



## Covid closure is a 'huge wake-up call' for town



## Oban braves the rain for hero Brian's send off

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# Sun, sea and ski at Ganavan?

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Could Ganavan become Argyll's new ski resort?

News of Kilbowie Outdoor Centre facing demolition later this year has raised the question of what will happen to its dry slope.

Councillor Roddy McCuish hinted the slope could possibly find a new home at Ganavan when Kilbowie's owner, North Lanarkshire Council (NLC), sells the centre off.

He says it could fit as part of an initiative to save one of the town's last open spaces for recreational and leisure seekers.

When The Oban Times contacted NLC to ask if it would gift the dry slope to Ganavan, a spokesman said: 'We need to ensure we follow our procedures for the disposal of assets, but yes, it's certainly something we'd actively consider.'

Councillor McCuish said Ganavan already has the scenery, the beach and the sea, but adding more leisure facilities such as the dry slope would help protect it even more.

Alison Chadwick from The Friends of Ganavan said: 'This would be the ideal kind of thing we would like to see down at Ganavan because it would

attract all year round use. Of course, it would have to be managed properly but it would make a brilliant little business for someone.'

Last week, three eco-friendly picnic benches were donated to the beach-side spot by an anonymous donor.

And this could be 'just the start' of a drive to make the most of what Ganavan has to offer people living in the area, as well as visitors.

**'This is the ideal kind of thing we would like to see at Ganavan as it would attract all year round use.'**

The area once had beach huts, an 18-hole golf course and pavilion – as well as a small play park that was removed about 10 years ago.

Dougie Graham who runs Dougie Dans' snack bar in big Ganavan car park says it would be good to see swings make a return for families to enjoy and have even more fun by the sea.

Mr Graham said: 'Within hours of the donated picnic benches arriving they were being put to good use by people

enjoying Ganavan. There was a lot of Oban people down as well as visitors. With the community's input this could be just the start of more good things happening here.'

Last month The Oban Times reported how the Friends of Ganavan are inviting people to send in photographs and stories of how they use the area to help preserve it for the community's health and wellbeing as well as other economic benefits.

It is already a popular spot for swimmers, runners, walkers, orienteers, and its cliffs are used for coastguard training.

The Friends of Ganavan group are continuing to round-up information about what potential changes the latest Local Development Plan could have in store for the open space and hope people's contributions will help build up a strong line of defence against losing the space to potential housing.

A community questionnaire is coming out soon from The Friends and a Facebook page is being planned for people to share their own posts about their love of Ganavan, including its heritage.

People who use the area can also get in touch by emailing their photographs and stories to mail@amcnab.co.uk, outlin-

## Looming large in creative plans



Ardchattan Centre's Breege Smyth and textile design artist Jessica Giannotti with a Harris loom, which came from Port Appin and has been donated to the centre. The plan is to put the loom – one of three acquired – in a space that can be used for creatives to come and co-work on any projects they have. For the full story, turn to page six.

ing how they use Ganavan and what it would mean to them to keep that use.

The latest Local Development Plan (LDP) setting out how

Oban could develop over the next 10 years, has marked the area out on maps for change and that includes more houses going up.

Argyll and Bute council says nothing has been decided yet, the outcome after a LDP consultation that ended in January is still awaited.

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Kim McClachlan, who has been volunteering with the project making the face coverings, hands over a face covering to Margaret MacDonald who has been helping with preparing the shop for reopening.



## Rockfield Centre gives away free face masks

The Rockfield Centre has given away more than 100 free face coverings in the space of one week, writes Kathie Griffiths.

More will be available over the next couple of weeks from the red hut on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 3pm.

The masks, for personal use only, come with full assembly instructions.

And The Rockfield Centre is gearing up to reopen its charity shop on Tuesday August 4, with opening hours being Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays 11am to 3pm.

The centre's Lyn Connolly said: 'We are delighted to be reopening our commu-

nity charity shop and are so pleased to be working with our wonderful shop volunteers again. We have worked hard over the last few weeks and months putting in place all Covid-19 guidelines and regulations to make the shop as safe as possible for both volunteers and customers. We look forward to welcoming all our customers old and new.'

Safety measures are in place, including a limit of three customers in the shop at any one time and an arrows system to follow once inside.

The shop sells pre-loved furniture, crockery, books, photographs, pictures, cards and ornaments.

# Covid closure a 'huge wake up call' for Oban

by Kathie Griffiths  
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Covid shutting down an Oban restaurant has been a 'huge wake up call' for the town, councillors are warning.

Although NHS Highland said it believed the risk to customers and the wider public to be 'very low' from the situation, Oban Lorn and Isles Area Committee has sent out a message to the public and businesses saying 'there is a very fine balance between keeping everyone in our communities safe from the virus and enabling businesses to survive'.

The message followed Friday's voluntary closure of Gelato Burger in George Street after one of its back-of-house workers tested positive for the virus.

In just a few hours of the news breaking on Facebook, hundreds of people had commented and shared concerns, with some claiming there had been no track and trace in place.

Gelato Burger restaurant and take away boss Peter Crolla Jnr of Crolla Gelato Franchising Limited later said a system was in place but he was 'dreadfully sorry' if some customers' details had not been taken. He also promised a review of the procedure.



A number of other Gelato Burger staff have been identified as close contacts, tests are being arranged and they have been advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

Councillors, who held an emergency meeting following the closure, said they 'absolutely recognise, acknowledge, and share the very real concern within the community', and they have been seeking answers and assurances from NHS and council officers 'that all possible procedures are in place and precautions being taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the people in this area'.

Councillor Elaine Robertson who chairs Oban Lorn and Isles Area Committee said: 'This is a huge wake-up call

and a learning experience to everyone in this area. The virus is still prevalent in our communities and is far from over.

'We know that many businesses in our local area have taken adherence to guidance extremely seriously and we applaud those who have engaged meaningfully and worked hard to adopt the new practices and ways of working required.'

'While the taking of customer details is voluntary, we would appeal to businesses in the service sector in our community to please do this to support Scotland's Test and Protect service.'

'There is a very fine balance between keeping everyone in our communities safe from the virus and enabling businesses

The Covid scare did not appear to put off visitors at the weekend, with the town 'fairly steady' with mainly staycationers.

to survive; it is therefore absolutely vital that we all continue to play our part in working to suppress the virus by adhering to the Scottish Government's FACTS guidance.'

Councillors also wished the worker affected all the best for a speedy recovery and said they hoped Gelato Burger would have a safe reopening after working closely with the council's Environmental Health Department and the Health and Social Care Partnership 'to ensure compliance with mandatory guidance and adherence to Test and Protect.'

Bid4Oban Chief Executive Andy Spence said this week: 'The lesson to be learned from this is the town is not immune to this kind of thing happening which is why all the businesses in Oban need to be vigilant.'

The Covid scare did not appear to put off visitors at the weekend, Mr Spence said the town was 'fairly steady' probably with more staycationers than international tourists.

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# Oban braves the rain for hero Brian's send off

by Kathie Griffiths  
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Crowds braved torrential rain to pay their final respects to retired firefighter Brian MacDonald today.

Six firemen in ceremonial tunics formed a guard of honour at St Columba's Cathedral as mourners of all ages gathered with umbrellas along the esplanade to say their last farewell to the popular 43-year-old.

Among them were a lone piper, other uniformed colleagues and friends as well as police and ambulance attending in tribute.

Fittingly a fire engine led the funeral cortege after the service through Oban's streets, passing the town's fire station.

Firefighters at stations across Scotland, including Oban Airport nearer home, also stood on parade in honour of their fire service 'brother'.

Brian, who was diagnosed with muscle-wasting Motor Neurone Disease 17 months ago on his birthday, was with family when he had a heart attack and passed away on July 15.

Although the number of mourners inside St Columba's Cathedral was limited by Covid restrictions, his family had wanted him to have a hero's send-off and Oban did them proud.

Brian leaves mum Annie, dad Bruce, sister Tia, brothers John Bruce, Colin and Allan. Among other close family, he also leaves a fiancée Michelle Mullen and a son, John Gillies.

His sister Tia told the Oban Times how Brian, who planned his own funeral, had wanted the Cathedral packed but 'heart breakingly', she



Colleagues formed a guard of honour outside St Columba's Cathedral, Oban, with friends, neighbours, mourners of all ages gathering in the rain to pay their last respects to Brian MacDonald on Monday.

said, Covid had made that impossible.

However, the crowds patiently waiting outside, from children to parents and grandparents, friends and acquaintances, will have warmed the family's hearts.

More than 1,000 people paid their own tributes on Facebook to Brian remembering his patter and banter, smile, charm, strength and courage.

John Bruce said his brother, who had a distinguished career saving lives in the Fire Service, had a 'heart of gold' and would always go the extra mile to help anyone.

And Tia said: 'For all the love and care we gave him, he would have done 100 times more for us.'

Despite his devastating diagnosis, Brian refused to let it destroy or break him and kept his smile and optimism a treatment would be found to slow down or stop his condi-

tion, said John Bruce.

He had been due to take part in a pioneering clinical MND trial but it was cancelled just a week before due to coronavirus.

'He was gutted, he really believed it was going to be a miracle, but even when it was cancelled, he never gave up on life,' added John Bruce.

Since his return to be near family in Oban, the community had raised thousands of pounds to help him live life to the full.

Even during the coronavirus crisis, £7,000 more was fundraised for him and will now be passed on to an MND charity to help others 'battling this horrible' illness said Tia.

'It's awful for those who have the illness but it's also awful for families having to watch. You feel so helpless, all you can do is make sure they are comfortable and know they are loved.

'Brian, in his own wee way, put his MND out there to raise awareness and now his legacy will live on to help others, with thanks to all the wonderful people who wanted to help him. The remarkable amount of money made for him despite other people's struggle during coronavirus will now go to charity to keep up his fight against this condition. In the future if we can do more, we will do it,' added Tia.



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## Group calls for faster action on climate change

A grassroots group pressing for quicker action to combat climate change has grown to more than 30 members and hundreds on social media, writes Ellis Butcher.

Climate action group, Time For Change Argyll & Bute, now has active members spread between Taylvallich, Oban, Helensburgh, Bute, Iona and Cowal, including university students to lifelong environmentalists, retired residents and those new to campaigning.

In a statement, the group said: 'We know that the situation is critical and that if we, as individuals, communities, and as a country, do not take decisive action in the next few years, global heating of over 2°C will be inevitable, forcing the climate into a downwards spiral of tipping points and ecosystem collapse.'

The group has now started proactively pressing ministers and plans to lobby local councillors and forge links with other organisations.

Members recently held a mass Zoom meeting with Brendan O'Hara MP, who represents the

Argyll and Bute constituency in Westminster for the SNP.

The group has called for a 'green recovery' and complained of a lack of urgency with economic growth being prioritised ahead of the planet, and decision-making too slow and bureaucratic.

Member John Aitchison said: 'The most obvious way that we can all support a green recovery is to get involved and start saying that this is what we want. We have to talk to our friends and neighbours, other members of communities we belong to, such as faith groups, our work colleagues and our political representatives at all levels, from local authorities to MPs, MSPs and government ministers.'

'There must be thousands of people in every constituency just as worried as we are, but they are not asking their MPs to take action. No MP should be able to say they have not heard this message.'

The group can be contacted by email: [timeforchangeargyll@gmail.com](mailto:timeforchangeargyll@gmail.com), or on social media

# Green light given for new Ulva Ferry housing

Full funding has been secured for a second affordable housing project on Ulva Ferry, writes Kathie Griffiths

Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) working with Ulva School Community Association (USCA), have just appointed The Wee House Company to build four new houses.

The news comes after three years' work to agree land and funding for the much-needed project.

The houses will be 90 per cent ready when they leave the Ayrshire factory and are delivered to site with fitted kitchens, bathrooms, plumbing and electrics so they can be occupied far quicker than traditional builds.

Thanks to a grant of £777,855 from the Scottish Government's Rural & Islands Housing Fund, £48,000 from Argyll & Bute Council's Strategic Housing



The four new houses should be ready to move into by next year.

Fund, a mortgage from Ecology Building Society and many individual donations, the full amount needed has now been met.

The houses will be built on two plots of land – one purchased via the Scottish Land Fund, and one donated by a local landowner. People in need of housing will be offered the properties for affordable rent in line with social housing on Mull, they will also be economical to heat.

While MICT is a registered

private landlord, it is working with West Highland Housing Association for help with allocations, management support, and advice to tenants.

The hope is that the new houses will have a positive impact on the community, increasing the primary school roll and the number of working age adults to boost the fragile local economy.

USCA Convenor Josh Liddle said: 'It's fantastic to see The Wee House Company formally appointed to manage this pro-

ject after so much work behind the scenes. We look forward to welcoming more people to our community here at Ulva Ferry next year.'

And MICT Convenor Sandy Brunton, added: 'Affordable housing is consistently a priority issue across Mull and Iona and this project is a really good example of community powered regeneration. We are so fortunate to have Helen MacDonald, our very experienced Housing Project Officer, steering us through all the challenges of building homes for rent in a very rural area.'

The Wee House Company Managing Director Jennifer Higgins said: 'With our wealth of experience building in remote and island communities we are very much looking forward to working with MICT and USCA to deliver these much-needed homes for residents of Mull.'

## Remote islanders appeal for new residents on Isle of Rum

A remote Scottish island is appealing for new residents to come forward – from families to individuals.

Four new, energy-efficient homes for rent are currently being constructed on the Isle of Rum, part of the Inner Hebrides.

Mountainous Rum is one of the Small Isles, south of the Isle of Skye and about eight miles wide and 20-miles from the ferry port of Mallaig on the mainland. It has a population of just over 30, with only one child in nursery and just two in primary school, and six children in total.

The community trust is seeking applications from those who wish to move, with the chance of a visit in August and a possible move-in date later this year.

The four, two-bedroom homes under construction are situated on the edge of Kinloch, the island's only village.

It offers stunning views up to the Rum Cuillin mountains on an island where red deer, feral goats, Highland cattle and ponies roam free.

The Isle of Rum Community Trust (IRCT) owns much of

Kinloch village and has reopened the allocation process after the pandemic.

Following a sift of applications, the trust hopes that later in the summer it will be safe for prospective islanders to visit Rum, to allow them to decide if relocating to a remote Scottish island might really be for them.

The trust said the houses should be completed by September and that it will be possible to welcome new residents soon after – covid-permitting.

New islanders would have to have a plan for how they would support themselves as there are no direct jobs currently on offer, the trust said. However, there are a range of self-employment opportunities, with trades such as qualified joiners, electricians and plumbers, remain in high demand.

There are also multiple tourism opportunities related to Rum's mountains and unique geology, or its seabird colony of over 200,000 Manx shearwaters, or 'marine tourism' opportunities made accessible from the shelter of Loch Scorsort bay.

The trust said the village has

'excellent, fast, fibre broadband to every property'.

The new homes are currently under construction by Acharacle builders, S&K MacDonald Homes, from a design by Kearney Donald Partnership of Fort William, and are being built to the highest eco-standard to ensure long-term sustainability.

As well as diversifying the local economy, the island also hopes to attract families with young children.

Resident, Lesley Watt said: 'We have a population of around 32 people, including six children. With only one child in nursery and two in our primary school we need more families to fill our school as well as to be the next generation of islanders.'

The homes were largely funded by the Scottish Government, with significant financial support also provided by commercial fish farm company, Mowi, which has a farm on the north coast of the island, as well as hotel group, The Crerar Trust.

For application forms and further details visit [www.isleofrum.com](http://www.isleofrum.com) or email: [isleofrumhousing@gmail.com](mailto:isleofrumhousing@gmail.com)

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# Anger over partygoers dumping trash at Hydro

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Oban's old hydro is being used as a dumping ground for partying litter louts.

The lofty spot on a hillside looking down onto the town and the harbour is being blighted by takeaway rubbish and other party waste.

Community litter-pickers had managed to keep the hydro clean for a few weeks until there was a big party, said Laura Corbe, who was one of the helpers.

'Though the kids left their rubbish in bags we didn't clean it up fast enough and either someone came along and spread some of the junk all over the place or another kind soul tidied the bags up and there was another party that left a mess,' she added.

Councillor Julie Mackenzie says people living close by and those who use the route for walks are fed-up with it being used as a dumping ground.

Reports of rubbish left to rot have prompted the councillor to put out another appeal for people to take ownership of the problem - either by clearing up their own waste by taking it back down the hill and home with them or by reporting any anti-social behaviour while it is happening - not leaving the



phone call until the next day when it is too late.

'A call to councillors 24 hours after the event is not going to teach the culprits a lesson. Anti-social behaviour need to be reported while it's still happening,' Councillor Mackenzie said.

The litter problem promoted a united call from members of Oban and Lorn Area Committee earlier this month urging residents and visitors alike 'in the strongest terms' to clean up their act by showing consideration and respect.

A statement from the area committee chairperson

Councillor Elaine Robertson read: '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.'

Other sites around the town being plagued by litter are Jacob's Ladder, McCaig's Tower, Ganavan, Gallanach Road, and Dunollie Woods, where volunteers have now removed all but the biggest junk items from the burn - from beds to broken bicycles and

dumped paint cans to dog poo, all the way from above Park Primary down to the ocean.

Laura said keep-it tidy volunteers are the latest in a line-up of townspeople who

**Last September Keep Oban Beautiful volunteers did a great job of clearing up at the Hydro.**

have taken it upon themselves to clean up the results of 'other people's selfish behaviour.'

'I've also been asked for help with a clean up of the wooded area by Soroba which I've never been through. I feel it would be really nice to try make that a nicer place for the Soroba residents who do care. And, of course, the Linn is still waiting for a clean up, so lots to do.

'Keeping Oban clean from here on in is not about calling people out but calling folk into the conversation. We live in a beautiful town, please don't litter or dump rubbish in our shared spaces. If you need to, speak to your family and friends about it too - it's our home and worth protecting,' she said.

## Oban sheriff Richard Davidson dies

Former Fort William Sheriff Richard Davidson has died suddenly aged 72.

Sheriff Davidson, who was described as a colourful character and was a native of Oban, had a heart attack and passed away on Sunday.

He served Fort William from February 2014 until retiring in May 2016. Before taking on that role he spent two decades in Dundee as the city's resident sheriff.

Outspoken Sheriff Davidson courted controversy on more than one occasion. Dealing with a female first offender at Fort William who appeared from custody accused of shouting at her husband, he apologised for her spending a night in the cells and branded Scotland's domestic abuse laws as 'way over the top.'

In his retirement in Blairgowrie, Sheriff Davidson enjoyed time with his family and his hobbies which included golf and photography.

He leaves a wife Shirley and two children Andrew and Cara.

## POLICE FILES

### Abusive behaviour

About 8pm on Sunday July 19, at Gallanach Road, Oban, a man, 64, behaved in an abusive manner. The man was charged and issued with a recorded police warning.

### Witness appeal

Between 10.30am and 12.30pm on July 20, at Tweedale Street, Oban, an unknown motor vehicle collided with a White VW Passat causing damage to the passenger side bumper and wheel arch, and failed to stop. Police are investigating.

### Charged

About 12.30am on July 23, at Catalina Avenue, Oban, a car was stopped and the driver, a 22-year-old man was arrested for allegedly driving while under the influence of alcohol, driving without the

correct licence or insurance. The man was charged and a report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

### Drugs

About 12.40am on July 23, at the A85 in Connel, a car was stopped and searched and the driver, a woman, 18, was arrested for allegedly driving while under the influence of drugs and possession of cannabis. The woman was charged and a report sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

### Vandalism

Between 1.30pm and 6pm on July 19 the communal door to a flat on George Street, Oban was damaged. Police are investigating.

### Housebreaking

Between 5pm on July 9 and 4pm on July 23 at a house located just off the A85,

near Tyndrum, the door was forced open and items including a gas stove, heater and canister were stolen. Police are investigating.

### Police Assault

At 1.05am on Saturday July 25, on the A85 between Oban and Dunbeg, a vehicle was stopped and the 37-year-old male driver was allegedly found to be driving under the influence of alcohol. Further enquiry revealed he was allegedly driving without a license or insurance and was subsequently arrested. He then allegedly threatened and assaulted officers. He was charged and held in police custody to appear at Court.

■ If any member of the public has information on the above, please call 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



I spotted my first queue of cars the length of the Bealach an Rìgh on Friday last week and while it did make me slightly nervous, I was also delighted that things were improving and getting back to a semblance of normal.

As Joe and I have been out and about we've been encouraged by the response of visitors to the restrictions in place - they're having a good time and doing it responsibly, as are the locals.

It's a difficult time, as we want to get our lives back to normal but have to be conscious all the time that things aren't normal - at least once a day I get to a shop door and have to run back to the car for a mask and I know I'm not alone, which is fine as at least everyone is wearing masks.

Lunch out was daunting the first time, but now I know what to expect and it has been easier every time. I'm delighted with the care that has been shown by the places I've visited, which has made it easier to relax and

## WHERE IS THIS?



enjoy my meal. As one of the few ways of getting out and about, I think eating out will be a popular way of socialising.

We all need to find our own way of adapting to the new normal and it will take some time, with everyone choosing the way that suits them best. And as we adapt it's important to remember that this is different for everyone - it's vital to remember that we don't know the reasons behind some people's decisions and we shouldn't judge but be kind and show some understanding.

The photograph last week was of the old school at the top of High Street. This week's snapshot isn't too far away and certainly brightens the street.

# Looms weave new space for creatives

A community hub project has inherited three looms to weave into plans for a creatives' co-working space, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The Ardchattan Centre at the old Bonawe School is now the proud owner of a tapestry loom, a rug loom and a four-shaft Harris loom.

The tapestry loom was gifted by a weaver from Glasgow who was moving to a new studio and ran out of space, the rug loom was donated via The Rockfield Centre from a woman on Mull and the Harris loom came from Port Appin.

This week Argyll and Bute Council workers were busy emptying the closed school on the shores of Glen Etive revealing the uncluttered potential the building has to offer, said Breege Smyth from The Ardchattan Centre.

'The plan is to put the looms in a space that can be used for creatives to come and co-work



Ardchattan Centre's Breege Smyth with the donated Harris loom and textile design artist Jessica Giannotti.

The ambition is to turn it into a thriving community hub, with plans so far including using it for workshops, evening classes, a bakery and cafe, as well as a meeting space for the whole community and for events - the idea of providing holiday accommodation had also been part of the package.

Scottish Land Fund has already funded it £6,360 towards transforming the building into a centre-for-all.

Profits eventually made from the centre, once established, would be put to purpose, running more community services. An electric bus, with a charging point at the centre, was requested by 66 per cent of people who responded to an earlier wish-list survey.

on any projects they have. We'll also make room for a large cutting table and we'll be running classes and workshops. It's just one of the projects we've got in mind,' she added.

'The council has been in emptying the school, so for the first time we'll be able to use space other than the hall. We are still on a fact finding mission to see how the community wants to use all the space for when we

own the building,' said Breege.

Last month The Oban Times reported how Ardchattan community is moving another step closer to buying the former school.

An application for a second-helping of money from the Scottish Land Fund to buy the building from Argyll and Bute Council has now been submitted and the outcome should be known by October.

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# Temperature checks in place as Oban Distillery reopens to visitors

Oban Distillery reopens to tours on Wednesday and has pledged 'comprehensive' safety measures – including mandatory temperature checks, writes Ellis Butcher.

The historic centre in Stafford Street is operated by Diageo and is the first of the company's 12 Scotch whisky distilleries to reopen to visitors

after being shut for more than four months.

Diageo said the Oban Distillery is going 'beyond compliance' with all the relevant guidelines to help build the confidence of staff, visitors and the local community.

Measures include mandatory temperature checks for all visitors, limiting the number

of visitors on site, screens in all retail units, ensuring physical distancing throughout, increased cleaning procedures and hand sanitiser stations, the company said.

Deirdre Henderson, Oban brand home manager, said: 'We are pleased that the time has finally come to reopen our doors so visitors can discover

the magic behind how we create our amazing single malt.

'We've been working extremely hard over the past few months to ensure both the distillery, tasting area and retail space are as welcoming and safe as possible, and we're looking forward to welcoming guests from the local Argyll and Bute community who

are keen to get out and about to discover what's on their doorstep.'

All visits must be booked in advance by calling 01631 572004.

Diageo's distilleries have all been accredited as part of the Good To Go scheme developed by VisitScotland and UK tourism bodies to

rebuild visitor confidence. Full details of the health and safety measures are available at [www.malts.com/reopening.pdf](http://www.malts.com/reopening.pdf)

As part of the reopening, a short film has been launched to showcase what visitors can expect when they arrive which can be seen by visiting [https://youtu.be/VUY1cguH\\_E](https://youtu.be/VUY1cguH_E).

The black guillemots nest in the harbour wall along Oban's Esplanade.



## Oban's black guillemots take to the airwaves

Oban waterfront's famous black guillemots are to star on BBC's The One Show – but viewers will have to wait until next year for that episode to take to the air, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The black guillemots, or Tysties as they are sometimes known, nest in the harbour wall along the Esplanade and in the North Harbour, and regularly entertain passing visitors and residents alike with their nesting antics.

A Glasgow-based film crew from the popular TV show was in Oban – on one of their first assignments since lockdown – to film them this week.

The BBC said it hopes to air the black guillemot story on The One Show sometime in 2021.

Some people make a special mission to sit and watch the courtship behaviour of the tysties, which involves the male dancing round the female with head and beak pointing downwards and showing off his bright red feet. The female then reciprocates with a similar crouching dance around him. All the time, they have a high pitched whistling call which is where their old Norse name Tystie probably comes from, meaning whistler. In their breeding plumage they are black with white wing patches, bright red feet and striking red gapes inside their beaks.

It is thought there are approximately 15 to 30 pairs along Oban's waterfront.

RSPB Scotland's Mull Officer

Dave Sexton, who was interviewed on camera, said: 'Every time I travel to and from Mull and Oban, I look out for these dapper birds. Their bright red lipstick matches their 'shoes'!

'They're such busy, active little characters and really draw the crowds. Oban is unique in having such an easily watchable colony and they can allow people to watch them close-up.'

He added: 'Like seabirds everywhere they are under threat; for tysties it can be pollutants, food supply and non-native predators such as mink which can destroy nesting attempts, so it makes the need for Marine Protected Areas all the more urgent.'

RSPB staff are helping with the 2020/2021 Joint Nature Conservation Committee's Seabird Census to count seabird colonies all over Scotland. The last full survey was Seabird 2000, 20 years ago, so it will be interesting to see what has changed over that time.'

Meanwhile, close cousin to the black guillemot, the puffin is also in need of help.

The RSPB's Puffarazzi project which asks people to send in photographs of puffins with fish in their beaks, is running until August 31. Even historic, black and white photographs from previous years are welcome.

Any old or new photographs with date and place noted can be sent to [www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/events-dates-and-inspiration/puffarazzi](http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/events-dates-and-inspiration/puffarazzi)

# A BRIGHTER FUTURE IS IN SIGHT, IF WE DO THIS RIGHT.

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OT

# Taynuilt Inn closure will help it survive, says director

by Ellis Butcher  
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A landmark pub in Taynuilt has announced that it will not reopen for months.

The Taynuilt Inn does not plan to reopen again 'for the foreseeable future,' despite the return of tourism and lockdown restrictions being eased this month.

Making the announcement on the inn's Facebook page, area operations manager Mark Lambson said it was 'with a heavy heart' that the decision had been made.

The inn, on the busy A85, had been shut for more than two years before being completely refurbished and reopened last summer after significant investment.

The coronavirus pandemic then closed it down with a



The Taynuilt Inn will be mothballed until next March.

number of staff having to be furloughed.

Businessman Calum MacLachlainn, one of the directors overseeing The Taynuilt Inn Ltd, told The Oban Times this week that the temporary closure was a strategic decision to save the

pub longer term. The alternative, he said, was incurring larger costs and then struggling through half a summer before going into winter when tourism dips, which could make the business unviable, particularly with concerns about a second wave

of coronavirus in winter. Mr MacLachlainn, originally from Mull and brought up in Uist, is involved in a number of different enterprises from Oban to Mull, Fort William and the central belt.

He has partnerships with fellow businessman and restaurateur Paul Sloan, a co-director of The Taynuilt Inn.

Mr MacLachlainn said: 'After trading all winter to effectively go into another winter without a proper summer, it is not viable. We will just have to mothball it until next March.'

'The costs to mothball are limited but the minute you open the costs go up and because of those costs you will go backwards and put the company at risk, he said.

'If it was to open in winter

there is a very high risk it would not open again in March. I have never been involved in any business that has gone into liquidation and I don't intend to start now,' he said.

'A lot of seasonal businesses do not make a lot of money during winter and you can't survive on two (winters).

'We have only been trading the Taynuilt Inn for a year and a half so we are still in the early years and the first three years are harder than normal.'

Mr MacLachlainn pledged that the business would be back - barring another coronavirus lockdown later in the year.

Originally a 16th-century coaching inn, The Taynuilt Inn saw major investment and had hoped to appeal to the

golfing market, being close to the nine-hole village golf course, along with courses at Dalmally and Glencruitten in Oban.

Brander Lodge Hotel, at Bridge of Awe, Taynuilt, also announced it, too, plans to stay closed 'until further notice'.

In a statement on its Facebook page, the family-run property said it was 'unable to recommence trading at this time,' but would continue to review the situation, with it possibly reopening in March 2021 to coincide with the spring wedding season.

The statement, signed by the Keats family, said 'the dangers of the pandemic' coupled with 'disruption to the business' was behind the decision.

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# Tribute paid to man who saved piping competition

The Lewis and Harris Piping Society has paid tribute to Robin Fleming, previous sponsor of its P/M Donald MacLeod Memorial Piping Competition, who died recently aged 87.

Mr Fleming's sponsorship of the competition ran for eight years before community wind farm organisation Point and Sandwick Trust took over in 2017, supporting the competition with £5,000 a year for five years. The creation of this arrangement secured the prestigious event in its home town of Stornoway at a time when its future was very uncertain.

Mr Fleming attended the competition every year that he sponsored it and was awarded Honorary Life Membership of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society in 2013.



**Robin Fleming being awarded Honorary Life Membership of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society in 2013.**

Photograph courtesy of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society.

**'He was a real gentleman...very friendly...the first time he came here, I took him for lunch and you would think we had known him all his life.'**

Dr John Smith, chairman of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society, said: 'Mr Fleming was a charming, polite and unassuming character, totally unostentatious.

'He originally undertook to sponsor the competition for five years but continued for another three because we were struggling to find another sponsor.

'His very generous sponsorship meant that the competition survived in Stornoway, its natural home, and with PST's continuing support, despite lockdown and pandemics, we are very hopeful that the competition will survive, although perhaps not in its customary form, this year.'

The Competition was originally set up to commemorate the musical legacy of one of Stornoway's most famous sons - Donald MacLeod MBE (1917-1982), a celebrated piper, teacher and one of the

most gifted and prolific composers of piping music ever.

The competition is an invitational one, featuring eight of the current best pipers in the world, based on their performances at events during the year on the piping circuit. It has been held in Stornoway since it was set up as a 'living memorial' in 1993 but there were fears it would have to be moved to the mainland to save costs before Mr Fleming came on board, following the withdrawal of headline sponsorship by Tennent Caledonian Breweries.

Mr Fleming was chairman of Robert Fleming and Co, the merchant bank founded by his grandfather, Robert Fleming, after whom he was named. He chose to be anonymous as the sponsor of the Donald MacLeod competition and was a strong philanthropist, famously buying back the Robert Fleming and Co art collection, when the bank was sold, so that it could go on public display.

Pipe Major Iain Murdo Morrison described Mr Fleming as 'a true gentleman' and recalled how his involvement with the society came about.

He said: 'I was at the Northern Meetings one year, about 2004, and was talking to Jimmy Banks, a friend of mine from the Scots Guards, and I was telling him that we were looking for sponsorship.

'Jimmy knew Robin very well because he was his personal piper for any events he had.

'I got in touch with Robin, explained the predicament the society was in and he responded, saying, 'right, we will sponsor you for five years to the tune of £5,000 a year every year'.

'He was a real gentleman. He was a very friendly, homey person, and an ex-officer. I remember the first time he came across here. I took him down to the house for lunch and you would honestly think that we had known him all his life.

'He was so modest and friendly, a true gentleman, in every sense of the word.'

Robin Fleming was a cousin of Ian Fleming, the Bond author, and the family also notably owned the Black Mount Estate in Argyllshire.

Robin Fleming's principal home was in Oxfordshire, where he was High Sheriff in 1980, a deputy lieutenant from 1990 and enjoyed, as he put it in Who's Who, "most country pursuits". He also inherited Black Mount, his grandfather's vast stalking estate in the wilderness of Glen Etive in Argyll, a landscape which he loved and did much to conserve by planting many thousands of trees.

P/M Morrison recalled one occasion at the Donald MacLeod Competition when

distilleries and organisations but the money was not available. It was just a spot of luck that Robin came on the scene. He'll be remembered forever more, as far as I'm concerned, and he should be by the society.'

one of the pipers played The Duke of Roxburgh's Farewell to Blackmount Forest, a classic 2/4 March.

Someone turned to Mr Fleming and asked: 'Do you know that tune?' His response was: 'I know it very well. I own it.'

P/M Morrison pointed out that Mr Fleming always paid his own costs for attending the competition. He added: 'Without him, I don't think we could have carried on (with the Donald MacLeod).

'It was a crucial time because we were asking various

Calum MacDonald, development manager for Point and Sandwick Trust and the former MP for the Western Isles, said: 'Point and Sandwick Trust were delighted to succeed Robin Fleming in supporting the Donald MacLeod piping competition.

'He stepped in to help the competition at a critical time and it is clear that his contribution was not just a financial one but one based on his personal enthusiasm and deep knowledge.'

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OT

# Historic island landmark to become whisky centre

by Ellis Butcher  
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



The couple in charge at North Uist Distillery have acquired the iconic Nunton Steadings on the neighbouring Isle of Benbecula.

The plan is to convert the historic u-shaped landmark into a base for production of the first whisky to be legally distilled in the southern islands of the Outer Hebrides.

Master distiller Jonny Ingledew and creative director Kate MacDonald, of the North Uist Distillery, plan to redevelop it as a distillery and visitor centre.

It provides the couple with space to distil whisky and build on the success of their popular range of premium 'Downpour' gins which were launched last year.



**Kate MacDonald and Jonny Ingledew at the iconic Nunton Steadings.**

Photograph: Am Pàipear

all whisky would have been made from Bere barley but it was changed out for higher yielding barleys. Bere tastes incredible and is not mass produced, so it retains a remarkable flavour that we want to harness.'

The hope is to work with crofters to create a supply chain of Bere barley on the islands with the intention of one day being able to malt the barley themselves, allowing for full 'grain to glass' production in the new premises.

Kate said: 'Nunton Steadings has beautiful original features, such as the cobbled floors on the south side of the building,

which will be the perfect home for our whisky casks during maturation.

'We will be providing tours which will cover the whisky and gin production process, and also share the stories of this historic building and the surrounding areas.'

Nunton Steadings was the scene of several important chapters in the island's history and is one of the oldest surviving structures in the Western Isles.

Nunton Steadings was constructed in its current form in the early 1700s on the site of a nunnery dating back to 1300.

Bonnie Prince Charlie took shelter while on the run in the aftermath of Culloden.

Built on what was then a substantial farm, the structure and land was seized when crofters raided Nunton in the

aftermath of the Great War. Local crofters housed cattle and stored animal feed inside the building until it fell into disrepair.

It was transferred to the Uist Buildings Preservation Trust, later renamed Nunton Steading Trust, which saw the building renovated in the late 1990s.

Nunton Steading Trust placed the building on the market earlier in 2020.

Kate and Jonny are keen to give the community ownership of the venture.

The crowdfunder aims to raise money to procure whisky equipment, which has been sized to create a single cask with each production run.

It is anticipated the kit will be purchased in March 2021, once finance is secured, with production starting in 2022.

It could also become a hub for the community and visitors, with pop-up events held there - a crowdfunding appeal is expected later in the year.

Jonny said: 'Our main goal has always been to put the islands on the whisky map and therefore we are incredibly ex-

cited to have secured Nunton Steadings which will allow us to fulfil our whisky dream.

The couple plan to make whisky using a grain that local crofters produce, Bere barley, which is one of the oldest cereals grown in the UK.

Jonny said: 'At one time

## Anchors aweigh as Majestic Line gets ready to set sail

West Coast small-ship cruising company The Majestic Line has announced it intends to start cruising again from August 29, writes Fiona Scott.

The company will only offer cruises using two of their four vessel fleet and will be operating six night cruises with a reduced number of guests onboard.

Working within Scottish Government guidelines and having completed the VisitScotland Good to Go accreditation the Majestic Line operators that they are now in a position to offer guests the opportunity to cruise the Scottish Islands with confidence.

A number of protocols have been put in place to ensure the safety of guests and crew with minimum impact on enjoyment.

The company will be running two of their most popular cruises, Mull and Her Inlets and Islands, and Skye and the Inner Hebrides, plus one-off cruises, Captain's Choice and Isles of the Clyde and the Southern Hebrides.

Commenting on the decision to cruise, The Majestic Line



**The Majestic Line will offer two of its more popular cruises plus one-off cruises using just two of its four vessels.**

managing director Ken Grant said: 'We have many guests who are very keen to cruise with us this year and having looked long and hard at the options and how best we can confidently offer a cruise experience that is enjoyable and safe, we feel that we are now in a position to cruise safely once again.'

Among the additional protocols being implemented are weekly testing of crew to

ensure they are Covid free, temperature checking of all crew and passengers, increased daily cleaning and sanitisation of all public areas, and prior to boarding all guests will be required to confirm that they are symptom free and have not been in contact with anyone known to have the virus.

The Majestic Line's ability to cruise at the time will be subject to Scottish Government guidance.

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Dr Willets is looking forward to starting in October.

# New GP to start on Colonsay

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Colonsay's new GP arrives in October.

The job of running the island practice has gone to Dr Simon Willets whose career started out in a London hospital.

After a change of focus from being a hospital physician, he completed his GP training in 1995 and has been a partner in a large practice in Dumfries since 2003.

Dr Willets says his first priority when he begins work will be to help his patients through the pandemic to 'calmer waters'.

Originally from Banchory on Deeside and a graduate from Aberdeen University, Dr Willets will be taking over from job-share GP couple Jan Brooks and David Binnie after a decade of service.

The pair's retirement plans include spending more time with their grandchildren and remaining on Colonsay to become crofters for pleasure – tending the needs of a few animals and polytunnel produce instead of 100 and more patients, plus the crop of summer visitors.

Dr Rebecca Helliwell, Associate Medical Director for Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership, said: 'Dr Willets is a very experienced GP and I am delighted that he will be providing medical services on

Colonsay. It is great news for the local community and he brings a wide range of skills and knowledge which will be a real asset to the service. I am also sure that he will embrace island life to the full.'

Dr Simon Willets is 'thrilled and delighted' to get the job at the surgery in Scalasaig and says he knows he has 'very big shoes to fill'.

'I am aware that I have very big shoes to fill and I hope to carry on where the current GPs left off when they retire later this year.'

'Clearly the first priority is to see the island and its folk safely through the Covid-19 challenge to calmer waters.'

The practice includes the islands of Colonsay and Oronsay which are 10 miles long and lie west of mainland Argyll and to the west of Jura.

A new headteacher has also been appointed to take over the school on Colonsay.

Earlier this year Oban Times reporter Kathie Griffiths visited the island to meet some of its residents and she made a podcast while there, which you can listen to on YouTube – visit [youtu.be/V4V1-5qO2IE](https://youtu.be/V4V1-5qO2IE).



## Lifeboat rescues RNLI fundraiser Phil's yacht

Oban lifeboat crew met a familiar face when they turned up to help a stricken yacht earlier this week.

On Monday, the UK Coastguard alerted them to a yacht experiencing engine difficulty off the entrance to Dunstaffnage marina and it turned out to belong to the station's fundraising chairman

Phil Hamerton. The lifeboat quickly set up an alongside tow with the vessel and soon had the vessel safely back to its mooring.

Phil said: 'You can think you're prepared for your trip and then the unexpected happens.'

'Rather than risk making the situation worse we decided to

ask for help and we are very glad that Oban Lifeboat were there to help us.'

David Isaac, one of Oban Lifeboat's deputy coxswains who was on duty for the call out said: 'It's a reminder to us all that anything can happen to anyone at sea and we were very glad that Phil requested assistance when he needed it.'



The stricken yacht.

## Got coronavirus symptoms? Self-isolate and book a test now.

If you have any coronavirus symptoms, no matter how mild, you need to self-isolate and book a test right away at [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre/quicklinks/nhsinform-scot) or by calling **0800 028 2816**.

Remember, if your symptoms worsen, call **111**.

Self-isolating and getting tested is crucial to stop the virus spreading any further.

It is important that we all do this, to protect ourselves, our loved ones and the hard-earned freedoms we are just getting back.

For more information go to [NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre/quicklinks/nhsinform-scot)

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OT

## LETTERS

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

## Who'd have thought it?

If you'd asked the community what leisure facilities they would like to see at Ganavan, chances are they would not have put forward a dry ski slope.

But that is exactly what is being proposed now that it looks like the Kilbowie Outdoor Centre is to be demolished and the land sold for development, meaning its dry slope could be up for grabs. When The Oban Times contacted North Lanarkshire Council to ask if it would gift the dry slope to Ganavan, a spokesman told us: 'Yes, it's certainly something we'd actively consider.'

Councillor Roddy McCuish is delighted at the possibility, as is Alison Chadwick of The Friends of Ganavan, who said: 'This would be the ideal kind of thing we would like to see down at Ganavan because it would attract all year round use.'

The Friends are continuing to round-up information about what potential changes the latest Local Development Plan could mean for the open space and hope people's contributions will help build a strong case against losing the space to potential housing.

We agree that the dry ski slope would help to shore up the argument for saving the green space for leisure and outdoor activities, and we encourage NLC to seriously consider donating the facility to Oban as a goodwill gesture.

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](mailto: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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## Not the time to buy estate

I refer to the report in the Lochaber Times of 16 July ('Scottish Land Fund supports buy') in respect of Killundine estate which has not yet been advertised for sale. The offer of £1million pounds by the Scottish Land Fund is not only premature but is at odds with Holyrood legislation. So far the group does not yet have a mandate from the local community to proceed, nor has it shown it has the experience to manage and operate a 6,000 acre estate – although of course that could be bought in at a high price from outside 'experts'.

The group's chairperson suggests untold benefits will come to the area should they succeed. Never in its recorded history has the Morvern peninsula been so prosperous. There is no unemployment, which is hardly surprising given the number of businesses there are. These include: sheep and cattle farming, a distillery, a silica sand mine, the largest granite quarry in Europe, a CalMac ferry, an hotel, two cafes, three dive boats, two dive lodges, a plumber, electrician, a resident GP, a new school, a surgery which is second to none, numerous high quality B&Bs, a caravan park, state and private timber producers, six sporting estates and a lucrative cottage-letting industry. All providing permanent local jobs and generating wealth.

The acquisition of Killundine using public money will contribute to Scotland's rising debt and bring an increase in taxes for the foreseeable future. Now is not the time to indulge in make-believe and to dwell in marble halls.

Iain Thornber, Morvern

## Take your litter home

Last week I cleared up a large amount of rubbish left at the layby as you leave Connel heading towards Glasgow.

The rubbish consisted of food packaging and several drinks reciprocal, receipts, and also a disposable mask, disposable gloves and an empty packet of paracetamol.

It is bad enough that this litter should occur and even worse that the cans could have been recycled, but in this unprecedented time to just discard protective equipment and medicine in such a thoughtless manner is beyond belief.

However the worse part was discovering, hidden under a fish and chips package, another type of 'deposit' – right next to the road! And this is the second time I have found such a deposit at this site.

Whoever is responsible for this, please desist. Take your litter home with you – it doesn't take much effort to have a bag in your vehicle and just place it in that – and if you do need to answer a

## Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

[editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk)

Tha moladh inntinneach air nochdadh, agus ga sgrùdadh, gus clàir-ola ath-chuartachadh mar ionadan-còmhnaidh agus taisbeanaidh turasachd. Far am bheil poileasaidhean dìon na h-àrainneachd a' sìor neartachadh tha an dleastanas a th' air leithid nam buidhnean a tha an sàs ann an gnìomhachas na h-ola gus an cuid làraich obrach a sgioblachadh agus a ghlanadh às an dèidh, a' cur chosgaisean mòra a bharrachd air a' ghnìomhachas. Tuigear mar sin cho tarraingeach 's a dh'fhaodadh e bhith cothrom ath-chuartachadh air clàir agus cruinn-ola, a' seachnadh cosgais mhòr am briseadh às a chèile.

Agus nach ann mar sin a tha cùisean a' gluasad gu h-eachdraidheil co-dhiù is cultar eaconamach agus sòisealta ag atharrachadh agus an ìre mhath a' dol à sealladh, agus a' cuimhne, mur a tèid a ghleidheadh ann an ionad-tasgaidh. Mar eisimpleir, tha croitearachd air atharrachadh thar tomhais anns na caogad bliadhna a chaidh, agus dh'fhàg sin ionadan feadh na dùthcha a' taisbeanadh uidheamachd agus chleachdaidhean nach eil ann tuilleadh. Adhbhar smaointinn da-riribh dhan fheadhainn againn aig am bheil deagh chuimhne air an t-saoghal sin ach a dh'fheumas a-nise tuigsinn gur e eachdraidh a tha seo agus, a dh'aindeoin ealantais ionadan-tasgaidh, gum bheil uabhas air chall mar-thà agus tuilleadh a' dol à sealladh gach latha thèid seachad! Cluinnear argamaid gur e adhartas a tha seo, agus mur a bi adhartas ann gun tig crìoch gu tur air coimhearsnachd. Tha sin fìor, agus feumaidh

adhartas coimhearsnachd a bhith stèidhichte air cothroman seasmhach cosnaidh agus nan lùib sin sàr ghoireasan sòisealta, foghlaim, agus cur-seachad. Far nach eil leasachadh eaconamach den t-seòrsa sin air tachairt fad iomadh bliadhna feumaidh barrachd is barrachd den òigridh an dòchas is misneachd a chuimseachadh air cothroman air falbh bho sgìrean an òige, agus tha cànan agus dualchas nan coimhearsnachdan sin a' crìonadh mar a tha sluagh ùr a' gluasad thuca.

Sin pàirt mhòr den dùbhlán a' Ghàidhlig a ghleidheadh anns na sgìrean sam bu dual dhi bhith na cànan làitheil, agus ma tha dòchas leasachaidh gu bhith air sin iarraidh e co-obrachadh agus spàirn mar nach do thachair riamh roimhe. Bho chionn ceathrad bliadhna air ais bha Bòrd Leasachaidh Na Gàidhealtachd, Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd, agus Comhairle nan Eileanan Siar, ag aithneachadh an dlùth cheangal eadar fèin-mheas, misneachd coimhearsnachd, agus leasachaidhean eaconamach, sòisealta, agus cultarach. Tha sin pailt cho fìor an-diugh 's a bha e an uairsin agus chan eil am feum a th' air ionmhas gus leithid de leasachaidhean a thoirt air adhart air atharrachadh a bharrachd. Ach, le uimhir de luchd-fastaidh a-nise deònach cosnaichean a bhith ag obair bhon dachaighean, dh'fhaodadh mòran dhaoine òga gluasad air ais do sgìrean an òige agus bheireadh sin buaidh nach bu bheag ann an ùine ghoirid! Agus cha chosgadh e cus!

Allan Campbell, [ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)

call of nature could you please find somewhere a bit more secluded.

Lynn Ashforth, Connel

## Concern over human waste

I wrote to your paper over a year ago drawing attention to the issue of human waste being occasionally dumped into ditches and water catchment areas by unscrupulous camper van/caravan visitors. The main point of my letter was that untreated human waste getting into water courses may harbour the very nasty parasite Giardia. Now human waste is on the increase massively across the countryside.

At the time of my original letter I was concerned about the lack of public toilets and shower/washing facilities for holiday visitors across Scotland. I suggested one only needs to look at Germany and how it caters for camper-

van visitors – often free parking close to town centres where toilets and showers are common place, and visitors welcome in a healthy environment.

Now we are all seeing what happens when a viral pandemic arrives in our midst.

The dumping of human waste is no longer an occasional/isolated problem.

As an 80-year-old, I watch with growing alarm the road taken by the UK government in its easing restrictions/opening up/back to school/back to the office philosophy. Sadly the Scottish Government appears to be bending to the same 'economic' rules – Nicola Sturgeon's original caution was proven to be much more sensible – which may well prove disastrous for the Highlands and rural elderly, and the vulnerable of all ages.

Andrew Graham Noble, Kinlocheil



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# DISTRICT NEWS

## Mull youngsters get crafty this summer

Earlier this summer, every baby and primary age child on Mull, Iona and Ulva received a parcel that included a book to enjoy, plus art and craft supplies.

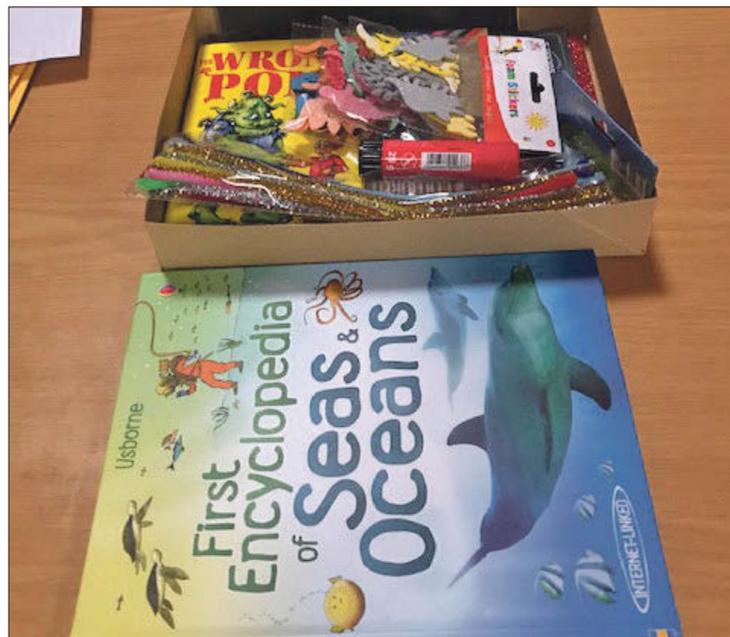
Youngsters aged over three years old received their gift in a cardboard box which can be used to store the supplies and which can be decorated to make it truly personal.

Moray Finch of the Mull and Iona Community Trust accessed funding for the books and activity packs through the Scottish Government's Supporting Communities Fund and the Mull and Iona Covid 19 Local Resilience Fund.

During the Covid crisis, children have been missing normal life in their families and at school. Although they are statistically less likely to contract the illness, their lives have changed profoundly to protect the older members of our community. The team that created the gifts hoped to provide a moment of surprise and joy for children. And a moment of peace for their parents!

Alison Linnemann, a retired paediatrician, volunteered to help at the beginning of lockdown. She was asked to form a group to look into what children might need at this time. Yvonne Marjot's Just for Families page on Facebook provided access to information and fun learning ideas.

In discussion with and inspired by people like Andrena Duffin of the Community Council, Alison and Maggie Robson began to gather a team, involving local businesses and organisations. Sue Penny sorted and collected hundreds of children's books which had been donated to MESS, with others supplied by Marianne Noble, Yvonne Marjot, Joanne MacPhail and



A book and art materials were among the goodies gifted to almost 400 children across Mull this summer.

Bev Maidment. Duncan Swinbanks persuaded Usborne Books to provide beautiful new books at cost price. Mary Phillips made a donation which helped buy art and craft materials based on suggestions from Donna Dugdale, Lee McCrone and Nina Pope. Pete Dugdale sourced many of the goodies at a great price. Home Start Lorn donated some super additions to the collection. Thanks to Ian Campbell, Tobermory Church Hall became the operations centre with all the contents gathered for allocation to four broad age groups.

Liaising with Maggie, the Mull health visiting team and the headteachers organised the distribution of the parcels. Chris Swinbanks cut up hundreds of sheets of card. Many others helped in a variety of ways. This was indeed a community effort, benefiting almost 400 children.

It is hoped that the youngsters felt embraced by their community. Some may even be inspired to volunteer locally in the future?

The parcels might just provide one of many good memories, for the children, of the Covid summer.



Tyler Aitken, from Dunbeg, turned four on Wednesday, July 22. Tyler spent his special day with family.

### Happy Lockdown Birthday!

Do you have a child celebrating their birthday during the lockdown?

Send us a picture of your wee one enjoying their special day and we will publish it and wish them Happy Birthday!

Remember to include their full name, age, where you live - and tell us a little bit about what you did to make the day at home special!

Our lockdown birthday shout-outs will cease at the end of July providing restrictions are eased enough for your children to enjoy celebrating with their friends once more. To make sure your child is included send your requests to [editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk) by Monday, August 3.

**Sponsored by your local Citizens Advice team - They need you!**

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# Puffers that served the

## Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

[iain.thorner@btinternet.com](mailto:iain.thorner@btinternet.com)



'Do you know what a puffer is?' I asked a local teenager the other day. 'An old geezer who smokes a lot' came the reply. Well, partly right I suppose, but it wasn't the answer I had hoped for.

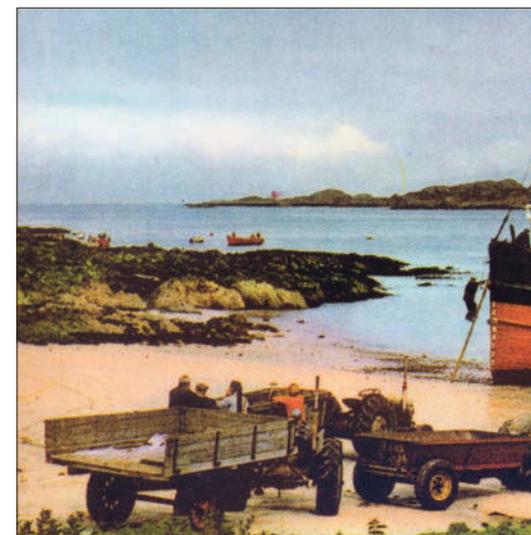
Maybe my question was a touch dated these days but I can scarcely believe Scotland's legendary Para Handy and the Vital Spark have gone to the bottom of the Minch and into the dustbin of history already.

To answer my own question, just in case anyone reading this is any doubt, puffers were sturdy small, coal-fired, single-masted cargo ships, built mainly on the Forth and Clyde Canal. They came on the scene in the mid 1800s and chugged their way round Scotland's west coast for the next 100 years providing a lifeline for remote communities. The beauty of these vessels was that they were almost flat-bottomed and could be beached at low-tide, discharge their cargoes and float off at high water allowing them to meet their customers' needs without having to come alongside a stone jetty or a pier.

It truly can be said that they were the 'wheelbarrows of the west', carrying anything from coal to coffins, nails to treacle, and almost every other necessity for croft, farm and mansion-house in between. The term puffer came from steam exhausted up the funnel in a string of puffs which could not only be seen but heard from miles away and although many of them were later converted to oil, the name stuck.

Puffers changed very little over the decades other than in length, breadth and advances in engine and off-loading technology. Those that ventured into sheltered sea lochs remained under 65ft, allowing them to fit short canal locks, while the larger boats bound for the West Coast and its open waters, were kept below 88ft in order that they could pass through the Crinan Canal thereby avoiding a longer and often rougher passage round the Mull of Kintyre.

During the First and Second World Wars these tough little ships proved themselves servicing battleships in Scapa Flow and many other naval establishments up and down the West Coast. So impressed were the Admiralty that they placed an order for boats of a similar type classing them as VICs (Victualing Inshore Craft).



Left, the Inchcolm, Leith, unloading coal at the head of Loch Aline in the early 1900s. Photograph supplied by Iain Thornber; and above right, the Clyde puffer Spartan discharging coal at Iona in the 1950s. Photograph courtesy of the Crawford Alexander Collection.

Many of the early ones were steam-powered but after Second World War new puffers went down the slips with diesel engines. The coasting trade serving mainland and islands destinations was kept up by a dwindling number of shipping companies until in 1993 when the government withdrew subsidies and, unable to compete with road transport using subsidised RoRo (roll-on/roll-off) ferries, the service ended.

Of course, as anyone in the Hebrides who has had anything to do with the sea knows, it was not just the vessels themselves which were special but the men who crewed them. Neil Munro (1863-1930), the Inveraray-born Scottish journalist who was familiar with Clyde puffers, spotted a good yarn and invented a fictional character called Para Handy in the Glasgow Evening News of which he was editor. Soon his hilarious stories were published in book form to be followed by a comedy series produced by BBC Scotland. The show soon became a popular Friday night television slot for its easy-going humour and colourful characters, which included Para Handy played by Duncan Macrae, Dan Macphall (John Grieve), Dougie (Roddy

McMillan) and Sunny Jim (Angus Lennie). Their less-than legitimate dealings along the West Coast ran for six episodes between 1959 and 1960. The adventures of the West Highland puffer skipper and the crew of the Vital Spark have enjoyed continuing success and have been adapted for television, stage and film all over the world.

Some puffers returned to the same places every year. The day they were due to arrive was eagerly awaited - not only for the contents of their holds but as an opportunity for old friends to meet and to ceildh during the three or four days they were in the area.

When the Strontian lead mines were in operation and the population of the surroundings was higher than today, Loch Sunart was a popular destination for Clyde vessels bringing coal and general provisions, and taking away lead ingots, wool, sand and timber. Birch and oak were exported in quantity from Sailean nan Cuileag near Salen. Birch in particular went to the Clydeside steel foundries to be used as brooms.

Following the First World War the demand

for Loch Sunart's high quality sand increased to such an extent that three Glasgow shipping companies were engaged in carrying it. Ross and Marshall of Greenock had the fastest puffer on the Clyde. Hamilton Brother's Rivercloy, Invercloy and Glencloy were well ahead of the loading and unloading game and consequently had the quickest turn around. Others were the Handa, her successor the Brenda, popular because for many years her captain and most members of her crew were local. The Crusader had two masts and was one of the largest. She always came into Salen with what was known as the poor's or pensioner's coal. Others were the Lady of the Lake, Incholm and the Inchmurrin; Ross and Marshall's Sealight, Raylight, Dawnlight and Warlight; and Warnock Brothers of Paisley's Logan, Faithfull, Douglas and the Petrel. At one time household names, today they are hardly remembered.

Calling at Jura were the Glencloy - which my good friend Iain Mackinnon, Kilmelford, tells me was the last puffer to discharge coal at Tarbert Bay using cobbles to take it ashore; the Dane, Kaffir, Kyle, Froach, Glenshira, Raylight



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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday July 23, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed underneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

<b>Thur</b>	01.49	3.1	08.17	1.5
	14.43	3.1	20.22	1.4
<b>Fri</b>	03.12	3.1	09.27	1.4
	15.45	3.3	21.36	1.3
<b>Sat</b>	04.16	3.3	10.22	1.2
	16.32	3.5	22.38	1.2
<b>Sun</b>	05.00	3.4	11.07	1.1
	17.11	3.7	23.28	1.1
<b>Mon</b>	05.36	3.5	11.48	0.9
	17.48	3.9	** **	**
<b>Tues</b>	00.11	1.0	06.10	3.6
	12.27	0.9	18.24	4.0
<b>Wed</b>	00.52	1.0	06.42	3.7
	13.04	0.8	18.59	4.0

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

Ardrisaig	-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

Heavy rain and a moderate breeze  
Temperatures 13°C to 17°C.

### FRIDAY

Light rain and a moderate breeze  
Temperatures 13°C to 22°C.

### WEEKEND OUTLOOK

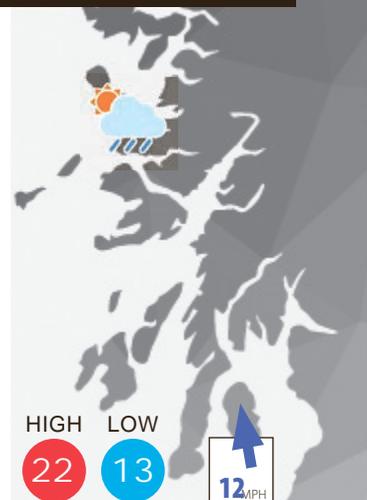
#### Saturday

Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze  
Temperatures 11°C to 16°C.

#### Sunday

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

## FRIDAY FORECAST



# West



and the Pibroch, commissioned by the White Horse Distillery, locally known as the distillery boat because she used to carry casks between the Islay distilleries and the Kingston Docks in Glasgow. Despite the presence of Customs and Excise Officers there was apparently a knack of dunting a cask full of whisky, just before it was placed into the bottom of the hold and capturing the ensuing drip in cleverly hidden channel which ran along the bilges and recovered later. Tim Epps, Port Charlotte, Islay, whose family had owned Laudale and Glencripesdale estates in Morvern in the 1950s, has a good knowledge of the history of Islay's maritime trade. He tells me he worked as a deck-hand on the Pibroch and was paid 1/6d a ton for shovelling coal into buckets before it was slewn ashore - a hard, dirty and tedious job.

Coal for Ardtornish estate was brought by puffer from the Clyde twice yearly and deposited into carts on the beach below Kinlochaline. When the tide permitted it was taken away and delivered round the employees' houses as part of their wages. The remainder went to the mansion house to feed the huge central-heating system which gobbled almost a ton a day. Other landings were at Loch Teacuis, Drimnin, Killundine, Glencripesdale, Laudale and Lochaline. I can see yet in my mind's eye the indomitable and diminutive Miss Helen MacNicol, the Lochaline shopkeeper, sitting on an ancient wooden chair at the head of the old stone pier keeping the tally as each bucket load was swung ashore and put into heaps or onto a cart or trailer.

## Islay Life Museum gets back to 'normal'

Some 12,000 years of Islay history will soon be able to be enjoyed by locals and visitors alike as staff and trustees at the Museum of Islay Life - Taigh-tasgaidh Muinntir Ìle - prepare for the safe reopening of the island's popular attraction.

A one-way route through the museum's varied displays has been designed and a hand-sanitising point at the entrance has been set up.

Museum manager, Jenni Minto, said: 'We are really looking forward to opening our doors and welcoming visitors again. Eileen MacKenzie, myself and the trustees have worked very hard to ensure our treasured collection can be enjoyed safely.'

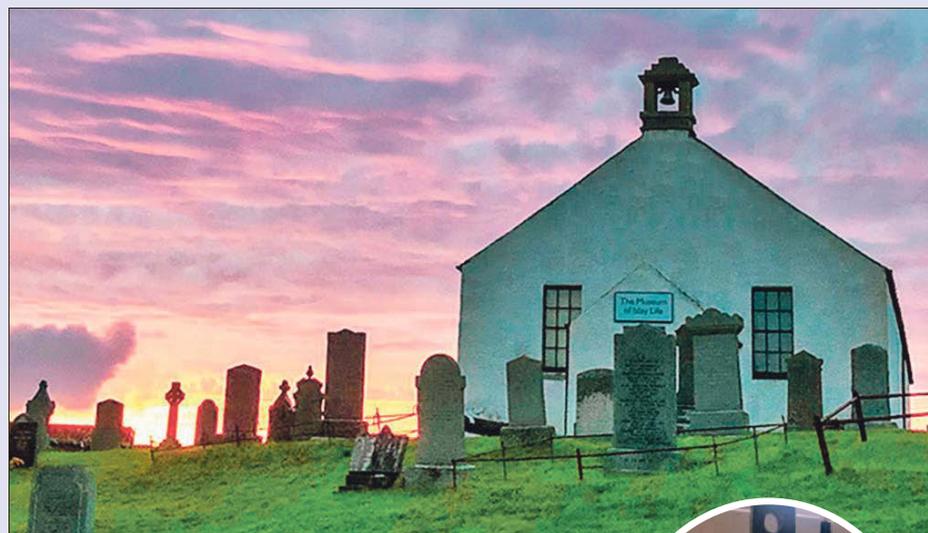
The museum will feature an entirely new display telling the story of how the island's iconic Georgian villages were created. Each village has a section looking at how they were established containing maps, information and photographs. For example, Free Church Minister, John McNeill, gave the following evidence to the Napier Commission on crofting in October 1883, about Portnahaven: 'The village of Port-na-haven was formed on exposed, bare, barren rocks in the year 1818 by Captain Walter Campbell of Sutherland, Islay. It contained a population of 361 souls. The original idea was to make it a fishing village, but practically it has been a haven of refuge for the migratory individuals of rural families who had been dispossessed of their homes. They were allowed to erect one-storied dwelling houses, consisting of one room and kitchen as a rule.'

Eileen MacKenzie said: 'It has been interesting researching and designing the display, gathering together the stories of the villages on Islay from the museum's archive and importantly getting help from Catriona Bell, Eleanor McNab and Sharon McHarrie.'

This work has been supported by Museums Galleries Scotland and Friends of Bruichladdich. The creation of this display was prompted by many questions from visitors about how Islay's beautiful planned villages came into being.

A new case, funded by Ben Reavey and family in memory of former chairman of the Museum, Carl Reavey, displays the 1593 Campbell of Cawdor Seal, unearthed during the Islay Heritage excavation of Dunyvaig Castle in 2018.

As a result of a continuing agreement with Jennifer Jones, curator of the Smithsonian's



The museum staff and volunteers have been working hard to get the museum ready so they can welcome back visitors; right, the bell of Rothesay Castle.



National Museum of American History, the museum is pleased that the American Stars and Stripes sewn by Islay women in 1918 for the funerals of American soldiers lost in the Tuscania tragedy will be displayed on Islay for a further three years. The flag is now framed in a new case, funded by Professor Richard Kurin, Ambassador-at-large, Smithsonian Institution, which is mounted on a specially-made wooden case by Alastair MacLellan and Malcolm Wilson.

Said Jenni: 'Having the flag here for an extended period is fantastic - it is such an important piece of Islay history, illustrating how our community came together, just over 100 years ago, in respect to mourn the loss of young men during the First World One. On behalf of the museum, I would like to thank Jennifer, Richard and their colleagues for allowing the flag to remain on display so that more people can experience the thrill of seeing it back on Islay.'

Unfortunately when the museum opens its reference library will not be available and the iPads containing the museum's photograph and postcard collection which visitors could look through have also been taken off display. The hope is that both will be able to be returned next year.

However, the new one-way route has allowed Eileen and Jenni to change around some of the much-loved displays and dig into the

museum's collection to bring out some new items.

Over the winter months the museum has also benefited from a few new items being donated, including the bell of the Rothesay Castle, by the Hymas-Shackleton family from North Yorkshire, who wanted to 'find it a home in which it can be treasured'.

The Rothesay Castle was an iron steamship which having left New York in on December 27, 1939 became stranded near Islay on January 4, 1940. An SOS message was received by the Coastguard was passed on to the RNLI at Port Askaig. The following day the ship was still firmly stuck on the rocks and the remaining crew were taken off. A court of enquiry found that the Captain was found guilty of the loss by serious default and his Certificate of Competency was suspended for one year.

The wreck lies near Nave island, although it is now broken up. However, one of its lifeboats was put to important use, becoming the Gordie's boat which ferried passengers between Islay and Jura.

The museum will be opening on Monday July 27, Monday to Friday, from 11am to 2pm. Please come and visit.

### Slimming World Fish Pie



#### Ingredients

- 1 small onion, roughly chopped
- 100g peeled butternut squash, roughly chopped
- 100g cauliflower, cut into florets
- ½ x 400g can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

#### Method:

- Put the onion, squash, cauliflower, beans, garlic, stock cube, mustard powder and 250ml boiling water in a medium-size saucepan over a medium-low heat. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until tender.
- Meanwhile, make the topping. Cook the potatoes in a saucepan of boiling water over a high heat for 15 minutes or until tender. Drain and mash well, then stir through the parsley and quark and season to taste.
- While the potatoes are cooking, put the leek in a small saucepan with 2 tbsp water. Cover and cook over a medium-low heat for about 10 minutes or until softened. Drain and keep warm.
- Remove the cauliflower mixture from the heat and blitz until smooth with a stick blender (or use a food processor and return to the pan). Return the mixture to a gentle simmer and add the fish and prawns. Simmer gently for 8-10 minutes or until the fish is just cooked, stirring gently from time to time. Stir in the leek and season lightly.
- Preheat the grill to medium-high.
- Tip the fish mixture into an ovenproof dish (that will fit under your grill) and spread it out evenly. Spoon the mash over the top and cook under the grill for 10 minutes or until bubbling and slightly golden. Serve hot with your favourite vegetables.

Packed with juicy prawns, smoked haddock and cod, the Slimming World Fish pie is a comforting classic. This healthy fish pie is topped with potato and parsley mash.

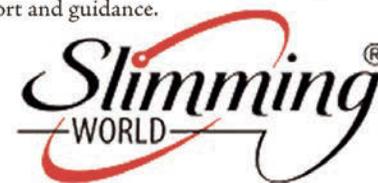
- 2 large garlic cloves
- 1 fish stock cube, crumbled
- 1 tsp mustard powder
- 1 medium leek, sliced
- 250g skinless and boneless smoked haddock fillet, cut into bite-size chunks

- 250g skinless and boneless cod fillet, cut into bite-size chunks
- 200g raw peeled king prawns
- For the Topping
- 1kg potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley
- 75g plain quark

• Syn FREE • 1 hour 10 minutes • Serves 4

### Watch this space for groups re-opening

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



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# It's time to enjoy a Great British family 'staycation'

People are being encouraged to enjoy summer safely by exploring destinations closer to home. Taking a holiday in the United Kingdom offers people the chance to uncover some stunning scenery, wonderful attractions and superb accommodation without having to jump on a plane. Here, we take a look at the type of places you can stay, the rules you need to follow and how to enjoy a great staycation.

SUMMER IS here and Britain is beginning to reopen, providing everyone with the opportunity to start dreaming about a holiday.

And this year a staycation could give you some much needed rest and recuperation, while also helping get the holiday industry back up and running.

Hotels, campsites, bed and breakfast accommodation and other places to stay are now opening if they can follow the guidelines relevant to their locality to ensure that their guests will be safe to stay and spend days wandering our award-winning coastlines, exploring our green spaces and getting inspired in our cities.

Each accommodation provider is unique and those that have reopened have had to adapt depending on the nature of their business, including the size and type of accommodation.

But these changes mean it is safe for visitors to come and enjoy a change of scenery.

But even when we are away from home, we still need to follow the guidelines.

Speaking earlier this month, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: "As lockdown eases, we should focus on supporting the livelihoods of business owners and their employees up and down the country – all of whom are opening their doors for the first time in more than three months.

"They are our local restaurants, hairdressers, libraries, museums, cinemas, and yes, pubs. They are also

## Take a trip with confidence

**Scotland's colourful countryside, breathtaking beaches and glorious gardens are ready to welcome visitors this summer. Many locations are reopening, but have restricted visitor numbers and pre-booked time slots, so we recommend looking at the official websites for attractions and organisations before you travel, so that you're in the know before you go. The national tourist organisations of Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland have launched a UK-wide industry standard**

**and 'We're Good to Go' mark. The mark means businesses can demonstrate that they are adhering to the respective government and public health guidance, ensuring they can welcome visitors back with confidence. Do remember that our four nations have different guidelines, advice and timescales for reopening tourism. Please respect government guidance on social distancing and also any regional lockdown measures that are provided by the respective nation.**

hotels, B&Bs, indeed much of our tourism industry.

"All these businesses and their workers have put in a heroic effort to prepare their venues for this reopening, to work out a way to trade in a way that keeps their customers safe.

"But the success of these businesses, the livelihoods of those who rely on them, and ultimately the economic health of the whole country is dependent on every single one of us acting responsibly. We must not let them down."

Mr Johnson emphasised that even if we are now allowed to spend nights away from our own homes, we must still follow social distancing rules.

When out and about, we need to remember to look after ourselves, one another and the



*As lockdown eases, we should focus on supporting the livelihoods of business owners and their employees*

environment around us. To make sure we're all doing our bit to travel responsibly, just follow a few simple steps.

When planning your trip, check that important facilities



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ENJOY  
Summer  
SAFELY

like toilets and car parks are open before you travel.

If you have an attraction in mind, check online to see if you need to pre-book.

Some places may be extremely popular, so get off the beaten track and discover a hidden gem.

Stay socially distanced apart from anyone outside your household while walking, running, cycling, sitting and sunbathing.

Wear your face covering at all times when on public transport.

Make sure you have a bank card; many outlets are currently only accepting cashless payments. Take hand sanitiser with you. Leave the car behind where possible and visit nearby attractions by walking, cycling or public transport.

## Bliss on Loch Lomond

**Heidi and Stuart Cordner have reopened their self-catering property on the shores of Loch Lomond and their family-run passenger cruise business, Cruise Loch Lomond.**

**The 10-person rental property is set in self-contained grounds on the shore of the lake, and the Cordners hope guests will contribute to the local economy while being respectful. They have implemented virus prevention measures in both the property and on the boats, including**

**increased cleaning and social distancing procedures. They have also invested in additional cleaning equipment and training for cleaning staff. Passengers are asked to wear face coverings and book in advance, and capacity has been reduced to allow for social distancing. "We live in a small community but we're fortunate that there's a lot of space and our main business is an outdoor activity," said Mr Cordner.**

[visitbritain.com/know-before-you-go](https://www.visitbritain.com/know-before-you-go)

## 'Defences' in place as Castle reopens to the general public

NORTHUMBERLAND'S OLDEST castle hotel, Langley Castle near Hexham, has reopened to visitors, with all the appropriate "defences" in place. The castle, which has survived attacks by Border Reivers and a fire that left it as a ruin for centuries, has again been buzzing with guests who have been impressed by the

sanitary and social distancing measures that Langley has already put in place. The management team makes many arrangements upfront, such as menu choices and payments, as part of the social distancing procedures that are required. Other changes affect check-in and check-out times, to enable the housekeeping team to carry

out deep cleans. Executive general manager Margaret Livingstone-Evans said: "We have stayed upbeat and optimistic and have managed to generate enquiries throughout lockdown, by being creative about the ways in which we can make things happen, in a safe way." More details at [langleycastle.co.uk](http://langleycastle.co.uk)



**LANGLEY CASTLE:** Guests have been impressed by the sanitary and social distancing measures.

## Camping perfect for keeping distance

Cool Camping is a curated website of small, independently-run camping and glamping sites across Wales and beyond. Marketing manager James Warner Smith said: "Having campfires, spreading yourself out, being able to chat with the owner of the business who'll be able to recommend a local pub – they're all big parts of the appeal of camping. "You're much more likely to be pitching your tent among shrubs and long grass with a lot of space between you and your neighbours."

The company has been working closely with campsites in Wales to ensure safety guidelines are met. At the moment, only self-contained accommodation can open, so the website only allows those types of sites to be booked. They've introduced a new feature on the website where each business can indicate what new safety measures they've put in place. Among the most popular places among potential

visitors is Pembrokeshire, with secluded spots outside of national parks all proving popular. ■ Wales is open for camping from 25 July. Image (below) courtesy of Cool Camping

A graphic featuring a bright yellow sun with rays in the top right corner and a multi-colored rainbow arching across the middle, set against a blue background.

# Safer Summer Staycation

For more information on staying safe, please go to [visitbritain.com/know-before-you-go](http://visitbritain.com/know-before-you-go)

Playing our part for a safer summer

**All together** >

# BUSINESS NEWS

Send us your business news by emailing  
[editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk) or call 01631 568000

## Firms urged to apply for specialist business advice

Highland businesses are being urged to take up an offer of specialist advice from business leaders.

The Scottish Business Resilience Centre (SBRC), in partnership with the Scottish Government, aims to provide guidance to businesses following the coronavirus outbreak.

A series of webinars are to be held in August to explain the application process and SBC wants to then offer businesses across the Scottish Highlands a one-to-one mentoring service to get tailored support.

Jude McCorry, chief executive officer of SBRC, said: 'Our mentoring programme is a fantastic opportunity for organisations in the Scottish Highlands to get immediate, specific support to overcome the challenges brought on to their operations by covid.'

'Belinda Roberts, founder of WeDO Scotland and member of our Scottish Business Cares Advisory Board, is running the mentoring programme for us.'

'She has been a wonderful resource in connecting businesses with leaders and entrepreneurs that have the relevant experience and knowledge.'

Ms Roberts said small-to-medium enterprises are the 'lifeline' of the Scottish economy.

'Expert advice and support for these companies as they emerge from lockdown will be an essential lifeline for many who are facing considerable challenges during these unparalleled times,' she said.

The webinars take place on August 5, 10 and 26.

Applications can be made online at <https://www.sbrcentre.co.uk/webinars/mentoring/>



# North Uist foodie Douglas signs supermarket deal

by Ellis Butcher  
[ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk)



An entrepreneur from North Uist has secured a major retail deal to take his business to another level.

Stewart's Kitchen, headed by managing director Douglas Stewart, aged 29, will provide quality pre-prepared handmade meals to nearly 70 Co-op stores across Scotland.

For six weeks around Scottish Food & Drink Fortnight, between September 5-20, the agreement will see his specially-made dishes in 220 stores.

Douglas, a lobster fisherman's son and advocate for home-grown food, has been able to create three new jobs at the firm's production base in Lanarkshire, bringing the workforce up to eight.

Stewart's Kitchen is an off-shoot of The Hebridean Food Company, which he established in 2013, based at Grimsay. The aim is to bring the 'best of Scotland's larder' to more people at home who may be short on time when it comes to cooking.

Douglas, the company's managing director, said: 'Growing up in the Hebrides, I've been blessed with enjoying and learning about the freshest produce that Scotland has to offer.'

'Stewart's Kitchen was born out of my mission to encourage more people to enjoy the bounty of incredible food produced on their doorstep, even for those whose busy lifestyles mean finding time to cook is often a struggle.'

'This major deal with the Co-op will provide more people across Scotland with our small batch, delicious pre-prepared handmade dishes and soups by our small team of talented chefs.'

Meals are created using fresh, locally-sourced produce to prepare quality dishes and soups priced between £2.50 and £3.75, and with a strong Scottish connection.



Douglas Stewart has signed a deal with the Co-op is a perfect marriage for his small batch, handmade pre-prepared meals using fresh, locally-sourced ingredients.

Treats include chicken braemar wrapped in streaky bacon and filled with Stornoway black pudding, served with buttery mashed potato and a rich peppercorn sauce.

Sophia Karim, Co-op ready meal buyer, said the Co-op aimed to create value in its communities by working closely with local suppliers, growers and producers to help job creation and local economies.

And Kevin Buchan, Co-op, sourcing manag-

er for Scotland, added: 'Shoppers tell us that provenance and trust is important to them.'

'The products will be enjoyed across Scotland, from Lerwick in the north to Earlston in the south, Stornoway to the west and Aberdeen to the east as we continue to work to explore ways to showcase and support Scottish food and drink.'

For more information visit <https://www.hebrideanfoodcompany.com/>



## The Eat Out to Help Out scheme launches in August

The Oban Times will be running a feature next week promoting local bars, cafes and restaurants participating in the scheme.

### Want to get involved?

If you would like your business to be included then contact us on 01631 568000 or email [advert@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:advert@obantimes.co.uk)

**The Oban Times**

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# Education in the West Your Future! 2020

The Oban Times  
& WEST HIGHLAND TIMES

LOCHABER TIMES  
& Oban Times

## Deciding your future during Covid-19: Education and training opportunities in Oban

With exam results just around the corner, partners in the Oban: A University Town project are highlighting the range and quality of education and training on offer right here in Oban.

The impact of Covid-19 has undoubtedly influenced the direction of many future career paths. School leavers are having to make or change some of the most important decisions of their life during unprecedented times. Many people are also now looking to upskill, retrain or even change career due to the economic impact of Covid-19. But opportunities to train closer to home may be a solution for those constrained by finances and the anxiety of moving to a new area to access learning opportunities during the pandemic.

The Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS), Ballet West, and Argyll College UHI, are gearing up for the start of the new academic year and are ready to welcome around 800 new and returning students.

And it is not too late to apply for local courses starting this

August and September. Clearing is open and for those not holding an offer from a university or college, it is not too late to discuss your options directly with campus staff and apply for courses that have spaces left.

SAMS and Argyll College are partners of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), which is planning a partner-wide online Open Day on August 5, a great chance to find out more about what is available and to speak directly to students and staff.

John Howe, programme leader at SAMS UHI, based on the shore at Dunbeg, said: 'If you have a passion for our oceans and thinking about a career in STEM, then consider our BSc (Hons) Marine Science programme, which is taught just metres from the sea. We have spaces available for September 2020 and those interested can sign up via the SAMS website to our UHI Open Day webinar, presented online by marine science students, or give our student support team a call to find out more.'

Chris Hammell of Ballet West added: 'Ballet West offers the training required for a successful professional dance career. Our international reputation for quality means we are able to attract the best students and teachers from around the world. This year we have students from 17 countries taking part in our BA (Hons) Ballet degree course.'

Theresa Bain, centre manager for Argyll College in Oban said: 'The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated changes in how and where we work, and highlighted the skills people need for jobs in the digital world. We can help you enhance your digital skills, whatever your starting point – from access courses to degrees in business, digital media, computing science or applied software development with IBM.'

'Enrolling with Argyll College has the added flexibility of allowing you annual exit points, with nationally recognised qualifications such as an HNC or HND, during the first couple years of a full degree.'

## Cùrsaichean Ceum aig Sabhal Mòr Ostaig – Cuir iarrtas thugainn airson 2020/21!

A bheil thu am beachd do chuid Gàidhlig a thoirt air adhart gu ìre oilthigh? A bheil ùidh agad ann an eachdraidh is cultar na Gàidhlig no a bheil meas mòr agad air ceòl traidiseanta agus am bu mhath leat barrachd ionnsachadh? No is dòcha gum bu mhath leat Gàidhlig a theagasg agus a toirt do dhaoine eile?

'S e Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eilean) an aon cholaiste san t-saoghal anns an urrainn dhut cùrsaichean ceum gu lèir a dhèanamh tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Tha dà chùrsa bhogaidh ann: An Cùrsa Comais agus Gàidhlig is Conaltradh. Tha na cùrsaichean seo a' mairsinn ochd mìosan, bhon t-Sultain chun a' Chèitein, air an làraich, aig Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. 'S urrainn dhut an dèanamh fad bliadhna a-mhàin air neo mar a' chiad bhliadhna de chùrsa Ceum le Urram, ann an Cànan is Cultar, Leasachadh, Foghlam no Ceòl. Tha An Cùrsa Comais agus Gàidhlig is Conaltradh stèidhichte air sgilean sgrìobhaidh is labhairt tro mhodalan riatanach: sgilean conaltraidh; cànan foirmeil is dreuchdail; agus eachdraidh, litreachas is cultar, cho math ri modalan roghainneil air òrain is sgeulachdan, na meadhanan, ceòl agus Gàidhlig sa choimhearsnachd.

'S e cùrsa dha fileantaich is luchd-ionnsachaidh adhartach a th' ann an Gàidhlig is Conaltradh a tha airson piseach a thoirt air sgilean sgrìobhaidh is còmhraidh, agus tha an Cùrsa Comais ag amas air luchd-ionnsachaidh eadar-mheadhanach a tha ag iarraidh a bhith fileanta anns a' chànan. Tha dùil gum bi oileanaich a' bruidhinn agus a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig air taobh a-staigh is taobh a-muigh nan clasaichean, bho latha gu latha. Gheibheadh tu cothrom an cois nan cùrsaichean greis-gnìomhachais a dhèanamh ann an Gàidhlig le, mar eisimpleir, sgoiltean, companaidhean riochdachaidh is craolaidh is buidhnean Gàidhlig a tha a' brosnachadh agus a' leasachadh cànan is cultar na Gàidhlig.



Ma tha ceist sam bith agad no ma tha thu airson barrachd fiosrachaidh fhaighinn air na cùrsaichean againn dha fileantaich is luchd-ionnsachaidh na Gàidhlig, no fiù 's iarrtas a chur thugainn

airson ro-shealladh, cuir post-d gu [iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk](mailto:iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk), fòn gu 01471 888304 no rach chun na làraich-lìn againn aig [www.smo.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk)



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Ionad Nàiseanta Cànan is Cultar na Gàidhlig



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An interactive grammar-based course aimed at intermediate level learners who would like to become fluent in Gaelic.

### GÀIDHLIG IS CONALTRADH

'S e cùrsa a th' ann dha fileantaich is luchd-ionnsachaidh adhartach a tha airson piseach a thoirt air na sgilean sgrìobhaidh is còmhraidh aca.

An intensive course for fluent speakers and advanced learners who want to improve their writing and communication skills in Gaelic.

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SEPT 2020 START!

[iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk](mailto:iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk)

[www.smo.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk)



## Undergraduate courses at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig – Apply now for September 2020

Do you want to continue with Gaelic at university level? Are you interested in exploring the culture and history of the language, maybe you are passionate about Gaelic traditional music and wish to learn more? Or would you like to teach Gaelic and pass the language on to others?

Whether you are studying on campus, or through distance learning, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (University of the Highlands and Islands) is the only college in the world where you can complete a degree entirely through the medium of Gaelic. Sabhal Mòr Ostaig offers two immersion courses: An Cùrsa Comais and Gàidhlig is Conaltradh.

These courses run over eight months, from September to May, on campus at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, in the Isle of Skye. You can complete the course as a stand-alone Cert HE or as the first year of an honours degree in Language and Culture, Development, Education or Music.

An Cùrsa Comais and Gàidhlig is Conaltradh are both based on writing and speaking skills through core modules: communication skills; formal and professional language; and history, literature and culture, as well as optional modules in song and folklore, media, music and Gaelic in the community. Gàidhlig is Conaltradh is a course for fluent speakers and advanced learners who want to improve their writing and conversation skills, whilst An Cùrsa Comais is aimed at intermediate level learners who would like to become fluent in the language. It is expected that, with encouragement, students will speak and use Gaelic, every day, inside and outside of classes. As part of the courses, you will get the opportunity to undertake a work experience placement in Gaelic with, for example, schools, production and broadcast companies and organisations which are active in promoting Gaelic language and culture.

If you have any questions, would like more information about the range of courses available for fluent speakers and learners of Gaelic, or wish to request a prospectus, please email [iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk](mailto:iarrtas@smo.uhi.ac.uk), phone 01471 888304 or visit our website: [www.smo.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk)



# Health and social care

## Start a rewarding career in care today

The recent pandemic has made many people grateful for the amazing key workers in the health and social care sector. Demand for these services is growing and job opportunities are predicted to rise by almost four per cent.

Although these critical roles can be demanding, they also offer some of the most fulfilling career opportunities. Many opportunities are not restricted by previous training, education or a person's age - if you want to help people there is a social care job for you.

What type of person do I need to be?

Employers are looking for staff who are warm, kind, reliable, empathetic and compassionate, and are willing to spend time listening to people to get to know them and their needs. You should also be able to communicate in a clear, open and straight forward way.

What skills and qualifications do I need?

You will need core skills of English, basic arithmetic,

some skills in problem solving, using a computer and team work. And while there are lots of roles which won't require you to have qualifications, there are some courses which can give you a taster of what it is like to work in social care.

If you are still at school you could consider a Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Health Care - this will allow you to combine a National Progression Award (NPA) in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level Six, with a work placement where you spend time with an employer, completing four units from the SVQ level two Social Services and Healthcare. This course is delivered by Argyll College UHI in partnership with High Schools across Argyll.

If you are a school leaver or a mature student, then the HNC Social Services, available locally at Argyll College UHI, will prepare you to work in a variety of care settings. During the one-year course, you will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement where you'll complete three vocational units. You can study full time or part time to suit your own personal circumstances, or even undertake individual units as part of your continuous professional development (CPD).

Rita Yost successfully completed this course and was nominated for the Ina Maciver Award for her passion for social care, her practical and academic performance and her dedication to her studies.

She says, 'Having good support from classmates and tutors, and learning from their experiences as well as on work placements, convinced me that working in social care was what I really wanted. It gave me the drive to achieve the best I could. I have fulfilled my goal, as I am now a qualified,

employed residential care worker thanks to the University of the Highlands and Islands.'

For those already working in the care sector, there are work based qualifications which enable you to gain recognition for the skills and experience you gain on the job. Scottish Vocational qualifications are assessed in your workplace and at Argyll College UHI - you will be appointed a personal tutor who will support you to complete a written portfolio of work, related to your workplace duties.

What job roles could I do?

There are lots of different job roles in social care; it just depends what you're interested in, who you want to work with and where you want to work.

Direct care roles could include, Personal Assistant, Rehabilitation Worker, Shared Lives Carer or Advocacy Worker. Management Roles include Team Leader or Supervisor, Residential Home Manager or specialist coordinators in dementia or end of life care.

You can find out more about FE and HE Care Sector Courses at [www.argyll.uhi.ac.uk](http://www.argyll.uhi.ac.uk)





University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
Argyll College

**5TH AUGUST**  
**ONLINE**  
**OPEN DAY**



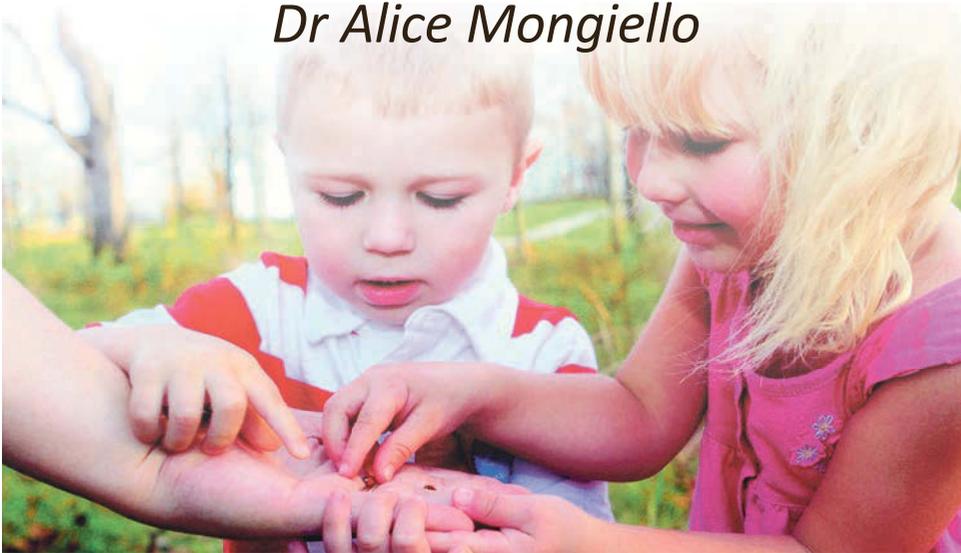
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## Early learning and childcare – Dr Alice Mongiello



**'Being human is more important than ever: my experience of delivering learning and teaching remotely for the past 15 years' -**



Dr Alice Mongiello, programme leader for the BA (Hons) Childhood Practice and Graduate Apprenticeship in Early Learning and Childcare, University of the Highlands and Islands.

As colleges and universities across the UK come to terms with the suspension of face-to-face teaching due to the Covid-19 pandemic, at the University of the Highlands and Islands, we knew we were in a better position than most to adapt to this 'new' normal. After all, it is just what we do.

Our staff have been delivering higher education courses to students across the University partnership through a blended approach to teaching for more than 20 years, connecting learners across a vast geographical area though a combination of video conferencing, remote learning technologies and face-to-face teaching. This innovative approach to learning and teaching is engrained in our culture and a key part of what makes our tertiary partnership of 13 colleges and research institutions so unique.

As programme leader for the BA (Hons) Childhood Practice and Graduate Apprenticeship in Early Learning and Childcare, my 'old' normal is the 'new' normal for so many educators as both courses are, and have always been, offered fully online. I am also responsible for delivering a Master's module on the Theory and Practice of eLearning – my doctoral research and more recent projects focus on the experience of online learning and the nature of online authentic practice. I have also written and presented numerous papers on the subject of online learning and teaching across the world.

Over the past 15 years, I have often found myself in discussion with colleagues who believe they need to develop a new skillset to deliver learning and teaching remotely. However, from my experience, the technology is not the master that determines our success but rather it is the human connection within the online space and how we interact with our learners that matters. Often what is actually required is a change of mindset: the online context is just a different classroom space. Yes, of course, we do need to have an understanding of technology and the tools available, but our focus should be on

creating a space that fosters connections and enables positive learning experiences.

I have coined the phrases 'humanising the machine' and 'becoming more human'. Ultimately the key for delivering successfully online lies in an educator's ability to build relationships and make connections: skills that lie at the heart of the learning and teaching process regardless of the context. It is human connections rather than the technology that promotes potential transformative learning experiences; the technology merely offers the platform in which these experiences take place.

More recently I have been considering the concept of 'love-led practice': where educators value their learners as fellow human beings, with their own unique characteristics, their own challenges and their own lives. Each learner comes with their own lived biographies. Our role as online educators is to acknowledge this and recognise the ways in which this affects the overall learning process for our students. It is therefore important that educators present a human online persona that aligns with who they are. This fosters an environment which is based on trust, creates a space that is warm, caring, and compassionate, and where learners feel safe to engage, learn and interact. Whether face-to-face or online, the experience of learning may cause discomfort for our students, it may push them out of their comfort zone. As an online educator you need support students to embrace the discomfort in an online space where they feel safe and secure to experience new things.

How you do this in a practical sense is down to you as an individual, but, there are simple things you can do, such as using your students' names during your interactions online, getting to know them and regularly checking in – although you are not big brother, your role is not to 'police' the online space. Show your own personality – my cat and dogs regularly make an appearance – make your sessions fun, show humour, create a social environment for students, share content that resonates, ensure you stay connected, and above all, communicate how you feel and what you think. The online space is not a place to hide but rather to be present, open and recognise that as humans we are far from perfect. Being vulnerable makes us human and helps to break down the barriers students often face when they enter the online space. As an online educator, you should also never underestimate the impact the written word can have on learners.

In a world where people feel less connected to their friends, families and colleagues, becoming more human online is even more important as we navigate through this crisis.

## Argyll students of the year 2020

Argyll College UHI works closely with the regional high schools delivering a range of courses which supplement the school's senior curriculum and give pupils a taste of college life. Each year, the college selects local and overall school prize-winners and here we take a look at the 2020 winning group.

Erin Mulholland, fifth year pupil at Arran High School was the prize-winner on Arran. Erin recently completed Skills for Work Childhood Practice course at SCQF level five, and was nominated by tutor Isobel MacDonald, who said: 'Erin is an extremely conscientious student. She is very caring and will take the time to listen to others, contributing well in class discussions.'



Erin said: 'I was happy to get the award and I loved the course; it has given me a clear idea of my future career choice.'

Ben MacDonald picked up the prize in Islay, having recently completed a Creative Digital Media course at SCQF level four.



Islay High School head teacher, Stephen Harrison said: 'We're absolutely delighted for Ben and it's great to see the commitment and effort that he has put into this course. I have no doubt that this will give him a great deal of confidence going forward as he starts thinking about a career after school. Well done, Ben!'

In Oban, Amy Cameron, who completed Skills for Work Hairdressing course, scooped the prize. Tutor, Lisa Johnston nominated Amy and said: 'Throughout the year Amy has consistently produced written and practical work of the highest standard, she has worked above and beyond the requirements of the course. Amy used her time in class to continue developing her skills, regularly discussing and demonstrating the skills she was learning in her place of work with a passion that shows she will do very well working in the hairdressing industry.'



Amy said: 'I'm so thankful that I was able to receive this award, I wouldn't have been able to do it without my friends from Trinity Hairdressers and my hairdressing tutor Lisa. Thank you very much.'

Finally, Inveraray teenager Amy Owen beat stiff competition to be named the overall Argyll College 2020 Schools Link Student of the Year. Amy completed the Skills for Work Health Sector programme, delivered for Lochgilphead Joint Campus senior students by Argyll College UHI.

Tutor Linda Brown said: 'Amy embraced every opportunity and worked exceptionally well with the members of the MS Centre (Lochgilphead) group, Brain Fog. She supported them with activities including Christmas party and charity events such as the Fire Walk where Amy helped with making posters and T shirts to promote the event.'

According to Claire Cameron (outreach worker, MS Centre Lochgilphead): 'Amy did amazingly well and made a huge impression on everyone. She became a trainer for Digesting Science and showed a lot of care and skill when delivering the training to other volunteers at the MS Centre.'

Amy said: 'I was very shocked to receive the award but also very pleased, it's been a great year and I had an amazing tutor!'

# West Highland College UHI is here for you

West Highland College UHI is one of 13 partner colleges in the University of the Highlands and Islands.

The university has been delivering a personalised learning experience for more than 20 years and West Highland College UHI has been part of that story for 10 years.

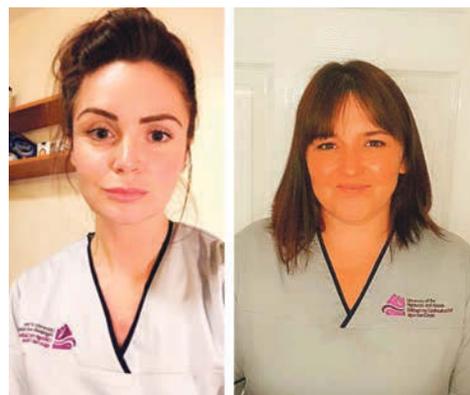
Many of our students live in remote areas, but through a well-developed network of college centres, we bring the same educational opportunities to everyone who has chosen to make the West Highlands their home.

Our strength lies in delivering courses through connected and flexible learning, always supported by local student services and friendly college centre staff.

**Connected and flexible learning** can combine video conferencing, online classrooms with real time interaction, contact and discussion with your lecturer and fellow students, practical face-to-face teaching and self-directed learning allowing you to choose when you study.

We are well placed to help you succeed. You'll be joining one of the highest performing colleges in Scotland with our learners consistently reporting satisfaction rates of 97 per cent or higher.

*and response is always quick. I think it made me a more independent learner because tasks are set, you go off and research alone and then come back into the virtual classroom to discuss or submit. It has prepared me well for studying at the next level.'*



**Elaine Stoddart and Kasha Mackay:**  
HNC Social Services then on to BSc Adult Nursing

*'We studied HNC Social Services together, this was the first step on the way to fulfilling our dream of becoming nurses. With young families, being able to start the journey back into education close to home was very important. With our newfound confidence and determination and support from college, we progressed onto BSc Adult Nursing with UHI. We are both proud that one day we will graduate from UHI to serve the NHS as qualified, experienced nurses.'*





Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean  
 Colaiste na Gàidhealtachd an Iar

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We know that things are a little different right now and you may be wondering how this affects your options for studying with us in September. <

As your local college and university partner, we want you to know that **WE'RE HERE FOR YOU** and we are ready to help you on your learning journey. We offer a full range of courses at whatever stage or level is right for you – and you'll be joining one of the highest performing colleges in Scotland with our learners consistently reporting satisfaction rates of 97% or even higher.

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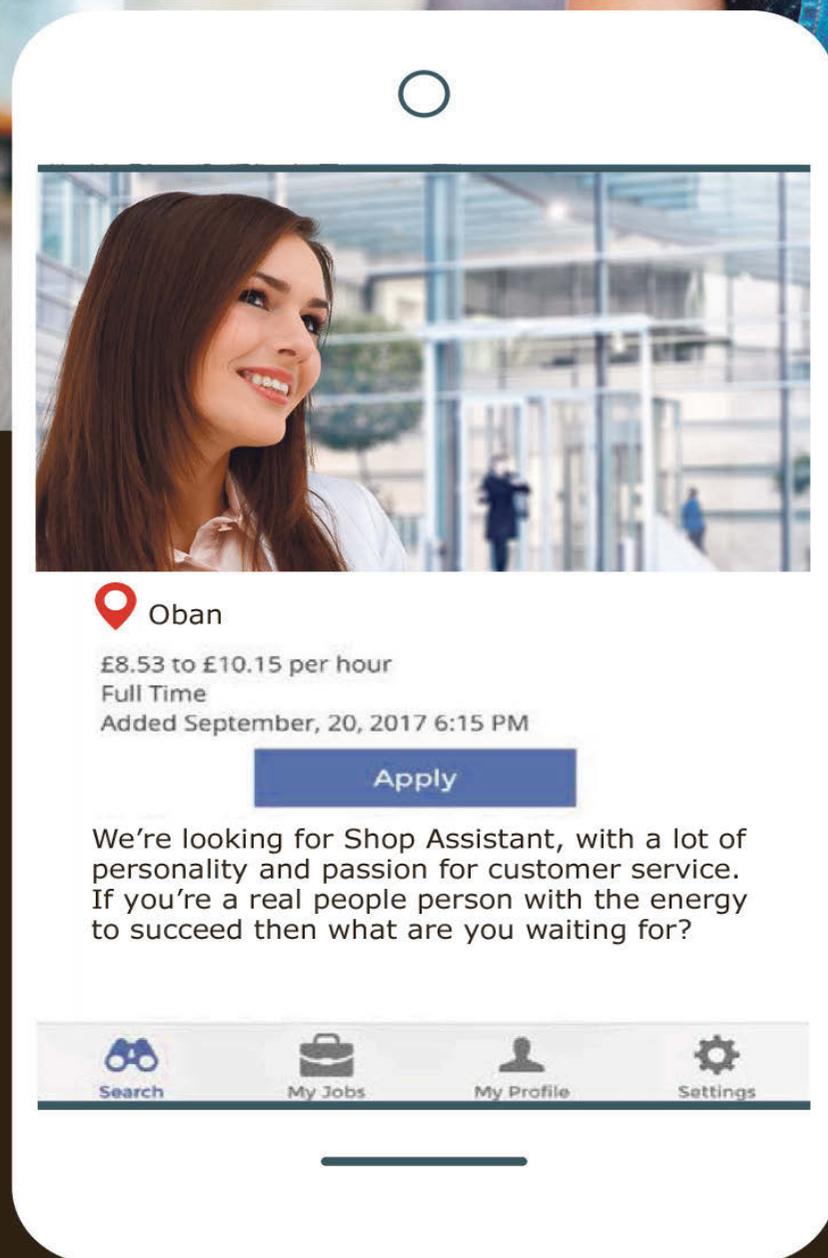
**Giles Wade: NQ Outdoor Leadership**

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# BUSINESS NEWS

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## Building A Great Business

ANGUS MACDONALD

[fort@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:fort@obantimes.co.uk)

*In the first of a six-part series, Fort William businessman Angus MacDonal offers advice on starting your own business, and why living in the West Highlands is no barrier to success.*

### Starting Your Own Company

A measure called Total Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) shows only 6.3 per cent of people in Scotland are engaged in some sort of entrepreneurial activities versus 9.3 per cent for the UK as a whole and 17.4 per cent in the US.

We have a huge public sector, and a long tradition of educating professionals. Our Scottish doctors, lawyers, accountants and engineers thrive all over the world, but it is successful companies employing well-paid people that countries need to generate the serious tax revenue.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if a young reader of this column would go on to create a world-class marine science, renewable energy or food business based in Mull or Ballachulish? It can be done in rural Scotland, after all Baxters Foods of Fochabers employs 1,500 staff and Walkers Shortbread on the Spey River have 4,000 staff.

What is it that makes people want to get their own business off the ground? You may know someone who has made a success of care homes or a tool-hire business. You might have read an article in the press of a bakery that sells artisan bread and has just sold to a multinational. Or you may work with a colleague and the two of you see that great once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that you would be mad to miss out on.

While making 'serious' money is definitely a driving force, it is really a by-product of creating a high-quality, respected company. Billionaire Frenchman Bernard Arnault, who built up Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy, said: 'Profit is a consequence of what we do well; it should never become a goal'.

If the product is right, you employ great staff and your customers love you, if you have the disciplines of sound corporate governance and a well-run finance department, then your chance of making a proper capital return is certainly high.

I have had my own business since I was 26, and loved every minute of the adrenaline highs and



Ferguson Transport is a hugely successful business based in Lochaber. It has a multi-million pound turnover.

lows. I adore work, it is my hobby...a two-week holiday is a week too long. Sad, eh? I devour stories about business and read every business biography. I take every opportunity to speak at schools about entrepreneurship. I look with pity at those who have a corporate career because it's so exciting to mould a business, to choose your colleagues, to work on the strategy and make it succeed.

Having no capital is good at the outset: much better to take your first steps as a window cleaner than borrow big money. Your first business failure is just a lesson, expect it. And don't expect that brilliant invention — we can't all be a James Dyson. My tip for wannabe entrepreneurs is plagiarise: pinch other people's ideas and do them better.

I'm often asked what are my top tips for aspiring entrepreneurs. Definitely read the business pages, tear yourself away from emails, social media and go and see people, use the telephone. Be hungry for information. Find a mentor or two in the industry you want to go into, work several hours a day more than others and chat to every business person; they will be surprisingly receptive.

These days you need to think big. You really need to have more than 10 members of staff and sales over £1million pretty quickly because there is a real problem with starting up your

own company, and that is the frightening level of bureaucracy. When you have employees you have National Insurance, PAYE, NEST, holiday and sickness pay, paternity and maternity leave, health and safety, employee liability insurance etc. to worry about. It seems you need to be an accountant and human resource expert as well as an entrepreneur, a rare combination.

Start-ups cannot afford proper office back-up with the result that sole traders who like to 'be on the tools' rather than at a desk, avoid the hassle of hiring trainees, resulting in a huge shortage of home-grown tradesmen.

Being based in the west highlands has its extra challenges: often poor internet, high travel and shipping costs, and lack of staff with the skills you may need. That said, it's getting better and I know of several multi-million pound-plus revenue businesses around here. The businesses I have run have made 90 per cent of their revenue outside Scotland, so lots of travelling time but living in an area with an unparalleled quality of life. Of course there are risks in starting your own business, but it can offer huge rewards in so many ways. I cannot recommend it more highly.

■ Angus MacDonal has built significant businesses in renewable energy, recycling, online education and publishing while based in the highlands.

## Initiative helps island businesses to stay afloat

A 'shop to ship' initiative has been launched to help shore-based businesses get goods to tourists onboard visiting vessels, writes Ellis Butcher.

Following the pandemic, the idea aims to help small businesses in remote areas and islands to carry on trading with visitors arriving by sea, while also respecting the concerns of communities about those stepping ashore.

It aims to promote the advanced order and purchase of local seafood, fresh food, arts and crafts, with arrangements made between the business and visitor for the safe drop off and collection from quays, ports and harbours. The idea being that 'marine tourists' use a dedicated website to find in advance about shore-based food and craft producers, and then make arrangements.

The move hopes to help in the economic recovery of remote rural and island destinations which have been hard hit by the lockdown and rely on visitors.

Sail Scotland, a membership group for the marine tourism industry, is behind the idea.

Its web-based portal will allow businesses to promote beer, wines and spirits, local seafood, fresh foods, meats, bakery, dairy, takeaways, groceries, household items and arts, and crafts to customers arriving by sea.

Alan Rankin, chief executive of Sail Scotland, said: 'This pilot initiative is aimed to enhance the sailing experience and offer vital sales to local coastal and island businesses.'

'Safe Sailing' guidelines have been published by Sail Scotland which says no two destinations are the same, so the platform aims to connect the producer and the consumer as easily as possible in a way that suits local wishes.

The platform is available for businesses to register at [www.sailscotland.co.uk/registration](http://www.sailscotland.co.uk/registration). It includes free associate membership of Sail Scotland.

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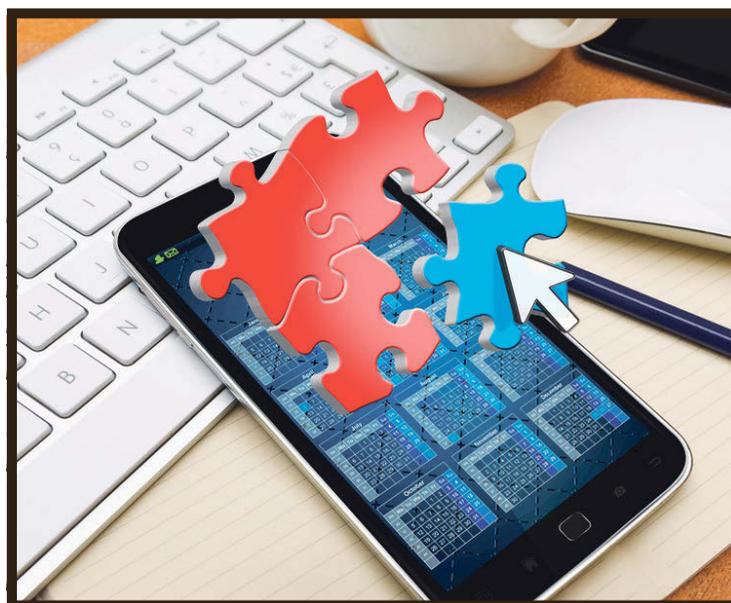
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# LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

## Whatever the questions, music is always the answer

by Fiona Scott  
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A string of Scottish artists have been lining up to take part in new stream series from iconic locations including McCaig's Tower, Glenfinnan Viaduct and Inveraray Castle.

Edinburgh Night Club FLY has partnered with Ground Level Up, an award-winning film production company, and FELive (world touring audio suppliers who recently did Lewis Capaldi's world tour) to deliver a series of recorded online streams with world renowned artists from breath-taking locations around the UK on its new YouTube channel: Music Is The Answer.

FLY operates one of Scotland's largest music



Ransom FA and Oakzy B's performance from McCaig's tower will show on YouTube tonight, Thursday July 30.

festivals, held in Princes Street Gardens under the iconic Edinburgh Castle and at Scotland's finest stately home, Hopetoun House, which along with its club nights attracts audiences of over 70,000.

The idea was trialled as part of moving its FLY Open Air Festival online in May.

It streamed Jackmaster [b2b] and Jasper James from Hopetoun House resulting in more than 50,000 views from people all over the world and raising thousands of pounds for charity.

Music Is The Answer (MITA) will also allow a global audience who are currently less

able to travel to Scotland to virtually visit some of the most stunning venues and locations across the country.

The first stream took place on Thursday July 16, featuring La La at Kinross House, while HYYTS Forth Bridge performance was aired last Thursday.

Tonight, July 30, is the turn of Ransom FA and Oakzy B who were filmed at McCaig's Tower on July 2.

Ransom FA had a blazing year in 2019 having starred in BBC Three's The Rap Game UK and is at the forefront of the vibrant Scottish Grime scene which is now making waves across the UK while Glasgow-based MC, Oakzy B also made his own appearances on BBC Scotland Tune and 1xtra Scottish team takeover.

He is also known in dance and happy hardcore's Makina

genre accumulating more than 23 million plays on his SoundCloud AlmightyYOakz.

The long-term project will continue on the YouTube channel where people can subscribe or follow FLY's social channels for alerts about the regular streams. The streams are free but there will be the opportunity to contribute to charities nominated by the artists and venues of each event.

Each stream will be made available on YouTube, Twitch and Facebook at 7pm on the advertised day and will then be on the YouTube indefinitely.

Fergus Myer, Music Is The Answer, said: 'With Covid-19 causing such a huge blow to all in the music industry, it's been an incredibly difficult time, not just for venues and promoters but artists as well.

'There are so many artists out there who will lose momentum with their live shows, release streaming numbers or won't manage to get going at all.

'Music Is The Answer will help us to push the boundaries beyond discovering, supporting and championing talent – something we (FLY) always strive towards.

'Music has the ability to change your mood and with everyone's mental health suffering throughout lockdown, we believe that lifting people's spirits through music can help.'

Producing phenomenon Sam Gellaitry was filmed at Inveraray Castle on June 3 and a date has yet to be confirmed for the streaming while an artist and date has still to be confirmed for the Glenfinnan performance.

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# What next for One Button Benny?

by Kathie Griffiths  
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

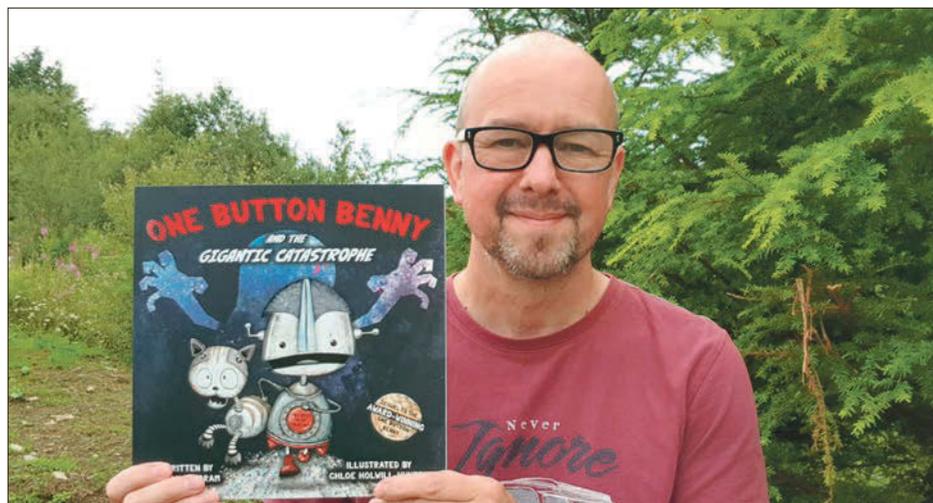


Fans of the lovable robot are in for a treat with his next eagerly awaited adventure coming soon.

For those who can't wait until the sequel One Button Benny and The Giant Catastrophe lands in UK bookshops on August 8, Benny's creator, author Alan Windram, has been invited to read the follow-up to his award-winning One Button Benny as part of this year's online Borders Book Festival on Sunday August 2, reaching little ears all over the world.

And Alan, who also runs children's publishing business Little Door Books, will be reading the first One Button Benny book on Facebook.com/littledoorbooks on Monday August 3, followed by a special reading of the latest Benny book on Friday August 5, live from the Highland Bookshop in Fort William.

These readings will be just



Alan Windram's latest One Button Benny adventure comes out on August 8.

the latest in a whole line-up of cheery, all singing, all dancing story videos Alan has been entertaining children with throughout lockdown, making up for missed events, gigs and roadshows. Hairy Highland cows, woodlands at Kilchrenan, the old harbour at Taynuilt and pretty Crinan Canal have been just some of the backdrops.

Alan said: 'It gave families stuck in flats and cities in lockdown a chance to see a bit of the countryside and have a bit of a laugh when I got attacked by midgies!'

When Covid struck, he made it his mission to read every one of the 18 books Little Doors has published since it started in 2016. This year will see five more

titles added, including One Button Benny and The Giant Catastrophe, illustrated by Chloe Holwill-Hunter, who was talent spotted by Little Door Books while working as a waitress and designing her own Christmas cards.

How Billy Hippo Learned His Colours and Molly's Circus are among the 2020 titles published, pairing up

established children's writers with unknown illustrators 'to give them a leg up into the business,' said Alan, who got a pal from his am dram days, up and coming Hollywood actor Jack Lowden, to put his voice to the audio-telling of the One Button Benny adventures.

Even before One Button Benny and the Giant Catastrophe is out in the UK, it has already been translated into Russian. One Button Benny was voted 2019 Bookbug Picture Book Prize by 17,000 children and was also translated into Russian, as well as Slovakian, Korean, Arabic and last but not least Gaelic.

'To be the chosen favourite by 17,000 children was just incredible and they all wanted to know what happened to Benny next, so there just had to be a sequel,' said Alan.

With the Gaelic version of One Button Benny in mind and lockdown depending, Alan hopes to get to Barra with tales of his little robot

pal in tow before the end of the year after a storm then Covid cancelled two previously planned trips - 'fingers crossed for third time lucky,' he said.

Despite its size, Little Door Books is growing a big presence in the publishing world.

'We've had lots of support from the publishing community and get calls from students looking for intern positions in our office, which is fine if they don't mind sitting in the living room with the cats!

'Everyone assumes we are working in a big glass office in Edinburgh or Glasgow when really we're currently squeezed into a spare bedroom in a wee static caravan in the Highlands. It just shows you can do so much with not much,' said Alan.

Little Doors Books has its own section in Waterstones, Oban and at the Highland Bookshop in Fort William.

For videos, crazy dancing, and lots more, visit [www.littledoorbooks.co.uk](http://www.littledoorbooks.co.uk)

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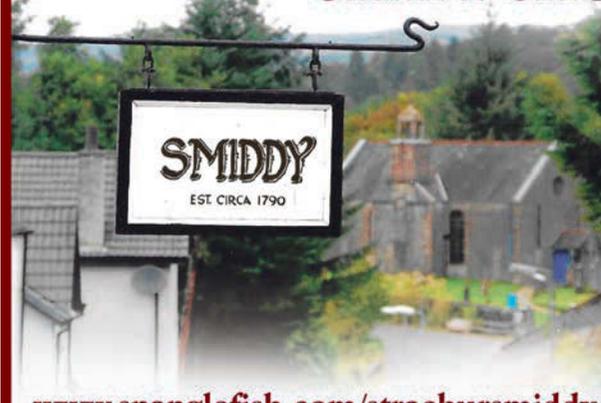


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The Week	8-11am	12-3pm	4-7pm	8-11pm
Monday	Stephen	Bob	Marcus	Rosemary 8-9pm
Tuesday	Stephen 10am	Archie 11-1 then Macky 1-3pm*	Bob	Mer
Wednesday	Karen	Doug	Campbell	Gordon
Thursday	Andy & Sarah	Archie	Stephen	Margo
Friday	Stephen	Allan (the One)	Margo	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

# A sign of peace from arty Aska

by Fiona Scott  
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Inspired by the message of hope throughout the coronavirus pandemic, Mull artist Aska Marzec has created a commemorative painting in order to help residents at Glen Iosal.

Entitled 'Lismore Rainbow – a sign of peace, hope and a promise', half the money raised from the sale of 25 large limited edition Giclée prints of the painting will go towards the creation of an outdoor area that residents can sit and socialise in, keeping in line with government guidelines for social distancing.

'I wanted to dedicated something to our precious key workers, volunteers and every bit of simple human kindness received during the Covid-19,' she told us.

'The residents of Glen Iosal have found it hard not being able to get out and socialise which has had an impact on their health.'



Aska, who is based at the Picture Gallery in Tobermory, with her painting – there are only 25 limited edition Giclée prints available, so be quick!

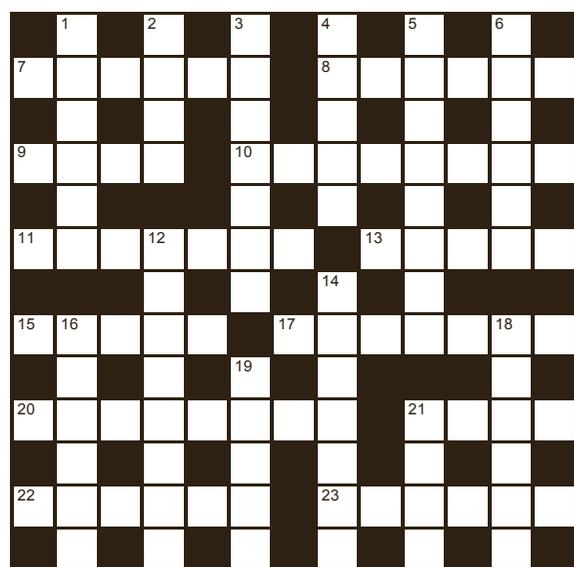
Based at the Picture Gallery in Tobermory, Aska created the painting as a sign of hope and to signify the presence of God her life, as well as a sign of solidarity and community spirit on the island.

'I am very blessed to live on one of the islands. The weather

is very changeable with plenty of opportunities to spot a rainbow and paint it in a very dramatic seascape landscape,' she added. 'Recent weeks also brought to attention very important issues of equality for everyone. The rainbow is a sign of peace and I think

everyone should embrace it.' The prints are on sale now via Aska's Scottish Island Art website, [www.scottishislandart.com](http://www.scottishislandart.com), and will be available until August 20. There are only 25 large limited edition prints available at the cost of £20 (usual price £55).

## Crossword



**Across**

- 7 View (6)
- 8 Frankfurter (6)
- 9 Thus (4)
- 10 Plain as day (5-3)
- 11 Collected works (7)
- 13 Type of alcohol (5)
- 15 Rigid (5)
- 17 Disprove (7)
- 20 Add to (8)
- 21 Halt (4)
- 22 Take a nap.... (6)
- 23 ....asleep (6)

**Down**

- 1 Secluded building used for religion (6)
- 2 Champion (4)
- 3 Arrogant (5-2)
- 4 Range (5)
- 5 Waste (8)
- 6 Destitution (6)
- 12 Second rate (8)
- 14 Flourish at the end of an aria (7)
- 16 Letter (6)
- 18 Old walker (6)
- 19 Vacillate (5)
- 21 Smooth (4)

### LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



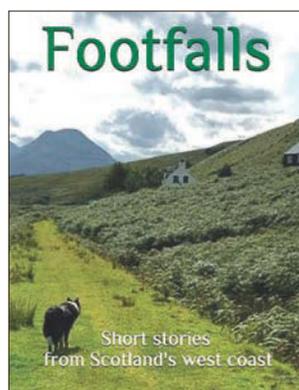
## Writers follow the path to short story success

Oban and Lorn Writers' Collective are inviting readers on a west coast inspired journey with their latest book, *Footfalls*, writes Fiona Scott.

*Footfalls* features a collection of 14 short stories written by 12 authors living in Argyll, who in pre-Covid times have been meeting up at The Rockfield Centre every month to share ideas and support each other's prose and poetry.

The book is already available to buy on Amazon and on Kindle, and the collective hopes it will soon be on the shelves at Waterstones.

Any profits made from the venture, which follows the theme of West Coast-inspired pathways, will go to The Rockfield Centre charity, says



**It is hoped the book will soon be available at Waterstones**

Irena Chapman, who has two pieces of work in it, a poem *The Road Home* and a foraging tale called *Hedgehog Highway*.

In Jane Wilkinson's *Ring in Time*, she visits Deirdre's Shieling, Argyll's very own love memorial rival to the Taj Mahal, cleverly telling a story within a story.

Alex Breck's eerie and almost cautionary tale of greed, heartbreak and selfishness will spook any reader.

'This collection was inspired by one of our sessions based around the theme of pathways, where we felt we would like to expand the theme beyond our usual short pieces into short stories.

'Ideal for holiday reading – or in the current climate, maybe post-lockdown escapism to other people's worlds! We feel many of the themes will strike chords with readers

on varied levels,' she added. The generous collection offers up genres spanning poetry to romance, peaks and troughs of life experience to edge-of-your-seat thriller.

Although having stories published is new and novel to some of *Footfalls*'s writers, others have already seen their work in book form.

One of the collective's previous publications was *Sea Passages*, a book of short stories in 2018.

'Many of us have benefited from writing courses at Argyll College, and the group was initially formed by members of one of the college courses deciding to meet and continue to support each other,' said Mrs Chapman.

## Wildfire Sessions journey on to new EP

Argyll/Glasgow based collaborative rock/pop project Wildfire Sessions have released a new three track EP which they hope will be 'a journey worth taking' for their listeners.

By Road, Sky or Sea is a distinctive sounding entry into the genre, from summery sounding pop songs to a dark waltz, with percussion provided by Stephen Buggy.

The group itself consists of musicians, lyricists and audio engineers. Whilst various session artists join them for

individual projects, the core members and main roles are: Michael McConville (Strings), Donny Munro (Strings), Martin Skinner (Vocals, Lyrics, Production), Alex Baillie (Strings) and Colin Skinner (Vocals, Lyrics).

What started out as jam sessions providing creative distraction from other projects developed into a project of its own; the combined talents worked well together, emerging material was interesting and varied and so they

hit the studio.

From this platform they began writing eclectically, both for themselves and as contributing artists to film projects. This has led to an ongoing relationship with Valentina Galdi, of the Gladiator Film Company, based in Italy.

Here in Scotland, they have been regular contributors to Heat FM and Celtic FM and were placed in the new Scottish Global Charts with *Don't Fix*. They can also be regularly found around the village of

Dalavich, the namesake for one of their first releases, where they have played the local festival 'Loch, Stock, Rock and Row'.

Prior to releasing their own album, the songwriting talents of individual members have been given recognition by The UK Songwriting Contest receiving finalist, semi-finalist and commended entry certificates for work submitted and Colin is now a lifetime member of the International Songwriters Association.

# Robert in lockdown!

**ROBERT ROBERTSON**

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



A staycation on the Isle of Arran, feels pretty close to perfection for Robert.



It was a nice (though nerve-wracking) feeling on Saturday evening to know that the two-hour television programme we've been working on with BBC Alba for the last few weeks was out in the public domain.

Thankfully my golf swing (which made a cameo appearance) didn't come in for too much criticism!

Looking back at the show, a highlight for me was collaborating with Tamzene on one of our songs called Shadow to the Light. We had recorded in Glasgow and she had recorded remotely in the Highlands, so it genuinely wasn't until the programme was aired on Saturday that I saw the finished product. If you fancy catching the programme, it will be available on BBC iPlayer for the next month or so.

As this is the second week of the Glasgow Fair, I thought I should follow tradition and head 'doon the watter'. The fair's earliest incarnation occurred, believe it or not, as early as 1190 when Bishop Jocelin obtained permission from William the Lion to

hold festivities. I imagine it reached its height when Glasgow and factories would shut on Fair Friday to allow workers and their families to head the Firth of Clyde or the Ayrshire coast - hence: 'doon the watter'.

Having fallen out of fashion as foreign holidays became cheaper, I wonder if future years will see a revival of the tradition as people favour staycations in the aftermath of Covid-19.

My staycation destination of choice was the Isle of Arran. The reason for my escape from the city was primarily to get away from the multiple nests of seagulls who have set up shop directly opposite my bedroom window in Partick. For the last few weeks, I have been wakened by their squawking every morning about 6am. Not to mention the mess they've been making on both my windows and my car!

It was a great relief, therefore, to arrive in my accommodation in Arran, lie back on the bed, and relax without the ear-piercing racket of the

gulls. I remembered that I had quickly thrown a book into my case on my way out the flat, so I lifted it out onto the bed to begin reading in the welcomed peace and quiet. My heart sank as I revealed the book: Jonathan Livingston Seagull! A big photo of a seagull was emblazoned across the front cover. I just can't get away from them, I thought.

In seriousness, though, I recommend this book to anyone who hasn't read it. It sold an incredible one million copies within two years of its publication in 1970. It's over-arching message is: "our purpose in living is to find perfection and show it forth".

If life is indeed a search for perfection, then, as I stood on a sun-kissed hill on the west of the island, looking over to the Mull of Kintyre, the paps of Jura in the distance, and the sea shimmering, I felt I must have been getting pretty close!

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# M'ALBA

## MY ALBA

**DIARDAOIN 30 An t-Iuchar**  
**THURSDAY 30 July**

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19:00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt)  
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)  
19:55 Binneas – Na Trads (Malinky) (rpt)  
20:00 An Là – News  
20:30 Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne Lundon (rpt)  
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Eilean Chanaigh (Summer on Canna)  
22:00 ÙR/NEW: Solas – Margaret Fay Shaw of Canna  
22:30 ÙR/NEW: Eileanan na Banrighe/ Islands of the Queen  
23:20 Gaol @ Gael (rpt)  
23:50 Dhan Uisge (Sanna)

**DIHAOINE 31 An t-Iuchar**  
**FRIDAY 31 July**

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
18:35 Machair (rpt)  
19:00 An Là – News  
19:25 Binneas-Na Trads-Malinky (rpt)  
19:30 Prosaig (rpt)  
20:00 Ceol Aig a' Chaisdeal/ Fiddle Music (rpt)  
20:25 An Lot – An Glasadh (rpt)  
20:55 Fraochy Bay (rpt)  
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Ceol Duthchasach/ Ken Burn's Country Music  
22:50 Dhan Uisge (Sanna) (rpt)  
23:00 Skippinish aig Barrowland (rpt)

**DISATHAIRNE 1 An Lunastal**  
**SATURDAY 1 August**

16:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
17:45 An Là – News  
18:00 ÙR/NEW: Belladrum 2020: Air Chuairt  
19:00 Colin Macleod – When it Kicks in (rpt)  
20:00 Machair (rpt)  
20:25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)  
20:30 Puirt-adhair (highland airports) (rpt)  
21:00 ÙR/NEW: Belladrum 2020: Air Chuairt

23:00 ÙR/NEW: Scottish Premiership – Dundee United v St Johnstone  
00:45 Port – Druthag Bheag Eile (rpt)

**DIDÒMHNAICH 2 An Lunastal**  
**SUNDAY 2 August**

16:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
18:15 An Là – News  
18:30 Binneas na Trads (rpt)  
18:40 Binneas na Trads (rpt)  
18:45 Sgeul Seirbheis (rpt)  
19:00 Obair nan Ainglean (rpt)  
19:30 Alleluia! (rpt)  
20:00 Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne Lundon (rpt)  
20:30 Na Tìrìstich (from Tìree with Love) (rpt)  
21:00 Bannan (rpt)  
21:30 Bannan (rpt)  
22:00 Belladrum 2020: Air Chuairt (rpt)

**DILUAIN 3 An Lunastal**  
**MONDAY 3 August**

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19:00 Tìr is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt)  
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)  
19:55 Binneas – Na Trads (Dosca) (rpt)  
20:00 An Là – News  
20:30 ÙR/NEW: An Lot – An Glasadh  
21:00 An Turas Chun Ear: Manus's Daibhidh (The Trip East: Magnus & Daibhidh) – Trusadh (rpt)  
22:00 Bannan (rpt)  
22:30 Eilean Chanaigh (Summer on Canna) (rpt)  
23:30 Gaol @ Gael (rpt)

**DIMÀIRT 4 An Lunastal**  
**TUESDAY 4 August**

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19:00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt)  
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)  
19:55 Binneas-Na Trads (Phil & Aly) (rpt)  
20:00 An Là – News

20:30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo (rpt)  
21:00 Baby Killer? Sgeulachd Jessing King (rpt)  
22:00 An Turas Chun Ear: Manus's Daibhidh (The Trip East: Magnus & Daibhidh) – Trusadh (rpt)  
23:00 Ceol Aig a' Chaisdeal (rpt)  
23:20 Dhan Uisge (sanna) (rpt)  
23:30 Alleluia! (rpt)

**DIACIADAIN 5 An Lunastal**  
**WEDNESDAY 5 August**

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19:00 Tìr is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt)  
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)  
19:55 Binneas na Trads (Dosca) (rpt)  
20:00 An Là – News  
20:30 Puirt-adhair (Highland Airports) (rpt)  
21:00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach/Sheepdogs (rpt)  
22:00 Bannan (rpt)  
22:30 Tradfest (rpt)  
23:00 Solas – Margaret Fay Shaw of Canna (rpt)  
23:30 Gaol @ Gael (rpt)

**DIARDAOIN 6 An Lunastal**  
**THURSDAY 6 August**

17:00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming  
19:00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt)  
19:30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)  
19:55 Binneas – Na Trads – (Phil & Aly) (rpt)  
20:00 An Là – News  
20:30 Wild Atlantic Way, with Anne Lundon (rpt)  
21:00 Elena Baltacha (rpt)  
22:15 Port – Druthag Bheag Eile (rpt)  
22:30 ÙR/NEW: Eileanan na Banrighe/ Islands of the Queen  
23:25 Eadar Chluich (rpt)  
23:30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)

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We are publishing this information in association with BID4OBAN and ObanFM, supported by the Scotland's Towns Partnership who, along with the Oban Times, are dedicated in 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.

Along with our wonderful NHS staff and carers, our local food, fuel, news platforms and home supply businesses are our community champions!



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**Oban Business Improvement District**  
[www.bid4oban.co.uk](http://www.bid4oban.co.uk)



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*Information correct at time of going to press. This page will run in the Oban Times every week for as long as necessary - printed information will be updated weekly but business are advised to get in touch if you have any questions or to add/change listings Tel: 01631 568000.*

# Campaign for shoppers to 'Love Local'



Scotland's Towns Partnership has launched a 'Love Local' campaign encouraging everyone to support businesses at the heart of their community, writes Ellis Butcher.

The campaign seeks to remind all those living in Scotland, including Oban, that town centres are not just a series of buildings and pavements – they are made up of people – and harness the compassion and solidarity that was shown by communities during the coronavirus outbreak to help fuel the recovery.

The campaign follows publication of new polling figures which showed two thirds of Scottish residents intended to shop locally once high streets reopened and that the success of town centres depends on local support.

Businesses across Scotland have been working with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), local councils and others to put in place arrangements so people can shop locally, but safely.

The Love Local campaign has received the support of Andy Spence, chief executive of Bid4Oban, who urged people in the town to get behind it.

He said Scotland's Towns Partnership had helped the BID group with a number of initiatives during lockdown and now, as Oban emerges from it.

A new initiative to help with the town's recovery are Love Oban vouchers – designed to be bought as a gift, such as birthday or wedding presents. The aim is to encourage people to buy a voucher and then give it as a gift which can be redeemed in up to 80 participating local businesses.

Starting at £10, the vouchers are available to purchase from Button Nose Boutique, Alba Artshop, The Sports Shop, Intersport, Oban Photographic Centre, the BID4Oban office and Etive Restaurant.

With help from the Scotland Towns Partnership, BID4Oban were able to advertise those businesses which had managed to keep operating during lockdown and help keep vital custom coming their way.

The 'Open For Business' section featured both on the website of The Oban Times and every week in the paper – being seen by a regular audience of thousands of people. It helped promote the

local economy, and spotlight success stories of those locally who had nimbly adapted to the crisis and kept going.

Communities Secretary Aileen Campbell MSP also supports the new campaign.

She commented: 'It is now more vitally important than ever to consider shopping, eating and drinking locally as we all have a role to play in Scotland's economic recovery.'

Phil Prentice, chief officer of Scotland's Towns Partnership, said:

'The impact of coronavirus has hit our town centres and local businesses hard. Now is the time for us all to support them to get back on their feet in a way which recognises that we still need to stay safe and follow the public health guidelines.'

'By thinking local first, we can help Scotland's economic recovery from its grassroots, supporting our town centres within all of the public safety guidelines.' The impact we can have by doing this should not be underestimated.'

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**Dairy farmers urged to speak up**

Dairy farmers in Argyll and Bute are being urged by a local politician to take part in a consultation on ending unfair practices in the sector. The consultation is being led by the UK Government and is designed to create a fairer marketplace for producers.

Highlands and Islands MSP Donald Cameron said: 'We badly need a scheme which better supports our dairy farmers, and recognises the contribution they make to the rural economy.'

'Argyll and Bute retains a significant number of producers, especially in Kintyre and on Bute itself, and I am very keen that they should have the chance to influence the future of their industry by taking part in the consultation.'

'The need to address the unequal bargaining relationship with processors and retailers is urgent if we are to retain our dairy industry, a challenge which has been compounded by the failure of the SNP Government to introduce a dairy hardship fund during the pandemic, as has been done in England and Wales.'

**Supporting green innovation in farming**

Projects to enable farmers, crofters, and land managers to create improved opportunities for nature, adapt to climate change and benefit from new organic farming materials will share £170,000 of investment.

Awarded through the Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund (KTIF), the new funding will drive forward innovation in farming and food production and help agricultural businesses contribute to the green economic recovery by farming more sustainably.

Announcing the funding, Rural Affairs Minister Mairi Gougeon said: 'It is important that we emerge from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic with a green economic recovery.'

'Projects like these help farmers and crofters in rural and island communities to explore new ways of protecting and restoring biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems.'

'With this latest funding the



It is hoped the lapwing will thrive on Shetland. Photograph: Lorne Gill

KTIF has now invested around £6 million in projects that will help us to grow a sustainable, vibrant and innovative rural economy.'

Biodiversity Monitoring in Shetland, one of the projects to receive investment, will see land managers collect information about wading birds on their land and produce best-practice guidance for farmers.

Commenting on the pro-

ject, RSPB Conservation in Shetland Advisor Nathalie Pion said: 'Waders depend on how farmers and crofters manage their land. Farmers' knowledge and skills are key to their protection.'

Colleen McCulloch of Soil Association Scotland, which is facilitating the Farming for Biodiversity project, said: 'Soil Association Scotland's Farming for Biodiversity project will al-

low us to develop a framework to benchmark the ways grazing livestock can rebuild natural capital as well as produce nutritious food.'

Debs Roberts of the Scottish Organic Producers Association, which is facilitating a project examining the potential uses of basic silicate rocks to capture CO<sub>2</sub>, said: 'This exciting project is an excellent example of grassroots farming grasping the opportunity to work with cross-sector partners in the academic sector.'

The three projects awarded new funding are:

■ Biodiversity Monitoring in Shetland – Facilitated by Shetland Livestock Marketing Group (SLMG) – £47,320.

This pilot project will give land managers an opportunity to learn about the birds and what they need to successfully nest and raise chicks. The participants will collect information which will be used to measure the quality of fields for waders,

and produce best-practice guidance to share management methods with the Shetland agricultural community.

■ Basic silicate rock by-product: a new agricultural input that captures CO<sub>2</sub> – facilitated by Scottish Organic Producers Association (SOPA) – £68,246.

Basic silicate rocks have recently gained product approval for use in organic farming as soil input. This project aims to collect data, present the innovative features and encourage uptake.

■ Farming for Biodiversity – Facilitated by Soil Association (Scotland) – £57,744.

This project will focus on practices to increase biodiverse habitat within enclosed farmland, enabling farmers, crofters, and land managers to adapt to climate change, help restore biodiversity and ecosystem health, meet growing demand for nature and climate-friendly food and be a key driver for Scotland's green recovery.

**Agriculture must be front and centre of new land use partnership**

NFU Scotland has urged the importance of agriculture to be recognised in plans for land management in Scotland.

The call comes after the Scottish Land Commission (SLC) published an interim report on Regional Land Use Partnerships (RLUPs) – available at: [landcommission.gov.scot/news-events/news-blog/regional-land-use-partnerships-interim-report](http://landcommission.gov.scot/news-events/news-blog/regional-land-use-partnerships-interim-report)

There is a strong level of ambition among Scottish Government and stakeholders for the establishment of RLUPs to be part of a wider step change that looks at future land use in Scotland and public interest in that.

SLC will produce a final report for Scottish Ministers in September. NFUS will consult again with its members



before making a further submission to the Commission. NFU Scotland President

Andrew McCornick said: 'Regional Land Use Partnerships present a significant opportunity to be more strategic about land use in Scotland. That said, their creation must recognise that agriculture, in its many forms, is the primary land use and practical farmers must be formally represented on these partnerships. Only then can farmers be assured that the way they run their businesses and manage the land will be a key part of the discussions.'

'The principle that RLUPs

must empower decision making at a local level is to be welcomed, as is the potential for those local partnerships to draw in private finance to drive changes with investment around land use.

'We would have concerns if RLUPs were to be drawn around local authorities as this approach makes no recognition of the wide variation of land type that can be found in a local authority area. RLUPs should be at scale that reflects land use, rather than administrative boundaries, to better target action and funding to secure the many benefits we want from Scotland's land assets.'

'When it comes to priorities, there is also the huge challenge of balancing local aspirations with national targets within any RLUP.'

**Time to discuss agri-environment future measures is right now**

Future agri-environment measures must enable farmers and crofters to play their key role in managing a significant majority of Scotland's environmental interests, writes

Environment and Land Use committee chairman, Angus MacFadyen, a hill farmer from near Oban.

Earlier this year, Scottish Government Ministers decided there would not be a normal AECS application round in 2020. Instead, one-year extensions would be available for those whose AECS contracts expire in 2020 to ensure continued support for vital land management required to protect biodiversity and tackle climate change.



While this may be pragmatic due to concerns about issuing a five-year contract without certainty of budgets beyond 2020, it is unacceptable that there is no defined commitment

for farmers and crofters to undertake biodiversity measures, water quality improvements, flooding mitigation, organic conversion, public access provision, and the like.

AECS is intended to promote land management practices which protect and enhance Scotland's natural heritage, improve water quality, manage flood risk and mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as improving public access and preserving historic sites. The funding available should

enable farmers and crofters to play their key role in managing a significant majority of Scotland's environmental interests – including valued species and habitats.

It is vital that piloting in the 2021 to 2024 period fully develop a bottom-up approach to build payments around desired outcomes rather than out-dated calculations of income foregone or additional costs. Prescriptive measures, compliance complexity and static payment calculations fail to foster participation or desired outcomes.

A major challenge is to ensure that there is no gap in support for agri-environment activity and that farmers and crofters have the confidence in future schemes to continue to come forward with applications.

## Around the markets

United Auctions Stirling, July 23, sold 6072 prime sheep comprising of 4616 new season lambs selling to average 210.56p also 87 prime hogs averaged 147.41ppk and 1369 ewes and rams.

### New Season Lambs (4616)

– Easterton (BTex) £115.00; Harviesmailing (BTex) £112.50; Laighwood & West Lethans (Tex) £115.00; Bellcraig (Suf) £101.00; Little Gairdrum (Suf) £100.00; Balmyre (Cha) £100.00; Shanry (Cha) £94.00; Nether Falla (Hamp) £89.50; Cretlevane (Cross) £94.00; Gaisland (Cross) £88.00; Ochiltree (Chev/Mule) £94.00; Merkins (BF) £89.50; Coxhill (Mule) £89.00; Leyden (Mule) £87.00.

### New Season Lambs (4616) –

Harviesmailing (BTex) 247.00ppk; Easterton (BTex) 345.00ppk; Easterton (Tex) 238.00ppk; Hardiston (Tex) 236.00ppk; Leyden (Suf) 223.00ppk; Bangour & Hunterston (Suf) 222.00ppk; Bangour (Cha) 218.00ppk; Balmyre (Cha) 216.00ppk; Wester Arngibbon (Cross) 212.00ppk; South Ardattie (Cross) 211.00ppk; South Ardattie (Mule) 211.00ppk; Shiels (Mule) 206.00ppk; Duncanziemere (Chev/Mule) 211.00ppk; Nether Falla (Hamp) 195.00ppk; Merkins (BF) 193.00ppk.

**Ewes** (1369) – Elmscleugh (Tex) £148.00; Drimsynie (Tex) £142.00; Woodhead of Aberdalgie (TexX) £136.00; Wester Whitefield (Cont) £125.00; Blinkbonny (Cont) £122.00; Berydyke (BTex) £104.00 & £99.00; Overton (BFL) £96.00; Westhall (BFL) £95.00; Shanry (Chev/Mule) £97.00; West Mains (Chev/Mule) £92.50; Abbey St

Bathens (Suf) £95.50; Halkerston (SuffX) £81.00; Sauchrie Mains (Mule) £94.00; Woodhead of Mailer (Mule) £86.00; Whitesykes (Chev) £88.00; Coxhill (Chev) £85.00; Wester Mye & Sauchenhall (Cross) £85.00; Parks of Keillor (BF) £80.00; Bogside (BF) £78.00; Elmscleugh (BF) £76.50.

**Tups** – Elmscleugh (Tex) £121.00; Bogburn (Tex) £104.00; Groan (BTex) £89.00; Lochend (Hamp) £84.00; Bogside (BFL) £80.00; Drumnessie (BF) £67.00.

**Caledonian Marts Ltd** sold 118 Cattle comprising of 76 Bullocks, Heifers & Young Bulls, 42 OTM Cattle.

With a planer show of Bullocks they averaged 648kg at 219ppkg. Heifers 592kg at 229ppkg Beef Bulls 680kg at 195ppkg Dairy Bred Bulls 595kg at 169ppkg (all over 16months)

**Prime Bullocks** sold to 252ppkg for a Limousin from J M Smith, North Boig, New Cumnock purchased by G Kirk, Butchers, Denny and to £1552 on two occasion for Limousins from A A & J Brand, Nether Myres, Auchtermuchty and F C Eccles, Bruckley, St Andrews purchased by W Pinkerton and J Gilvear & Sons respectively.

**Prime Heifers** sold to 248ppkg on two occasions from M Orr, Penston, Macmerry and W Dandie, Learielaw, Broxburn purchased by J Gilvear & Sons and D Campbell, Butchers, Callander and to £1566 for a Limousin from Monkey Puzzle Limousins, Melrose purchased by H A Black, Butchers, Stirling.

**Bulls** (under 30 months) sold to 212ppkg for a Limousin from Monkey Puzzle Limousins, Melrose and to £1509 for a Limousin again from Monkey Puzzle Limousins, Melrose.

### Other Leading Prices

Bullocks per kg 245p Penston 242p Easter Ochtermuthill & Penston 240p Easter Ochtermuthill 238p North Boig, Nether Myres & Bruckley

232p Penston & Meadowend 225p Newbigging & Bruckley **Heifers** per kg 245p Nethermyres, North Boig, Easter Buchlyvie & Learielaw 242p Carriston, Easter Ochtermuthill & Nethermyres 240p Carriston 238p Learielaw, Easter Buchlyvie & Easter Ochtermuthill 235p Easter Buchlyvie & Learielaw 232p Meadowend 230p Easter Buchlyvie

**Bullocks per head** £1547 North Boig £1529 Easter Ochtermuthill £1509 Newbigging of Ceres £1494 Nethermyres £1489 Penston (twice) £1485 Bruckley £1484 Meadowend **Heifers per head** £1545 Easter Buchlyvie £1542 Penston £1509 North Boig £1495 & £1494 Easter Buchlyvie £1443 Meadowend £1431 Nether Longford

Also forward were 42 OTM Cattle. OTM's averaged 134ppkg selling to 178ppkg for a Limousin from

W Dandie & Sons, Learielaw, Broxburn and to £1350 for the same beast.

Dairy Cows averaged 106ppkg selling to 121ppkg from J Baxter, Gibleston, Bridge of Weir and to £870 from the same home and Ross Farms, Wester Middleton, Gorebridge.

### Other Leading Prices

Beef OTMs per kg 172p Nether Longford 168p West Mains 164p Glenside 151p Hawkhill Beef OTMs per head £1160 West Mains £1130 Hawkhill £1060 Nether Longford £1000 Easter Dullatur Dairy Cows per head £800 Gibleston & West Backs £740 West Backs £720 Gibleston

**United Auctions, Stirling, July 22** – sold 445 store cattle and 79 out of spec cattle, cast cows and bulls also 53 pedigree Poll Dorset and Dorset Horn sheep and 200 breeding sheep

**Bullocks** (201) – averaged 227.29p to 252.80p per kg for a 360kg CHX from Polquhairn, and to £1430 for a 688kg SimX from Putechan.

**Dairy Bullocks** (24) – averaged 180.43p to 213.40p per kg for a 396kg MRIX from Caddell, and to £1010 for a 608kg MOX from Nethertown.

**Heifers** (220) – averaged 217.22p to 247.20p per kg for a 441kg LimX from Gateside, and to £1210 for a 592kg CHX from Pardovan.

**Beef Cows and Bulls** (50) – averaged 151.68p to 196.90p per kg for a AAX from Meikle Camoquhill, and to £1650 for a Lim from Over Finlary.

**Dairy Cows** (18) – averaged 128.43p to 187.50p per kg for a MOX from Meikle Camoquhill, and to £1170 for a MOX from Meikle Camoquhill.

Out of Spec Cattle (11) – averaged 175.73p to 205.00p per kg for a BSX from Cairnie, and to £1690 for a BSX from Cairnie. **Bullocks:** 301-350kgs- Gateside £800, 250.80p; 351-400kgs- Parkhouse £930, Polquhairn 252.80p; 401-450kgs- Crofthead £1080, 252.30p; 451-500kgs- Crofthead £1165, Gateside 246.10p; 501-551kgs- Crofthead £1200, 237.20p; 552-601kgs- Crofthead £1270, 230.10p; 602-651kgs- Shawbraes £1330, 218.80p; 652-701kgs- Putechan £1430, 207.80p.

**Heifers:** 251-300kgs- Grassfield £580, 226.60p; 301-350kgs- Polquhairn £805, 242.50p; 351-400kgs- Parkhouses £960, 246.20p; 401-450kgs- Mill of Plunkton £1100, Gateside 247.20p; 451-500kgs- Mill of Plunkton £1150, 238.60p; 501-551kgs- Nethertown £1120, Cattlehill 220.50p; 552-601kgs- Pardovan £1300, 221.80p.

### OTM Cows:

£ per head- Over Finlary (Lim) £1650; Todpark (CH) £1450; Kaeside (Sal) £1350; Newpark (AA) £1350; Meikle Camoquhill (MO) £1170.00; Norrieston (HF) £1130.00; Netherton (Sim) £1070; Stanley (BB) £1050; Wemyss (BS) £1010.

PPK- Meikle Camoquhill (AA) 196.60ppk; Meikle Camoquhill (MO) 187.50ppk; Mains of Callander (Sal) 182.50ppk; Over Finlary (Lim) 177.80ppk; Todpark (CH) 162.90ppk; Shottrigg (Sim) 150.90ppk; Stanley (BB) 147.90ppk; Wemyss (BS) 140.10ppk.

### OTM Bulls:

£ per head- West Park (Lim) £1570; Kaeside (CH) £1470; Arnhall (Sim) £1410; Newpark (AA) £1250. PPK- Longloch (CH) 183.20ppk; Newhouse of Glamis (Lim) 180.00ppk; Arnhall (Sim) 136.40ppk; Newpark (AA) 125.00ppk.

### Out of Spec Cattle:

£ per head- Cairnie (Lim) £1690; Cairnie (BS) £1390; West Park (Lim) £1250; Craigmaddie Muir (AA) £1210 PPK- Longloch (Sim) 205.10ppk; Cairnie (BS) 205.00ppk; Craigmaddie Muir (AA) 185.00ppk; West Park (Lim) 186.60ppk.

United Auctions sold 53 pedigree Poll Dorset and Dorset Horn sheep and their annual sale. Topping the sale at 1100gns was a tremendous ram lamb, Mainview Chieftain from Mr & Mrs A Kennedy, Mainview, Ballymena, by the Ballytaggart After Shock stock ram and sold to M/s Baxter, Castleroddy Road, Omagh. Following in the female line was an outstanding ewe lamb from the same home. Mainview C1161 by the homebred sire Mainview Armani, Selling at 700gns to M/s Moorhead, Lisnaght, Ballymoney, Co Antrim.

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## CROSS CODE

24	13	21	2	2	22	18	6		14	12	18	10
13			21		21		16		25			22
23		22	9	22	2	1	22	16	23	8		21
16	22	5	16		18		2		17	18	12	16
		17		7	15	23	9	1		21		13
19	21	18	13	22		2		18	12	6	22	2
21		12		17	25	12	16	12		6		22
8	21	7	22	16		9		11	23	2	7	6
8		23		25	21	6	16	22		12		
23	12	9	6		7		12		4	12	11	6
9		1	22	2	20	21	9	23	13	20		23
22			9		23		1		9			26
6	17	23	16		16	2	21	8	3	21	1	22

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	R				S						O	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Each number in our 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.

## MAGIC SQUARE

### I KISSED – I'M MARRIED!

Using all 16 letters of the phrase above, form four words each of four letters which will fit in the grid to form a magic square in which the words can be read both horizontally and vertically.


# Quiz Challenge

- In May 1997, John Prescott was appointed to which Cabinet office?
- The name of the dinosaur triceratops literally means what?
- What event is celebrated in France as a national holiday on July 14?
- The TV cartoon family The Simpsons live in which town?
- Which Asian island is home to a race of people known as Dyaks?
- How often is the Cricket World Cup held?
- Which North African country is the closest in distance to Italy?
- "When I find myself in times of trouble" is the opening lyric of which Beatles song?
- Actress Charlize Theron was born in which country?
- Which style of arched window takes its name from a surgical instrument?

## NONAGRAM

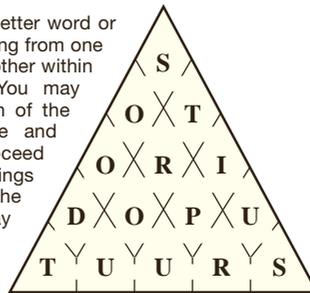
A	I	M
C	P	U
N	I	L

How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Nonagram? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used only once. At least one word using all nine letters can be found.

**Guidelines:** 15 Good; 18 Very Good; 21 Excellent. Any word found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Tenth Edition) is eligible with the following exceptions: proper nouns; plural nouns, pronouns and possessives; third person singular verbs; hyphenated words; contractions and abbreviations; vulgar slang words; variant spellings of the same word (where another variant is also eligible).

## WORD PYRAMID

Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within the pyramid. You may only enter each of the chambers once and may only proceed through openings in the walls. The first letter may appear in any chamber.



## FIVE ALIVE

LH	OU	UR	GS	YE
AO		NI		IN
TR	UE	FV	UT	ES
EV		EA		LU
LA	IO	DL	EG	DE

Here are two miniature five-square crosswords using the same grid – but the letters have been mixed up. You have to work out which letters belong to which crossword.

## CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

1		2		3		4		5		6		
7												
				8								
9												
					10				11		12	
13												
					14				15			
									16			
17	18		19		20							
									21			
22												
24												

### ACROSS

- Look out for high tar content! (5-4)
- Girl returned the bad ball (5)
- Praiseworthy double turn by a politician (9)
- Old boat upended by gangster in settlement (5)
- Footballer, one prepared to use a brush perhaps (7)
- Grade for many a girl (5)
- Colloquially speaking, it isn't an infection (5)
- Such a jewel has not been reduced in price (5)
- Cry for donkey kept at festive occasion (7)
- Loafer left in dire trouble (5)
- Weak and unsupported at the back (9)
- Before one I had to return the fool (5)
- Replace a nice load in ancient land (9)

### DOWN

- Opener going round in circles (9)
- High spots of an Asian tour, no doubt (9)
- Musician in small room is first trumpet (7)
- Her husband is late (5)
- Inert compound used in gunpowder (5)
- Supply free verse (5)
- Shed light (5)
- China April once smashed (9)
- About to say again and again (9)
- A unit is exchanged in this country (7)
- First of a series of letters from Athens (5)
- Look around poles in order to understand (5)
- White House up north (5)

## QUICK CROSSWORD

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
9									10			
14												
17	18											
23												
28												
30												

### ACROSS

- Over-confident (8)
- Ring (4)
- Gap filler (7)
- Panache (5)
- Protection (5)
- Pardonable (6)
- Vertical (5)
- Recreational area (4)
- Raced (3)
- Overtake (4)
- Blood ingredient (5)
- Shun (6)
- Drench (5)
- Throng (5)
- Oblivious (7)
- Melody (4)
- Respectful (8)
- Price (4)
- Packing case (5)
- Assist (anag.) (6)
- Ceremony (4)
- Wind instrument (7)
- Immobilise (8)
- Propose (5)
- Mouselike animal (5)
- Planet (5)
- Short-arm blow (8)
- Listening organ (3)
- American mammal (7)
- Sordid (5)
- Confidence (6)
- Shovel (5)
- Solid square (4)
- Warmth (4)

## SUDOKU

Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box. Hard

4	6		3			9	1	
		8	9	1		4	7	
		7			8	3		
		9	8		6			
8	7							5
			2		4	7	8	
2	8		4				3	7
		3			1			
		4	5				6	1

		2				1		
	7							5
	8	6						9
		3			8			2
		5		3				8
	2				9			
4								9
3			9	7	5			4
								3

## EQUALISER

7	9
10 ○	1 ○
1	1
8 ○	1 ○
3	1

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same. Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

This puzzle page is supplied by Sirius Media Services. To try our new puzzle, Zygolex, go to [www.zygolex.com](http://www.zygolex.com)

**QUIZ CHALLENGE:** 1 Deputy Prime Minister; 2 Three-horned face; 3 The storming of the Bastille during the French Revolution; 4 Springfield; 5 Borneo; 6 Every four years; 7 Tunisia; 8 Let it Be; 9 South Africa; 10 Lancelot.

**CROSS CODE:** 1 G; 2 R; 3 K; 4 J; 5 X; 6 S; 7 D; 8 C; 9 N; 10 F; 11 B; 12 O; 13 U; 14 W; 15 Y; 16 T; 17 P; 18 L; 19 V; 20 M; 21 A; 22 E; 23 I; 24 Q; 25 H; 26 Z

**NONAGRAM:** DOWN - 1 Cost; 2 Crater; 3 Stasis; 4 Rite; 5 Ocarina; 7 Paralyse; 8 Reverse; 9 Spineless; 23 Idiot; 24 Caladonia; 25 Spontani.

**WORD PYRAMID:** DOWN - 1 Corkscrew; 2 Himalayas; 3 Cellist; 4 Widow; 5 Nitre; 6 Ampul; camp; caplin; clamp; clasp; clip; clump; imp; lamp; limp; lipa; lump; lupin; MUNNIFICENT; nipa; pal; palm; pat; paric; picat; pila; plain; plan; plica; plum; pua; pull; puma; puna; uncap.

**CRYPTIC CROSSWORD:** DOWN - 1 Larva; 2 House; 3 Tuffs; 4 Lodge; 5 Rival; 6 Yield; 7 Lurgy; 8 Revue; 9 Allied.

**MAGIC SQUARE:** 19 Sense; 20 Iqic.

**EQUALISER:** amidi; mire; ins.

**QUICK CROSSWORD:** 19 Sense; 20 Iqic.

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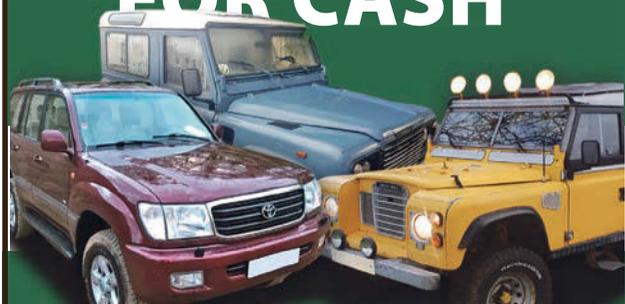


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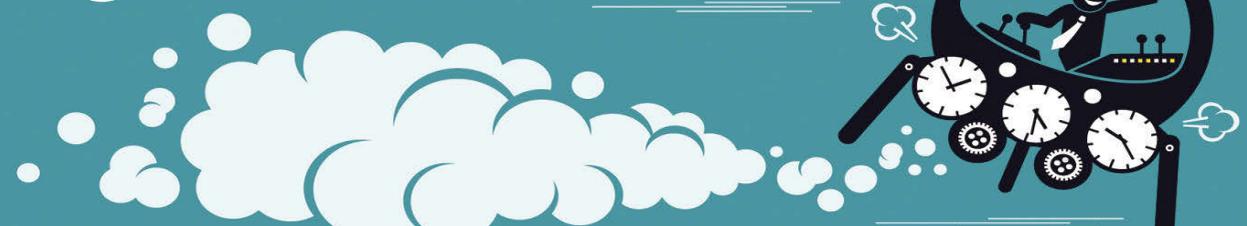
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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### FIRST REG OF A CROFT

Matthew & Sofie Corns have registered their croft, Ceo Mara Croft, Brolas, Ardchattan & Muckairn on the Crofting Registers held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by April 2nd 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C7027.

### FIRST REG OF A CROFT

Gillian Scanlon has registered their croft, 175 Newton Ardtoe, Ardnamurchan & Sunart on the Crofting Register of Scotland held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 6th December 2020.

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C6907.

[www.highland.gov.uk](http://www.highland.gov.uk)



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

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

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
20/02611/FUL	Land 185M NW Of Carinish Achaphubil, Fort William	Erection of house, garage and ancillary cabin
20/02605/FUL	Residential Accommodation Innseagan Hotel, Achintore Road	Proposed Demolition of Hotel and Erection of 14 No. (2 No. Blocks of 7 no.) Holiday Apartments
20/02617/FUL	8A Blar Mhor Industrial Estate Lochyside	Proposed erection of fish processing plant

Time period for comments is 14 days

ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX  
Email: [eplanning@highland.gov.uk](mailto:eplanning@highland.gov.uk)



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### PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENT

**Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 Town and Country Planning (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020**

Planning application for the north eastern extension to Kilmartin Quarry

Notice is hereby given that a pre-planning application community engagement event is to be held on behalf of Macleod Construction Limited in respect of a proposal for the north eastern extension to the existing Kilmartin sand and gravel quarry comprising circa 4 ha of additional land.

In accordance with Scottish Government's current restrictions on public gatherings on account of Covid19, the event is scheduled to take place online on Wednesday 12th August between the hours of 4pm to 7pm. To access the consultation event please contact Tom Lewis in writing at Johnson Poole & Bloomer, 50 Speirs Wharf, Glasgow, G4 9TH or [enquiries@jpbscotland.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@jpbscotland.co.uk) or by telephone 0141 3311456.

The online consultation event will be attended by the project's lead planning consultant and a representative of the applicant who will be available to answer questions and provide any additional information or clarification as required.

Any persons wishing to make comments to the prospective applicant prior to the formal submission of the planning application to the Argyll and Bute Council may do so by either:

- (1) visiting the website at [www.kilmartinquarry.online](http://www.kilmartinquarry.online);
- (2) contacting Tom Lewis in writing at Johnson Poole & Bloomer, 50 Speirs Wharf, Glasgow, G4 9TH or [enquiries@jpbscotland.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@jpbscotland.co.uk) or by telephone on 0141 3311456. All comments and questions should be submitted no later than Friday 4th September 2020.

Please note, comments made to the prospective applicant do not constitute representations to the Planning Authority. A further opportunity to make representations to the Argyll and Bute Council will be available following formal submission of the planning application.

Further details about the proposals can be found at [www.kilmartinquarry.online](http://www.kilmartinquarry.online) or requested by writing directly to Tom Lewis in writing at Johnson Poole & Bloomer, 50 Speirs Wharf, Glasgow, G4 9TH or [enquiries@jpbscotland.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@jpbscotland.co.uk) or by telephone on 0141 3311456.

## PUBLIC NOTICES



### The Gas (Calculation of Thermal Energy) Regulations 1996

Notice is hereby given that, in pursuance of Regulation 8 of the Gas (Calculation of Thermal Energy) Regulations 1996, the calorific value of natural gas supplied by SGN (formerly known as Scotland Gas Networks) on and after 1 August 2019 shall be set out in the schedule.

#### Schedule

A calorific value of 38.8 megajoules per cubic metre in the Strathclyde region.

Part of the local authority district of: Argyll and Bute.

Dated: 6 August 2020.

By authority of: SGN.

### 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](http://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](mailto: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
20/00711/PP	Amended cable route, revised substations and installation of cable bridge crossing as previously approved under planning permission 19/01894/PP	Land North Of Elleric House Fasnacloch, Appin Argyll And Bute
20/01208/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land South West Of Goirtean Beag, Ceo Mara Croft, Taynuilt Argyll And Bute
20/01200/PPP	Site for the erection of 3 dwellinghouses	Land Opposite Water Treatment Works, School Street, Port Charlotte Isle Of Islay Argyll And Bute

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](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)  
Comhairle Earra - Ghàidheal agus Bhòid



#### Proposed Assignment of a Grazing Share

Mr Graham Campbell is applying to the Crofting Commission for consent to assign the tenancy of the grazing share pertaining to the croft at 1 Carbstobeg, Bracadale to Stuart John MacSween in the Carbstobeg Common Grazings of Bracadale. 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](mailto:info@crofting.gov.scot) within 28 days from the date of this advert.

#### FIRST REG OF A CROFT

Dolina Anderson has registered their croft, 10 Airds Bay, Ardchattan & Muckairn, on the Crofting Register of Scotland held by the Registers of Scotland.

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

Details of the registration can be found at [www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home](http://www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home). The croft registration number is C6997.

**Oban Times**  
PUBLIC NOTICES

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## DEATHS

**DAVIDSON** - Very suddenly in Glasgow Royal Infirmary on Sunday, July 26, 2020, Sheriff Richard Davidson, of Blairgowrie, aged 72 years, much loved husband of Shirley and loving dad to Cara and Andy. Funeral service private. Family flowers only please but donations may be given to the British Heart Foundation, c/o David Scott Funeral Directors, 65 High Street, Blairgowrie PH10 6DF.

**DOUGLAS** - Helen Stewart, passed away peacefully on July 20, 2020. Beloved wife of John, devoted mother and grandmother. Lifetime member of Oban Baptist church, where her funeral took place on July 28, 2020, thereafter to burial at Pennyfuir cemetery. Now at peace with The Lord.

**FOX** - Peacefully at home on Saturday, July 25, 2020, surrounded by his loved ones, Christopher "Foxy" Fox. Much loved member of the Craignish community, he will

be sorely missed by many. A private funeral service will be held at Kilvaree, Craignish on Friday, August 7. A larger memorial will be held at a future date.

**MACKINNON** - Clare died suddenly in Oban on July 20, 2020. Much loved wife of Kenny, sister of Francis, mother of Neil, Nicola and Michelle and Gran of Alex, Izzy and Iona. Greatly missed, always in our thoughts and hearts. Private cremation. Donations may be made to Mary's Meals.

**MORGAN** - Peacefully at Rosaburn House Care Home, East Kilbride, on July 25, 2020, aged 90 years, Heather Sheena Morgan, retired matron and dog breeder, formerly of Benderloch. Funeral will take place at Pennyfuir Cemetery, Oban. Due to current guidelines numbers will be limited to a maximum of 20. Anyone wishing to attend the funeral should contact Hamish Hoey & Son Ltd, Funeral Directors on 01631 562269 for further details.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**MACPHERSON** - Donnie would like to thank all relations and friends who paid their respects at the funeral of his late wife Ann. Special thanks to Dail Mhor House, Strontian, doctors and nurses of Pines Medical Practice, Belford Hospital, and Moss Park Care Home for their excellent care of Ann. Father Tim for his uplifting service and Manson & MacBeath Funeral Directors for their advice and guidance. Thank you to all friends, relations and neighbours for cards and well wishes received. It's all been very much appreciated.

**MANSON** - Margaret (née Aitchison). James, Mary, Margaret and family of the late Margaret Manson would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for the kind and thoughtful expressions of sympathy following their recent sad loss. Thanks also to those who paid their respects, lining the route, on Mum's final journey

through the village and at the cemetery. Grateful thanks to the Mallaig Medical staff and home carers, to the Belford Hospital and to Abbeyfield House, Ballachulish for their care and kindness to Mum. Special thanks to John McLellan, Funeral Directors, for their professional and sensitive handling of the arrangements and to Rev Malcolm Kinnear for the touching service at the graveside.

**TOPPING** - The family of the late Peter Topping would like to thank all relatives and friends near and far and neighbours for the many comforting expressions of sympathy, flowers, messages, cards and telephone calls following the sad loss of their beloved husband, dad, father-in-law and grandpa. Our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the district nurses and doctors for their kindness and support that allowed Peter to stay at home. Thank you to H. Hoey & Son for the caring, respectful and efficient service

and thank you to Petals for the beautiful flowers.

## MEMORIALS

**ARCHIBALD** - In loving memory of our loving daughter, sister, niece and auntie Michelle, died July 25, 2002.

As time goes by without you and the days turn into years They hold a million memories and a thousand silent tears No longer in our lives to share But in our hearts you're always there  
Loved and remembered every day  
- Mum, Dad, Lisa, Angus and Mila.

**MACDONALD** - Treasured memories of our Mum and Nanny, Rae MacDonald, passed away August 3, 2019. Never a day goes by when we don't think of you Mum.

- Your daughter Laura, son-in-law Roy and beloved grandchildren Lewis and Erin.

**MACDOUGALL** - In loving memory of Ian a dear son, brother, uncle and dad, who

died August 1, 2014, also Duncan (Dochie) a loving husband, dad and grandpa who died August 3, 2018.

In our hearts you will always stay  
Loved and remembered every day.

We miss you both very much.  
- Jean, Fiona, Michael, Rebecca and Matthew.

**MACKINNON** - Treasured memories of our dear dad, grampa and great grampa Iain, who passed away on July 29, 2012.

Time slips by and life goes on, But from our hearts you are never gone,

We think about you all the time,  
We talk about you too.

We have so many memories, But we wish we still had you.  
- Angus, Lachie, Margaret, Christine, Fiona, Linda, Alastair and all their families.

**MADEJ** - Always loved and always missed, 24/7.

Till we meet again.  
- Her husband Stanley.

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# Tribute: Gwyneth Neal, Dunbeg

In normal circumstances the sad passing of Gwyneth Neal would have been marked by many people attending a service in her own church, Oban Parish. Fulsome tributes would have been paid to honour a woman who gave so much to enhance the lives of so many. It is hoped this obituary will be a part of a process of acknowledgment of Gwyneth's worth.

Gwyneth grew up in Bradford. She was an active member of the Methodist church and supported many youth and community activities. Such ventures led her to meet Tony and in time, they decided to move from Bradford for a more rural and community-based life. They and sons David and Robert subsequently moved to Dunbeg in 1974, when Tony took up a position within social work.

Gwyneth, with her warm and friendly manner, very quickly became a highly respected member of the community, putting her heart and soul into village life. She played an active role and worked tirelessly to support and befriend local villagers across all ages. In the early days she was involved in a variety of social and family gatherings and was responsible for starting the first playgroup in the village for early years' children who, along with their parents, benefited from her leadership skills and qualities.

Very much a people person, Gwyneth not only provided quality social and learning experiences for these very young children but also fun, a listening ear and tremendous support for their very often new parents. Great friendships developed

here and homebaking was an added bonus.

Together with Tony they were passionate about providing a 'voice' for the local community as members and chairpersons of the community council. She was an avid supporter of Dunbeg Primary School, serving as a member of Dunbeg School Board for several years, while offering very positive and practical input and organising the production of a school magazine.

Yet again as a team Gwyneth and Tony shared their music and drama skills through producing and directing very professional school productions. Former pupils will still have memories of making their acting debuts in the very successful stage production of the musical Oliver.

Gwyneth was a long serving member of the West Highland Housing Association Board, joining in 2008. She came with a long history of working in the community and wanting to do things both large and small that would make a difference.

Her heart was in Dunbeg and she along with other members of the community were always battling to ensure there was a joined up approach to the new housing planned for the village. She knew housing could make a huge difference to the local area but she, like all of the community, wanted housing they could be proud of and would continue to keep Dunbeg as a community. Gwyneth left the board in 2018 but remained in touch.



Gwyneth and Tony had been involved in amateur dramatics and musical theatre in Yorkshire. They were keen to share their interest in musical theatre, and were instrumental in setting up OOPS [formerly

Oban Operatic Society] which later became Spotlight Musical Theatre Group, which continues today. Gwyneth and Tony produced many well-known, and perhaps some not so well known shows in their capacity as producer and musical director. In between times, to help finance the cost of productions, Summer Showtime emerged. On a weekly basis, for several years, Showtime entertained tourists and locals alike.

Following Tony's death, Gwyneth set up the Argyll Youth Theatre, which was a great success until Gwyneth's health deteriorated.

Gwyneth was an enthusiastic and committed member of Oban MacMillan Cancer Support for nine years. Joining in 2011, she assumed the role of chairperson in 2014 and played an active role until late 2019.

House and Home was Gwyneth's business and it was a sad time in her life when the shop closed, and there were other sorrows and regrets too. However, her faith undergirded everything she did. She worshipped weekly in Oban Parish Church, where she was an ordained an elder.

May she rest in peace.

Reverend Dugald Cameron

## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Recently I was reading in the Bible about a situation where a crowd was protesting about something.

The wording is really descriptive: 'Some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.'

This sounds so much like what we often see happening nowadays.

People are angry, frustrated, wanting something to change

but sometimes without a clear understanding of the history behind issues and often with no developed sense of what will effectively bring about the change they're looking for.

Changing deep seated aspects of culture or society, however flawed, can take a lot of patience. People will say: 'We've been patient for long enough' and that's absolutely true in very many cases but really what needs to happen is dialogue.

There's a real need for those

in authority to enter into the kinds of conversations that are due and overdue but there's also care needed from those who, perhaps rightly, are demanding change that they don't polarise opinion by their actions.

In the Bible are many stories of conflict but underlying it all is the quest for justice in our common humanity under the love of God.

Reverend Sandy Stoddart,  
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## Shinty survey reveals clubs want back on the field

Shinty clubs across the highlands are gearing up for the return of the ancient sport when it is safe to do so.

Since the announcement that all shinty had been postponed for the foreseeable future due to Covid-19, the Camanachd Association has been working to develop a plan for the return of our ancient sport, when it is safe to do so.

Following the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon's announcement last week, allowing a return to youth shinty (subject to guidance), Camanachd Association plans have intensified as it looks to support clubs in their read-

iness to host a return to youth shinty in the near future.

In order to gauge the suitability of a return to shinty the governing body conducted a survey. Of the 26 clubs who responded there was an overwhelming desire to return when the conditions allowed it.

When asked: 'If government guidance allows contact sports in 2020 and it is safe to return - would your club wish to take part in a localised mini league competition?' Just under 70 per cent of clubs answered yes, with the other 30 per cent answering maybe, meaning no clubs were opposed to the

plan. When asked: 'If a limited time was available, prior to the end of 2020, to return to play shinty what type of activity should be prioritised?' Ninety-six per cent of clubs answered that local area tournaments/games should be prioritised.

### Localised tournaments

Based on this, and after much consideration, the Camanachd Association is, at present, preparing for the return of youth shinty training, with a desire to organise localised tournaments when it is safe to do so, in line with Scottish Government guidance and the readiness of clubs.

Each club has been requested to complete a readiness checklist, along with a risk assessment for the return of the sport, while the association is working with registered clubs to prepare themselves for a return for children and youths.

Derek Keir, Camanachd Association CEO said: 'It is so exciting to get the go ahead for a return to children's and youth shinty after such a long period of absence.'

'We know from consultations with our clubs that this is welcome news for many communities right throughout Scotland.'



Bob MacIntyre.

## Bob gets back in the swing in America

Bob MacIntyre's first golf tournament since the coronavirus lockdown was lifted will take place in Memphis, Tennessee, when he rubs shoulders with the likes of World No 1 Jon Rahm and Rory McIlroy in the WGC-FedEx St Jude Invitational on July 30.

The Glencruitten left-hander is the only Scot in the field.

Bob's last outing was back at the beginning of March at the Qatar Master.

The event marks the start of a huge few weeks for Bob, who then moves on to the first major of the year at the USPGA Championship, to be held at TPC Harding Park, San Francisco from August 3-9.

Bob will also be taking part in the US Open, starting on September 17 at Winged Foot New York.

# Podium finish for McPhee in Andalucia

Oban's John McPhee today made up for the disappointment of last week at the Spanish Grand Prix with a podium finish at the Circuito de Jerez - Angel Nieto, after finishing the 22-lap Andalucian Grand Prix in second place.

When the lights went out, John found himself losing out on a couple of places into the first corner. The Oban rider was quick to recover and started making progress through the field.

Keeping within the leading group, pulling away from the rest of the field, John enjoyed an intense battle with championship leader Albert Arenas, the pair trading places for the

majority of the race. After moving into podium contention, John stayed on the tail of Tatsuki Suzuki in the closing laps of the encounter.

With the championship in mind, John made the decision not to lunge down the inside of Suzuki in the last corner and ended the race with a well-deserved second place finish.

John sits third in the championship standings, just 10 points behind leader Albert Arenas.

He will now be able to enjoy some time to relax, before the 2020 season continues next month at the Automotodrom Brno, Czech Republic (August 7-9).

After the race John said: 'After last weekend going into that last lap I had a feeling of déjà vu, but the good thing about that was that I knew what to do. My instinct was to have a lunge, but Suzuki went so defensive that I decided second place was a fantastic result to come away with.'

'I feel like we're back in the game in the championship and it was a great race.'

'This track for some reason is normally a difficult one for me, so this fills me with confidence and is a great feeling to have moving forwards. I had my first ever GP win at Brno so I'm really looking forward to heading there next.'



John McPhee does a wheelie to celebrate his second place finish in the Andalucian Grand Prix.



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# LOCHABER TIMES

## & OBAN TIMES

No 8522

Thursday 30 July, 2020

www.lochabertimes.co.uk

95p



### Thieves cause costly damage at Lochaber rural trust



### Care home reflects on life during pandemic



# 'Vital' marina funding must be in place by September

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The chairman of the steering group overseeing the construction of the new 40-berth marina at Corpach says it is 'absolutely vital' that funding for the final stage of the project – the floating marina infrastructure – is in place by the end of September.

Andrew McKenna, chairman of Thomas Telford Corpach Marina, was speaking after local MSP and Scottish Finance Secretary Kate Forbes joined directors of Caol Regeneration Company (CRC) and local councillor Ben Thompson at the marina site this week to inspect progress on the first phase of the contract involving construction of a car park and slipway, plus dredging works.

Contractor George Leslie Ltd has been on site since late June and is said to be off to a great start on the 19-week-long first phase of the project, costing £1.48million.

This figure comprises a



Kate Forbes MSP, front, at the site of the new Corpach marina this week with, from left, Steven Dickson of NorthernLight Ltd; Donnie Corbett (CRC chair); Bobby Mathers (Lochaber Small Boat Club chair); Linda Cameron (CRC secretary); Councillor Ben Thompson, Andy McKenna (Thomas Telford Corpach Marina chair) and Shona MacLeay of NorthernLight Ltd.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Regeneration Capital Grant awarded from the Scottish Government in March, 2018, as well as £171,000 from the EU LEADER fund.

Donnie Corbett, chairman of CRC, told the Lochaber Times: 'We are all delighted to see the construction works for the Thomas Telford

Corpach Marina making great progress.

'The project has experienced huge delays in getting started, but there is no stopping us

now. We are very grateful for the professionalism and commitment by our project managers NorthernLight Ltd.'

When completed, the 40-berth marina and coffee shop will be owned by Caol Regeneration Company – a not-for-profit charity which operates Caol Community Centre.

The marina was originally the idea of the late Dr Su Sen, who was one of CRC's founding members. The contract for the marina facilities building will be announced shortly and the building should be completed by the end of December this year.

However, Mr McKenna warned: 'It is absolutely vital that the funding for the final stage of the project – the floating marina infrastructure – is put in place by the end of September, 2020.'

'We have been waiting a very long time for Crown Estates Scotland capital, managed by The Highland Council, to be made available.

'We expect a financial commitment from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and additional capital funding from the Scottish Government RCGF fund to complete this exciting project.'

'This marina will bring economic and community benefits to the area and so timing is absolutely critical to avoid any further delays and costs. With the capital in place this marina could be open for business in April 2021.'

Welcoming the progress on site, Ms Forbes told the Lochaber Times: 'It is brilliant to see construction work starting on the marina. This project has been a long time coming and it's evident how much interest there is locally and further afield.'

'I know that there have been a number of issues along the way and so it will be a relief to the project team to see this progress. There is great potential, and it's important that the community's interests are reflected in all decisions.'

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LT

# Canna, friendship and Whisky Galore

by Fiona Scott  
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A documentary about a remarkable American woman who came to live on a Scottish island to record Gaelic culture and a way of life that was beginning to disappear, has revealed that she was close friends with the famous author of Whisky Galore.

Compton Mackenzie, who wrote Whisky Galore in 1947, which was adapted into a film in 1949, visited Margaret Fay Shaw and her husband John Lorne Campbell at their house on the Isle of Canna so often that the typewriter he used to write the famous novel along with his slippers, smoking jacket, a handkerchief with his initials and a cigar case, complete with two cigars, are still there.

There are also two Whisky Galore bottles, salvaged by a local on South Uist from the wreckage of the real-life SS Politician, which ran aground while carrying 28,000 cases of malt whisky near Eriskay in 1941. This was the inspiration for the book and the bottles were a gift from Margaret's former landlady Peigi Macrae from South Uist to celebrate the publication of her book, *Folksongs and Folklore of South Uist*, in 1955.

Fiona Mackenzie, archivist



Above, Fiona Mackenzie with Compton Mackenzie's typewriter and whisky bottles from SS Politician; above right, John and Margaret outside Canna House in 1970; and right, the wedding of John and Margaret Campbell on June 15, 1935.



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at Canna House, became interested in Margaret's work after buying the book 25 years ago and she gives a fascinating insight into the couple's life in the Hebrides and the priceless legacy Margaret left behind for generations to come.

Margaret sailed to South

Uist from America when she was in her twenties after falling in love with the place on an earlier visit when she cycled and walked the length of the outer islands.

In the documentary Margaret says: 'It attracted me like a magnet and it still does

after all these years. Everyone was so happy and sang, it was their accompaniment to life.'

Margaret met John in the Lochboisdale Hotel on South Uist. He was involved with the Sea League at the time, alongside Compton Mackenzie, and requested

photographs from Margaret for his book.

After living in a house on Barra, where Compton lived for a number of years, John decided he'd like to purchase a traditional highland estate within a Gaelic speaking community, so they bought the island of Canna in 1938.

Fiona said: 'Compton was actually meant to share the cost of the island with them, but he changed his mind at the last-minute leaving John to find the extra money to complete the purchase on his own. He paid just over £9,000 for the island and about £2,000 for the animals.'

'Compton had become a close friend when they lived in Barra and John wanted to continue to live near him, but it took a bit of time before Margaret and Compton got along, she always believed that he was slightly jealous of Margaret's relationship with John!'

The island of Canna and Canna House is now owned by the National Trust for Scotland after the couple gave it to them in 1981, and the house still contains thousands of photographs, films, papers and recordings of Gaelic songs, many of which would have been lost forever without their efforts.

Margaret's films and pho-

tographs show a world of old crofting traditions such as men and women working on the land, carrying seaweed from the shore in creels on their backs, ploughing with the cas-chrom - a type of foot plough - and reaping the oats with a sickle.

Fiona added: 'Margaret realised that when people died a wealth of Gaelic songs were lost with them, so she started collecting and recording the songs because she wanted to keep them alive.'

'What made her work unique from any other folklorists, was that she lived within the communities. She was not a visitor and the people respected her.'

'She was a remarkable woman. Her friend Fred T Gillies said that "if there was a dying ember, she blew on it and brought it to life again".'

The programme also pays tribute to Magda Sagarzazu who came to Canna from the Basque region of Spain as a child and made it her mission to preserve and popularise Margaret and John's work as Gaelic scholars. She was archivist at Canna House for 20 years and died of cancer in June this year aged 70.

Solas: Margaret Fay Shaw of Canna airs on BBC ALBA tonight (Thursday July 30), at 10pm.

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# Thieves wreak costly damage at Lochaber Rural Trust

by Iain Ferguson  
fort@obantimes.co.uk

A Lochaber charity which has been a rural skills hub for schoolchildren since 2005 is facing big repair bills after a storage shed was damaged during a break-in at the weekend.

Thieves targeted the Lochaber Rural Education Trust (LRET) base at Torlundy, near the Nevis Range mountain Resort, sometime last Saturday evening/Sunday morning, cutting through padlocks and pulling away planks on the garage sized shed in search of high value items, but found none.

However, the damage to the shed and a smaller adjacent building will cost the charity more than if the thieves had cleared out its contents.

Founder, volunteer and local crofter Isabel Campbell said:

**'It is sickening to think of these people coming here and trying to steal what little we have.'**

'Given the speight of recent robberies where a local farmer had a quad bike stolen from outside his door and reports of a white van seen driving slowly around outbuildings, I can only assume they thought our shed would have some easy to steal high-value items, like motorised grass cutters or similar equipment.

'We are a small charity and the shed contains only garden tools, ladders and new wheelbarrows which they obviously weren't interested in. All of these are very valuable to us and are used by the many



Volunteer Tommy McKnight opens one of the new, heavy-duty padlocks which the Trust had to buy. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

hundreds of children who visit every year, many with special needs. The robbers did take one box, although no one is even sure what was in it.'

The criminals then attempted to break in to another smaller

shed, ripping off parts of the door, but the lock held.

Volunteer Tommy McKnight, who with his partner Alma have been regularly tending the various plants grown from seed by schoolchildren,

patched up some of the damage and bought two new strong padlocks, costing the charity £50 at a time when their money is tight.

He said: 'The shed is old and was approaching time for replacement, but the damage done to it by these people means we will have to find the money sooner. Ideally, a metal shed would be the answer given our remote location and the damage done this time, but we will be looking at thousands to do this. It will be a great stretch on our funds, which are raised entirely by our own efforts and donations.'

One of the trust's highlights for children is its 'Seed to Supper' project where, under expert guidance, the youngsters prepare the ground in large outdoor planters, which are also designed for access by wheelchair users, sow vegetable seeds and on each return visit help cultivate them.

They tend them through to the point where they are ready to be harvested then help cook, serve and eat them. This process also gives a first hand understanding of the food supply chain. These home-grown dishes are often shared with friends and family at a 'pop-up' cafe to help raise funds for the next year's planting.

Only last week, volunteers were harvesting some of the vegetables and giving them away to families and local groups as the project could not be completed due to Covid restrictions.

Isabel added: 'We only exist to help our children and the community, so it is sickening to think of these people coming here and trying to steal what little we have, which means so much to those who attend. It would be great if someone could help us with a new shed, but we will battle on regardless.'

## Remote islanders appeal for new residents on Isle of Rum

A remote Scottish island is appealing for new residents to come forward – from families to individuals.

Four new, energy-efficient homes for rent are currently being constructed on the Isle of Rum, part of the Inner Hebrides.

Mountainous Rum is one of the Small Isles, south of the Isle of Skye and about eight miles wide and 20-miles from the ferry port of Mallaig on the mainland. It has a population of just over 30, with only one child in nursery and just two in primary school, and six children in total.

The community trust is seeking applications from those who wish to move, with the chance of a visit in August and a possible move-in date later this year.

The four, two-bedroom homes under construction are situated on the edge of Kinloch, the island's only village.

It offers stunning views up to the Rum Cuillin mountains on an island where red deer, feral goats, Highland cattle and ponies roam free.

The Isle of Rum Community Trust (IRCT) owns much of

Kinloch village and has reopened the allocation process after the pandemic.

Following a sift of applications, the trust hopes that later in the summer it will be safe for prospective islanders to visit Rum, to allow them to decide if relocating to a remote Scottish island might really be for them.

The trust said the houses should be completed by September and that it will be possible to welcome new residents soon after – covid-permitting.

New islanders would have to have a plan for how they would support themselves as there are no direct jobs currently on offer, the trust said. However, there are a range of self-employment opportunities, with trades such as qualified joiners, electricians and plumbers, remain in high demand.

There are also multiple tourism opportunities related to Rum's mountains and unique geology, or its seabird colony of over 200,000 Manx shearwaters, or 'marine tourism' opportunities made accessible from the shelter of Loch Scresort bay.

The trust said the village has

'excellent, fast, fibre broadband to every property'.

The new homes are currently under construction by Acharacle builders, S&K MacDonald Homes, from a design by Kearney Donald Partnership of Fort William, and are being built to the highest eco-standard to ensure long-term sustainability.

As well as diversifying the local economy, the island also hopes to attract families with young children.

Resident, Lesley Watt said: 'We have a population of around 32 people, including six children. With only one child in nursery and two in our primary school we need more families to fill our school as well as to be the next generation of islanders.'

The homes were largely funded by the Scottish Government, with significant financial support also provided by commercial fish farm company, Mowi, which has a farm on the north coast of the island, as well as hotel group, The Crerar Trust.

For application forms and further details visit [www.isleofrum.com](http://www.isleofrum.com) or email: [isleofrumhousing@gmail.com](mailto:isleofrumhousing@gmail.com)

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# Historic island landmark to become whisky centre

by Ellis Butcher  
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The couple in charge at North Uist Distillery have acquired the iconic Nunton Steadings on the neighbouring Isle of Benbecula.

The plan is to convert the historic u-shaped landmark into a base for production of the first whisky to be legally distilled in the southern islands of the Outer Hebrides.

Master distiller Jonny Ingledew and creative director Kate MacDonald, of the North Uist Distillery, plan to redevelop it as a distillery and visitor centre.

It provides the couple with space to distil whisky and build on the success of their popular range of premium 'Downpour' gins which were launched last year.

It could also become a hub



for the community and visitors, with pop-up events held there - a crowdfunding appeal is expected later in the year.

Jonny said: 'Our main goal has always been to put the islands on the whisky map and

therefore we are incredibly excited to have secured Nunton Steadings which will allow us to fulfil our whisky dream.

The couple plan to make whisky using a grain that local crofters produce, Bere barley,

**Kate MacDonald and Jonny Ingledew at the iconic Nunton Steadings.**

Photograph: Am Pàipear

which is one of the oldest cereals grown in the UK.

Jonny said: 'At one time all whisky would have been made from Bere barley but it was changed out for higher yielding barleys. Bere tastes incredible and is not mass produced, so it retains a remarkable flavour that we want to harness.'

The hope is to work with crofters to create a supply chain of Bere barley on the islands with the intention of one day being able to malt the barley themselves, allowing for full 'grain to glass' production in the new premises.

Kate said: 'Nunton Steadings has beautiful original features,

such as the cobbled floors on the south side of the building, which will be the perfect home for our whisky casks during maturation.

'We will be providing tours which will cover the whisky and gin production process, and also share the stories of this historic building and the surrounding areas.'

Nunton Steadings was the scene of several important chapters in the island's history and is one of the oldest surviving structures in the Western Isles.

Nunton Steadings was constructed in its current form in the early 1700s on the site of a nunnery dating back to 1300.

Bonnie Prince Charlie took shelter while on the run in the aftermath of Culloden.

Built on what was then a substantial farm, the structure and land was seized when

crofters raided Nunton in the aftermath of the Great War. Local crofters housed cattle and stored animal feed inside the building until it fell into disrepair.

It was transferred to the Uist Buildings Preservation Trust, later renamed Nunton Steading Trust, which saw the building renovated in the late 1990s.

Nunton Steading Trust placed the building on the market earlier in 2020.

Kate and Jonny are keen to give the community ownership of the venture.

The crowdfunder aims to raise money to procure whisky equipment, which has been sized to create a single cask with each production run.

It is anticipated the kit will be purchased in March 2021, once finance is secured, with production starting in 2022.

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Cameron Steel

## Man dies after fall in Glencoe

Police Scotland has confirmed the identity of a man who died after suffering a fall while walking in Glencoe at the weekend.

He has been named as Cameron Steel, 35, from Glasgow.

Police were called around 3.35pm on Saturday, July 25, to assist two male walkers on the Three Sisters route.

Members of the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team also attended, along with the HM Coastguard helicopter.

Sadly, Mr Steel had sustained a fall and died at the scene. His body was recovered by the helicopter team.

Police Scotland stated: 'Our thoughts are with his family at this time. As with all sudden deaths, a report will be sent to the Procurator Fiscal.'

## Glenfinnan speed limit cut at monument sites

As thousands of visitors flock back to Glenfinnan in the wake of the easing of coronavirus lockdown restrictions,

Transport Scotland this week confirmed the implementation of a new 40mph speed limit on the A830 where it passes the iconic monument to the 1745 Jacobite Rising, writes Mark Entwistle.

A Transport Scotland spokesperson told the Lochaber Times: 'The new 40mph speed limit came into force on the A830 at Glenfinnan on July 21.'

'This was required to be in place prior to installation of the pedestrian crossing at the National Trust for Scotland Visitor Centre, which is currently programmed to take place later on this financial year.'

Transport Scotland bosses had originally intended the new speed limit to be in force by the end of March after agreeing to implement local MSP Kate Forbes's request to reduce the 60mph speed limit on the section of road, which lies sandwiched between



MSP Kate Forbes is delighted at the change to the speed limit.

two of Scotland's most famous visitor attractions - the Glenfinnan railway viaduct, made famous by the Harry Potter movies, and the 1745 monument.

Along with Glenfinnan Community Council, Ms Forbes campaigned for months to see a reduction on safety grounds.

Speaking after visiting Glenfinnan on Monday, Ms Forbes told the Lochaber Times: 'At the very first meeting I had with the Glenfinnan community group, they asked for a reduction in the speed limit.'

'I'm so delighted that Transport Scotland has now agreed to the reduction, has implemented the reduction and now has put up the signs.'

'This will be helpful to the community's aspirations for a new car park to make the road safer. There is still some way to go, but it's good to step the first improvement in road safety implemented.'

# Work to start on Blar Mor

by Mark Entwistle  
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Construction works will start shortly on what will be the largest affordable housing development in the Highlands since the 1980s.

This will be the first phase of the strategic Blar Mor development in Fort William.

The development delivers housing and land for the Belford Hospital replacement as well as a STEM Centre for West Highland College.

The first phase of housing comprises 117 new affordable homes of various sizes and tenures to help meet the demand within the area.

A total of 87 of the completed properties will be made available for rent by The Highland Council with 20 available for mid-market rent and 10 for sale as shared equity under the Scottish Government's Low-cost Initiative for First Time buyers (LIFT) scheme.

The first phase, which is the largest affordable housing development in Highlands since



**Housing Minister Kevin Stewart MSP, right, with Allan Maguire, the Council's Head of Development and Regeneration on site at the new housing development last year.**

Photograph: Abrightside Photography

the 1980s, is being developed by The Highland Council and will be delivered on site by TSL Contractors Ltd.

The housing development has benefited from £10.9 million in Scottish Government grant assistance, through the mainstream housing programme and through the Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme.

The additional funding has enabled use of the latest heat battery storage technology

linked to air source heat pumps and solar panels, contributing to The Highland Council's response to the Climate Emergency and helping to ensure that the completed homes can be heated affordably.

Lochaber Councillor Ben Thompson (Caol and Mallaig), chairman of the Housing and Property Committee, said: 'A lot of work is being done by the council and its housing partners to provide much needed high-quality homes for local

residents. Meeting housing demand in Fort William helps bring economic expansion, including private investment, to the town. It is good to see the council working to bring new investment and jobs to Lochaber. I particularly applaud the council embracing more reliable green technologies to heat homes. This is a positive step towards making homes cheaper to live in while addressing the climate emergency and I welcome the support from the Low Carbon Infrastructure Transition Programme in achieving this.'

Scottish Government housing minister Kevin Stewart visited the site last year to see the ongoing site preparation.

Welcoming the start of construction, Mr Stewart said with support of nearly £11 million in Scottish Government funding, this was an ambitious development to provide more affordable, energy efficient homes to the Lochaber area than ever before: 'This means the new tenants' homes will be warmer and cheaper to

heat and bring a real sense of pride and belonging. The local economy and wider community will benefit too, by attracting more people to the area, providing more jobs and improving STEM skills with the new college,' added Mr Stewart.

'We want everyone in Scotland to be able to live in

**'We want everyone in Scotland to live in a warm, safe home...'**

a warm, safe home that meets their needs. That's why we are investing an additional £300 million in 2021-22, on top of our record investment of over £3.5 billion to ensure affordable homes continue to be delivered beyond this current parliament.'

Phase one of the housing project is due to complete by May 2022. Chairman of Highland Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee, Councillor Trish

Robertson, added: 'It's great news that work on the Blar Mor site is about to start. Lots of planning and preparation work has taken place to get to this stage. This is going to be the largest affordable housing development undertaken in the Highlands since the 1980s.'

Managing Director of TSL Contractors Ltd, Iain Lumsden, said the company was delighted to have been awarded this prestigious project: 'Our strategy for the sustainable organic growth of our business has seen us progressively increase our directly employed skilled workforce in the Lochaber area and subsequently provide the platform for the employment and development of much needed apprentices within the local construction industry,' said Mr Lumsden.

'This project will allow us to further develop this strategy, continue the development of our workforce, seek to enhance our apprenticeship intake and generally help boost the local economy.'

## £96,300 award for Loch Arkaig – Glen Mallie Forest Edge Restoration Project

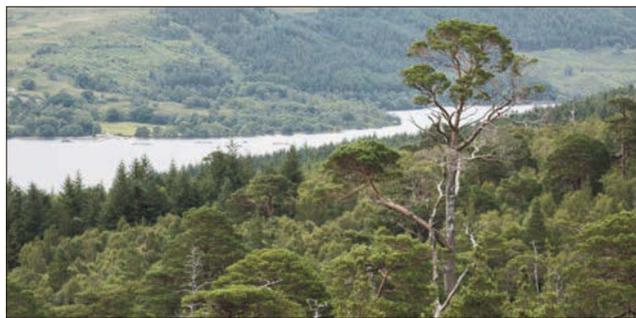
A project to enhance and expand ancient and native woodland and improve habitat connectivity at Loch Arkaig Pine Forest in Lochaber has received £96,300 from the Scottish Government's Biodiversity Challenge Fund.

The Glen Mallie Forest Edge Restoration Project will include the removal of non-native tree regeneration, with young spruce and lodgepole pine trees felled and left to decompose.

The goal is to restore these areas to low-density native woodland edge, which will provide important habitat for many species, including: black grouse, butterflies, dragonflies, and lichen.

Woodland Trust Scotland acquired Loch Arkaig Pine Forest in 2016 in close partnership with local group Arkaig Community Forest. Together, they have long-term plans to restore the ancient Caledonian pinewood while stimulating economic activity in the community.

Dr Jessica Maxwell, Loch Arkaig Pine Forest Project Development Manager, said: 'Receiving this support from the Biodiversity Challenge Fund means we can address



View east from hill above Loch Arkaig. Photograph: John MacPherson

a major threat to the survival and restoration of this ancient woodland. A local firm, Broc Contracting, has been awarded the contract for this work, increasing local employment and rural development opportunities.'

The Biodiversity Challenge Fund specifically encourages applicants with innovative projects that improve biodiversity and address the impact of climate change, by increasing the resilience of our most at-risk habitats and species and creating large areas of brand new habitat. Loch Arkaig – Glen Mallie Forest Edge Restoration is one of 16 successful projects across Scotland announced in the second round of the £4 million

Biodiversity Challenge Fund. SNH Chief Executive, Francesca Osowska, said: 'As lockdown conditions lift, green recovery projects like the Biodiversity Challenge Fund put nature, and nature-based solutions, at the heart of rebuilding our economy.'

'But it's not just about conservation – enriching our nature is also part of the solution to the climate emergency too. People know climate change is a big issue but not as many know that biodiversity loss is also a global and generational threat to human wellbeing. We will continue to deliver the transformational change needed to bring a nature-rich, sustainable and more economically secure future for Scotland.'

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# Caring in a global crisis

It's been hard. Since leaving a local resilience meeting on Friday March 13, my head buzzing with what needed to be done, we've been constantly 'looking ahead' and eating, sleeping and breathing the requirements placed on us by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It's been a stressful roller-coaster ride of balancing the best interests, well-being and human rights of residents, with the response required by wave-upon-wave of guidance from government, public health, Care Inspectorate and the NHS – sometimes having to pause and remember this is not a hospital, nor principally a workplace. It is home for our residents.

Our fantastic staff have adapted quickly and professionally to the constant, on-going changes to information, instructions, protocols, work patterns and practices. They have been amazing.

The safety and wellbeing of our residents is always our top priority. Closing our doors to visitors a week or two before

Care home manager Louise Duffy reflects on how the last four months have been for the 30 residents, their families, 51 staff and others in the community who have been supported by Abbeyfield Ballachulish.



Louise Duffy.

being instructed to do so was a really tough decision. But, by that time, we could see the devastating effects of Covid-19 in care homes in other countries.

We're grateful to our voluntary board of trustees,

residents, their relatives and our communities for trusting our judgement and showing patience, understanding and support throughout these challenging times.

Keeping loved ones and residents connected is another priority.

It's been three months of Zoom, Skype, Messenger and phone calls, as family and staff keep vital connections going for residents.

Our staff also need to be safe and supported. Monika, deputy manager, and I altered our working shifts to have one of us physically on-site every day, not just at the end of a phone.

Providing safe transit for staff to and from work in our minibus avoided the risk of using public transport. We're all passionate about maintaining

a Covid-free home. Despite suspending our day care service, we didn't furlough the day care staff. Instead, they have been supporting our activities co-ordinator and the

**'It's been different. It's been emotional and it's been tough at times. But it's also been a time of caring.'**

care team and provide personalised activities for residents.

They have also kept in touch with our day care clients.

We also carried on providing meals to some community lunch-club regulars. Activities

have been tailored to individuals, but we've also created opportunities for safely connecting including corridor sing-songs and pen pal exchanges between our residents and a care home in Forfar.

Our community has made us feel appreciated. Gifts have ranged from welcome hand-cream to delicious baking. Good for our hands – not so good for our waists. We've had donations from local businesses of 3-D-printed visors and hand sanitiser. A box of personal protective equipment came all the way from a well-wisher in Hong Kong.

Separation has been one of the hardest things. When garden visits for one designated visitor were allowed, we felt nervous.

Everything was in place safety-wise but some people who live here are very ill and have noticeably declined or lost their spark: hard to bear for relatives and staff.

When residents reunited with their visitors, at a safe

physical distance, there wasn't a dry eye in the house. We're now into the next phase of restrictions being lifted. Eating areas have been set up with spacing in place so that residents can eat together again and chat over a meal.

It's been different. It's been emotional and it's been tough at times. We've experienced non-Covid-related deaths and other difficult situations. But it's also been a time of caring.

Everyone has supported each other and shared the load to ensure people don't feel isolated or alone.

Hopefully, this crisis will have drawn attention to the under-valuing and under-funding of health and social care services in this country and people will now support the vital work we do, demanding a better future for our sector, for the people we care for and for our staff.

To donate to Abbeyfield Ballachulish click on the link here or go to [justgiving.com](http://justgiving.com) and search for Abbeyfield Ballachulish.

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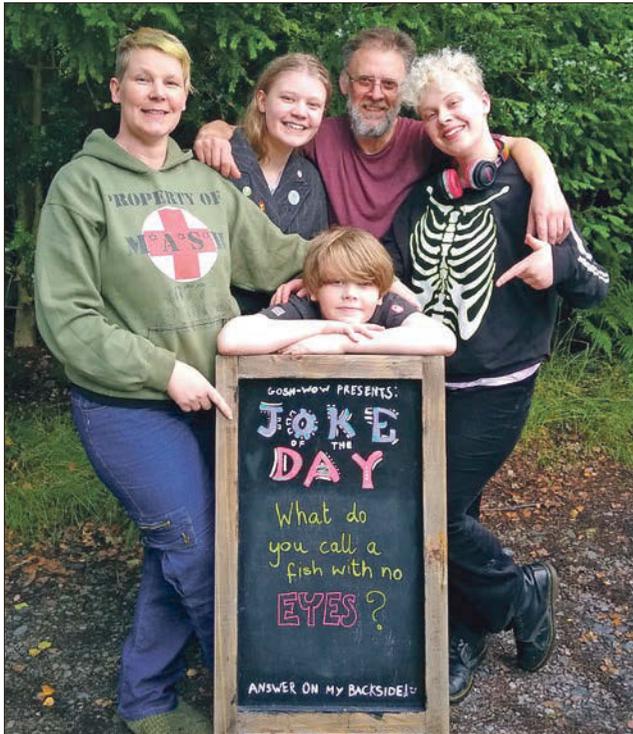


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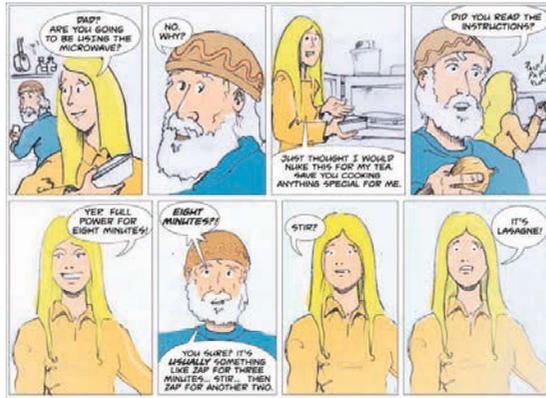
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Above, from left: Merriol, Daisy, Liam and Holly Baldwin with Eben in the middle. Above right: one of the family's comic strips.



## Mountain partnership extended

Nevis Range Mountain Experience, host venue for the multi award-winning UK round of the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup, has announced its successful partnership with Trek Bikes will be extended for another year.

The Fort William-based mountain resort re-opened earlier this month after the Covid-19 outbreak forced its closure over the past months.

Chris O'Brien, Nevis Range's chief executive officer, said: 'Bike season ticket sales and uplift day tickets are selling well, so here's hoping for a fantastic, if shorter, summer season. Whilst we don't yet know what racing may look like over the coming months, we know that despite everything there will be more people riding our trails than ever before and I thank Trek for its continued support.'

## Comic capers from Ballachulish during lockdown

A fun-loving Ballachulish family helped lift community spirits during lockdown by displaying a 'joke a day' on a blackboard outside their home.

Liam Baldwin, chief writer and artist, along with his wife Merriol, chief everything else, children Holly, Daisy and Eben and mother Pat Baldwin are the quintet behind Gosh-Wow Comics which boasts five publications since its inception five years ago.

'I'd loved comics as a kid but, somewhere along the way, I'd forgotten about them,' said Liam.

'It's only when my own children started reading them that my love was rekindled and I realised what I had been missing. I picked up a pencil one day and started doodling a couple of characters and haven't stopped since.'

Very much a family affair, Gosh-Wow! Comics has so far self published Geeks – a black and white, talking heads, funny pages type strip full of the family's geeky obsessions; two issues of Derek – full colour books with a variety of strips; Tales of the Unaccepted – a black and white collection of Science Fiction strips, and Stupendous Comics – an all superhero collection.

'Holly, Daisy and Eben are the first ones to read the strips,' added Liam.

'If they don't think the joke's funny I'll rewrite it – or sulk. Sometimes they provide me with material for gags and my mother Pat can spot a typo from three miles away and proofreads everything.'

The Baldwin's Joke of the Day board came about when Liam got fed up with tripping over a double-sided pavement blackboard he had rescued from a skip. The family also used it as a way of getting some kind of routine into their lives during the 'strange lockdown timelessness'.

Liam continued: 'My son Eben was usually responsible for finding the joke. He owns a lot of '1,001 stupid joke' type books and we would all take turns to write it up and draw an illustration. Question on one side of the board, answer on the other.'

'Merriol got serious, bought chalk marker pens and painted and varnished the board to make it more durable. People seemed to appreciate it and it became part of their daily walk.'

'Some even sent us family selfies with the board.'

Now things are scaling back and life is returning to 'normal', the Baldwins have retired the board, but you can view it in all its lockdown glory on the GoshWow Comics Facebook page.

# A BRIGHTER FUTURE IS IN SIGHT, IF WE DO THIS RIGHT.

## STICK WITH IT SCOTLAND, FOR YOURSELVES AND EACH OTHER.

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## Cameron Square canopy in place

Fort William Marina and Shoreline Community Interest Company confirmed this week work to install a retractable canopy in Fort William's Cameron Square is complete.

The community interest company told the Lochaber Times on Monday: 'It has been a joint effort with Fort William Town Team which paid for planning permission with funds from Fort William Community Council. The canopy itself was paid for with a £30,070 grant from the Town Centre Fund from The Highland Council.

'We sent a photograph of the canopy to Mr Fairfax-Lucy, who owns Cameron Square, together with an invitation to see it for himself and he responded.'

Mr Duncan Fairfax-Lucy told those involved: 'I am delighted with the way you have transformed Cameron Square into something your community can be proud of.

'Sadly, I am now of an age where I can only get out for short distances. I do hope that when this lockdown is a thing of the past, much good use will be made of it.'

## The Croftless Crofter

NIC GODDARD

fort@obantimes.co.uk

If you keep any sort of livestock or grow any kind of crops, the challenges are often the same.

Firstly you are keeping everything crossed for life in the first place – eggs hatching, pregnant livestock giving birth to healthy offspring and staying alive themselves, or tiny seeds germinating and pushing their first tiny green stem through the soil.

Often that is the cause for much celebration but just as people tell you when you toast the safe arrival of a new baby 'the real work starts now'.

Over the years I have subscribed to countless magazines for allotment holders, small holders and livestock keepers. I have read enough books on the subject to line the wall of a library, watched TV shows and YouTube clips, listened to the old wisdom of growers and crofters and farmers. So many offer conflicting views or tips or advise different approaches, it almost becomes a deliberate act of defiance to prove them wrong.

I have spent a small fortune – in money and in my time – in protective measures to keep



A buzzard.

plants and animals in while keeping other plants and animals out of spaces. I have grown sacrificial crops to lure leaf eating beasts away from the real prize.

I have sown companion plants which deter by their smell, taste, colour or some other magical property.

I have strewn coffee grounds, sheeps wool, seaweed, human urine, the liquid from steeped leaves of comfrey plants. There comes a point when you look at a crop and ponder whether you'd particularly want to eat it if it grew anyway.

The same has been true of protecting livestock. We have lost eggs, chicks and fully grown poultry to crows, ravens, buzzard and eagles. Our chicken house is as fox, badger and pine marten proofed as possible but our flock free range widely during the day so have had to learn to be wily and alert themselves as they roam.

If we want to find and eat their eggs, we have to do the same. I found myself prowling round our garden last week telling myself to 'think like a chicken'. I managed it, victoriously discovering a stash of 15 eggs hidden in plain sight.

Back on our croft on Rum, as I sat amidst raised beds of crops failing due to the weather, trampled by the red deer or lost due to a polytunnel being destroyed by gale force winds and having a wail to myself about 'why nothing grows', I had something of an epiphany as I looked around at the verdant green surroundings. I realised plenty grew, just not necessarily what I had planted in the places I wanted it. I still often have to remind myself to

work with nature rather than fighting it. An example of this was when I pulled out a load of cabbages which had bolted due to the hot dry spell in spring, then been stunted by the cold wet spell in summer and finally annihilated by slugs just this week.

Working with nature is a constant learning curve. It means being watchful and getting to know the space you are in, understanding where is shady and where is sunny, where is wet and does not need a load of watering and then planting accordingly.

Then making tweaks because if everywhere in your garden is sunny – oh, what a hard prospect to face – you could plant something fast growing that creates shade.

If everywhere is wet, then learning to love watercress and mint is one option – mmm soup. Planting elder or willow is another, then learning to weave with the resulting growth.

In the low nutrient, wet and often shallow soil on Rum, soft fruits grew wild in abundance. This meant rather than spend-

ing my time battling nature to grow crops which were not suited to the environment, I spent my days picking the brambles which covered so much of the land in August and September. Having spotted patches of blueberries and raspberries in inaccessible areas, I planted cultivated varieties of those in fruit cages – safe from the deer, birds and our sheep – which flourished. The resultant jams from these foraged and thoughtfully planned crops were one of our bestsellers in our little shop, with me making hundreds of jars every year.

My lessons from a first year growing here on the peninsula are that I am far better growing things that slugs don't like, flowers flourish and I have a garden full of bees and other pollinators, so I should make full use of that with fruit crops next year and that our spare room is the perfect hothouse for tomatoes and chillies.

But, in more normal times when we are likely to have friends and family visiting, they may not be so happy to share the space.



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# Tribute paid to man who saved piping competition

The Lewis and Harris Piping Society has paid tribute to Robin Fleming, previous sponsor of its P/M Donald MacLeod Memorial Piping Competition, who died recently aged 87.

Mr Fleming's sponsorship of the competition ran for eight years before community wind farm organisation Point and Sandwick Trust took over in 2017, supporting the competition with £5,000 a year for five years. The creation of this arrangement secured the prestigious event in its home town of Stornoway at a time when its future was very uncertain.

Mr Fleming attended the competition every year that he sponsored it and was awarded Honorary Life Membership of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society in 2013.



**Robin Fleming being awarded Honorary Life Membership of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society in 2013.**

Photograph courtesy of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society.

one of the pipers played The Duke of Roxburgh's Farewell to Blackmount Forest, a classic 2/4 March.

Someone turned to Mr Fleming and asked: 'Do you know that tune?' His response was: 'I know it very well. I own it.'

P/M Morrison pointed out that Mr Fleming always paid his own costs for attending the competition. He added: 'Without him, I don't think we could have carried on (with the Donald MacLeod).'

'It was a crucial time because we were asking various

distilleries and organisations but the money was not available. It was just a spot of luck that Robin came on the scene. He'll be remembered forever more, as far as I'm concerned, and he should be by the society.'

Calum MacDonald, development manager for Point and Sandwick Trust and the former MP for the Western Isles, said: 'Point and Sandwick Trust were delighted to succeed Robin Fleming in supporting the Donald MacLeod piping competition.'

'He stepped in to help the competition at a critical time and it is clear that his contribution was not just a financial one but one based on his personal enthusiasm and deep knowledge.'

**'He was a real gentleman...very friendly...the first time he came here, I took him for lunch and you would think we had known him all his life.'**

Dr John Smith, chairman of The Lewis and Harris Piping Society, said: 'Mr Fleming was a charming, polite and unassuming character, totally unostentatious.'

'He originally undertook to sponsor the competition for five years but continued for another three because we were struggling to find another sponsor.'

'His very generous sponsorship meant that the competition survived in Stornoway, its natural home, and with PST's continuing support, despite lockdown and pandemics, we are very hopeful that the competition will survive, although perhaps not in its customary form, this year.'

The Competition was originally set up to commemorate the musical legacy of one of Stornoway's most famous sons - Donald MacLeod MBE (1917-1982), a celebrated piper, teacher and one of the

most gifted and prolific composers of piping music ever.

The competition is an invitational one, featuring eight of the current best pipers in the world, based on their performances at events during the year on the piping circuit. It has been held in Stornoway since it was set up as a 'living memorial' in 1993 but there were fears it would have to be moved to the mainland to save costs before Mr Fleming came on board, following the withdrawal of headline sponsorship by Tennent Caledonian Breweries.

Mr Fleming was chairman of Robert Fleming and Co, the merchant bank founded by his grandfather, Robert Fleming, after whom he was named. He chose to be anonymous as the sponsor of the Donald MacLeod competition and was a strong philanthropist, famously buying back the Robert Fleming and Co art collection, when the bank was sold, so that it could go on public display.

Pipe Major Iain Murdo Morrison described Mr Fleming as 'a true gentleman' and recalled how his involvement with the society came about.

He said: 'I was at the Northern Meetings one year, about 2004, and was talking to Jimmy Banks, a friend of mine from the Scots Guards, and I was telling him that we were looking for sponsorship.'

'Jimmy knew Robin very well because he was his personal piper for any events he had.'

'I got in touch with Robin, explained the predicament the society was in and he responded, saying, 'right, we will sponsor you for five years to the tune of £5,000 a year every year'.

'He was a real gentleman. He was a very friendly, home-ly person, and an ex-officer. I remember the first time he came across here. I took him down to the house for lunch and you would honestly think that we had known him all his life.'

'He was so modest and friendly, a true gentleman, in every sense of the word.'

Robin Fleming was a cousin of Ian Fleming, the Bond author, and the family also notably owned the Black Mount Estate in Argyllshire.

Robin Fleming's principal home was in Oxfordshire, where he was High Sheriff in 1980, a deputy lieutenant from 1990 and enjoyed, as he put it in Who's Who, "most country pursuits". He also inherited Black Mount, his grandfather's vast stalking estate in the wilderness of Glen Etive in Argyll, a landscape which he loved and did much to conserve by planting many thousands of trees.

P/M Morrison recalled one occasion at the Donald MacLeod Competition when

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The rare portrait of 'The Gentle Lochiel', after artist George Chalmers, which hangs in the West Highland Museum in Fort William. Photograph courtesy of Art UK.

# This week in 1745: the prince meets with clan chiefs

by Ally Entwistle  
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

This week, 275 years ago, Loch nam Uamh would have been a strange mix of heady anticipation and covert operations.

Letters were being sent out with trusted supporters prompting figures to arrive on the shore to be quietly rowed out to the Du Teillay, presumably in great expectation of a long-awaited meeting.

The prince's travelling companions, the 'Seven Men of Moidart', were still introducing the stranger on board as a man of the cloth – this time as an English clergyman 'who had long been possess'd of a desire to see and converse

with Highlanders'. One of these figures being rowed out to the ship was the summoned Clanranald, who almost immediately disappeared into a cabin for a three-hour discussion with the Prince.

About half an hour after Clanranald emerged, a young man appeared. According to one account, he was 'a tall youth of a most agreeable aspect, in a plain black coat, with a plain shirt, not very clean, and a cambrick stock fixed with a plain silver buckle... at his first appearance I found my heart swell to my very throat.'

This effect which the Prince had on loyal Jacobites was also seen in the exchange he had with the reluctant Lochiel, who was concerned the Prince had

arrived without the arms, men and weapons Lochiel believed would be necessary for a successful rising and advised him to return to France.

One account quotes the Prince as saying: 'In a few days, with the few friends that I have, I will erect the royal standard and proclaim to the people of Britain that Charles Stuart is come over to claim the crown of his ancestors, to win it, or to perish in the attempt; Lochiel, who my father has often told me was our firmest friend, may stay at home and learn from the newspapers the fate of his prince.'

This was a key moment for the Rising. Without Lochiel's support – and the hundreds of men his support would bring –

the other chiefs would not have rallied to the standard and the spark of rebellion would have been snuffed out. The account gives Lochiel's history-changing reply: 'No, I'll share the fate of my prince and so shall every man over whom nature or fortune hath given me any power.'

On July 29, some of Clanranald's best men were chosen to be the Prince's guard. In the following days, MacDonald of Keppoch and MacDonald of Glencoe, who had also met with the Prince, returned home to gather their followers, each taking arms and ammunition for the use of their own men. The Prince's conversation with Lochiel was bearing fruit.

The rare  
Photograph:



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## 'The Gentle Lochiel'

Donald Cameron of Lochiel was the hereditary chief of Clan Cameron, which was traditionally loyal to the Stuarts. His father John was exiled after the 1715 rising and his grandfather, Sir Ewen, assumed his duties as 'Lochiel'. When Sir Ewen died in 1719, Donald became the 19th clan chief.

There had been heavy fines after the '15 and government garrisons kept an eye on the Highlands. No wonder Lochiel was initially reluctant to support the Prince and indeed wrote to him to dissuade him from coming – unless he brought 6,000 troops, weapons and money with him.

He refused to meet the Prince at Eriskay and sent his brother to urge him to return to France.

But he was eventually persuaded to meet the Prince who used a combination of charm and clan loyalty to persuade Lochiel to join him. If this had not happened, perhaps the Rising would have failed before it had even started. Lochiel provided the Prince with between 800 and 900 men.

Once Lochiel had pledged to support the Prince, his loyalty was unswerving.

Badly wounded by musket fire in both legs at Culloden, Lochiel went on the run in



An 18th-century glass depicting a five-coloured, enamelled portrait of the Prince, thought to be one of only three made.

Lochaber, spending time hiding out in Sunart and on Loch Shiel and at the foot of Ben Alder, where he met up with the Prince. They both left from Loch nan Uamh for France in September 1746 where Lochiel remained in exile, dying just two years after Culloden at Bergues in 1748.

He is often referred to as 'The Gentle Lochiel', however, this is an attribution which first appeared in a poem written after his death.

## Hostel for mo

Highland hostel owners are calling for Government to recognise the challenge sector by allocating additional support.

Scottish Independent Hostels (SIH) 86 hostels located in rural and island throughout Scotland, fear their business 'left behind and forgotten' as the rest of the industry gets back on its feet after the lockdown.

Gregor Barclay from SIH member Sa Hostel in Invergarry is the co-author of a petition lining the case for further financial support. It has been submitted to the Scottish Government and all MSPs and MPs with one or more of their constituency.

'No other type of accommodation offers the flexibility which our members do and in many instances where they are located there is no other accommodation,' he said.

'We risk a whole tier of accommodation closing before the 2021 season begins.'

'That is why we are asking the Scottish Government to recognise our unique situation and allocate additional support to see our members through the next few months.'

In a normal July, Scotland's hostels would be packed with a mix of overseas visitors, families, Munro baggers, long distance walkers and other outdoors enthusiasts. This year they are virtually empty.

The report argues the communal nature of the sector means they are affected more severely than other parts of the tourism industry.



The snuff box is a recent acquisition for the West Highland Museum.

Inain Ferguson, alba.photos

# Hidden secrets and symbols

Fort William's West Highland Museum boasts an impressive collection of Jacobite relics once owned by staunch Jacobites.

There are items of the Prince's clothing, from tartan fragments to shoe buckles, a bonnet, jacket and a silk waistcoat. More personal 'souvenirs' include locks of the Prince's hair and one of his teeth. More usual memorabilia is glassware engraved

with secret symbols of support for the Prince – white roses, oak leaves and acorns and the thistle. The words 'fiat' meaning 'let it be' or 'let it come to pass' and 'redeat' (Go back/return) 'redi' (return) or 'revirescit' (revive) suggest hope of a Stuart restoration. Toasts were made over a bowl of water, symbolising the king 'over the water' in exile. In 2018 the museum

received the famous Drambuie Collection on long-term loan, which includes many items of Jacobite glassware.

One very rare piece is an 18th Century glass depicting a five-coloured, enamelled portrait of the Prince, thought to be one of only three made. Whilst the museum is currently closed as a result of coronavirus, it hopes to open again on September 1.

## Got coronavirus symptoms? Self-isolate and book a test now.

If you have any coronavirus symptoms, no matter how mild, you need to self-isolate and book a test right away at [NHSinform.scot](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre/conditions-and-coronavirus) or by calling **0800 028 2816**.

Remember, if your symptoms worsen, call **111**.

Self-isolating and getting tested is crucial to stop the virus spreading any further.

It is important that we all do this, to protect ourselves, our loved ones and the hard-earned freedoms we are just getting back.

For more information go to [NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect](https://www.nhs.uk/infocentre/conditions-and-coronavirus)

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Gregor Barclay and Helen Cunningham from Saddle Mountain Hostel.

of accommodation. 'Covid-19 has led the Scottish Government to set out guidelines affecting how tourist businesses should be run. These are based on rules about social distancing and who can meet indoors,' explained Mr Barclay.

'Currently, hostels can offer only private rooms, fewer rooms in total, one household group per room and no or very restricted access to shared facilities.

'Other accommodation providers can still offer their normal product, but hostels can't.'

A survey by SIH of its members shows 33 per cent think that without additional government support they will have to close down before spring 2021.



# TEST & PROTECT

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## LETTERS

Write to us: send your letters to [fort@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:fort@obantimes.co.uk)  
or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

## Highland Council needs to provide 'vital' cash – soon

Let's hope that Finance Secretary and local MSP Kate Forbes' visit to the site of the new 40-berth Thomas Telford Corpach Marina is a positive indication that the Scottish Government will meet expectations and fund the final stages of this project.

It was great to hear that contractor George Leslie Ltd is making good progress on the first phase of the contract, but it would be shameful if after all the hard work and huge delays, there was further setback to what is going to be a fantastic facility for the area.

Caol Regeneration Company and project managers NorthernLight Ltd have done a fantastic job getting the project this far, let's hope the Scottish Government and Highland Council do not let everyone down.

## We need to help trust out

The thieves who broke into Lochaber Rural Education Trust's base at Torlundy over the weekend should be ashamed of themselves – if they even have the capacity.

This charity does such brilliant, vital work with our community, particularly during this difficult time when it has been providing fresh vegetables to families. So it would be great if we could rally round to help them, perhaps starting a crowdfunding campaign for a new metal shed or perhaps a local business could step in and help out.

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](mailto: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 timeous, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: [inquiries@ipso.co.uk](mailto:inquiries@ipso.co.uk). We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



## Not the time to buy estate

I refer to the report in the Lochaber Times of 16 July ('Scottish Land Fund supports buy') in respect of Killundine estate which has not yet been advertised for sale. The offer of £1million pounds by the Scottish Land Fund is not only premature but is at odds with Holyrood legislation. So far the group does not yet have a mandate from the local community to proceed, nor has it shown it has the experience to manage and operate a 6,000 acre estate – although of course that could be bought in at a high price from outside 'experts'.

The group's chairperson suggests untold benefits will come to the area should they succeed. Never in its recorded history has the Morvern peninsula been so prosperous. There is no unemployment, which is hardly surprising given the number of businesses there are. These include: sheep and cattle farming, a distillery, a silica sand mine, the largest granite quarry in Europe, a CalMac ferry, an hotel, two cafes, three dive boats, two dive lodges, a plumber, electrician, a resident GP, a new school, a surgery which is second to none, numerous high quality B&Bs, a caravan park, state and private timber producers, six sporting estates and a lucrative cottage-letting industry. All providing permanent local jobs and generating wealth.

The acquisition of Killundine using public money will contribute to Scotland's rising debt and bring an increase in taxes for the foreseeable future. Now is not the time to indulge in make-believe and to dwell in marble halls.

Iain Thornber, Morvern

## Take your litter home

Last week I cleared up a large amount of rubbish left at the layby as you leave Connel heading towards Glasgow.

The rubbish consisted of food packaging and several drinks reciprocal, receipts, and also a disposable mask, disposable gloves and an empty packet of paracetamol.

It is bad enough that this litter should occur and even worse that the cans could have been recycled, but in this unprecedented time to just discard protective equipment and medicine in such a thoughtless manner is beyond belief.

However the worse part was discovering, hidden under a fish and chips package, another type of 'deposit' – right next to the road! And this is the second time I have found such a deposit at this site.

Whoever is responsible for this, please desist. Take your litter home with you – it doesn't take much effort to have a bag in your vehicle and just place it in that – and if you do need to answer a

## Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

[editor@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:editor@obantimes.co.uk)

Tha moladh inninneach air nochdadh, agus ga sgrùdadh, gus clàir-ola ath-chuartachadh mar ionadan-còmhnaidh agus taisbeanaidh turasachd. Far am bheil poileasaidhean dìon na h-àrainneachd a' sìor neartachadh tha an dleasan a th' air leithid nam buidhnean a tha an sàs ann an gnìomhachas na h-ola gus an cuid làraich obrach a sgioblachadh agus a ghlanadh às an dèidh, a' cur chosgaisean mòra a bharrachd air a' ghnìomhachas. Tuigear mar sin cho tarraingeach 's a dh'fhaodadh e bhith cothrom ath-chuartachaidh air clàir agus cruinn-ola, a' seachnadh cosgais mhòr am briseadh às a chèile.

Agus nach ann mar sin a tha cùisean a' gluasad gu h-eachdraidheil co-dhiù is cultar eaconamach agus sòisealta ag atharrachadh agus an ìre mhath a' dol à sealladh, agus à cuimhne, mur a tèid a ghleidheadh ann an ionad-tasgaidh. Mar eisimpleir, tha croitearachd air atharrachadh thar tomhais anns na caogad bliadhna a chaidh, agus dh'fhàg sin ionadan feadh na dùthcha a' taisbeanadh uidheamachd agus chleachdaidhean nach eil ann tuilleadh. Adhbhar smaointinn da-rìribh dhan fheadhainn againn aig am bheil deagh chuimhne air an t-saoghal sin ach a dh'fheumas a-nise tuigsinn gur e eachdraidh a tha seo agus, a dh'aindeoin ealantais ionadan-tasgaidh, gum bheil uabhas air chall mar-thà agus tuilleadh a' dol à sealladh gach latha thèid seachd! Cluinnear argamaid gur e adhartas a tha seo, agus mur a bi adhartas ann gun tig crìoch gu tur air coimhearsnachd. Tha sin fìor, agus feumaidh

adhartas coimhearsnachd a bhith stèidhichte air cothroman seasmhach cosnaidh agus nan lùib sin sàr ghoireasan sòisealta, foghlaim, agus cur-seachad. Far nach eil leasachadh eaconamach den t-seòrsa sin air tachairt fad iomadh bliadhna feumaidh barrachd is barrachd den òigridh an dòchas is misneachd a chuimseachadh air cothroman air falbh bho sgìrean an òige, agus tha cànan agus dualchas nan coimhearsnachdan sin a' crìonadh mar a tha sluagh ùr a' gluasad thuca.

Sin pàirt mhòr den dùbhlann a' Ghàidhlig a ghleidheadh anns na sgìrean sam bu dual dhi bhith na cànan làitheil, agus ma tha dòchas leasachaidh gu bhith air sin iarraidh e co-obrachadh agus spàirn mar nach do thachair riamh roimhe. Bho chionn ceathrad bliadhna air ais bha Bòrd Leasachaidh Na Gàidhealtachd, Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd, agus Comhairle nan Eileanan Siar, ag aithneachadh an dlùth cheangal eadar fèin-mheas, misneachd coimhearsnachd, agus leasachaidhean eaconamach, sòisealta, agus cultarach. Tha sin pailt cho fìor an-diugh 's a bha e an uairsin agus chan eil am feum a th' air ionmhas gus leithid de leasachaidhean a thoirt air adhart air atharrachadh a bharrachd. Ach, le uimhir de luchd-fastaidh a-nise deònach cosnaichean a bhith ag obair bhon dachaighean, dh'fhaodadh mòran dhaoine òga gluasad air ais do sgìrean an òige agus bheireadh sin buaidh nach bu bheag ann an ùine ghoirid! Agus cha chosgadh e cus!

Allan Campbell, [ailean@obantimes.co.uk](mailto:ailean@obantimes.co.uk)

call of nature could you please find somewhere a bit more secluded.

Lynn Ashforth, Connel

## Concern over human waste

I wrote to your paper over a year ago drawing attention to the issue of human waste being occasionally dumped into ditches and water catchment areas by unscrupulous camper van/caravan visitors. The main point of my letter was that untreated human waste getting into water courses may harbour the very nasty parasite Giardia. Now human waste is on the increase massively across the countryside.

At the time of my original letter I was concerned about the lack of public toilets and shower/washing facilities for holiday visitors across Scotland. I suggested one only needs to look at Germany and how it caters for camper-

van visitors – often free parking close to town centres where toilets and showers are common place, and visitors welcome in a healthy environment.

Now we are all seeing what happens when a viral pandemic arrives in our midst.

The dumping of human waste is no longer an occasional/isolated problem.

As an 80-year-old, I watch with growing alarm the road taken by the UK government in its easing restrictions/opening up/back to school/back to the office philosophy. Sadly the Scottish Government appears to be bending to the same 'economic' rules – Nicola Sturgeon's original caution was proven to be much more sensible – which may well prove disastrous for the Highlands and rural elderly, and the vulnerable of all ages.

Andrew Graham Noble, Kinlocheil



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## Comhairle congratulates students



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has congratulated all students throughout the Western Isles who have finished university, college or an apprenticeship at this difficult time.

Many graduates will not be finishing their studies with the customary celebrations, but the Comhairle would like to wish them every success in the future.

Three members of the Comhairle's

Communications Team, Peigi Ann Scott, above left, Eachainn Miller, centre, and James Mackinnon have recently finished their studies and have achieved three honours degrees in BA Gàidhlig agus Leasachadh, BA Journalism, and BA Politics, Journalism and Creative Writing.

Nigel Scott, communications officer, said: 'I am delighted that Eachainn, James and Peigi Ann

have graduated with Honours. They are all very valued members of the Communications Team.

Colin George Morrison, media coordinator, added: 'Peigi Ann, Eachainn and James have already made significant contributions to the Comhairle's communications during the pandemic. Congratulations to them and to all the students who have recently completed courses.'

## Fellowship recognition for Lochaber Rotary

Lochaber Rotary has been granted an award from the International Fellowship of Scouting Rotarians.

Awarded annually, the fellowship recognises support of the Scout or Guide movement which in this case helped fund new equipment for Acharacle Brownies, the new unit that covers Ardnamurchan and Moidart.

The Rotary is keen to encourage any type of community activity and so was very pleased to be able to help the new Brownie unit get established.

Commenting on the award, newly appointed Rotary president, Richard Baxter, said: 'While we were delighted to help the Brownies, it is encouraging to have our outreach work recognised



**Acharacle Brownies celebrate receiving their start-up funding back in May.**

within the Rotary movement too. Although Rotary is unable to meet owing to Covid-19 restrictions, we are keen to be open for business as best we can. Probably the best way to contact us at present is through Facebook.'

## Improvement work due to start at Sandwick Cemetery

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar intends to carry out improvement works (which had been scheduled for March) of an unused, existing area, of the lower part of Sandwick Cemetery which will provide an additional 1,200 lairs and associated access.

The work is now scheduled to begin week beginning August 3 and is expected to last for a period of 12 weeks.

During the period of works the cemetery will remain open, but access and movement through certain areas of the cemetery will be restricted for the duration of the works.



Paul and Mary MacColl were married in Glasgow on July 28, 1960.

## Happy anniversary to a diamond duo

Dunblane couple Paul and Mary MacColl celebrated 60 years of marriage on Tuesday, July 28.

Paul, originally living in Ballachulish, and Mary (nee Campbell) from Barra, were married in Glasgow on 28 July 1960. They have four children: John, Anne, Angus and

Sheena, and 10 grandchildren. Paul and Mary moved to Dunblane in 1968, and were both schoolteachers.

Mary is a traditional Gaelic singer and sang with the Stirling Gaelic Choir. She and Paul have been regulars for many years at the annual Royal National Mod.



Paul and Mary MacColl celebrated 60 years married on Tuesday.

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# Time to take part in 2020 #NoWrongPath campaign

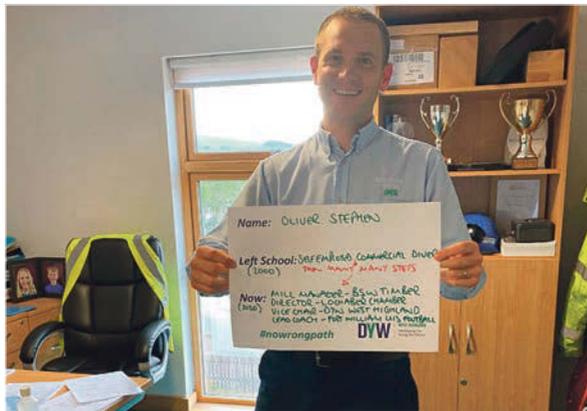
Hosted by Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) West Highland is participating in the national #NoWrongPath campaign, with all regions across Scotland looking for social media participants, in time for exam results day on August 4.

The social media campaign seeks to inspire and reassure young people that even in these most difficult times there are still opportunities for them to progress and that there is no wrong path to success.

This year has been unique due to the disruption to education and the subsequent impact with exams being cancelled for the first time in recent memory.

Now more than ever it is important to connect with school leavers who may not have received the results they expected, as well as with those in the older age groups who may be leaving college or university and are now facing a very different labour market.

DYW West Highland is reaching out to organisations and individuals who themselves may have travelled along many pathways to get to the point they



**Oliver Stephen, BSW Timber Mill Manager and DYW West Highland Board Member tells his #NoWrongPath story. Further information about the campaign can be found at [www.dywwesthighland.org](http://www.dywwesthighland.org)**

are at now and who can share their story. This can be done through a photograph, video or case study which can then be shared and promoted across social media using #NoWrongPath, to reach as many young people across Lochaber, Skye, and Wester Ross as possible.

This year DYW West Highland is also very keen to engage with organisations who may be offering apprenticeships, jobs, or training either now or in the near future so the team can help guide young people towards these opportu-

nities. To share your path, take these steps:

Step 1: Pledge your support for the campaign and mark Tuesday August 4 in your diary.

Step 2: On Tuesday post a photograph or video of yourself on social media with a handwritten sign with your name, what you did when you left school, what you are doing now and including #NoWrongPath and tag @DYWWestHighland.

Step 3: Nominate a friend or colleague to do the same.

## VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

### Eat Out to Help Out

Hospitality businesses across Scotland have been delighted to welcome back customers from July 15 as part of phase three of the route out of lockdown.

This reopening of restaurants, bars and accommodation providers is an important step on our road to recovery and a welcome chance for everyone to experience the pleasures of eating out, meeting up with friends, and enjoying a change of scene.

Hospitality is taking its first steps back to life and we have huge admiration for all the businesses who have gone to such great efforts to ensure that they are offering an enjoyable experience in the safest way possible for their guests and staff.

Whether you can't wait to go out, or are more cautious about coming out of lockdown, this is a significant moment when we can begin to experience a taste of our new normal; where enhanced hygiene, new ways of ordering and distance from others are all necessary precautions that allows us to get out and enjoy more of life's simple pleasures again.

If you haven't yet been out for a meal or a coffee with a friend, August is a great time to get back

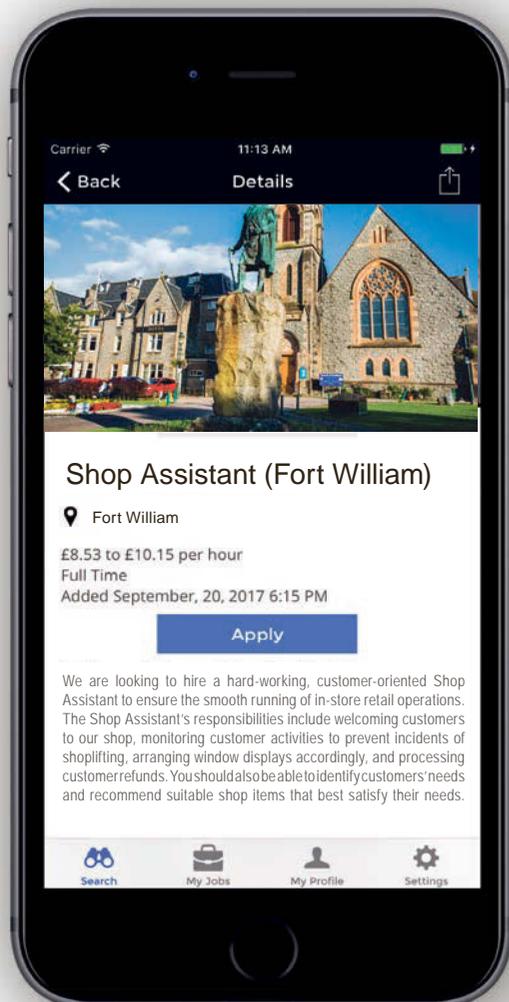


into the swing of things. The 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme, which was unveiled by the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, earlier this month, offers diners 50 per cent off meals and soft drinks up to a maximum discount of £10 per head when eating in from Monday to Wednesday from August 3-31. The offer can be used all day and there is no limit to the number of times you can use it during the month.

The offer applies to both adults and children, and means a family of four can save £40 on a meal and drinks costing £80. You don't need to do anything – the discount will simply be applied to your bill. Businesses then claim the money back from the government.

Claims can be made on a weekly basis and will be paid into bank accounts within five working days. Businesses are encouraged to sign up for the scheme by going to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

Keep a look out of the Eat Out to Help Out signs in local cafes, pubs and restaurants and enjoy some delicious dining out in Lochaber.



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# Campaign for shoppers to 'Love Local'



Scotland's Towns Partnership has launched a 'Love Local' campaign encouraging everyone to support businesses at the heart of their community.

The campaign seeks to remind all those living in Scotland, including Fort William, that town centres are not just a series of buildings and pavements – they are made up of people – and harness the compassion and solidarity that was shown by communities during the coronavirus outbreak to help fuel the recovery.

The campaign follows publication of new polling figures which showed that two thirds of Scottish residents intended to shop locally once high streets reopened and that the success of town centres depends on local support.

Businesses across Scotland have been working with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), local councils and others to put in place arrangements so people can shop locally, but safely.

The Love Local campaign has received the support of Communities Secretary Aileen Campbell MSP.

She commented: 'It is now more vitally important than ever to consider shopping, eating and drinking locally as we all have a role to play in Scotland's economic recovery.'

'Simple steps like choosing to visit a nearby shop or café, or buying goods or services from a business in your own community, helps support jobs and goes a long way to



Fort William businesses suffered terribly during lockdown when the high street was all but deserted. So now is the time to support our local businesses and let them know how much you appreciate them.

fostering the vibrant selection of products and services on offer close to home.

'By following the public health advice, we can all make exploring what the neighbourhood has to offer as safe as possible.'

'I would encourage everyone who is able to head out and discover for themselves what living locally can offer them – I know that business owners at the heart of our communities will appreciate it immensely.'

Phil Prentice, chief officer of Scotland's Towns Partnership, said: 'The impact of coronavirus has hit our town centres and local businesses hard. Now is the time for us all to support them to get back on their feet in a way which recognises that we still need to stay safe and follow the public health

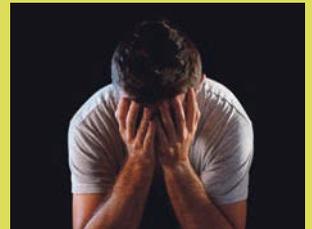
guidelines. By thinking local first, we can help Scotland's economic recovery from its grassroots, supporting our town centres within all of the public safety guidelines. The impact we can have by doing this should not be underestimated.'

'The breadth of businesses in our town centres is vast. Whether you need a book, a pint of milk, a night out and a meal or some garden furniture, please think local first.'

'Scotland Loves Local is all about getting people back to their roots and recognising that our town centre businesses and the people who run them are part of the fabric of our communities. Sometimes for generations these people have been there for us. Now it's time for us to be there for them.'

## Anxiety about returning to work is real, it will affect most of us.

As we are beginning to come out of crisis lockdown and back to work, we can expect to start to feel the trauma that we have and still are going through, like loss, fear, uncertainty and financial anxiety.



We are currently trying to fit normal responses to abnormal circumstances.

We may all face real or perceived threats and will definitely see them and react differently from some of our colleagues which can be difficult to understand and accept.

Many of us have suffered loss, all of us loss of freedom, some of us are wondering who we are outside our jobs, most of us will feel anxiety, this is normal, the unknown makes us anxious.

Please do not underestimate or disregard your feelings, let Lochaber Hope reach out to you.

Speak to one of our experienced counsellors or contact us to find out about our other helping services.

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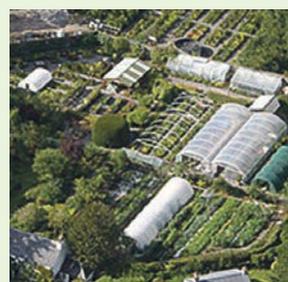


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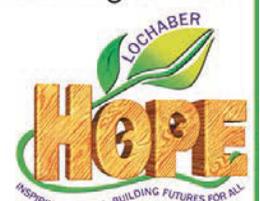


[www.kinlochlaichgardencentre.co.uk](http://www.kinlochlaichgardencentre.co.uk)  
Tel: 07881525754

## Anxiety about returning to work?

Do not underestimate or disregard your feelings of anxiety about returning to work.

For mental health and wellbeing support for employers and employees, contact us.



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## Stragglers go the extra mile to support Skye responders



### Meet Speedy, Lochaber Athletic Club's new mascot

Let me introduce myself. I am Speedy and this is my wee chum Little Speedy, Lochaber Athletic Club's (LAC) new club mascot.

I have no doubt I am the fastest mascot in the world. First Lochaber, the Highlands, Europe, we will run, we will have fun, we will improve our times. Wherever the juniors race, they will have me to cheer them on through hail, sleet, rain and snow, baking sun, drought, mud, floods and gales.

I was designed by nine-year-old Aaron Tresidder. You may have read about

this in the Lochaber Times in May when there was a competition with other mascots all jockeying to be our number one. My creator was the brilliant, lovely and talented Debbie Reynolds.

Thank you Debbie for my great waterproof coat, the world designed on my back, the famous blue stripes of Lochaber and LAC and SPEEDY written on my jacket.

I must head off for a run now. If you see me peep your horn, give me a wave. I will be cheering you on at Claggan Park, at a race or up the Ben.

A Portree family has won a challenge to walk, run or cycle as many miles as possible throughout June to raise funds for Skye Community Response, writes Fiona Scott.

A total of 112 teams signed up for the challenge and collectively raised £23,566 for the charity with The Stormyhill Stragglers crowned winners.

Norman MacLeod, Donna Nicolson and their two children Dean and Hazel covered an amazing 6,827 miles in total and were awarded a £250 voucher for the Portree Hotel donated by The Scottish Salmon Company.

The challenge was organised following the postponement of the annual Scottish Salmon Company Isle of Skye Half Marathon as a result of the coronavirus lockdown. Teams of four were asked to walk, run or cycle as many miles as they could over the month while maintaining social distancing.

Skye Community Response was set up to support the community throughout the pandemic. The response team co-ordinates volunteers and groups in Skye and Lochalsh offering services including food delivery, prescription collection, social services support and home support. The team takes calls and emails from the public and directs them to relevant information, organisations or volunteers that can help them.

Sam Crowe, race organiser at Skye Events said: 'On behalf of Skye Events, we thank



Donna and daughter Hazel.



Dean and Norman MacLeod.

everyone who participated and donated to the fundraiser.

'We hope this challenge will encourage many to stay

active post-lockdown. We would also like to thank The Scottish Salmon Company for its continued support and for

generously donating our top prize.'

Davy Taylor, Head of Production North, at The Scottish Salmon Company said: 'The Skye's the limit challenge was great fun and really gave us all a focus to achieve our own goals and keep busy during a unique time in all our lives. The weather for most of the month was kind and the scenery was fantastic. Seeing so many people taking part, with smiles on their faces as we passed each other walking or pedalling, was a sheer joy. Well done to the organising committee and everyone who supported, donated and took part.'

Su Cox, director at The Scottish Salmon Company, said: 'Congratulations to the Stormyhill Stragglers and the rest of the teams on such a fantastic achievement. Well done to everyone involved, including Davy Taylor and Ewen Maclean from The Scottish Salmon Company who between them covered 2,138 miles over the month.'

'It's wonderful to see the Skye community come together to promote positive health and wellbeing. We look forward to the return of The Scottish Salmon Company Isle of Skye Half Marathon.'



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