and spirits
Tel: 01397 702558 – Claggan
Tel: 01397 705562 – Grange Road

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DIRECT PET SUPPLIES/PETSTOP

Open Tuesday - 9:00am until 5:30pm
Thursday - 9:00am until 5:30pm
Saturday - 10:00am until 5:00 pm
Social distancing measures in place
Tel: 01397 700715

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Visit FB page for details on how to order online

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OTHER INFO FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES

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Visit FB page for more information FB:
Covid-19: Ballachulish Community Support
New foodbank at the Ballachulish Village Hall on Fridays 12PM-2pm

FOODBANK LOCHABER

Tel: 01397 700212/077785 03276
www.lochaberfoodbank.org
FB: lochaberfoodbank

OFF BEAT BIKES

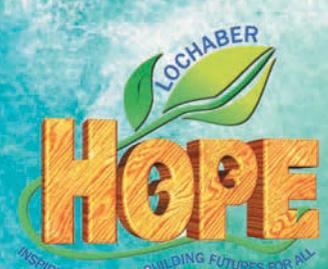
Bike Hire & Shop
Open Mon, Wed, Fri 12pm-4pm
or by appointment only

TRAVEL & TRANSPORT

SHIEL BUSES AND CITYLINK

Both companies continue to run reduced timetable for essential journeys
www.shielbuses.co.uk
www.citylink.co.uk

Information correct at time of going to press. Check www.obantimes.co.uk/openforbusiness for updated information. This page will run in the Lochaber Times every week for as long as necessary - printed information will be updated weekly.



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These are really weird times and you probably feel scared and lonely at times, like most of us! At Lochaber Hope we have lots of virtual groups that connect you to other like-minded people who experiencing the same difficulties. If you would like someone to call you privately, just ask.

You are welcome to join us! Check out our new virtual groups daily on our facebook page or website.

facebook.com/LochaberHopeFortWilliam

We host our groups in Zoom. A platform that is really easy to use with your laptop, phone or tablet. Do you have technical issues or questions? Let us know by sending us an email, message on Facebook or phone 01397 704836, our volunteers are happy to help you!
www.lochaberhope.org.uk

Fort FC manager says lots to consider before next season

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Fort William FC boss Calum MacLean says he has a lot to think about when it comes to possibly continuing as the Claggan Park club's manager next season.

Speaking to the Lochaber Times in the wake of comments elsewhere on the pros and cons of introducing relegation from the Highland League, MacLean expressed frustration with the way the current season had gone before the shutdown due to coronavirus.

Fort still had eight games in hand by the mid-March halt of any further league action and MacLean is convinced his players were on course to lift themselves away from the bottom of the table if the public health emergency had not unleashed chaos across the sporting calendar.

The league currently has 17 teams and MacLean feels it might be beneficial if the set-up was restructured to give other clubs, from either the North Caledonian League or North Region Superleague, the opportunity to step up.

Promotion has never existed as a way into the Highland League, with teams instead having to apply for a place in the division.

However, MacLean says he has long harboured the feeling there are people who would prefer it if the Claggan Park outfit were ousted from the



Fort FC manager Calum MacLean, who believes the club would have not remained at the bottom of the league if games had continued. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

league altogether and relegation might be looked at as a way of achieving this.

'Because there is so much travel involved for many of the sides to come to us for games, I think plenty would like to see us out of the league - I've thought that for years,' he told the Lochaber Times this week.

But he thinks if there are teams that would opt for a relegation system to be put in place, they might be in for

shock: 'They need to be careful what they wish for because I don't think it is by any means certain we'd be the ones going down.'

He admits to frustration with so many games at Claggan Park being switched to opposition grounds due to Fort's ground being unplayable in bad weather.

'There were so many games we had to play away and these were meant to be home games

for us and we ended at the other side at their ground when we'd already played them there,' said MacLean.

Asked if he wants to be the one leading Fort into the new season and build on some decent performances from this season's albeit truncated fixture list, the ever-honest and plain speaking MacLean admitted there was a lot to think about.

'To be honest I didn't enjoy

having to play so many away games. I was away nearly every weekend. I've got a daughter, so didn't get to see very much of her. I don't know yet about next season. That's something the club and I will have to speak about.

'We'd need to see what players we are going to get for a start. But I don't know yet what the club's thoughts are as yet, so we'll see.

'Typically though, we are

getting some good weather now that would have let us play our remaining games and I know we wouldn't have been bottom of the league by the time we were finished.'





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