



Lockdown birthdays? Best ever birthday!



Ding, dong delight as Teresa's bell is returned

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Clean up your act, urge councillors in united call

by Kathie Griffiths
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Dirty needles in public toilets, abandoned tents and stomach-churning piles of human excrement are among discarded waste blighting our 'beautiful' area, disgusting community leaders.

The foul catalogue of dumped rubbish reported to sickened Oban and Lorn councillors has prompted a united call for the public – visitors and residents – to clean up their act.

Councillor Julie McKenzie who represents Oban and North Lorn on Argyll and Bute Council, told The Oban Times this week: 'We are going in on this mob-handed, regardless of our politics, to ask people to do the right thing and show respect to our beautiful environment. We are absolutely unanimous in this.'

'Every single councillor of the Oban and Lorn Area Committee is being inundated with complaints from the entire area about the amounts



This pile of rubbish and discarded camping gear is an example of rubbish often abandoned at Glen Etive.

of rubbish and flytipping going on. The problem is everywhere.

'Dirty needles have been found in public toilets, rubbish has been dumped, tents and camping gear are being abandoned by our lochsides and human excrement are all being reported to us.'

'This is anti-social behaviour. We are also seeing more acts of vandalism. The police are being more pro-active but we do need the help of the public on this to clean up this mess.'

'We're not blaming it all on visitors, it is locals as well, it's been an ongoing problem. We as councillors want to make the appeal to people to think about their behaviour. We want to encourage people to come and enjoy our beautiful area, but we need to make sure we keep it beautiful,' added councillor McKenzie.

A public message from the area committee read: 'We welcome visitors and are happy for everyone to enjoy our

wonderful area, but recently we have received reports of irresponsible and thoughtless behaviour which is causing anger and distress to residents. We are appealing in the strongest terms to all to be considerate and respect our countryside and beauty spots.

'Please do not leave litter and refuse behind. Pick up, bin it or take it home. Our hard pressed amenities staff try to keep the area clear but we need everyone to assist, particularly in the present difficult circumstances, and would greatly appreciate your help.'

Over the weekend 47 cars were counted parked up in one troubled beauty spot at Glen Orchy where there are no toilets or bins, as well as 11 tents and one caravan. In Oban earlier this week, a van parked up on the roadside close to Dunollie Castle had a green toilet tent attached to it. At Ganavan, campervans and cars being slept in have been ignoring notices forbidding overnight camping.

Councillor McKenzie added: 'This is a time of unprecedented pressure on public services and people engaging in littering and fouling our environment are putting even more pressure on the council and the police when they should be focusing on the pandemic and responding to that rather than cleaning up after people's mess and chasing them for anti-social behaviour.'

Oban Community Council is working with Bid4Oban to produce banners to go up at litter hotspots around the town.

Community council chairperson Marri Malloy said Ganavan, McCaigs Tower and the steps at Jacob's Ladder were problem areas.

'It's disgusting the rubbish that is being left, spoiling our town. I can't understand why people do it. We are working with Bid4Oban on the wording for some banners to put up. There is a big problem at Ganavan and there are other places like Jacob's Ladder, McCaig's Tower and up by the Hydro.'

Maurice Wilkins of Keep Oban Beautiful said: 'We were unable to organise the usual Oban Spring Clean this year owing to the lockdown, but it's very heartening to see so many local people concerned about the state of our town and ready to go out there to pick up litter.'

'The fact remains, however, that unless the thoughtless minority can be persuaded to stop dropping it in the first place, the problem will never be overcome. It's up to all of us – parents, schools, the council, local radio, the press, everyone – to put the word out that we won't tolerate it anymore, that those responsible should think of others for a change.'

'It's not just bottles, cans and carry-out boxes; it's clothing, garden weeds, prunings, lawn mowings – and even lawnmowers – that are thrown over the nearest fence, and supermarket trolleys dumped in the Black Lynn or even in the harbour! We're not out to name names, to bully people, but to educate and encourage.'



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OT

Oban Times' a-peal sees return of Teresa's bell

A school bell has been returned to its grateful owner after an a-peal went out in The Oban Times, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Teresa Russell was heartbroken when the brass bell she used to clap for carers suddenly went missing from outside her home in Nant Drive.

Weeks after its mystery disappearance, the bell had now suddenly reappeared on her doorstep.

'There was no note, no explanation of where it had been, but who cares, I got it back,' said Teresa who has been shielding from Covid since February.

The bell from St Columba's Primary School with its oak handle had huge sentimental value for Teresa who was given it as a gift when she helped the head teacher move to the new building and it was going to be replaced with a push-button version.

'I'm thinking it was a prank. Someone must have recognised it from the story in The Oban Times and brought it back.



A delighted Teresa with the old school bell, which was returned with the help of The Oban Times.

'I'm keeping it indoors from now on so I can keep it safe,' she said.

Teresa, who was a volunteer meet and greeter at the hospital in Oban until the coronavirus outbreak, was involved in a serious road accident a

number of years ago and said the NHS saved her life, so ringing the bell at Clap For Carers had special poignancy for her.

'Thank you Oban Times for helping get my bell back,' she added.

We'll meet again, vows war and peace museum

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Covid will keep Oban's War & Peace Museum closed for now but its doors will open again, vow its volunteers.

The museum on Corran Esplanade only managed to open for three weeks this year welcoming about 1,000 visitors before the virus forced it to close.

In peak season, footfall brings in about 2,000 visitors weekly, with annual numbers in normal times reaching around 33,000 but not this year said museum curator and chairman of its board Bill Leech.

Mr Leech said: 'Unlike some big organisations we don't

have a payroll. We have volunteers and we have to guard their health all the same. Most of our watch keepers are 60 plus.

'We have not put any ideas to them yet about whether they will all be returning.'

'We will have to do things rather differently. We won't be able to run the DVD of Oban that we would normally show because that would involve people sitting and watching together.'

'We are checking to see exactly what we will be able to do and hope that by the end of July we will have a clearer idea.'

'Most of our customers coming through the doors are not local folk, so until visitors start coming back to town we

would probably not get that many in even if we were open.

'The loss of Shearings and other coach companies could mean numbers would be down, but I gather bookings for hotels and the flats along the Esplanade are looking good so that gives us hope.'

'For now it's a question of wait and see, but we will certainly be coming back, our doors will open again,' added Mr Leech.

Last November the museum welcomed its 700,000th visitor - a couple from Grantown On Spey.

Gordon and Jane Thomson were gifted a quaich, donated by The Iona Shop, to mark the milestone.

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Bill Leech and Fergus Gillanders from Oban War and Peace Museum and Gordon and Jane Thomson who were the 700,000th thousand visitors. 17_t45_WarMuseum01

POLICE FILES

■ About 8pm on July 9 at Gallanach Road, Oban, two men, aged 34 and 35, were allegedly fighting with each other. Police attended and both were charged and a report sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 10pm on July 9 at Colonsay Terrace, Oban, police searched a house where a man, 28, was allegedly found to be in possession of cannabis. He was charged and a

report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 1.30pm on July 11 at Tweedale Street, Oban, a 32-year-old man and a 23-year-old woman allegedly behaved in an abusive manner. Police attended and both were arrested and charged with the offence. A report was sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 5pm on Saturday July 11 at the A82, near Bridge of

Orchy, a motorist was stopped for allegedly exceeding the speed limit. The driver, a man, 25, was charged and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ If anyone has information on 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.

Stay active to help you and the NHS beat coronavirus

Health woes from staying indoors and being inactive during the Covid outbreak are starting to show up in patients seeking help at Oban's Lorn and The Islands Hospital, write Kathie Griffiths.

Medical consultant Colin Millar calls it 'post-shielding deconditioning' and says these are people who never had coronavirus but have lost stamina because of being in lockdown.

It has prompted advice that people can help themselves and the NHS by staying as active as possible even if shielding or isolating.

Physiotherapist Katy Docherty who is leading on Covid rehabilitation work at the hospital said: 'Our bodies are designed to move. Sedentary lifestyles are a risk factor for many chronic health conditions, falls and poor mental health. It's amazing how quickly your body will deteriorate if you are not active.'



Covid lead physiotherapist Katy Docherty and Christine Calder helping patients get back on their feet.

Physiotherapists, occupational therapists, consultants and GPs as well as voluntary groups are working together across the district to help get patients back to better health and their new normal - whether they

have been hospitalised with the virus or not.

For patients who are recovering from coronavirus, it is not a straight-forward process said physiotherapist Katy, who spoke to Britt Doughty-

Godchaux for The Oban Times.

'Many people are impatient to get back to normal, but if you are recovering from Covid-19, even if you have not required hospitalisation, be patient with your body. The recuperation and rehabilitation phase is highly important,' she said.

Symptoms, such as shortness of breath, can continue long after an acute episode has ended.

Katy added: 'Gradual phased increase in activity is key. We are working hard with people to recover full fitness where possible. It is still not clear how much or how quickly fitness levels will return without support. For the few patients who have required a longer stay in hospital the reduced levels of fitness are more marked and can persist for longer.'

However, for the general population the advice is to keep active and Covid-19 will pass 'in the fullness of time', she said, adding for reassurance:

'The majority of people who contract Covid-19 do not need hospitalisation, the majority who are hospitalised are not ventilated, and the majority who are ventilated recover. Before, during and after any Covid treatment or care, staying active is key.'

Patients' own goals and investment in their recovery is vital for success and examples of help available in the community are Lorn and Oban Healthy Options (LOHO) and Martyn's Monday Club, both of which run Zoom meetings.

GPs are also offering short- and long-term support. Dr Beth Hadden of Connel Surgery said GPs are there to help people get over the virus as well as others touched by 'its far-reaching effects'.

'We will do all we can to assist people to recover from Covid as well as those in our community who are affected by its far-reaching effects, both

physically and emotionally. We understand and feel the impact this is having on so many people. GP surgeries remain open, and the message remains, if you need us, please phone us,' she said.

Argyll has been clear of recorded Covid deaths for five weeks now, according to latest figures. The last time coronavirus was mentioned on death certificates in the Argyll and Bute Council area was in the week starting May 25, when there was one care home and two hospital deaths.

Most recent numbers published by National Records of Scotland (NRS) shows from June 29 to to July 5, 40 fewer deaths from all causes were registered compared with the average number for this time of year.

This is the second week in a row the total number of deaths registered has been lower than the average.

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is any way in which we can help you. We would like to reassure you that despite the current restrictions there is still plenty of time to get a new stove organised before the

cold weather sets in again! You can contact us by phone on 01631 720539, or via the website or our Facebook page. Take care, keep warm and stay safe.

OT

Around Oban

KAY McDONALD
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What a week! It feels as if Oban has blossomed again with the majority of our businesses able to open.

The excitement of being able to make a hairdresser's appointment after months of wandering about like a wee highland coo, being able to go for a meal or even a coffee and cake with other people.

There's an excited buzz about the town this week and I'm delighted to see businesses have put a lot of time and effort into reopening and keeping their customers safe. The way we shop and use our local businesses is going to be very different for the next while and it's lovely to see everyone working together to make it happen with us as customers being able to do our part by obeying the rules and wearing masks indoors.

Many of the businesses have been able to use grants from BID4Oban to freshen up their shop fronts and despite the pandemic we have two new businesses open, Oban Beer Seller and Mandarin Laundry, which

WHERE IS THIS?



can only be good for Oban. It's up to us now to help our local businesses survive this difficult time by supporting them and using them. I for one will be having a staycation this year and not leaving Scotland, so I'll be doing what I normally do on holiday but locally, eating out, having day trips, shopping, relaxing and taking in the scenery, and spending the money here instead.

It's good to know we'll be able to have days out to Dunollie and Dunstaffnage, and I love the boat trips to see the seals. It's time to make the most of what we have on our doorstep, and we're luckier than most.

The photograph last week was of the cross on top of the white church which is now a nursery. This week isn't too far away.

Heritage trust delays its 21st celebrations to 2021

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

A heritage trust celebrating the Slate Islands has put its 21st anniversary on hold.

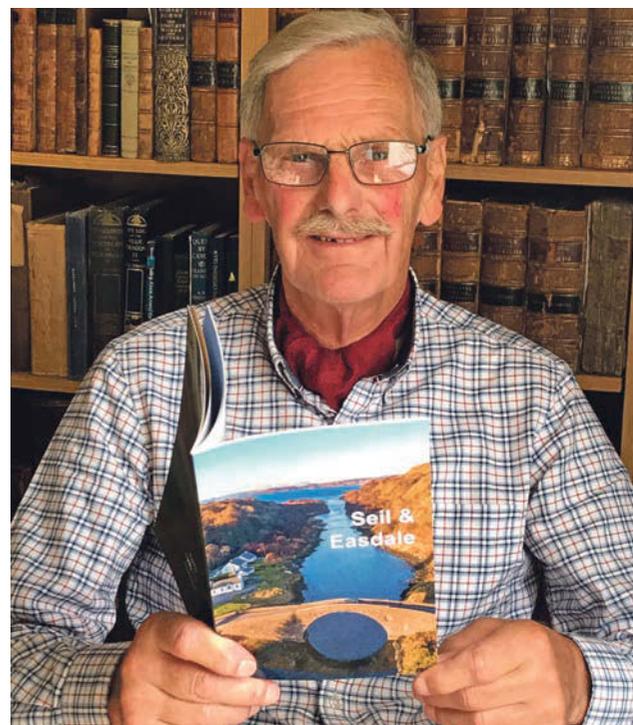
Covid scuppered plans to mark the occasion this year, so Heritage trust postpones Happy 21st to next year

A heritage trust celebrating the Slate Islands has put its 21st anniversary on hold.

Covid scuppered plans to mark the occasion this year, so The Scottish Slate Islands Heritage Trust has shifted the big celebration to 2021.

The virus means the doors of the Trust's Heritage Centre at 13a Ellenabeich will remain closed and most likely open next spring instead.

But by no means will the trust be dormant, says its vice chairman David Glennie, who said there is lots of work to be



Author, and chairman of the The Scottish Slate Islands Heritage Trust, Michael Shaw with his new book *Seil & Easdale*.

ing Luing and Belnahua. *Seil & Easdale* is a newly published 47-page gloss-backed book revealing a glimpse of treasures to be found on the cluster of islands, illustrated by Trevor Davies.

Among those gems of the Slate Age are Kilbrandon Church with its five magnificent stained glass windows, Ballachuan Hazelwood Nature Reserve, the walled garden at Ardmaddy Castle and the famous Clachan Bridge - known as the only bridge over the Atlantic, where legend has it long before the bridge was built that an elderly woman acted as a Saint Christopher on hand to help less able travellers wade the channel.

The book, costing £5, was brought out to mark the trust's 21st anniversary and author Mr Shaw said he hoped its pages will 'inspire a visit, stimulate a return or simply nourish' fond memories for many people.

Mr Shaw said the timing of the book was a message to let people know that lots of hard work is continuing behind the scenes, with many members carrying on with research projects, including discovering more about Ballachuan Hazelwood and about the life and times of islanders.

Twice yearly the trust brings out journals to keep people up to date with its most recent discoveries and work.

done behind the scenes ready for its 'resurgence' - in 2021.

Between 10,000 and 12,000 visitors from far and wide step through the doors of the one-room museum every year, so working out social-distance measures is going to be one of the big tasks ahead.

Volunteer members, many who are shielding and still self isolating, are usually at the door to welcome in visitors so lockdown back in March was inevitable.

The trust is missing the public and relies on donations to keep up its work but it will be back next year to celebrate its 21st anniversary properly with a new exhibition or possible a series of lectures, said Mr Glennie.

'Of course we're missing the

public but we have to keep everyone safe, that is our priority and will continue to be so. We're looking forward to opening our doors again and we're quite optimistic it will be in the spring,' he added.

Until then, volunteers will have the opportunity to rethink and refresh displays and ways of working to follow government guidelines - including how to handle, or not, cash in the museum.

'We'll use this time to plan our resurgence,' said Mr Glennie.

In the meantime, the trust and its chairman Michael Shaw have got an alternative for anyone who cannot wait until next year to find out more about the Slate Islands that include neighbour-

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POLICE FILES

■ Between midday on June 1 and 10am on June 3 on farm land at Tigh Cargaman, Port Ellen, a building's stonework was damaged.

■ Between 7pm and 7.30pm on July 6, near the Co-op Store, at Main Street, Bowmore, Isle of Islay, the driver's door of a grey Fiat 500 car was scratched. Police are investigating.

■ Between 3.15pm and 4.45pm on July 6 within a car park at Cattlemans, Islay House Square, Isle of Islay, the driver side of a black Volkswagen Golf was scratched.

■ About midnight on July 7, police searched a house at Aros Close, Oban. A 21-year-old man was allegedly found in possession of and cultivation of cannabis. He was charged and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 1.30pm on July 7 near to Lerags Road, Oban, a man, 75, allegedly behaved in an abusive manner. The man was charged and a report sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ About 8.30pm on July 6 at Jarvisfield Road, Salen, Isle of Mull, an 82-year-old man al-

legedly was in possession of an air weapon without a licence. Police seized the weapon and a report sent to the Fiscal.

■ About 9am on June 29 at George Street, Oban, police stopped a vehicle and the 32-year-old male driver allegedly did not hold a valid licence or insurance. The man was charged and a report sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

■ If you have information in relation to the above, call your local Police Station on **101**, or Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

Small islands in plea for respect as lockdown eases

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Small island communities are asking visitors for understanding and respect as the lockdown laws ease.

Kerrera, Oban and Seil are among many who are cautiously opening up again and while all the islands are looking forward to welcoming visitors back, they are asking that they keep to the rules in order to keep everyone safe.

A spokesperson from Kerrera Development Trust said: 'As a small island community we have managed to stay safe during the Covid-19 pandemic and we hope to be able to continue this as we move out of lockdown.'

'For this we need the help and understanding of people travelling to and from the



island as we move forward.'

The trust is asking visitors to allow residents returning to the island from the mainland priority boarding if there are large numbers of people wait-

ing. 'In many cases parents with infants or the elderly will be coming back and it makes life very difficult if they face a long queue just to come home,' said the spokesperson.

There are currently no public facilities or toilets open on the island so the group are also asking people to be as fastidious regarding the hygiene and cleanliness of

Residents on Seil and Easdale have made it clear there will be no illegal parking, but Seafari owner Tony Hill who owns the car park in Ellenabeich is welcoming motorhomes to park overnight, as long as they have toilet facilities.

the island as they would be in their own surroundings and to respect social distancing guidance at all times.

Residents on Iona are also looking for trust and responsibility on all sides.

'We expect visitors will want to know what new measures businesses are implementing so that they can feel confident, relaxed and enjoy their time here,' said a statement from Iona Community Council.

'We also hope that visitors will play their part by respecting and following guidance and regulations. This will help our community to feel confident and relaxed about being a welcoming place once again.'

The community council is also asking that visitors do not arrive for an overnight

stay unless they have booked accommodation before they travel.

Seil and Easdale Community Council have put up two big signs at Clachan Bridge to greet visitors making their way over to its islands.

While the signs encourage people to come and enjoy the scenery and visit again, the boards make it clear there is to be no illegal overnight parking. Motorhomes with their own toilet facilities can, however, park overnight in the car park of the former Highland Arts Studio in Ellenabeich.

All the islands are urging tourists to help keep the islands safe while following social distancing rules, take litter home, support local businesses and keep cleaning their hands.

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OT

RNLI rescue annual open day with digital fundraiser

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

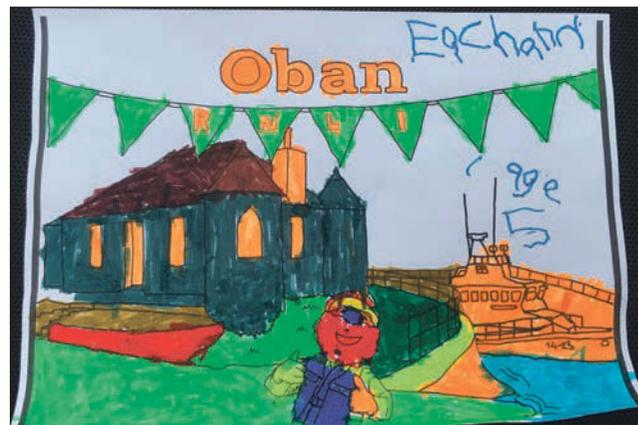


Oban RNLI's first digital fundraising event saw the station raise more than £800 for its lifesaving charity.

Oban Lifeboat Station sadly had to cancel its annual open day in line with government guidelines due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The event, which is usually one of the station's biggest fundraisers was due to take place on June 20. Instead, the station took to its Facebook page to bring some Open Day fun to their supporters digitally, aiming to raise some cash for the lifesaving charity in the process.

The event ran for the entire month of June and competitions included RNLI-themed baking, guess the weight of the lobster and a colouring in competition. The station also



The lucky winners included Mac Rodwell, right, who rose to the top in the baking competition and Eachann Brown won the colouring in competition.

shared video tours around their lifeboat the 'Mora Edith MacDonald', introduced some of their volunteers and station officials and shared some RNLI-themed activities for followers to enjoy at home. Supporters were encouraged

to donate to the RNLI via their Facebook fundraiser.

Leonie Mead, Oban Lifeboat's Press Officer said: 'It's been great interacting with our supporters digitally while we are unable to do so face to face.



'We wanted to include something for everyone; a mix of educational and fun activities, and it's been amazing to see the effort everyone put into their competition entries.'

The lucky winners included Mac Rodwell, age eight, who

rose to the top in the baking competition and Eachann Brown age five who won the colouring in competition.

Through Facebook, the station collected donations of £461 for the RNLI, a further £361 was raised thanks to two generous supporters who held fundraising events of their own.

Judith MacDougall Vajk of Caledonian Oysters kindly donated £210 from oysters sales over the weekend of the station's cancelled open day, from her honesty box on the edge of Loch Creran. Another local supporter, May Mackenzie, held a raffle for a bottle of Oban lifeboat whisky through Facebook herself, raising £151 for the lifesaving charity.

Phil Hamerton, Oban Lifeboats fundraising chairman, said: 'We'd like to thank everyone who tuned in, took

part, and most importantly helped us with a donation. We rely on your generosity to enable us to continue saving lives at sea.'

The RNLI is an emergency service and a charity and it is reliant on the support of the public and that's needed now, more than ever. Anyone can help raise money for the RNLI with fundraising events of their own.

More information and ideas can be found on the RNLI's website - RNLI.org/fundraising.

In addition to open day events, the final total from the fundraising walk initiated by RNLI Fundraising Secretary, Alison Rennie, amounts to around £785 in donations for Oban lifeboat.

'We'd like to say a big thank you to Alison and everyone who has supported her efforts, too,' said Leonie.



THE NORTH ARGYLL EVENTIDE HOME was opened by the people of Oban, in 1955, to provide a caring environment for the elderly of the area.

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01631 562168 info@northargyllhouse.org

Taynuilt gets £1.15 million electricity investment

Work is starting on a £1.15 million project to upgrade and strengthen Taynuilt's electricity infrastructure, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The major programme of investment is expected to take four months to complete, says Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Distribution.

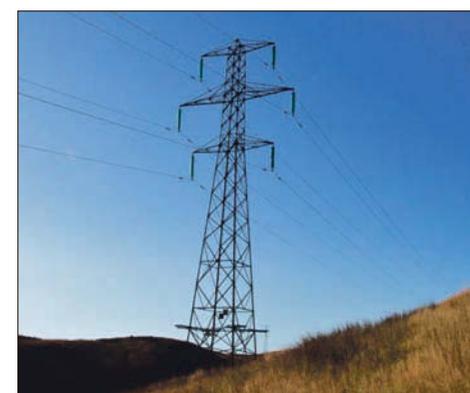
It means the village will benefit from 'a more resilient power supply' ahead of the winter months said the power supplier.

The project includes the replacement of existing electrical equipment at Taynuilt substation.

The existing transformer supplying power to more than 500 properties in the area will be replaced, with new circuit breakers and switchboards installed giving faster restoration of supplies on the rare occasion that faults occur, said SSEN.

Engineers will also be installing an extra transformer making the supply even more reliable.

Scott Mackintosh, project engineer at SSEN, said: 'This investment forms part of our



The work to upgrade Taynuilt's electricity infrastructure will make the village's power supply more resilient.

ongoing commitment to keep power flowing across our communities, ensuring a safe and reliable supply of electricity to homes and businesses in the local area. By replacing existing infrastructure with new equipment, we're unlocking greater flexibility on our network, allowing us to re-route supplies during power cuts to restore power much quicker to our customers.

'We've planned these works to minimise disruption to the local community, including installing key equipment at the early stages to enable us to avoid multiple planned interruptions to supplies. We are committed to doing

everything we can to keep customers informed of the works as the project progresses.'

Disruption will be kept to a minimum while engineers work but some customers, needing extra help if there is a power cut, can register on a priority services register.

People in that category include anyone shielding during the coronavirus pandemic, anyone who is deaf or hard of hearing, has a disability, live with children under five, is blind or partially sighted, has a chronic illness, is over 60 or uses medical equipment or aids reliant on electricity. To find out more about the PSR call 0800 294 3259.

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FINANCE AND DELIVERY ARRANGED

Loving sister's message in a bottle returns home

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A message in a bottle sent to a much-loved brother has found its way home.

It took months of deciphering the water-spoiled message inside the small bottle that was found washed up near Easdale at the New Year.

Eventually and with the wonder of Facebook connections, the bottle and its contents is finally heading back to its sender.

Jane Gallacher had written the heartfelt message to her brother Tam Conroy who spent many happy years living on Seil but passed away in his sleep last April.

Tam, who was living in Perth when he died aged just 50, was well-known on the island for his fundraising exploits.

Although he had Dystonia, a movement disorder in which a person's muscles contract uncontrollably, he never let it get in the way of life, said Jane.

One of his most memorable stunts was when he took part in a hill race on Seil wearing leopard skin and carting a wheel barrow.

Jane, who now lives in Stafford, was stunned when a relative living in Balvicar got in touch to say the message had been found. The last time she saw the bottle was when she threw it into the sea off Seil during a balloon release in Tam's memory last year.

'It was a bolt from the blue. I never thought I'd see it again - it's as if Tam was sending a message back to us. We've been having a bit of a tough time recently as a family and although it sounds strange,



Right, Tam during took part in Seil hill race with a wheelbarrow strapped to his back; and above, the message.

it was like a comfort to hear from him.

'In the message I'd written about the lovely times we had as a family when we'd all visit him on Seil. We used to come for the Seil Games. He'd done the hill race pushing a wheelbarrow. Tam had problems with a muscle disorder but he never let that get in his way!'

'The bottle was found by a

young man who was visiting relatives and he took it back home to Glasgow with him to try and work out who sent it. When a few words had been worked out, it went up on Facebook and the connection was made,' said Jane.

'We're just waiting to get it sent back to us. We'll be keeping it this time - it's meant to stay with us,' she added.



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Enjoy summer safely by

People across the country are being encouraged to enjoy summer safely by following official advice and staying safe.

Pubs, restaurants, bars and hairdressers are

following UK Government advice and started to make plans to reopen, marking the start of summer.

Safety measures to protect staff and customers are being put in

**ENJOY
Summer
SAFELY**

place, with people asked to be sensible, continue to

follow social distancing messages and stay close to home to support local business.

To help people plan days out, the UK Government has launched the Know

Before You Go website at visitbritain.com/gb/en/know-before-you-go

Here, we look at what action businesses have taken to ensure we can all enjoy summer safely.



SAFE ENVIRONMENT: That Rosie Glow hair and beauty salon opens up again on July 15.

'I want to ensure clients and staff feel safe returning to the salon'

CASE STUDY THAT ROSIE GLOW

EDINBURGH HAIR and beauty salon That Rosie Glow is preparing to open for business on July 15 after almost four months of closure due to the coronavirus lockdown.

A number of safety measures will be in place to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 when the business opens.

The salon has already installed clear screens between each treatment station, and at the reception desk.

Customers and staff will be asked to wear face coverings, and customers will be requested to visit the salon alone where possible, and arrive on time rather than early to reduce time spent in the waiting area. They will have to keep their coats and belongings with them instead of them being hung up by

staff, and there will be no magazines or refreshments available.

Each station and any equipment used will be thoroughly cleaned between customers, and clean towels or gowns will be used with each one.

Salon owner Rosie Fraser said: "We closed on March 23, but we have kept our social media active and positive, and kept in touch with clients." Ms Fraser said she has tried to make the new measures as



comfortable as possible, including the screens bearing the salon's name.

She said: "I wanted to make sure the clients and also the staff felt safe coming back, and we also wanted people to feel like it's a nice experience and not too clinical.

"In this new normal we will be coming into we wanted to have safety but with style so that women still feel like they are having an enjoyable experience. Our whole ethos is to make women feel empowered, beautiful, confident and glowing not only on the outside but on the inside too. With new measures making our usual level of service and attention to detail looking likely to change we did not want to have cheap looking, temporary fixtures.

"We have had bespoke screens made with our logo engraved onto them and frames custom made and sprayed to be on brand."

THE UK Government is helping thousands of pubs, restaurants and hairdressers reopen safely with detailed practical information to help keep staff and customers safe.

The new Covid-19 secure guidance for the hospitality sector and hairdressers meant businesses were able to reopen across England on July 4, provided they met key criteria.

UK Government officials have worked alongside over 300 key industry stakeholders and trade unions to develop clear plans in line with scientific advice and public health directions, building on existing guidance published in May.

The new guidance sets out a range of measures for pubs and restaurants to become Covid-19 secure, including:

- requiring use of table service where possible instead of ordering at the bar and assigning a single staff member per table

- encouraging use of contactless ordering from tables where available, such as through an app

- discouraging non-essential trips by staff within venues, such as between the kitchen and front of house, by using radios and other electronic devices to communicate

- encouraging customers to use hand sanitiser or hand washing facilities as they enter the venue

providing clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene as people arrive on the premises, with signage and visual aids

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said: "We know this pandemic has been particularly hard for people working in hairdressing



SAFETY ADVICE: Business Secretary Alok Sharma.

and hospitality. Allowing pubs, restaurants and hairdressers to open will be another step in our plan to kickstart our economic recovery in a safe manner."

The guidance that is set out provides clear, practical steps businesses can take to open in a way that is as safe as possible for workers and customers.

Separate guidance has been published for hairdressers, which states that a clear visor should be worn by the person providing the service, covering the face and providing a barrier between the wearer and the customer from respiratory droplets caused by sneezing, coughing or speaking.

The government is also consulting with industry on how businesses should record customer information to help keep customers and employees safe and support the new test and trace system.

Guidance for your business

THE UK Government has published guidance to support businesses to reopen and keep workers and customers safe so they feel confident to return.

To find out about measures your business needs to implement to reopen safely, there is an online tool, which will direct you to guidelines specific to your type of workplace

at gov.uk/coronavirus-business-reopening.

If you run a business and would like to know which of the coronavirus support schemes you are eligible for, you can use the business support finder tool. It takes just minutes to complete and will help you easily find support for your business.

visitbritain.com/gb/en/know-before-you-go to plan your days out

following official advice



LOOKING UP: Corgi co-owner Chris Jones.

CASE STUDY CORGI

WHEN LOCKDOWN was announced, luxury knitwear company Corgi knew they had the experience to get through the Covid-19 crisis.

The Welsh firm – which has a Royal Warrant from the Prince of Wales – has ridden many an economic downturn in its illustrious 128-year-old history. Co-owner Chris Jones, who is great-great grandson of the company's founder, said: "We take a view that you can get through anything. I think it

'Orders starting to pick up once again'

makes it easier because we've been through crises before."

It helped that the Ammanford-based firm had been through five fantastic years before coronavirus struck. In March they furloughed 50 of their 65 staff but now many are returning as orders begin to pick up. Corgi

makes hand-finished wool, cotton and cashmere socks and other knitwear and Chris said: "Normally we run two shifts on the sock machine, so we kept going with one. Next week going back to one and a half shifts – we're going to have the other knitters coming in some of the time."

With shops reopening, old customers are beginning to ask for new sales catalogues and Chris expects business to pick up properly in around a month.

What has helped the business survive more than anything though was the package of financial help the Government made available.

Chris said: "The furlough scheme has practically saved us. Without it, we'd have been in a lot of trouble or we'd have managed but we'd have had to let a lot of people go."

Haircuts return with new safety measures

CASE STUDY THE BARBER'S DEN

HAIRDRESSER AND barber Claire McKittrick faced worrying times when she had to close her salon The Barber's Den, which also houses the Hairdresser's Den.

But Claire, her staff and her customers are delighted that the Lisburn business is reopening after putting safety measures in place.

Claire first opened the Barber's Den four years ago and such was its popularity she also decided to expand to include The Hairdresser's Den for all the ladies of Lisburn.

When they had to put the business on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was an understandably worrying time for Claire and her staff.

She said: "I am heavily pregnant. I'm 37 weeks now. When I found out the salon had to close the first thought

was stress, panic, and what is going to happen to my clients. We closed early. We have about 30 to 40 clients a day so that is a lot of footfall and I had a real concern about safety."

Claire and her team have been busy getting the salon ready to welcome back her valued customers.

With the rearrangement of the salon to allow social distancing, the introduction of PPE, risk assessment and team training, Claire is ready for the influx of people who are desperate for a haircut after the long months of lockdown.

Claire said: "The guidelines are good. We have posters up with the guidelines on them and I have held a team meeting to carry out a risk assessment and explain to the staff what is expected of them."

"Hand sanitisers have been installed and everywhere has been thoroughly cleaned."



HAPPY DAYS: Claire McKittrick and her staff are reopening The Barber's Den with rigorous safety measures in place.*

during this summer



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OT

Charity harvests hope for home support

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



A Seil-based charity helping farmers and feed children in Malawi needs help to keep harvesting successful.

The current pandemic has stopped Seed For Life's usual fundraising activities, prompting the charity to make a 'Big Ask' for much-needed support.

Now in its fourth growing year, the project is on target to be self-sufficient within the next few years, but coronavirus could get in its way unless they can keep reaping funds.

Grant aid is still coming from the Scottish Government but the generosity of well-wishers is vital to help keep all the tiers of the project up and running. The project in Bemvu has also become an independent company, including representatives from across the community having a say on how it is managed.

Charity founder David Alsop says it is becoming evident at this time that it will have to either cut back on what was planned or appeal to the public for more donations.

'We realise that this is a big ask in this current climate. Malawi, of course, is living through the Covid-19 crisis



The charity has helped fund six dinner ladies to help feed the school children.

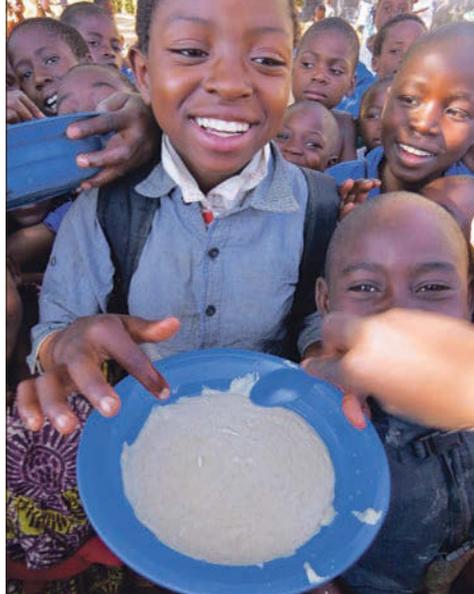
as well,' said Mr David Alsop, who added: 'Their main fear is we will pack up our bags and go. There's no doubt that what we are doing is life-changing for these people because they are seeing more food security.'

'This year has been a good growing year. They are getting top quality seed and fertiliser. They are seeing their incomes increase. The community is beginning to benefit and the school feeding project has been a huge success, although Covid closed the schools in April.'

The charity has also employed six dinner ladies to help feed the children which means six other families are now getting an income they were not receiving in the past.

Mr Alsop said: 'This is all part of the project's original idea to give people a better chance to stand on their own feet and they have pride in doing that. They don't want to spend the rest of their lives with their hands held out.'

With 120 farmers signed up to the project, growing crops,



there are hopes to recruit another 30 before that part of the work becomes self-sufficient in spring 2022. This year's harvest yielded 181 tonnes of maize. Some of the crops are used to feed 1,200 schoolchildren and some is stored to sell for the best price to plough into funds that will support the community as it takes its future into its own hands.

Seed For Life also runs a scholarship programme to help youngsters through their four years of secondary education

- in Malawi it has to be paid for privately. Last September it helped 25 students, this September it hopes to support 30 of them.

And the charity has a Fertiliser Fund that gifts seed and fertiliser to the elderly, widowed or those living with disabilities. Last October it put £1,200 into that pot thanks to people's generous donations.

Seed for Life has also been branching out into growing trees to provide fruit or for firewood, a banana tree nursery has also been set up.

Trustee Maggie Brooks is hoping people nearer home around Oban and Seil will help keep up the charity's good work by taking up the challenge to fundraise whether its sponsored events of their own by making donations.

'Every penny goes directly to the work we do, it all adds up and will make such a difference to so many people,' she said.

To find out how you can help by online shopping, visit seedforlife.org.uk

The charity's account for bank donations is SEEDforLIFE.FEEDforLIFE.SCIO

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Public urged to report whale and dolphin sightings

The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust is calling on members of the public to record their at-sea excursions and sightings of whales, dolphins, porpoises and endangered basking sharks off Scotland's west coast.

The exercise is intended to boost monitoring efforts and strengthen understanding of the coronavirus lockdown's impact on these animals.

With wildlife around the world reported to be taking advantage of reduced human activity, the trust wants to discover more about what has been happening in Hebridean seas, which are globally important for cetaceans.

But the trust's ability to gather crucial scientific evidence has been hit hard by the global Covid-19 - leaving it facing the biggest gap in its data collection for two decades.

Dr Lauren Hartny-Mills, the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust's Science and Conservation Manager, said: 'Reporting is easy and every excursion logged on the Whale Track app - whether a ferry crossing or a kayaking trip - will make a difference to our understanding of what impact lockdown has had on Scottish whales and dolphins.'

Sightings and photographs will also help. Whale Track has an interactive map showing all sightings reported since 2017. Go to www.hwdt.org for more information.

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TV's Rhoda tunes into Tiree Tea

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Finding time for a cup of tea is no mean feat when you are juggling croft life on Tiree with a day job in IT, but beverage entrepreneur Rhoda Meek has just made it her business to do all of that.

Rhoda, who moved to the island several years ago, is one of the characters whose daily lives are being followed in an observational documentary on BBC ALBA.

Na Tiristich – From Tiree with Love still has two more episodes to run on a Tuesday at 8pm and the programmes will be available on BBC iPlayer for 30 days after they air so there is time to catch up with the series.

In the show, made over six months between June to December last year, Rhoda hinted at brewing up a new venture which post-filming has turned into Tiree Tea.

Rhoda, 37, whose dad came from Tiree, had no crofting experience when she moved to the old family plot on the island, where she also keeps Hebridean sheep and has a collie dog she trained herself called Gunna.



Rhoda with her collie, Gunna.

When a big software contract ended, Rhoda looked for a new opportunity.

Still freelancing for software companies and starting Isle20.com, a new directory linking up almost 450 businesses across the islands and an online marketplace selling more than 1,000 island-made products, Rhoda has also now launched Tiree Tea.

'I'd been growing veg and selling it locally for beer money but I'd always fancied having a go at making tea because of all the nettles and mint that grow here. As yet none of the ingredients come from Tiree, that is something else for the future, but the blend is unique to my specification and is owned by

me. It's made specially by a tea maker in Kent,' she said.

During the Covid crisis, Rhoda had kept the online shop open (www.tireetea.co.uk), dispatching orders with her weekly essential shopping trip, and despite lockdown her tea has made it as far as America.

Inspired by life on Tiree, the plastic-free teabags come in four varieties - the Crofter Breakfast Tea has a picture on its box of the little grey Fergie tractor bought by her grandfather in 1947, and the mint and nettle herbal infusion is fondly called Tilley after the turbine that powers community programmes on the island.

Back to the small screen, pro-

gramme three of Na Tiristich – From Tiree with Love will see Rhoda taking her lambs to a sale and will have more from Tiree Music Festival. Gordon Connell, who has been teaching accordion on the island for 50 years, features along with Stewart MacLennan and Skerryvore's Daniel Gillespie, and there will be a meeting with Tiree musicians and entrepreneurs Ian Smith and Alain Campbell from Trail West who have set up Tyree Gin.

The Tiree Wave Classic features in episode four and a visit to the island of Lunga with Frazer and Donnie Macinnes from Tiree Sea Tours also plays a part in the final instalment.

Scrapping free TV licences for over 75s would be 'catastrophic'

Support organisations in Oban are warning the BBC's decision to scrap free TV licences for the over 75s could be a 'catastrophe' for many people.

The BBC has decided to go ahead with its plan to end free TV licences for most over-75s. The move follows a two-month delay because of the pandemic.

That means over-75s will have to pay the £157.50 fee from August 1. Only those who receive the Pension Credit benefit will be exempt.

Age Scotland has warned that the decision will do untold damage to the lives of hundreds of thousands of older people countrywide.

The national charity for older people has been working with other charities on a huge campaign to get the BBC to reverse its plan to remove the benefit for over-75s of a free TV licence, arguing that it is a lifeline service for many.

Organisations in Oban are agreeing that presenting over-75s with a new annual bill for £157.50 at this time is particularly harsh as lots of older people are already struggling to cope with lockdown and shielding during the coronavirus pandemic.

David Entwistle, chairman of Oban Hospice Ltd said: 'It seems a nit-picky to do that to older people. It's rather harsh

and would add another layer of difficulty at what is already a difficult time for many.'

And Judith Hawcroft, manager at North Argyll Carers Centre, said: 'TV is quite clearly a lifeline for many older people. If they are denied access to it, it could be a catastrophe.'

According to research from Age Scotland half of over-75s said that their TV or a pet was their main form of company before the pandemic, while nine in 10 watch TV every day.

Michelle Supple, Age Scotland's Director of Charity Services, said: 'The timing of this announcement is atrocious and it will be one of the last things older people want to hear right now. Life has been hard enough for them in recent months, now the lifeline of their TV could be taken away.'

'This decision will no doubt have a significant impact on levels of loneliness as for half of all over-75s, their TV has been a valuable source of information and news.'

'Many older people say that they will find it difficult to pay for this new bill. The choice they now face is their TV or other essentials.'

Mrs Supple said the UK government 'must urgently get together with the BBC and work out how to keep the free TV licence for over-75s'.



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OT

Mull theatre shines a light on digital dramas

Like venues around the country An Tobar, the home of Mull Theatre, has been in darkness since the end of March due to the coronavirus pandemic, writes Fiona Scott.

This autumn, however, the company will be stepping back into the limelight with two new plays for the theatre, staged and filmed for a digital run.

Directed by Beth Morton, Emergence will be made up of two short plays by exciting writers from Scotland. These special plays explore themes of understanding - of both ourselves and each other - and of opening our hearts and minds. They are intimate human stories inspired by change, connectivity, and the world we've been living in over the last few months.

Morton was appointed Mull theatre director 2020/21 in May and is keen to find new ways to engage audiences during this dark spell.

'We are living through unique and unpredictable times that have impacted the lives of

everyone. It is important for many reasons that we find new ways of coming together to continue celebrating the need for theatre and what it does in connecting people.

'Mull Theatre wants to celebrate theatre, provide opportunities for artists to create new work, engage and inspire our audiences and community in a meaningful way, and make high quality productions in response to the world.

'Emergence is our commitment to upholding these values through these times, making and connecting in a new way as we start thinking about slowly turning the lights back on.'

Audiences can look forward to buying tickets and seeing these new plays in October.

On July 3 a targeted £10 million to support Scotland's performing arts venues was announced by Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop.

The fund will be run by Creative Scotland, which will publish full details shortly.

Clarification

Back in June we published a story 'Close shave for Mull mother and daughter'

Rebecca Woolcock and her mum Kate raised £1,022 for Craignure Community Hospital by having their hair shaved off.

In parts of the article Rebecca's name was mixed up with her daughter's Eliza.

To clear up any confusion Rebecca's dad Michael performed the honours and James McFadden is Rebecca's fiance. Rebecca and Kate presented the cheque.

Band sadness over Skerryvore scam

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Illegal Skerryvore merchandise being sold on an unofficial website has been taking money that should have gone to support NHS workers, says the band.

Founding member Martin Gillespie told The Oban Times that the merchandise until recently for sale on an unofficial goods website 'blatantly infringed our copyright, using our album covers and poster designs to sell products and profiteer'.

The website in question has now removed all the items 'thankfully' said Martin.

According to that website, it is policy to remove 'allegedly infringing work in response to legally valid complaints'.

Skerryvore's Everyday Heroes charity single went to No 1 in the iTunes charts within hours of being released earlier this year. All proceeds from it went towards the NHS Charities Covid-19 Urgent Appeal.

The streaming figures have not come through yet but the band estimate they have raised



around £3,000 from streams and downloads and £500 from t-shirts, plus funds people generously donated to the charities directly off the back of the single.

Skerryvore has now appealed to fans not to purchase merchandise from any third-party stores and instead make sure it is bought from their own official website or social media channels, or via authorised music download and stream-

ing sites.

Martin said: 'We were really sad to see illegal Skerryvore merchandise being sold on an unofficial website. The merchandise blatantly infringed our copyright, using our album covers and poster designs to sell products and profiteer.'

'During the current situation, when selling merchandise is one of the few ways that musicians can generate income, this discovery was extremely

Until recently an unofficial website has been selling Skerryvore and Mánran merchandise profiting while band members and charity have suffered.

disheartening. One of the saddest things about this is that many of the items exploit the success of our Everyday Heroes charity single in an attempt to extort money which would otherwise be going to charity if the merchandise was official.'

Mánran merchandise was also being sold on the same unofficial website. Gary Innes from Mánran said: 'We were really disappointed to see that our merchandise was being made and sold from a third-party vendor. At any time this would be unacceptable but at a time when, alongside our fellow musicians, all of our touring and performing work has disappeared, it's an added kick below the belt. We as a band rely on merchandise sales to help keep us afloat and maintain some kind of revenue so to have someone else profiting from the band's name and image during this time is very disheartening.'

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Mull Rally cancelled due to coronavirus uncertainty

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Mishnish Lochs will stay silent in October, there will be no Group 4 roar up the Glen and the Long One... well, it will be shorter than normal this time around.

The Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally – planned for October 8-11 – has been cancelled.

Clerk of the Course Andy Jardine admitted the decision was dictated by ongoing uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. While preparations for the iconic Scottish island rally had been moving forward, with the team behind the sell-out event closely monitoring the Scottish Government's 'route out of lockdown,' the organisers are unwilling to proceed given the possible risk of spreading the virus.

Jardine said: 'It was looking good for a while.

'October seemed so far off and things were opening up again, but now the end of July is looming and we just can't commit to running the rally not knowing how the situation will develop.

'It's tough for the team as we put a lot of effort into developing different ways to work with the coronavirus restrictions, but it isn't practical to cover all the eventualities and keep everybody safe.

'This year has been unprecedented in the way we've seen our sport simply stopped in its tracks by this pandemic. But we have to remember that an awful lot of people have been – and continue to be – affected in the most tragic way by coronavirus.'

Mull Car Club chairman,

Fred Maclean added: 'While some of the island is preparing for some sort of tourist season in the weeks ahead, there remains uncertainty and many places are not opening.

Mull has remained apparently Covid-free throughout the lockdown period and there is a nervousness about what might happen when visitors return.

'This is the right decision for Mull and to ensure the rally is welcomed back in, hopefully, happier times in 2021.'

Demand for Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally remains exceptional, with competitors from across the world keeping in regular contact with the organisers in the hope of securing a place, were the 2020 event to run. Jardine is keen, however, this enforced break is used to take a look at ways to make a great rally even better.

Favourite

'After the event missed a couple of years due to the insurance issue, we got the overwhelming message that the Mull Rally was still a competitors' favourite when we broke the internet as entries opened in 2019,' added Jardine.

'This has energised the team to use this break to take a step back and think about a review of the format of the event and we'll be getting our heads together in the next couple of months to see what can be done to freshen it up a bit.

'It goes without saying, none of our Octobers will be the same this year. We'll all spend a bit longer watching Peter Taylor's run through Gribun on YouTube! But the key thing – the only thing – is to stay healthy, keep the island healthy and be back, bigger and better next time.'



David Bogie won the all-important race to be first Escort home in his gorgeous Mk 2 at the 2019 Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally.

Phase 3

FACE COVERINGS MUST BE WORN IN SCOTLAND'S SHOPS AND ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Remember, you can have coronavirus but show no symptoms, so a face covering reduces the risk of you unknowingly infecting others.

By wearing one in shops and on public transport you can feel confident that you're helping to protect yourself, staff and others.



Remember
FACTS
for a safer Scotland



Face coverings



Avoid crowded places



Clean your hands regularly



Two metre distance



Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms



CORONAVIRUS
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SAVE LIVES

gov.scot/coronavirus



OT

Project sees oysters being returned to Loch Craignish

A call is being put out to schools to take part in a native oyster restoration project at Loch Craignish, near Ardfern.

Over the next five years, the charity Seawilding, is planning to restore the native oyster beds at the loch with an exciting plan to reintroduce one million native oysters.

The protected species was once prevalent in most of Scottish sea lochs, but predation, disease and bottom trawling have destroyed most populations.

It is now recognised native oyster beds are an important part of the local marine eco-system. Each oyster can filtrate and clean up to 200 litres of water a day, and the native oyster reefs enhance biodiversity by becoming fish spawning grounds and nurseries.

Back in March, the charity Seawilding secured a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant to grow young native oysters over a five-year period in



floating baskets on the loch. When they are semi-mature, the oysters will be translocated to trial seabed sites around Loch Craignish where it is hoped they will become a self-sustaining population.

Project Coordinator Danny Renton, told The Oban Times: 'This is a pioneering project, driven by the Craignish community. Loch Craignish was once a rich environment for native oysters and scallops

in particular; but bottom trawling since the 1980s has destroyed much of the seabed. Our community wants to reverse that. We hear a lot about rewilding, but there's little action been taken so far with

The oysters are placed in the cages to be lowered into Loch Craignish at Ardfern Yacht Centre.

Photograph: Philip Price/Lochvisions

restoration of marine habitats – so what we are doing at Loch Craignish is an exciting opportunity to show that marine rewilding and reintroduction of priority marine species is possible.'

The project is teaming up with Scottish Association of Marine Science (SAMS) and the Department of Aquaculture from Stirling University to enable 20 marine science students to monitor, survey and research the restoration efforts over the next five years.

Meanwhile to kick off the project, the charity, along with local partner Heart of Argyll Wildlife Organisation

and the Ardfern Yacht Centre, has been introducing native oysters in suspended cages under the pontoons of the Yacht Centre.

Each Oyster Hoister houses 30 mature oysters which will help clean up the marina water as well as releasing spat, adding to the wider restoration effort in the loch. The hoisters are sponsored by members of the community and boat owners, and the plan is to suspend around 30 cages by the end of the year.

Andrew Ashton, the Director of the Ardfern Yacht Centre said: 'We at the Yacht Centre are delighted to be involved in this pioneering project. It's good news for us, our marine environment, local schools and the challenge of marine conservation generally. The clock is ticking for the health of our seas and it's exciting to see a community initiative that aims to restore an important species locally. We are encouraging boat owners to

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Alba Art Shop, Oban Photographic Shop,
Button Nose Boutique**

Wishing our local businesses all the best moving forward

STAY SAFE!

We will ask our visitors and residents to take individual and collective responsibility for helping to keep Oban a safer place.



This includes: Following the 'know before you go' approach. Carefully planning to follow local and national guidelines.



Maintaining social distancing at the prescribed distance.



Washing hands regularly for at least 20 seconds.



Staying at home if any symptoms of coronavirus are displayed by you or any member of your household.



Being patient and understanding We are all working to ensure that everyone feels safe and secure in our town and countryside



Encouraging the use of face coverings where possible and practical.

#ObanMinded



Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



Loch Craignish

get involved, by sponsoring an oyster hoister!

Meanwhile from August when schools open, the Heart of Argyll Wildlife Organisation (HAWO) will be working with school pupils to monitor the oysters in the Yacht Centre cages, measuring their growth and recording biodiversity.

HAWO is no stranger to re-introduction projects, having been involved in the ongoing return of beavers to Scotland for a number of years.

Oly Hemmings and Pete Creech, the organisation's Rangers, initially want pupils from five local primary schools to get involved in this exciting project. This is an opportunity for pupils to actively take part in valuable research that will be added to data already being collected from other oyster reintroductions throughout the UK.

Reflecting on Argyll's long association with European native oysters, Oly said:

'We've been interacting with oysters in Argyll for around 8,500 years and it is fantastic to be able to get future generations involved in ensuring this relationship continues.'

Any schools interested can email Oly and Pete at info@heartofargyllwildlife.org for further information. A teacher's resource pack that can be used in conjunction with school visits or as a standalone resource is available. The educational objectives are fully-funded by the project's funders, the National Lottery, and this includes travel to and from the project venue at Ardferrn Yacht Centre. Oly and Pete also intend to engage with older schoolchildren and community groups as the project progresses.

For further information about the Loch Craignish Native Oyster Restoration Project, please visit www.seawilding.org or email info@seawilding.org

Call for radical action in face of Gaelic decline

In response to a recent study conducted by Gaelic experts and socio-linguists at the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), the Highlands and Islands Students Association (HISA) has called for action to save the Gaelic language.

A recent report entitled Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community found that only 11,000 people were habitual Gaelic speakers, and forecasts that next year's national census will find the proportion of people in the Western Isles who speak Gaelic has fallen to nearly 45 per cent.

Undertaken by the UHI, the study provides in-depth analysis of the use and transmission of Scottish Gaelic as a communal language in the Western Isles, in Staffin in the Isle of Skye, and in the Isle of Tiree.

Just last week, HISA launched a Gaelic Representation Project to enhance the voice of Gaelic-speaking and Gaelic-learning students across the institution, with funding awarded by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and supported by the UHI.

The project should ensure a strong voice and widened opportunities for all Gaelic-speakers and learners no matter

where or what they study across the region, to accommodate normalised use of the language at college, at the university and in our communities.

Commenting on the study, HISA president, Florence Jansen, said: 'The study by the university clearly identifies the need for action to save the Gaelic language. At HISA, we believe that the use of Gaelic should be normalised and institutions in Scotland must play their part to be accommodating.'

'We're currently undertaking a project to establish HISA as a bilingual organisation, a change that will affect the way the organisation is structured and how our staff will work. If students wish to engage their students' association in the native language of the country, they should be able to do so.'

'As the largest students' association in the Highlands and Islands, we are willing to work with other bodies to encourage the everyday use of Gaelic. There are still too many barriers to its use in society. If increased use of Gaelic remains an ambition, institutions must be accommodating to have it used in formal environments if we expect it to be also used in social, home and everyday life.'

Plan needed for backlog of medical operations

Highlands and Islands MSP Donald Cameron, pictured, has said that the Scottish Government must focus on supporting NHS Highland, and the other Health Boards in Scotland, to address the backlog in operations that



has accrued due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr Cameron said: 'The fall in the number of operations is startling. In the last two months that we have figures for – April and May – the total number of operations that took place

in the NHS Highland region was 382.

'During the equivalent period last year the number was 2,731.

'Inevitably that must mean that a huge backlog has built up while NHS staff have focused on the fight against the coronavirus.

'It's absolutely essential that

the Scottish Government now prioritises organising the resources to address this backlog before it develops into a health emergency.

'We cannot afford any distractions, let alone speculation about the constitution which, unfortunately, seems to be obscuring some SNP politicians at the moment.'

Are you a current or former Postmaster?

If you held a contract with Post Office and experienced shortfalls which you believe were caused by previous versions of Horizon, you may be eligible to make a claim.

If you wish to register a claim, the Historical Shortfall Scheme is open until 14 August 2020.

Cases will be assessed by an independent advisory panel.

For details and to submit a claim please visit onepostoffice.co.uk/scheme

POST OFFICE

BUSINESS NEWS

New appointments to board of Gael Force

Aquaculture equipment and technology supply partner Gael Force Group has announced new appointments to its board of directors as it implements an ambitious new five-year strategy to grow into a world-class supply partner in the global aquaculture sector.

The implementation of the new strategy comes on the back of a strong period of growth which saw sales climb from £17.1million in 2016 to £41.5m in 2019. Successful delivery of the strategy is expected to lead to a similar rate of growth as the previous four years, with more than a doubling of sales and its workforce over the five-year period.

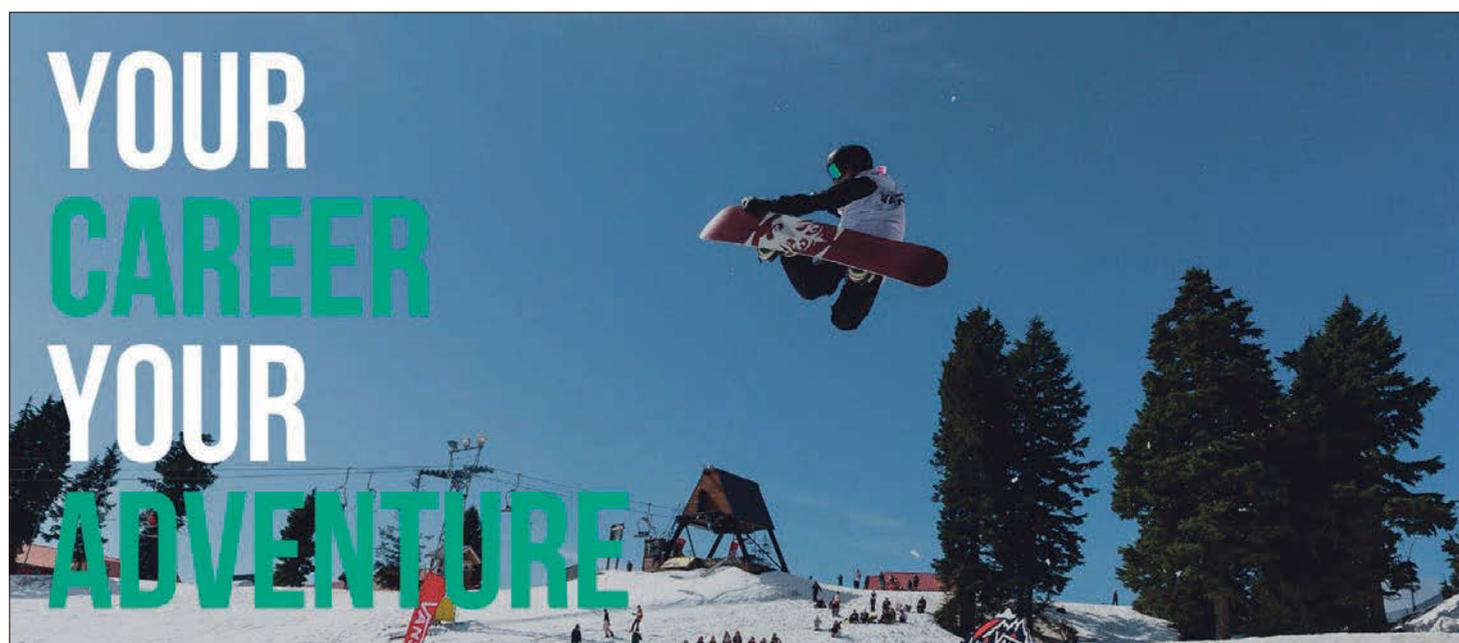
The timing of the new strategy coincides with key appointments to the Gael Force Group board and the retirement of two of its stalwarts.

Group sales director Jamie Young and group production director Stephen Offord have both been promoted to the Gael Force Group board and will play key senior roles in driving the new strategy.

Retiring this September from Gael Force Fusion after nearly 20 years of service is operations director Iain Forbes, who said: 'I am certain the company will continue to go from strength to strength in the forthcoming years and that it is clearly in the very best of hands. I wish everyone at Gael Force Group all the very best.'

Commenting on Mr Forbes' forthcoming retirement, group managing director Stewart Graham said: 'Iain leaves behind a tremendous legacy in the aquaculture sector, to Argyll and the west coast of Scotland, as well as a team and ownership which will see the company develop and grow further into the future.'

New group finance director Robert Foster who joins from Halliburton, replaces the outgoing Tim Phillips, who is retiring after almost eight years of service with Gael Force. Mr Phillips said: 'I can honestly say that there has not been one day in my spell at Gael Force when I haven't felt better from virtually every interaction I've had. Serving our customers is the beginning and the end.'



Coollest school in Highlands

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) West Highland is delighted to deliver our second virtual event in a series of employer-led online events to showcase the employment opportunities that are on offer not just in the West Highlands but across the Highland geography in outdoor adventure.

Join us on Wednesday July 22 at 2.30pm via Zoom, for a one-hour insight into the world of outdoor adventure and the career options available in adventure tourism, helping you to make your next choice for the future.

We are linking with regional DYW programmes, DYW Inverness and Central Highland and DYW North Highland so young people across our regions can find out more about a career in adventure.

This event will be live and interactive so you can hear first-hand from a variety of professionals who work within the outdoor education and adventure tourism sector. This will also provide the opportunity to discover a route into the outdoor world through courses available within the School of Adventure at West Highland College UHI.

This online event is aimed at school-leavers but is also open to all young people out of school up to the age of 24, those who may have been made redundant, are unemployed, or simply looking for a career opportunity or change. Teachers, parents and carers are also welcomed to join and learn about the opportunities available in this sector.

You will get the chance to hear from and speak with: Brodie Hood, University of the Highlands and Islands alumni and passionate outdoor adventurer and photographer; Keir Coupland, an outdoor sports specialist and globe trotter with coaching skills from international mountain biking and snowboarding; Alice Cant, business management graduate who works with the Nevis Range marketing team; Ann-Marie Campbell, she has a range of skills across sectors and is part of the Nevis Range team in Human Resources; Chris Ball, founder of Enduro World Series and running the best respected skills academy in the UK – Dirt School. You'll hear how passion and grit will help you forge a career; Reece McAfee, founder of outdoor adventure sports company River to Sea Scotland, based

across Lochaber. He has learned by experience within education and learning that outdoor education is a key part of child development and a support to Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and school education; Carl Haberl, curriculum area lead, School of Adventure Studies at West Highland College (UHI) in Fort William, will provide insight into the many opportunities available to learn at West Highland College and beyond through the University of the Highlands and Islands network.

Frazer Coupland, DYW West Highland lead and CEO of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce said: 'Outdoor education and adventure tourism seamlessly taps into the Highland's natural competitive advantage and as such the sector has significant potential for further growth. We are excited to partner with West Highland College (UHI) and with the assistance of our neighbour DYW programmes we want to provide young people with the inspiration to consider a career in adventure.'

Sign up now via www.dywwesthighland.org and this could be the most valuable one hour you will spend this summer.

Spaghetti Carbonara



½ Syn per serving 20 minutes Serves 4

With just a handful of ingredients, this lightened-up carbonara is a dinner-time hero. It has all the taste of the creamy Italian classic without the Syns!

Ingredients

400g dried spaghetti

Small handful of fresh chives, finely snipped

4 tbsp fat-free natural fromage frais

6 back bacon rashers, visible fat removed

2 level tbsp grated fresh Parmesan

Method:

1. Cook the spaghetti according to the pack instructions. Drain well and return to the saucepan.
2. Meanwhile, place a large non-stick frying pan over a high heat. Add the bacon and dry-fry for 2-3 minutes, then turn off the heat.
3. Lightly beat the eggs, season lightly and stir in the fromage frais, 1 level tbsp Parmesan and most of the chives.
4. Add the bacon to the drained spaghetti and mix well over a low heat, then remove from the heat and stir in the egg mixture. Toss thoroughly so that the eggs thicken in the residual heat, making a sauce that coats the pasta.
5. Divide the spaghetti between 4 bowls, then divide over the remaining Parmesan and chives. Serve hot.

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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ANGUS MACDONALD

fort@obantimes.co.uk



Buying local

Do you care where your food comes from? Do you go into the supermarket and load up with the cheapest recognisable brand product and head to the till? When buying sausages or burgers does it matter to you whether the meat has been stripped off the bone by power hoses, and all sorts of undesirable body parts minced up? Perhaps you look at the strawberries, see they have been flown in from Morocco when you know that delicious strawberries are grown in Scotland right now.

According to the Office for National Statistics, our weekly food shop, excluding alcohol, falls steadily and is now just over 10 per cent of our average household income. Supermarkets have driven down prices to a level where our farming is barely viable; Britain imports 61 per cent of its food, down from 80 per cent 30 years ago, and security



of food supply has shown to be a real concern.

What I am trying to convey is that there is a cost to cheap food, flowers or clothing. You can get bigger and cheaper but someone is paying, perhaps in the almost starvation wages of Leicester garment makers or industrial abattoirs where 'sub contractors' make appalling money in terrible conditions. In Kenya your cheap roses might well have been irrigated by water pumped from Lake Naivasha, taking it to unsustainably low levels. It might be that your apples or peas tasted

less good than you remember when you were young. What has changed?

During lockdown I sense that with a reluctance to go to supermarkets, people discovered the benefits of buying local. Our village shops did a fantastic job of keeping well stocked and in Scotland we have the launch of supportlocal.scot directory, and it's clear what an amazing role Food Lochaber and Food from Argyll play.

Scotland's food and drink industry is world class, with combined sales of £15

billion, of which our whisky and salmon are a significant percentage. We export all over the world, yet here at home do we appreciate our world-class beef, lamb, seafood etc. that is so sought after elsewhere?

Locally the word got out that Lochaber Larder had teamed up with Glen Spean Brewery* and Iain Stewart Fishmonger, and that the most delicious local produce could be delivered to your door while we enjoyed our superlative early summer. The scallop and prawn fishermen didn't have restaurants or overseas markets to sell to and were more than delighted to sell at the jetty to any local who dropped by, with Tobermory Fish Company and Ethical Shellfish organising deliveries in chilled vans. Many of us discovered the benefits of growing our own vegetables and now have salad that will grow until late September.

Anja Baak from Great Glen Charcuterie (pictured), in Roy Bridge, says: 'I think a

lot of people are feeling more connected to food and really thinking about where it comes from; they like to connect to growers and producers.'

Supplies of flour and yeast soared as families rediscovered baking and at home we enjoyed barbecues of Roshven Hill Farm beef burgers from nearby, which had its cattle butchered at the Mull abattoir. How pleasing to know the lady who reared the calves, to see the animals age on the hillside and know they had been dispatched in the most humane way, with the burgers consisting of ingredients we would be pleased to know about.

Is it a middle-class thing to be able to afford local food? If money is spent on takeaways and ready-to-eat meals, then actually batch cooking with quality ingredients is almost certainly cheaper, as well as higher quality. But buying local is not just about the food or drink, it's about community, friendship, laughter, knowing

you are helping your neighbour and getting a fresher, healthier product in return. The middleman is cut out, you are buying from source.

All over the world there are thriving street markets, yet we only have a sparse one in Fort William at one end of town. We need them up and down the West Coast, a fish stand, butcher, a delicatessen with cheese and cured meats, vegetables picked that morning, delicious baking. It would make the high street buzz, help the other retailers and revive the sense of community.

Will this era of local buying continue? Are we prepared to pay a bit more for the locally sourced, higher quality product from people we know? Do you accept that these micro businesses are the lifeblood of our local society and economy, and if we have decent regular farmers market in our towns will you support them?

*Co-owned by Ian Peter MacDonald.

Business Gateway beats target to support local businesses by almost double

Argyll and Bute Council's Business Gateway provided support to 65 existing businesses in the last quarter of 2019/20. That's almost double the target of 38 it aimed to reach in that time period.

This success was reported to the council's Business Continuity Committee on Thursday (25 June).

That means by the end of the year, the Business Gateway team has supported 255 existing businesses against a target of 200.



The team provides a wide range of support, including free and impartial business advice, tailored to individual business needs, through one to one support from a business adviser as well as through a range of locally run courses and on-line resources.

Customer feedback continues to achieve good levels of satisfaction.

During 2019/20, the Business Gateway team also supported 138 businesses to start-up, an

increase of 22 businesses from 2018/19, and surpassing of the Service Plan target of 100. The start-up targets for 2019/20 were met and exceeded for all four areas of Argyll and Bute.

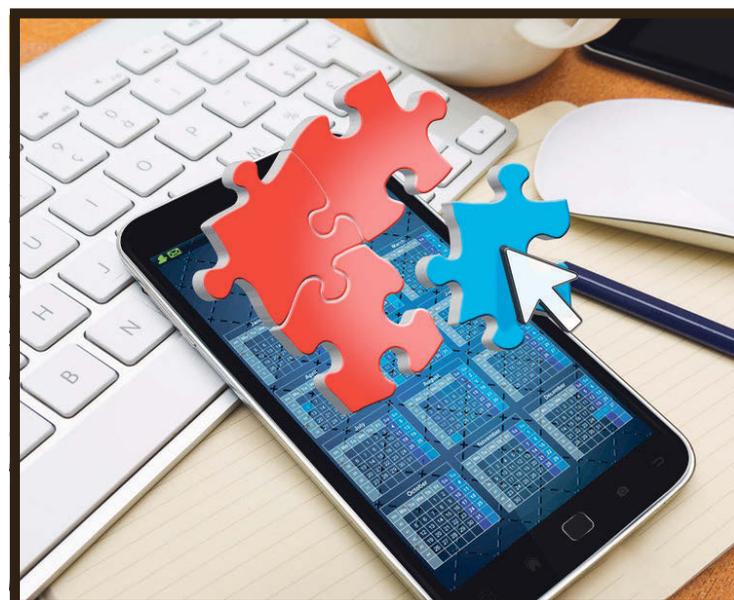
Councillor Alastair Redman, Policy Lead for Economic Growth, said: 'Argyll and Bute is full of talented and creative people and this is reflected in our higher than average level of self-employment.'

'We have a terrifically dedicated team at Business Gateway who support a diverse range of local enterprises, from sole traders right up

to those on the cusp of major growth. Together they have been working to underpin and grow the area's economy.'

'Obviously these figures reflect last year, and our businesses and economy have faced an incredibly tough few months. Business Gateway has changed the way it operates to help many businesses to adapt to new ways of working, and to help them access support grants.'

'More information is available on our website: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-businesses.'



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.

info@wyliebisset.com www.wyliebisset.com

Call now on 0141 566 7096



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OT

LETTERS

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

Clean up your act!

Over the weekend 47 cars, 11 tents and one caravan were counted parked up at Glen Orchy, where there are no toilets or bins. And in Oban, campervans are ignoring notices forbidding overnight camping at Ganavan.

Now following an unprecedented amount of rubbish being left behind at some of our outstanding beauty spots – including excrement and camping gear – many people have said, enough!

This week Oban and Lorn Area Committee spoke out, appealing to visitors – and locals, because the mess is not just down to tourists – to have a bit of respect for our town, villages, and countryside.

The outstanding natural beauty of our region is, after all, why many people visit. But if this carries on and visitors wanting to spend time – and money – in our area are met by litter and flytipping, many may decide not to come back.

Would you want to take your children to a beach where they could cut their feet on broken beer bottles? Or stop for a picnic lunch at a beauty spot where people have left bags of rubbish or human excrement?

Of course you wouldn't.

If we don't clean up our act, legislation may be the only way to force people to pick up after themselves, and that's not what any of us want.

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 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.



The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.

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Ferry travel for island residents: is this equity with mainland citizens?

Extract of open letter to Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for energy, connectivity and the islands.

You will be aware of this petition (<http://chnng.it/rKZpYRxB55>) which asks that island residents across the ferry network be given some rights of priority booking to ensure that their reasonable travel needs between home and the mainland are secured.

I had an extensive correspondence with yourself and Robbie Drummond about this last year. I have written to Mr. Drummond again and he has reiterated what he said then: CalMac cannot give priority to island residents because it is required by the terms of its contract with Transport Scotland to treat all passengers exactly the same. This has also been confirmed by Transport Scotland who wrote to me on July 8 stating, 'The Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services contract is quite explicit in that "the Operator must ensure that all bookings and reservations are dealt with on a first come first served basis. There must be no discrimination between one ferry user and other".'

Island life has many advantages but the requirement to cross miles of water when leaving or returning home unavoidably constrains the ability of residents to travel. The weather, mechanical breakdowns and limited ferry capacity are all facts of life which have to be accommodated. The journeys of islanders will always be longer, slower and more expensive than those of mainland residents. By and large island residents realise that these relative disadvantages are consequences of their own choices and accept them as such but even taking this into account it is not reasonable to maintain that the current situation represents anything like a position of equity between Scottish island residents and Scottish mainland residents travelling between their homes and mainland Scotland.

The ferries are the only practicable roads to the islands but their carrying capacity is severely limited and inadequate for the volume of traffic which wishes to use them. On Islay residents are outnumbered by visitors 40 to one even before taking freight traffic into account. Individual visitors come to the island once, perhaps twice, in a year for their holidays. They can and do book their passage months in advance. Their travel needs are not comparable with those of island residents. Neither are those of freight. These other users outcompete the island's residents by sheer weight of numbers and the practical effect of this is that the travel needs of tourists and freight take priority by force over the sort of reasonable, rou-

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

'S gann a chreideas mi gum bheil sinn aig meadhan an t-samhraidh! Saoilidh mi, agus tha mi air a bhith a' cluinntinn an aon bheachd bho dhaoine eile, gun deach na ceithir mìosan mu dheireadh seachad cha mhòr gun fhiosta, a dh'aindeoin an t-suidheachaidh neo-àbhaisteach a bh' againn fo ghlasadh a' choròna-bhiorais. Bha fadachd oirnn uile chun an tigeadh fuasgladh air bacaidhean a' ghlasaidh, agus mu dheireadh thall tha sin air tòiseachadh agus tha cead againn siubhal air feadh na dùthcha a-rithist. Thug sinne cuairt dhan Eilean Sgitheanach airson a' chiad turas bhon Ghearran, agus leis an fhirinn innse bha an turas a' faireachadh car annasach an dèidh ùine cha fada, ach tha mi creidsinn gur e a' annasaiche uile cho beag 's a bha de chàraichean air an rathad faisg air meadhan an t-samhraidh. Gun teagamh, tha an t-sàmhchair sin air fìor dhroch bhuaidh a thoirt air beòshlaint mhòran dhaoine air Ghàidhealtachd agus anns na h-Eileanan a tha cho mòr an eisimeil turasachd, agus gu dearbh tha cuid a' ghnìomhachasan beaga air dùnadh uile gu lèir ri linn dìth cosnaidh.

Ach bhon t-seachdain seo a-mach tha dùil ri sruth de shluagh aig tuath agus san iar, agus dh'fhaodadh gur ann a bhios cus a' tighinn! Chan eil cho fada bhon a chunnacas luchd-turais a' cadal a-muigh san Eilean Sgitheanach ri linn 's nach gabhadh àite-fuirich a lorg, ach bithear an dòchas nach ruig sinn an ìre sin a-rithist! 'S e firinn na cùise nach gabh smachd cumail neo

a ghabhail air na h-àireamhan de luchd-turais a thig gu ruig nan sgìrean againn, agus gu ìre tha an aon rud fìor mun dòigh sam bi cuid dhiubh gan giùlan fhèin.

Chan iongnadh mar sin ged a bhiodh cuid a' faireachadh rud beag an-fhoiseil is na bacaidhean gan togail. Fiù 's nuair a bha an glasadh stèidhichte bha beagan luchd-turais a' nochdadh, gun fhios ciamar nach robh iad mothachail air na riaghailtean.

Ach an uair a tha modhan giùlain an urra ri ciall an t-sluaigh bidh cuideigin gam briseadh, agus sin far am bheil an cunnart agus adhbhar na h-iomagain an-dràsta. Cuirear fàilte air an teachd-a-steach a chuireas na coigrich ri gnìomhachasan de gach seòrsa ach chan urrainnear a bhith cinnteach nach toir cuideigin an galair mallaichte leotha cuideachd, gun fhiosta.

Tha e gu bhith doirbh rian a chumail air as-tar dhaoine bho chèile agus aig an aon àm an t-seirbheis air am bi feum aca a' fhriththeadh. Ma bha suidheachadh riamh an urra ri tùr a' mhòr-shluaigh 's e na tha gu bhith romhainn thar ùine shaor-làithean an t-samhraidh seo, agus air sgàth a h-uile neach a bhios an sàs bidh sinn an dòchas gun tèid gnothaichean mar a dh'iarramaid.

Gu cinnteach chan iarramaid tilleadh gu glasadh!

Allan Campbell
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

time, day to day travel needs of the island residents which are taken for granted by those who live on the mainland. No resident of Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness, or indeed any place on the mainland accessible by public highway needs to plan and book ahead sometimes weeks in advance so that they can travel to see their dentist, buy a new fridge, get their car repaired or visit with their parents, children or grandchildren. No mainland resident, having travelled from their home without fixing a definite return date, faces the prospect of hours or days waiting in a queue and nights sleeping in a hotel not knowing when they might eventually get home. No mainland resident has to book a space for their car on the public road weeks ahead of the time that they hope to drive on it. This is not just a problem for Islay or just a problem of the Covid emergency. Even in normal times, across the western isles on many busy tourist routes

ferries are booked up weeks in advance by visitors and freight so that island residents experience significant difficulties in travelling. The current arrangements obviously disadvantage islanders, are a clear impediment to their ability to travel, make a mockery of the much repeated designation of the ferries as a Lifeline Service and are contrary to the implied promise of 'road equivalent tariff' that the ferries provide a passage to the islands for residents which is as easy and as cheap as the open road.

This unfairness could easily be addressed by changing CalMac's contract and requiring them to reserve a small proportion of ferry berths until 48 hours before each sailing which could only be booked by island residents, who would be required to present a photo ID resident's ferry card when doing so and again when travelling. This type of solution has been used in other situations,

Still operating under Government guidelines

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DISTRICT NEWS

is easy to administer, is inexpensive and has been suggested as a constructive approach on many previous occasions.

The failure of Transport Scotland to take this or any equivalent alternative action to redress this inequity suggests that, without public discussion or consultation, it has tacitly determined that equity between Scottish island residents and Scottish mainland residents travelling between their homes and other parts of mainland Scotland is satisfied by the opportunity to compete on equal terms for ferry places with all other travellers to the islands. It suggests that Transport Scotland does not recognise the increasing unfairness to island residents of this unequal competition and does not understand how much of a burden and a worry travel for island residents has become.

In this context, I would be grateful if you would answer the following questions.

■ Does Transport Scotland consider that equity between Scottish island residents and Scottish mainland residents in travelling between their homes and any part of the Scottish mainland is fully satisfied by the island resident's opportunity to compete on a first come first served basis with all other persons who wish to travel to and from the islands?

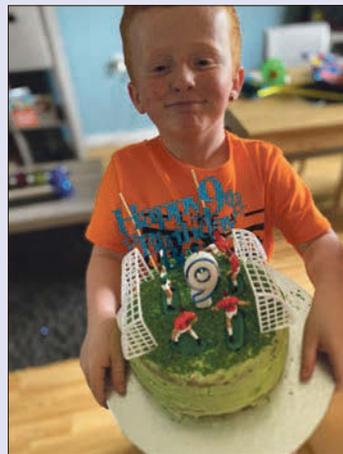
■ If the answer is 'Yes' will you please give details of the decision making process and the reasoning that has been used by Transport Scotland in making this decision? Will you also tell me where details of these processes, reasons and the decision itself have been recorded and are available to the public?

■ If the answer is 'No' will you please confirm that Transport Scotland could make arrangements to give priority booking rights for ferry travel to and from their home island to Scottish island residents if it wished by changing the conditions its contract with CalMac to instruct them to do so?

Finally, I would be grateful if you would comment on the status and utility of "Island Proofing" and the 'Islands Bill' in this context. Specifically, why should Scottish island residents have any confidence that the constraints and inequities consequent on living on an island will be recognised and ameliorated while Transport Scotland continues to tolerate this particularly egregious example?

Chris Abell, Port Ellen, Islay.

Happy lockdown birthday!



Benjamin Munro, from Oban, celebrated his 9th birthday on Thursday July 2. Ben asked for a DJ set for his birthday so his family set up a tent in the garden with his DJ set and balloons. He played music all day and had a great time. Ben said that he had enjoyed his lockdown birthday better most other birthdays!



Kyra Macmillan, left, from Connel, turned six on Wednesday, July 8. The sun was shining and Kyra had a lovely day in the garden with her family playing party games.



Alfie Alistair Black, left, from Oban, celebrated his first birthday on Monday, July 6. Alfie celebrated with garden visits from his family, lots of cake and even more presents.



Twins Sarah and Campbell MacLeod, from Oban, turned two on Tuesday July 7, and celebrated with a small garden party with their closest family. Their big sister Faith turned four on April 4, which was right at the beginning of lockdown, so to make up for it the family celebrated her day again too. With a cake each there was lots to go round!



Samantha with her family.

High school dux thanks all her supporters

The Islay High School dux winner has paid tribute to all those who supported her through her secondary schooling.

Samantha MacArthur was not able to make the traditional speech at an official awards ceremony so she penned her own instead and posted it on the school's Facebook page.

'I wish I could have made this speech in person to thank all the people who mean the most to me but due to the current circumstances, the celebration of achievements has been cancelled and so all of the students have missed the opportunity to be presented with their well-earned rewards,' she wrote.

As well as mentioning highlights of her secondary school years the 18-year-old sent a heartfelt thanks to all the teachers and staff that had helped her along the way including Mr Pollock, Ms Priestly, Mr Weatherhogg, Dr Weatherhogg, Ms Fuery, Mr Kitching, Mrs Mitchell, Mr McDermott, Mr Harrison, Mrs Carmichael and Mrs Bauld.

Samantha also thanked her parents Mairi and Iain, her big sister Kirsty, Gran Gilda and Nana Merrick and her wider family and friends.

By the end of her time at Islay High School Samantha had achieved eight national 5s, eight highers and two advanced highers. She has excelled in English, Maths, Music, Geography, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Business Management.

Samantha and older sibling Kirsty celebrated their respective 18th and 21st birthdays during lockdown.

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Morvern Lines

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A recent planning application to alter and add to a magnificent 100-year-old private ballroom in Lochaber has created not only an interest in its size and design, but awakened a fascination in the material used in its construction.

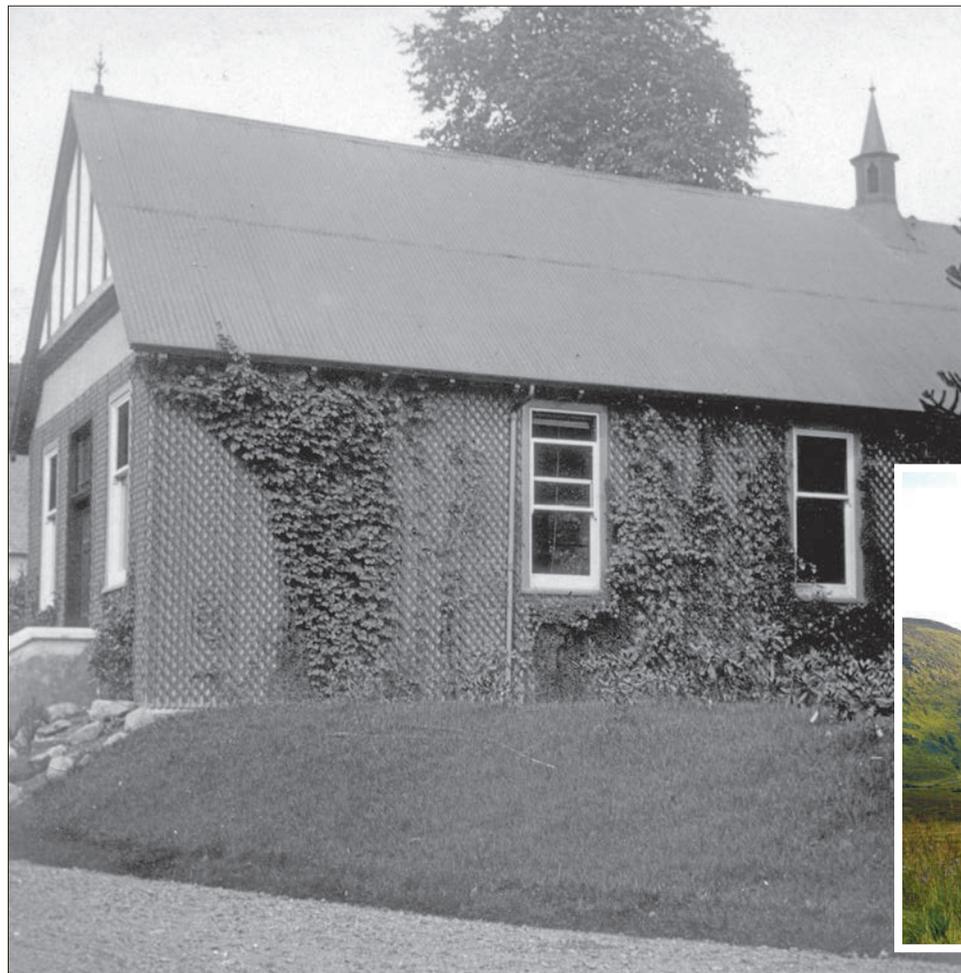
Corrugated iron buildings were common across the Highlands when the ballroom was built but examples are now becoming so rare they are being listed by Historic Scotland. The quality of the material used in those days was far superior to that bought from industrial suppliers today.

The first corrugated iron was, in fact, wrought iron, which was remarkably weather resistant. It was also a lot thicker and more galvanised than today's. It truly was, and still is, a wonderful material which now comes in a greater range of shapes and sizes.

Henry Robinson Palmer, who recognised its potential for covering wide span roofs, patented corrugated iron in 1829. The following year, Palmer, who was an engineer and architect with the London Dock Company, built a large shed at the docks roofed entirely of self-supporting corrugated iron sheets and spanning 40 feet. By the 1840s the production of fully prefabricated corrugated-iron buildings was established in Britain. Many of these were exported to Australia and South Africa. Public fascination with this new and exciting material was such that in 1845 an 'iron palace' built in Liverpool for export to Africa, was displayed to the public, who paid a small fee to view it.

However, the public love affair with corrugated iron was not unanimous. Contemporary newspaper reports show that although it was considered all right in rural areas it was not generally tolerated in towns and cities where, for example, some bishops were unwilling to consecrate iron churches. Something which The Rt Rev Angus MacDonald, the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, had no qualms about when, in 1886, he blessed Oban's world famous ProCathedral, better known locally as the Tin Cathedral, which stood on the site of the present St Columba's Cathedral. (The Tin Cathedral will feature in a later Morvern Lines).

Cheap to build and light enough to be transported great distances on land and water,



Left, the rare Lochaber corrugated iron ballroom in 1904, a year after it was built, its small spire can clearly be seen in the background in this charming photograph (right) taken from the old walled garden in 1904.

Photographs supplied by Iain Thorne; corrugated iron buildings had many uses. The old school room of Strathan, below, which stood at the head of Loch Arkaig until it was blown down in a storm in 2015. Norman Maclean the entertainer and Gaelic champion, and James Kennedy the well known Lochaber deer stalker, were educated here. Photograph William Cameron.



corrugated iron was to be found everywhere, including some of the most isolated parts of the Highlands and Islands. Fine examples of cottages, boathouses, schools, halls, churches, sheep and cattle sheds, kennels and hen-houses, to name only a few uses to which it was put, are still to be seen from Campbeltown to Cape Wrath and St Kilda to Peterhead. These structures, usually in kit form, were bought in much the same way as we might order a garden shed from Amazon today. They were quick to put up and, as the perfect solution to a number of different needs within the community, soon became a familiar part of our cultural heritage. Many UK companies offered them for sale through illustrated catalogues. Humphreys' Ltd, Knightsbridge, Hyde Park, London, who were the recipient of several gold medals as builders

and suppliers to the military, corporations and town councils, sold church halls, chapels, schools, reading rooms and isolation hospitals and offered to erect them in any part of the United Kingdom and abroad. Unfortunately, however, it was very much a case of 'price on application'. E T Bellhouse and Co, the Eagle Foundry in Manchester, were more upfront. From their catalogues we know they charged £500 for a two-storey, eight-roomed house and £100 for a cottage with two rooms, both with an incredible guarantee that they would be equal to the most comfortable house of comparable size in England. Bellhouse and Co's greatest coup was undoubtedly securing a presence on Balmoral Estate.

Prince Albert, the Prince Consort, who initiated the Great Crystal Palace Exhibition opened

in Hyde Park, London, on 1 May 1851, was so taken by a corrugated iron building he saw there he gave them a commission to provide a ballroom made from it for Queen Victoria on condition it would be ready for that year's annual Ghillies Ball on 1 October. It is still there but now serves as a carpenter's workshop and store.

Interest in corrugated-iron buildings has not gone away. When Strutt & Parker, one of the largest property consultancies in the UK, were asked a few years ago to market a family home in Strathspey built entirely from corrugated iron, house hunters in the Highlands queued to pay £175,000 for a structure which cost the seller's father, a local farmer, £425 to put up at the turn of the 20th century to move his family into for a couple of months every summer while their farmhouse was rented out to wealthy holi-



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

Thur	02.20	3.1	08.24	1.7
	14.41	3.0	20.36	1.8
Fri	03.20	3.2	09.20	1.5
	15.34	3.2	21.40	1.6
Sat	04.09	3.4	10.07	1.3
	16.20	3.4	22.34	1.4
Sun	04.54	3.5	10.50	1.1
	17.02	3.6	23.21	1.2
Mon	05.35	3.6	11.31	0.9
	17.42	3.7	** **	**
Tues	00.06	1.0	06.14	3.7
	12.12	0.7	18.20	3.9
Wed	00.49	0.9	06.50	3.8
	12.52	0.6	18.58	3.9

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

Ardrishaig	-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
Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 13°C to 15°C.

FRIDAY
Light rain and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 11°C to 15°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK
Saturday
Sunny intervals / moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 15°C.

Sunday
Sunny intervals / gentle breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 15°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST



HIGH 15 LOW 11

9 MPH



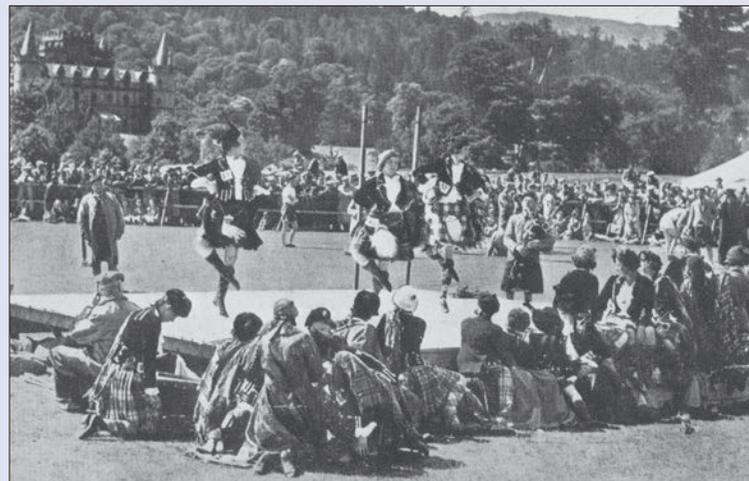
daymakers. The house, which features a kitchen, sitting room, dining room, two bathrooms and three bedrooms, is thought to have been bought as a ready-to-assemble kit from the catalogue of William Cooper Ltd, Old Kent Road, London. A spokesperson for Strutt & Parker said: 'When the surveyor came to do the house he was rather worried at its first appearance but he was pleasantly surprised when he looked around it. He said it is probably better built than most houses nowadays.'

The Lochaber ballroom which is attracting so much attention, was built in 1903 by a Derbyshire industrialist. It measures 70ft long, 24ft broad and 29ft high. Inside there is a stage, a small sitooterie and a WC. The original richly-patinaed pitch-pine walls are covered with stags' heads, and flags and bunting taken from

the 151-ton family yacht, named the Sanda, which, every few years, would steam out to St Kilda to pick up specially-commissioned tweed woven by the islanders for the family and their shepherds and stalkers. Its function was to provide a sufficiently large and comfortable dance hall for family and guests during the stalking season, and employees and friends at Christmas and other times of the year. It and the adjoining shooting lodge, stand in a designed landscape created at a period of great social and economic change in the Highlands by the arrival of southern proprietors and their unimaginable 'new' money bringing an end to a quasi-feudal subsistence economy with tenure for service.

That reason alone make buildings such as these stand out and worthy of protection.

Inveraray Games would have been celebrating its 149th anniversary this year, but instead the games have had to be cancelled due to Covid; and inset, Seton Gordon.



A year without the Games...

This week we would normally be looking forward in the coming days to Inveraray Games, Mull Games and Taynuilt Games, all important annual events for their local communities, writes Eric MacIntyre.

Next month should be held the Argyllshire Gathering, one year short of its 150th anniversary.

Sadly, all Highland Games in Scotland have been cancelled in 2020 because of coronavirus and competitors will have to await another day to show fitness and strength, piping skills and intricate dance steps to the public. It is, therefore, a good moment to reflect on past times and the future of these events.

In September 1944 the celebrated Highland naturalist and piping judge Seton Gordon wrote an article for the *Scottish Field* in which he speculated if all the games, cancelled during the war, would return after the end of the conflict. The vast majority did, but it took Inveraray Games till 1958 to return and grow into one of the biggest and most successful in Scotland. As Seton Gordon wrote, 'there is one thing Hitler cannot do and that is silence the pipes'.

Once more, as in the two World Wars, the organisers of the games have had to make the difficult decision to cancel, with the corresponding impact on local economies and the social benefits of their great annual celebration. As my father Angus wrote in his poem *The Games*, such gatherings allow for:

Suspension of your labours,
A time of fun and laughs
The place to greet your neighbours,
In heartfelt Slainte –Mhaths.
He was the treasurer of Mull Highland



Games when the tempest of 1962 wreaked havoc and put the future of the event in doubt. Happily they survived and are successful to this day.

The games are also vital to an area's economy, with tourists paying an entrance fee or purchasing the range of local wares on offer at the event.

Although there will no gatherings this summer, Highland Games have used online and social media platforms to try to keep them in the public eye in these strange times.

Piping competitions have been staged and parents shown how to make a fun caber for children. The Argyllshire Gathering is still hoping to stage invitational piping competition, either online or with an audience, with the necessary restrictions in place. All of our local games have hard-working committees, a sterling band of local volunteers and a sound financial base, so should be able to survive till the hoped-for return in 2021.

Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, is patron of the Scottish Highland Games Association and he has spoken of how important Highland Games are to him and his family. He feels that 'the loyalty, strength and determination that lie at the very heart of our Games will, I am sure, see us through to better times ahead'.

Echoing Seton Gordon's 1944 speculations, the Duke goes on to say: 'Let us look forward to happier times when, once again the pipes can be tuned, the cabers rolled out, the kilts strapped on and we can head out once more to enjoy all that we love and share at our uniquely special Highland Games.'

All Highlanders will raise a glass to that for 2021.

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Oban music lovers hit Spotify with crazy collaboration

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Constrained from his usual musical endeavours by lockdown measures 4below's Andy Bruce has taken to Spotify in a bid to put together an eclectic collaboration of like-minded Obanites.

His euphonious venture is proving to be a huge hit.

After sending out a request through the Oban Musicians Facebook group for people to send him their artist links he was staggered by the response. The collaborative playlist, simply entitled Oban, has accumulated so much material that Andy has had to limit it to a maximum five tracks per artist.

Talking about the inspiration behind the project, the bassist said: 'I was bored on Sunday and started with my own songs and some performed by my mates' bands and others that I

was aware of. 'I then put out a request via social media groups for any others that would like their music added and was overwhelmed by the response not just from musicians themselves but from music fans.'

The crazy cross-genre playlist now has 100s of songs in it, mostly from little known independent artists, including rap, rock, folk and trad.

'I've not tried to moderate it in any way,' added Andy.

The only criteria is one band member must live or have lived in the Oban area and that there is a five-track limit on each artist/band.

'It is collaborative but I did remove one band that someone added to it as they were from Skye... But I let Tide Lines slide as one of their members is from Mull.

Although his own musical preferences veer towards the alternative rock/grunge sounds, Andy's main aim for the playlist is to bring all

the local under-the-radar artists to people's attention.

'If you start letting personal preference dictate what goes on the list then it becomes a bit of a dictatorship,' he conceded.

'I was pretty astounded at the amount and the diversity of music from Oban. I have kept my personal music tastes out of it and the only rule I have was one member of the band had to live or have lived in Oban.

'I started off by putting in all the tracks by lesser known artists but as it grew some multi-album ones were appearing too, so I decided to just use five tracks from each in line with Spotify's strategy of featuring the top five popular tracks when you visit a artists profile.'

Artists include Citizen9, Little Bay, Atlas Run, Stephen Skinn, Elissa Conway and the Signal Fires, with K9 Kev, Crackin Craic and Angus MacColl among many others making



Andy Bruce created the collaborated playlist on Spotify and it has caught the imagination of music lovers.

an appearance. Andy has made the playlist public and collaborative so others can add to it too.

Search for Oban on Spotify or mes-

sage Andy through his Facebook page to add your songs.

Or simply visit this link on the internet: <https://bit.ly/obanandy>

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Young creatives to benefit from community arts fund

Highland arts communities have come together to provide significant funding for young people to support them with their creative ambitions, writes Fiona Scott.

The current Covid-19 situation has put a huge strain on the arts world across the globe and, fearing that emerging artists would be put off a promising career in the arts, the Fèis Rois led Highlands Youth Arts Hub (HYAH), have launched a new arts fund which offers 18 young artists from across the region the chance to secure £1,000 each.

Creative In Your Community will support the artists with projects which will maintain and develop their creativity and inspiration whilst also engaging with their local community.

Each of the 18 artists will also receive three days of mentoring from well-known, successful industry professionals,



Each of the 18 artists will also receive three days of mentoring from well-known, successful industry professionals, such as renowned Gaelic singer, Julie Fowlis. Photograph: Craig Mackay.

including; renowned Gaelic singer, Julie Fowlis, filmmaker Thomas Hogben, performance maker Robbie Synge, award-winning visual artist Joanne B Kaar, theatre maker Jenna Watt and Highland writer, Anne MacLeod.

The initiative is open to young artists, 16-25 years old, across the six art forms - dance, theatre, digital art/film, literature, music and visual art - who live in, or are originally from, the Highlands. Applicants must also either be in their final year at school and considering studying their chosen art form in the future;

currently in further/higher education in an arts/creative industries discipline; or have recently graduated.

Applicants are asked to come up with a project, involving at least one art form, which engages with their community, collaborates with a professional mentor and perhaps explores some of the challenges faced in Highland communities or around the world today.

Fiona Dalgetty, chief executive, Fèis Rois, one of the HYAH project partners, commented 'The current global pandemic has really hit the arts and cultural sector hard.

'We have such a rich arts community here in the Highlands and it is under threat at the moment; we cannot risk losing the next generation of talented artists.

'We also recognise that the situation is having a significant impact on people's mental health and wellbeing, so we

are hoping that this fund will not only provide the financial support to stay creative, but it will also inspire and motivate young talent here in the Highlands.'

The fund to support emerging artists at this difficult time has been created by the Highland Youth Arts Hub with support from Creative Scotland. The organisations who have collaborated to deliver this project include, Fèis Rois, Moniack Mhor, Eden Court, Highland Print Studio, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Lyth Arts Centre, North Lands Creative, Youth Highland and High Life Highland.

The closing date for applications is July 24 and the successful applicants will be announced on August 7, with the final projects being completed by Christmas 2020. For more information on how to apply to this fund, please visit <https://hyah.co.uk/>.



LATEST NEWS from The Tayvallich Inn

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Enjoying a summer of music with BBC Alba

We might not be packing our tents and choosing our festival outfits but BBC Alba is making sure viewers won't miss out on music this summer.

With festivals and gigs off-limits, the Gaelic medium TV channel is offering a fantastic selection of music programmes for those long summer nights. As well as exclusive performances, the programmes will show highlights from previous festivals and other festival-related features.

BBC Alba acted quickly to organise 'virtual' music performances from the homes of not just Scottish musicians, but musicians from around the world.

Margaret Cameron, channel editor at MG Alba, said: 'We wanted to create music programmes that people can watch from the comfort of their own homes while still maintaining that sense of community and shared experience that you get from attending live events.'

Regular presenters, Fiona Mackenzie and Niall Iain MacDonald, will recreate the festival vibe from the comfort of Fiona's garden.

Belladrum 2020 (starts Saturday, August 1, 9pm): Air Chuiart (on tour) will showcase a mix of new performance and archive music with a special programme earlier in the evening looking at what makes the Belladrum festival special.

Three Music Festival 2020 (July 11, 9pm): features new music from Skerryvore, Be Charlotte and Callum Beattie, alongside classic archive performances.

Fiona and Niall Iain will also host a special Tide Lines festival experience (Saturday, July 25, 9pm), including exclusive socially distant performances from their own homes.

There will be also be another chance to see the Peat and Diesel programmes (That's the way we do it! - Saturday, July 18, 9pm; From the Barrow to the Barrowlands - Saturday, July 18, 10.30pm) broadcast earlier this year, and a new programme will show previously unseen footage of Colin MacLeod (Thursday, July 16, 10pm), highlighting his experiences supporting Robert Plant at the O2 to the SXSW Music festival in Texas.

For the full story, visit www.obantimes.co.uk

SNH splashes out to support Skye festival

Skye's leading summer festival is one of 24 projects to receive a share in almost £150,000 from Scotland's nature agency, writes Fiona Scott.

Through its Plunge In! Coasts and Waters Community Fund, and to celebrate Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has invested £4,000 towards the costs of delivering the Féis an Eilein in 2021.

All being well, the festival will return next year to public spaces around the Isles of Skye and Raasay, and will showcase the islands' distinctive contribution to Scotland's natural and cultural heritage through celebration, performance and conversation.

The new-look 10-day summer festival takes place from July 2-11 and will deliver a spectacular programme of world-class performances in music, theatre, dance, literature - plus a few big surprises. Organised by

SEALL creative director Marie Lewis and Skye piper Malin Lewis who will be playing at next year's Feis.



SEALL, the 2021 summer event will highlight the distinctiveness of Scotland's coasts and waters while raising awareness of their fragility and the need to protect them for future generations.

SEALL Creative Director Marie Lewis said: 'The festival was due to be relaunched this year but the global pandemic

put paid to all performing arts events on Skye for most of 2020, so we deferred the event to next year when we hope to gather in safety.

'We are very grateful to Scottish Natural Heritage for their support and are making plans for a spectacular 2021.

'Our new-look festival will provide a chance for commu-

nities to celebrate, participate and showcase their unique area to visitors, while visitors will experience the diversity of the islands' landscapes, coastlines and people in a truly special series of celebrations.

'We understand people are naturally nervous about gatherings and we will be taking vigorous precautions to ensure our audiences, artists, volunteers, visitors and staff are safe to enjoy all our events.

'To this end, we will make good use of our natural environment and open spaces, as well as take all the necessary safety precautions. We look forward to seeing everyone next year.'

The Plunge In! Coasts and Waters Community Fund was established by SNH to help community groups celebrate the Year of Coasts and Waters.

For SEALL news, visit their Facebook page [SeallEventsSkye](https://www.facebook.com/SeallEventsSkye) or www.seall.co.uk



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MacDonald is currently working on the fourth book.

Third Ardnish novel goes back to start

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



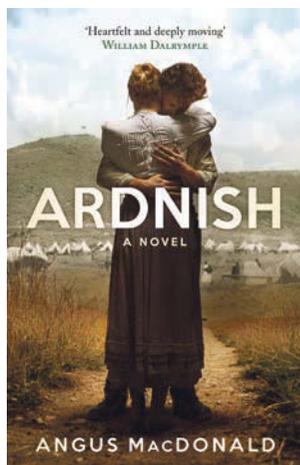
Author and Lochaber businessman Angus MacDonald launched the third book in his Ardnish series at The Highland Bookshop in Fort William last week.

To celebrate the launch MacDonald took part in a virtual interview with Scottish wildlife author and photographer Polly Pullar during which he discussed his family's personal connection to this story – his great-grandfather was present at the creation of the Lovat Scouts, the regiment featured in this book, and his grandfather also joined the Lovat Scouts, so between them they served in the Boer War, the First World War and the Second World War.

The pair also talk about the Boer War itself which features heavily in the book, and discuss why it is often overlooked in histories, and the atrocities that took place within concentration camps in South Africa.

During the interview Angus explains a bit about his research process, his trips to South Africa to gather information, and his use of real historical people in his books.

They also discuss the Ardnish series more generally, as this is the third book in the series and the culmination of 20 years of research and



The latest novel in the series centres on the Boer War.

writing for Angus, and he reveals he is working on a fourth in the series which will be set in 2016.

The interview is available to watch on The Highland Bookshop's YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/DxK178g41XI>

Inspired by his beloved Highlands, the curious draw of Ardnish's abandoned settlements and his passion for military history, MacDonald set about creating his first novel Ardnish Was Home in 1999. It's success ensured a follow-up novel, We Fought For Ardnish, which was inspired by the Special Operations Executive selecting their training posts at estate homes around Arisaig and Lochailort for their

secluded locations, harsh terrain and tough weather conditions during the Second World War.

Inspiration for the third book in the trilogy (and the first, due to its timeline) is a story of love and family secrets set amid the Boer war and was prompted by MacDonald's reading of Lovat Scouts activity during those wars and involved a research trip to South Africa.

Angus MacDonald has lived all his life in the Highlands and is steeped in their tales. He served in his local regiment, the Queen's Own Highlanders.

A serial entrepreneur, he has built businesses in publishing, renewable energy, recycling and education. He founded The Caledonian Challenge and runs The Moidart Trust. He is the owner of The Highland Bookshop in Fort William and will open a cinema and arts centre there later this year.

Published by Birlinn Ardnish' is available in-store at The Highland Bookshop and at the online shop with 20% off when all three books are bought together.

KEEPINTOUCH

email us at fort@obantimes.co.uk
telephone 01397 703003

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 16 An t-Iuchar THURSDAY 16 July	22.30 Peat & Diesel – From the Barrow to the Barrowlands (rpt)	19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	23.30 Eileanan na Banrighe/ Islands of the Queen (rpt)	20:00 An Là – News
19:00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt)	00.20 Belladrum – Cridhe Tartan (Highlights) (rpt)	20:30 ÙR/NEW: Na Tiristich (From Tiree with Love)
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)	DIDÒMHAICH 19 An t-Iuchar SUNDAY 19 July	21:00 All That Lies Behind Me – Sgeulachd Donald Merrett (rpt)
19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)	16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	22:00 An Seillean (Bees) – Trusadh (rpt)
20:00 An Là – News	18:15 An Là – News	23:00 Port – Druthag Eile (rpt)
20:30 Ceathrar air a' Chuiltheann (Four on the Cuillin) (rpt)	18:30 Binneas na Trads (rpt)	23:25 Dhan Uisge (River Douchary) (rpt)
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Mathair	18:35 Sgeul Seirbheis (rpt)	23:35 Slighe Anndra (rpt)
21:40 ÙR/NEW: Port – Druthag Bheag Eile	18:50 Ar N-Aran Laitheil (rpt)	DICIADAIN 22 An t-Iuchar WEDNESDAY 22 July
21:55 Eadar Chluich (rpt)	19:30 Slighe Anndra (rpt)	17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
22:00 ÙR/NEW: Julie Fowles – Ceol Aig baile	19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)	19:00 Tir is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt)
22:30 ÙR/NEW: Eileanan na Banrighe/ Islands of the Queen	20:00 Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne London (rpt)	19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
23:20 Dhan Uisge (rpt)	20:30 Na Tiristich (from Tiree with Love) (rpt)	19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
23:30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)	21:00 Bannan (rpt)	20:00 An Là – News
DIHAOINE 17 An t-Iuchar FRIDAY 17 July	21:30 Bannan (rpt)	20:30 Puirt-adhair (Highland Airports) (rpt)
17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	22:00 Ceol Duthchasach/ Ken Burn's Country Music (rpt)	21:00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach/Sheepdogs (rpt)
18.35 Machair (rpt)	23.55 Eadar Chluich (rpt)	22:00 Bannan (rpt)
19:00 An Là – News	DILUAIN 20 An t-Iuchar MONDAY 20 July	22:35 Ceol Aig A' Chaisteal (rpt)
19:25 Binneas-Na Trads-Lori Watson (rpt)	17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	23:00 Am Posadh Afraganach/ The African Wedding (rpt)
19:30 Prosbaig (rpt)	19:00 Tir is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt)	DIARDAOIN 23 An t-Iuchar THURSDAY 23 July
20:00 Ceolas – A' Cheilidh Mhor (rpt)	19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)	17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
20:30 Fuine (rpt)	19:50 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)	19:00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt)
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Ceol Duthchasach/ Ken Burn's Country Music	19:55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)	19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
22:50 Dhan Uisge (rpt)	20:00 An Là – News	19:55 Binneas – Na Trads – The Shee (rpt)
23:00 ALT (rpt)	20:30 Fuine (rpt)	20:00 An Là – News
DISATHAIRNE 18 An t-Iuchar SATURDAY 18 July	21:00 An Seillean (Bees) – Trusadh (rpt)	20:30 Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne London (rpt)
16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	22:00 Bannan (rpt)	21:00 Am Posadh Afraganach/ The African Wedding (rpt)
17:45 An Là – News	22:30 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt)	22:00 Gaoil@Gael (rpt)
18:00 SPFL Challenge Cup Final – Inverness Caledonian Thistle v Rangers Colts (rpt)	23:30 Colin Macleod – An Ceol (rpt)	22:30 ÙR/NEW: Eileanan na Banrighe/ Islands of the Queen
20:10 Port – Druthag Bheag Eile (rpt)	DIMÀIRT 21 An t-Iuchar TUESDAY 21 July	23:20 Dhan Uisge (River Garry) (rpt)
20:25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)	17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming	23:30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)
20:30 Leugh Mi (rpt)	19:00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt)	
21:00 Peat & Diesel – That's the way we do it! (rpt)		



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Oban Fm – Morning, Noon, and Night

The Week	8-11am	12-3pm	4-7pm	8-11pm
Monday	Stephen	Bob	Marcus	Rosemary 8 – 9pm
Tuesday	Stephen 10am	Archie 11-1 then Macky 1-3pm*	Bob	Mer
Wednesday	Karen	Doug	Campbell	Gordon
Thursday	Andy & Sarah	Archie	Stephen	Margo
Friday	Stephen	Allan (the One)	Margo	Peter
The Weekend				
Saturday	Stephen until 10am	Linda 11-2pm	Kenny's Jukebox Jamboree	Archies Scottish Show 7pm – 9pm Dave Hobbs 60's Hits 10pm – Midnight
Sunday	Breege	Archie/Stephen	Sunday Praise 5pm – 6pm	Dave and Murdo 7pm – 9pm Graham Scott's Drum and Bass 10pm – Midnight

Robert in lockdown!

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Well, after a long and arduous four months since we were plunged into lockdown last March, the news came this week that every cèilidh dancing, Gaelic singing, kilt swinging, whisky drinking Highlander has been waiting for.



The news that the Park Bar was finally able to reopen was met with messages of joy and celebration.

It's the moment we have dreamed of throughout those long days of Zoom meetings and day time television. It's the light that has helped so many through this incredibly dark tunnel.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, you've guessed it. The Park Bar is opening its doors!

Their Facebook announcement triggered an outpouring of Highland joy unseen since Ben Nevis won the Grand National in 1980 – or they announced the Mòd was returning to Glasgow in 2019.

The post garnered more than 600 likes, and many hundreds of shares and comments expressing relief, celebration, and jubilation.

The legendary John Carmichael even posted a commemorative video playing a set of Gaelic waltzes on the box – although John revealed

he unfortunately won't make the opening day because that's the night he has to do the dishes.

The Glasgow Gaelic diaspora can now emerge from its long imposed hibernation and enjoy a mixed grill, a malt of the month, and a good cèilidh.

It will, however, be a cèilidh with a difference as the pub follows all the appropriate covid-19 guidance to the letter. There will be no live music in the pub as yet; tables must be booked in advance and are all very clearly two metres apart;

it will be table service only; and staff will be wearing masks.

While it has been great to see the city opening up again in the last week or so with pub beer gardens being busy, it is so important that we all remain aware that we are far from out of the woods yet where this awful virus is concerned.

The Park Bar's video on Facebook made it very clear that strict social distancing measures will be in place – as they are throughout all similar establishments in Glasgow.

Those famous doors were

scheduled to open again on Wednesday (I had booked my table!), so I dare say there will be a few hazy heads reading their Oban Times this morning (Thursday!). I shall report next week on what I'm sure will be a successful day and evening.

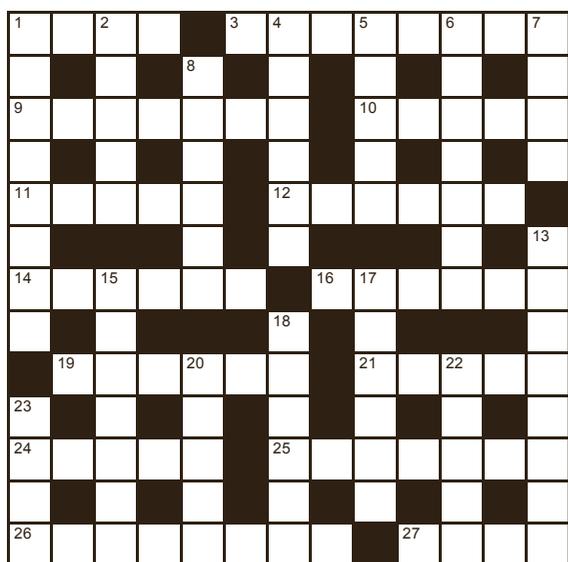
In other Glasgow-related hospitality news, the opening of beer gardens the week prior to pubs opening seems to have gone relatively smoothly. I thought I had better sample a few last week for research purposes for my column.

Bar Brel on Ashton Lane has a fantastic beer garden behind it (serving excellent food), with wooden benches and tables, all two metres apart, and fire pits to keep everyone warm in what was an unpredictable week of weather.

I have also heard good reports about the food and drink at massive temporary beer gardens at Cranside Kitchen and SWG3.

The adaptability of all these business has been great to see – but nothing will beat a wee dram with the dulcet tones of Donald Macrae playing from the Park Bar CD player!

Crossword



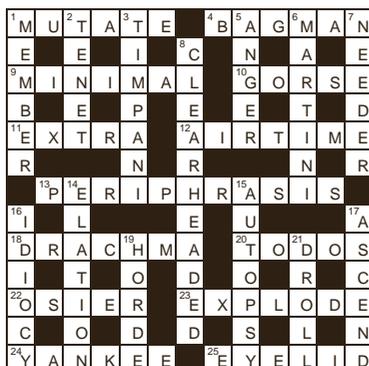
Across

- 1 Wash (4)
- 3 Ship again (8)
- 9 Offensive odour (7)
- 10 Freshwater fish (5)
- 11 Fracture (5)
- 12 Setting (6)
- 14 Concur (6)
- 16 Caretaker (6)
- 19 Spud (6)
- 21 Implore (5)
- 24 Entice (5)
- 25 Hire car (7)
- 26 Game of bowling (8)
- 27 Trifling (4)

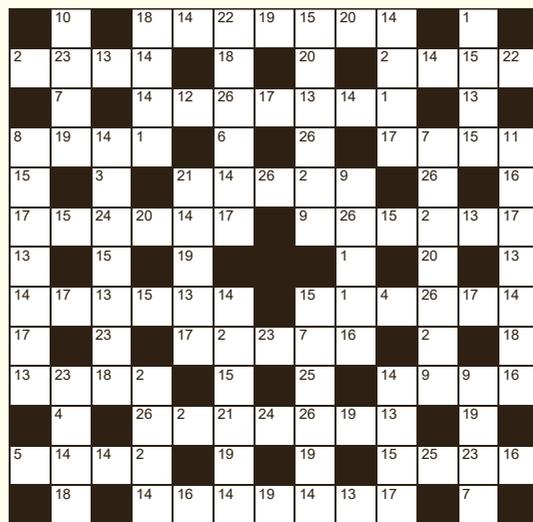
Down

- 1 The largest boat carried by a sailing ship (8)
- 2 Lightweight fabric (5)
- 4 Flatly (6)
- 5 Small three masted vessel (5)
- 6 Extend beyond (7)
- 7 Press down (4)
- 8 Brief glance (4-2)
- 13 Believable (8)
- 15 Theatrical person (7)
- 17 Use up (6)
- 18 Portal tomb (6)
- 20 Misbehave (3,2)
- 22 Run the show (5)
- 23 Zap (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



CROSS CODE



ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ



Each number in the Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

SOLUTIONS

COMMON LINK
1 Kiev; 2 Marenco; 3 Cacciatore; 4 Kentucky; 5 Nuggles; 6 Common Ink; 7 Names for dishes made from cooked chicken.



BOX CLEVER
1 Charles Dickens; 2 Scorpers; 3 W.H. Auden; 4 Albert Campion; 5 First Among Equals; 6 Canary Islands; 7 Corn & Cer; 8 Javier Bardem; 9 Mace; 10 Owen Hargreaves.

Quiz Challenge

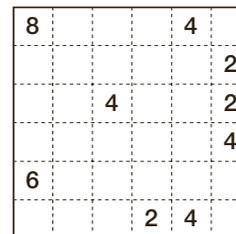
1. Catherine Hogarth, who had 10 children, was the wife of which famous English writer?
2. On a ship, what S are holes in the side of the deck to allow water to drain off?
3. Which poet had the first names Wystan Hugh?
4. Which detective, a creation of Margery Allingham, lives at 17A Bottle Street, Piccadilly, London?
5. Four British politicians vying to become prime minister are the subjects of which Jeffrey Archer novel?



Selena Gomez – see Question 7

6. Seven volcanic peaks on a shield supported by two dogs appear on the coat of arms of which island group?
7. "You ain't gotta worry, it's an open invitation" is a lyric from which UK top 10 single by Selena Gomez?
8. Spanish actress Penelope Cruz is married to which Spanish actor?
9. What M is the fleshy outer covering of nutmeg, dried as a spice?
10. Born in Canada, which football pundit for BT Sports played for Bayern Munich and Manchester United?

BOX CLEVER



Fill the 6x6 grid with as many boxes as there are numbers printed. Each box must be either square or rectangular and must contain just one of the numbers. The numbers show how many squares there should be in each box.

COMMON LINK

The answers to the following five questions contain a word or words which have a common theme. Can you find the link?

1. Which city, once known to Europeans as 'The Gateway to Asia', is now the capital of Ukraine?
2. Which battle, fought in Piedmont in 1800, drove the Austrians from Italy and sealed Napoleon's position as First Consul of France?
3. What is the Italian word for a hunter?
4. Which state of the USA is known as the Bluegrass State?
5. What name is given to lumps of natural gold found by prospectors?

The granite cross for the Church of St Michael the Archangel will be on display on the 11th November 2020 at Church Brae, Kinlochlaggan. RJC Campbell the crofter.

MACLEOD

CONSTRUCTION LIMITED

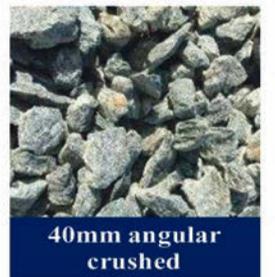


Rock & Gravel Quarries

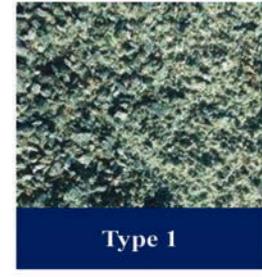
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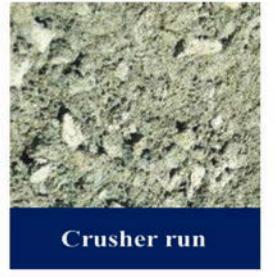
20mm angular crushed



40mm angular crushed



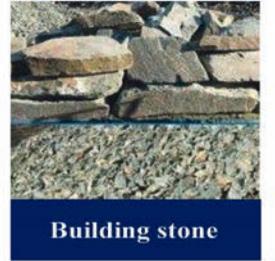
Type 1



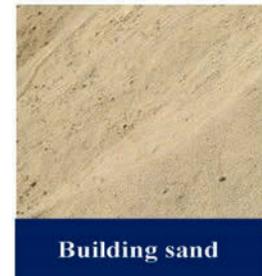
Crusher run



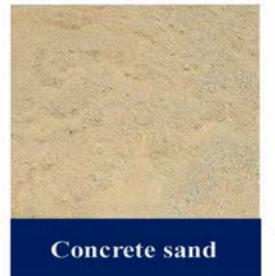
Dust



Building stone



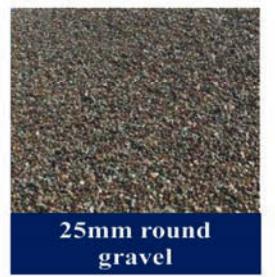
Building sand



Concrete sand



Pea gravel



25mm round gravel



mix



Large round stone

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Customers and staff are always MacLeods top priority and we will continue to work within Government guidelines to ensure safety for all!

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OPEN FOR BUSINESS

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!

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

9 Soroba Rd, Oban
Mon-Sat 8am-10pm
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.

LOCAL FRESH FOOD & DRINK SUPPLIERS

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

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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.
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 & BARCALDINE - 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

Millstones is open to customers 0915am-5.15pm Mon-Sat.
Pre-order available but not essential.
Contact Saffron on 01631 562704 or email contact@millstonewholefoods.co.uk

OBAN BEER SELLER

Shop open weekends, orders rest of week by phone/email 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
Mon-Thurs 10am-5pm
Fri & Sat 10am-9pm
Take-away available and from 15th July, sit in
We showcase some of Argylls finest produce on our new menu. Takeaway menu still available.
Friday night deliveries (free to Oban, £3 on outskirts)
Tel: 07882226675

FROM CRATE TO GATE (THE OBAN INN)

Drinks supplies - for full menu see Oban Inn Facebook page
Home deliveries daily

D WATT & SON

The fishmonger on the railway pier is open Tues to Sat 9am to 1 p.m.
Customers can go to the shop or phone an order in to collect.
Telephone 01631 562358.
Fresh shellfish and fish daily.

TAKE-AWAY FOOD

CUAN MOR

Take-away finished ahead of reopening on 17th July
Tel: 01631 565078

GEORGE STREET FISH RESTAURANT AND TAKE-AWAY and available now also at THE VAULTS OBAN

Open 12pm-8pm daily
Tel 01631 566664

OBAN GRILLHOUSE

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

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Fri, Sat, Sun from 5pm
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PIAZZA

From 5.30pm, Thurs-Sun
Tel: 01631 563628
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KEBABISH OF OBAN

Open daily from 11am.
For full menu see this week's Oban Times
Tel: 01631 566885

Order online at kebabishofoban.co.uk
Collection or fast delivery

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BIRCHWOOD FILLING STATION

Hot filled rolls
Open 7am-6pm

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Monday- Saturday 9am - 4.30pm

CAFE SHORE

reduced hours until 15th of July.
10am-3pm Mon to Sat
11am-3pm Sun. Takeaways and outdoor seating until able to reopen inside.
After 15th July back to normal opening.

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Mon-Fri

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Telephone orders 01631 562362
Email: sales.oban@cef.co.uk
Along with the 5,000 unique lines we stock at the branch, our customers still have access to over 30,000 product lines from www.cef.co.uk
Delivery or collection

SCREWFIX

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

For all your building and DIY needs
Mon-Fri, 8am-12pm
Essential supplies only Tel: 01631 570584

HOWDEN'S JOINERY

Essential supplies for the trade, housing associations etc.
Open 7.30am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-12pm Sat 9-3
Tel: 01631 567083 Email: oban@howdens.com

HOMEBASE OBAN

Open 10am-5pm daily
Card payment preferred

POPPIES GARDEN CENTRE & CAFE

Garden Centre NOW OPEN
Café Opening 15th July
Orders can be placed by phone: 01631565718.
Email : sales@poppiesgardencentre.com
Or if preferred by messenger.

KINLOCHLAICH GARDEN CENTRE

Now open or we can deliver orders and can leave plants out for collection (see plant options on the Facebook page).
Orders via 07881525754 or email fiona@kinlochlaich.plus.com (Opens in new tab) plants include vegetables, fruit, compost, shrubs, rhods, azaleas, alpines, and bedding plants

CRAIGARD DECOR

Open 9.00am - 5.30pm, Mon - Sat on an order, pay and collect basis only - no customers will be allowed in the shop at this point.
To place an order please telephone the shop on 01631 562680 or message us through Facebook. Or email tonycave@aol.com (Opens in new tab). For island services, where possible, Tony will liaise with local carriers for uplift and delivery.

GARAGES

RODDY'S GARAGE

Open but with limited staff.
Booking ahead by telephone required.
Tel: 01631 565882

KWIK FIT

NHS 10% discount on tyres, servicing and batteries
Tel: 01631 566282

FLIT

Visit Flit self drive Facebook page for opening info
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

Vehicle repairs and vehicle rentals
Tel: 07825 581171

FIN'S PLACE

Open as normal again
Tyres, brakes, batteries etc
Tel: 01631 566 220 or 07766 757 013

TRAILWEST

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.com



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



co.uk
Benbecula office: 01870 602061
Email: uist@andersonbanks.co.uk

STEVENSON KENNEDY SOLICITORS

open for business as usual but our priority has to be the safety of our staff and clients. The office door is locked as recommended by the Authorities.

We are here for you and can be in touch by phone, mobile, Skype etc. We realise that life and business must go on. We can still meet by appointment and at a safe distance.

Stay safe and well, Gordon, Sorley, Cat, Louise and Sarah.
Main office line: 01631 562317

E-mail addresses:
gordon@stevensonkennedy.co.uk

MACPHEE & PARTNERS

Available: Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm

We remain fully available to assist with your legal and property matters – with protective measures in place. Providing a local and personal service in these difficult times.

Tel: 01631 562308
Email: law@macphee.co.uk

E THORNTON AND CO, SOLICITORS AND ESTATE AGENTS

We are open for business. We are seeing clients by appointment only. Please contact us by phone or email. Stay safe.

Telephone: 01631 566771
Email: info@ethornton.co.uk

INSURANCE

JELF CLARKE THOMSON

Open for Business As Usual.

Office is currently closed, but Jelf Clark Thomson staff are working from home from 9am-5pm, Mon-Fri. If you email us, we will respond.

If you call us, the phone will be answered (or the call returned if a message is left). Whether it's the renewal of an existing policy, enquiries about new insurance arrangements, queries on cover or guidance on loss prevention and risk mitigation, we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Office telephone number: 01631 567675
Graeme Bass mobile: 07872 131073

BANKS

ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND

Open for essential business:
Mon-Fri 10am - 3pm
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 Monday to Friday
8am to 5pm.

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
Open 9am-1pm and 2pm-5.30pm
Telephone consultations also available if required

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

7.30am to 10.00pm daily.

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...

VETS AND 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

9am until 2pm every day except Sunday
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

OBAN VETERINARY SURGEONS

All enquiries by telephone 01631 562876 or via www.obanvets.co.uk

SHOPS AND ONLINE SHOPPING

OBAN MUSIC SHOP

Open again as usual
www.musicscotland.com
Tel: 01631 566304

ORSAY

Now open as normal and also orders taken online at www.orsayoban.co.uk

SCOTTISH ISLAND JEWELLERY

Website: www.scottishislandjewellery.co.uk

Now Open

Phone mail orders/enquires on 07760297957

Shop: 01631 570005 and

Mobile: 07760297957

scottishislandjewellery@gmail.com

<http://scottishislandjewellery.co.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ScottishIslandJewellery1>

The Jetty Gallery www.thejettygallery.com

emailannie@thejettygallery.com

100, George St, Oban, PA344JL

Tel: 01631 570102

THE JETTY GALLERY www.thejettygallery.com

emailannie@thejettygallery.com

100, George St, Oban, PA344JL

Tel: 01631 570102

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Delivery free in Oban.

Small charge for delivery outwith Oban

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By email eric@gowestravel.co.uk,

dianne@gowestravel.co.uk

FB message ERIC SMITH TRAVEL

IT AND COMPUTER SERVICES

MATRIX COMPUTERS

Computer Support

Providing telephone and remote support to home and business customers. Limited office/shop visits, strictly by appointment only. Please call to arrange first.

Tel: 01631 571571

Email: info@matrixcomputers.co.uk

OBAN COMPUTER SERVICES

Limited service for essential assistance
Tel: 01631 566561

TV AERIAL SERVICES

MACLEOD TELEVISION LTD

TV Aerial Services

All our BSKYB customers need to book through BSKYB on 03442 41 41 41.

For enquiries:

Office - 01631 54310

Email - office@mcleodtv.co.uk

QUANTITY SURVEYORS

MORHAM & BROTCHE

We are open while working from home - 9am till 5.15pm
Monday to Friday

Telephone: 01631 563 721

Email: admin@morhambro.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.

Kinlochlaich Garden Centre Plant Centre and Nursery between Fort William and Oban

Open 7 days 10am - 4pm
Also available by arrangement/
re-booking in addition to
public opening hours after 4pm
Delivery available

Can also leave orders out for collection.

We have a one way system in and out, and once in it is easy to social distance as we are well spaced out. Hand sanitiser available too.



www.kinlochlaichgardencentre.co.uk
Tel: 07881525754

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graeme.mcculloch2411@gmail.com

Hereford Bulls For Sale
Ready for work
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Fraser Sangster
01360 850531
or 07979 093031

Around the markets

United Auctions, Stirling sold 633 store cattle, native bred cattle and young bulls, 87 breeding cattle and 103 out of spec cattle, cast cows and bulls on Wednesday July 8.

All cows met an increased trade on the week with 19 buyers in attendance.

Beef cows averaged 150.08p per kg, and Dairy cows averaged 114.00p per kg.

Bullocks (323) – averaged 217.46p to 309.60p per kg for a 218kg BRBX from High Bellochinty, and to £1340 for a 615kg AAX from High Unthank.

Dairy Bullocks (71) – averaged 172.72p to 206.20p per kg for a 422kg MOX from Caddell, and to £1025 for a 582kg HFX from Dykehead.

Heifers (230) – averaged 214.34p to 269.80p per kg for a 202kg BRBX from High Bellochinty, and to £1130 for a 569kg BSX from Crookedstonemuir.

Young Bulls (9) – averaged 191.21p to 218.20p per kg for a AAX from Bows, and to £1165 for a AAX from Bows.

Beef Cows and Bulls (91) – averaged 150.08p to 208.10p per

kg for a LimX from Carslae, and to £1530 for a BAX from Chapel.

Dairy Cows (10) – averaged 114.16p to 133.90p per kg for a HFX from Wester Borland, and to £1095 for a HFX from Wester Borland.

Out of Spec Cattle (2) – averaged 176.79p to 189.10p per kg for a LimX from Glenartney, and to £1150 for a LimX from Glenartney.

Bullocks: Up to 250kgs - High Bellochinty £675, 309.60p; 251-300kgs - Meikle Ittington £765, High Bellochinty 268.10p; 301-350kgs - Gateside £835, High Bellochinty 246.80p; 351-400kgs - Craigievern £980, 246.20p; 401-450kgs - Newpark £985, 233.30p; 451-500kgs - Newpark £1155, Tanhill 237.00p; 501-551kgs - Garvald Mains £1180, 226.90p; 552-601kgs - Tanhill £1200, Ballieston 211.50p; 602-651kgs - High Unthank £1340, 217.90p.

Heifers: Up to 250kgs - High Bellochinty £600, 269.80p; 251-300kgs - Meikle Ittington £710, 257.20p; 301-350kgs - Fallside £765, 227.00p; 351-400kgs - Fisherton £890, Glenturk 225.90p; 401-450kgs - Newpark £960, Fisherton 226.30p; 451-500kgs - Fisherton £1120, 234.30p; 501-551kgs - Crook-

edstonemuir £1090, Candermain 205.20p; 552-601kgs - Crookedstonemuir £1130, 201.00p. Young Bulls: 301-350kgs - Caddell £700, 214.70p; 401-450kgs - Hyndford Road £940, 216.10p; 501-551kgs - Bows £1165, 218.20p; 602-651kgs - Mosshall £1150, 182.00p.

OTM Cows: £ per head - Chapel (BA) £1530, Newhouse of Glamis (CH) £1510, Woodhead of Mailler (Cont) £1450, Airthrey Kerse (Sim) £1490, Carslae (Lim) £1290, Mosshall (AA) £1170, Hyndford Road (BS) £1130, Wester Borland (HF) £1095, Gibsley (SH) £1070.

PPK - Carslae (Lim) 208.10p, Mollandhu (AA) 201.90p, Laigh Alticane (Sim) 192.70p, Chapel (BA) 168.30p, Woodhead of Mailler (Cont) 161.10p, Glenartney (CH) 159.70p, Glenartney (BS) 156.10p, Hatton of Newtyle (HE) 150.70p, Gibsley (SH) 145.00p.

OTM Bulls: £ per head - Easter Frew (Lim) £1550, Peattieshill (AA) £1070.

PPK - Peattieshill (AA) 198.10p, Craigharnet (Lim) 160.00p.

Out of Spec Cattle: £ per head - Glenartney (Lim) £1150, Glenartney (MO) £975

PPK - Glenartney (Lim) 189.10p, Glenartney (MO) 164.10p.

Breeding Cattle: Whitelaw Dispersal - SimX Cows & Bull Calves at foot £2400, £2350 x3, £2450.

SimX Cows & Heifer Calves at foot £2500, £2300, £2200.

AAX Cows & Bull Calves at foot £2400 x2, £2050.

AAX Cows & Heifer Calves at foot £1950 x2, £1800.

SDX Cows & Bull Calves at foot £2000.

SDX Cows & Heifer Calves at foot £1900.

AA Bull 2 ½ yo £2900.

Caledonian Marts Ltd, Stirling,

sold 126 Cattle comprising of 65 Bullocks, Heifers and Young Bulls, 61 OTM Cattle on Thursday July 9.

With a smaller show forward and a good ringside of buyers present, all classes met a similar trade.

Bullocks averaged 640kg at 223p per kg and Heifers averaged 618kg at 227p per kg.

Many more are needed on a weekly basis including native breeds, which sold to 228p per kg or £1337.

Prime Heifers sold to 245ppkg on Three occasions from W Dandie & Sons, Learielaw, Broxburn, D

Dickinson, Brockwoodlees, Canobie and J H & N T Turnbull, Meadowend,

Clackmanan purchased by D Campbell, Butchers, Callander, T Johnston, Butchers, Falkirk and H A Black, Butchers, Stirling and to £1605 for a Limousin from D Dickinson, Brockwoodlees, Canobie purchased by J Gilvear & Sons.

Prime Bullocks sold to 238ppkg on Two occasions from J Meikle, Turniemoon, West Calder and D Dickinson, Brockwoodlees both purchased by T Johnston, Butchers, Falkirk and to £1584 for a Limousin from M Orr, Penston, Macmerry purchased by Charles Kirkpatrick.

Bulls (under 30 months) sold to 215 ppkg for a Blonde Aquitaine from L Laird & Sons, Lochhead, East Wemyss and to £1628 for a Limousin from W Dick & Sons, Mains of Throsk, Throsk.

Other Leading Prices: Beef OTMs per kg - 175p Eden (Campbeltown). 170p Mains of Throsk. 162p Castlehill. 156p Learielaw. 153p Walton. 151p Salterhill & Castlehill

Beef OTMs per head - £1150 Learielaw. £1130 Castlehill & Broompark. £1090 Knocknaha. £1070 Walton. £1060 Mains of Throsk. £1050 & £1040 Castlehill

Dairy Cows per head - £890 Walton. £730 and £690 Kilkivan (Campbeltown).

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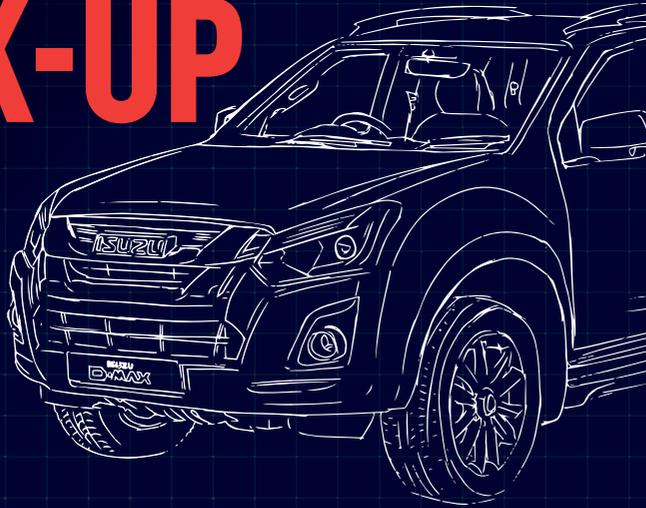
Contact **JOHN CRAIG** at **J CRAIG & SON**
EASTER CLEVAGE FARM,
DUNNING PERTH

Tel: Mobile **07774 629123** night **01764 684625**
email jct8210@googlemail.com

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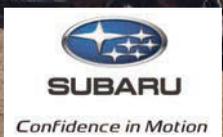
WE ARE OPEN FOR ALL YOUR MOTORING NEEDS

Following safe guidelines and practices, S&S Services are able to offer you and our staff, a safe environment to shop for your next car. As an approved Isuzu and Subaru, sales and service agent, we can assist with all aspects of your needs and most over the phone.

A big thank you to all our customer and staff during the last few months and welcome back!

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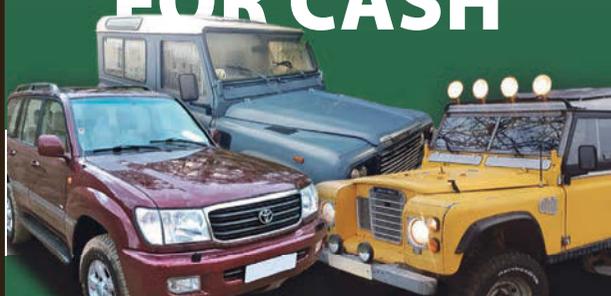
Vehicles shown- Outback 2.5i SE Premium Lineartronic OTR price of £37,320.00, a Forester 2.0i XE Premium e-BOXER Lineartronic OTR price of £39,885.00 and a XV 2.0i SE Premium e-BOXER Lineartronic OTR price of £34,205.00.



Subaru Forester TEST 2019
Subaru XV TEST 2017
Subaru Outback TEST 2014

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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
20/02032/FUL	2 Mallaig Bheag, Mallaig	Proposed hut for temporary (short term) recreational accommodation for creative artists (holiday letting)
20/02355/FUL	Site 1820M SW Of Glencripesdale House, Ardgour	Alterations at marine fish farm - Atlantic Salmon

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

Proposed Assignation of a Croft

Mrs Janet Tindal is applying to assign the tenancy of the croft at Calva and Clachanach, Kilfinichen and Kilvickeon to Colin Tindal of Clachanach, Isle of Iona. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW info@crofting.gov.scot by 13/08/2020.

Argyll and Bute Council

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
20/01105/PP	Change of use of land, erection of building and attached garage, installation of 8 metre high flag pole and air source heat pump	Torosay View North Connel, Oban Argyll And Bute PA37 1QX
20/01114/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land North West Of Rosgill, Caolis Isle Of Tiree Argyll And Bute
20/01007/PP	Re-positioning of breakwater/pontoon (amended location relative to application (18/01537/PP))	Land South East Of Kilfinichen, Tiorran Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute
20/01128/PP	Demolition of existing extension and erection of replacement extension	St Annes, Dervaig Isle Of Mull Argyll And Bute PA75 6QJ
20/01100/PP	Erection of replacement stable	Land North Of Aspen Lodge Glencruitten, Oban Argyll And Bute
20/00974/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage, installation of septic tank, formation of vehicular access and upgrade of existing access	Land North East Of Ben Glass Glencruitten, Oban Argyll And Bute
20/00810/PP	Alterations, downtakings, extension and change of use of barn to form dwellinghouse. Change of use of land for holiday let purposes and siting of caravan for that purpose	Tormisdale Farm Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA48 7UE
20/00899/PP	Demolition of existing house and erection of replacement dwellinghouse and garage with adjoining annexe	Cnoc Ard Taighean Gorm, Bridgend Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute PA44 7PQ

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:
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Argyll & Bute COUNCIL

FIRST REG OF A CROFT

Mrs Joanna Margaret MacKinnon has registered their croft, 1/2 5 Torrin, Strath, Isle of Skye, on the Crofting Register of Scotland held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any persons who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 9th April 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7031.

FIRST REG OF A CROFT

Hamish MacPherson has registered their croft 1/2 7 Tote, Snizort on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 25 March 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7010.

RECRUITMENT



WEST HIGHLAND HOUSING ASSOCIATION

West Highland Housing Association is a charitable organisation working in the Oban and Lorn area. We are recruiting a Housing Assistant to cover maternity leave (1 year), for our office based in Oban, but currently working from home due to the Coronavirus restrictions.

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If you want to speak to us about this post, please contact Iona Smith on 01631 566451 and we will be delighted to talk further about our work and our expectations for the post.

A full job pack can be downloaded from our website at www.westhighlandha.co.uk

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Interviews will be held on Wednesday 19 August 2020

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DEATHS

BUCHANAN - Colin John. Died suddenly at his home on the Isle of Mull on July 7, 2020. Much loved son, brother and uncle, a friend to many. Greatly missed, always in our thoughts and hearts.

CAMERON - (Grogarry, South Uist). Willie, aged 78, of Hopewell Cottage, Grogarry, South Uist, passed away peacefully on June 13, 2020 whilst in the care of Sacred Heart House, South Uist. Beloved husband of Bella, father of Seamus and Donald John and grandfather to Rory and Alex. Now at peace and forever in our hearts. R.I.P.

CAMPBELL - Ruth Ellen Bolton, formerly of Kinlochleven, passed away in Ludlow on June 23, 2020, aged 79 years. Beloved wife of the late Donald and adored mother of Garry and Lynn; cherished grandma to Fergus, Benedict and Louisa. Ruth will be greatly missed by all her family and friends. Private cremation to take place due to

current circumstances. Kind donations received in Ruth's memory and which will be given to Lingen Davies Cancer Fund can be sent via the Funeral Home. All enquiries please to: Victoria Allen Funeral Services, 8 Charlton Rise, Ludlow SY8 1ND. 01584 879035.

MACPHERSON - Ann Elizabeth late of Camuschork, Strontian passed away peacefully at Belford Hospital, Fort William on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, aged 91 years. Many happy memories shared with her loving husband Donnie. Funeral service will be held at Drimnatorran Cemetery on Tuesday July 21 at 1 p.m. Rest in Peace.

McNEILL - Peacefully at home, with her family by her side, on July 10, 2020, Jean McNeill, née Dunlop, aged 80 years, of Criffel, 3a Wilson Road, Lochgilphead. Beloved wife of Hamish and much loved mother of James and Jennifer. Dearly loved granny of Amy, Kirsty, Ross and Lucy, and proud great-granny of

Ella and Blair. Dear sister of Flora, Tina, Nannie and the late Duncan and Catherine. Much respected mother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt and cousin to all the extended family. A good neighbour and friend to many. A private funeral service was held at Achhabreac Cemetery on Wednesday, July 15, 2020.

NICHOL - Peacefully on July 1, 2020, Mary, aged 75 years, of Clarkston and Kintra, Mull. Daughter of the late Aliena and John McCallum. Beloved wife of Jim, much loved mother to Catriona and Lorna. Devoted gran to Myles, Alex, Lucy and Jamie. Dear mother-in-law to Ken and Euan. Interment, Mearns Cemetery, East Renfrewshire.

OLDALE - Peacefully at Etive House Care Home, Benderloch on July 8, 2020, in her 92nd year, Pearl, beloved wife of the late Raymond Oldale, a much loved mum, granny, great-granny and great-great-granny. The family would like to thank all the staff at Etive House for the loving care they showed Pearl.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CAMERON - The family of Willie Cameron would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for the many expressions of sympathy, flowers, cards, visits and phone calls following our loss. We would also like to express our appreciation to everyone who paid their last respects at the roadside on his final journey to Hallan. Sincere thanks to Fr Michael MacDonald for the comforting words and service and to Macphee Brothers for their respectful handling of the funeral arrangements. Our heartfelt thanks to the staff at Sacred Heart for their care during his stay and to Fr Ross Crighton for his visits.

MACEACHEN - The family of David MacEachen would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for the many expressions of sympathy with cards, letters and telephone calls following the sad loss of their beloved husband and Dad. We would also like to express our

appreciation to everyone who paid their respects on his final journey. Thank you to H Hoey & Son for caring and efficient service. Thank you to Petals for beautiful flowers. A special thank you to Frs J MacNeil, M Hutson, R MacAulay and D Connor for comforting words and music. Our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to all nursing staff and carers involved in making David's final weeks so comfortable and dignified. To know that so many people care is a great comfort at this difficult time. A Requiem Mass will be held for David when restrictions allow. Thank you all. Jean, Jacqueline and Andrew.

MACLENNAN - In loving memory of Anne MacLennan, née Sinclair, of Torglas, Spean Bridge, who passed away peacefully at home with her family on July 1, 2020. Beloved wife of Ronald, mother to Kenneth and Rona and Granny to Lexie and Monty. A private family interment was held at

Kilmonivaig on July 7. We offer our heartfelt thanks to family and friends near and far who have offered their support and kindness. A special thanks too to the excellent Macmillan and district nurses for the support that allowed Mum to stay at home, to the Rev. Kaye and to the thoughtful team at McLellans. Donations in memoriam to Macmillan Cancer Support.

MEMORIALS

DOHERTY - Treasured memories of Gerry, who passed away July 20, 2014.

Mary xx

TRAYNOR - Treasured memories of our beloved parents and grandparents mother Jessie, who passed away on July 16, 2013 and father John, on November 22, 1994.

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- Violet, Iain Janette, Jennifer and families.

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Recently, I had the privilege of attending a major international conference in San Francisco.

Well, I almost attended it. In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, international travel was impossible and California certainly lacked its usual appeal in current circumstances. The whole conference moved online and the 20,000 delegates joined in from their own home locations.

From my home in Fort William I attended conference sessions with people as diverse as Winnie Byanyima, the head of UNAids, Nancy Pelosi the Speaker of the US House of Representatives, Dr Anthony Fauci, Chief Medical Advisor to the US President, and any number of scientists, experts, celebrities, and campaigners.

The last running of the conference was two years ago in Amsterdam. While many of the sessions were very interesting and informative, the most useful part was just talking to



people working in different settings in a whole range of countries, and hearing their stories.

This time round, the information and the presentations were as impressive as ever, and it was amazing to see how much could be achieved online. However, the one thing missing was all the personal contacts.

Jesus didn't have much time for the sort of religion that was

heavy on rules and ceremony, but didn't make time for people. Since the whole point of religious faith was to connect people with God, a version of faith which forgot about people wasn't much use. That's why he argued with those who thought keeping sabbath rules mattered more than making sick people well.

In recent months churches have been doing their best to stay in touch with people and provide worship resources. Some of them are very helpful and very creative. But there really is no substitute for spending time with people, and most of us are looking forward to that more than anything else as lockdown eases.

Jesus said: 'The son of man came to seek and save the lost.' Giving others our time and our attention has never been more important.

**Reverend Richard Baxter,
Fort William Duncansburgh
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PERSONAL NOTICES

**Happy 50th
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Oban Bowling Club celebrates belated historic green opening

Oban Bowling Club president Iain Boyd threw the first jack of the season last Saturday, 150 years after the inaugural bowl was played at the Dalriach Road venue, writes Fiona Scott.

The club celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary last season, marking the formation of the outfit when founding members purchased shares to buy the ground, and those less well off contributing a £1 membership fee.

Last week, however, a bit later than planned due to the Covid crisis, the ceremonial jack was delivered.

'It was really quite emotional,' said Mr Boyd.



Oban Bowling Club president Iain Boyd throws the first jack of 2020.

'Not only did this year's opening mark 150 years since the first jack was thrown but also a return to the green following weeks when many of our

members have been confined to their homes and others severely restricted in their usual active lifestyles.'

Due to stringent guidelines,

laid out by the Scottish Government and Bowls Scotland, with further guidance put in place by the OBC committee, Opening Day

celebrations were slightly contained this year. But, despite that, and the sporadic drizzle throughout the afternoon, bowlers seemed to enjoy getting back into the swing of things with the hard working committee members taking the first fill and eager members playing the second.

'Our main concern is keeping our members safe, so after carrying out a risk assessment we decided to open up with temporary rules in place,' added Mr Boyd.

All bowling competitions have been cancelled for the remainder of the season but members are being encouraged to go along and play with mem-

bers of their own household and/or members of two other households while adhering to the two metre distancing rule.

Players must be responsible for their own equipment and all mats and jacks must be disinfected (in the trays provided) before and after each game with one player taking responsibility for them before, during and after play.

There will be four one hour sessions available each day: 11am-noon; 1pm-2pm; 3pm-4pm; 6.30pm-7.30pm.

To book a rink you should contact Helen MacLean, Match Secretary, between 4pm and 6pm on the day before you wish to play.

Camanachd win Ryder Cup after play-off win over Saints

Oban Camanachd accepted the invitation from Oban Saints in what was deemed Oban's shinty/football Ryder Cup challenge golf match.

The opening game saw Saints captain Dene Cassells take on Kenny Wotherspoon, with the latter in control and being two-up through nine holes but Cassells fought back to cause an early upset to get the better of Wotherspoon 2&1.

Match two was Willie Gemmell against Iain 'Scally' MacMillan. This game looked dead and buried by the 12th as MacMillan was sitting pretty at four-up but Gemmell never gave in and wrestled the score down to just one but MacMillan held his nerve on the 18th for the half to win

the match. Next up on paper was game of the day as Craig MacEwan took the tee to play Scott MacMillan, with the neutral predicting a tight match. It was anything but as MacMillan roared to a 4&3 victory.

Craig Easton managed to take care of Graham 'Sugar' Douglas without breaking sweat. This match was won after 10 holes 10&8.

Aidan MacIntyre and Sean Ford's game was also going to prove tough to call but MacIntyre won the bragging rights to hold his nerve at the last to eventually win the hole and finish 2up.

Cue the Saints fight back. Jamie Graham managed to take care of Garry Lord 2&1.

Matt Rippon then stepped up for Saints to put on a cracker of



Saints' captain and competition organiser Dene Cassells presents the Ryder Cup to Camanachd captain Scott MacMillan.

a performance to defeat Lorne Dickie 5&4.

Steven MacLeod was next up to fire another point on the

board for Saints when he managed to get the better of Malcolm Clark 2&1.

Paul Kerr never looked like losing in his battle against Daniel MacVicar winning 3&2 and Daniel Madej had enough in his bag to beat Ben Pollock 2&1.

The battle of the MacFarlane brothers was next with Niall defeating Fraser 3&2.

Last to tee off at the 18th were golden oldies - Saints' Peter MacCallum and Camanachd's Gareth Evans. Word reached the clubhouse the players were level and the overall score 6-5 to Camanachd. Evans knew a half would be good enough to ensure victory but MacCallum held his nerve to win the hole and force a play-off.

It was agreed a one hole

combined score at the 5th hole from three players from each team to see who would lift the trophy. Saints' three were Matt Rippon, Craig MacEwan and Sean Ford, with Scott MacMillan, Aidan MacIntyre and Kenny Wotherspoon representing the red and blacks.

MacIntyre and MacEwan cancelled each other out with fours, Ford got his three and Rippon found the green, although putting for a four, while MacMillan held his nerve for his three. It was all down to Wotherspoon to sink a five-footer for a three to win the match, which he did.

A great day was had by all and a special thanks goes to Glencruitten Golf Club for their hospitality.

Craignure golfers

Craignure Golf Club on Mull swung back into action on Saturday, although it is currently open to members only.

Winner of the Lorna Christie Trophy was Adrian Fitness (38 points); 2. Tony McGill (34); 3. Steve Wilson (32). Sunday: Texas Scramble result - 1. Iain King Snr/Scott McCracken/Robert Lawson 44 points; 2. Tony McGill/ Adrian Fitness/ Donald Morrison 42 points; 3. Pat Wilson/Steve Wilson/Barry Whenman 41 points.

The club's Anniversary Open is scheduled for Sunday, July 19. More details can be found on the club website.



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MAKE THE SWITCH

Communities plea for help to tackle 'anti-social camping'

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Hundreds of tents, cars, motorhomes, as well as piles of rubbish and damage left behind at the weekend at several Lochaber beauty spots saw Scottish Government tourism secretary Fergus Ewing host a hastily organised telephone summit this week with local community leaders desperate for help to cope with the growing problems of so-called 'wild camping'.

Mr Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism, hosted the conference call with representatives from Mallaig, Morar and Arisaig Community Councils, as well as other local organisations, together with local councillors Allan Henderson and Denis Rixson.

It came in the wake of a weekend that saw hordes of campers descend on Glen Etive, leaving piles of rubbish, with problems also reported on beaches at Morar and Arisaig.

A spokesperson for Glencoe

and Glen Etive Community Council told us: 'The mess is appalling – sadly nothing new – but are we really going to close our eyes to this and let Scotland drown in litter?'

Another community representative, Anne Widdop from Arisaig, who is spearheading an action team spanning the Road to the Isles marketing group

'It's a double whammy of Covid-19 and the devastating impact on the beach...'

and community councils, said her local community is at breaking point with concerns.

'It's a double whammy of Covid-19 being potentially spread in the area and the devastating impact on the beach environment by uncontrolled camping,' she said.

'While some cash has been secured to improve toilets at Traigh and Mallaig, it does not go nearly far enough. We all

welcome visitors and recognise the importance of tourism to the local economy.

'VisitScotland has done a great job persuading people to come here, but to date the Scottish Government has failed to provide the cash for infrastructure required to accommodate the increase in visitors.

'The result is having a detrimental effect on the environment, the quality of life for people living in these areas is impacted, and visitors are having a poorer experience.

'The Scottish Government did listen to us at a meeting with Kate Forbes and Fergus Ewing and they are taking the concerns very seriously. We remain hopeful that their words convert into action.'

Following the conference call, Dave Newnham, chairman of Morar Community Council, wrote to Mr Ewing on behalf of local community councils, telling him there should be immediate action to reverse the decision to permit wild

Continued on page seven.

Jacobite service set to steam ahead



James Shuttleworth and Florence MacLean at the launch of The Jacobite Steam Train summer service yesterday (Wednesday). For the full story, turn to page four. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

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LT

CalMac secures top customer award

CalMac has been awarded the highest level of accreditation for the helpfulness and professionalism of its customer operations staff.

CalMac's 47 strong Customer Service Team was given the much-coveted top-level quality assurance mark by the Contact Centre Association (CCA) and commended for its commitment to customer service, especially in the face of the coronavirus emergency.

The CCA assessor highlighted a number of strengths in the team with evidence demonstrating staff being motivated and proud to work for the company, while being passionate about delivering high performance results and excellent standards of customer service.

The accreditation involved surveying a range of staff on their customer focused processes to ensure a consistent and professional approach across the centre, and also included closely auditing the daily workings of the operation.

Scottish Land Fund supports buyout bid

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Morvern Community Woodlands (MCW) has been offered a grant of £1million from the Scottish Land Fund towards the purchase of the 2,400 hectare (6,000 acre) Killundine Estate in Morvern.

This is a unique proposal by a community to purchase a Highland estate which no one is currently living on.

The group has identified ownership of the estate as a key factor in creating housing and employment opportunities, as well as driving forward projects to protect and restore the natural environment in one of the most remote parts of Scotland.

Veronique Walraven, chairperson of MCW, told us: 'We are very grateful for the support from Scottish Land Fund. Morvern is a fragile communi-



Veronique Walraven of Morvern community woodlands.

ty with an ageing population and a falling school roll.

'Among other things, our plans for Killundine will bring business and housing prospects for young families.

'We now need to raise the additional capital of £1.7 million so that the people of Morvern – and the West Highlands more

widely – can benefit from the opportunities this presents. This is important now more than ever.'

Killundine Estate is made up of hill ground which supports grazing for deer – pastures; conifer plantation and ancient semi-natural Atlantic hazel woodland. MCW's plans in-

clude a proposal to create new crofts, as well as harvesting timber, restoring estate buildings, regenerating native woodland and restoring peatlands.

The restoration of the ancient native woodlands on Killundine, which are designated as Sites of Special Scientific

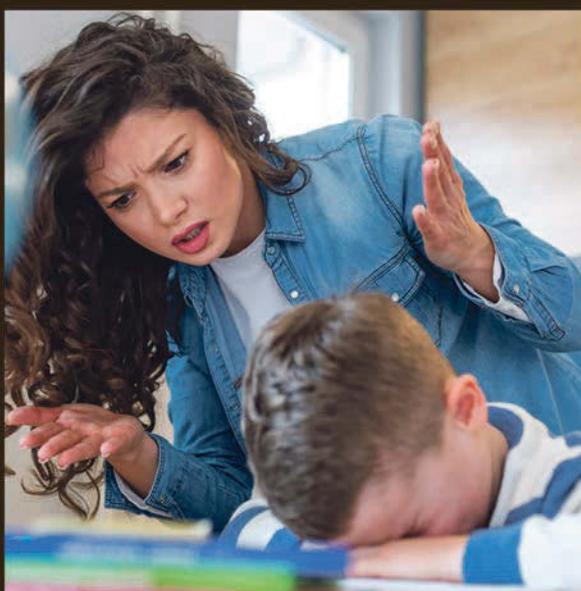
Interest as part of Scotland's rainforest and include one of the largest remaining populations of elm in Scotland, is of particular interest to the group.

Tying the project into restoration of the Gaelic heritage of the area is also being proposed.

The board of MCW is composed of volunteers with a high proportion of young people. Adam Nicholson, author of Sea Room, commented: 'With a highly committed and knowledgeable community, and an inspiring landscape that knits together hill and shore, Killundine represents a glowing opportunity to make something beautiful and life-enhancing, an example for the rest of Scotland.'

MCW now needs to raise the remaining £1.7 million by October for the project to be successful. The group has produced a short film to launch its fundraising appeal.

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'Hogwarts Express' gets up head of steam for restart of train trips

Captured by the photographer as they passed Greenholme on Shap in Cumbria on Sunday on their way to Fort William, are the steam locomotives Lord of the Isles (front) and Lancashire Fusilier, writes Mark Entwistle.

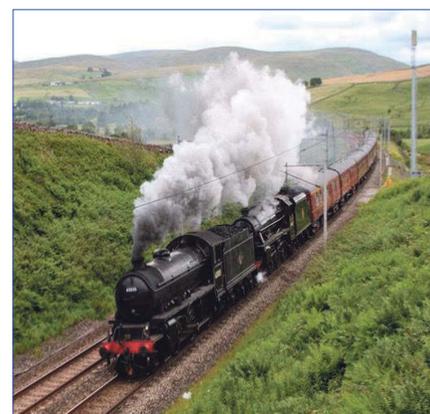
The two engines, numbers 62005 and 45407 respectively, are scheduled to start hauling the Jacobite steam train service on the West Highland Line this week when the popular visitor attraction restarts after the easing of coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

The engines travelled up from the base of operator, West Coast Railways, at Carnforth, in Lancashire.

However, because of some delay in arranging the paperwork, Lord of the Isles will not be able to operate until next week at the earliest.

Instead, for the first week, duties on the service - immortalised as the Hogwarts Express in the Harry Potter movies - will be shared between 45407 and 45212.

The West Highland line reopened for passengers on Monday morning following the successful completion of



Lord of the Isles, in front, with Lancashire Fusilier as they head for Fort William on Sunday. Photograph: James Shuttleworth.

repair works between Fort William and Mallaig.

The line had been closed by damaged tracks at Lochailort after extreme rainfall caused a nearby stream to overflow and wash-away a section of the railway embankment beneath the line.

Engineers worked around-the-clock to replace more than 1,600 tons of material washed away by the flash-flood on June 25 and to install new under-track drainage systems and re-lay over 80 metres of track.

Work was carried out to improve drainage on third-party land to reduce future risk to

the railway and the project team also improved the flood defences of a nearby line-side neighbour affected by the extreme weather.

Liam Sumpter, Network Rail Scotland route director, said: 'With the easing of lockdown and the reopening of the tourism sector, it was vital that we completed these repairs quickly to help support the local economy in the West Highlands.'

'I'd also thank our contractors - QTS and Story - for their close collaboration during this project, which has been vital to getting passengers moving again.'

Lochaber residents invited to enter ballot for cut-price deer stalking

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

With the coronavirus pandemic seeing the cancellation of pre-existing bookings from overseas deer stalkers, Jahama Highland Estates has brought forward plans to offer discounted shooting to local residents of Lochaber.

Local people are now being invited to enter a ballot for the opportunity to stalk deer across Jahama's large land holdings in Lochaber at a discounted rate for the months ahead as the stag season gathers momentum.

Announcing the move this week, Jahama said it is all part of its new 'ethical venison brand', which will be available to buy in select cuts directly from the estate from August.



While enabling the community to buy locally-sourced venison at accessible prices, those successful in the ballot will also receive a 25 per cent discount voucher on Jahama Venison.

As part of a strategy to make its recreational activities

more accessible to the local community, Jahama has brought forward plans to offer the discounted stag stalking days to those living within one hour's drive of the Mamore, Glenshero and Killiechonnate estates.

The company – part of the

Residents of Lochaber who possess a deer-legal rifle and meet other criteria are being invited to enter a ballot to shoot deer on Jahama Highland Estates land.

GFG Alliance group which owns Lochaber Smelter - had initially planned to offer a select number of discounted stag stalking days to the community on an annual basis starting in 2021.

However, the cancellation of pre-existing bookings from overseas deer stalking tourists due to the Covid-19 pandemic has created some availability to bring forward this initiative to the remainder of this year.

With the open stag season traditionally running from the start of July to the middle

of October when the hind season begins, Jahama carries out its deer culling activity from the beginning of August into the New Year.

Jahama's Chief Operating Officer, Julia Stoddart, commented: 'We have listened to local people who want to connect directly with the land through hunting for their own food, and we are delighted to take our first steps towards achieving this ahead of our original schedule.'

'Sustainability is the driving force of Jahama and GFG Alliance more widely. As a wild animal that must be actively managed for environmental and welfare reasons, venison is a truly sustainable meat.'

'With this in mind, we want to provide sporting opportunities that were previously

inaccessible to many people, as well as making this healthy and nutritious native meat available to a wider market.'

Those with a qualifying postcode and their own deer-legal hunting rifle are invited to email their name, address and telephone number to highland@jahamaestates.com to register their interest by August 1.

After that closing date, a random selection process will be used to allocate the available days at the discounted rate.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, applicants must have their own deer-legal rifle and optics, must be hill-fit as transportation in Jahama vehicles cannot be provided this season, and must maintain social distancing during the stalk.



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cold weather sets in again! You can contact us by phone on 01631 720539, or via the website or our Facebook page. Take care, keep warm and stay safe.

LT

Communities voice anger over councillor's expulsion

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Anger is building among communities in South Lochaber over the expulsion of popular local councillor, Andrew Baxter, from the group of Independents in the ruling Highland Council administration.

Last week we reported how Mr Baxter (Fort William and Ardnamurchan) was unceremoniously booted out of the group after he posted a video on the Independents' own Facebook page attacking the administration leadership, which was alleged to contain factual errors on the local authority's financial position.

The video was compiled by Conservative group leader, Councillor Andrew Jarvie, and concerned issues over school budgets.

Apparently, his sharing of



Andrew Baxter

the video was the last straw, with the group's leaders, Margaret Davidson and Andrew Mackinnon, saying it was the culmination of months of speeches and votes against the administration.

But now two Lochaber community councils have waded into the row, throwing their



Margaret Davidson

support firmly behind Mr Baxter.

Nether Lochaber and Ballachulish community councils have both written to convey their anger at the way he has been treated, while others are expected to follow suit this week.

In the letter from Nether

Lochaber Community Council, chairperson, Iain Jenner, voiced the council's 'deep disquiet and anger' over the matter.

Mr Jenner went on to say Mr Baxter had been and remained a 'good friend to our community and to our neighbours in South Lochaber.'

And he added: 'His conduct as an elected representative for our area in engaging with individuals and community groups is second to none. He has our full support and this will continue for good reason.'

'He is well-liked, trusted and seen as one of our most potent voices for enabling communities to become more empowered, and in being dealt with fairly by Highland Council.'

Mr Jenner told the Independent group leaders that its treatment of Mr Baxter, along with his treat-

ment by Highland Council as a whole, amounted to a 'gagging order'.

And Mr Jenner added: 'Sanctioning a representative for doing their job in pursuing challenging issues at this time, speaks volumes about how your administration views those whom you are elected by and paid to represent. We are to be excluded, it seems.'

In its letter of support for Mr Baxter, Ballachulish Community Council chairperson Kevin Smith stated: 'We believe the actions and points raised by Andrew at various meetings were wholly appropriate where he highlighted community concerns over the Highland Council finances and the actions proposed for the education system.'

'We strongly support Andrew Baxter and Niall McLean [SNP councillor for

the same ward] in their efforts to raise our community concerns at the local and central level.'

'We do not accept that they ever raised any issue to cause offence only to seek clarification on various matters. To be told at a meeting you cannot raise questions that impinge on the communities is not only undemocratic to an elected councillor but also the communities that elected them.'

The Lochaber Times emailed both Mrs Davidson and Mr Mackinnon over a week ago asking for a comment on Mr Baxter's expulsion and none has been forthcoming.

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Eigg trust cracks it with £1M award from National Lottery

A heritage trust on Eigg has been awarded £1,045,000 by the National Lottery to help extend and develop An Laimhrig, a vital community hub, writes Mark Entwistle.

The Hebridean island community, which famously took ownership of its own destiny back in 1997, is celebrating its cash award of £1,045,000 to the Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust.

To be completed in time for the 25th anniversary of Eigg's community buyout in two years' time, the first phase, consisting of a new toilet, shower and laundry block, and improved water and power infrastructure, will start soon.

Phase two, starting in spring 2021, will refurbish and extend the existing building and storage area to provide space for current and new businesses, and for community facilities.

The National Lottery Community Fund award provides the last major piece of the funding jigsaw required for the £3million project, which is also funded by the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, Highlands and Islands



A mock up of the new tearoom/cafe area that residents and upwards of 11,000 visitors can enjoy. Photograph: WT Architecture.

Enterprise, the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, an award from SSE's Highland Sustainable Development Fund, and funding raised by the island.

The trust's Business Development Manager, Rebecca Long, said: 'Eigg was one of the first community buyouts in Scotland and the original build of An Laimhrig, completed in 1998, was the very first flagship project undertaken by Eigg's community.'

'It is now 23 years later and with a 70 per cent positive population increase, the building is fit to bursting, with Eigg's

only shop, café, visitor-facing businesses and community offices unable to keep up with all the demands put upon them.

'This vital expansion will aid the island's economic, social and cultural development and secure Eigg's future for the next generation of residents and visitors alike. Without National Lottery players this award and project would not have been possible.'

Eigg's community is working with the design team behind the An Crubh Community Hub on Skye and the new Iona Village Hall, led by Architects WT Architecture.

Plea for help over 'anti-social camping'

Continued from page one. camping be allowed as from yesterday (Wednesday).

'Sadly it has come to our attention that there are a number of posts on social media that suggest we may once again be inundated with people at the weekend,' added Mr Newnham. 'If we see a repeat of the events of last weekend, there are potentially going to be over 100 people camping on the beach in Morar, more at both Traigh and Camusdarach, and none of them will have the means by which they can maintain even the most basic level of personal hygiene.'

'We also feel there needs to be urgent measures put in place that restrict the parking of campervans and caravans along the roadside next to the beaches. Whilst we feel that some urgent and immediate action needs to be taken, we also feel far more positive about the future and would like to thank you again for taking the time to

Discarded rubbish is becoming a real issue at local beauty spots.



listen and to everyone for the constructive contribution they made.'

Mr Ewing told the Lochaber Times: 'We understand that the majority of people visiting Scotland's scenic sights do so responsibly, however we are absolutely clear that visitors should respect the local communities and areas they are visiting. Anti-social behaviour, in any form, is unacceptable. This afternoon I convened a call to discuss

concerns raised by local stakeholders and consider how public sector partners, including Police Scotland and local authorities, can work with them to mitigate such issues reoccurring.'

'There are already many policies in place to support sustainable tourism, including the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, which is benefiting community toilets and



More bins are needed in Glen Etive as there are currently not enough to cope with the demand.

motorhome facilities in Mallaig and composting toilets at Traigh beach. We are committed to doing more to reduce pressures on communities.'

Commenting afterwards, local MSP Kate Forbes, who secured the conference call with Mr Ewing and local community representatives, said there was no quick and easy fix. But she added: 'I hope this shows the commitment and willingness of

the Scottish Government and the Highland Council to find solutions and also to work constructively with the local communities in Arisaig and Morar, as well as Glen Etive, to alleviate some of the pressures.'

Caol and Mallaig councillor Allan Henderson said what was witnessed at the weekend was not wild camping but groups clearly out to 'colonise' the beaches.

'It is not possible to leave

no trace on pristine beaches such as the silver sands which has been a beach much adored and shared by day visitors and locals for many years. Unfortunately what was a local issue is also a national problem - anti social behaviour,' he told us.

Nevertheless, he also said the call with Mr Ewing had been very positive with the council mainly able to focus on short-term measures and the Scottish Government and other agencies the longer term national issues.

Frazer Coupland, chief executive officer at Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, said it was important everyone uses consistent and accurate language: 'The talk about 'wild camping' in recent weeks has included camping that leaves litter, smouldering fires and human waste. That is not 'wild camping' that is 'illegal camping', far removed from our wonderful Scottish Outdoor Access Code.'

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LT

Sharon urges public to shop today to save lives tomorrow

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A charity outlet manager from Fort William whose cousin died from cancer is urging people to shop to save lives.

It was an emotional moment for Sharon Smith last Friday as she opened the doors of the Cancer UK shop to customers again for the first time since lockdown started.

Sharon knows exactly how vital the power of research is to give families more tomorrows with their loved ones. Her cousin Laura Barr died in March 2018, aged 51, after a four-year battle with brain cancer.

'I miss Laura's laughter, her smile and that sparkle which was always in her eyes,' said Sharon. 'Memories of Laura make me see clearly there's so much urgent work still to be done to help beat cancer. That's

why it's such a relief for the tills to be ringing again. I love my job and I'm proud of our team of staff and volunteers in Fort William who have raised more than £3 million since the shop first opened on November 14, 1989. Covid-19 has slowed us down. But we will never stop.'

The Fort William store reopened on Friday. Staff and volunteers at the High Street store are now getting back to business to tackle the shortfall in funding caused by the pandemic.

'To save lives tomorrow, we need the public's support today - so we want people to know we're making every effort to create a safe shopping experience,' added Sharon.

'Covid-19 has hit us hard and after three long months we're delighted to be able to welcome new and familiar faces back through our doors again, as well as a host of new dona-



Sharon is glad the shop has reopened, and inset, her cousin, Laura.

tions. Our shops are full of new and pre-loved items, fashion one-offs and homeware treasures - particularly after lockdown clear-outs. As well as being sold at bargain prices, every sale helps to fund our work. But right now, clinical trials are being postponed and we're having to delay vital research.

With its shops typically contributing more than £25million every year to vital research, Cancer Research UK has suffered a dramatic loss of income since they were forced to close temporarily due to lockdown. Highlighting the scale of the funding gap, the call to support the shops coincides with the launch of an

urgent new TV appeal to help get the charity's life-saving work back on track.

Strict measures are being followed to ensure people can shop, volunteer and donate goods safely in Fort William.

These include social distancing, hand sanitiser stations, cough guards at till points, face coverings and gloves for shop staff and volunteers, additional cleaning and a 72-hour quarantine period for donated items.

The shop also has a 72-hour quarantine period for donated items.

Staff are recommending that people phone ahead to check capacity on the day before dropping off goods as the new safety measures mean that storage space may be limited.

The Cancer Research UK Fort William shop is open 9.30am-4.30pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

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Lettuce share vegetable bounty says, Lochaber Rural Trust

A highlight for primary school children from across Lochaber is a visit to the Lochaber Rural Education Trust, where amongst many other projects, they take part in, 'Seed to Supper' is always very popular, writes Fiona Scott.

Under expert guidance the youngsters prepare the ground in large outdoor planters (which are also designed for access by wheelchair users), sow various vegetable seeds and on each return visit help cultivate them, checking how their progress through to the point where they are ready to be harvested and eaten.

One of the favourite parts of this scheme is planning a pop-up cafe for friends and family, where they can plan the dishes using the plants they have grown, cook them and serve them up, while at the same time learning about the whole food supply chain.

This year the children planted the seeds, but just as they started to grow, Covid-19 restrictions came into force, which closed schools and put a stop to their visits.

However, Isabel Campbell and volunteers such as Tommy



Tommy McKnight harvests the lettuce and Isabel Campbell packs them ready for collection and distribution.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

McKnight and his partner, Alma, kept looking after the many plants and pet animals in the absence of the children, each attending on alternate days to preserve social distancing rules.

Their activities proved very successful and productive, with the raised planters burgeoning with healthy fresh vegetable.

While the trust hopes a pop-up cafe may once again be possible later in the year, it decided to offer the first crop of lettuce. With Tommy in the planter and Isabel ready with the paper bags, they managed to give it all away to individuals and community groups, saving the fresh, juicy lettuce

from going to waste.

Isabel told us: 'Hundreds of children of all abilities have taken part in planting, harvesting and cooking vegetables over the years and we are all very disappointed that we haven't been able to do it this time.'

'Hopefully, if restrictions ease enough and the schools go back in August, we may be able to hold a pop-up cafe for everyone as there will still be plenty of vegetables reaching their peak, ready to be picked.'

'The volunteers have really done a fantastic job in looking after the gardens so that if and when the schoolchildren are able to return they can still enjoy the whole experience. Well done to them all.'

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FINANCE AND DELIVERY ARRANGED

World's first battery-run cruise liner to call at Fort

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The world's first hybrid ship, MS Roald Amundsen, which is partially powered by batteries, will be the first cruise liner to call at Fort William since the coronavirus pandemic began when it drops anchor in Loch Linnhe in September.

It is part of the fleet operated by the Norwegian expedition cruise line, Hurtigruten, which has announced it is launching a series of sailings from UK ports this September.

The vessel uses battery packs to support her low-emission engines, which the cruise line says reduces CO2 emissions by 20 per cent compared to other cruise ships of the same size.

Passenger numbers will be limited to no more 350 for each cruise to allow for social distancing measures. The four sailings will all be short break expedition cruises around the



British Isles. When it weighs anchor at Dover in September, MS Roald Amundsen will be the first expedition cruise ship to depart from a UK port since the country went into lockdown in March.

The four sailings will depart from Portsmouth (September 2), Liverpool (September 7 and 17) and Glasgow (September 12), with the expeditions lasting six days each and,

as well as Fort William, the Roald Amundsen will also call at Loch Sunart, Oban, Stornoway, St Kilda and Portree on Skye.

Fort William had been due to welcome 14 cruise liners this season before Covid-19 forced their cancellation.

On the ship will be a dedicated expedition team, including ornithologists, leading excursions such as beach clean ups.

The MS Roald Amundsen is scheduled to call at Fort William in September.

As befits the world's first hybrid ship, single-use plastics are banned on board the MS Roald Amundsen.

It was only last year that the vessel was added to the Hurtigruten fleet. She boasts the latest environmentally sustainable hybrid technology and demonstrate that hybrid propulsion on large ships is possible.

With a gross tonnage of 20,890, MS Roald Amundsen and her sister ship MS Fridtjof Nansen are the first of two hybrid ships Hurtigruten will add to its fleet over the next few years.

Named after the famous Norwegian explorer who was the first man to reach the South Pole, the company says MS Roald Amundsen, which

has an ice-strengthened hull for sailing in polar seas, leads the way towards an even more sustainable way of travelling.

Experts onboard deliver in-depth lectures on a variety of topics, while the ship also boasts a science centre which has an extensive library, biological and geological microscopes. There is a Citizen Science programme which allows guests to assist with live scientific research.

Councillor Ben Thompson (Caol and Mallaig), who has called for an electric option when it comes to choosing the replacement vessel for the Corran Ferry service, said Norway was ahead of Scotland when it comes to dealing with particle pollution.

'I first became aware of the electrification going on in Norway when they banned cruise liners burning dirty fuel and introduced a date for the fjords becoming zero emis-

sion,' Councillor Thompson told the Lochaber Times.

'Their government has been taking these steps to protect people because of the significant pollution Norwegian fjord towns were suffering. Cruise ships are responsible for a large amount of that pollution as many still burn very dirty fuel. New hybrid vessels like the Roald Amundsen are going to be needed for cruise ships to visit the Norwegian fjords in future.'

'There has been a lot of media coverage in the UK of the new medical understanding of the severe health impact of particle pollution from dirty engines. Children are especially impacted. In the Highlands we have not yet dealt with particle pollution as Norway has.'

'We pride ourselves on our pristine, healthy Highland environment - we need to make sure we're taking the steps to keep it that way.'

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VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

AGM with a difference!

The crisis of the last few months has clearly demonstrated that a strong local Chamber of Commerce is a vital resource for our Lochaber business community. Throughout these hugely uncertain and unprecedented times for everyone, the team at Lochaber Chamber of Commerce has worked tirelessly to support and speak up for the needs of our member businesses and the wider community.

Businesses have been able to get their points across directly to the MPs and MSPs at the heart of the decision-making processes through regular virtual Q&A sessions, find their way through the intricacies of furlough and staffing issues with specialist seminars and access direct help on the huge number of business issues that have arisen.

We've been proud to offer our members all the support, guidance and lobbying power we can in order to help make sure that our local economy and community survives and thrives in an economic and social landscape that's been changing at a dizzying rate.

There's no getting away from the fact that it's been, and continues to be, an incredibly challenging time for businesses across all sectors. As part of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce network, Lochaber Chamber has been able to make sure that the needs



of our local community are heard loud and clear by those in power and we've provided a reliable source of up-to-date information and guidance throughout the lockdown and beyond. We're pleased that our members can clearly see the value that being part of the Chamber brings to their businesses.

A vital part of the effective running of the Chamber is our AGM and this year's one will be a bit different, as we join together by Zoom on Tuesday August 11. The meeting gives members – as well as interested members of the public – the chance to find out about the plans for the coming year, review what's been done over the last year and ask questions of the board and chief executive. The AGM is a great opportunity to find out more about how your Chamber is adapting to the changes and refocusing for the future.

Put the date in your diary: our virtual AGM will be held via Zoom on Tuesday August 11. We promise a friendly and informative get-together; but you will have to supply your own tea and biscuits!

Further details will be sent out to all members directly and made available on www.lochaberchamber.co.uk and our social media channels over the coming weeks.

Meet Doddie, Vera and Captain...

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



After receiving several thousand suggestions from the public, Woodland Trust Scotland have named the three osprey chicks hatched at Loch Arkaig Pine Forest earlier this year.

The trio have been named Doddie, Vera and Captain in honour of Scottish rugby legend Doddie Weir, Forces' Sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn and centenarian NHS fundraiser Captain Tom Moore.

The chicks are watched by more than a quarter of a million fans on a livestreaming nest camera supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery and following an on-line vote last weekend Doddie, Vera and Captain topped the poll.

George Anderson of Woodland Trust Scotland said: 'Our osprey nest livestream found a huge audience this summer, as people at home during lockdown craved contact with nature.'

'When it came to naming the chicks people wanted to honour these individuals who for different reasons have all



From left Vera, Doddie and Captain.

would attract a mate. But after 18 days Aila arrived and that first year they raised a single chick – Lachlan. In 2018 all three of the pair's eggs were taken by a pine marten. In 2019 they successfully raised two female chicks – Rannoch and Mallie.

Loch Arkaig was the last known breeding site of ospreys in Britain before the species was wiped out around the time of the First World War. The species has been making a gradual comeback since returning to Loch Garten on Speyside in the 1950s.

Woodland Trust Scotland bought Loch Arkaig Pine Forest in 2016 in partnership with local group Arkaig Community Forest. They have long-term plans to restore the ancient forest while stimulating economic activity in the local community.

The livestreaming nest camera offers a wild slice of forest life with the aim of publicising the fundraising appeal for the restoration.

been prominent in the public consciousness this year.'

The nest camera has been running since 2017. Last year it attracted an audience of 60,000 viewers (that's viewers not individual views). This year it has seen its audience shoot up to 290,000 viewers so far, with almost two million individual visits to the web page.

The birds are expected to fledge - or take their first flights - in around a week. The nest will remain their basecamp until they migrate south towards the end of August.

Mr Anderson added: 'Most Scottish ospreys fly overland down through England before

crossing the Channel to France and on to Africa. There is every chance that Vera the osprey may fly over those white cliffs made so famous in song by her namesake.'

There were more than 10,000 votes in the naming poll. Fifty per cent voted for Doddie, Vera and Captain; 28 per cent voted for Thor, Freya and Loki; 14 per cent voted for Ally, Bally and Bee; 8 per cent voted for Hagrid, Boudica and Merlin.

The osprey family's story began in 2017 when an inexperienced young male took possession of the nest at Loch Arkaig. He was nicknamed Lonesome Louis as it didn't look like he

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Customers chose Nevis in bakery awards

Nevis Bakery took more than 200 votes to make the finals of the Wholesale Bakery of the Year category in the Scottish Baker of the Year Customer Choice Awards.

The 2020 search for the Scottish Baker of Year might have been postponed, but over 14,000 bakery customers in Scotland still voted for their favourite bakers.

Archie Paterson of Nevis Bakery said: 'Wow, after such a tough few months, it is beyond wonderful to know so many of our customers rate us their favourite Wholesale Baker.'

'We are really touched, so thanks to everyone who took the time to vote for us and we are looking forward to continuing to serve our community with freshly baked, quality produce for many more years to come.'

Scottish Bakers ambassador and star baker in her own right, Mich Turner MBE said: 'It's not just for our daily bread that we rely on our local bakers - and who doesn't love a tasty treat, perfect pie or super sausage roll - so to be able to celebrate the success of our winners today is wonderful.'

The competition runs every year to help find the best bakers in Scotland and the 2020 competition, which got off to a great start in February before the Covid-19 pandemic hit, saw the first ever Customer Choice awards. Shoppers simply voted

for their favourite baker and from these Scottish Bakers, the industry organisation with more than 200 bakery members, identified a Customer Choice winner and two runners up in each of the four business categories; Craft Baker, Retail Craft Baker, Wholesale Baker and Bakery Café.

Often described as Queen of Couture Cakes, Mich Turner is a founder member of Little Venice Cake Company and was delighted to announce this year's winners, saying that it would bring some sense of celebration back to the great Scottish Bakers family.

She added: 'As lockdown eases, we're asking consumers everywhere, if you haven't shopped in your local baker for a while, perhaps now is the time to pay a visit and try some of their fantastic fresh bakes. Each product you buy helps recognise the hard work and skill of your favourite local baker and to help their businesses bounce back.'

Alasdair Smith of Scottish Bakers, who organise the competition said: 'We are delighted to have been able to give the public a say in 2020 with our new Customer Choice awards. It was a great opportunity to get people buzzing about great, traditional Scottish baking.'

'Nevis Bakery are a worthy finalist in the Customer Choice Wholesale Baker of the year award, sponsored by Rondo.'

Wild Words

KIRSTEEN BELL
fort@obantimes.co.uk

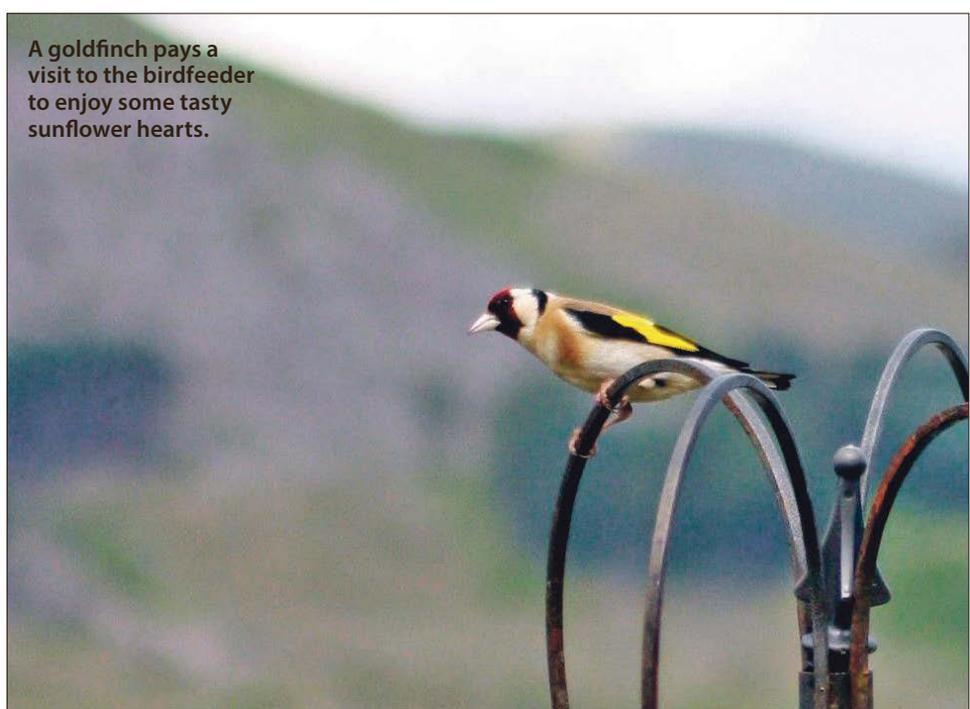
I am sitting at the back of our house, the kids are inside, and all is quiet - except it is not.

Turning slowly towards a light scurrying noise along the surface of the gravel path, I catch sight of a water vole, hugging close to the stone before disappearing into the long grass up the bank. In the space of our silence other lives can be seen and heard.

A stag strolling through a friend's garden prompted him to ask if the stag was there because there were no cars and people on the road, or if it had always walked there and all that had changed was that he was there to see it.

While some towns and cities may have seen more remarkable changes in lockdown, wildlife venturing into the silent streets, in Lochaber the change in behaviour is largely our own. Lockdown has created space in our lives, but it is by no means empty.

Another day, standing on a raised pallet path to the east of the house, I become aware of a fat hedgehog, poised, watching me, watching it. A few nights later, as we turn the kitchen lights out for the evening, the hedgehog trails across the shorter grass in front of the house, heading towards the bird table in the blue dusk. The creature's search for the fragments of food dropped by the birds could be seen in the twitching of the uncut



A goldfinch pays a visit to the birdfeeder to enjoy some tasty sunflower hearts.

grass above it. It is the first time we have seen a hedgehog by the house in the 10 years that we have lived here.

The same bird table has been filled sporadically over those years, but these days I watch to see which birds prefer what feed; filling it has become part of my daily routine. Sunflower hearts draw charms of goldfinch, the blackbirds will perform acrobatics to get to the fatballs, and two mamma woodpeckers fly in for those fatballs from east and west so often that I cannot keep up

with their demand. The slope beyond the bird table is thick with grass and flowers, but not so thick that I do not see the soft movement of a roe buck passing through, his short antlers bobbing and pausing above the seed-heads. Butterflies that were previously only seen as orange-brown flutters, fluttering away from our slightest movement, are now pearl-bordered fritillaries, red admirals, peacocks, and heaths. The tiny dark holes leading into tumbled stone walls and moss-covered trees,

once a mystery, are revealed as wrens' nests.

Lochaber Times recently reported the efforts of Upper Achintore Regeneration Group to gift window boxes and bird feeders to residents without gardens. The blue tits, the chaffinches, the sparrows that will come are all there, busy in their lives. The birds will be unaware of the boon coming to them - they will not be waiting - but by creating space for them in our lives, whatever shape it is, we can see them a little more clearly.



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This week in 1745: the Bonnie Prince sets sail for Scotland

by Ally Entwistle
fort@bantimes.co.uk

This August, on the 19th to be precise, it will be 275 years since Prince Charles Edward Stuart – ‘Bonnie Prince Charlie’ – sparked the last, and most successful, of the Jacobite risings when he lifted his fluttering standard into the Loch Shiel breeze at Glenfinnan.

Today the 400,000 visitors that stream into this tiny hamlet every year might gaze down Loch Shiel, squeezed in between truly majestic hills, whilst thinking how beautiful it is, and pause to take a picture of the conveniently-situated stone tower with the kilted man on top, almost as an after-thought, before they turn the other way and head up the glen.

The main prize for many Glenfinnan visitors these days is ‘the Harry Potter bridge’, preferably with the ‘Hogwarts Express’ puffing over the top of it.

‘Concrete Bob’ MacAlpine, whose brainchild the viaduct was, would be spinning in his grave. In his day it was the Eighth Wonder of the World,



Held in the National Maritime Museum's collection, this painting depicts the sea battle on July 9 involving the prince's ships. Photograph: National Trust for Scotland.

It was in 1744, that King Louis XV of France had formally declared war on Britain. Two merchants of Irish extraction operating in France – Walsh and Rutledge – had recently bought two ships from the French government in order to expand their operations and to act as privateers to cruise against the English in the war.

Walsh, who had made his money in the slave trade, came from Irish-Jacobite stock. His grandfather had been a captain in the French navy and it was on board his ship that the Prince's grandfather, James VII and II had fled from Kinsale, Ireland, to France in July, 1690, after the Battle of the Boyne, an unsuccessful bid to regain the British throne.

Walsh and Rutledge's ships comprised an old 64-gun man-o'-war, the Elisabeth, and the 16-gun, light frigate Du Teillay, which had been built at

Nantes and just been launched in 1744.

The Prince was introduced to Walsh and Rutledge and not only did they pledge to lend him their ships, but also placed £3,800 in his hands.

And so the romantic endeavour begins...

June 20: The Prince makes his way to Nantes in disguise, and then sails to St Nazaire on a fishing boat, to board the Du Teillay.

June 21: the Du Teillay leaves St Nazaire, and sails to Belle-Isle.

July 4: the Elisabeth joins the Du Teillay. On board the Elisabeth are 100 marines, 2,000 muskets, 20 cannon, 11,000 ‘arm’ and 500 or 600 French broadswords.

July 5: the expedition sets sail and gets off to a promising start, with a fair wind which continues for the next few days

July 8: dead calm ensues.

July 9: at around 4pm as the ships approach the English coast off the Lizard, the most south-westerly point on the British mainland, a sail is spotted windward, which proves to be the Lion, a British man-o'-war of 60 guns. With

a triumph of engineering. But for many Scots, the dark waters of Loch Shiel and the 18-metre (60 feet in old money) monument are a bitter-sweet place of pilgrimage, the site of a hopeful spark which started a rising that could have changed the course of British history.

But it ended nine months later, trampled into the blood and

mud on a muir in the carnage that was Culloden.

Whilst debates still swirl around the actual, physical spot at which Prince Charles Edward raised the standard – reputedly sewn in red and white silk by women at nearby Dalilea – the monument and the loch along which the Prince was rowed remain the focus

for modern-day Jacobites. To mark the 275th anniversary of the start of the last Jacobite rising, this week we launch our new series involving a weekly timeline of the events leading up to that momentous day at Glenfinnan on August 19, and afterwards, along with some of the interesting facts and artefacts associated with the rising.

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onnie and...



The intricate model of Du Teillay at NTS Glenfinnan Monument visitor centre.

the Lion bearing down on the Du Teillay, the Elisabeth has the first broadside, and the ensuing battle lasts nearly five hours before the two parted – most by mutual agreement. Night is coming on and by this point they are both almost wrecks.

On board the much smaller Du Teillay, there is little the Prince can do but stand back out of range and watch.

The Elisabeth is so badly damaged that she can not even pull up alongside the Du

Teillay to transfer 300 casualties and limps back to France, to the port of Brest. This leaves the expedition at an early disadvantage – the Elisabeth is carrying the bulk of the arms and ammunition. The Du Teillay continued on her voyage towards the western Highlands.

July 11: a sail was spied, and gave chase to the Du Teillay. A small, swift vessel, the Du Teillay outran her pursuer.

July 15 and 16: rough seas and tempestuous weather.



The 1745 portrait of Prince Charles Edward Stuart by the artist Allan Ramsay.

Photograph courtesy of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Who was Bonnie Prince Charlie?

Full name: Prince Charles Edward Louis John Casimir Sylvester Severino Maria Stuart

Place of birth: Rome

Father: James Francis Edward, nicknamed The Old Pretender

Grandfather: James VII and II, who had been ousted in the so-called 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688. James was the last Catholic monarch of England, Scotland and Wales.

Supporters: called Jacobites (from Jacobus, the Latin for James).

Emblem: White rose – The Old Pretender's birthday, June 10, was known as White Rose Day by Jacobites.

Plan needed for backlog of medical operations

Highlands and Islands MSP Donald Cameron, pictured, has said that the Scottish Government must focus on supporting NHS Highland, and the other Health Boards in Scotland, to address the backlog in operations that



has accrued due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr Cameron said: 'The fall in the number of operations is startling. In the last two months that we have figures for – April and May – the total number of operations that took place

in the NHS Highland region was 382.

'During the equivalent period last year the number was 2,731.

'Inevitably that must mean that a huge backlog has built up while NHS staff have focused on the fight against the coronavirus.

'It's absolutely essential that

the Scottish Government now prioritises organising the resources to address this backlog before it develops into a health emergency.

'We cannot afford any distractions, let alone speculation about the constitution which, unfortunately, seems to be obsessing some SNP politicians at the moment.'

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LT

From the sidelines

PETE NEWMAN

fort@obantimes.co.uk



I suppose, if you're going to be subjected to sporting thoughts, you have a right to know: why me?

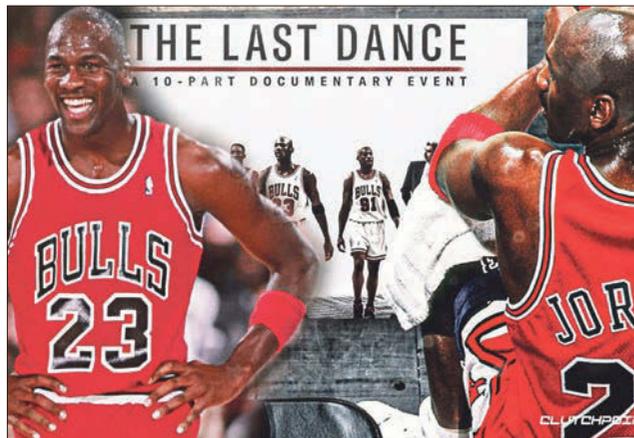
If you've spoken to me for more than five minutes, I've probably crowbarred a nonchalant reference in that I have been a freelance sports writer for national publications such as The Herald, The Sunday Herald and Nutmeg.

When I'm not writing for the Lochaber Times, I film and edit football matches for the Highland and North Caledonian Leagues. Some of you will know me as the president of South Lochaber Thistle, or one of the women's and juniors' coaches. Others will have sat through the odd lesson delivered by me in my other role as a teacher.

I played rugby, before the hips crumbled, cricket and I still play football (badly). I'm a qualified rugby, football and basketball coach and I've been known to have the odd view on sport.

The Last Dance

It feels like just me – and the



The Last Dance is a documentary that follows the 1998 Chicago Bulls basketball team, including Michael Jordan.

rest of the world – have been enjoying Netflix and ESPN Films' 10-part documentary The Last Dance.

It is, of course, difficult to know exactly how many people are watching, courtesy of Netflix's notoriously secretive metrics for success, but 2,310,000,000 Google results added to less quantitative social media hype, does tend to imply that the series is doing OK. Especially impressive is

that, in the UK, basketball barely gets any coverage.

For those who don't know, the programme follows the 1998 Chicago Bulls as they aim to win the NBA Championship for the third year in a row, and their sixth in eight years – the notorious and unprecedented 'Three-peat'. It follows this journey intercutting with the backgrounds and stories of the disparate cast of characters which made up the playing,

coaching and management staff at the Bulls in those days.

There is much to adore about the show: both personally and as a consumer. If, like me, you were playing basketball as a teenager in the 90s, the Bulls reigned supreme and Michael Jordan especially. However, Dennis Rodman and Scottie Pippen were hardly under the radar. I was never a good basketball player: too short, too tubby. But I could scrap like Rodman – even if I couldn't pull off the hair.

Then there's the merchandise: my Dad bought me a Jordan-sponsored Chicago Bulls black and red basketball which was constantly getting dribbled on the path outside the house. I only got rid of it when I moved my Mum out of that house a couple of years ago and, if I hadn't been travelling on a plane, that ball would have made the trip back with me, smooth and ancient though it then was. It had to go in the skip. Now, both my father and the ball are gone and... What can you say: there's the nostalgia.

However, in some ways, the thing I have enjoyed even more is the rabbit hole it's sent me down. First, there was a podcast – The Dream Team Tapes with Jack McCallum which tells the story of the US Olympic basketball team from Barcelona 92. McCallum is a basketball Hall of Famer and has been with Sports Illustrated for a very long time and his delivery and unravelling of the story behind this remarkable team is first class. Is it a shameless coattail ride on TLD? Yes, and for a book, The Dream Team, released in 2014, but now I have to read the damn thing. Oh, well sure I'll cope.

Then there was this profile by Wright Thompson on ESPN from 2013 when Jordan turned 50. I got to it from The Ruffian, the newsletter of journalist and author Ian Leslie ian-leslie.com/about and it's super. Top notch sports writing: revealing, emotional, inspiring – a little horrifying in places.

I know some people think that TLD is a puff piece but, if this is Jordan censored and

touched up, then he may be an actual monster because I think the makers go for balance as much as possible. The scene where Jordan tearfully calls for a time out in an interview when he is asked if winning came at the expense of being a nice guy is heart-breaking and revealing.

I know it doesn't address Craig Hodges, however, Jordan's hesitancy to speak out over issues of race ('Republicans buy sneakers too') is addressed by no less an authority on these issues than former President Obama so, that's not exactly ducking it.

I know it doesn't address Horace Grant and the stories about Grant being denied food after bad games. But, Grant does appear in the show.

What this programme does over 10 episodes is look at what it takes to win – what the fire and fuel it takes to dominate in any profession, and it does it in a warts and all way.

There's lots of rabbit holes to go down with wider context and that's a form of nostalgia I can enjoy.



Welcome back to Glencoe...

Many people have spent months dreaming of visiting and exploring the Glencoe area. Now it's time they can turn those dreams into plans by booking stays and adventures here.

With more information available, it's easier to plan a trip – whether you're travelling locally or from further afield. Here's a quick rundown of key points for you:

Locals are welcome

Join us in supporting our local tourism industry as it reopens. Rediscover the attractions of south Lochaber. Eat local, buy local, see local, enjoy local.

What's open?

Throughout the area many tourism and hospitality businesses are opening this week. Others will continue their preparations to welcome visitors back later. The Ice Factor and Glencoe Folk Museum are two local attractions who will not open immediately. The best information is online.

Plan ahead, book direct

Capacity is affected by social distancing measures and some businesses are not opening fully. Please make sure to contact individual providers to check opening times and safety information before your visit.

Responsible tourism

Please respect this beautiful area and take your litter home with you. Take only photos and leave only footprints. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code applies all year-round and offers some great tips and advice.



Too busy?

If it's busy, move on and explore another spot. Perhaps enjoy 'slow travel', visit fewer locations and really get to know the area, by foot, bike or paddle.

Face coverings

Face coverings are mandatory on public transport and in shops. Please note there are exceptions for some health conditions and for children under 5.

Protect others & yourself

Do not travel if you have COVID-19 symptoms or have been told to isolate. Observe



physical distancing, cough etiquette, regularly use hand sanitiser and wash your hands frequently. For staff safety many businesses still prefer card or online payments at this time.

Social distancing

Social distancing remains at 2 metres as the default. However 1 metre exceptions may be introduced including: public transport; outdoor hospitality; indoor hospitality; and retail. These areas will be clearly signposted for you.



Safety first

Every business has increased hygiene, risk assessed, signposted and re-trained. Look out for the 'Good to Go' scheme throughout the area.

Know before you go

Government guidelines change regularly, please check them before travelling.



For information and our Visitor Charter: discoverglencoe.scot/covid-19



Angela Woodley has transformed a limited dermatology service into one that is outstanding and person-centred.

Innovative Angela makes shortlist for nurse award

A Stornoway specialist nurse has been shortlisted for one of the highest accolades in her profession, writes Fiona Scott.

Angela Woodley, who specialises in dermatology at the Western Isles Hospital, was nominated for the RCNi Nurse Awards 2020 in the category Innovations in your Specialty Award for her commitment to a service redesign delivered last year.

Qualifying as a nurse 30 years ago, Angela began her employment with NHS Western Isles in 2006, first working on Erisort Ward for five years, before working simultaneously as part-time dermatology liaison nurse, occupational health nurse and as a call centre nursing advisor with NHS 24.

'I am honestly astounded at not only being nominated, but to have been shortlisted for this award,' she said.

As the dermatology service lead, Angela vets all referrals, performs complex diagnostics, delivers multiple complex therapies and initiates medication and treatment plans.

Under her lead, waiting time breaches for urgent referrals to the service have gone from 55 per cent to zero. In addition, weekly rather than monthly clinics are improving outcomes for patients with suspected cancer, and all patients are put on a treatment plan within a week of referral. Her patient satisfaction questionnaires are all positive, with patients reporting that they feel listened to, appropriately treated and reassured. Her use of tele-dermatology has allowed for further education of nurses and referring GPs as all results are fed back with images and comments, thus reducing future referrals.

Angela, who was nominated for the award by Iain Trayner,

NHS Western Isles Technology Enabled Care (TEC) project manager, added: 'I couldn't have achieved the service redesign without the support of Iain and the rest of the TEC Team - they have the 'know how' to make things happen.

'With further support from the Western Isles Health Board, Drs Pete Greenstock and Kate Dawson, the dermatology service continues to develop. In addition, the team at the Western Isles Hospital's Outpatients Department (my 'work family') have always been so supportive and encouraging, having more faith in me than I do!'

Since the announcement of being shortlisted, Angela has already been tweeted congratulations by Sandra Lawton OBE, Queen's Nurse and Nurse Consultant Dermatology, the British Dermatological Nursing Society and Psoriasis.org which she described as 'an absolute thrill'.

William Findlay, NHS Western Isles Nurse/AHP director and chief operating officer, said: 'We are very proud of Angela's achievements.

'She has transformed a limited dermatology service into one that is outstanding and person-centred through clinical leadership, co-designing improvements with patients, and using technology from the United States for our remote islands.

'In addition, Angela has engaged to a level above and beyond her position. She has undertaken advanced training (Masters level) in Dermatology and has now completed her second year with a distinction award.

'She has become an accomplished, advanced independent practitioner in dermatology who can now better serve our local community.'

Fort William Bike Kitchen on hunt for bike mechanic

Lochaber Environmental Group (LEG) is recruiting for a qualified bike mechanic to help run the Fort William Bike Kitchen.

With another 12 months of funding secured from Paths for All Smarter Choices Smarter Places, the bike mechanic will help LEG to continue developing the Bike Kitchen, promoting active travel and teaching

bike repair skills. The position is part time (three days/week), and the mechanic will deliver bike repair workshops, restore bikes, help develop LEGs Bike Tool Library and run guided ebike rides.

The closing date for applications is Tuesday July 21, with interviews being held during the week beginning July 27.

The new funding will enable

the Bike Kitchen to resume LEG's successful Adopt A Bike scheme, offering more restored bikes to new owners.

The newly completed Bike Kitchen shed will also be home to LEGs developing Bike Tool Library, with bike tools available for all to borrow, free of charge, helping to keep your bike in good condition and running smoothly.

The Bike Kitchen is funded by the Climate Challenge Fund as part of LEGs project 'Low Carbon Lochaber', Paths for All Smarter Choices Smarter Places, and Cycling Scotland.

More information about the bike mechanic position and application documents are available at lochaberenviron.org.uk or email: kate@lochaberenviron.org.uk

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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

Clean up your act!

Piles of rubbish left behind at Lochaber beauty spots last weekend lead to tourism secretary Fergus Ewing hastily organising a conference call this week with community leaders desperate for help to tackle the growing problem of 'wild camping'.

The call sounded positive but this issue is not going to go away without much more debate, and hard cash being made available.

At the moment campervaners and motor-home owners are being blamed for a lot of the mess. However, as well-known broadcaster, author and outdoor pursuits expert Cameron McNeish points out, hordes of young people who would normally be drinking on the sun-warmed beaches of Costa del Sol and Ibiza if it wasn't for Covid, are instead buying cheap tents and plenty booze and heading up here, having no idea of what no-trace-camping is about. Education and infrastructure is needed, including more bins and public toilets that are open, if our local environment is to be protected.

The outstanding natural beauty of our region is why many people visit, and we don't want to stop them. But if we don't find a way to manage this issue, visitors wanting to spend time – and money – in our area may decide not to come back if all they can see is piles of litter and flytipping.

Instead of getting to the point where legislation is the only solution, let's find a positive way forward.

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 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.

The views expressed on our letters page are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of The Oban Times.

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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.



Ferry travel for island residents

Extract of open letter to Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for energy, connectivity and the islands.

You will be aware of this petition (<http://chn.g.it/rKZpYRxB55>), which asks that island residents across the ferry network be given some rights of priority booking to ensure that their reasonable travel needs between home and the mainland are secured.

I had an extensive correspondence with yourself and Robbie Drummond about this last year. I have written to Mr. Drummond again and he has reiterated what he said then: CalMac cannot give priority to island residents because it is required by the terms of its contract with Transport Scotland to treat all passengers exactly the same. This has also been confirmed by Transport Scotland who wrote to me on July 8 stating, "The Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services contract is quite explicit in that "the Operator must ensure that all bookings and reservations are dealt with on a first come first served basis. There must be no discrimination between one ferry user and other".

Island life has many advantages but the requirement to cross miles of water when leaving or returning home unavoidably constrains the ability of residents to travel. The weather, mechanical breakdowns and limited ferry capacity are all facts of life which have to be accommodated. By and large island residents realise that these relative disadvantages are consequences of their own choices and accept them as such but even taking this into account it is not reasonable to maintain that the current situation represents anything like a position of equity between Scottish island residents and Scottish mainland residents travelling between their homes and mainland Scotland.

The ferries are the only practicable roads to the islands but their carrying capacity is severely limited and inadequate for the volume of traffic which wishes to use them. On Islay residents are outnumbered by visitors 40 to one even before taking freight traffic into account. Individual visitors come to the island once, perhaps twice, in a year for their holidays. They can and do book their passage months in advance. Their travel needs are not comparable with those of island residents. Neither are those of freight. These other users outcompete the island's residents by sheer weight of numbers and take priority by force over the sort of reasonable, routine, day to day travel needs of the island residents which are taken for granted by those who live on the mainland. No resident of Glasgow, Inverness, or indeed any place on the mainland accessible by public highway needs to plan and book ahead sometimes weeks in advance

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

'S gann a chreideas mi gum bheil sinn aig meadhan an t-samhraidh! Saoilidh mi, agus tha mi air a bhith a' cluinntinn an aon bheachd bho dhaoine eile, gun deach na ceithir mìosan mu dheireadh seachad cha mhòr gun fhiosta, a dh'aindeoin an t-suidheachaidh neo-àbhaisteach a bh' againn fo ghlasadh a' choròna-bhiorais. Bha fadachd oirnn uile chun an tigeadh fuasgladh air bacaidhean a' ghlasaidh, agus mu dheireadh thall tha sin air tòiseachadh agus tha cead againn siubhal air feadh na dùthcha a-rithist. Thug sinne cuairt dhan Eilean Sgitheanach airson a' chiad turas bhon Ghearran, agus leis an fhirinn innse bha an turas a' faireachadh car annasach an dèidh ùine cha fada, ach tha mi creidsinn gur e a' b' annasaiche uile cho beag 's a bha de chàraichean air an rathad faisg air meadhan an t-samhraidh. Gun teagamh, tha an t-sàmhchair sin air fìor dhroch bhuidh a thoirt air beòshlaint mhòran dhaoine air Ghàidhealtachd agus anns na h-Eileanan a tha cho mòr an eisimeil turasachd, agus gu dearbh tha cuid a' ghnìomhachasan beaga air dùnadh uile gu lèir ri linn dìth cosnaidh.

Ach bhon t-seachdain seo a-mach tha dùil ri sruth de shluagh aig tuath agus san iar, agus dh'fhaodadh gur ann a bhios cus a' tighinn! Chan eil cho fada bhon a chunnacas luchd-turais a' cadal a-muigh san Eilean Sgitheanach ri linn 's nach gabhadh àite-fuirich a lorg, ach bithear an dòchas nach ruig sinn an ire sin a-rithist! 'S e firinn na cùise nach gabh smachd cumail neo

a ghabhail air na h-àireamhan de luchd-turais a thig gu ruig nan sgìrean againn, agus gu ìre tha an aon rud fìor mun dòigh sam bi cuid dhiubh gan giùlan fhèin.

Chan iongnadh mar sin ged a bhiodh cuid a' faireachadh rud beag an-fhoiseil is na bacaidhean gan togail. Fìu 's nuair a bha an glasadh stèidhichte bha beagan luchd-turais a' nochdadh, gun fhios ciamar nach robh iad mothachail air na riaghailtean.

Ach an uair a tha modhan giùlain an urra ri ciall an t-sluaigh bidh cuideigin gam briseadh, agus sin far am bheil an cunnart agus adhbhar na h-iomagain an-dràsta. Cuirear fàilte air an teachd-a-steach a chuireas na coigrich ri gnìomhachasan de gach seòrsa ach chan urrainnear a bhith cinnteach nach toir cuideigin an galair mallaichte leotha cuideachd, gun fhiosta.

Tha e gu bhith doirbh rian a chumail air as-tar dhaoine bho chèile agus aig an aon àm an t-seirbheis air am bi feum aca a' fhriththeadh. Ma bha suidheachadh riamh an urra ri tùr a' mhòr-shluaigh 's e na tha gu bhith romhainn thar ùine shaor-làithean an t-samhraidh seo, agus air sgàth a h-uile neach a bhios an sàs bidh sinn an dòchas gun tèid gnothaichean mar a dh'iarramaid.

Gu cinnteach chan iarramaid tilleadh gu glasadh!

Allan Campbell
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

so that they can travel to see their dentist, buy a new fridge, get their car repaired or visit with their parents, children or grandchildren. No mainland resident, having travelled from their home without fixing a definite return date, faces the prospect of hours or days waiting in a queue and nights sleeping in a hotel not knowing when they might eventually get home. No mainland resident has to book a space for their car on the public road weeks ahead of the time that they hope to drive on it. This is not just a problem for Islay or just a problem of the Covid emergency.

Even in normal times, across the western isles on many busy tourist routes ferries are booked up weeks in advance by visitors and freight so that island residents experience significant difficulties in travelling. The current arrangements obviously disadvantage islanders, are a clear impediment to their ability to travel, make a mockery of the much

repeated designation of the ferries as a Lifeline Service and are contrary to the implied promise of 'road equivalent tariff' that the ferries provide a passage to the islands for residents which is as easy and as cheap as the open road.

This unfairness could easily be addressed by changing CalMac's contract and requiring them to reserve a small proportion of ferry berths until 48 hours before each sailing which could only be booked by island residents, who would be required to present a photo ID resident's ferry card when doing so and again when travelling. This type of solution has been used in other situations, is easy to administer, is inexpensive and has been suggested as a constructive approach on many previous occasions.

The failure of Transport Scotland to take this or any equivalent alternative action to redress this inequity suggests that, without public discussion



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or consultation, it has tacitly determined that equity between Scottish island residents and Scottish mainland residents travelling between their homes and other parts of mainland Scotland is satisfied by the opportunity to compete on equal terms for ferry places with all other travellers to the islands. It suggests that Transport Scotland does not recognise the increasing unfairness to island residents of this unequal competition and does not understand how much of a burden and a worry travel for island residents has become.

In this context, I would be grateful if you would answer the following questions.

■ Does Transport Scotland consider equity between Scottish island residents and Scottish mainland residents in travelling between their homes and any part of the Scottish mainland is fully satisfied by the island resident's opportunity to compete on a first come first served basis with all other persons who wish to travel to and from the islands?

■ If the answer is 'Yes' will you please give details of the decision-making process and the reasoning used by Transport Scotland in making this decision? Will you also tell me where details of these processes, reasons and the decision itself have been recorded and are available to the public?

■ If the answer is 'No' will you please confirm that Transport Scotland could make arrangements to give priority booking rights for ferry travel to and from their home island to Scottish island residents if it wished by changing the conditions its contract with CalMac to instruct them to do so?

Finally, I would be grateful if you would comment on the status and utility of 'Island Proofing' and the 'Islands Bill' in this context. Specifically, why should island residents have any confidence that the constraints and inequities consequent on living on an island will be recognised and ameliorated while Transport Scotland continues to tolerate this particularly egregious example?

Chris Abell, Port Ellen, Islay.

Gardening project takes root

Locked-down residents of Upper Achintore welcomed the local regeneration group's Windowsill Gardening Kits project when the group set up its first of many visits and collect stances, writes Fiona Scott.

With support from High Life Highland's Green Health Initiative programme, the group

has put together almost 200 Windowsill Gardening Kits for distribution to families and children living in the Upper Achintore community.

The Windowsill Gardening Kits are free and contain bird seed, compost, plant pots and seeds plus a selection of nature identification cards and a guidance note.

Additionally, the kits include some outdoor activity-based items appropriate to the

area. Each kit can be enjoyed by a person on their own or explored and shared as part of a family activity.

The purpose of the kits is to provide enjoyment, educate, release some creative talents and hopefully discover a new hobby.

Group chairman Mark Linfield said 'While initially aimed at residents in flats without gardens, we have now



Sarah Huxley, left, with Nigel and Chris Heardsman of the Regeneration Group with the kits. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

sourced material for almost 200 kits and are able to offer them to the wider community.

'You don't need a fancy bird feeder, simply sprinkle some of your seed on a windowsill and watch to see which winged visitors you attract.'

'Growing herbs, plants and flowers has been proven to reduce stress and have a positive impact on your mental health.'

To obtain a kit contact the group through their Facebook

Page or email uarg19@aol.com.

Mark continued: 'I would like to thank our hard-working team for sourcing and assembling the kits and also give a big shout-out to the Granite House for supplying the recyclable carrier bags.'

This Highland Green Health initiative was made possible with funding provided by EU Leader through the Rural Communities Development Fund.

Donations help care homes welcome visitors

Muaitheabhal Community Windfarm Trust and local councillors, through their ward funds, have enabled Western Isles care homes to re-introduce visiting by the purchase of equipment making socially distanced outdoor visiting possible.

Head of community care Jack Libby expressed his thanks.

Friday was a very special day for care home residents and their loved ones, made all the more special by the enhanced visiting facilities available through this funding which went towards the purchase of garden furniture, gazebos and awnings, he said.

Iain MacIver, chairperson of the Muaitheabhal Community Windfarm Trust, added: The Muaitheabhal Trustees are united in our desire to offer help to better the lives of those who find themselves in care during such challenging and worrying times.

'By offering help from the fund we hope that, in however small a way, the money can be used to safely add to the quality of comfort and care for residents.'

'We hope that is to their benefit and also for those on whose care they rely.'

Muaitheabhal Community Wind Farm Trust was formally launched in April 2013 to distribute the 'community benefit fund' available from the Beinn Mhor Wind Farm. Priority areas benefitting from the fund are Pairc, Kinloch and the villages along Loch Seaforth in North Harris.

Two wheels good, four Wheelers even better

The Plockton Two Wheelers made up of Michael Matheson, Kenneth Macrae, Alan Hendry and Douglas Cameron will cycle 265km in August to raise money for the Maggie's Centre Highlands.

The quartet will set off from Duirinish on August 15 at around 6am taking the north road to Inverness. They hope to arrive at Maggie's Inverness around 11.30pm.

If that was not enough they will then start the journey home via Loch Ness and will be welcomed back into Duirinish at The Croft Cafe.

This is a charity close to Michael's heart and he his delighted his friends thought this was a good way to raise some funds. Alan came up with the route plan for this challenging cycle for Maggie's, which provide help and support to families who have had a cancer diagnosis.

Maggie's offer counselling services, workshops, support groups, special days for children and many other activities, and as a charity is dependant on fundraising and donations.

Donations can be given on the Cycle for Maggie's Highlands Just Giving page.

The Two Wheelers wish to thank everyone for their help and donations, and also Iain Dobson who will be their support driver.





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Travelodge lends support as prepares to reopen in Fort

Fort William Travelodge was one of five hotels in crucial Scottish locations to open last week to support critical/key workers and local authorities, writes Fiona Scott.

The budget hotel chain, which has 47 hotels across Scotland, has been operating three of its hotels during the Covid-19 lockdown in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen – providing accommodation for key/critical workers and supporting local authorities during these unprecedented times.

Last Thursday the company kick-started its official hotel reopening programme by opening 68 of its venues across the UK and as of this week it will start to reopen 100 hotels per week which includes an additional nine hotels in Scotland.

As part of its reopening



Fort William Travelodge reopened for business last week.

and teams save and protected post lockdown. Travelodge Protect+ has been developed by a dedicated cross functional hygiene strategy team and will become the way Travelodge operates going forward. The programme includes stringent protocols on Cleaning and Hygiene and Social Distancing.

Travelodge, Spokeswoman Shakila Ahmed said: 'In these unprecedented times, our hotel teams across Scotland are working enormously hard, under great pressure, to support critical/key workers, vulnerable groups and local authorities.'

'We are delighted to be reopening a further five hotels this week in Scotland, which will assist our three hotels that have been operating during the lockdown.'

'We are also working around the clock to get our other Scottish hotels ready to reopen over the coming weeks.'

'With safety at the forefront of our business, we have worked closely with our hotel teams that stayed open during the lockdown, government and industry bodies to develop our new safety programme which is designed to keep our customers and teams safe and has been implemented into all Travelodge hotels.'

KEEPINTOUCH

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programme, Travelodge has taken its key learnings whilst operating in the lockdown

and is launching Travelodge Protect+ a programme of cleaning and social distanc-

ing measures in line with government guidance – designed to keep its customers



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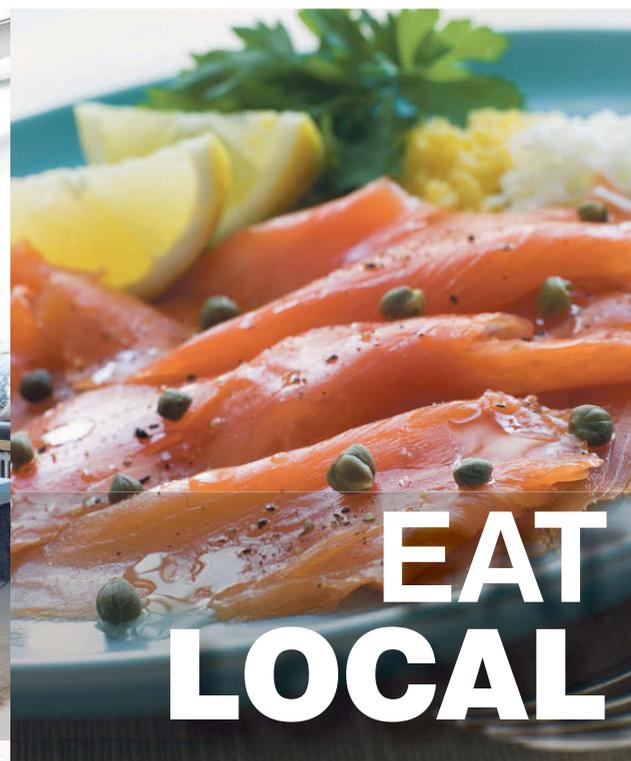
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others/pages/face-coverings? Please spare a thought that by supporting local shops, be they locally owned or national retailers, you are sustaining the local economy. They all employ local people and sustain families. Yes, it's easy to click, click, click online, but if we don't support our own local shops, restaurants, and pubs,

they may not be sustainable. **■ Supporting the economy!** – Research shows that for every £1 spent with a small or medium-sized business, 63p stayed in the local company. **■ It is the ethical choice!** – When you shop at the local butchers, bakers, farm shops and producers, it is likely that a percentage of the produce

has had a short journey, less packaging and contains more nutrients. **■ Unique is the best!** – Independent shops often sell locally-made gifts that aren't available in more commercial outlets. Local shops also support artists and designers, local authors and artisans. Buy something unique to your area!

■ Charity matters! – Local businesses often hold charity events, social groups and community gatherings in aid of charities that are closer to home to the benefit of the community. Let's help keep our area a safe place and please remember the Scottish advice on face coverings.

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2020 Mull Rally cancelled due to Covid uncertainty

Mishnish Lochs will stay silent in October, there will be no Group 4 roar up the Glen and the Long One... well, it will be shorter than normal this time around.

The Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally – planned for October 8-11 – has been cancelled.

Clerk of the Course Andy Jardine admitted the decision was dictated by ongoing uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. While preparations for the iconic Scottish island rally had been moving forward, with the team behind the sell-out event closely monitoring the Scottish Government's 'route out of lockdown,' the organisers are unwilling to proceed given the possible risk of spreading the virus.

Jardine said: 'It was looking good for a while.

'October seemed so far off and things were opening up again, but now the end of July is looming and we just can't commit to running the rally not knowing how the situation will develop.

'It's tough for the team as we put a lot of effort into developing different ways to work with the coronavirus restrictions, but it isn't practical to cover all the eventualities and keep everybody safe.

'This year has been unprecedented in the way we've seen our sport simply stopped in its tracks by this pandemic. But we have to remember that an



awful lot of people have been – and continue to be – affected in the most tragic way by coronavirus.'

Mull Car Club chairman, Fred Maclean added: 'While some of the island is preparing for some sort of tourist season in the weeks ahead, there remains uncertainty and many places are not opening.

Mull has remained apparently Covid-free throughout the

lockdown period and there is a nervousness about what might happen when visitors return.

'This is the right decision for Mull and to ensure the rally is welcomed back in, hopefully, happier times in 2021.'

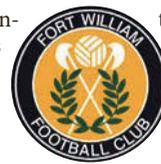
Demand for Beatson's Building Supplies Mull Rally remains exceptional, with competitors from across the world keeping in regular contact with the organisers in the

hope of securing a place, were the 2020 event to run. Jardine is keen, however, this enforced break is used to take a look at ways to make a great rally even better.

'After the event missed a couple of years due to the insurance issue, we got the overwhelming message that the Mull Rally was still a competitors' favourite when we broke the internet as entries

Vandalism is 'slap in face' for volunteers

Fort William FC manager Peter Murphy has expressed his dismay at damage caused by vandals at Claggan Park last weekend.



the stand and left lots of empty drink bottles and cans around,' said Murphy.

For the past two weeks members of The Fort committee along with players and supporters have been busy paving the way for required improvements at Claggan Park by starting to lay the lateral drainage on the pitch.

On Monday morning, however the group of hard working volunteers arrived to find the mess caused by visitors over the weekend.

'I'm hugely disappointed to see that some people have come into the park over the weekend and smashed seats in

Claggan is a public park we cannot lock the gates. It's a slap in the face for all the incredible guys who are working tirelessly to make Claggan Park a ground to be proud of.'

Over the past few months the club has been raising money for the improvements by selling football cards online with added support from a number of local organisations.

The remedial work is being carried out by volunteer committee members, players and followers of the club.

opened in 2019,' added Jardine.

'This has energised the team to use this break to take a step back and think about a review of the format of the event and we'll be getting our heads together in the next couple of months to see what can be done to freshen it up a bit.

'It goes without saying, none of our Octobers will be the same this year. We'll all spend a bit longer watching

Peter Taylor's run through Gribun on YouTube! But the key thing – the only thing – is to stay healthy, keep the island healthy and be back, bigger and better next time.'



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