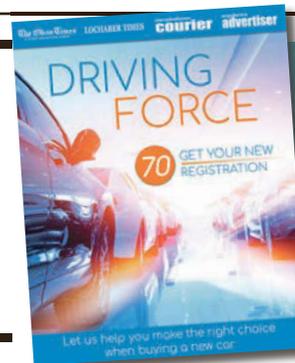




Lochnell youngsters have fun at skillorama



MMC launches new youth project



INSIDE 12-page motoring special

Campaigners call for ban on fish farm formaldehyde

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Pressure is growing on the Scottish Government to step in and halt the use of formaldehyde in fresh water lochs across the West Highlands.

Campaigners for Inside Scottish Salmon Feedlots (ISSF) have called for a total ban on the chemical at fish farms until a 'proper' public consultation on its use has taken place and they have tabled an online petition in support, bearing nearly 10,000 signatures.

It follows a Freedom of Information request earlier this year to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). It revealed more than 22 tonnes of formaldehyde had been poured into cages at 12 fish farms across Scotland between April and December 2019.

Fish farming companies are officially sanctioned by SEPA to apply the chemical to water as it is used to treat farmed salmon and control fungus, parasites, and disease.

The practice is legally permitted at a number of lochs, including Loch Tralraig near Melfort; Loch Shiel, Glenfinnan; Loch Lochy and Loch Arkaig, both Spean Bridge.

Campaigners have raised concerns about the impact on human health and wildlife, and 'accidental overdoses' - where more of the chemical enters the water than allowed.

The concern is the quantities being used and their impact.

The ISSF has now raised the issue with Roseanna Cunningham MSP, cabinet secretary for the environment, and Gillian Martin, convenor for Holyrood's Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.

The ISSF opposes the use of formaldehyde, calling it a 'cancer causing' chemical used for embalming. Ministers have yet to formally respond to ISSF's letter or the public petition.

However, the Scottish Government said in a statement to The Oban Times: "The use of formaldehyde is strictly regulated by the independent Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), and it can be safely used in fish farming.

'Formaldehyde use in fish farming, as regulated, does not pose a risk to food safety.'

ISSF has encouraged people to lobby their local MSP, MP and councillors.

It has also called on people to canvas support from their local fishery board, wild swimming clubs, conservation groups, schools, community groups, angling clubs and bird watching groups.

Corin Smith, founder of ISSF, based in Perthshire, said it recognised formaldehyde had been used in farming for many years and that it broke down 'relatively rapidly' in water.

The concern is the quantities being used and accidental overdoses and their impact.

Continued on page two.

Volunteers go extra mile for RNLI



Tobermory RNLI launched a Virtual Lifeboat Week last week with volunteers of all ages taking part in a 2,164-mile challenge.

More than £3,000 was raised from the event, during which volunteers walked, ran, swam, cycled or rowed the equivalent of the distance between Tobermory and Newfoundland.

The original challenge was to complete 1,739

miles (17-39 is the number of Tobermory lifeboat), but the group beat the target by 444 miles. Pictured are coxswain David McHaffie, mechanic Paul Gunn and operations manager Dr Sam Jones taking a quick breather on the final day of the challenge.

See next week's Oban Times for more on this story.



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OT

Call for ban on fish farm formaldehyde

Continued from page one.

Mr Smith said the effects of its use in a freshwater ecosystem in the quantities reported were not well researched or understood.

'Many people would expect a more precautionary approach to have been taken and far greater consultation, given the potential for widespread use in a number of lochs and river catchments throughout north and west Scotland,' he said.

'Having reviewed existing literature it is not clear or well understood to what extent formaldehyde on freshwater fish farms will directly impact wild fish, of any species, at the alevin, fry or parr stages, or indeed aquatic invertebrates and other foundation organisms that are in proximity to freshwater fish farms. The extent to which its effects may cascade through an entire ecosystem, diminishing biodiversity, is therefore not well understood and the risks are unquantified.'

The Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation (SSPO) – which calls itself the 'voice of Scottish farmed salmon' – declined to comment on the specific claims made by ISSF.

However, it said its position on the use of formaldehyde was that it was an 'active ingredient' in dilute form in a licensed medicine called formalin.

It says formalin is 'fully approved for use by SEPA' and is a medicine used in freshwater farms to 'protect young salmon from water-borne challenges'.

'Formaldehyde itself is a naturally occurring compound that swiftly breaks down in water and is therefore safe to use for both fish and the environment. Fish farmers are fully trained in the correct usage of any medicinal treatment used to protect fish health and welfare,' said the SSPO.

New Dunbeg homes' play areas worth wait

by Kathie Griffiths

kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Dunbeg residents are being told their promised play areas as part of the new housing development will be well worth the wait.

An open letter to Dunbeg Community Council has been sent by ward councillor Julie McKenzie to quash fears that plans for the play areas, which should have been built within five years of work starting on the 300 new homes, are being scrapped.

When Link Housing received Argyll and Bute Council's approval in 2012 to build phase one, it came with a condition that a formal play area would be provided within the first five years of starting work on the new homes near Dunstaffnage Mains Farm or pay no less than £40,000 to the authority towards other play facilities.

Yesterday, Wednesday August 19, planning officers were due to recommend to members of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee that they agreed to Link Housing's bid to have that Section 75 obligation discharged.

Councillor McKenzie told The Oban Times she was 'bamboozled' at how Dunbeg Community Council and others in the community had 'got the wrong end of the stick' and was sending out an open letter to save



people from worrying: 'They can't be building playgrounds in the middle of building houses and having children wandering in and between. The promised play areas will definitely happen but towards the end of phase three.'

'They will get the playgrounds and they will be much, much better than what they would have got at the start.'

'There will also be a municipal open space for teenagers,' she said.

Wednesday's report told committee members: 'Phases one and two of the Dunbeg development, comprising 75 dwellings, have been completed for a number of years. No formal play areas have, as yet, been provided for these developments.'

'It has been understood, and agreed by officers, since the initial master-

plan submissions for phase three that it was appropriate to amalgamate the, as yet unmet, play provision for phases one and two with the development of the larger phase three proposals, and as a result provide a coherent overall layout and new play facilities for all of the existing and future residents as part of this wider and more ambitious housing development.'

Officers reported the housing developer had been working on its play strategy for the whole site in consultation with the local school to provide play areas for phases one and two as well as the new phase three.

A Link spokesperson said: 'As part of phase three of the Dunbeg development, Link will provide play space provision for 375 homes.'

'Link is seeking approval from

Argyll and Bute Council to transfer the obligation to provide play space adjacent to phases one and two from their own respective planning conditions, to the planning conditions of the phase three development which is currently on site.

'This is because all the play areas are being delivered as part of this construction phase. Groundworks for the first play parks have begun on site and Link is working with the contractor, MacLeod Construction, on the phased construction of play areas to tie in with the adjacent housing completions.'

'The current proposals include eight equipped play areas, a multi-use games area and an unequipped open amenity area which will provide areas for all ages. Layouts for the initial play areas have been submitted to the planning authority for consideration and other areas are undergoing detailed design.'

In 2019 children from Dunbeg Primary School were visited by Link representatives and during the session children voted and commented on their favourite pieces of play equipment.

'These play areas will be the kids' vision and that will be well worth the wait,' added Councillor McKenzie.



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People parking overnight at Ganavan fined

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Nine fines have been issued since July to illegal overnight campers at Ganavan.

Argyll and Bute Council says while the 'overwhelming majority of visitors' use Ganavan responsibly, which is 'really appreciated', there are 'unfortunately' a small minority of people who ignore the rule prohibiting using vehicles overnight for camping or sleeping purposes.

'Where there are breaches, our wardens issue fines,' said a council spokesperson.

The fines are £60 and are discounted by 50 per cent if paid within 14 days.

But there are concerns that wardens are not appearing often enough, especially early on weekends when the problem of overnighters peaks.

The council spokesperson said staff visit Ganavan throughout the day at weekends and are on site to open the toilet each morning and either attend to or report back any issues.

The site is then attended in the evening, with the toilets locked and cleaned along with a litter pick.

'Our wardens cover the whole of Argyll and Bute and are primarily there to manage car parks and densely populated areas,' added the spokesperson.

'Since July, we have issued nine fines. Each fine is £60 and is discounted by 50 per cent if paid within 14 days,' she added.

But people living nearby and Dougie Graham, who runs the snack van at the car park, say the problem of overnighters is reaching crisis point and argue it is more than 'a small minority' flouting the ban.

More concerns are also being raised about the health and safety risks left by some people defecating and urinating behind the public toilets locked at night and by those who brush their teeth and spit it out.

One morning last week there were 12 overnight campers, said Mr Graham.



Dougie Graham says the problem of people parking overnight at Ganavan has reached crisis point.

He told the Oban Times he is 'on pins' about some 'dirty' campers behaviours and says he is not alone, with nearby residents now taking regular photographs of vans and motorhomes ignoring the overnight camping ban.

'They are defecating and urinating and leaving their waste which piled up. They brush their teeth and spit everywhere. We are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. This is most worrying. There's no track and trace - if it was an official campsite they would be required to leave their details. Who knows what they are leaving behind for the good people of Oban and other day visitors when they move off elsewhere? There's no knowing.'

'I'd say the situation here has reached crisis point. The other day I watched one man do an oil change on his van here. Some can be aggressive if you approach them, you have to be careful or you could end up with your teeth in your hands. I've never known it to be as bad as this before. I've had to change over my vans so I've got the one with 24-hour security here now,' added Mr Graham.

One woman who lives at Ganavan said although she had seen some parking fines issued to overnighters, it seemed only to be happening on week days and was not happening at weekends which was disappointing.

Oban, Lorn and the Isles councillors are looking for solutions to the Ganavan problem.

Ward councillor Julie McKenzie says the time has come for 'a more sensible, long-term approach to be taken on Ganavan.'

'There is no dispute that Ganavan has been impacted by a variety of issues over the lockdown period, however the majority of people who enjoy the area do so responsibly, and we cannot allow a minority engaging in irresponsible behaviour to spoil things for everyone.'

And she added: 'For me the immediate solution for Ganavan is straightforward and begins with adequate provision of infrastructure for camper-vans, alongside education and tough enforcement for anyone found flouting legislation. Longer term, I believe that an organised community-led initiative for the area could provide the most sustainable way forward.'

Councillor hopes to run for Argyll and Bute MSP role

A Glasgow city councillor is seeking to become the MSP representing Argyll and Bute in Holyrood.

Rhiannon Spear, originally from Bute, is hoping to be selected to the seat vacated by veteran SNP politician Michael Russell.

Mr Russell, aged 67, plans to step down, after 22 years in politics, ahead of next May's elections to the Scottish Parliament.

Ms Spear, aged 29, went to school on Bute and is the National Women's Convenor for the SNP.

She moved to Glasgow in 2008 to study law at university.

She said: 'It's definitely my home constituency and obviously growing up there, going to school there and having all of my family still living on the island, I truly understand the area, the challenges it faces, and the massive opportunities and potential that it holds from the people who live there and the talent the region holds.'

'It would be the honour of my life to represent the area.'



Councillor Rhiannon Spear.

'I'm one of those people who moved away to go to university and to have the opportunity to move home and represent Bute

would be a dream for me.'

Ms Spear has been an SNP member since the age of 20 and is a founding member of Generation Yes in 2012.

Ms Spear was elected to the council in 2017 to represent Greater Pollok; made the Glasgow list for MSP in 2016 and chairs Glasgow's Social Enterprise Board and the TIE Campaign - Time for Inclusive Education.

Party members across Argyll and Bute will have the ultimate say in a vote of the successful shortlisted candidates.

The party will host an all-woman shortlist to improve gender balance.

Police searching for missing Kilninver woman find body

Police searching for missing Kilninver woman May Petrie recovered her body on Monday morning, August 17.

The 56-year-old, who was reported missing on Sunday, was found by officers on a hill ground near Kilninver around 10.40am. Her family are aware. Police said there appears to be no suspicious circumstances surrounding her death and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

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OT

ScotRail trials school train for OHS pupils

ScotRail is to trial a dedicated school train to meet the needs of students needing to stay safe from Covid, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The special service, complying with the Scottish Government's guidelines on managing Covid-19, will run for four weeks seeing the 8.35am arrival to Oban from Dalmally and 4.11pm departure from Oban to Dalmally for high school pupils. They must wear face coverings at the stations and on the train.

Anyone else from Dalmally, Loch Awe, Taynuilt and Connel Ferry stations will be transported by bus.

Scott Prentice, ScotRail Head of Business Development, said: 'We're delighted to be able to

support local pupils to travel safely to school. We've worked closely with Argyll and Bute Council and the High School so that we meet the needs of parents and students.

'While a small number of customers may have to alter their journeys, it's important that we support the safer return of pupils to school, which is a priority for the local community.'

Head Teacher at Oban High School Peter Bain said: 'We are extremely grateful for our very positive partnership with ScotRail. Working together we are able to ensure we provide a safe, comfortable and efficient service that allows all our children to attend our school each day.'



Oban railway station

Oban NHS staff in 'virtual' pay demo

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Unison members across the Oban area took part in a 'virtual demo' on Tuesday as part of a national demonstration about NHS pay.

The online 'Pay Up Now' event - with members asked to post selfies which read 'Clapping doesn't pay our bills' - coincided with socially-distanced demonstrations outside hospitals in Rothesay on the Isle of Bute, and Raigmore, Inverness.

It follows union criticisms of the Scottish Government's 'refusal' to sit down and discuss a pay rise for all NHS workers, according to Unison, which wants talks opened on a three-year pay deal.

Britt Doughty-Godchaux, Argyll and Bute Unison convenor at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, said pay was an essential issue for members.



Oban NHS staff took part in a 'selfie' demo.

She said it was a 'pressure point' because the NHS was being 'depleted of talent' and the pressure, culture and low pay created 'untenable conditions'.

Healthcare workers across the board, including those who cleaned and maintained facilities, nurses and those working in data, had been in the spot-

light during the pandemic, she said.

'It seems ironic then that over the last decade these same workers have had year-on-year real term pay cuts made worse with Covid-associated expenses. Without question, NHS workers have performed heroically during this time, so it seems to pay them fairly for the work they do should also be done without question.'

Unison's 'Pay Up Now' campaign is thanking the public and asking them for their continued support for a NHS pay rise.

Tom Waterson, chairman of Unison Scotland Health Committee, said: 'The reality is that NHS workers have seen their pay eroded over the past decade and some NHS staff are among the lowest paid in Scotland.'

'So please continue your support for NHS workers. They deserve it.'

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Sophie King and Des MacMillan appeal to people aged between 16 and 21 to come forward.

Martyn's Monday Club opens doors to young people

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A successful mental health support group for men and women has now expanded to welcome young people.

Martyn's Monday Club is opening the doors of its Breadalbane Street premises to male and female young people aged between 16 and 21 between 6pm-8pm every Wednesday.

Chairman and founder Des MacMillan said it had planned to open a group for young people earlier this year until the coronavirus pandemic struck.

Mr MacMillan said: 'This is the first opportunity we have had and it will be a safe place for youths to come and talk together.'

'They don't have to have a mental health issue, it's just a place where they can get support and have a talk.'

Young people will have found the coronavirus lock-

down tough and can also face uncertainty at this time around exam results and future careers, along with the transition from being teenagers to young adults, said Mr MacMillan, who also volunteers for See Me Scotland, a national programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination.

'They don't need to have mental health issues, it's just a place they can get support and talk.'

The demand for a youth group in Oban exists and the charity is also seeking young people aged between 16 and 21 to train as a facilitator so that the group can be led by a peer.

Initially, Sophie King, aged 20, of Oban, has volunteered to lead the group, and her

mum, Lorraine, is already a co-ordinator for the service.

Mr MacMillan said many adults had commented that they wished they had access to such a group while growing up, which was another reason for establishing a service for young people.

Since Martyn's Monday Club was first established in 2019, it has seen more than 135 people - drawing people from Fort William and as far away as Callander, a 140-mile round trip, which demonstrated the acute shortage of such groups, with some regarding its services as 'life changing'.



Clarification

Dawsons Estate Agents has asked us to make clear that in an article in last week's Oban Times, concerning Rockhill Farm, the company's sales brochure for the property clearly stated that planning consent for three building plots at the site had

lapsed. We apologise for any inference otherwise.

All cool at school

After understandable nervousness about returning into the classroom last week following months of home schooling due to Covid-19, Oban High School headmaster Peter Bain told The Oban

Times that the transition back to the school building had gone well, saying: 'Having spent time listening to many of the youngsters raving about their new classes and meeting new friends over the last few days, I'm pleased to report our youngsters have had a fabulous start to the year.'

NHS heroes welcomed to Oban and Loch Fyne by Crerar Hotels

A leading Scottish hotel group welcomed more than 380 key workers and their families last weekend to say thank you for their efforts during the pandemic, writes Ellis Butcher.

Crerar Hotels dedicated all rooms across its portfolio of seven hotels entirely to NHS key workers, including the 74-room Oban Bay Hotel on the Corran Esplanade, and hotels on the Isle of Mull and Inveraray.

It amounted to 850 guests and 2,000 complimentary overnight stays between August 14-16 and resulted in upwards of £250,000 being spent by the hotel group to express its gratitude.

At Oban Bay Hotel, pipers welcomed the guests, who enjoyed welcome drinks on the hotel's sea deck. At Loch Fyne Hotel & Spa, the heroes were greeted with a colourful rainbow display from the children of Inveraray, who were also armed with pots and pans to hail their arrival.

Chris Wayne Wills, chief executive officer of Crerar Hotels, said: 'We were so



pleased to welcome over 380 NHS heroes and their families from across Scotland for a weekend of celebrations. It was great to see them all relax and have a good time.

'All seven of our hotels, from Nairn to Oban, threw open their doors in honour of the incredible key workers, who continue to put themselves on the front line, day in and day out. I and the Crerar Hotels team were lucky enough to meet many of these courageous workers face to face and personally thank them for all of their work.'

Each guest received a per-

sonal note of thanks from First Minister Nicola Sturgeon. It read: 'Our Scottish NHS workers have been our first line of defence against Covid-19 and we are all in their debt. It's heartening to see that despite all the current economic challenges in hospitality, Crerar Hotels have still found time to reflect the debt of gratitude we all feel.'

Crerar Hotels was founded in 2005 by Paddy Crerar CBE. More than half of the company's distributable profits are gifted annually to local causes and charities through the company's Crerar Trust.

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Dervaig tree nursery re-roots after Covid

A community tree nursery at Dervaig is taking root again after Covid stunted its growth for four months, writes Kathie Griffiths.

After work on the site in Mull had to come to a halt due to the virus, volunteers are gearing themselves up to carry on with the scheme once more.

An appeal has just gone out for the donation of a tank that could hold anything from 1,000 to 5,000 litres of water so an irrigation system can be set up to nurture the native tree seedlings that will eventually grow there. Ideally the project is looking for a HDPE water tank, says Mull & Iona Community Trust (MICT) general manager Moray Finch.

There is a burn running by the site and the plan is to take water from it to the tank.

The community nursery has also now put up deer fencing, deer gates and a polytunnel is also onsite, with volunteers



expected to start work putting it up soon, said Mr Finch, adding: 'After a four-month hiatus due to Covid, work has started again. It's great to see.'

The project has been registered with the forestry authority so it can start collecting seeds ready to grow on, including acorns and hazelnuts.

MICT is joint partners with Mull Native Woodlands Group in this project. The woodland group was so inspired after

taking part in a previous Kew Garden seed bank project it decided to find a piece of land to grow its own trees from seed and replenish the island's Atlantic rainforest.

The nursery is on former forestry land next door to Dervaig Community Orchard. Because the orchard was a former rubbish tip, the new project next to it ticked all the right boxes with landfill charity fund EB Scotland to secure a successful

bid for £23,000. The 0.5 hectare forestry site was covered in tree stumps and needed clearing but received help from Mull-based TSL contractors to prepare the area.

Anyone who has a water tank they would be willing to donate should contact mfinch@mict.co.uk

Meanwhile, another Mull & Iona Community Trust project has just been completed.

Thanks to funding split between Sustrans and Argyll and Bute Council, a 30m stretch of new pavement has been tarmacked near 14 houses built at Lochdon last year by West Highland Housing Association. The pavement means youngsters living in the houses can safely get to Lochdonhead Primary School.

'It's not the biggest project we've achieved but there's a

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



WHERE IS THIS?



What a great spell of weather we've had.

I know I shouldn't moan, but it was a bit too hot for me, although it was wonderful to see everyone enjoying it.

I watched kids jumping of the slip at the North Pier into the water and they were having the time of their lives. Wild swimming seems to have really taken off, too, with lots of lovely photos on Facebook of people braving lochs and the sea to make the most of what we have in abundance here, water.

This year was to have been a celebration of our coast and waters which sadly hasn't happened – there was so much to look forward to but if we're lucky then next year we will manage to squeeze in lots of the events that didn't happen this year.

I was delighted to hear that our fabulous wee cinema is reopening next week. I've always been a fan and was so disappointed the few years that Oban had no cinema – we have to ensure that it gets the support it needs and continues to thrive, as the

thought of having no cinema doesn't bear thinking about.

I know the board and staff will do their very best to ensure everyone is protected and safe, both staff and customers, and I must admit my confidence in going out and about is increasing as I see the care that the majority of places are taking in ensuring everyone stays safe.

I know it's hard for many businesses just now but with our help and support by eating out and shopping locally, then hopefully things will continue to improve and we can get nearer and nearer to a normal life.

The photograph last week was of the beautiful beer garden at the Lorne which is the result of Debbie's hard work – it's well worth a visit. And this week's photograph is great for a wee walk.

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Ballet West dance school in turmoil amid allegations

The founder and principal of Scotland's biggest ballet school, Gillian Barton, has been suspended.

The suspension follows the resignation of the Taynuilt-based dance school's vice-principal, her son, Jonathan Barton, amid allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards students and that he abused his position at the family-run boarding school.

The allegations became public last Wednesday evening following an ITV News investigation.

The ballet school's board of trustees has now appointed Dr Kirsty Hood, QC, to lead an independent, external inquiry.

It said last week that the safety and wellbeing of students was of paramount importance and that these allegations had come as a shock to the school.

In a statement issued this week, the board of trustees said: 'Any emerging allegations will form part of



The Ballet West board says it welcomes an investigation by Police Scotland into the allegations.

also urge ITN to provide any relevant information to Police Scotland who have been contacted by the board of trustees at Ballet West.'

The board has said that parents or students requiring information about the current term can contact the school on 01866 822641 or by email on admissions@balletwest.co.uk.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'We can confirm that officers have been made aware of concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour. However, there has been no criminality established to date.'

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ongoing external and internal investigations.

'Since ITN broadcast allegations last Thursday, the board has yet to receive any complaint from either students or parents.

'The vast majority of parents who have contacted us have done so in support of Ballet West and the quality of edu-

cation, but we welcome an investigation by Police Scotland and urge anyone who feels they have cause for complaint to make these concerns known to the police or the Ballet West board at board@balletwest.ac.uk so it can be dealt without delay.

'Any correspondence will be treated as confidential. We

Up to 15 public toilets set to close despite concerns

Public toilets across Argyll and Bute are set to be closed as a cost-saving measure – despite reports of human waste being left outside some facilities, writes Ellis Butcher.

The council's business continuity committee has agreed to an officer's recommendation to keep 35 public conveniences open until the end of October but then close 10 to 15, leaving only a 'core set' open. The council has been asked to identify which toilets are proposed to be retained and lost.

Faced with a budget deficit because of Covid and strict new guidelines requiring more extensive cleaning, council officials are looking to reduce costs.

However, the decision comes amid rising community concerns about people fouling the area due to a lack of open toilets.

A meeting of the committee heard widespread discussion on what should be done going forward.

Councillor Douglas Philand asked: 'On the green at Kilmartin, they have found human excrement – they know it is human because there was toilet paper beside it. Is it possible,

based on that, to look at opening other facilities?'

Kirsty Flanagan, the council's head of strategic finance, responded: 'There is an option to open more toilets, but it will come at a cost. We also have the paper on Covid-19 costs, which we are trying to minimise.'

Councillor Rory Colville then asked: 'Have we any way of engaging with communities?'

Ms Flanagan responded: 'Services are engaging where they have contact, but prior to the pandemic they tried but had limited take-up from communities. If groups come forward I'm sure they will engage.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'It's not uncommon for some of our public toilets to close over the winter period. Nevertheless, officers will work with the area committee members over the coming weeks to identify which public toilets should remain open. Taking this approach allows us to offer the best possible service within the normal budget we have available. This is something we need to consider given the financial impact Covid-19 has placed on the council.'

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OT

Heavy rain closes Old Military Road diversion

The Old Military Road parallel to the landslip-stricken A83 at the Rest and Be Thankful was closed from noon on Tuesday after heavy rain was forecast.

The Met Office issued the yellow warning for heavy rain across most of Scotland from 1pm until 9pm on Tuesday, including sporadic heavy showers of up to 30mm which had the potential to affect the Rest and Be Thankful.

A safety check was due to take place at first light on Wednesday morning as The Oban Times went to press to assess the route before reopening the Old Military Road diversion.

All traffic was once again diverted via the A83, A82, A85 and A819.

Western Ferries has also been available as an alternative travel option for motorists, with sailings between Dunoon and Gourrock.

A large landslip hit the A83 and embankments above and below the road on August 4, which teams have been working round the clock to repair.

Geotechnical specialists have assessed the area and a

large amount of loose debris is still present in the steep channels above and below the A83, which has the potential to become dislodged during heavy rain.

The Old Military Road diversion was also temporarily closed on Monday between midnight and 4am to allow a small section of road at a tight bend to be resurfaced.

Eddie Ross, BEAR Scotland's North West representative, said: 'We've been paying close attention to the weather forecast and advice from our geotechnical specialists and the safest option was to close the Old Military Road given the potential for heavy rain in the area.'

'Safety has to come first and with loose debris present in the steep channels above and below the A83 carriageway we took the difficult decision to close the local diversion road for safety.'

'We thank the local community and road users for their patience while we do everything we can to address the landslip at the Rest and Be Thankful.'

CalMac helps Tobermory Pipe Band keep the beat

Tobermory High School Pipe Band is drumming up more new members than ever before thanks to CalMac's Community Fund, writes Kathie Griffiths.

They now have more than 30 young people learning and playing the drums.

The fund meant the band were able to buy new drum harnesses and now have almost twice as many drummers as pipers.

Pipe Major Calum MacLean said: 'The purchase of the new harnesses has made a massive difference to the band members for carrying the drums and feeling more confident while playing in front of people.'

'The old harnesses were in limited supply, were uncomfortable and not easy to adjust, making them difficult to wear for long periods, especially for the members who are quite small or tall.'



'We now have 15 drummers ready at competition level using the harnesses with another 15 coming through as learners on tenor, snare and bass drums.'

Drumming is now being offered in both the primary and secondary of Tobermory High School with both parents and teachers commenting on the changes in confidence being

part of the band brings.

Last year CalMac's Community Fund was designed to create new opportunities for young people by supporting non-profit youth organisations based in a mainland port or island the company serves. Organisations applied for an award between £500 to £2,000.

So far the fund has supported

Tobermory High School Pipe Band now has more than 30 drummers in the band.

76 projects, from woman's football in the Outer Hebrides, to the Campbeltown Sea Cadets and a Gaelic youth club on Skye.

Each application was judged by a screening panel of young people recruited from across the company's network, in partnership with Young Scot.

'A key part of the Community Fund's aims is to open up opportunities for island young people that they would otherwise not have access to. With the increase in numbers participating in the band there was clearly a demand that wasn't being met. We were delighted to be able to kit them out to enable more island young people to take part,' said CalMac's Corporate Social Responsibility manager, Gordon McKillop.

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A 20-year-old man has been issued with an anti-social behaviour warning after a white Peugeot van was seen to be driven at excessive speed at about 12.05am on Saturday August 8, on Main Street, Bowmore, Islay. An ASBO warning is valid for 12 months and if the driver or the vehicle is involved in a similar anti-social incident within that period, the vehicle will be seized by police.

Between 7pm on August 9 and 7am on August 10, the former Sea Life Sanctuary building at Barcaldine was broken into and vandalised. Police are investigating.

About 5.55pm on August 10, near the A828 at Barcaldine, a 61-year-old man allegedly behaved in a manner which caused others distress and alarm. The man was arrested and charged. A report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

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

Councillors consider 'digital default' working

Councillors have urged caution over plans by Argyll and Bute Council to encourage more remote working after the Covid-19 pandemic has eased.

A report which went to the council's business continuity committee revealed plans for working digital by default, which would see offices not being reopened.

But members attending the meeting by Skype on Thursday August 13 queried whether that approach would work for the wellbeing of council staff.

The measure is one of a number of proposals listed as part of the council's budget planning for the 2021/22 financial year and beyond.

A review process is ongoing and it was agreed to set up a cross-party budget working group. The 2021/22 budget setting process is likely to begin in October, with the budget itself being set in February.

A report on the subject,



The council's Kilmory headquarters at Lochgilphead.

by Kirsty Flanagan, head of Strategic Finance, said: 'The Covid-19 pandemic has seen a move to home-working and remote/virtual meetings which have worked well and council business has continued.'

'The review will consider where there are opportunities to move more to digital, not reopen properties and save on travel costs in addition to

office costs, including printing which has significantly reduced during the lockdown.'

Councillor Lorna Douglas said during the meeting: 'I have a slight concern as to whether this will save us any money, in that many companies are looking to do more blended work. Defaulting to digital is costing them a lot to set up. I wondered if that was

being looked at, as it could cost quite a lot.'

Ms Flanagan answered: 'We will pick this up as part of the review. When we were putting together the cost template for Covid, there is a reduction in staff travel as more are working from home and engaging with virtual meetings. We believe there is a good amount of savings to get.'

Councillor Robin Currie said: 'There may be a reduction for the council as an employer, but I would probably say that there is an increase in costs to employees by working from home. This is particularly in the months to come, during winter, regarding heating and electricity costs. These and other additional costs all have to be weighed up, as does the wellbeing of employees. There are a lot to think about.'

Ms Flanagan answered: 'We had a lengthy discussion on home-working, and interest-

ingly Jane Fowler (head of improvement and HR) has reported through various groups that there was a reduction in absence levels. This is assumed to be to do with home-working. These are all things to be taken into consideration.'

Councillor Gary Mulvaney said: 'The key going forward will be flexibility. I appreciate there are issues but equally there are benefits. As an employer, we need to look at how it works for everybody. The model has changed from before Covid-19, perhaps irrevocably.'

Ms Fowler then said: 'We have done some work with trade unions in getting feedback from employees about working from home.'

'It suits some, but not others, so we have to look at it on a case-by-case basis, looking at delivering the best services we can and engaging with staff as best we can.'



Eye to eye with John Wallace

Post Lockdown Vision

It hardly seems like the blink of an eye but it is six months since I last wrote my monthly column. It has been quite an amazing and very strange time we have all lived through. At the start of the year I wrote about 2020 being the year of vision. I was excited about the boost all the publicity my profession would have because of the 2020 link. Six months later my practices have only just reopened. Because of the dangers of COVID-19 we have had to introduce strict infection control procedures which have meant it takes twice as long to see each patient.

My biggest concern about this lost time is for patients I am now seeing who have major vision or eye health issues. In common with most of my



profession, I spent lockdown telephone and video triaging patients. Some needed urgent referral to hospital for treatment. Understandably, many were extremely reluctant to go to hospital. Even more "did not want to cause a fuss" during lockdown and did not even call to discuss their problem. Since I started back earlier this month, I have seen sev-

eral patients who have major problems that would have been treated much more effectively if only they had presented during lockdown.

I can fully understand why patients are reluctant to venture out from the safety of their home. I spent four months shielding and could not believe the idiocy of many people who failed to social distance or to wear facemasks when I finally was able to venture into shops earlier this month.

NHS Scotland has set very strict standards for my profession. I actually feel safe at work because of these guidelines. Even if you don't feel safe you can still call for advice if you have any issues with your vision.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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OT

Festivals must wait to apply for funding

Organisers of major events and festivals in Argyll and Bute will have to wait until late October to apply for financial support from the council, councillors have decided.

A third round of applications to the authority's Strategic Events and Festivals Fund – with a total of £90,000 available – was due to be launched on August 20.

But councillors have agreed to push the launch date back until October 22, with a closing date for applications of December 7.

Members of Argyll and Bute Council's temporary business continuity committee (BCC) approved the date change when they meet via video link on August 13.

In a report to the meeting, executive director Kirsty Flanagan, said: 'It is hoped that by deferring the process that the position with regard to Covid-19 and the holding of events in 2020/21 and other key event grant schemes such as EventScotland, currently suspended, will be clearer.'

'Events are faced with an unprecedented set of ex-



Kirsty Flanagan

traordinary and challenging circumstances brought about as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and it is anticipated that the situation will continue to be challenging.

'It is hoped that by pushing the launch date back until the end of October that this will allow the position for 2021/22 to be a bit clearer and to ensure that the process is as fit for purpose at the time of the launch.'

In June the BCC agreed that grants already approved for events which have since had to be cancelled this year due to the pandemic could be carried over until 2021.

Pandemic set to cost Argyll £12M

The Covid-19 pandemic is set to cost Argyll and Bute Council around £12 million across the current financial year, a report has revealed, writes Andrew Galloway.

The document states that the biggest estimated costs to the authority caused by coronavirus are £2.3m in lost harbour income and £1.2m in lost income for waste collection.

The council was also expected to face a £1.8m cost for a 'blended approach' to children's education, but that figure is now expected to be significantly lower after the Scottish Government said pupils should return to class full-time.

The report went to a meeting of the council's business continuity committee on Thursday August 13. It was agreed to note the position and 'mitigation measures' being taken by the council. It has also established an informal cross-party working group comprising nine

councillors, with council leader Aileen Morton to chair.

The report highlighted that council tax income was down by almost £1m at the end of June. It is roughly estimated that by the end of the year, the figure will be slightly more than £500,000.

The authority's chief financial

The biggest estimated costs are £2.3m lost in harbour income and £1.2m in income from waste collection.

officer Kirsty Flanagan said in the report: 'The first submission of full-year estimates was submitted to COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) on June 19.

'Naturally a number of assumptions have been made on costs that will be incurred,

the income that will be lost and the pace that the recovery of services will take place. The full year cost at that time was estimated to be £12.176m.

'This full year estimate was based on a blended education approach, however, the deputy first minister made an announcement on June 23 and outlined that the new central planning assumption will be that there will be a full return to school in August, should the virus continue to be suppressed and it is safe to do so.

'This approach was confirmed on July 30, and schools will have a full return and therefore the estimated full year cost will be less, which will also include a reduction to the previous school transport estimate.

'The estimates relating to education and school transport are currently being updated and a verbal update will be given at committee.'

The report also stated that the council has saved nearly £800,000 in school meals, nearly £300,000 in travel expenses and just over £300,000 in connection with waste. In total, reduced costs amounted to nearly £2m.

On the matter of council tax, Ms Flanagan added: 'As at the end of June, council tax collections were down by 1.56 per cent on collections this time last year which equates to a circa £0.865m reduction in income.

'Some of this reduction has already been rescheduled to be repaid over the remainder of the year.

'It is very difficult to estimate what the lost income will be by the end of the year; at this stage it has been estimated that it could be in the region of £0.555m, equivalent to a one per cent reduction in collections, and this will be kept under review.'

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Bayern see off PSG in hotly contested Lochnell Skillorama

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Lochnell Football Club were undeterred by the recent lockdown, going virtual to run their annual end-of-season Skillorama contest.

More than 50 youngsters and adults enjoyed a series of speed, agility and skills challenges devised by the club's football coordinator Cammy Lowe, with gardens, driveways and back yards being fully utilised to accommodate the activities.

Team Bayern Munich (Andy, Duncan and Fergus Hunt and Ruairidh Newis) came out on top with Team PSG (Kai and Finn MacKechnie, and Roan and Ross MacColl) coming in a close second.

During lockdown, the club managed to continue their activities online with a weekly 'at home' training session for all members. At the same time, the 2008 squad, who will become the club's first



The youngsters had a lot of fun at their annual end-of-season Skillorama, despite it having to be held virtually.

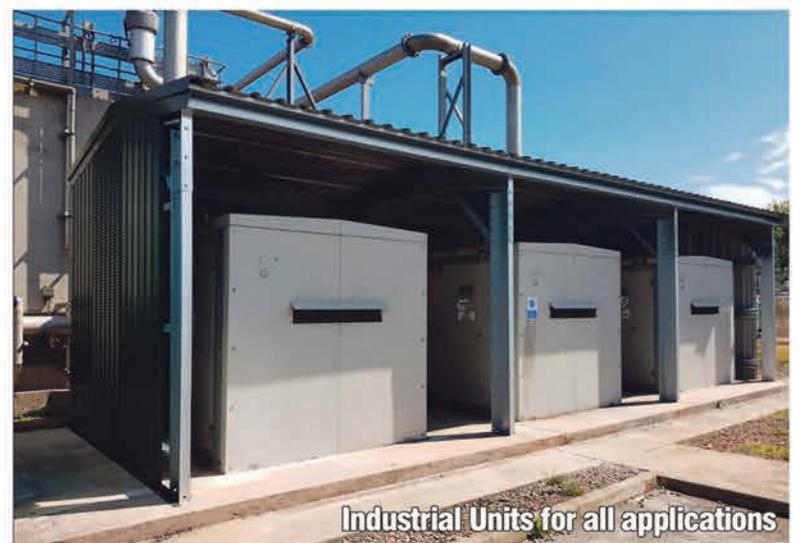
ever 11-a-side team, kept their focus by engaging with the SFA's Activity Hub together with a series of inter-club skills challenges with Lochgilphead Red Star.

With the easing of restrictions, the club are now looking forward to resuming outdoor sessions. Participation at these sessions is by prior booking only, and new membership enquiries can be made through the club's Facebook page.



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LETTERS

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or The Editor, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll PA34 4HB

NHS staff deserve better

If the last six months have shown us anything, it is the massive debt this country owes its NHS workers.

From consultants to hospital cleaners and porters, GPs, medical centre staff, dentists, midwives, pharmacists, among others, they all put aside their own safety and health – and to a large extent that of their families – to ensure we were cared for. And that care covered not only those who caught Covid-19, but also many people who needed other emergency treatment.

During that time so many people spoke of their gratitude, and the fact that we must not forget the sacrifices many NHS staff made – and in all honesty, always have made – to keep us well. However, on Tuesday, Unison members across the Oban area took part in a virtual demo as part of a national demonstration about NHS pay, following union criticisms of the Scottish Government's 'refusal' to sit down and discuss a pay rise for all NHS workers.

The Scottish Government has done a lot of good work during the pandemic to help keep the country safe, but at the very least our health service staff deserve to be paid a fair wage for the work they do, and if the government is refusing to sit down with them to discuss and negotiate that, shame on them.

Our NHS staff deserve better than this.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we

reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

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Call for urgent action on A83

Open letter sent to Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister and Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Islands and Connectivity Dear Nicola and Michael,

The issue that never fails to unite politicians at all levels of government and of all party persuasions is the need to ensure Argyll and Bute stays connected and open for business through a permanent, robust solution for the A83 Rest and Be Thankful – a solution that works.

Last week's landslip continues to close the Rest and the Old Military Road, which itself was out of action for a period, will be shut again tonight (August 10) at 9pm due to weather conditions. This continuing impact is why all of Argyll and Bute's elected representatives have been united in pressing, once again, for urgent action.

Our local Members of the Scottish Parliament, Michael Russell, Jackie Baillie and Donald Cameron, have been swift to engage with us and to add their own voices to these calls. They join us in writing to you to reinforce that request for action on behalf of the people of Argyll and Bute. We are asking you to convene an urgent special meeting of the A83 Taskforce – on a virtual basis if needs be – as soon as possible to focus specifically on outline options for a permanent solution and for that meeting to consider and agree the following timescale for the same:

- Nature of permanent solution to be identified and confirmed by March 31, 2021
- Contract to construct permanent solution to be awarded by December 31, 2021
- Work to start as soon as possible thereafter with completion by December 31, 2023, at latest.

We know this requires a tremendous effort from everyone involved, including Transport Scotland which would have to start work on this immediately for it to succeed.

Argyll and Bute Council will do all it can in this to co-operate and to encourage all other partners, from all sectors, to do likewise. We believe if the will is there, on all counts, to deliver a permanent solution, this can be achieved – because the risk of failing to do so is far too great and there is evidence of innovative, viable solutions of similar scale being established in other regions with similar geography and rurality.

The threats to Argyll and Bute's economic success and to the contribution it makes to the national economy are well-known, as are the various personal impacts on those who live and work in our communities and who find their business, social and health-related activities disrupted without warning when landslips close the Rest.

Our biggest concern now, though, is continued

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk

“Tha coltas math air a’ bhuntàta am-bliadhna!” Nach b’ eòlach sinn uile air abairtean den t-seòrsa sin mun bhuntàta, agus mu iomadach planntais eile. Bha sinn cuideachd glè eòlach air duan eile nach robh idir cho subhach, deireadh foghair, is daoine ag ràdh nach “robh ann ach am bàrr”, is nach do choilean e a ghealladh! Sin beagan den dùbhlàn a tha daonnan an lùib obair-cuir is buain aig ìre bheag is mòr, agus tha an fheadhainn a tha ris an obair air fàs leagte ri mar a thachras cuisean.

Tha ar saoghal làitheil air a riaghladh le eòlaichean de gach seòrsa a bhios a’ fàidheadaireachd air na tha iad am beachd a thachras agus tha saoghal ionmhais, gnìomhachais, agus poilitigs fo bhuidhe nam beachdan sin, agus gu ìre tha “lèirsinn” nan daoine sin a’ riaghladh ghluasad an t-saoghail nas motha na ceannardan riaghlaidh! Gun teagamh sam bith ‘s math ionnsachadh bho eachdraidh agus cha bu chòir cùl a chur ri beachdan glìce, ach mar a thuir Àrd-Ollamh Eaconamachd uaireigin a thaobh staitistearachd, tha e feumail gus barrachd soilse a thoirt air trioblaid seach a cheartachadh! Ach tha naidheachdan an t-saoghail a’ dearbhadh dhuinn gach latha mar a tha miltean de dh’eòlaichean foghlamaichte a’ dèanamh deagh chosnadh à bhith a’ breithneachadh air na tha romhainn. Feumar aideachadh gum bheil cuid den bhreithneachadh sin air tighinn air adhart gu mòr, ged nach biodh ann ach an ìre gum bheil teicneòlas air fios mun aimsir a leasachadh gu ìre ‘s nach eil

adhbhar aig na bodaich is na cailleachan (sinne!) a bhith tuilleadh a’ càineadh “aimsir na wireless” mar a bha!

Ach saoilidh mise gur còir do ro-aithrisiche onarach aideachadh gum bheil tomhas de thuiteamas anns an ìre gun tig na tha e neo i a’ fàisneachd gu buil, car mar a tha an croitear agus toradh a chuid bàrr. Bha seann Ghàidheil a’ tuigsinn sin na b’ fheàrr na tha sinne nuair a chruthaich iadsan an seanfhacal “na àireamh a chaidh an t-iasg gus an tig e às a’ mhuir!”. Tha truaighe Covid 19 a’ bagairt slughan an t-saoghail ann an caochladh dhòighean, eadar slàinte agus gu h-eaconamach, agus tha beachdan glè dhraghail a’ nochdadh air na dh’fhaodadh sin ciallachadh dhuinn uile a thaobh dìth chosnaidhean is eile. Nach bu mhath gum biodh na h-eòlaichean sin dìreach fiù ‘s rud beag ceàrr agus nach biodh an trioblaid a’ leantainn cho fada gun bhacadh maireannach, agus cuideachd gun tigeadh a’ mhòr-shluagh às an deuchainn seo nas glìce, agus nas càirdeile dha chèile, na bha iad roimhe.

“Gum ann a ghonar am fiosaiche, mun tig an fhiosachd fìor!”

Forecasting the future is not an exact science and successful outcomes will always depend on an element of luck. It would be good if the worst predictions for health and economy following Covid 19 did not materialise, and that people emerged wiser and more respectful of each other.

Allan Campbell, ailean@obantimes.co.uk

public safety. It is a miracle no one has been seriously injured or killed to date. We simply cannot afford to wait any longer – the risks are too great.

We stand ready to do anything we can to ensure Argyll and Bute and its communities finally get the solution they deserve.

Aileen Morton, Argyll and Bute Council leader; Gary Mulvaney, deputy leader; Sandy Taylor, SNP group leader; Dougie Philand, Argyll First group leader; MSPs Michael Russell, Jackie Baillie, and Donald Cameron.

Oban Aire at Ganavan?

There is never any excuse for vandalism, or leaving litter behind. There is never an excuse for punishing everyone because of the actions of a few... and especially when you cannot tell exactly who was responsible.

Therefore I was disappointed to read a bar-

rier was being proposed for Ganavan Sands when all of the facilities to easily create a Motorhome Aire are already on site – and would pay back the investment along with securing the future of the public toilet.

Readers only have to look a few miles south of Oban to see a dedicated motorhome facility that's been created to cater for the demand for overnight parking at Ellenabeich – directly to take pressure off locals.

Before Councillors make a knee-jerk reaction to unsubstantiated claims against tourists, maybe providing paid-for facilities would stop any inconvenience and bring much needed revenue into the council.

Donald Macdonald,

Founder of Campaign for Real Aires.

For more letters on this subject, visit www.obantimes.co.uk

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DISTRICT NEWS

Fund comes up a treat for Gloria

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Retired artist Gloria Young from Tralee was nominated as just one of the deserving recipients of Ardchattan's Random Acts of Kindness campaign that ran in July.

In all, there were 40 treat boxes delivered to nominees living in the Ardchattan Parish area as part of a response to spread cheer during the Covid pandemic.

Gloria was absolutely thrilled to receive her gift, which included one of Jimmy's famous scones from Ben Lora Cafe, a slice of homemade cake and a posy of garden flowers.

Ardchattan Community Council wants to thank all those involved with the project, especially the volunteer bakers and delivery drivers who helped make it all possible.

As a thank you from Gloria, she has now gifted one of her original watercolour paintings to the community. Once it is framed it will go on display,



possibly in Benderloch's Victory Hall.

The community council is also interested in hearing about residents' who need help with IT and digital support.

Council members want to get the word out that there could be some funding available to help them.

The Supporting Communities Fund can also cover counselling sessions

Gloria, left, was delighted with her treat box, and as a thank you gifted one of her original paintings to the community.

for anyone in the Ardchattan area who is struggling with the easing of lockdown, is anxious about going back to school, work, or just leaving the house, or for anyone who finds themselves depressed after months of isolation. People getting in touch for more details can be referred for up to three pre-paid sessions with a local counsellor.

To find out more, email ardchattancoordinator@gmail.com or phone 07387 475584.

The Supporting Communities Fund was made available to residents of the Ardchattan Parish region, covering the area between Connel bridge and Creagan bridge, as part of the North Lorne Covid-19 Partnership alongside Appin, Lismore, Duror and Kentallen.

New log system for North Ledaig cycle route

North Ledaig is set to receive a new counter aimed at logging the number of people travelling along National Cycle Network Route 78 by foot as well as by bike.

The counter, one of 13 across the country, will replace the Danish-style model in Benderloch and will be managed and maintained by walking and cycling charity Sustrans Scotland.

It is hoped the change of location and type of counter, will more accurately log cyclist and pedestrian numbers along the busy commuter and leisure route.

Unlike the current counters, the new models will not have live display screens. Instead Sustrans will launch an online platform by the end of 2020 where users will be able to access data from all of Sustrans' counters from across the UK.

Sustrans Scotland Partnerships Manager Nadia Freeman said: "These innovative counters will help track the number of people using some of our most popular National Cycle Network routes.

"These counters will help us monitor levels of walking and cycling in areas across Scotland, and have been vital in shaping the decisions for our programme.

"Choosing to travel actively by foot or bike rather than taking the car not only helps reduce carbon emissions and tackle climate change but also improves our health and well-being."

Works for the counter replacement were due to start last week.

ACHA housing team goes above and beyond during Covid

Front line ACHA staff who delivered vital services during the Covid-19 pandemic have been presented quiches in recognition of their efforts.

During lockdown the housing association's workforce continued to carry out emergency repairs and essential health-and-safety servicing. In addition to that, staff also delivered food parcels and prescriptions to vulnerable residents throughout Argyll and Bute linked to the coun-

cil's emergency planning framework. Alastair MacGregor, ACHA's Chief Executive, said: 'All ACHA Group staff pulled out the stops to help during lockdown.

'There were examples of going the extra mile, and indeed bravery, from a number of our staff.

'We felt it more than appropriate that recognition should be given in a commemorative way to colleagues who had done so much to help others.'



Alastair MacGregor ACHA's Chief Executive, centre, presents commemorative quiches to Kenny MacInnes and Matt Kelly from the Oban, Lorn and the Isles team.

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The Oban Times and St Kilda

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNER

ian.thorner@btinternet.com



This week we continue Iain Thornber's extracts from the Oban Times 1930, throwing new light on St Kilda before and after it was abandoned. This extract is taken from a forthcoming book on the subject.

Letter to the Editor July 1930 – St Kilda Tales of Hirta, True or False: 'Sir, As the Oban Times is read the world over by Gaels, I'm in hopes that you will give me – a St Kildan, and a woman – an opportunity of telling Highland folk the truth about 'Eilean mo graidh' – Hirta.

'For the last year or two 'ink-coolies' have been lying – lying about my little island home and its small remnant of simple, voiceless folk. Occasionally an odd honest stranger has tried to dam or divert the black, poisonous stream, but, ach, mo chreadh, in vain. I lately tried myself in a Scottish newspaper, to tell Lowlanders how we in Hirta live; how few and simple are our pleasures; how intense and lasting our griefs, how pure, hardy, healthy and peaceful our way of life in the remote little isle of the sea. But the kindest of Lowlanders do not understand the Gael, and the 'ink-coolies' have poisoned the wells; and the Socialist Government will deport my kinsfolk, and Hirta will become truly 'the isle of the dead' – mo thruaighe! Maybe it will be a safer place for landing aeroplanes then? Maybe?

'They say in the papers than my kinsfolk are now starving and terribly lonely, and longing and praying to the Socialist Government to be deported - to some Lowland paradise, I suppose? Nonsense! Food is as plentiful now as ever it was, and the people to feed, less. The birds of the rocks and the sheep of the hills are as numerous as ever. Only the fish have deserted them, driven by Sassenach trawler men to other and still remote spawning beds, where, sooner or later, the cruel steel net will find them out, only to destroy them as it has a once flourishing industry. But there is still plenty of food.

'Hirta today is not more remote and lonely than it was ages ago. Today the ends of the Earth meet. Miles are now but inches, and the best that science can make of us is paupers! This Lowland paradise for thousands of Gaels is the 'Parish' and the 'Bureau'. My people don't understand.



I have never heard them express a wish to be deported. I do believe, however, that such a wish as been 'put in their mouths', and that they have fallen for this 'Paradise dope' like a few millions more a little over a year ago.

'When I read that Mr Tom Johnston, Under Secretary for State, is seriously concerned about the cost of the evacuation of, in all, about 34 humans beings from Hirta, I feel that the Socialist Under Secretary is but making a mock of the island's day of sorrow, and is no longer Caraid nan Gaidheal, or of the oppressed. Mo chreach! mo chreach!

'Alas the depopulation of the Highlands goes on, and the advocates of it will continue to find or invent false, if plausible, reasons for

deporting the old race that once peopled Tiran Beann. To make it easier, one such advocate in the person of the Socialist Under Secretary has suggested that, after all, we Hirtaichs are but the descendents of a race of criminals, the island having been at one time (according to Mr Johnston) been used by the hereditary Chiefs of Dunvegan as a 'penal colony for misdemeanants'. If he doesn't know the history of Hirta, I do. God be merciful to us from the pens of those who would make history from the thin voice of tradition – a voice they don't understand, a speech they cannot comprehend!

'I read the other day that Mr Adamson suggested that the nurse in Hirta should be honoured by the King for her inestimable service

to the islesfolk. Her service was her duty, her duties her service. The real Caraidh na Hirtaich has been, and is, Mr Ferguson the Glasgow tweed merchant, a Hirtaich himself. His father was bailiff of the island, as his brother is today. No one has ever approached Mr Ferguson in his devotion to the interests and welfare of the isle folk of Hirta, and all the decorations that monarchs may bestow on others will never displace Mr Ferguson in the hearts' core of na Hirtaich. Looking back across the years I see, too, another in the person of our old dominie-divine, the Rev Angus Fiddes, who, when he could not get a nurse to stay, proceeded to the mainland – to the same city as, in later years, lured me – and there took a course of maternity training, returning to



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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday August 20, 2020** are listed below with differences for major ports listed underneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

Thur	00.37	0.7	06.35	3.9
	12.36	0.4	18.44	4.2
Fri	01.16	0.6	07.08	3.9
	13.17	0.3	19.21	4.2
Sat	01.56	0.6	07.44	3.8
	14.00	0.3	19.59	4.0
Sun	02.37	0.7	08.23	3.7
	14.45	0.5	20.40	3.8
Mon	03.22	0.9	09.06	3.5
	15.33	0.7	21.25	3.5
Tues	04.13	1.1	09.57	3.2
	16.28	1.0	22.17	3.2
Wed	05.13	1.4	11.07	3.0
	17.32	1.3	23.36	2.9

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

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

WEATHER

THURSDAY

Sunny intervals and a fresh breeze
Temperatures 14°C to 20°C.

FRIDAY

Light rain and a fresh breeze
Temperatures 13°C to 17°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

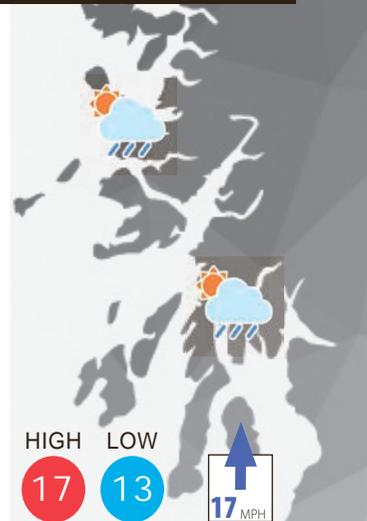
Saturday

Light rain and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 11°C to 16°C.

Sunday

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

FRIDAY FORECAST



clearance: part 3



Left, George Herbert Strutt (in white panama hat) buying tweed on St Kilda in 1908 for his Kingairloch Estate. Photograph supplied by Iain Thornber; and above, St Kilda's line of houses in front of the circular burial ground above Village Bay. Photograph: William Cameron.

his threefold task of minister, schoolmaster and nurse. He sleeps forgotten in a little churchyard of Easter Ross – Portmahomack. But happily he lives in the memory of those who, like myself, knew him as all three, and more.

'I am happy to note that such able men as Compton MacKenzie, Mr Ramsay, MP and Mr Matheson, the noted Scottish geographer, give no credence to the tale that the last remnants of my race will be healthier, happier, or purer in the slums of the mainland, unemployed or casually working, that they are at the moment on 'an t-eilean a chuan' – Hirta. And thousands of Gaels will join them, and me, in condemning this or any other Government who will make Hirta an 'Isle of the Dead' and condemn it to the same fate as innumerable crofter villages now lost amongst the almost countless acres of the sportsman's paradise. Tomorrow it is in danger of becoming but an island of dreams to the exiles, a memory of joys that are past, sweet yet mournful to the soul; and all this because Governments have for the last 40 years been unheeding to our plea of better facilities during the winter – facilities that are not only the

need of Hirta but of all the Hebrides, Soiridh, Hirta! – Mrs Christina MacDonald MacQueen, Stonehouse, Lanarkshire.'

Letter to the Editor July: 'Sir. May I express my thanks to the letter you printed of Mrs Christina MacDonald MacQueen about St Kilda. Mr Tom Johnston landed on the island with a mind obscured by sea-sickness, and he was in no condition to appreciate the real state of affairs. A more pusillanimous admission by the member of any Government that his party was incompetent to deal with the problems of modern Scotland that Mr Johnston's statement in the House of Commons on the subject of St Kilda I never read.

'Mrs MacQueen rightly says that Nurse Barclay did no more than her duty, and I would add the same of the missionary, Mr Munro. Sentimental eloquence over nurses cannot disguise the feeble handling of the St Kilda business, which is a clear sign that the town-obsessed Labour Party intends to shirk all land problems. However, my criticism of it is not inspired by the least respect for or belief in either of its two rivals. - I am etc., Compton Mackenzie'

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



All we know about this photograph is that it is of Oban Sailing Club members. Who everyone is, what the date was or the occasions, we do not know. But we'd love to find out, so if you know what this photograph was all about and who all these smiling faces belong to, we'd love to hear from you. If you email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



Here we clearly have at least one very happy customer after what looks like a trolley dash. We're not sure when the photograph has taken, or where, and would love to know who everyone in the photograph is. So if you have any information, please get in touch with us by emailing editor@obantimes.co.uk

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BUSINESS NEWS

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Businesses fear a winter 'reckoning' survey warns

A new survey by the Scottish Chambers of Commerce has found the vast majority of businesses are striving to retain staff.

Just 11 per cent of those polled have made staff redundant so far but confidence in avoiding redundancies starts to slump over the coming months – with tourism, hospitality and retail at risk, it found.

Currently, 60 per cent of businesses have employees on the furlough scheme, the snap poll carried out last month found. Some 74 per cent said they expected to retain staff over the next three months. Yet this falls to 68 per cent when the UK Treasury's furlough scheme ends in October – signalling redundancies in winter. Businesses have also been stung by rising costs to make premises 'Covid secure' at the same time as facing reduced capacity and trade being down, the SCC said.

Despite the lifting of restrictions, 'poor customer demand' remains a key concern for 63 per cent, the survey found.

The most 'significant concern' is another national or a local lockdown – highlighted by eight in 10 firms.

Dr Liz Cameron, chief executive of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce, said: 'We fear a reckoning as some companies, particularly in tourism, hospitality and retail decide it is no longer viable to restart or continue in the coming months.'

'For those sectors which remain closed or have just resumed operations, helping them back to work and restoring consumer confidence as quickly as possible is crucial.'

'Alongside a cautious outlook for employment, the tracker survey highlights there is a need for more action by government to cut further the upfront costs of doing business.'

'Scottish businesses have already demonstrated we are adaptive, innovative and resilient, but the challenges we face over the next few months, potentially years, warrants a response from government that is just as substantial.'

Islands tourism businesses adapt to life after lockdown

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A tourism group representing the isles of Mull and Iona say businesses there have met the challenge of opening safely.

Visit Mull and Iona said it had been a 'tense' time as they reopened but the islands remained Covid-free and plan to stay that way.

It has spotlighted four businesses and the measures they have taken to ensure that residents are safe and visitors have a great stay.

They include visitor attraction, Ardalanish Weavers, Ross of Mull; Tobermory Campsite, Mull; and the Argyll Hotel and Staffa Trips, both Iona.

Ardalanish Weavers reopened on August 1. The Weaving Shed is part of Ardalanish Farm which produces native breed lamb and beef, as well as ice cream, homebaking, teas and coffees. It has temporarily provided a field for motor-homes with their own facilities for overnight stays. Farmer Anne Smith said: 'As one of the few visitor attractions in the Ross of Mull, we have done our best to open up while keeping everyone safe.'

At Tobermory Campsite, owner Angus Williams has introduced new protocols to all aspects of the business, which spans static caravans, shepherds huts, self-catering and camping and touring vehicles.

Mr Williams has pledged to over-deliver on hygiene standards. He said: 'We are busy but we have space for tourers. It's important that people book into a managed site as there is no wild camping on Mull for vehicles.'

At the Argyll Hotel, owners Wendy and Rob MacManaway, opened on July 15.

Changes to the 17-bedroom hotel include introducing standard hygiene requirements, two-metre spacing in the dining room and lounge, one-way systems and hourly cleaning protocols.



Iona-based Staffa Trips is once again taking visitors out on the water, however the number of passengers its able to carry has been reduced to allow for social distancing.

A separate communications system was set up to service the outdoor seating area which offers a fabulous view in the garden across the Sound of Iona.

Guests are greeted with an envelope of information, any request is delivered in a sealed bag and their room is their 'personal bubble' for the duration of their stay.

'Without exception every visitor and guest has accepted all our procedures. There has been a deep appreciation of us being open and of the measures that we have provided to enable the safest possible visit,' said Wendy.

Iona-based Staffa Trips runs day cruises where visitors can often spot puffins, minke whales and dolphins, and visit Fingal's Cave.

Owner Sara Tindal said its vessel, Iolaire of Iona, has capacity for 67 passengers which has been reduced to 30 per cent to allow for social distancing.

Mull businesses Whitetail Gin supplied hand sanitiser and Highland Services Building Materials had helped, she said.

Sara added: 'We expect to cruise until mid-October. Although the puffins have now gone, Fingal's Cave has been reopened after storm damage in 2019 and people are delighted to be able to walk inside the cave once more.'

'Our marine wildlife has turned out for our customers, too, with regular sightings of minke whales and dolphins. It's so lovely to be back out on the water.'

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BUSINESS NEWS

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Building A Great Business

ANGUS MACDONALD

fort@obantimes.co.uk

In the fourth part of our six-part series, Fort William businessman Angus MacDonal offers advice on starting your own company, and why it is quite possible to build a valuable business in the West Highlands.

Sales and selling

In many countries in the world sales executives are feted as the driving force within a business: the people who know the customer needs better than others, know how to price the product and have a real ability to relate and communicate.

However in Britain, it is hard to think of a job with a worse reputation than sales executive.

How many mothers here want their little darlings to have a career in sales? The image is of someone in a sharp suit, slicked back hair, too smooth by half in their BMW company car.

I am fundamentally a sales person and have built my business career with an unusually high focus and interest in the sales side of the company.

Assuming your product is solid, if you hire enough of the right sort of sales people, there is every chance you can achieve exponential growth that will help you build an exceptional business.

Good sales people are hard to find and hire. They often already have great jobs and are getting well remunerated. You need to identify the best then woo them. An exciting new company, a better product and an opportunity to do better financially and career-wise should allow you to land the candidate.

Headhunting the best sales people from your competitor has a double advantage, of course. A great sales person is likeable and trustworthy, doesn't over promise and is resilient to the inevitable knockbacks.

Once you have clinched the right people, treasure them, give them your time and interest, and compensate them well — they are difficult to replace. When they arrive in the company give them time to find their feet; few will get off to a running start. And expect even the best to have periods of drought: sales can be the most dispiriting career.

In my businesses, sales people were asked



Good sales people are hard to find so it is important to nurture and look after them when you do find them.

to take the Myers Briggs personality test. It informs individuals what sort of character they are: alpha male, outspoken, hugely confident, or reserved, detailed, methodical ... and everything in between. There is a place for all sorts on a sales team.

Even more important is to be aware of what sort of character your client is. Understanding how Myers Briggs works is invaluable for that. To state the obvious, your young alpha male is unlikely to hit it off with the almost reclusive elderly facilities manager who loves his chess.

Having a mix of women and men in a sales team seemed beneficial.

Having telesales to produce warm sales leads proved very useful to me. And attending trade shows in your sector is a great way to suss out competitors and meet potential customers, some of whom you often aren't even aware of.

It was difficult to make my little waste firm stand out amongst the mega companies, with their vast, prime positioned stands. So one year our sales director had a skip full of multi-coloured plastic balls and clients would have fifteen seconds to dive in to find a prize, ranging from our logo'd mug to an iPhone. Our staff wore lurid, multi-coloured shirts to

stand out from the corporate types everywhere else.

Everyone knew of our company by the end of the show, and we had a few minutes to introduce our business to everyone who mattered.

The basic pay of a sales person should be modest, but with real scope to earn a multiple of that from bonuses or commission. I'd really want my top sales people to be the best compensated people in the company.

I'm often asked how best to structure commission. At my waste company they would need to bring in business worth six times their salary in a quarter to cover their cost, then they would earn 5 per cent of their sales over that, with 2.5 per cent for renewal of contracts. The sales director would get a bonus on the team hitting their targets. There are a dozen ways of structuring an incentive scheme, and they constantly need revising.

Half your staff should be on the sales side of the business; each should win a lot more business than it costs to employ them.

Sales people are often outgoing and fun colleagues but hard to manage; getting your sales team right is key to building a successful company.

Shoppers pledge to back local business, says survey

A survey has stated that 74 per cent of people in Oban are making efforts to shop at and support local businesses following the pandemic.

Three in four Oban residents would shop local and nearly half said they would be prepared to pay more for local products rather than cheaper ones at chain stores, according to investingreviews.co.uk

However, concern about the coronavirus has scared away entrepreneurs with only one in five considering starting their own business.

Studies show that the current job forecast is the weakest it has been in the UK since 1992. Of those surveyed, 76 per cent believe the economic effects of the pandemic will be the worst they experience in their lifetime.

Peter Field, of Investing Reviews, said: 'When thinking about starting a business, it is of vital importance to assess the investment risks involved. There is no question that right now is a difficult time to take a financial risk, however, the crisis will also present new opportunities for entrepreneurs, which will help drive the economy in the months and years ahead.'

Button Nose on the move

An independent gift shop in Oban has announced it is on the move later this year.

Button Nose Boutique at 51 Stevenson Street will remain open for the foreseeable future but intends to switch to larger premises at 12 Airds Crescent between the TSB and The Ark in October.

Although there is no precise date yet, owner Jackie Kerr emphasised that the existing premises would remain open for as long it can before making the move.

Owner Jackie Kerr said the aim was to be in a more prime location with bigger premises.

Jackie has run the business for four years and sells items from greetings cards to scarves, handbags, jewellery and baby clothes.

The new premises was empty for around a couple of years, having formally been The Pound Shop.

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

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

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

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

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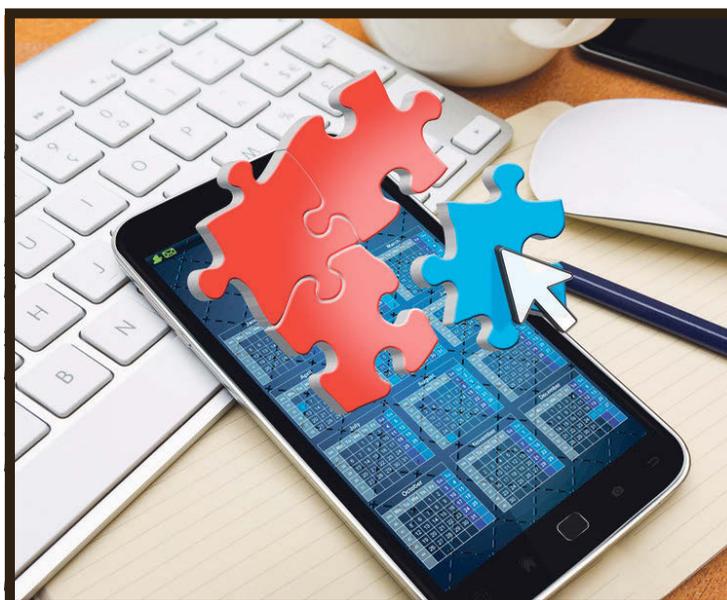
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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Appin residents new book spans Connel Bridge story

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



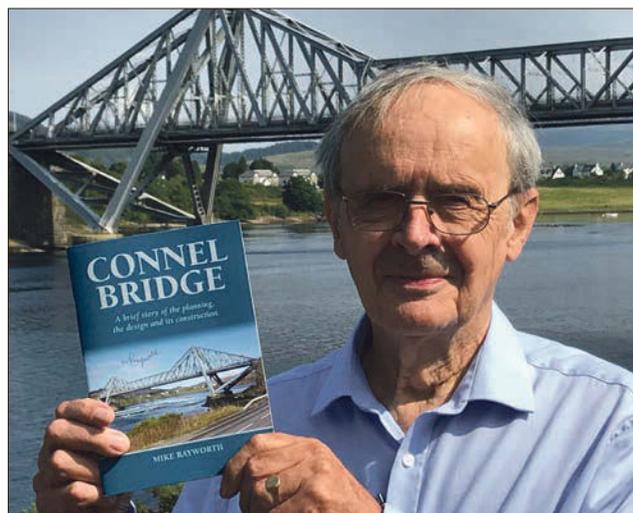
Ever since childhood car journeys, Appin man Mike Rayworth has held a fascination for bridges.

The award-winning bridge engineer has just written a new booklet telling the story of Connel Bridge.

The publication's first run of 100 sold out within 24 hours and the next delivery of 500 more is due soon.

Copies will be on shelves soon at the Port Appin Store, Connel Village Store, online and at Waterstones in Oban.

Before moving to Appin more than two decades ago, Mike's former home overlooked the bridge, which some would dub as being 'over the top' in design.



But there is very good reason for its over-design, speculates Mr Rayworth.

After the collapse of the 'spidery' Tay Rail Bridge

during a violent storm in 1879, all future British bridges were designed to be much more robust.

The Tay Bridge had been

Mike Rayworth with his book a Connel Bridge.

KG_T34_Connelbridgetrayworth02

designed by Sir Thomas Bouch using lattice girders and wrought iron cross-bracing, but its collapse brought death to all passengers on the train that was crossing it that fateful day. With his reputation ruined, the designer also died within the year. Needless to say, his design for the Forth Road bridge was not used.

When Connel Bridge was completed in 1903 it was novel for its time, it is only the second largest cantilever bridge in Europe after the Forth Rail Bridge.

Mr Rayworth said: 'So many people cross it to get from A

to B and back again and think it's interesting but don't go beyond that thought. That's why I wrote the book. It gives the ins and outs and details about why it was built as it was.

'It's all very readable by lay-people, except for one chapter that gets a bit technical, but only mildly so!

Mr Rayworth first book was all about the reconstruction of Appin's Jubilee Bridge, as for his next project, it is not likely to result in something that will be printed, he says.

'I'm very interested in bridge collapses but I can't write about that because it means someone has done something wrong and it'll end up in court - I don't want to join them,' he said.

During his working life, Mr Rayworth was responsible for

a number of bridges in the Oban area, including the one at the end of Argyll Square crossing the Black Lynn.

In 1965, Mr Rayworth, who worked in Cumbria for a number of years earlier in his career, received the Miller Prize from the Institute of Civil Engineers for a technical paper about the development of a unique method, never used before, to strengthen Kendal's Victoria Bridge.

That paper was presented at the Institution's HQ in London and he has been asked to present it again - 55 years later - in November to the Kendal Engineering Society.

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Campbeltown super-group Slainte Davaar Allstars on the runway at Machrihanish.

Mull of Kintyre to Major Tom

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Campbeltown super-group Slainte Davaar Allstars are hoping that their take on a classic David Bowie song will be heard by astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS) this week.

Mull of Kintyre music festival (MOK Fest) is aiming to make history by beaming the unique Scottish rendition of Space Oddity to the station which sits in low Earth orbit.

The annual music festival has teamed up with Machrihanish Airbase Community Company (MACC), currently in the running to become the UK's first spaceport, to record the unique set.

With the annual music festival moving online this year, organisers, keen to try something new and showcase the traditional and contemporary artists to a new virtual audience, came up with the idea of partnering with the base and its unconventional location for the exclusive gig.

As the MACC base continues to develop its plans for spaceflight related activities, the set was performed on the former top-secret RAF base runway - nearly two miles long and one of the longest in Europe - for current Commander of the ISS Chris Cassidy and Cosmonauts Anatoly

Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner, as they orbit the Earth at 17,000mph and pass the Mull of Kintyre.

The performance was transmitted through the MOK Fest Facebook page on Saturday night and will now be sent to the ISS through NASA.

Event manager Iain Johnston of JIG Events said: 'We are overwhelmed with the response to Saturday night's broadcast.

Space Oddity

'To see Slainte Davaar Allstars perform their unique cover of David Bowie's Space Oddity was quite something else, and already has had nearly 7,000 views from people all over the world.

'We know that the International Space Station crew are tuning in this week ahead of MOK Fest kicking off, and we can't wait to hear what they think of our rendition.'

New recordings and footage from the past three years feature in the Virtual MOK Fest, which started yesterday, August 19, and runs through to Sunday, August 23.

Tonight's Virtual Young Folk night promises a great mix of new recorded and past footage of some of the best young musicians from Kintyre and will be broadcast on the MOK Fest Facebook page from 7.30pm.

Tomorrow, Friday, night is Ceilidh Night. The MOK Fest Virtual Kilkerran Ceilidh gets under way from 8pm with a performance from Ceolta from Northern Ireland, plus great sets and footage from Kintyre Schools Pipe Band, Ross Conner, Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band and Grouse Ceilidh Band.

On Saturday (8pm), it's the MOK Fest Virtual Glen Scotia West Coast Rocks Concert with specially recorded sets from The Wee Toon Tellers, Claire Hastings and Rhuvaal at Davaar Island Lighthouse.

The Virtual Survivors Night on Sunday (8pm) has more than 10 specially-recorded sets from Slainte Davaar Allstars, FLING, Twisted Melons, Iain McIntyre, None the Wiser, Adam Fortune, FLW, Charles Martin and Hope Strang.

This year's festival is part of a new marketing campaign to raise awareness of the Kintyre 66 route which showcases the stunning peninsula.



OBAN PHOENIX CINEMA What's On This Week

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UNHINGED

Academy Award winner Russell Crowe stars in Unhinged, a psychological thriller that takes something we've all experienced- road rage - to an unpredictable and terrifying conclusion. Rachel (Caren Pistorius) is running late getting to work when she crosses paths with a stranger (Crowe) at a traffic light. Soon, Rachel finds herself and everyone she loves the target of a man who feels invisible and is looking to make one last mark upon the world by teaching her a series of deadly lessons. What follows is a dangerous game of cat and mouse that proves you never know who you're driving next to.

Friday 21st-27th at 19:30 Daily



DREAMBUILDERS

Is a Pixar-esque movie full of heart and magic as we follow a young girl who can control dreams. From the animation team behind Big Hero, 6 and Sherlock Holmes, this beautiful and mesmerising animation explores the world behind dreams in which the dreambuilders create our imaginations on stage. A story full of heart and magic that the whole family will love.

Fri 21st+Mon-Thu at 16:30, Sat-Sun at 13:30



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After stealing a mysterious orb in the far reaches of outer space, Peter Quill from Earth is now the main target of a manhunt led by the villain known as Ronan the Accuser. To help fight Ronan and his team and save the galaxy from his power, Quill creates a team of space heroes known as the "Guardians of the Galaxy" to save the galaxy.

Saturday 22nd-23rd at 16:00

We've made changes to help you enjoy a safer big screen experience.

Masks/face coverings must be worn when entering and moving around the cinema. You can remove masks to have food and drink. Those who are exempt and under 5s do not need to wear a mask. Please book ahead where possible. We have implemented a 2m rule in the big screen and left every other row empty, please sit in the seat shown on your ticket.

Please be advised, all films and showtimes are subject to change/availability with little or no notice. Booking is always recommended to avoid disappointment. Please check www.bbc.co.uk for more information about film certificates.



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Oban Fm – Morning, Noon, and Night

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

The Weekend

Saturday	Stephen until 10am	Linda 11-2pm	Kenny's Jukebox Jamboree	Archies Scottish Show 7pm-9pm Dave Hobbs 60's Hits 10pm - Midnight
Sunday	Breege	Archie/Stephen	Sunday Praise 5pm - 6pm	Dave and Murdo 7pm - 9pm Graham Scott's Drum and Bass 10pm - Midnight

Robert in lockdown!

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



Normally this week I would be writing about the World Pipe Band Championships which take place every year on Glasgow Green. I would be reporting a selection of the winners, including the grade 1 world champions, and more than likely telling a few anecdotes from the fringe events.

Some of those fringe events would be part of Piping Live – the annual week-long festival of piping. Others would be less formal. Last year, I remember standing on Gray Street (between the Park Bar and the Snaffle Bit) in the pouring rain with the one-off outside bar doing a roaring trade as hundreds of pipers and drummers enjoyed the social side of the championships despite the horrible weather.

This year, with a cruel irony that felt somehow inevitable, Glasgow experienced the best weather that particular weekend has seen in years – with temperatures reaching the high 20s and not even a breath of wind – yet Gray Street lay empty. I think it is wise not to look at a calendar or a diary until the summer is over because every weekend only throws up reminders of what would have been going on had things being normal.

The good old Scottish weather playing tricks with us hasn't helped either. The heart of lockdown (when everybody was confined to barracks) was a heatwave. Then the kids go back to school and the sun comes out again! And I dare say pipers the world over would

have been hearing of the sun in Scotland this weekend and wishing they were out strutting their stuff on Glasgow Green.

It reminds me of the old story of the two Scottish soldiers lying in the desert one day in scorching heat. One turns to the other and says: goodness me, it would have been the Tobermory Games today! The other one said: well they've got a fine day for it!

As I've mentioned a number of times in this column over the last few months, there are so many aspects of recording and filming that have changed due to the coronavirus. I've written about having to film a virtual gig two metres apart from my band mates; having a virtual interview between Glasgow and Inverness facili-

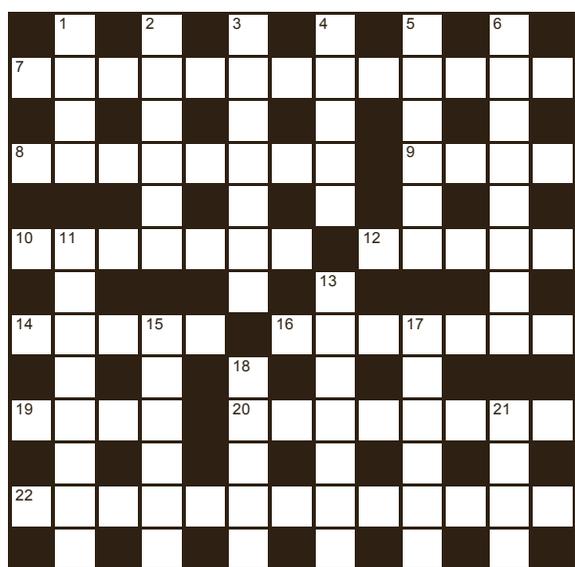
tated by a guy in London; and even having to dress up as an alien and film myself in my flat while folk looking out windows across the road thought they were hallucinating!

Last week, though, while doing a bit of filming at Pacific Quay for a BBC Alba kids programme, I had a new experience altogether. I had to put on my own TV make up!

The BBC make-up lady was on hand to tell me what to do; but it turned out I wasn't much use. 'Don't tell any of my pals about this,' I joked with her. Then, as soon as I was finished, with it being a Friday, I went off and met said pals...forgetting I still had a full face of television make up on!

I won't be living that one down for some time.

Crossword



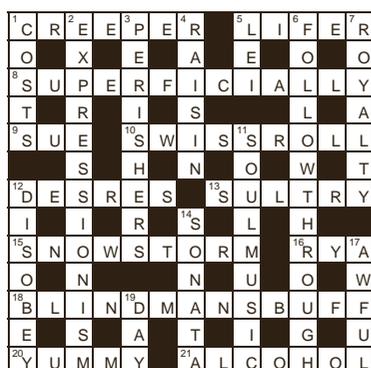
Across

- 7 Untiring (13)
- 8 This gives the minutes for your soldiers. (3,5)
- 9 ...use a beeper (4)
- 10 Portuguese island (7)
- 12 You can bet on it (5)
- 14 Existing (5)
- 16 Folded (7)
- 19 Unite (4)
- 20 Glass cylinder (4,4)
- 22 Self-appointed tribunal (8,5)

Down

- 1 Unforeseen difficulty (4)
- 2 Grow choppers (6)
- 3 An object serving as a guide to a traveler (7)
- 4 Unit of liquid (5)
- 5 Thieving bird (6)
- 6 Qualified (8)
- 11 Sound after the raid (3,5)
- 13 Omission of a vowel or consonant (7)
- 15 Journey (6)
- 17 Essayist (6)
- 18 Warehouse (5)
- 21 Troubadour (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Coastal Castles of Clan Donald exhibition opens on Skye

A new exhibition at the Museum of the Isles, Armadale Castle, on the Isle of Skye explores the fascinating history of Clan Donald castles on Scotland's Western seaboard. The exhibition has been specially produced to mark Scotland's 2020 Year of Coasts and Waters.

Romantic and steeped in history, Scotland's castles are iconic – and nothing captures the imagination more than a castle standing guard over the sea.

As Lords of the Isles in medieval times, Clan Donald chiefs commanded the sea routes that were vital to maintaining power over wild and inaccessible lands. Their castles from this time are touchstones to a remarkable period in Scotland's history.

The exhibition uses prints, drawings and maps from the museum archive, as well as photography and film, to trace the evolution of clan castles from 10th-century fortification to 19th-century manor house.

Featured castles include the ancient Lordship seat of Finlaggan on Islay; Castle Sween in Argyll, Scotland's earliest stone castle; the evocative tower house of Ormaclit on South Uist; and Castle Camus (Knock Castle) on Skye – site of bloody inter-clan rivalry and evocative legend. The exhibition also reveals characters and stories associ-

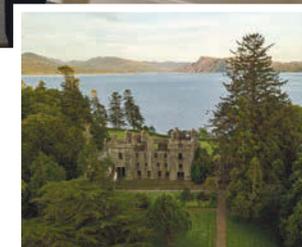


The exhibition uses prints, drawings and maps from the museum archive, as well as photography and film, to trace the evolution of clan castles and houses.

ated with the castles such the Warrior Queen Scathach of Dunscraith, and castle-builder Amie MacRuari.

Exhibition visitors can also explore the permanent galleries of the Museum of the Isles. The museum traces the history of the Highlands & Islands through the story of Clan Donald, Scotland's largest and most powerful clan. Its fine collections include Viking, Jacobite and crofting artefacts, and it is Skye's only museum to be accredited by Museums Galleries Scotland.

The museum is part of a five-star visitor attraction in Sleat, South Skye. Armadale Castle, Gardens and Museum



of the Isles also includes colourful historic gardens and a castle ruin, former seat of the Macdonalds of Sleat.

Coastal Castles of Clan Donald is sponsored by Torabhaig Distillery, the south Skye distillery, based next to one of the featured castles, Castle Camus.

Sue Geale, museum manager said: 'We are delighted to mark the reopening of the museum with the launch of this exhibition. We have thoroughly enjoyed researching the stories behind these castles and unearthing material from our museum stores to illustrate them.'

'I'd like to thank everyone involved including colleagues, volunteers, historical advisor Dr Dòmhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart from Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, designers CGS, and sponsors Torabhaig Distillery, for making the exhibition possible.'

Anne O'Loone, Visitor Centre Manager at Torabhaig Distillery said: 'We are very pleased to support this exhibition being held at our neighbouring and highly acclaimed visitor attraction. Celebrating local culture and heritage is important to us here at Torabhaig, where we are producing a heavily peated, Island style Single Malt Scotch Whisky in our beautifully restored old farm steading which overlooks the picturesque ruins of Castle Camus.'

'We would encourage visitors to Sleat on the Isle of Skye to make a point of exploring this excellent exhibition and to come and visit us here at the distillery.'

The museum and exhibition are open Thursday-Sunday until the end of November.

Armadale Castle Gardens are open daily in August and then Thursday-Sunday until end November.

Tickets can be purchased at the entrance. Visitors are advised to check the Armadale Castle website before visiting to familiarise themselves with Covid-19 precautions and opening times.

Canals the inspiration for Jolomo's new exhibition

An Oban hospice is set to benefit from proceeds of a new exhibition by renowned Argyll artist John Lowrie Morrison.

The best-selling Tayvallich-based artist, known as Jolomo, unveiled his new exhibition in Lochgilphead recently and a percentage of the artist's profits will be donated to The Dove Centre.

The paintings of canalscapes, which includes paintings of Holland and Venice, is on show at the Archway Gallery.

While John has been involved in online exhibitions throughout lockdown, this is his first gallery show since the pandemic began and a few differences were noticed by attendees who missed the formal opening and were still trying to get used to wearing a mask.

Viewers of the striking images commented on the vivid colours, accurate likeness to places and even the ability to 'dream of being elsewhere' while appreciating the artwork.

The Dove Centre on Stevenson Street, Oban, offers emotional, spiritual and practical help to people living with cancer and

other life-changing illnesses. Throughout lockdown it has continued to provide vital support and services to around 50 people a week.

David Entwistle, chairman of Oban Hospice Limited, said: 'I am delighted John has decided to support us. All of our funding comes from donations so this really is incredible.'

John explained the inspiration behind the exhibition: 'I did a lot of drawing of Holland on trips made over the years but I'd never painted it. The landscapes there made a huge impression on me. The sunrises and sunsets are amazing because the land is so flat.'

'I love canals, so I decided to make that the theme and bring in paintings based on drawings I had done in Holland and Venice and around the Crinan Canal.'

John and his wife Maureen first visited Venice a few years ago for a special wedding anniversary and he has been painting the city since.

He said: 'Everyone said 'Oh so you'll be painting in Venice then?' and I said 'No, every-

body and their Granny paints Venice and I'll not be painting it'. Got off the Orient Express, walking down the platform to the Grand Canal and then just looked across the water, thought 'oh my goodness!' and got the sketchbook out. Hundreds of drawings, 2,500 photographs - I just couldn't believe it. I still love it and I still want to paint it.

'These paintings are paintings of memories. I have a photographic memory and can always recall a sunset or particular kind of light. Often I am painting things I remember from years and years back, like the lily pond by the Crinan Canal which is gone now, but I still miss it.'

'Holland blew me away when I first saw it and Venice did too. I've been in Argyll for 50 years and it blew me away too when I first came here in the 1960s. This is what this exhibition is about - my feelings for all three places.'

Canalscapes: Holland, Scotland, Venezia is at the Archway Gallery, Lochgilphead, until August 29.

Jolomo with David Entwistle, chairman of Oban Hospice Limited.



M'ALBA

MY ALBA

<p>DIARDAOIN 20 An Lunastal THURSDAY 20 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming 19.00 O Mo Dhuthaich/ From Uist with Love (rpt) 19.25 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là - News 20.30 An Lot 53 (rpt) 21.00 Rose Reilly (rpt) 22.25 Eadar Chluich (rpt) 22.30 Annie Oakley (rpt) 23.20 Dhan Uisge (Loch Maree) 23.30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)</p> <p>DIHAOINE 21 Lunastal FRIDAY 21 August</p> <p>17.00 UR/NEW: UEFA Women's Champions League 2019 - Glasgow City v Wolfsburg 19.00 An Là - News 19.25 Celtic Connections (rpt) 19.30 Machair (rpt) 19.55 Fraochy Bay (rpt) 20.00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live! (rpt) 20.30 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt) 21.00 UR/NEW: Ceol Duthchasach/Ken Burn's Country Music Eadar Chluich (rpt) 22.55 Lorient is Alba: Scotland's Year (rpt)</p> <p>DISATHAIRNE 22 An Lunastal SATURDAY 22 August</p> <p>16.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming 17.45 An Là - News 18.00 'San Fhuil/It's In the Blood (rpt) 19.00 Druthag na Hearadh/A little drop of Harris (rpt) 19.30 Bonn Comhraidh (rpt) 20.00 Machair (rpt) 20.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt) 20.30 Puirt-adhair (highland airports) (rpt)</p>	<p>21.00 Ceol Duthchasach/Ken Burn's Country Music (rpt) 22.55 Dhan Uisge (Loch Maree) (rpt) 23.00 Ever Believe Me - Sgeulachd Madeleine Smith (The Madeleine Smith Story) (rpt) 00.00 Annie Oakley (rpt) 00.50 Binneas na Trads (rpt)</p> <p>DIDÒMHNAICH 23 An Lunastal SUNDAY 23 August</p> <p>16.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming 18.15 An Là - News 18.30 Binneas na Trads (rpt) 18.35 Binneas na Trads (rpt) 18.45 Sgeul Seirbheis (rpt) 19.00 Siubhal nan Salm (rpt) 19.30 Alleluia! (rpt) 20.00 An Lot 53 (rpt) 20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair beo (rpt) 21.00 Bannan (rpt) 21.30 Bannan (rpt) 22.00 UR/NEW: Scottish Premiership - Aberdeen v Livingston 23.45 Binneas - Na Trads (rpt)</p> <p>DILUAIN 24 An Lunastal MONDAY 24 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming 19.00 Tir is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là - News 20.30 Dealbhan Fraoich (rpt) 21.00 Dannsa Gaidhealach - Trusadh (rpt) 22.00 Bannan 55 (rpt) 22.30 Farpaisean Chon-Chaoarach/Sheepdogs (rpt) 23.30 Seoid a' Chidsin - The Kitchen Coves (rpt)</p> <p>DÌMÀIRT 25 An Lunastal TUESDAY 25 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming</p>	<p>19.00 Dileas/Working Dogs (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là - News 20.30 Vets: Gach Creutair Beo (rpt) 21.00 The Sandyford Murder - Sgeulachd Jessie McLachlan (the Jessie McLachlan Story) (rpt) 21.45 Binneas na Trads (rpt) 21.50 Binneas na Trads (rpt) 22.00 Dannsa Gaidhealach - Trusadh (rpt) 23.00 Ceolmhor@Piping Live (rpt) 23.30 Alleluia! (rpt)</p> <p>DICIADAIN 26 An Lunastal / WEDNESDAY 26 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming 19.00 Tir is Teanga/Language and Landscape (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là - News 20.30 Puirt-adhair (Highland Airports) (rpt) 21.00 Jolomo - Dealbhadair nan Daoine (rpt) 22.00 Bannan 55 (rpt) 22.30 Rose Reilly (rpt) 23.50 Dhan Uisge (Loch Maree) (rpt)</p> <p>DIARDAOIN 27 An Lunastal / THURSDAY 27 August</p> <p>17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming 19.00 Dileas/Working Dogs (rpt) 19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt) 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) 20.00 An Là - News 20.30 An Lot 53 (rpt) 21.00 Jim Baxter (rpt) 22.00 Seoid a' Chidsin - The Kitchen Coves (rpt) 22.30 Buffalo Bill (rpt) 23.20 Dhan Uisge (Loch Loyne) 23.30 Air an Rathad/On the road (rpt)</p>
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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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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.

Use us or lose us, says arts and crafts emporium



It doesn't get much closer to 'shopping local' than a hidden gem in the middle of Oban celebrating the creative talents of those across Argyll.

Made in Argyll Arts and Crafts is at the waterfront opposite the railway station and next door to The Olive Garden.

It provides a vital shop window for dozens of local creatives, selling a wide variety of colourful and locally-made bespoke gifts lovingly created from woodwork, crochet, basket-weaving, jewellery, knitwear, photography, paintings, and many more.

Owner Janice Stewart has run it for three years and said: 'Everything we have in the shop with the exception of wool is all handcrafted by local crafters. There's nearly 40 of them providing to us and to be part of the shop you've got to live with in Argyll and Bute. They all take turns in manning the shop as well.'

Janice, of Tralee Bay, is a keen knitter herself and also makes paracord dog leads and craft kits for children. She paid tribute to the contribution of Ada Daly, of Oban, for her support, and Argyll and Bute Council for its recent business grant to help through lockdown.

Scotland's Towns Partnership, with the support of BID4Oban, has launched



Janice Stewart of Made in Argyll

a 'Love Local' campaign encouraging everyone to support businesses at the heart of their community. Janice gave it her backing too: 'If people don't support shops like these they are going to disappear. It's unbelievable how many talented crafters and artists there are in Argyll and Bute, and they need somewhere to show-

case their crafts.

'I am trying to give them a place to do things as cheaply as possible, I don't intend to make profit, but to reinvest in the shop.'

Made in Argyll is open between 10am-5pm Monday to Saturday, and between 11am-4pm on Sundays. <https://www.facebook.com/madeinargyll/>

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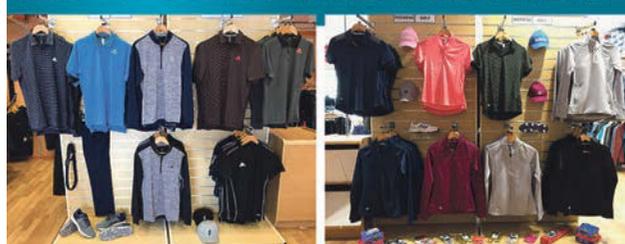
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Union urges 'opt in' to payment offer

Scottish farmers and crofters have started to receive loan scheme offer letters from Scottish Government and NFU Scotland is urging recipients to 'opt in'.

The 2020 National Basic Payment Support Scheme (NPBS) offers recipients up to 95 per cent of their Basic Payment Scheme and Greening payments in advance.

Around 17,300 businesses are expected to receive a loan offer and around 16,000 letters are in the first round. Those looking to accept the offer and receive payment without delay are asked to respond by September 4 and, as with previous loan schemes, the opt-in acceptance is simple and can be completed by email or by post. All payments will be made in sterling.

NFU Scotland President Andrew McCornick said: 'The announcement that the vast majority of Scotland's farmers and crofters can access up to 95 percent of their BPS and Greening payments from September this year will add certainty and stability across Scottish agriculture and the wider rural community at a time of great change.'

'This year, as we recover from Covid-19, the scheme will also provide much-needed cash flow ahead of an unknown winter that will undoubtedly be dominated by Brexit.'

'I would urge all to opt into this year's scheme and to do so by email to ensure payments are made as soon as possible.'



NFUS pushes for change to address fuel filter blocking problems

Last autumn and winter, hundreds of Scottish farmers and crofters were left frustrated when fuel filters on tractors and other machinery were choking, many within minutes of being replaced.

Action taken by NFU Scotland, led by Transport Advisor Jamie Smart led to the creation of a BSI industry taskforce looking into fuel issues, including biofuel inclusion.

With harvest now in full swing and autumn approaching, Jamie Smart, right, has used the Union's blog to update members on progress on the taskforce and, more importantly, provide some very useful bullet points on how farmers and crofters can take

steps to avoid a similar level of disruption in the months ahead.

Jamie writes: 'In addition, a sampling and testing protocol is near completion. This means that in the event of any issues this coming winter, we can be ready to gather further evidence of what is causing filter blocking problems, and where exactly the fuel is coming from. NFU Scotland and NFU will continue to put pressure on this Taskforce to ensure the standards UK fuel industry set will protect us from fuel which is not fit for purpose.'

To read the full blog, visit www.nfus.org.uk/news/blog/transport-advisors-fuel-filter-update-10-august-2020

Young crofters gather to share and inspire

Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) held a free virtual gathering for Young Crofters, on Tuesday August 18, five years on from a successful residential event held at Glencanis Lodge, Lochinver.

Four sessions, using Zoom, covered a range of topics and offer a variety of formats. Participants could join for the whole day, running from 10am to 4pm, or individual sessions.

Contributors included some of those who attended five years ago as aspiring crofters, with one commenting that 'the gathering that I went to five years ago was so influential it would be great to contribute something to this one!'

Session aimed to give a snapshot of what crofting in 2020 means to a range of young people through film shorts and presentations followed by a chance to ask questions of those who have shared their stories. Contributors includes Carianne, crofter in North Uist, as well as, Sweeny (pictured), Air An Lot, based in Lewis and winner of the SCF Young Crofter of the Year award 2018, and Jacob and Kate small holders growing and selling vegetables in Glenelg, Lochalsh.



Session two was to focus on Crofting during Covid, with an interactive activity followed by open discussion with SCF Director Jonathan Hedges, hoping to capture the challenges and positives as well as looking to the future.

Session three explored 'Adding Value', with an introduction to the Scottish Crofting Produce mark and Croft Holidays. Beth Rose from Birchwood Croft was due to share her experience of SCP and Quality Meat Scotland.

In the final session 'Crofting

Policy - What's the plan?', participants had the opportunity to direct questions to a panel of policy and decision makers including: Siobhan Macdonald, Senior Consultant SAC; Bill Dundas, SGRPID, Claudia Rowse, Head of Natural Resource Management at SNH, Gordon Jackson from the Scottish Government Crofting Policy team and Rod Mackenzie, Crofting Commission Convener.

The day ended with the opening of nominations for the SCF Young Crofter Awards 2020.

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Around the markets

United Auctions, Oban, Tuesday August 11: sold 5532 (+1157) Lambs & Sheep of all classes. 5056 Lambs averaged £63.86 (+£5.01). Although there was a good selection of quality bred lambs presented to a large ringside of buyers, lambs in general lacked condition, this may be due to the wet July month the stock has had to endure, thus resulting in a scarcity of killing lambs normally presented at this sale.



Lambs - SuffX - £75.50, Balnagown Croft; £74.50, Frack-ersaig; £74.00, Assapol; £73.50, Mid Farm; £73.50, Achnacree Beag; £73.00, Ardsheal; £73.00, Strongorm; £72.00, Glengorm; £70.50, Strongorm. TexX - £76.50, Torbhlaire; £75.00, Balnagown; £75.00, 58 Tangasdale; £75.00, Balligarve; £74.50, Saulmore; £74.50, Strongorm; £73.00, 3 Bali-grundle; £72.50, 2 Baligrundle; £72.00, Bailuacraich; £72.00, Park Farm; £72.00, Achnacree Beag; £72.00, Couston Farm; £71.50, Ardlarach; £71.50, Balnagown;

£70.50, Caolis, Coll; £70.50, 2 Baligrundle; £70.50, Dalvore; £70.00, Poltalloch; £70.00, Ardachy; £70.00, Barbreck. Chev - £72.00, Caddleton Farms; £68.00, 85 Borve; £67.00, Strontoiiler; £64.50, 67 Tangasdale; £64.50, Caddleton Farms. Cross - £69.00, Caddleton Farms; £65.00, 85 Borve. Mule - £73.00, Fiart; £69.50, Glenamachrie; £68.00, Saulmore. BF - £47.50, Achuaran. Ewes - SuffX - £66.00, Strongorm. TexX - £75.00, Strontoiiler. ChevX - £81.00, Caolis, Coll.

United Auctions, Tیره, Saturday August 15: sold 4750 lambs averaging £70.78 per head (+ £11.81) and 209.90p/kg (+.32 pence). Lambs were shown in excellent bloom and sold to the usual following of mainland buyers. Lambs per head - SuffX

Pictured is a pen of 368 Suffolk Cross lambs which sold for £69.50, from Mr Shane Cadzow, Isle of Luing.

- £94.50, 9 Barrapol; £93.00, Salum; £93.00, Greenbank; £92.50, Druimasaidh; £91.00, Benview; £91.00, Druimasaidh; £90.00, 6 Crossapol; £90.00, Mannal; £90.00, 6 Crossapol; £88.00, Hillcrest; £87.00, 2 Heylipol; £86.00, 4 Heanish; £85.50, Druimasaidh; £84.00, 8 Cornaigbeg; £84.00, Mannal; £82.00, 9 Barrapol; £80.50, Croish; £80.00, 10 Crossapol. BeltX - £105.00, Heylipol Farm; £100.00, Ruaig; £98.00, Hillcrest; £96.00, Heylipol Farm; £95.00, Braeside; £95.00, 4 Kilkenneth; £95.00, Braeside; £90.00, Hillcrest; £89.00, Ruaig; £88.00, Heylipol Farm; £87.00, Braeside; £87.00, Lochphuill; £87.00, 4 Kilkenneth; £87.00, Braeside; £86.00, Ruaig; £86.00, Lochphuill; £86.00, Heylipol; £82.50, 6 Barrapol; £82.00, Hillcrest;

£82.00, Braeside; £82.00, 4 Kilkenneth; £82.00, Braeside; £80.00, Hillcrest. TexX - £98.00, Hillcrest; £94.00, Lochside; £90.50, 6 Barrapol; £90.00, Braeside; £89.50, 10 Balevullin; £89.00, Ardmay; £89.00, Mannal; £88.00, 6 Barrapol; £88.00, Greenbank; £88.00, Mannal; £87.00, Hillcrest; £86.50, Druimasaidh; £86.00, Hough; £85.00, Whitehouse; £84.50, Ardmay; £82.50, 34 Balephetrish; £82.00, 7 Kilkenneth; £80.00, Mannal; £80.00, 6 Crossapol; £80.00, 3 Balevullin; £80.00, Heylipol Farm; £80.00, Whitehouse. HB - £73.50, 8 Barrapol. Chev - £87.00, Skipinnis; £80.00, 8 Kilkenneth; £76.00, 4 Heanish; £73.50, Ardeas; £72.00, Vaul; £71.00, Croish; £70.00, 8 Kilkenneth. CROSS - £84.50, £84.00, 3 Balevullin; £79.00, 34 Balephetrish; £76.50, Ruaig; £75.50, Mannal; £72.50, 3 Balevullin. Zwa - £65.00, Garaphail. Mule - £90.00, Ruaig; £87.00, Braeside; £78.00, 3 Balevullin; £76.00, Lochside; £72.00, Mannal. Chev Mule -

£70.50, Mannal. BF - £62.00, 3 Balevullin, £56.50, Lochside. Lambs per Kilo - SuffX - 236p, Benview; 234p, Scarinish Farm; 233p, 2 Heylipol; 232p, Druimasaidh; 229p, Salum; 227p, Scarinish Farm; 227p, Salum; 226p, Ardeas; 224p, Druimasaidh; 223p, Clachan, 222p, Greenbank; 221p, Croish. BeltX - 248p, Ardmay; 246p, 236p, Heylipol Farm; 234p, 229p, Lochphuill; 229p, Heylipol Farm; 228p, Hillcrest; 228p, Ruaig; 228p, Lochphuill; 226p, Ruaig; 225p, Hillcrest; 224p, Ardmay; 224p, Heylipol Farm; 222p, 6 Barrapol; 222p, Hillcrest. TexX - 246p, 6 Barrapol; 245p, 8 Kilkenneth; 234p, Heylipol Farm; 229p, 10 Balevullin; 224p, Lochside; 223p, Whitehouse; 222p, 6 Barrapol; 221p, 6 Balevullin. HB - 237p, 8 Barrapol. Chev - 219p, 3a Caolis; 218p, Scarinish Farm. Cross - 215p, 3A Caolis. Zwa - 214p, Garaphail. Mule - 215p, Lochside. Chev Mule - 221p, Mannal. BF - 175p, Lochside; 169p, Garaphail.



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SALE DATES 2020



RAMS

OCTOBER

3 Newton Stewart
5 Ballymna
9 Dingwall
10 Stirling (UA)
10 Perth Ram Society
12 Hexham
14 Castle Douglas
14 Oban
17 Dalmally
19 Portree
22 Lanark - Shealings
23 Lanark - Lambs

NOVEMBER

5 Lanark
6 Fort William

GIMMERS AND EWES

SEPTEMBER

17 Ayr
17 Huntly
18 Newton Stewart
19 Forfar
22 Oban
23 Castle Douglas
23 Stirling (Cal)
24 Ayr

WETHER LAMB

AUGUST

Weekly sales of store lambs held at all auctions.

SEPTEMBER

4 Dumfries
7 Stirling (UA) Show
8 Oban Show
12 Dalmally show
14 Stirling (Cal) Show
18 Dingwall Show
19 Forfar Show
20 Longtown Show
24 St Boswells Show
25 Lanark show
25 Hexham Show
25 Fort William

24 St Boswells
25 Dalmally
26 Dumfries
26 Stirling (UA)
29 Lanark
30 Longtown

OCTOBER

1 Hexham
3 Loughash Farm Sale
7 Thainstone
9 Dingwall
14 Lanark

BLACKFACE SHEEP BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION

Contact: Aileen McFadzean 07768820405
aileen@scottish-blackface.co.uk www.scottish-blackface.co.uk







These dates may be subject to change. Due to Covid-19 restrictions the sales will be held under the regulations at the time. Please check the auction marts web sites and the Blackface web site and Facebook page for up to date information.

PUBLIC NOTICES

www.highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

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
20/02886/FUL	East Knoll, The Knoll, Lower Inverroy, Roy Bridge	Installation of 2 no. Holiday Pods
20/02836/PIP	Land 50M NE of Romalin Spean Bridge	Erection of house
20/02901/PIP	Land 120M North of Ardloch House Gairloch, Spean Bridge	Erection of a house
20/02914/FUL	Land 760M South Of 1 Glen Cottages, Glenachulish	Relocation of intake (amendment to planning permission 15/04716/FUL)
20/02917/FUL	Land 80M N of Garvan House Fort William	Erection of 3 houses
20/02840/FUL	Land 50M SE Of Old Dairy Inverie, Knoydart	Erection of house (amended design to planning permission 19/03332/FUL)

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

Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

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

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
20/01118/PP	Use of land for the siting of reverse vending machine unit for recycling purposes and associated works	Aldi, Lynn Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4PH
20/01307/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse	Plot 6, Ella Lane, Tobermory, Argyll And Bute
20/01287/PP	Erection of agricultural storage shed and formation of access track	Oban Seil Croft, Clachan Seil, Isle Of Seil, Argyll And Bute
20/01286/PP	Formation of vehicular access and erection of shed	Kerrera Primary School, Kerrera, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 4SX
20/01311/LIB	Installation of replacement external double doors and internal double doors	Perle Oban Hotel Station Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5RT
20/01271/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse and detached garage, installation of septic tank and upgrade of existing access	Land North East Of The Haven, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
20/01318/PPP	Site for the erection dwellinghouse	Plot 3 Land West Of Fishnish, Timber Pier, Pennygown Old Road, Pennygown, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
20/01296/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of septic tank and formation of vehicular access	Land West Of An Carn, Glenegeedale, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
20/01263/PP	Change of use of land for the siting of 2 holiday letting pods	Land North East Of Ballard, Craighouse, Isle Of Jura, 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
Comhairle Earra – Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Argyll and Bute Council

DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL (MAIN STREET, TOBERMORY) (TEMPORARY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) ORDER 2020

On Monday 17th August 2020, Argyll and Bute Council made the above named Order under Section 14(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, the effect of which will be that for a temporary period, the following restrictions will apply:

Schedule 1 – Prohibition of waiting at any time

- 1. Main Street** On both sides, from the extended northeast kerbline of Rockburn Road extending in an easterly direction to the entrance to Mishnish Pier.
- 2. Main Street** On the southeast side, from a point 7 metres or thereby northeast of the extended northeast kerbline of Springbank Brae, extending in a south-westerly direction for a distance of 35 metres or thereby.

Schedule 2 – Temporary disabled parking place

- 1. Main Street** On the southeast side, extending from a point 30 metres or thereby southwest of the extended southwest kerbline of Springbank Brae, extending in a northeasterly direction for a distance of 7 metres or thereby.
- 2. Main Street** On the southeast side, extending from a point 43.5 metres or thereby southwest of the extended southwest kerbline of Springbank Brae, extending in a southwesterly direction for a distance of 3.5 metres or thereby.

Schedule 3 – Temporary taxi parking place

- 1. Main Street** On the southeast side, extending from a point 40 metres or thereby southwest of the extended southwest kerbline of Springbank Brae, extending in a southwesterly direction for a distance of 3.5 metres or thereby.

Exceptions will apply to a vehicle being used in an emergency for fire brigade, ambulance, police or coastguard purposes or a vehicle being used for carrying out the works. The restrictions imposed by this Order which are required to allow essential works to be carried out on or near the road will be effective when indicated by signs from 0001 hours on the 24th August 2020 to 2359 hours on 31st January 2021, or until the works are complete, whichever is the earlier. The parking restrictions will be phased in 70 metre lengths to reduce the impact at any one time. The existing disabled parking and taxi parking places on Main Street southwest of the Clock Tower will be suspended for the duration of the works.

Roads & Infrastructure Services, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead PA31 8RD

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk
Comhairle Earra – Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks

Creag Dhubh – Dalmally 275kV Connection Project
Virtual Consultation

SSEN Transmission invites you to share your views with us

What is happening?
SSEN Transmission are launching a Virtual Consultation Exhibition to gain your views and feedback on our proposals to reinforce the existing transmission network connections in the region, to enable renewable energy projects to connect to the GB transmission network and ensure security of supply. This project was formerly referred to as the North Argyll Project.

What are you consulting on?
In recognition of the feedback received from previous consultation, about the potential for an additional overhead line at the head of Loch Awe, we committed to explore undergrounding across the Strath of Orchy.

Feedback concerning alternative overhead line routes and connection locations also led to a review of the connection options, and following assessment we have identified an alternative overhead line connection option.

Therefore, we are now consulting on three options for this connection;

- an overhead line to the existing Dalmally substation
- a combination of overhead line and underground cable to the existing Dalmally substation
- an alternative overhead line connection location east of Dalmally and new Switching Station

How can I get involved?
The virtual consultation exhibition has been designed to be fully interactive, allowing for presentation of key project information and plans, as well as providing an opportunity to ask questions about the project. Visitors will be able to engage directly with the project team, via a live text chat function, where they can ask any questions they might have about the project and share their feedback on the current proposals.

The team will be available for live chat sessions on:

Tuesday
01 September 2020
2pm – 4pm

Wednesday
02 September 2020
10am – 12pm

Wednesday
02 September 2020
6pm – 8pm

To find out how you can join the interactive virtual consultation, please visit the project website:
www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/creag-dhubh-dalmally-275kv-connection

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Community Liaison Manager:

 **Kelly Scott**
Community Liaison Manager
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks,
1 Waterloo Street, Glasgow, G2 6AY

Mob: 07443 772 946
Email: kelly.scott@sse.com

[@assencommunity](https://www.facebook.com/assencommunity)

Argyll & Bute Council

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT
Mrs Deirdre Muriel MacFarlane has registered their croft 5 Bonawe, Bonawe, Glenorchy and Innishail on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 14 May 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7095.

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

AGM of Oban Hospice
will be held via Zoom
on Monday 14th September 2020 at 7.30 pm

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES

West Coast PROPERTY

OBAN LIVESTOCK CENTRE LIMITED



Franchise opportunity for Café at Oban Livestock Centre
Interested parties should contact Angus MacGillivray at R A Clement Associates
Email: amg@raclement.co.uk
Phone: 01631 562643

74%

Local newspapers in print and digital (74%) are more than three times more trusted for local news and information than social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn (22%)

Source: YouGov 2018



DRIVING FORCE

70

GET YOUR NEW
REGISTRATION

Let us help you make the right choice
when buying a new car

Welcome to DRIVING FORCE



Buying a car can be the second biggest investment you will make. Choosing a new car is one of the most exciting experiences a motorist can enjoy and having a clear idea of exactly what you are looking for can make the process much easier.

Whether you buy from a local dealer, a distant retailer, an online broker or via the internet, it pays to do your homework so you are in the best position to get a good deal. This means deciding what make and model you want, as well as any add-ons that you need.

Once you have the facts and figures in front of you, it's time to talk to the dealer and negotiate your best price. Our guide will help you get the right car, with the right features for the right price, so read on and get inspired!

PUT SAFETY FIRST ON YOUR MOTORWAY JOURNEYS THIS SUMMER, SAYS GEM

• **STAY BACK** – leave a large enough safety gap from the vehicle in front

Road safety and breakdown cover specialist GEM Motoring Assist is encouraging drivers to put safety first on motorway journeys. GEM's advice focuses on two key aspects of motorway driving: leaving a sufficient gap from the vehicle in front and understanding the danger signs of fatigue while on a motorway journey.

GEM chief executive Neil Worth offered some reassurance for drivers. "Motorways may be the fastest roads we use, but they are statistically also the safest; and there are fewer collisions on motorways than on other roads," he said.

Stay back – leave a safety gap

"A serious risk occurs when there is not enough time and space between vehicles travelling at high speed. "Imagine a sudden hazard ahead of you on the motorway. According to the Highway Code, if you're driving at 70mph you will need a minimum of 96 metres to come to a stop.

"We recommend that all drivers familiarise themselves with the two-second rule. It's time-based, not distance-based, so it's effective at

• **STAY ALERT** – don't fight signs of tiredness

any legal motorway speed.

"Try it out on your next motorway journey. You should note as the vehicle in front passes a fixed point, such as a sign, bridge or lamp-post. Then you say 'Only a fool breaks the two-second rule.' If you are still speaking when you pass the same fixed point, then you are following too close."

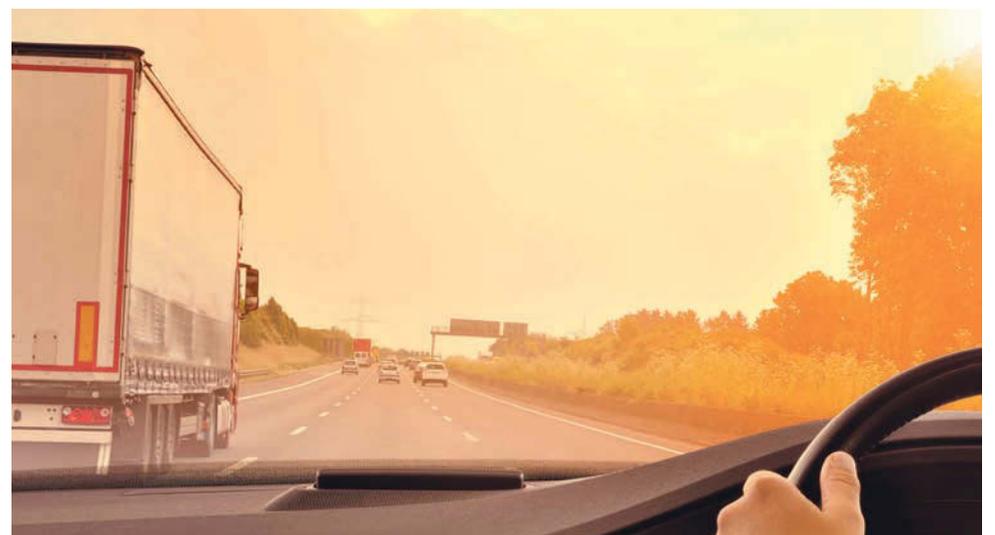
Stay alert – take regular breaks

Neil explained that a fatigue-related crash was around 50 per cent more likely to result in death or serious injury, simply because a driver who has fallen asleep at the wheel would be unable to reduce speed or change direction to avoid a collision. "The consequences can be devastating," he said.

"Falling asleep at the wheel is easily avoided, but it's vital you heed the many warning signs your body will give you before you actually nod off.

"After all, no-one simply falls asleep without passing through various recognisable stages of tiredness and distraction.

"You will experience difficulty focusing on



your driving, you may fidget, yawn constantly and rub your eyes frequently. You may find your thoughts constantly wandering away from driving, you may drift to the left or right, you may be slowing down without realising and you'll suddenly find you cannot recall anything that happened in the past few minutes.

"Don't ever get that tired when driving. On

long journeys, take a break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours or 100 miles. Get out of the car, do some exercise, stretch or walk. If necessary, have a caffeine drink or two to boost your alertness.

"You will know when fatigue is affecting you. It doesn't just take you by surprise. So resist the urge to press on, and take a proper break."

THE SUMMER SHOW BY ISUZU IS VIRTUALLY HERE



Isuzu UK is hosting its second virtual show of the season – the Summer Show by Isuzu – bringing all the entertainment and fun of a county show, safely to the comfort of your own home and without the mud. This 45-minute show will be jam-packed with entertainment and information that appeals to farmers, families and outdoor enthusiasts and includes vehicle walk-arounds, towing tips and off-road challenges. Plus, some exclusive interviews and celebrity guests.

Events season hasn't gone to plan this year and most shows have had to be cancelled but the

Pick-Up Professionals at Isuzu haven't let that stop them. The Summer Show by Isuzu will be split into three general interest sections: Agriculture, Towing and Adventure.

The Isuzu virtual stand displays the full range of D-Max pick-ups and viewers can look around some very different Isuzu D-Max vehicles and accessories that are perfectly suited to agriculture and outdoor activities.

Towing is a weighty topic for pick-up owners as over 90 per cent of D-Max are sold with a tow bar. Geared towards novice towers and helping the more experienced brush up on their

skills, some top towing tips are on offer.

An off-road course is a popular attraction for visitors at all Isuzu summer shows and this one is no exception. The grand finale will be a celebrity getting into some sticky situations as they demonstrate just how capable the Isuzu D-Max XTR is in eXTREme conditions on the ultimate off-road adventure.

The Summer Show by Isuzu will be broadcast on YouTube Live on Saturday August 22 at 4pm. Registrations are now open to the public at <https://www.isuzu.co.uk/summer>

Book early to avoid disappointment and join in the fun!



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PEUGEOT SHINES IN THE DIESEL CAR & ECO CAR TOP 50



PEUGEOT models have scored several wins at the Diesel Car & Eco Car Top 50 awards, with the all-new 2008 SUV named Best Compact SUV and the all-new e-2008 SUV named Best Compact Electric Car, while the PEUGEOT Rifter was awarded the Best Utility Vehicle. PEUGEOT models, including the 3008 SUV, 5008 SUV and 508 also featured in the Top 50 list of best vehicles currently on the market.

Five of PEUGEOT's latest models have been listed in the Diesel Car & Eco Car Top 50 awards. The all-new PEUGEOT 2008 SUV was crowned winner of the Compact SUV category, with its fully electric variant

winning the Compact Electric Car category, and ranked 13th overall in the Top 50 standings.

Ian Robertson, editor and publisher of Diesel Car & Eco Car, said: "The second-generation PEUGEOT 2008 SUV has undergone a complete transformation, trading in its soft lines for a chiselled baby-3008 SUV design.

"Powered by a range of traditional petrol and diesel engines, the arrival of the e-2008 SUV is ground-breaking in the baby SUV sector, meaning that buyers can choose an all-electric version for the first time."

The PEUGEOT Rifter was

awarded the Best Utility Vehicle by Diesel Car & Eco Car, with the magazine praising its practicality and capability.

Robertson said: "If the term 'lifestyle vehicle' fills you with horror, look no further than the PEUGEOT Rifter. Five-seat models feature the standard wheelbase, while seven-seat editions gain a longer wheelbase.

"Choose the latter option and there's a staggering 4,000 litres of load space with all seats folded down."

Diesel Car & Eco Car ranked the PEUGEOT 3008 SUV sixth in its Top 50 rankings, praising the SUV

for its "eye-catching" looks and efficient line-up of diesel engines. PEUGEOT's i-Cockpit® also earned praise from the judging panel thanks to its compact dimensions and the incorporation of a digital instrument panel.

The 5008 SUV and 508 were also ranked 41st and 33rd by Diesel Car & Eco Car in its annual ranking. Both vehicles impressed the judges with their line-up of efficient diesel engines, as well as stylish interiors featuring the latest in technology and driver assistance features and the availability of plug-in powertrains on the 508 and 508 SW.

David Peel, managing director

of PEUGEOT UK, said: "To rack up so many awards and Top 50 performances in the latest Diesel Car & Eco Car Top 50 shows the breadth and strength of the current PEUGEOT model line-up.

"Efficiency runs through the heart of the PEUGEOT brand, which is why we have made the commitment to have an electrified variant across our entire model line-up by 2023, complementing our current diesel and petrol models that are among the cleanest and most efficient in the sector."

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Subaru awarded best manufacturer for safety features in the 2020 driver power survey

For the second year running, Subaru has been voted Best Manufacturer for Safety Features in the 2020 Driver Power survey, the UK's number one car ownership survey.

In the overall rankings, Subaru placed third in a fiercely competitive field of 30 manufacturers. Steve Fowler, editor at Auto Express, said: "This year marks another exceptional performance for Subaru, as Driver Power respondents told us they're happy with almost everything that relates to life with these cars. Owners find them immensely satisfying to drive, enjoy their fantastic interiors, and can rely on them day in, day out. Owners also say no other car maker offers better safety systems. Given these results, it's easy to see why Subaru owners tend to be a loyal lot."

Chris Graham, managing director at Subaru UK, commented: "The results of this industry-leading survey clearly show that owners appreciate the importance of being able to choose and drive a car that's built to be Better Where It Matters – and nothing matters more

than safety. We're delighted that Subaru owners recognise our on-going commitment to build the safest cars on the road today, as well as praising the outstanding capability, practicality and reliability that our vehicles offer.

"We are immensely proud to be placed third out of 30 manufacturers and will continue to work tirelessly to deliver against – and exceed – owners' expectations."

All three Subaru SUVs hold the maximum five-star Euro NCAP safety rating and are fitted with a host of safety features, including EyeSight driver assistance, as standard. Subaru's exceptional safety credentials have been recognised with several notable awards in recent months. Subaru's brand-new Driver Monitoring System won the Technology Award at the 2020 What Car? Awards and was described as 'the most advanced of its kind', proving to be more accurate than other manufacturer systems at identifying when concentration was lost.

Forester e-BOXER was named Best in Class 2019



in the Small Off-Road/MPV Class in the Euro NCAP 2019 safety performance test, achieving outstanding scores in all four assessment areas and registering the highest score ever (91 per cent) in its class for Child Occupant Protection. Forester was also awarded 4x4 Magazine's

Best Small SUV of the Year 2020, impressing judges with its comprehensive range of safety technologies, on-road driveability and outstanding off-road capabilities.

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Isuzu D-Max sales up 50% for best July on record

The award-winning Isuzu D-Max has recorded its strongest ever sales performance for July, up 50 per cent on the same month last year. As the company prepares for launch of the All-New D-Max in 2021, Isuzu UK is recruiting new dealers to help it achieve its medium-term target of 10,000 sales per year by 2025.

Thanks to its 3.5t towing capacity, shift-on-the-fly 4WD system and one-tonne payload, the Isuzu D-Max has been highly decorated with a whole host of accolades including the What Van? Pick-Up of the Year 2020. As well as industry professionals, the D-Max is also held in high regard by its loyal – and growing – customer base.

Farmers, tradespeople and fleet customers are attracted by the D-Max's rugged reliability and broad range of accessories and fleet solutions, while customers who use their truck for business and pleasure love the sophistication and the distinctive styling of the 'Adventure' range models like the Blade and XTR.

In addition to record sales, interest in the brand is also at an all-time high with the Isuzu website witnessing

record traffic and brochure downloads last month as the country steadily opens back up for business.

William Brown, managing director of Isuzu UK, commented: "Our team has worked exceptionally hard to achieve this fantastic sales record and it's great to see that more people are recognising the capabilities and strengths of our award-winning truck. Moving forward, we're currently getting ready for the arrival of the All-New D-Max due next year. We're extremely excited about this as the new model raises the bar in the pick-up segment for comfort and safety, while retaining Isuzu's traditional strengths of durability and practicality."

As a brand, Isuzu is firmly on track to achieving its business objective of reaching 10,000 sales per year by 2025 and is now actively recruiting new dealers to expand its network in order to fulfill its growth expectations over the next few years.

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CARELESS SATNAV POSITIONING COULD LAND YOU IN TROUBLE, WARNS GEM

Poor positioning of satnav devices on car windscreens is posing a significant threat to road safety, says breakdown organisation GEM Motoring Assist. Today's large screen devices positioned in the middle of car windscreens mean a potentially dangerous reduction in driver visibility, especially on left hand bends and at junctions, according to GEM.

GEM chief executive Neil Worth said: "Satnav devices are great for reducing a lot of motoring stress and showing you the way on unfamiliar journeys. But if in the process you're obscuring a large part of your field of view, then you are taking a risk as well as breaking the law."

"A typical large screen satnav device measuring nearly seven inches (17cm) wide by four inches (10.48cm) high has the potential to cause significant restrictions to a driver's field of view, especially if it's mounted in the centre of the windscreen below a large rear view mirror.

"A small screen device may seem to be only a minor obstruction from inside the car. However, it has the potential to hide a much larger area outside the car, depending on where you sit and the distance you are from it.

"Placing a satnav right in the centre of the windscreen will block most of your nearside view, and will mean you miss all the hazards that might be there. This is particularly dangerous on left-hand bends, at junctions and crossings, and in any locations where you may share the

road space with cyclists and pedestrians."

Department for Transport advice is that nothing should intrude more than 1cm into a 29cm-wide strip of windscreen directly in front of the steering wheel, or more than 4cm into the rest of the area swept by the windscreen wipers.

GEM has assembled some simple tips to ensure your view of the road is not obstructed by a poorly-positioned sat nav:

- Ensure you position your satnav so that it won't affect your view of the road and your ability to drive safely.

- The safest place for a satnav is low down on your windscreen, and to the far right, to minimise obstruction of your field of view.

- If this is not possible, then it may be acceptable in the centre of the windscreen, but you should position it as low down as possible.

- Make sure you choose the right seat height and position to suit your individual shape and size before positioning your satnav.

- Avoid fitting the satnav to a location that could cause injury to a driver or passenger in a crash. This includes potential head strike zones on the windscreen, or other locations where deploying an airbag may contact them.

- Never fit the satnav high up on the windscreen. As well as severely restricting vision, this could interfere with the rear view mirror and sun visors, and will require power cords to trail across the driver's field of vision.



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DACIA DUSTER NAMED BEST VALUE NEW CAR IN AUTO TRADER NEW CAR AWARDS



AutoTrader

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2020

BEST VALUE
NEW CAR

- Dacia Duster triumphs with Best Value New Car Award 2020 from Auto Trader for the second consecutive year
- More than 181,000 car

- owners voted in the 2020 Auto Trader New Car Awards
- The Duster is Dacia's best-selling model, with broad range of engines

- and trim levels
- Available to buy through a retailer or via Dacia Buy Online and in conjunction with Dacia's 'Three Months On Us' offer

The Dacia Duster's trophy cabinet has been extended to accommodate another victory with the announcement of the popular family model scooping the Best Value New Car prize in Auto Trader's 2020 New Car Awards.

More than 181,000 car own-

ers voted in the latest awards, with the Duster coming out on top as the best value of all the contenders for the second year in a row after winning the same award in 2019.

Speaking of the win, Erin Baker, editorial director of Auto Trader, said: "The Dacia

Duster achieved one of the highest scores in our survey this year to claim the coveted Auto Trader Best Value New Car Award. The Duster still offers so much car, for so little money!"

Building on its extensive list of existing accolades, the



award-winning Duster majors on value for money, delivering impressive practicality, comfort, usability and standard equipment for an attractive price that's hard to argue with.

With a broad range of engine and trim level options, there's a Duster for all occasions.

The comprehensive petrol and diesel line-up has recently expanded with the addition of the TCe 100 Bi-Fuel LPG option, delivering an impressive combined range of over 620 miles and low CO2 emissions in LPG mode.

A wide choice of specifications are available too, made up of Access, Essential, Comfort, SE Twenty and Prestige options, all of which deliver outstanding value for money and a generous level of standard equipment, while also bringing new levels of comfort and technology to Dacia models.

Of the win, Luke Broad, head of brand for Dacia, commented: "The ongoing appeal of the impressive Duster continues to be recognised, and receiving the award for

the best-value car on sale in the UK solidifies what Dacia's philosophy is all about.

"The Duster represents outstanding value for money thanks to its broad spread of capabilities, its comfort, versatility and low running costs, all for an attractively low price in the first place."

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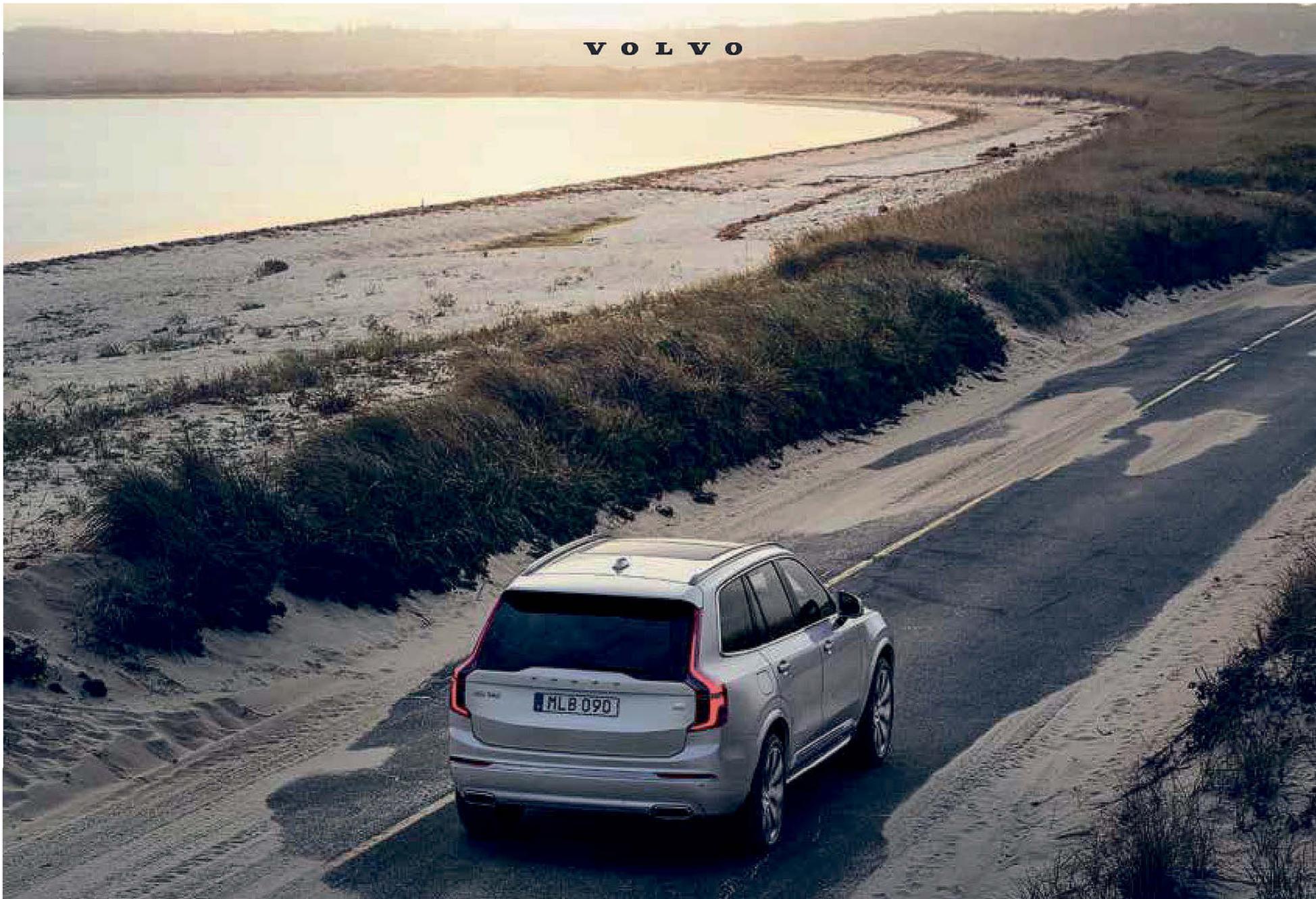
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Interviews will be held on *September 11th*

For job description and further details please contact:
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DEATHS

DICKSON - Robert. Suddenly, but peacefully, at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary on August 7, 2020, Robert Redpath (Dixie). Beloved husband of Mary, a loving dad to Robert and Laura, devoted grandad and a much loved brother of Jacqueline and James. The funeral service took place on Wednesday, August 19 in Kirkcaldy Crematorium.

HOWARD - Bruce Leonard Macarthy, Edinburgh. Passed away peacefully in Edinburgh on Wednesday August 12, 2020. Will be much missed by family and friends.

HOWE - Suddenly but peacefully at Lorn And Isles Hospital on Thursday August 13, William (Willie). Precious dad and grandad. Sorely missed.

Susan, Peter, Aga, Laura and Jack xxxxx

JORDAN - Passed away peacefully at home on August 14, 2020 surrounded by her family, Dolina (Dolly), last member of the Livingstone

family, aged 87 years. A much loved mother to Neil, Lorna and Ian, a loving mother-in-law, granny and great-granny. Sadly missed by all.

MACGREGOR - Andrew Duncan John, former resident of Colonsay, passed away peacefully in his sleep at Manor Care Home in Cambridge on July 27, 2020. A small funeral was held on August 11 at Cambridge Crematorium, and a memorial service will be held on Colonsay next year when travel is more feasible.

MACKINNON - Peacefully at home, Cala Grianach, Tarbert on Sunday August 16, 2020, Catherine Smith aged 89. Much loved daughter of the late Malcolm and Chrissie. Loving sister of Malcolm and the late Alistair, Ian and Elsie. Aunt, great Aunt and great, great Aunt. A private family funeral service will be held at Cardross Crematorium on Monday August 24.

McPHAIL - Suddenly at home on August 12, 2020, John Park McPhail, beloved husband of the late Sandra

McLeod, wonderful dad to Aileen and Lindsey and loving pa of John, Grant and Laurie, who all adored him. Due to current restrictions a private graveside service will be held on Monday, August 24 at 12 noon in Strachur Cemetery.

SANSOME - Irene, (Renee). Passed away peacefully at home, Torosay Court Oban, August 11, 2020 in her 91st year. Beloved mother, mother-in-law to the late Diane and Alistair Macleod (Dunolliebeg Farm), Lesley and Adrian. Much loved grandmother to Justine, James, Lorna and Fiona, cherished great-grandmother. A true and loyal friend to many. She will be truly missed. Private funeral will be held in due course.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LEES - Marilyn. Fiona Craik and family wish to thank the many friends for their sympathy, gifts and cards that we have received after the loss of our sister, Marilyn.

LITSTER - Moira, Yvonne, Vivienne and their families

wish to thank all relatives, friends, neighbours and work colleagues for the many kind expressions of sympathy, phone calls, visits, cards, food, baking, flowers and charitable donations received following their recent sad loss of Danny. Special thanks to local ambulance staff, Air Ambulance medics and staff at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital for their care and attention to Danny. Heartfelt thanks to everyone who took time to pay their respects during the cortege's route through Kilmichael and Lochgilphead. Thanks to Cameron MacDonald for conducting the funeral ceremony in a personal and dignified manner; to Donald MacDonald Funeral Directors for their care and professionalism; to Morna for beautiful floral tributes, and also to Christine for allowing us to have a small, but intimate service enabling us to celebrate Danny's life.

McINTYRE - Margaret's family would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for the many expressions of sympathy following their sad loss. Heartfelt gratitude to the nursing staff at Lorn and Islands Hospital, all carers and community nurses for their kindness and care to Margaret. Special thanks to H. Hoey & Son for their sensitive handling of the funeral arrangements. Sincere thanks to Donald MacKinnon for his comforting and uplifting service. Our thanks to all those who paid their

respects at the roadside.

McNEILL - The family of the late John McNeill would like to express their thanks to all their relatives, friends and neighbours for all the flowers, cards and messages of sympathy. We would also like to thank the medical team at Tarbert Health Centre, the district nurses, Marie Curie, the health care team and the home care team. Special thanks to Ian MacInnes of D & A Munn for his caring and efficient funeral arrangements, the Rev R MacLeod for a personal and comforting service, piper John Hunt for playing lovely tunes and to all those who paid their respects on John's final journey.

MEMORIAMs

CRUICKSHANK - In loving memory of our dear parents, grandparents and great-grandparents Duncan, died August 15, 2015 and Flora died August 22, 2013.

Missed so much

- Duncan, Emma, Mhairi and families

MACCOLL - In loving memory of Donnie 1/8/17 and Angus 3/9/17. Deeply loved and so very sorely missed. - The MacColl family

MACKAY - In memory of Donnie, who died August 18, 2018, adored Dad and Papa. Remembered with love everyday

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McGRATH - Precious memories of a dear mum Margaret, Achaleven Farm,

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MUNRO - In loving memory of Craig, a dear son, who passed away August 25, 2019.

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- Dad and Jane

OWEN - In loving memory of our dear mum, gran and great-gran, who passed away on

August 18, 2016, and our dear dad and grandpa, who passed away on August 25, 1997.

Forever in our thoughts and prayers.

- Tom, Lily Elizabeth and families.

SIMPSON - Remembering

my dad Ian who died so

suddenly on August 24, 1987.

Always in my thoughts.

- Love Mary x

STEWART - In loving memory of our mum Ann who passed away August 21 2019 and our dad Sandy who died September 26, 2007. A much loved granny and papa missed every day.

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Kirk produces new guide to support worship in Gaelic

The Church of Scotland has created a new guide for Gaelic speakers and learners which will particularly support worship leaders who want to use the language with confidence.

Described as a guide to biblical and ecclesiastical language, the booklet will also more generally aim to help anyone who wants to engage in Bible study or follow sermons more easily.

It arrives against the backdrop of a study released last month by the University of the Highlands and Islands warning that the Gaelic language will decline unless it is used more in everyday conversation and at home (www.uhi.ac.uk).

The booklet has been compiled by the Kirk's Gaelic Language Development Officer Dr Duncan Sneddon and has also been supported by a range of academics and Gaelic speakers. Speaking about the booklet Dr Sneddon said: 'There are a lot of people who speak Gaelic quite well or even fluently, but aren't confident in their grasp of 'church Gaelic'.

'Church Gaelic or Bible Gaelic is increasingly distant from the everyday spoken language, for younger people in particular. This handbook should help people gain confidence in using their Gaelic in worship and Bible reading.

'I'm also happy to take suggestions for future editions, so

if there's something you think would be useful that isn't in there, let me know.'

Those who could benefit from the guide include people who grew up speaking the language but were discouraged from using Gaelic in formal contexts such as church or school, and others who are out of practice having moved to English speaking areas.

People learning Gaelic for the first time as adults may also be interested in sharing their Christian faith in the language.

The booklet states its goal is to encourage people to 'bring their gifts to the church and use their Gaelic for the preaching of the Gospel and the work of the Kingdom'.

Sections include advice on using different translations of the Bible alongside key differences between them, a glossary of relevant words, and notes on the potentially difficult grammar used within the Gaelic Bible.

Although presented as an online document, it has been formatted to be easily downloaded, printed, and read.

Parts of the Bible were first translated into Gaelic in the 17th century, but the first full translation was not produced until 1807.

During lockdown some local churches, such as Fort William Duncansburgh MacIntosh Parish Church, have success-

fully moved online for Gaelic Bible study and services, which has led to people taking part from places such as Argentina.

Due to popular demand, the Gaelic Bible study group has now split into a beginner and more advanced level and is now attended by several ministers and readers from the Church of Scotland, and even two ministers from Canada.

Meanwhile Lochs-In-Bernera and Uig Churches of Scotland, led by Rev Hugh Maurice Stewart on the Isle of Lewis have been hosting an online Sunday School in Gaelic.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

- Sow seeds in pots indoors
Second week of March
- Pot up young plants
Second week of April
- Harden off young plants
First week of May
- Plant out young plants
Third week of May
- Begin high potash feed
When flowers die off
- Begin pruning cordon type
When side shoots appear
- Begin harvesting tomatoes
First week of August



This was the plan! But some things don't work exactly to plan, and I find myself going into the third week in August with one red tomato, and another just beginning to blush.

Those of us who have waited all winter for a decent tomato

know the joy of the first ripe tomato of summer, it is a promise of the abundance that people can expect to eat in months to come. They signal that there are good days ahead.

In the Bible, there was something that the Israelites called 'first fruits'.

They were an offering to God (2 Chronicles 31 verse 5). The idea behind the first fruits, of course, was that the first fruits of any harvest are especially valuable.

We have all had a very difficult year, but as we begin to see some changes for the better, perhaps now is the time to reflect on the new things we have learned about ourselves, and our communities. We have grown resilience, community spirit, and some of us have grown in our faith, and found new ways to share that faith. There are many precious things to thank God for.

Reverend Marion Kinnear,
Auxiliary Minister
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Former rugby internationals swap boots for bikes

A quartet of former Scotland international rugby players will be descending on Oban next week during an epic charity bike run.

Ruaridh Jackson, who earned 33 caps between 2010 and 2018, will join Richie Vernon, the first man to go to World Cups for Scotland as a forward then a back, Ryan Grant, the former Scotland prop and 2009 Lions tourist and Andrew Easson, the former Edinburgh

and Scotland Sevens player, in cycling the Caledonia Way in aid of Doddie Weir's My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation and Unite Against Cancer.

With no cycling experience between them apart from the occasional spin on an indoor training cycle, the four-some aim to ride the 234 miles from Campbeltown to Inverness in 36 hours.

Speaking to the Oban Times last week Jackson said: 'Training has been going

well but it is not without its challenges fitting it in and around work. We are all excited about the route but nervous about some of the climbs that will have to be taken on, especially day one up to Oban.'

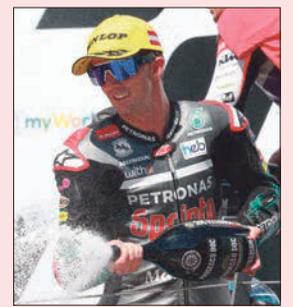
The quartet are raising money for two charities close to their hearts – the My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation and Unite Against Cancer.

At the time of writing they had al-

ready reached £4,940 of their original £5,000 target.

The team roll out of Campbeltown tomorrow and will stay overnight in Oban before taking off for Fort William on Saturday morning.

You can track their journey and donate to Ruaridh, Ryan, Richie and Andrew's cycling challenge at their Cycling the Caledonia Way gofundme page.



John McPhee sprays the champagne at the end of the Austrian Grand Prix.

Surprise podium for John McPhee in Austrian GP

Oban's John McPhee found himself taking his third Moto3 podium of the year last Sunday at the Austrian Grand Prix, despite crossing the line in sixth place.

A frenetic race ended with a bunch battle, where three riders ran wide and received post-race penalties. This promoted McPhee up into third place.

This result sees McPhee move up to second in the championship standings. After the race John said: 'To be gifted a podium like this is not the nicest way to have one, but we'll certainly take it. In the race I felt really strong, I was able to pass the other guys with ease and that's not normal in Moto3.'

John will be back in action at the end of this week as the paddock remains in Austria for the Grand Prix of Styria (21-23 August).

Green for go at Dalmally Golf Club

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



Sunday was a big day in the season at Dalmally Golf Club with the opening of its new putting green and the playing of the annual John MacKechnie Quaich tournament.

The weather, with pleasant sunshine and a cooling breeze, was perfect for golf and the course was in excellent condition.

Events started off with the official opening of the putting green.

Club Captain, Graeme MacKechnie probably did not need to remind everyone that it had been a long time in the making, and thanked Carraig Gheal Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund and Greenpower for their financial support and patience, welcoming Finn Forrest, representing Greenpower.

Rob Forrest, Chief Executive of Greenpower, who was una-

ble to be at the opening, sent a personal message. He said: 'I am delighted that the putting green is now open following challenging times and weather.'

'It has been funded by a grant of over £5,000 and I wish everyone success in the John MacKechnie Quaich competition as part of the opening of the green.'

'I hope that members and visitors alike can enjoy the green for many years to come.'

Graeme MacKechnie invited Alison Livingstone to cut the official ribbon and her husband, Jim, to hit the inaugural putt. Declaring the green open, he thanked both for their outstanding voluntary work on the course over the past months.

Now in its fourth year, and with a great turnout, the tournament was then played in memory of John MacKechnie, a much admired and respected club stalwart, and Graeme's father.

This year's format – a



Alison Livingstone cuts the ribbon to officially open the new putting green with husband Jim, Greenpower assistant project manager, Finn Forrest and junior players Lewis and Andrew MacMillan were also in attendance.

three-person, mixed Texas Scramble – was tightly contested with little separating the first three teams.

First were Judith McGregor, Martin O'Keeffe and James MacMillan on 57, second Ann McLaren, Terry McNair and

Lewis MacMillan, 58 (bih) and third were the MacKechnie 'clan', Alicia, Graeme and Arik on 58 (bih).

Concluding the day, Graeme thanked everyone – members, their families and many friends – for making it such a

success: 'My father would have been 80 next week.'

'We were prevented from running the Quaich as our traditional, opening tournament back in March. Having held it in his name today feels just right,' he said.

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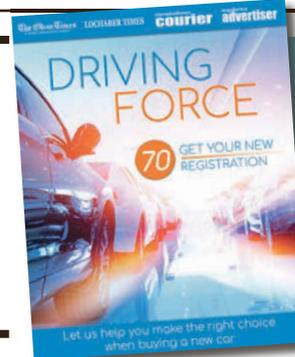
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Emma hits Ben for boxing club fundraiser



Fergus conquers Glencoe challenge



INSIDE 12-page motoring special



In glorious summer sunshine, Glenfinnan residents gathered on their games field at the head of Loch Shiel to mark what should have been the day of their 75th annual Gathering and Highland Games. Sadly, Covid forced its cancellation but people came together on Saturday to ensure the historic occasion did not go unmarked. Full story page four. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.images

Call to action over Belford

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Frustration and disappointment are continuing to grow over the perceived lack of action on the project to replace Fort William's ageing Belford Hospital, despite land being acquired five years ago.

In comparison, construction for new hospitals in Broadford on Skye and at Aviemore – bare-

ly 40 minutes from Raigmore Hospital in Inverness – are both already well under way, with completion due next year.

It was back in 1995 that a report flagged up the need for an improved facility.

But despite all this, yet another scheduled meeting of the local steering group, which involves officials from NHS Highland, has again been cancelled. It means the last steering group meeting took

place on March 5, while the Transport sub group met at the end of February.

And while there is understanding over how busy NHS Highland has been in tackling the coronavirus pandemic, there is now increasing pressure for more tangible progress on the new hospital plans.

MSP Kate Forbes told the Lochaber Times this week: 'Plans for the New Belford Hospital have been moving at a

snail's pace, despite land being acquired five years ago.

'The steering groups have been delayed once again and some of the most basic elements regarding access haven't been resolved yet. Members and representatives have participated in good faith for years, and so I know the incredibly slow speed of progress is disappointing.

'I have raised this with the chair, chief executive and local manager of NHS Highland.'

Lochaber community advocate John Hutchison – a member of the steering group since inception and also currently vice-chairman of Kilmallie Community Council – said there was growing concern among the area's community councils, including those for Fort William, Inverlochty and Torlundy; South Lochaber, Caol and Kilmallie.

The Belford Hospital project was on the agenda for Fort

William, Inverlochty and Torlundy Community Council this week and is also down for discussion at next week's meeting of the Kilmallie council.

Mr Hutchison said: 'Community council colleagues are expressing extreme disappointment and irritation at yet another cancellation.

'We understand the current focus on Covid-19, but wonder

Continued on page three.



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Students urged to apply for funding

Students in the Great Glen and on Skye considering a career in a renewable energy-related subject are being invited to apply for financial support with costs associated with their studies.

The support scheme run by Falck Renewables, owners of Millennium Wind Farm in Glenmoriston and Ben Aketil Wind Farm near Dunvegan, in areas around their 10 wind farms in Scotland, helps students of renewable energy-related subjects with some of the expenses they incur while studying, such as travel costs, equipment, software or broadband.

Local businesses considering retraining staff in a renewable energy related area to help plan for the future after lockdown are also being invited to apply.

Now in its third year, the scheme has so far provided funding for students from Sutherland and Lanarkshire.

Richard Dibley, managing director of Falck Renewables, said: 'Now more than ever, the more help we can give young people to help them into secure employment the better and we hope that by offering some financial support for things such as travel expenses, equipment or software more people might be encouraged to consider studying for a qualification in a subject related to renewable energy.'

Iseabal at cutting edge of sustainable fashion

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A young Highland textile designer has been backed to succeed by Creative Scotland after being selected for a leading nationwide initiative.

A former pupil at Lochcarron Primary and Plockton High Schools, Iseabal Hendry launched her first collection of sustainable hand-woven leather bags and accessories this month, and has already caught the eye of the organisation that supports creative industries in Scotland.

Creative Scotland will provide match funding to Iseabal to help support her growing business, if she meets her initial £5,000 target on Crowdfunder.co.uk

The funding will enable the Glasgow School of Art graduate to bring her premium, hand-crafted bags and accessories fully to market.

Every item is made of sustainably produced and sourced materials, including cotton woven in Scotland on traditional looms that are more than 100 years old.

The daughter of George and Jenny Hendry, Iseabal, 27, who lives in Strathcarron, takes



around 15 hours to craft each of her bags, which are made of organically tanned leather – using natural tannins found in plants, bark, leaves, berries, and fruit.

She told the Lochaber Times: 'There is a definite need and desire for environmentally friendly and 'slow' fashion which places the emphasis on the sustainability and quality



Iseabal Hendry at work and, above, some of her creations.

of the materials and finished product. The fashion industry is obviously dominated by global brands and cheap, overseas manufacturing, but buying from closer to home has more benefits than just supporting local businesses.

'There is a growing awareness that knowing where your product came from, and who made it, creates a stronger connection between purchaser, designer and maker.

'This exciting initiative from Creative Scotland takes that a step further and lets the public build a strong bond with local designers from an early stage.

'Pre-ordering your bag on Crowdfunder allows me to make the collection entirely from materials sourced within the UK and Europe – minimis-

ing the environmental impact and providing confidence in their origin and the quality of the product.'

She added: 'It is a slow process, and one that can't be achieved with the help of a machine. It's about valuing the process of making, not just the design, and celebrating craft and quality.'

Reaching her target of £5,000 will allow Iseabal to realise her dream of putting her beautiful creations into production entirely within the UK.

However, she needs to meet her fundraising target quickly in order to access the match-funding.

She explained: 'There are a lot of people competing for this funding and I'm told the pot of money will go within the first few days.'

'I will be launching a range of products available to pre-order from smaller items to the capsule collection itself. There will also be the option to make a donation.'

Iseabal launched her capsule collection on Crowdfunder on Monday and her work can be seen at www.iseabalhendry.com. Also follow her on Instagram @iseabalhendry for updates on the Crowdfunder.



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Call to ban fish farm use of formaldehyde in lochs

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Pressure is growing on the Scottish Government to halt the use of formaldehyde on West Highland fresh water lochs, including three in Lochaber - Loch Shiel, Loch Lochy and Loch Arkaig.

Campaigners for Inside Scottish Salmon Feedlots (ISSF) have called for a total ban on the chemical at fish farms until a 'proper' public consultation on its use has taken place.

It follows a Freedom of Information request earlier this year to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), which revealed more than 22 tonnes of formaldehyde had been poured into cages at 12 fish farms across Scotland between April and December 2019.

Fish farming companies are officially sanctioned by SEPA to apply the chemical to water as it is used to treat farmed salmon and control fungus, parasites, and disease.

The practice is legally permitted at a number of lochs, including Loch Shiel at

The concern is quantities being used and accidental overdoses

Glenfinnan; Loch Lochy and Loch Arkaig, both near Spean Bridge; and Loch Tralaig near Melfort, south of Oban.

Campaigners have raised concerns about the impact on human health and wildlife, and 'accidental overdoses' - where more of the chemical enters the water than allowed.

The ISSF has now raised the issue with Roseanna Cunningham MSP, cabinet secretary for the environment, and Gillian Martin, convenor for Holyrood's Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee.

The ISSF opposes the use of formaldehyde, calling it a 'cancer causing' chemical used for embalming.

The Scottish Government said in a statement: 'The use of formaldehyde is strictly regulated by the independent Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), and it can be safely used in fish farming. Formaldehyde use in fish farming, as regulated, does not pose a risk to food safety.'

Corin Smith, founder of ISSF, based in Perthshire, said it recognised formaldehyde had been used in farming for many years and that it broke down

'relatively rapidly' in water. The concern is the quantities being used, and accidental overdoses and their impact.

Mr Smith said: 'Having reviewed existing literature it is not clear or well understood to what extent formaldehyde on freshwater fish farms will directly impact wild fish, of any species, at the alevin, fry or parr stages, or indeed aquatic invertebrates and other foundation organisms that are in proximity to freshwater fish farms.'

The Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation (SSPO) declined to comment on the specific claims by ISSF.

It said formalin was 'fully approved for use by SEPA' and added: 'Formaldehyde itself is a naturally occurring compound that swiftly breaks down in water and is therefore safe to use for both fish and the environment.'

Call for action over new Belford Hospital plans

Continued from page one.

just how many of those involved with the project planning and design of the new Belford are involved with post-Covid redesign, day to day.

'We also note that the steering group has been meeting for almost five years with little progress to show for it and we are still discussing the basic principles of the services to be provided.'

'Covid-related delay only accounts for the past few months. In the meantime a new unit for orthopaedic and eye procedures seems to be moving ahead at Raigmore.'

'The question is how the NHS is going to get the new Belford project back on track and we call for a Lochaber-based, experienced project manager with this single remit to drive the project forward.'

Fellow steering group member David Sedgwick, who retired from his surgeon's post at the Belford Hospital six years ago after more than two decades working in the hospital's operating theatres,

echoed Mr Hutchison's remarks.

He told the Lochaber Times: 'As a clinician I am aware that there are pressures on the managerial team which has been responding to the Covid pandemic over the last few months. However, there has been a lack of momentum in this planning process for a new hospital in Lochaber with several meetings having been cancelled or postponed over the past five years.'

'Whilst meeting in person has not been possible in the past five months, there are many internet platforms that could now be used.'

'The health board is well aware that the Belford Hospital is the busiest acute hospital in NHS Highland outside Inverness.'

'This planning process needs to be completed urgently, particularly as we are aware of the other new hospitals that are now being built in the Highland health board area.'

NHS Highland was asked to comment but had been unable to at the time of going to press.

Ballet West dance school in turmoil amid allegations

The founder and principal of Scotland's biggest ballet school, Gillian Barton, has been suspended.

The suspension follows the resignation of the Taynuilt-based dance school's vice-principal, her son, Jonathan Barton.

Mr Barton is facing allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards students and that he abused his position at the family-run boarding school.

The allegations came to light following an ITV News investigation.

The ballet school's board of trustees has appointed Dr Kirsty Hood, QC, to lead an independent, external inquiry into the allegations.

In a statement issued this week, the board of trustees said: 'Any emerging allegations will form part of ongoing external and internal investigations. Since ITN broadcast allegations last Thursday, the board has yet to receive any complaint from either students or parents.'

'The vast majority of parents who have contacted us have



The Ballet West board says it welcomes an investigation by Police Scotland into the allegations.

done so in support of Ballet West and the quality of education, but we welcome an investigation by Police Scotland and urge anyone who feels they have cause for complaint to make these concerns known to the police or the Ballet West board at board@balletwest.ac.uk so it can be dealt without delay.

'Any correspondence will be treated as confidential. We also urge ITN to provide any relevant information to Police

Scotland who have been contacted by the board of trustees at Ballet West.

'Parents or students requiring information about the current term can contact the school on 01866 822641 or by email on admissions@balletwest.co.uk'

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'We can confirm that officers have been made aware of concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour. However, there has been no criminality established to date.'

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Historic Glenfinnan Gathering and games date celebrated by residents

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Saturday would have been the perfect day to stage the 75th anniversary Glenfinnan Gathering and Highland Games.

The annual gathering usually takes place on the Saturday closest to the anniversary of Bonnie Prince Charlie's raising of the standard in 1745, which signalled the start of the Jacobite rising.

The 275th anniversary was yesterday (Wednesday), so many in Glenfinnan and elsewhere in the UK and abroad were crestfallen when the coronavirus lockdown restrictions forced the cancellation of this year's events.

However, Glenfinnan's residents came together on the games field on Saturday to mark the day and look forward to next year.

At the event, organised by Glenfinnan Community Council, Alastair Gibson,

manager of Glenfinnan Estate and a member of the gathering and games organising committee, said: 'We felt the 275th anniversary of the start of the 1745 rising should be remembered and marked.'

The Bicentennial Celebration held at Glenfinnan on VJ Day in 1945, marking the 200th anniversary of the raising of the standard, was meant to be a one-off event but was so popular that it was agreed to host a gathering annually.

Among those present on Saturday was 90-year-old Donald Sinclair from North Devon, a veteran of the Seaforth Highlanders, who has attended many gatherings, as well as donating to fundraising efforts.

A great friend of the late Ronnie MacKellaig, one of the founders of the gathering, Mr Sinclair had wanted to be in Glenfinnan for the anniversary date to lay a white rose on the grave of his old friend.



Clockwise from left: Alastair Gibson says a few words; Katie MacRae plays 'Glenfinnan Highland Gathering'; Donald Sinclair tends the grave of his old friend Ronnie MacKellaig; Younger Glenfinnan residents carry the clan standards.

All photographs: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

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Ardnamurchan lighthouse transfer is beacon of hope

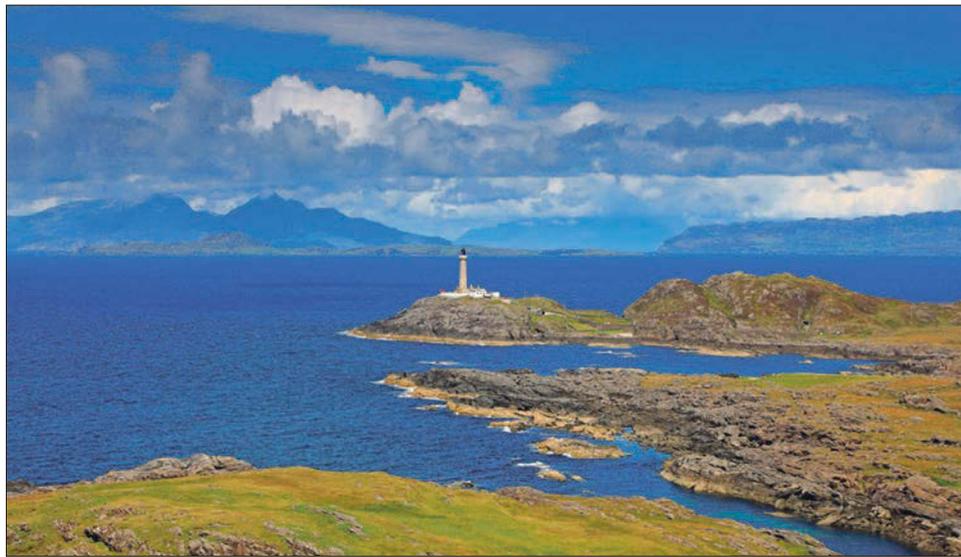
by Stephanie Cope
fort@obantimes.co.uk

Ardnamurchan Lighthouse, at the most westerly point on the British mainland, is a towering 115-foot beacon to the brilliance of the famous Stevenson engineering dynasty.

The latest chapter in its history sees ownership of the lighthouse complex transferred from Highland Council to Ardnamurchan Lighthouse Trust.

The community asset transfer was made possible by grant aid from the Scottish Land Fund and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The site and associated buildings will be owned and managed by the trust on behalf of Ardnamurchan's residents. The lighthouse tower, which is still operational, remains the property of the Northern Lighthouse Board.

Councillor Allan Henderson, Caol and Mallaig, chairman of the council's communities and place committee, said the local authority was delighted to complete the transfer of the ownership of the land and



Ardnamurchan lighthouse. Photograph: Michael Macgregor Photography.

buildings surrounding the lighthouse to the trust that has run it for many years.

'The council is sure that the trust and the local community will make full use of the asset to protect its future and develop the range of facilities and services they provide on the site.'

'We wish them success in their future ventures,' added

Councillor Henderson. Ardnamurchan Lighthouse has a long history of safeguarding mariners off Scotland's west coast. Completed in 1849, the white granite tower was erected by Alan Stevenson, uncle of Robert Louis Stevenson.

The lighthouse complex has changed hands several times since its completion, but came

into community ownership in 1996. Following a lengthy campaign led by Ardnamurchan residents, then councillor Dr

Michael Foxley persuaded the council to purchase the site from entrepreneur Peter de Savary. Under private ownership, the complex had not been fully accessible to the public.

The lighthouse group highlighted the site's significance to Scotland's cultural and maritime heritage and its value as a place for people to connect with coastal environments.

As the existing buildings transformed into a visitor attraction, the community volunteers became the constituted social enterprise Ardnamurchan Lighthouse Trust.

For more than 20 years, the trust operated the lighthouse complex in collaboration with the Northern Lighthouse Board.

In 2019, the trust was awarded £224,900 from the Scottish Land Fund to purchase the lighthouse complex and deliver much-needed

emergency repairs. As part of this, the trust also appointed a dedicated project manager to push the multi-phase restoration forward.

Ritchie Dinnes, chairman of the trust, said: 'Now, with the completion of our community asset transfer, the focal role of the lighthouse complex in our community has been strengthened.'

'This important change will help us to attract grant funding; allowing us to upgrade facilities at the site so that it can play an even bigger part in community life.'

The challenge of concluding this transfer was heightened by the ongoing pandemic. It has taken tenacity, sleepless nights, strong partnerships, and a collective vision of the huge potential this attraction has for buttressing Ardnamurchan's remote rural economy.

ScotRail denies bolting shut toilets as 'Hogwarts Express' restarted

ScotRail has refuted claims it locked toilets at Fort William station when the Jacobite steam train services restarted recently, after keeping the public loos open during the previous coronavirus lockdown stages.

The company's comments came after Jacobite operator West Coast Railways (WCR) told the Lochaber Times: 'Railway staff at Fort William kept the station's public lavatories open all through the Covid-19 lockdown. But as soon as the Jacobite steam train began to run again last month, they bolted them shut.'

And that, said WCR, caused a problem for hundreds of tourists as they queued to catch the popular service over the Glenfinnan Viaduct to Mallaig.

'You could say it was a public inconvenience,' said a spokesman for WCR, which

runs the steam train made more famous after doubling as the Hogwarts Express in the Harry Potter movies.

'A lot of our passengers are not, how shall we say, in the first flush of youth. So some of them were left hopping from foot to foot desperate to spend a penny,' added the spokesman. 'We had to try and get them on board as quickly as we could so they could use the train's loos.'

'I think ScotRail staff were worried that with the Covid-19 safety measures they might not have time to clean the public conveniences properly. But if they had approached us and discussed the problem I'm sure we could have worked something out.'

Instead it led to some awkward moments and unfortunately we have had to complain to ScotRail headquarters in Glasgow.

'What seemed even more ridiculous was that the platform buffet was kept open. So our passengers could buy cups of coffee and tea - but could not go and have a pee.'

ScotRail told the Lochaber Times the station toilets at Fort William had not been closed but remain open and have been operated by key-controlled use.

ScotRail said anyone wishing to use the toilets just had to request the key from station staff.

This is to allow the station team to manage the facility in terms of cleaning, replenishing stock levels, and people using the facility keeping a physical distance with the increased number of people now using the station.

The measures were put in place, ScotRail explained, to manage the increased passenger numbers as lockdown restrictions eased.

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The Croftless Crofter

NIC GODDARD

fort@obantimes.co.uk



I never knew when I was a child that one of the many things I would do to make money when I was a grown-up would be to make jam.

I didn't even know it until the point when I realised there were kilos and kilos of brambles growing on Rum that I could forage for nothing – and then learned that I had something of a knack for making jam. And that people really like jam.

Many people have childhood memories of stained fingers and scratched arms from gathering soft fruit and most of us are able to identify wild blackberries and raspberries to pick along with cultivated varieties but there remains a mystique to turning those jewel-bright berries into jars of jam.

My dad – a huge fan of all types of preserve, jam and jelly – was convinced that its creation involved hours, if not days, of boiling up fruit along with some undisclosed form of magic, known only to his grandmother.

I have several friends who have attempted jam making to be left with a delicious but



runny puree only suitable for pouring over ice cream, or worse, a smoke filled kitchen, a ruined pan and a lump of solid fruit and sugar.

The hundreds of jars of jam I made – and sold – from our croft had value added in the form of flavour combinations from herbs and spices to florals (blackcurrant and vanilla, raspberry and rose, bramble and chilli, strawberry and lavender) and were decanted into charming jars with hand drawn labels and were posted

out across the world. These days I am only making for our own consumption or for friends and family.

My own personal form of jam-making magic is a percentage of at least 51 per cent sugar to fruit ratio (sometimes slightly more, but never less) by weight. My secret for getting the jam to set is knowing what fruit has a decent level of pectin in it already (blackberries have plenty, strawberries very little, for example).

If required, more pectin can



From fruits of the forest to the flavour of summer on toast in the winter.

be added with lemon juice, a few less ripe fruits (which generally have higher levels of pectin), mixing some high pectin fruits with lower ones or if all else fails some powdered pectin, a pinch at a time.

You can also use jam sugar with pectin already included but beware not to use that for a fruit which already has high natural levels.

Then you need to cook the jam to a high temperature for long enough that it is going to set. Never, ever walk away from the jam while you're making it. It requires your full attention. You can get all sorts

of accessories. I have a sugar thermometer I have never used and a fancy jelly bag with a stand to strain cooked fruit but I am happy with bits of fruit in my jam.

My vital bits of kit are clean sterilised jars, a large pan (the jam bubbles right up and you really don't want it spilling over or splashing you), scales, a wooden spoon and a plate (ideally a cold one that's sat in the fridge for a while before you start).

Some knowledge of pectin levels in the fruit can be found online and some fruit requires a bit of additional attention

– like cooking first in a small amount of water before adding the sugar. Add your sugar (at least the same in weight as your fruit, plus a little bit more) and get jammin'.

You will know when it's reached setting point by dribbling a little on to that cold plate. Leave it a few moments to cool and then push it with your finger. If it wrinkles on the surface it is ready. If it doesn't, carry on cooking for another few minutes and dribble another drop on to the plate and try again. Once ready, decant into jars and put the lids on.

The only bit of kit I would recommend is a jam funnel – a wide-necked funnel to easily get the jam from the pan/ladle to the jar without lots of mess. But a steady hand and a jug will suffice.

It has been odd making such small scale batches of jam this year but no less satisfying when I screwed the lids on.

Or when in the depths of winter I spread a layer of jam over a piece of warm buttery toast and remember the summer sunshine from this year.

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Benbecula student tackles Swinney over exam results

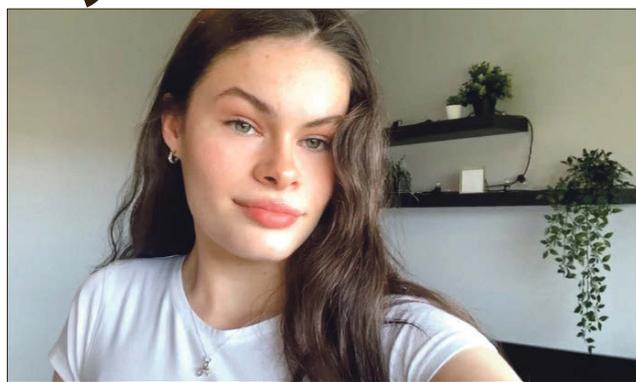
by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The plight of a school student from the Western Isles, who received worse than expected grades from the SQA, was raised with Education Secretary John Swinney last week by Conservative MSP Donald Cameron.

The Highlands and Islands MSP raised the situation of Benbecula pupil Eva Peteranna in a debate in the Scottish Parliament about the fall-out from the grading fiasco.

Ms Peteranna, who despite being predicted to receive AAABC at Higher, was in fact given BBBDF, gained widespread sympathy after revealing her disappointment and frustration on social media.

Ms Peteranna, who is entering her sixth year at Sgoil Lioncleit, had written to Mr Swinney, as well as the head of education at Comhairle nan



Eva Peteranna wrote to the education minister protesting about her downgraded Higher results.

Eilean Siar, on receiving her grades.

She told Mr Swinney that to have her grades marked down so significantly had made her completely reconsider her career path in medicine.

The coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of exams this year with estimated grades based on past attain-

ment and a school's previous exam record.

The modelling system used by the Scottish Qualifications Authority saw the grades of thousands of pupils marked down.

Pupils whose results were downgraded by the SQA are now to receive their grades based solely on teacher esti-

mates. Ms Peteranna's letter called for the system, which she criticised for being discriminatory, to be investigated and added: 'The government has been pushing the 'no wrong path slogan' but why should pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and deprived areas be forced into a pathway they didn't want and worked tirelessly to avoid.'

She added: 'Any further efforts by pupils to achieve higher grades in schools which have historically under-performed has been disregarded.'

'SQA results this year have been more about fitting the statistical trends than the individual pupil.'

Mr Cameron said: 'Eva's situation reminds us of the tremendous and unnecessary upset that this shambles has caused for so many of our young people.'

'While I am pleased that, at long last, Eva and many others,

should receive an acceptable result, this fiasco has raised very serious doubts about the competence and judgement of ministers, particularly John Swinney.'

Mr Swinney has apologised to the 75,000 young people whose estimated mark was reduced by the SQA.

He said these were exceptional times, and in exceptional times truly difficult decisions were made. 'In speaking directly to the young people affected by the downgrading of awards, I want to say this: I am sorry,' he said.

'I have listened and the message is clear. They don't just want an apology, they want to see this fixed and that is exactly what I will now do. To resolve this issue, all downgraded awards will be withdrawn. I am directing the SQA to re-issue those awards based solely on teacher or lecturer judgement.'

Man who died on Lewis named

Police Scotland have named the man who died on Sunday after getting into difficulty while swimming in Loch Caitiosbhal as 37-year-old Stephen Slavin.

Around 11.15am police received a report of a man in difficulty in the water near Marvig on the Isle of Lewis.

Mr Slavin, from Ayrshire, was recovered from the water and pronounced dead at the scene.

Sergeant David MacKinnon from Stornoway Police Office said: 'Enquiries into the circumstances surrounding Stephen's death, which is not being treated as suspicious, are ongoing and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal. Our thoughts remain with Stephen's family at this very difficult time.'



Stephen Slavin.

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Wild Words

KIRSTEEN BELL

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Saturday August 1 was Lùnastal, or Lughnasadh, the old Gaelic festival marking the coming of the harvest season, but I wasn't feeling very hopeful about the harvest I was meant to be celebrating.

Like a lot of folk this year I have been trying to grow more of my own fruit and veg.

Unlike a lot of folk, I have been trying to use the soil we already had.

While Gardenstop was selling lorry loads of fertile compost, I was happy in the thought that I didn't need to buy any. Rookie error.

On that first August morning, instead of casting an expectant eye over a maturing crop, I stomped up the hill in a grump, away from the half-grown, struggling contents of the polytunnel.

Where the ground levels out you cross an old stone wall that takes you from hill grass to a weave of heather and moss.

Below both grass and heather though lies dark, acidic peat.

In *The Dark Stuff: Stories from the Peatlands*, Lewis writer Donald S. Murray talks about failed attempts to farm the Lewis moor, saying 'too much fertiliser had been required to create apportionments of 'improved' land'.

It can take years of applying fertiliser to alter soil pH. Poly-tunnel or not, without a lot more work on the soil, my onions had no chance.

However, as I sit on an old upturned bottle-crate left there for that purpose by my late father-in-law, surrounded by purple bell-heather and orange stars of asphodel, my eye catches on something else at the fenceline; I remember him coming in to tell us that there was a good crop of blaeberrys one year. Could this be them?

According to *A Handbook of Scotland's Wild Harvests*, 'The berries are ripe between July and



A solitary blaeberry gives hope of at least one harvest.

September'. Crows cackle above me as I rummage through the low, sprawling shrub.

Shorn twig ends suggest

that the deer have been here browsing before me, so it would seem that if there were blaeberrys here I've missed them.

Just as I allow a moment of sadness for another failed 'harvest' I spot one.

A single blaeberry, soft, blue-purple, deep within the

green and red-gold mottled leaves. I come back a few days later to show the boys and we manage to find a small handful of berries.

Admittedly it is not much of a harvest – but they grew, without fertiliser, or weeding, or any kind of human attention at all, in fact.

The *Handbook* says that blaeberrys are harvested in commercial quantities in Scandinavia 'without detriment to the plants or the environment'.

It adds: 'The potential to do this in Scotland has yet to be realised, although it has been suggested that this native plant could yield a better return per hectare than is gained from sheep farming.'

My one berry, harvested on Lùnastal, might not be much now, but it has potential.

The blaeberry is one of countless native plants that thrive on acidic soil.

Instead of working to change the landscape, maybe I can work with it.

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Fergus rises to challenge of climbing 10 Glencoe peaks

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Climbing just one of Glencoe's famous peaks is no mean feat, but Fergus Berardelli tackled 10 of the daunting mountains recently, inspired by his younger brother and a good friend.

Fergus, son of Paolo and Elspeth Berardelli from the Great Glen Cattle Ranch at Spean Bridge, took on the challenge to mark his 18th birthday and to raise money for two good causes.

The charities were Action Duchenne, inspired by younger brother, Giorgio, who suffers from Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, and Ewen's Room in memory of good friend and former family shepherd, Sandy, who sadly took his own life just over a year ago.

Fergus challenged himself to climb the 10 mountains in just 10 hours and successfully

managed his target at the end of July, with 20 minutes to spare. Several family members and friends trekked into the 'Lost Valley' to meet him as he came down from the last peak and Giorgio managed to get there too, which was a challenge and personal achievement all of his own.

The response to Fergus's fundraising has been phenomenal, with, incredibly, almost £8,000 raised so far. His Just Giving page is still open and Fergus and his family cannot stress enough how much they appreciate all the support.

The Berardellis run a flock of Blackface ewes on Gleann Leac na Muidhe in Glencoe, supplemented by another 3,000 rented from neighbours the National Trust for Scotland (NTS).

Fergus said: 'I chose Glencoe because many of my best childhood memories have been made there in the glen,



Fergus and his dog, Nan, during the challenge; right, Fergus and his brother Giorgio in the 'Lost Valley' at Glencoe.



gathering sheep with Sandy and many other assorted 'gatherers' and dogs. We all miss Sandy very much, but somehow up on the hill you can still feel his presence, especially up on the tops. As I've grown up, I still like nothing better than a good day on the

hill, a feeling shared by many of my family and friends.

'The gathering is still one of the highlights of our summer and there is often quite a crowd by the time we get back to the fank. For Giorgio, getting up the hill is increasingly tough but he is as determined as ever

to be part of things. He is an inspiration to us all and one of the main motivations for my walk.'

Action Duchenne is a charity working to find a cure for the muscle-wasting disease Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. Donations are

needed to help fund research to find a cure or viable treatments, campaign for better care and access to treatments, as well as running education and transition projects.

Fergus added: 'My other inspiration is Sandy and that is why I also want to raise money for Ewen's Room, a charity which was established as a tribute to a local lad Ewen Gillespie, who sadly took his own life in 2008. The organisation offers support and advice on mental health issues and provides an opportunity for mutual self-help and companionship. It also delivers mental health and well-being awareness sessions to school pupils.'

'We were devastated that Sandy felt he only had one way out and couldn't ask for help. We wish things could have been different and are passionate that issues around mental health should not be hidden away.'



Eye to eye with John Wallace

Post Lockdown Vision

It hardly seems like the blink of an eye but it is six months since I last wrote my monthly column. It has been quite an amazing and very strange time we have all lived through. At the start of the year I wrote about 2020 being the year of vision. I was excited about the boost all the publicity my profession would have because of the 2020 link. Six months later my practices have only just reopened. Because of the dangers of COVID-19 we have had to introduce strict infection control procedures which have meant it takes twice as long to see each patient.

My biggest concern about this lost time is for patients I am now seeing who have major vision or eye health issues. In common with most of my



profession, I spent lockdown telephone and video triaging patients. Some needed urgent referral to hospital for treatment. Understandably, many were extremely reluctant to go to hospital. Even more "did not want to cause a fuss" during lockdown and did not even call to discuss their problem. Since I started back earlier this month, I have seen sev-

eral patients who have major problems that would have been treated much more effectively if only they had presented during lockdown.

I can fully understand why patients are reluctant to venture out from the safety of their home. I spent four months shielding and could not believe the idiocy of many people who failed to social distance or to wear facemasks when I finally was able to venture into shops earlier this month.

NHS Scotland has set very strict standards for my profession. I actually feel safe at work because of these guidelines. Even if you don't feel safe you can still call for advice if you have any issues with your vision.

John Wallace BSc (Hons), FCOptom, DipCLP

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Let us tell you a bit about The 45. This different and delicious new drink is hand-crafted from scratch, blending the international spices contained in all great spiced rums with a mix of Scottish botanicals – including orange peel, ginger, vanilla, caramel, liquorice and smoked seaweed.

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going to argue! The 45's strong flavour profile makes it perfect to drink neat as a sipping rum, or with a robust mixer such as ginger beer. And, with rum's versatility earning its place as the cocktail partner of choice, The 45 is made for mixology.

As the craft spirits market has expanded, rum has grown faster in recent years than any of its rivals. There's no doubt that rum is on the rise and we're delighted to be a Scottish product at the heart of it all.

Jacobite Spirits is raising the bar on social media. Check out our Instagram and Facebook pages to see cocktail and serving suggestions.

You can order a bottle of The 45 at www.jacobitespirits.com/ order.

The mystery of the Glenfinnan Stone

There are three or four spots at Glenfinnan which vie for the title of the place where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised the Standard.

One of them is particularly intriguing.

A heather fire which broke out on a hillside at Glenfinnan in 1988 revealed a large, flat boulder with an inscription in Latin which reads: 'MDCCXLV, in the name of the Lord, the Standard of Charles Edward Stuart was set up in 1745, triumphant at last.'

There were three sets of footsteps carved out on the stone, a crown, a cross and the names 'Cameron 827', 'Hugh' and 'Trdine'.

Were these denoting Lochiel and the number of men he brought? Was 'Hugh' Bishop Hugh MacDonald? And 'Trdine' the Marquis of Tullibardine? Other carvings were an arrow and the number 'four'. Was this the direction of, and the number of steps to the spot the Standard was actually raised?

There are local stories that



this is the spot where the Standard was raised, carved perhaps within living memory of the event, but there are also stories that the carvings may have been executed much, much later.

Near the boulder was a stone, about 12 inches in diameter, with a hole at its centre, which it was presumed was the place where the pole of the Standard would have rested.

In 1989 this smaller stone disappeared, and it wasn't until 2009 that a woman contacted Lochaber historian Iain Thornber after watching the TV programme Countryfile, realising that the historic stone was sitting in her son's rockery in Hartlepool, England, a gift to her many years before when she was living in Scotland.

The 'Glenfinnan Stone' is now on display in the West Highland Museum.

This week i raises Stan

by Ally Entwistle
fort@obantimes.co.uk

Although by this week in August 275 years ago the Prince had been in Scotland for almost a month, news of his landing did not reach Edinburgh until August 8, and Fort William a day later.

When news reached London that the Prince had landed, the British government announced a reward of £30,000 (equivalent to £15 million today) to anyone who seized him.

August 10: In Edinburgh, General Sir John Cope's response to reports of the Prince's presence on the west coast was to order two companies of troops from Perth to march north to strengthen the garrison in Fort William.

August 15: the government troops, some 90-100 men under the command of Captain Scott, reached Fort Augustus.

August 16: The reinforcements set out early to march down the Great Glen to Fort William. After the best part of 20 miles they were approaching the High Bridge on General Wade's military road just a mile or two from Spean Bridge, when they were ambushed by a small group of Highlanders under Donald MacDonnell of Tiendrish comprising 11 clansmen and one piper.

Two government troops were killed and Captain Scott's mount, a fine grey horse, was taken, and would be later presented to the Prince. As the troops fled back towards Fort Augustus, they were intercepted further along the military road at Laggan by another 20 or 30 Highlanders under the command of Keppoch.

Four redcoats were killed and a dozen wounded, at which point the rest surrendered. What would become

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in 1745: The Prince Standard at Glenfinnan

the first skirmish of the Rising of 1745 had ended in victory for the Jacobites. Meanwhile, the journey to raise the Royal Standard at Glenfinnan began.

August 18: The Prince, the Seven Men of Moidart and other supporters numbering around 50 men, took boats at Dalilea to go up Loch Shiel to stop at Glenaladale, close to Glenfinnan, for the night.

August 19, Midday-1 o'clock: After breakfasting at Glenaladale, the company left in a flotilla of small boats. According to a local story, the Prince's boat paused at a bay in order for his oarsmen to rest, now known as 'Prince's Bay', and arrived at Glenfinnan in the afternoon.

The Prince was concerned to find there was no clan army waiting for him.

3 o'clock: Lochiel arrived with about 900 men. With Lochiel's men and about 150 of the Prince's Clanranald



The Royal Standard is raised at Glenfinnan on August 19, 1745. Image courtesy of West Highland Museum.

supporters under MacDonald of Morar, the Royal Standard was raised.

6 o'clock: Keppoch came over the hill with about 350 clansmen and the captured government troops, the redcoats, who had been taken during the skirmish at High Bridge. Whilst Captain Scott was hosted by the Prince, his remaining men were released and told to walk towards the Lowlands.

For two days the Jacobite army stayed at Glenfinnan, with the Prince making his quarters 'in a little barn at [sic] the head of the loch'. Councils of war were held, provisions collected, arms and ammunition distributed, despatches written and an attempt made to organise the clansmen into more regular army units.

21 August: At last, with high hopes, the Jacobite army marched eastwards towards Fassfern – the '45 had begun.

Dramatic moment as Standard is held aloft

Described as 'about twice the size of an ordinary pair of colours', the Royal Standard was a large banner of red silk with a white area in the middle.

It is said it was sewn by the women of Dalilea and the pole was made by a man called Corbett from Moidart.

It was a dramatic moment as the Standard was unfurled and held aloft by the Marquis of Tullibardine, and it was blessed by Bishop Hugh MacDonald, Morar's brother. Tullibardine then read the declaration, dated at Rome, December 23, 1743, proclaiming the Prince's father, James VIII, as King of England, Scotland and Ireland.

Next, a commission was read in the name of his father appointing Charles, Prince of Wales, to be prince regent.

Finally, a manifesto penned by the Prince, dated at Paris, May 16, 1745 declaring that he had come to execute the will of his father by setting

up the Royal Standard, asserting his father's undoubted right to the throne of his ancestors, and offering pardon to those who would take up arms on his behalf. Toasts were drunk to the Prince in brandy which he had brought from France.

The Highlanders threw their bonnets in the air and cheered, shouting: 'Long live King James the Eighth and Charles Prince of Wales, Prosperity to Scotland, and no union.'



The 1745 portrait of Prince Charles Edward Stuart by Allan Ramsay.

Photograph courtesy of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

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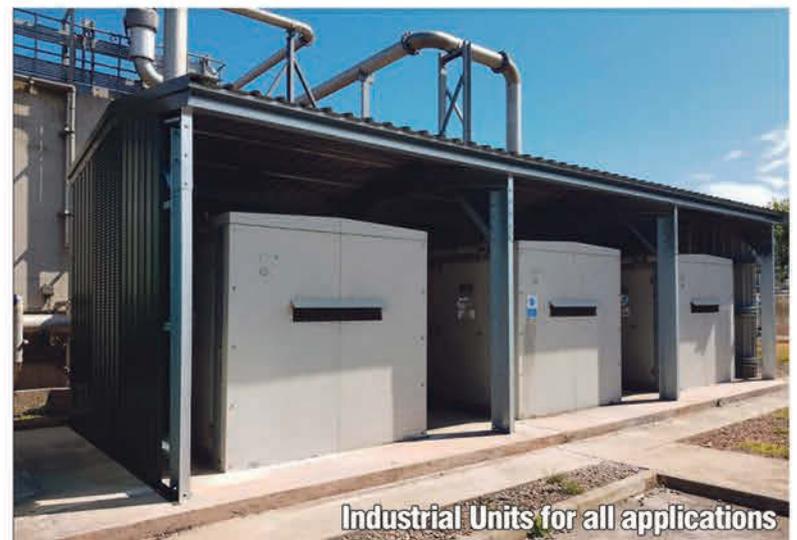
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LETTERS

Hospital delay is a disgrace

The delay in starting work on the promised new hospital in Fort William is now beyond a joke. It is time the health secretary Jeane Freeman put an end to the uncertainty and gave the go-ahead.

The people of Lochaber have been strung along for the last 25 years, and quite frankly it is long enough. To add insult to injury, the construction on the new hospitals in Broadford on Skye and at Aviemore – barely 40 minutes from Raigmore Hospital in Inverness – are well under way and due to be completed next year. Meanwhile the land that was acquired for the new Fort William facility five years ago is still lying empty.

Now the scheduled meeting of the local steering group – which after five years is still discussing the basic principles of the services to be provided – has again been cancelled. What on earth is going on?

While it is understandable people's focus has been on Covid, we agree with community advocate John Hutchison, who questioned how many of those involved with the new Belford project are involved with post-Covid redesign, day to day.

It's time to stop talking in circles and just get the job done.

The people of Lochaber deserve better.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

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

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We realise, however, that mistakes happen from time to time. If we have published anything that is factually incorrect, please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk; telephone on 01631 568000; or email editor@obantimes.co.uk

We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



Call for urgent action on A83

Open letter sent to Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister and Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Islands and Connectivity

Dear Nicola and Michael,

The issue that never fails to unite politicians at all levels of government and of all party persuasions is the need to ensure Argyll and Bute stays connected and open for business through a permanent, robust solution for the A83 Rest and Be Thankful – a solution that works.

Last week's landslip continues to close the Rest and the Old Military Road, which itself was out of action for a period, will be shut again tonight (August 10) at 9pm due to weather conditions. This continuing impact is why all of Argyll and Bute's elected representatives have been united in pressing, once again, for urgent action.

Our local Members of the Scottish Parliament, Michael Russell, Jackie Baillie and Donald Cameron, have been swift to engage with us and to add their own voices to these calls. They join us in writing to you to reinforce that request for action on behalf of the people of Argyll and Bute. We are asking you to convene an urgent special meeting of the A83 Taskforce – on a virtual basis if needs be – as soon as possible to focus specifically on outline options for a permanent solution and for that meeting to consider and agree the following timescale for the same:

a) Nature of permanent solution to be identified and confirmed by March 31, 2021

b) Contract to construct permanent solution to be awarded by December 31, 2021

c) Work to start as soon as possible thereafter with completion by December 31, 2023, at latest.

We know this requires a tremendous effort from everyone involved, including Transport Scotland which would have to start work on this immediately for it to succeed.

Argyll and Bute Council will do all it can in this to co-operate and to encourage all other partners, from all sectors, to do likewise. We believe if the will is there, on all counts, to deliver a permanent solution, this can be achieved – because the risk of failing to do so is far too great and there is evidence of innovative, viable solutions of similar scale being established in other regions with similar geography and rurality.

The threats to Argyll and Bute's economic success and to the contribution it makes to the national economy are well-known, as are the various personal impacts on those who live and work in our communities and who find their business, social and health-related activities disrupted without warning when landslips close the Rest.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

editor@obantimes.co.uk



“Tha coltas math air a’ bhuntàta am-bli-adhna!” Nach b’ eòlach sinn uile air abairtean den t-seòrsa sin mun bhuntàta, agus mu iomadach planntais eile. Bha sinn cuideachd glè eòlach air duan eile nach robh idir cho sub-hach, deireadh foghair, is daoine ag ràdh nach “robh ann ach am bàrr”, is nach do choilean e a ghealladh! Sin beagan den dùbhlàn a tha daonnan an lùib obair-cuir is buain aig ire bheag is mòr, agus tha an fheadhainn a tha ris an obair air fàs leagte ri mar a thachras cùisean.

Tha ar saoghal làitheil air a riaghladh le eòlaichean de gach seòrsa a bhios a’ fàidheadaireachd air na tha iad am beachd a thachras agus tha saoghal ionmhais, gnìomhachais, agus poilitigs fo bhuidh nam beachdan sin, agus gu ìre tha “lèirsinn” nan daoine sin a’ riaghladh ghluasadan an t-saoghail nas motha na ceannardan riaghlaidh! Gun teagamh sam bith 's math ionnsachadh bho eachdraidh agus cha bu chòir cùl a chur ri beachdan glìce, ach mar a thuirtd Àrd-Ollamh Eaconamachd uaireigin a thaobh staitistearachd, tha e feumail gus barrachd soillse a thoirt air trioblaid seach a cheartachadh! Ach tha naidheachdan an t-saoghail a’ dearbhadh dhuinn gach latha mar a tha miltean de dh’eòlaichean foghlamaichte a’ dèanamh deagh chosnadh à bhith a’ breithneachadh air na tha romhainn. Feumar aideachadh gum bheil cuid den bhreithneachadh

sin air tighinn air adhart gu mòr, ged nach biodh ann ach an ìre gum bheil teicneòlas air fios mun aimsir a leasachadh gu ìre 's nach eil adhbhar aig na bodaich is na cailleachan (sinne!) a bhith tuilleadh a’ càineadh “aimsir na wireless” mar a bha!

Ach saoilidh mise gur còir do ro-aithrisiche onarach aideachadh gum bheil tomhas de thuiteamas anns an ìre gun tig na tha e neo i a’ fàisneachd gu buil, car mar a tha an croitear agus toradh a chuid bàrr. Bha seann Ghàidheil a’ tuigsinn sin na b’ fheàrr na tha sinne nuair a chruthaich iadsan an seanfhacal “na àireamh a chaoidh an t-iasg gus an tig e às a’ mhuir!”. Tha truaighe Covid 19 a’ bagairt sluagh an t-saoghail ann an caochladh dhòighean, eadar slàinte agus gu h-eaconamach, agus tha beachdan glè dhraghail a’ nochdadh air na dh’fhaodadh sin ciallachadh dhuinn uile a tha-obh dith chosnaidhean is eile. Nach bu mhath gum biodh na h-eòlaichean sin dìreach fiù 's rud beag ceàrr agus nach biodh an trioblaid a’ leantainn cho fada gun bhacadh maireannach, agus cuideachd gum tigeadh a’ mhòr-shluagh às an deuchainn seo nas glìce, agus nas càirdeile dha chèile, na bha iad roimhe.

“Gum ann a ghonar am fiosaiche, mun tig an fhiosachd fìor!”

Allan Campbell
ailean@obantimes.co.uk

Our biggest concern now, though, is continued public safety. It is a miracle no one has been seriously injured or killed to date. We simply cannot afford to wait any longer – the risks are too great.

We stand ready to do anything we can to ensure Argyll and Bute and its communities finally get the solution they deserve.

Aileen Morton, Argyll and Bute Council leader; Gary Mulvaney, deputy leader; Sandy Taylor, SNP group leader; Dougie Philand, Argyll First group leader; MSPs Michael Russell, Jackie Baillie, and Donald Cameron.

Oban Aire at Ganavan?

There is never any excuse for vandalism, or leaving litter behind. There is never an excuse for punishing everyone because of the actions of a few... and especially when you cannot tell exactly who was responsible.

Therefore I was was disappointed to read a bar-

rier was being proposed for Ganavan Sands when all of the facilities to easily create a Motorhome Aire are already on site – and would pay back the investment along with securing the future of the public toilet.

Readers only have to look a few miles south of Oban to see a dedicated motorhome facility that's been created to cater for the demand for overnight parking at Ellenabeich – directly to take pressure off locals.

Before Councillors make a knee-jerk reaction to unsubstantiated claims against tourists, maybe providing paid-for facilities would stop any inconvenience and bring much needed revenue into the council.

Donald Macdonald,
Founder of Campaign for Real Aires.

For more letters on this subject, visit www.obantimes.co.uk

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Veterans' charity cycle visits Commando Memorial

Lochaber piper Finlay Cameron played 'Flo'er's O' the Forest' for a large group of injured military veterans and former firefighters last week at the Commando Memorial, Spean Bridge, writes Mark Entwistle.

The veterans had paused on their fund-raising journey from John O' Groats to Land's End.

The cycling event is being supported by VetRun180, a charity that takes physically and mentally injured veterans on challenging expeditions around the world, to re-invoke the sense of adventure and teamwork.

The trip involves a group of injured veterans, from the charity Pilgrim Bandits, and John Chant with a group of firefighters.

The team have been cycling from John O' Groats to Lands End over 13 days to raise money and awareness for MND which John, a former firefighter himself, suffers from.

VetRun180 is supporting the ride logistically, setting up campsites for the riders and providing cooking facilities and food.



Lochaber piper Finlay Cameron, far left, played 'Flo'er's O' the Forest' for the party of injured military veterans who paused at the Commando Memorial. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Lewis ceremony to mark the 75th anniversary of VJ Day

A ceremony was held at the Lewis War Memorial on Saturday to mark the 75th anniversary of VJ Day.

The short ceremony started at 10.45am and was livestreamed on the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Facebook page. The ceremony lasted around 30 minutes and included the presentation of a medallion to Second World War veteran Kenny Nicolson, who worked at the code-breaking Station X of Bletchley Park, which helped to enable the British to read the German Third Reich's Enigma code.

A wreath laying ceremony took place after the presentation.



Crash closes Strontian road

A van carrying mining equipment was involved in a crash with a car on the A884 road near Achleek, by Strontian, last Thursday morning.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said: 'A report was received of a two-vehicle crash involving a car and a van on the A884 near Achleek in Lochaber shortly after 7.35am on Thursday August 13.'

'The driver of the car suffered a non-life threatening injury and received treatment from the Scottish Ambulance Service.'

'The van was carrying mining equipment and the road was closed as a precaution to allow the safe recovery of the items.'

Physical distancing funds

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar has been awarded £128,850 to support the introduction of temporary physical distancing measures across the Outer Hebrides.

The Transport Scotland's Spaces for People fund will be used to implement temporary measures to enable physical distancing while walking, wheeling and cycling, including changes to speed limits, wider footpaths and traffic calming measures.

Public feedback is invited on the proposed interventions which will be on the council website and social media pages.

£100,000 of A82 road improvements started in Glencoe on Monday

Two sections of the A82 between Tyndrum and Glencoe Village are benefitting from an improved road surface as work worth £100,000 began on Monday night.

It involves upgrading the A82 surface near the Pass of Glencoe as well as the A82 approximately five miles south of Glencoe Mountain Ski Centre. The work will fix any defects in the

road surface and create a smoother and safer journey.

The improvements started on Monday for four nights, from 8pm to 5am.

To ensure the safety of the workforce and the travelling public, the A82 has been closed overnight during the project.

To help minimise disruption to road users

planned amnesties have been provided where waiting vehicles have been escorted through the worksite at 9pm, 10pm, 11pm, 12am, 2am and 4am.

During the day, traffic management has been removed, however, a 30mph speed limit has been enforced and access maintained for emergency services at all times.

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VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Be a mentor

You may already know that Lochaber Chamber of Commerce is currently delivering the first year of its One Lochaber one-year leadership development course to participants from across local businesses. The course will qualify students with a Level 5 Management qualification accredited by the Chartered Institute of Management.

After fantastic feedback from our earlier request to members who might be interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, we're pleased to be working again with our friends from Ethos Consulting on our new One Lochaber Mentoring Programme, that will run alongside our One Lochaber Leadership Programme. We'll be asking people to sign up as mentors to develop informal working relationships to help guide mentees in their self-development.

Why be a mentor?

Becoming a mentor allows you to give back and help develop the future of Lochaber business in an informal and flexible way. Mentoring is not the same as training, teaching,



or coaching, and a mentor doesn't need to be a qualified trainer or an expert in the role the mentee carries out.

You need to be able to listen and ask questions that will challenge the mentee to identify the course of action they need to take in their own development. You won't be doing it alone – The One Lochaber Mentoring Programme will help you with support along the way.

What is a Mentor?

Mentorship is a personal development relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. The mentor may be older or younger; but have a certain area of expertise.

So, what kinds of things does a mentor actually do? Well, there are no hard and fast rules, but a mentor generally does things like: listen effectively; ask questions to help develop your and the

mentee's understanding of a situation or problem; provide information and knowledge and share informal networks; provide advice on career development; offer different perspectives; provide support and encouragement; provide an insight into your work and career; be a sounding board; be a critical friend; encourage self-reflection; help mentees identify areas for development

As a mentor you will have the opportunity to use your experience and knowledge to support the development of the mentee. However, the responsibility for making things happen and putting plans into action lies primarily with the mentee – not with you.

We know that Lochaber has a fantastic community spirit and at times like these, we can achieve much more by working together to support each other. Mentoring is a great way to help our business community, add to your CV skills and get involved in shaping the future of business in Lochaber.

If you'd like to find out more about becoming a mentor, or you would like to benefit from a mentor, email: membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk

There is an alternative to traffic chaos – get on a bike



Traffic chaos has returned to our roads with the easing of lockdown restrictions and the return of visitors to the Highlands.

Last week, you may have seen photographs in the Lochaber Times and on social media of clogged roads and poorly parked cars in Glen Nevis.

But it doesn't have to be like this. During lockdown many people rediscovered the joys and benefits of walking and cycling, and there is no reason why this shouldn't continue.

As part of a project funded by Cycling Scotland, Lochaber Environmental Group is working to improve the cycling infrastructure in Glen Nevis and the wider Fort William area, to help people get out of their cars and onto a bike.

Bike racks have now been installed in Steall Falls,



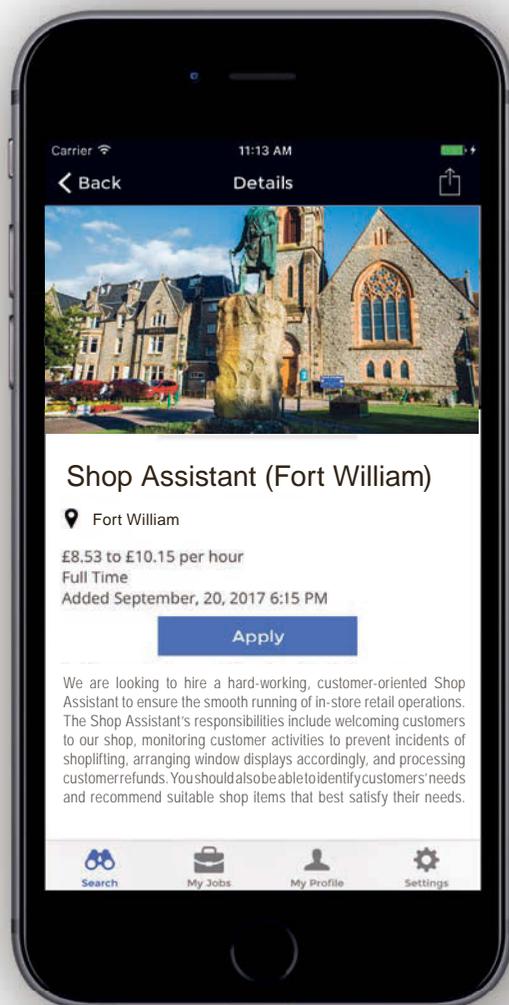
If you don't have a bike, or want to improve your bike repair skills, The Bike Kitchen can help you out.

Braveheart and Northface car-parks to help people access the area by bike. The Bike Kitchen has also started up again, with funding from Paths For All Smarter Choices Smarter Places for a bike mechanic.

If you don't have a bike or want to improve your bike repair skills, the Bike Kitchen can help you with restored bikes available free of charge

through our Adopt A Bike scheme, bike repair workshops, and tool and electric bike loans from our Bike Tool and Bike Libraries. All you have to do is get in touch, we can help you get on a bike, avoid the traffic chaos, and stay fit and healthy.

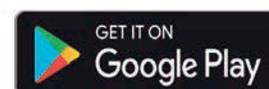
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Former rugby internationals swap boots for bikes

A quartet of former Scotland international rugby players will be descending on Fort William on Saturday during an epic charity bike ride.

Ruaridh Jackson, who earned 33 caps between 2010 and 2018, will join Richie Vernon, the first man to go to World Cups for Scotland as a forward then a back; Ryan Grant, the former Scotland prop and 2009 Lions tourist; and Andrew Easson, the former Edinburgh and Scotland Sevens player, in cycling the Caledonia Way in aid of Doddie Weir's My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation and Unite Against

Cancer. With no cycling experience between them apart from the occasional spin on an indoor training cycle, the foursome aim to ride the 234 miles from Campbeltown to Inverness in 36 hours.

Ruaridh said: 'Training has been going well but it is not without its challenges fitting it in and around work.'

'Plus, I have a newborn so sleep deprivation has been another factor,' he said.

'We are all excited about the route but nervous about some of the climbs that will have to be taken on.'

'The views will help on the way but we will be excited to get to our final destination for a big feed and a couple beers at Highland Rugby Club.'

'We're doing this to raise money for two charities close to the team's hearts. The My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation and Unite Against Cancer. If anyone can spare a few quid to sponsor us, it will make the pain and inevitable chaffing a little more bearable.'

At the time of writing, the quartet had already reached £4,330 of the original £5,000 target and they are excited to see how far it will

go by the time they roll out of Campbeltown tomorrow.

The Caledonia Way, also known as National Cycle Route 78, will take them from Kintyre, through Mid Argyll to Inverness using the road and traffic-free forest trails and canal paths, stopping in Oban for the night before heading to Fort William on Saturday, a section which includes two ferry rides.

Those interested can track their journey and donate to Ruaridh, Ryan, Richie and Andrew's cycling challenge at their Cycling the Caledonia Way gofundme page.

Boxing club to Ben summit in one round

Like so many sports across the country the activities of Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club have been severely disrupted by Covid restrictions, shutting its gym and resulting in the cancellation of its Home Show, planned for April.

This event is not only the opportunity to showcase the incredible talents and abilities of Lochaber boxers against opponents from across Scotland, but also one of the club's main sources of income.

Training has continued through social media contact with incredible dedication by members, aged nine upwards, to keep active and prepared for a return to more 'normal' times, although this has not helped the club bring in any cash.

A grant from the Scottish Government Resilience Fund

and a fundraising 'Name the Boxer' scratch card have helped to meet some costs, but having just moved into a new gym as the lockdown hit, with considerable amounts spent on its conversion and new equipment, club funds are at an all-time low.

Last weekend boxer Emma Lauder took up this challenge stepping not into the ring but onto the Ben path starting from the club gym in Corpach, running to the summit of Ben Nevis and back again in a massive single round of 5 hours, 8 minutes and 56 seconds, all in a 20°C-plus heat with only a short break for food and water.

She said: 'I set off from the club at about 6am to beat the crowds and I am glad I did. On the way up, there were only about 20 people, but coming down just

a few hours later I must have passed over a thousand on their way up and that did slow me down as the path was crowded.'

Her solo efforts (although she was accompanied all the way by her dog, Alfie) raised £600, which was then doubled by Lochaber business, Leven Homes, for which her partner and boxing coach Aidan Donnelly works.

Sheri Murphy of Leven Homes Ltd said: 'We really admire the club for what it has achieved and the great work it does. As a small business we know how hard things have been during lockdown and are really happy to support the club.'

Emma Lauder, right, and Alfie accept a £600 cheque from Sheri Murphy.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



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