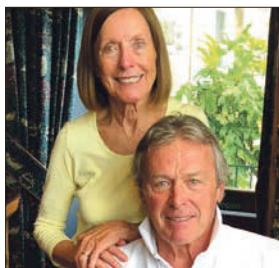




Hallowe'en fun at Rockfield Primary



End of an era as Manor House owners say farewell



Oban playpark closed until further notice

by Kathie Griffiths & Ellis Butcher

Playparks in Oban and Mull have been closed because of damaged play equipment.

A notice has been placed at the site in Oban, next to the Atlantis Leisure centre by Argyll and Bute Council, telling visitors the play park is closed until further notice.

The playpark at Tobermory has also been closed.

In Oban, parents have commented some areas of the park appear unsafe and there have also been reports of older children congregating there after dark and there being a potential safety risk.

Councillor Jim Lynch, for Oban, South and the Isles, said the most important thing was the safety of children and then getting the play park reopened.

The damaged equipment was highlighted during an annual safety inspection.

Councillor Lynch said some of the items at the park had been found unsafe during the check and they needed repaired

before it could reopen. Efforts were being made by councillor Elaine Robertson to establish responsibility for maintenance, he said.

The council was asked who was responsible for maintenance of the playpark but did not provide an answer in its statement.

'The playpark has not failed its inspection. Repairs are required...'

A council spokesperson said: 'Annual inspections, by accredited outdoor playpark specialists, have highlighted damage to a couple of pieces of equipment in playparks in Tobermory and at Atlantis in Oban – damage caused mainly through wear and tear.'

The popular playpark only reopened in January after it closed in March 2018 following sections of the flooring becoming hazardous. Work to get the five-year-old playpark back up and running stalled a number of times before the gates could open to the £334,000 park, funded by community events and grants. Covid restrictions have also seen the gates to the playpark shut for a considerable time this year.

'We always take a safety-first approach so have temporarily closed both playparks.'

'We are taking steps to find out how quickly these repairs can be addressed.'

When The Oban Times

asked the council exactly what Oban playpark had failed on and questioned some reports that part of the area's ground covering had become 'spongy', a spokesperson for Argyll and Bute insisted safety inspections had not 'failed'.

The spokesperson said: 'The playpark has not failed its inspection. Repairs are required on individual pieces of equipment to bring them back to standard. We would expect that in equipment that has been well-used which is why we organise annual inspections. The inspector found no issues with the ground covering.'

The popular playpark only reopened in January after it closed in March 2018 following sections of the flooring becoming hazardous. Work to get the five-year-old playpark back up and running stalled a number of times before the gates could open to the £334,000 park, funded by community events and grants. Covid restrictions have also seen the gates to the playpark shut for a considerable time this year.



Key moment as Rockfield ready for internal refit

The Rockfield Centre is ready to move to its next phase of development now that builders on the £2.8million scheme have finished revamping the old school and handed the keys back to the community. Turn to page three for the full story.

Seil waste water plans on hold

Scottish Water wants to defer its planning bid to deliver a new multi-million pound waste water treatment works on Seil 'due to a significant increase in the final detailed cost estimates to deliver the proposed new works'.

The development, which has been dividing the community for years, had been estimated at around £5.6 million.

Letters from Scottish Water will be going out to residents soon.

Scottish Water says it will be carrying out a full review of the project over the coming months. Plans are being arranged for an online meeting, including representatives from the community council.

RNLI popping up on North Pier

Fundraisers for Oban's lifeboat will be popping up on the North Pier this Saturday November 7 from 10am to 4pm.

Storm Aiden cancelled last weekend's RNLI pop-up shop but with a brighter weather forecast to look forward to, organisers hope a good turnout of shoppers will support them this weekend.

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OT

New smoke alarm laws put off until 2022

New legislation which requires all homes in Scotland to have inter-linked smoke and carbon monoxide alarms has been delayed until 2022.

The moves follows criticism from Age Scotland and opposition politicians over the lack of public awareness.

The new measures, which could cost an estimated £220 for an average three-bedroom home, were due to come into force in February next year.

Welcoming the news, Argyll and Bute MSP Michael Russell said: 'Fire safety is an absolute priority for all of us and these improved regulations will mean everyone in Argyll and Bute will benefit from the same level of protection, whether they own their home or rent from a social or private landlord.'

'However, given the impact of Covid-19 and the difficulties this legislation was likely to cause for people seeking to install new alarms, it is welcome the Scottish Government has listened to concerns and decided to ask the Scottish Parliament to delay the deadline by 12 months.'

'As MSP for Argyll and Bute, I will continue to look closely at ensuring people have the support, information and advice they need to make changes in advance of the new standards coming into force in February 2022.'

The legislation was introduced in February 2019 following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, which claimed 72 lives.



by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Rescuers launched Oban's lifeboat in gale force winds as Storm Aiden battered down, wreaking havoc and damage along coastline and inland at the weekend.

A boat out fishing with four people onboard sent out an SOS when the 22ft vessel they were in broke down and went adrift in Loch Etive, west of Airds Point, just before 4pm on Saturday.

In driving rain and winds gusting 60mph, the lifeboat's volunteer crew fought through heavy seas to reach the stricken boat that had managed to secure itself to a mooring at a nearby fish farm to wait for

help. A tow was set up and a work boat from the fish farm was also on scene.

Once the fishing boat was safely clear of the farm, the lifeboat towed it back to Taynuilt Pier where the group had started out from earlier in the day, launching with a trailer. But an extremely high tide meant the pier was mostly submerged and it was clear that getting the boat back to its trailer, or the persons on board ashore, would pose further danger.

'With no other shelter in the area, the decision was made to secure the boat to a mooring in Airds Bay and take the people on board the lifeboat for the journey home. The lifeboat proceeded out of the loch and

Chills and thrills at Rockfield primary

Youngsters and teachers enjoyed a wonderful fun day at Rockfield Primary School on Friday to celebrate Hallowe'en.

Deputy head teacher Laura Fawdry sent in these fabulous photographs and told The Oban Times: 'The costumes worn by staff and pupils were absolutely amazing, so very creative. The lunch provided by Katie and her school dinner team was also brilliant. We had class competitions and prizes galore and the staff prize of two Hallowe'en burgers went to Mr Mitchell for his scary portrayal of Professor Severus Snape.'

'Well done Mr Mitchell and commiserations to Mrs Fothergill, who was very disap-



Youngsters and teachers got into the spirit of Hallowe'en.

pointed not to win. We raised £168.80 on the day which will go towards enhanced activities and future fun!'

MOREPHOTOS
www.obantimes.co.uk

Storm Aiden wreaks havoc

As daylight appeared on Sunday, homes and businesses across Oban and Lorn were waking up to assess the damage and count the cost of Saturday's storm.

On Luing, some houses in Cullipool were flooded, with a slate wall and wooden gate demolished by the ferocity of the waves.

Waves lashed Oban's Esplanade, strewing seaweed across the road and tossing boats on their moorings. Emergency services were called to the Lancaster Hotel after part of its roof collapsed and the road had to be sealed off for safety.

Some roads experienced flooding, Kilmore and Seil were hit - Balvicar Stores

became an island at one point surrounded by water - while waves swept over the ferry hut at Ellenabeich pier.

A tree came down on the road between Taynuilt and Kilchrenan and at Benderloch and Ganavan, waves bashed up onto the layby wiping out the beach for a time.

SSE engineers got across to Lismore on Sunday morning to restore power to the island after it cut out the day before.

When the engineers got the job done, they had missed the official final ferry back to Appin but an extra service across choppy waters was put on to get them home.

For video of the storm, visit The Oban Times' Facebook page.

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Key moment for Rockfield

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk

The Rockfield Centre has notched up another milestone getting closer to its razzmatazz opening next year.

Builders revamping the centre in the heart of Oban have handed the keys back to the community. And with just a few more finishing touches to go, kitting out the former primary school, the £2.8million project is looking good, with plans for a soft opening in the spring and a 'full on, razzmatazz' opening later in the year.

A new main entrance at the side of the building marks a new era for the building coming back to life as a community hub. Inside it is big and bright - more than 70 windows were taken out and restored to let in lots of light. On the ground floor, the footprint of what was once three classrooms at the front of the building have been left marked out with shaded floor covering - making for just one of the many nods to the former school's past. The main staircase, lit by hanging mul-



ti-coloured lights, has retained the original steps, leading to the first floor. A lift has also been installed.

Plans are in the pipeline for a guided tour video that will be put online for people to take a peek inside themselves.

Multi-function spaces are ready and waiting for gatherings and events - some gigs and exhibitions for 2021 are already in the diary, says Eleanor MacKinnon, The Rockfield

Centre's (TRC's) transition operational manager.

'We've got the blank canvas now from the builders, ready for us to take it to the next exciting stage,' she added.

Attention to detail has been mind-blowing - stripped back to the stone of the original 1877 building, an area of wall has been left exposed behind glass as a reminder of the past.

Stone to carry out repairs on the building was matched after

samples were sent off to be analysed and find the 'nearest to it' material. A specialist company was brought in to re-create saved decorative cornicing missing from the once head teacher's office that will now be used by centre staff.

North Argyll Carer's Centre is moving into two spaces on the first floor, there is more office space, a messy space for making and creating, plenty room for exhibitions and a huge

The team are all smiles as the keys are handed back, ready to kit out the building.

performance space downstairs, with back access to bring in sound systems and equipment. Original fresh air vents have been retained - handy now for Covid times.

Capital project manager Stuart Pinkerton said: 'While we couldn't retain everything from the old building, we wanted to retain as much as we could so people could still remember it from its schooldays and at the same time benefit for the building being brought up to modern day standards.'

Eleanor added: 'The character of the place is amazing. It's a big building but you feel it's giving you a big hug.'

Chairman of Oban Communities Trust Gordon McNab said: 'Our being handed back the keys to the Rockfield Centre after its refurbishment is another fantastic milestone. A special thank you to all the teams involved in getting us to this point. Now another chapter begins, namely the

fitting out. We are preparing a link so everyone can tour and see inside safely. Thank you to everyone who shares the vision and who works tirelessly to deliver this life changing project.'

Fundraising has been remarkable and achieved in just over five years. Arts and culture, history and heritage, enterprise and education and community well-being will be the centre's focus.

Plans are now heading to the next phase of furnishing the inside, with hopes to move in the first tenants in January, with the team optimistic, despite the uncertainty of Covid, of a limited opening.

During the pandemic, staff and volunteers have continued to work, moving clubs and activities online supporting the community and keeping the project on track. To keep up to date with the project, visit www.therockfieldcentre.org.uk and its Facebook page.

MOREPHOTOS

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OT

Honouring our heroes

It doesn't seem that long ago when we stepped outside our homes and clapped to show our support for those on the NHS front line and the essential workers who kept the country going in the depths of lockdown.

Well, today The Oban Times is asking you to stand on your doorstep or in your garden – this time to remember the sacrifice of all those who paid the ultimate price to defend our freedom.

Normally on Sunday November 8 and again on Armistice Day, three days later, we would be gathering for annual remembrance parades and services. However, sadly this year the pandemic has put paid to that and while Oban will be doing its bit to keep up the tradition in a reduced way and with live-streaming from its war memorial, the majority of events have been cancelled.

Regardless of whether we are able to gather together at our war memorials or not, we should still ensure we honour the fallen of the First and Second World Wars and those who have served their country in conflicts since then.

That is why we are encour-



Join us in remembering all those who have sacrificed so

aging our readers to take part in our campaign, Honour our Heroes. We're asking you and your families to stand out on your front doorstep, in your street or garden and observe the two-minute silence as a mark of respect to all those heroes who never made it home.

We'd also encourage you to wear a poppy – there has never been a more important time to give what you can to the Royal British Legion's annual Poppy Appeal. So please, Honour our Heroes and buy a poppy and show that Oban, Argyll and the Islands' communities remember and care.

Oban Remembrance parade is called off

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Tier 2 Covid restrictions brought in this week have led to the cancellation of Oban's Act of Remembrance plans.

A small-scale parade and service at the town's War Memorial on the Esplanade will no longer go ahead on Sunday November 8.

Organisers had hoped to continue some form of commemoration that morning but the new restrictions have ruled it out, says councillor Jim Lynch.

A second act of remembrance on Wednesday November 11 at 11am at the Garden of Remembrance on George Street, where crosses were to be provided for anyone wishing to place one in the garden, has also been cancelled.

Councillor Lynch said a lot of work had been put in to planning a safe way of commemorating the world wars



and subsequent conflict heroes this year during Covid but protecting the community from the virus had to take priority.

Instead he and Oban Sea Cadets chaplain the Reverend Peter Park are joining calls for people to take to their doorsteps for the usual two-minutes silence and to go online to make donations to

The Scottish Poppy Appeal. 'It's disappointing but the new restrictions for us say no remembrance parades can go ahead. People can also still go individually to the war memorial to pay their respects at their own risk but please stay mindful of social distancing,' said Councillor Lynch.

And on Breege Smyth's Oban

Janice Stewart from Made In Argyll is helping raise funds for this year's Poppy Appeal by running an auction of craftwork.

FM show on November 8, leading up to the two-minute silence between 10am and 11am, the names from all the town's war memorials will be read out. 'It will be an incredibly moving piece,' said Breege.

There is also still time to put a bid in for one of the eight lots of crafters' work going under the hammer at Made In Argyll in aid of the Earl Haig Poppy Appeal. Go to the shop's Facebook page to find out more. The auction will close on November 10 and winning bidders will be notified.

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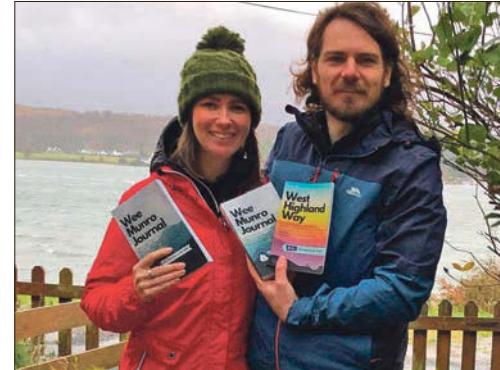
Munro journals kickstart couple's new adventure

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

When Munro-bagging was out-of-bounds for one lockdown Lismore couple, they embarked on another adventure – into the world of journal publishing.

Covid restrictions might have kept Michael Hanley, originally from Canada, and his partner Debbie Harris, the island's new head teacher, away from their beloved Munros, but the pair put time in lockdown to good use and brainstormed a new venture until they could safely return to the peaks.

'During lockdown, hikers were itching to get out, but it wasn't possible with the restrictions. We needed to scratch the itch somehow, so we brainstormed through a few days and came up with an outline for a Munro journal,



Michael Hanley and his partner Debbie Harris with the journals.

allowing hillwalkers to tick-off their accomplishments and record information about their climbs,' said Michael who used to run two fast food outlets.

The Wee Munro Team, as they call themselves, teamed up with Scottish Mountain Rescue to give them 25 per cent of any profit made from sales of the journal.

'Teaming up with such an amazing organisation meant

just a journal wasn't going to cut it. So we came up with loads of ideas,' added Michael.

Munro Gaelic, wild camping etiquette and toilet use in the wild have all made their way into the book, alongside a regional, alphabetical and height ordered index of the 282 Munros.

The couple, who also moved house, from Kilmaurs in East Ayrshire to Lismore during

lockdown, had to learn new skills from graphic design to type setting and editing and when the journal's draft was finally done they sent it to their friends to get feedback.

'They came back with more mistakes than we'd hoped,' said Michael, but after another edit and more proof reading, the journal was ready to publish and took off. 'In our first week, we've sold just shy of 100 copies which has far exceeded our expectations,' added Michael. Following the success of the Wee Munro Journal, they brought out a West Highland Way Journal, pledging to donate 25 per cent of those sales to the West Highland Way Management Group, and a third journal for Corbetts might be coming next. The journals are available on Amazon for now with hopes to get them on the shelves of bookshops soon.



Members of the Inner Wheel Club of Oban recently filled 10 boxes and gave a generous donation to Blythswood Care for its Shoebox Appeal. The donation will go towards providing transport for delivering this year's boxes to someone in need, said the club's Fiona Innes.

School crossing safety concerns

Councillors are looking at ways to make McCraig Road safer for schoolchildren.

Some parents have raised concerns about children crossing it to reach Oban's Rockfield Primary campus.

Community councillor Keith Miller told a recent online meeting of Oban Community Council the traffic flow on that stretch was 'intense' and 'it would be a tragedy if any youngsters were injured there'.

Councillors agreed to take the issue forward to help find a solution.

It was suggested in the meantime the school's Parent Teacher Association might put forward people to train as volunteer crossing patrollers under a current Argyll and Bute Council scheme.

A walking bus scheme, like the one that operates at Dunbeg School, was also suggested.

I wash my hands to protect my colleagues.

NHS

HANDS **FACE** **SPACE**

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OT

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Lots of people have been telling me lately that they have started their Christmas shopping a bit earlier this year because of the uncertainty about any future lockdowns and I must admit it makes perfect sense.

The other thing that also makes perfect sense this year is shopping locally which, as usual, I'm really enjoying. It makes all the difference knowing the people you're buying from. You can have a blether and relax knowing that if you can't make up your mind you can always pop back tomorrow - useful for someone as indecisive as me.

We're lucky in Oban to have the range of shops that we do, big and little, and it makes for a much nicer shopping experience. A bonus is that there is lots of lovely cafes to pop into between shops without trekking miles.

The other good thing about shopping locally is that you're supporting the businesses who have supported this community,

WHERE IS THIS?



the ones who have given raffle prizes for schools and nurseries, and who have given of their time and talent to support local charities. It's time we supported them too.

This year it's more important than ever that we help each other out and hopefully next year, when we come out the other side of this pandemic, we won't have lost any more businesses and Oban can bounce back.

The photographs over the last two weeks were taken on the North Pier, at different sides. This week's photograph was sent to me by Margaret Powell-Joss. I got it wrong and had to ask where it was!

Harbour consultation to start in Oban soon

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Development of a community-led harbour authority for Oban will move a step closer later this month with the start of a public consultation.

The exact date of when the consultation will start and how people can get involved are still being firmed up but the month-long 'have your say' opportunity will be seeking the views of anyone with an interest in the future of the town's harbour.

People will be encouraged to make their views and preferences known over the seaward limits of the area which the new harbour authority will control.

Oban Community Harbour Development Association (OCHDA) chairman John MacAlister said: 'Defining the harbour extent is the first step



in a process which will result in making the waters safer for everyone by improving the management of vessel movements, allocation of anchorages for large vessels, controlling vessel speeds and general oversight of the marine environment.'

Details of how to take part in the consultation will appear

The month-long 'have your say' opportunity will be seeking the views of anyone with an interest in the future of the town's harbour.

for the waters of Oban Bay and its approaches.

It is currently proposed that the Trust Port operation will be based on the North Pier and will cover the waters of Oban Bay with Caledonian Marine Assets Limited (CMAL) harbour area as it is now 'nested' within it. The railway pier used by the CalMac ferries would be part of it.

In the proposals there will also be special provision for areas around Oban Marina like the Northern Lighthouse Board. The Sound of Kerrera and its approaches would also be included.



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Lilies light up in Oban

North Argyll Carers Centre in Albany Street lit up its remembrance lilies on Sunday, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The illuminating display is part of a Scotland-wide festival called To Absent Friends remembering loved ones.

Carers across our area were invited to pen a message on a lily petal before they went on display in the centre's window in Oban.

Mairi Fleck, the centre's learning and development co-ordinator, said: 'There was a great turn out for the launch of the To Absent Friends festival of remembrance, despite rotten weather. A group of carers and their families watched as the illuminated lilies for remembrance were revealed.'

The lilies will be lit again from 5pm tomorrow.



Photograph: Mairi Fleck

Manor House Hotel – the end of an era

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

Almost 21 years ago this December, American businessman Les Crane and his wife Margaret stopped for a night at the Manor House Hotel in Oban and liked it so much they bought it.

Last Sunday, after many happy years, the couple, who now live in Bermuda, came to the end of their tenure and the historic building, with its prominent position overlooking the bay, will morph into a boutique bed and breakfast in January.

'We've had a fabulous 20 years owning the Manor House and have always taken great care in maintaining the property and ensuring our guests enjoy their stay as much as we enjoyed staying there ourselves during our quarterly trips each year,' said Les.

'We will miss all the friends



we have made and the dedicated staff, but felt it was time for us to pass it on.'

Built in 1780 as the principal residence of the Duke of Argyll's Oban estate, the Manor House was later used as a Dower House for his family.

Of late Georgian architecture, great consideration has been given to preserve its elegance, charm and atmosphere. The Cranes came across the venue

by chance while stopping off there after visiting Margaret's family in Banffshire and they instantly fell in love with the place. 'We booked for a day and stayed three,' added Les.

'In that time we learned the owner had died recently and the property was coming up for sale. I looked into the details a month later and we both thought it would be an interesting adventure. We had

no background in the industry but had met the staff who were keen to stay on. We loved the waterfront location and the historic building. I am an avid sailor and the situation looked like fun. It would be owning a country house from which we could entertain while it supported itself.'

Les continued: 'We've had great staff over the years starting with Gabriella Wijker (MacKenzie) managing with Patrick Freytag and Sean Squire in the kitchen, Ronnie Dalgleish on premises and finishing with Gregor MacKinnon managing, Ronnie still keeping everything together and Mandy Todd as head chef.

'Gregor has done a magnif-

icent job for 13 years creating a strong response from our guests. By ensuring it was a pleasant place to work, Gregor was instrumental in putting together a strong house staff with minimal turnover.'

'We have had great loyalty from our staff which guests recognised and appreciated. We are sorry to see the end of this era and wish everyone success in their next endeavours.'

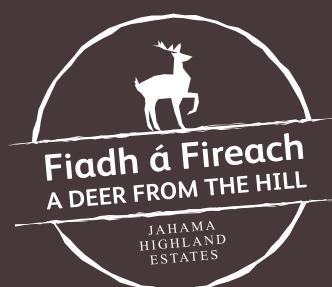
Gregor himself had the last word.

'Manor House has a unique atmosphere which appeals to many and I have made many great friends over the years. I am extremely sad to be leaving but look forward to taking on a new challenge.'

'I have loved my time at Manor House and could not have done it without my great team of local staff. I wish everyone all the very best for the future,' he concluded.

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OT

Appin dancers honoured

Young Highland dancers in Appin who have been starved of competition silverware this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic have won an unexpected trophy to add to their collection.

Members of the Appin School of Dance were collectively awarded this year's Young Person Award, an annual prize presented by Appin Community Trust since 2009 to recognise the achievements of young people in the village.

The dance school, which has run for more than three decades under the tutelage of Trish MacKay, has members as young as four. The more senior dancers are regular prizewinners at national events and have also competed in Ireland and France.

They also readily support local ceilidhs, entertain senior citizens and this year produced a lockdown video to entertain everyone who was housebound.

In handing over the shield to Mrs MacKay and dancers Eva MacColl and Erin Jackson, trust chairman Dr



Highland dancers Erin Jackson, left, and Eva MacColl accepted the Appin Young Person Award on behalf of Appin School of Dance.

Iain McNicol made a special mention of Mrs MacKay's contribution to the village.

Dr McNicol said: 'Usually, we give this award to an individual but in this most unusual year we decided to give it to a group of young people who have made Appin proud over many years. The school of

dance has been led by Trish for more than 30 years and it owes her a huge amount of gratitude for her dedication, skill and commitment.'

Having not danced competitively since March 7 and unable to meet for practices, Mrs MacKay has been organising dancing lessons via video

conferencing to maintain the fitness of her competitive dancers.

She said: 'It is marvellous to receive this recognition for the dancers. They are all very committed and are usually up there challenging for prizes in the big national competitions. They represent Appin so well.'

Gran's back with new safety message for young drivers

A new campaign is urging young male drivers to prepare for the unexpected and slow down on country roads.

The plea by the Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland, targeted at young men aged between 20 and 29, features the return of the cheeky, straight-talking gran character, who has been a central feature of a number of highly-successful campaigns over the past year.

Inappropriate speed leading to loss of control is the biggest cause of deaths on country roads.

Country roads account for 60 per cent of casualties on Scotland's roads, with the latest figures highlighting 7,003 people were killed or seriously injured while driving on them in 2018 - the last year for which figures are available.

The campaign launch includes a humorous and thought-provoking video, highlighting speed and other potential hazards on

country roads that can turn even a familiar journey into a potentially fatal one.

'Gran' appears from a young man's crashed car to give him the appropriate dressing down following a lucky escape.

Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity Michael Matheson said: 'This new campaign strikes just the right balance of humour while delivering an incredibly important message, so it is sure to stick in the minds of our target audience of young male drivers.'

'We've had great success using 'Gran' to deliver these messages, so we're pleased to welcome her back for this campaign.'

The advertising campaign will run across relevant channels from this week.

View the film at <https://youtu.be/mDk-Bin3Iuc> and get involved with the conversation on Facebook (Road Safety Scotland) and Twitter @RoadSafetyScot, #DriveSmart.

Home-Start Lorn – Celebrating 32 years of working with families in Oban, Lorn and now on Mull



What we do

Bringing up children is one of the most difficult jobs we will ever have to do. Home-Start Lorn has been supporting families with young children throughout the whole of the Oban and North Argyll

area, including the outlying villages since 1988 and on the Isle of Mull since 2016. Through our home-visiting volunteers we offer a unique service providing practical and emotional support to parents/carers with one or

more children under 3 years of age. During 'Lockdown' we delivered craft packs and pamper packs to our families. We have just recently started a café project in partnership with Hope Kitchen for families



Who we can help

We can help parents/carers who find it hard to cope for all sorts of reasons, including

- illness or disability,
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- multiple birth or multiple young children in the home,
- housing or financial issues.

At Home-Start support is given to any parent/carer who asks for help. If you think Home-Start Lorn could help your family why not find out more? You can either contact your Health Visitor or your GP or you can contact us directly.

Trustees

We are managed by a board of trustees. They are all volunteers with a variety of skills and knowledge. We are very lucky to have a treasurer who is a

qualified accountant as well as a retired teacher, social worker and others. What we NEED on our board is someone with Social Media skills who can help us raise our profile and someone with good data analysis to help us make the most of the data we collect. Perhaps you can help?

**Home
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for families

TV's Secret Scotland given an eagle-eye's view of Mull

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk



TV viewers will see comedian Susan Calman dropping in on Mull as part of her popular Channel 5 Secret Scotland series this week.

The show that follows Susan on a light-hearted jaunt around her homeland to visit some of the country's most iconic destinations, discovering the nearly forgotten legends and secret stories within, will focus on Mull and Staffa in an episode scheduled for Friday November 6.

Beginning her west coast trip in Staffa, Susan visits one of the UK's true natural wonders, a cathedral-like cavern formed over thousands of years – Fingal's Cave. Her need for speed is also fulfilled on the show, as she takes to the track and learns all about the UK's first, closed road rally race – The Mull Rally. From



there, she visits Calgary Bay to help preserve one of the rarest habitats in Europe and then tries her hand at wood carving.

Picturesque Tobermory is next on her exciting journey with a visit to a biscuit factory powered using only renewable energy.

During her time on Mull,

Susan also meets with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' Mull officer Dave Sexton at Craignure Golf Course which doubles up as official home to Mull Eagle Watch.

With a special licence from NatureScot, Susan went with Dave to check out the nest of the resident pair of white-tailed

Susan Calman and David Sexton with the camera crew on the lookout for white-tailed eagles Scalla and Anna.

and goose feathers which the eagles had taken in as prey to the chick and a smelly old dog fish which they'd eaten a bit of. Susan declined my offer to smell the bundle of fulmar feathers which were quite distinctive with their oily, musty odour! said Mr Sexton.

They then headed across to Ulva Ferry where they boarded a Mull Charters trip so that Susan could get up close and personal with a sea eagle.

"There were tense scenes on board when we headed to the first location and found absolutely no sign of any sea eagles when I'd been convinced it would be almost 100 per cent guaranteed at that spot. They were just nowhere to be seen.

'After waiting a while and with the clock ticking, we headed north to another location. As the crew decided we probably weren't going to see anything, they started having cups of tea when suddenly I shouted,

quietly 'eagles!' as two adult sea eagles were approaching the boat from the rear. There was much scrambling and grabbing of cameras and microphones and tea going everywhere as they raced to get in position for Susan to see the eagles and to do her piece to camera. She was blown away by the sheer scale and majesty of the eagles and was almost speechless – but not for long!" said Mr Sexton.

Luckily the crew got a cherished shot of Susan with the eagle coming down for a fish and everyone was happy.

It wasn't an easy shoot as we all had to be socially distanced at all times, wearing masks when not being interviewed and having our temperature taken at regular intervals. But it all worked out well.

'Mull looked magnificent, the eagles were the stars of the show and Susan really enjoyed herself. Job done,' said Mr Sexton.



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We all need something special right now to make us feel good in body and soul; to lift our spirits and inject some joy back into life. Ardrhu House has the perfect solution with its 'spa la carte' approach to wellness. The luxury spa, beloved by visitors and locals-in-the-know, has answered the call by providing with its holistic treatment menu, an indulgent treat whilst maintaining a safe environment. These Spa Days are truly à la carte: you buy the time with a therapist and you get to choose whatever treatments you desire with plenty of expert help and advice available to make the wisest decision. The emerald steam room, Finish sauna, hydro-jet shower and outdoor Jacuzzi overlooking Loch Linnhe await you. The spa team comprises an Ayurveda practitioner, herbalist, aromatherapist and sound healer; all coming together to weave the magic of Ardrhu House for a bespoke spa experience. World-famous brands like Ila and Temple Spa are part of the range of products used for these exquisite treatments available exclusively in Scotland at Ardrhu House. Treatment choices vary in length and include a therapeutic range for insomnia, restlessness, anxiety, stress and exhaustion. The massage treatments are popular with male and female customers and a couples' visit includes some amazing rituals to be shared together side by side in the same treatment room. A half-day includes either breakfast or afternoon tea and the full day features both - and the à la carte theme continues. You can add a light lunch or blocks of extra spa time as you desire; it is all about you receiving the finest spa experience. Activities on offer at the hotel can also be added, like yoga, canoeing or wild swimming. The full story unfolds when you visit <https://www.ardrhuhouse.com/spa>



OT

Ocean exploration to help climate change prediction

Such is the importance of oceanographic data to climate and environmental scientists, a team from SAMS braved rough open Atlantic seas in October to retrieve and redeploy underwater sensors attached to moorings.

Travelling on the UK science ship RRS Discovery from Southampton, the team changed over all six moorings and added a seventh to the west of the Rockall Plateau to measure a jet of the North Atlantic Current recently discovered by underwater robotic gliders from SAMS.

On their return to SAMS on Saturday October 24, research cruise leader Professor Stuart Cunningham of SAMS described the data retrieval as 'exceptional' as all but one of 125 instruments recorded important measurements such as temperature, salinity and speed of the current in the wa-



The RRS Discovery.

ter continuously for 27 months. This information will now be analysed to help scientists predict how the climate will change in the coming decades.

Professor Cunningham said: "We were essentially taking various measurements of the ocean current and the temperature of the sea across the north-east Atlantic, as this is

crucial to understanding how the UK climate will change short-term and long-term.

'Computer models that use such data are producing worrying predictions about how our weather will change, suggesting increased rainfall and temperature shifts that industries like agriculture need to be aware of. I was extremely

proud of the team, which was half the usual complement because of Covid-19 restrictions.'

Originally scheduled for August, the research cruise, named DY120, was delayed by the Covid-19 lockdown and was only the second scientific cruise to leave the UK

post-lockdown. The sensors recovered during DY120 have survived for two years in the hostile environment of the deep Atlantic Ocean.

Each mooring the ship visited consists of tens of instruments distributed along a wire, which is anchored to the seabed and

kept vertical by floats. Due to the depth of the ocean basins, most of the moorings are several kilometres long, so there is great skill in recovering each mooring intact onto a relatively small vessel, downloading data and redeploying in precisely the same location.

Sailing for a month in the notoriously rough north-east Atlantic during October is not the ideal setting for a scientific cruise.

Throw in a global pandemic and the DY120 cruise on board the RRS Discovery faced a number of challenges.

Covid added a different dynamic to the already stressful job of planning a research cruise, as Sarah Reed, one of the SAMS scientists on board, explains: 'The number of people allowed on board

was restricted and most people had a backup person on standby if anything went wrong with the tests.

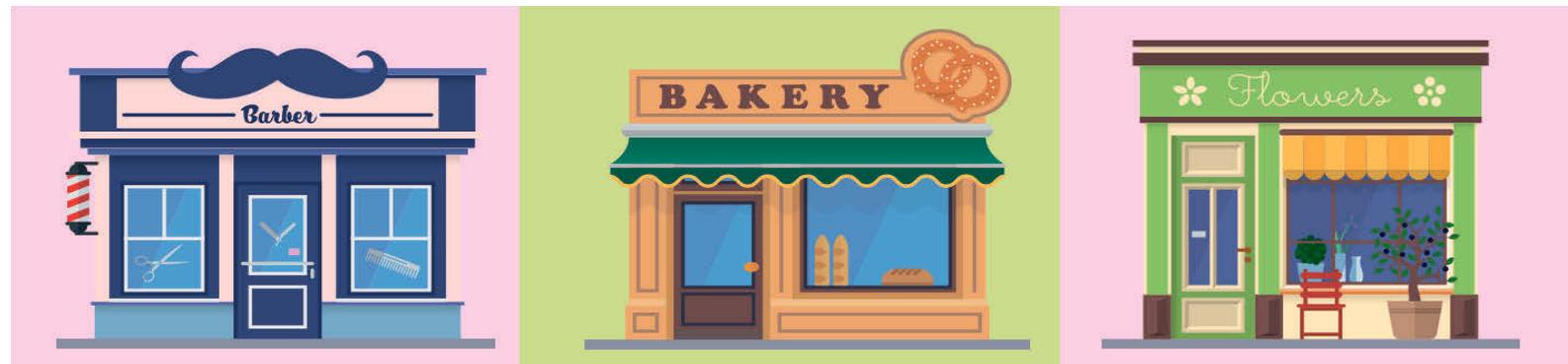
'We all took Covid tests prior to sailing and isolated ourselves for one week before we headed to Southampton. Our kit was sent down early and had to be left for 72 hours. When we arrived, the vessel was split into two for the science party then the crew. For the next two weeks we would socially distance on board, eating meals at dif-

ferent times. It was a bizarre scenario but it worked well. After setting sail, our routine of being socially distanced and having our temperature taken every day became normal. When the two weeks were up, we were all able to socialise, eat together, sit in the bar and help each other move science kit without wearing masks. When we got back to civilisation, it was quite a shock to the system that we were all locked up again.'

Whatever your business needs! Catch local eyes with an improvement grant

Business Improvement Grants 2020/2021

BID4Oban (Oban Business Improvement District) has been awarded £21,000 to support businesses within the BID Levy Area to improve the appearance of Shopfronts or alternatively Signage for businesses that may be located in some of the commercial areas of the town as part of the £63,000 Town Regeneration Fund from the Scottish Government. Since its inception, BID4Oban has provided Improvement Grants in excess of £62,000 including £12,000 over 2020, some of which was



to enable businesses to change their business models to enable outside trading. The new award will be combined with a further £7000 from BIDS own funds delivering a total funding

pot of £28,000. BID4Oban have agreed with Argyll and Bute Council that the existing BID process for allocating grants will be used. This is to ensure compliance with current

procurement processes. The maximum grant will be £1500 per business or 50% of the costs. There is an expectation that businesses will use local contractors wherever possible.

Potentially, the improvement grants will generate an investment of £56,000 in Oban businesses and associated contractors. There is a condition that all works, and grants must be

approved by 31st March 2021. Many businesses have benefited from these grants to greatly improve the appearance of their business.

Applications are available from <https://bid4oban.co.uk/projects/business-relocate-or-expansion-frontage-grant/information/>
All applications will be treated on a first come first served basis. For full details contact the BID4Oban office or email admin@bid4oban.co.uk



Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



A powerful force that controls our climate

By Dr Sam Jones, SAMS Oceanographer

We often think of the world's oceans as discrete systems, operating independently from one another.

In fact, they are so deeply interconnected it is more appropriate to think of a single world ocean in constant circulation.

Like a vast, stately conveyor belt, water flows from the tropics to polar regions where it cools and becomes denser, pouring back along the basins and valleys of the seabed towards the lower latitudes. This flow encompasses every ocean basin and takes many hundreds of years to complete a full circuit.

A striking example of this process in action is the ocean's delayed response to climate change. Since the industrial revolution, the Polar seas have been taking in additional heat and pollutants from human activities and diligently storing them in the deep oceans of the world, where they will reside for many years before eventually resurfacing. Not gone forever, just filed under 'to deal with later'.

The Atlantic segment of this flow is known as the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC). 'Meridional' refers to the south-north nature of the flow and 'overturning' describes its upwelling and downwelling components in the tropics and the poles, respectively.

Despite its stately progress, the energy moved by the AMOC is staggering. Roughly 1.25 Peta (10¹⁵) watts of heat is continuously transported from the tropics towards the Atlantic Arctic via this mechanism, more than 60 times the present rate of world energy consumption.

Ambitious

The idea that human activity could disrupt this immense current system was first considered in response to an unexpected result. In 1957 an ambitious hydrographic survey aimed to measure the total amount of water and heat transported by the AMOC using a line of observations between the eastern and western sides of the Atlantic ocean.

This effort successfully delivered a figure for the

'Despite its stately progress, the energy moved by AMOC is staggering'

strength of the AMOC and a follow-up experiment in 1981 was conducted to see whether anything had changed during the 24-year interval.

Contrary to expectations, the transport was found to have decreased significantly. The discrepancy was tentative evidence this seemingly inexorable current system was slowing down.

A possible culprit for the slowdown was forthcoming. The Polar ice caps store vast amounts of fresh water and human-induced climate change has added to existing ice melt, causing more fresh water to flow into the Polar oceans. Fresh water reduces the density of seawater so has the potential to disrupt the engine that drives the AMOC. Water in the Arctic may no longer have sufficient density

to sink and flow towards the tropics.

There is much evidence that such slowdowns occurred due to melting at the end of the last ice age, as recently as 8,200 years ago.

This is the scenario portrayed in the movie *The Day after Tomorrow*. It's true the warm, salty North Atlantic Current keeps Western Europe relatively mild and that a reduction in this current could lead to cooling in the northern hemisphere. That the current could 'switch off' in a matter of days, leading to polar super-hurricanes and an influx of wolves into New York is less scientifically rigorous, but in the interests of dramatic cinema we'll let that slide.

After the discovery of an apparent slowdown in the AMOC, it was imperative we learned more about the Atlantic portion of the ocean conveyor belt. How quickly was it slowing down? What would the implications be for climate in the northern hemisphere? How sensitive would it be to future changes in climate?

To answer these questions,



Dr Sam Jones, SAMS oceanographer, is helping to uncover the inner workings of the ocean conveyor belt.

the RAPID mooring array was instigated in 2004. It comprised a line of deep ocean moorings maintained between Morocco and Florida to continuously measure the AMOC in a more comprehensive manner than had previously been possible. The data provided by this array demonstrated that the slowdown was real, but more gradual than had initially been feared. However, the scale of year-to-year and even seasonal variability in current strength was far greater than expected.

A large unknown remained:

how much of the water which passes through the RAPID array reaches the Arctic to cool and sink and how much just recirculates in the North Atlantic? To answer this question and better understand the engine which drives the AMOC, it was decided a second array of instruments – a 'gateway' across the entrance to the Polar seas – was needed.

This mooring array stretched from Western Scotland, via Greenland, to the east coast of Canada and was named the Overturning in the Sub-Polar North Atlantic Program (OSNAP).

This international effort has been maintained since 2014 and has offered further insight into the inner workings of the ocean conveyor belt. We now know, for example, that most of the cooling and sinking occurs east of Greenland, not in the Labrador Sea as was previously thought. In addition, most of the strong year-to-year changes in AMOC strength originate in the stormy seas of the Eastern North Atlantic where we currently find ourselves.

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OT

Night vision – Argyll's single track trunk road

by Colin Cameron
editor@argyllshireadvertiser.co.uk

The door closed last week – October 30 – on a five-week public consultation on alternative routes avoiding the troublesome Rest and be Thankful.

As the Transport Scotland consultation ends, the need for a permanent solution was underlined when trunk road management firm BEAR Scotland announced that the single track old military road detour would be used every night, under convoy, until the end of November for safety reasons.

By that point a barrier to intercept material tumbling down the hillside on to the A83 should be complete as part of ongoing 'mitigation' measures.

In the latest in a long series of such events over recent years, two significant landslides hit the A83 at the Rest in August and September. This left the



slopes of Beinn Luibhean heavily scarred and exposed to further erosion.

Heavy rain has been the main threat and BEAR Scotland revealed around 150mmms - six inches - of rain fell in a week from Sunday October 18, with some debris and silt reaching catch pits next to the A83.

Eddie Ross of BEAR Scotland said: 'We're continuing to put motorist safety first and as

more seasonal wet weather approaches we have taken the decision to close the A83 each night from 6pm overnight as a safety precaution.

The old military road will be used overnight for all road users with an inspection taking place at first light in the morning ahead of a potential re-opening of the A83 under traffic signal control.'

All of which throws the spot-

The old military road is to be used as a detour every night until the end of November.

light on the need for an alternative and Transport Scotland last month unveiled 11 options for public consideration.

Argyll and Bute Council last week came out in favour of the pragmatic option of Option One – a road up the other side of Glen Croe.

Council leader Robin Currie said: 'After years of disruption, we now have the promise of a permanent solution, but we also need a commitment that our preferred option can be delivered within the term of the next Scottish Parliament.'

The council is also calling for greater investment along the whole of the A83 trunk road and, longer-term, consideration of a more ambitious route along the lines of Option Five involving bridge crossings over Loch Long and Loch Fyne.

Holyrood extends SGA salmon hatchery petition

How salmon rivers in Scotland may be stocked in future moved further up the political agenda last week with Holyrood's Petitions Committee set to seek government assurances on a full consultation.

Wild fisheries in Scotland sustain 2,800 jobs in remote areas and investment has been made in several hatcheries as wild salmon numbers have dipped worryingly through pressures in rivers and at sea.

Hatcheries strip salmon broodstock for eggs which are grown in controlled conditions before being released into the river, eliminating certain factors which lead to early mortality.

Last year government scientists at Marine Scotland were accused by some angling groups and river boards of rushing through a more restrictive policy position on hatcheries, without full consultation. This sparked a Holyrood petition by the SGA Fishing Group urging that, due to its importance for ghillies, anglers and potentially jobs, it ought to be the subject of a full and transparent stakeholder consultation.

The petitioner Robert White, a ghillie on the Tay, acknowledged there was a range of opinions but that Marine Scotland had moved to a position, then sought unsuccessfully to build support for it afterwards.

Since then Marine Scotland officials have written to the SGA Fishing Group promising initial discussions ahead of a 'focused' consultation, something the group believes runs the risk of being perceived as another fait accompli.

Last week, MSPs on the Petitions Committee expressed sympathy with that view, with Conservative MSP Maurice Corry saying there was a need for an 'all round picture'.

Robert White said he was satisfied with the outcome of the Parliament's deliberations.

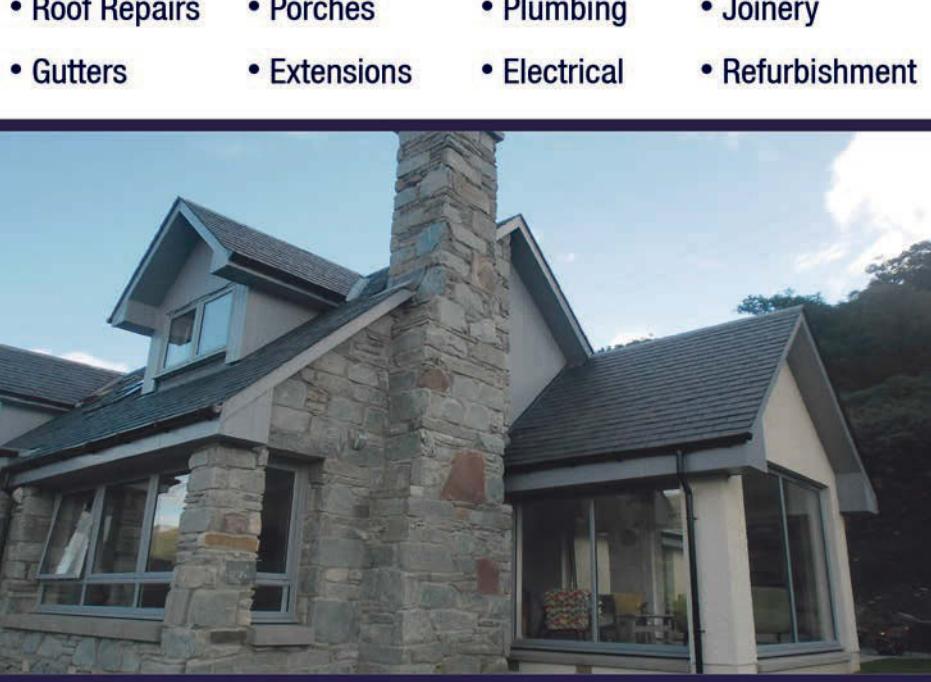
It was encouraging to see the MSPs recognising how important an issue this is.

Ghillies, anglers, hatchery employees and investors as well as riparian owners and conservationists all want to have a say.

'We don't feel that is too much to ask and we look forward to future discussions with Marine Scotland and others.'

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Eric Smith, Captain Fantastic

Last month we featured the Northern Lighthouse Board ship Fingal which has been transformed into a luxury hotel. This week, Martin Laing speaks to the vessel's former captain, Oban resident Eric Smith

One Oban mariner with decided recollections of the Fingal is Eric Smith, now master of the Northern Lighthouse Board vessel Pole Star.

Eric, a genial native of Lewis who has lived in Oban for more than 30 years, was captain of the Fingal and has fond memories of his time aboard the ship that is now a luxury floating hotel in Edinburgh.

However, a recent visit threw him somewhat off balance given the wholesale changes to the vessel to transform it from the boat he knew so well into the five-star enterprise it has become.

Eric joined the Fingal as a mate in 1990 and was made master five years later, serving in that role until 2000, when the ship was sold, and then switching to the new NLV Pole Star. He has also captained the NLV Pharos. These two vessels continue to operate out of Oban, with Eric switching between the two.

'The Fingal was identical to



the Pole Star,' said Eric. 'I'd been deep sea before the NLB and I'd never seen an old brass telegraph on a bridge.'

'We went on the Fingal in February last year for a week-

end, just after she opened, and I got a look around her. I'd been aboard during the conversion work so the change was fantastic. I walked around it and had difficulty recognising it. I knew

Eric Smith has fond memories of his time as captain of the Fingal.

time and it was all locals who were employed.

'During the summer we used to do what was called storage, going round the lighthouses, because in those days there were still quite a few keepers. We'd anchor off and run boats back and forth with water, diesel and stores and they'd give us tea and biscuits.'

The NLB is responsible for lighthouses in the waters around Scotland and its islands as well as the Isle of Man, the latter of which prompts a fond memory for Eric. 'Putting a Land Rover ashore at the Calf of Man lighthouse was quite an adventure.'

'Up on the bridge they had some of the old logs and flicking through these I came across my own name, which felt strange.'

'The Fingal was the first ship

where I was master so it sticks in your mind. She had a total crew of 33 or 34, which was quite a lot, but the job on deck was labour intensive.'

'When I started, the rota was eight weeks on and four weeks off - it's now four and four - but the ship was in port most of the

and some of them were real characters.'

Eric continues to serve the NLB but perhaps not for too much longer as he is contemplating hanging up his master's ticket. However, his family's maritime connections continue as his daughter Caroline, who also lives in Oban, is at sea with CalMac. 'She works in catering on the ferries and loves it.'

I'm in the process of thinking about retiring next year because I've been 46 years at sea now. We saw the last of the lighthouse keepers as 1998 was the end for them.'

Asked if he has a favourite lighthouse, Eric is quick to respond: 'Skerryvore. It's an amazing lighthouse because of the way it is constructed and engineered. It couldn't be done the same way now because of the risks. When you stand underneath it and look up, it's like an optical illusion: you think it's going to fall right on top of you.'

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OT

Celebrating Argyll's girls and women in sport

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Live Argyll is shining a light on women and girls in our area who are pushing themselves to the top of their sport.

In celebration of Women and Girls in Sport Week, Live Argyll's Community Sports Hub Officer Stacey Holloway spoke to just some of them across the region – from professionals to podium placers, coaches to club committee members and amateur athletes – asking them to share their aspirations, realities and reveal what drives them to keep playing, coaching and taking part in personal challenges.

Experienced mountain climber Kirsty Pallas has worked in outdoor pursuits since she was 17 and is also a volunteer with Oban Mountain Rescue Team and for Our Shared Outdoors, a group dedicated to diversifying outdoor spaces.

To see what it means to Kirsty to be out in the hills and up on peaks, you can watch her in a film 'Called to the Mountains'.

Librarian Carol Lawson from Lochgilphead has just conquered an Everest of her own - on a bike.

In memory of her father, North Argyll Cycle Club (NACC) member Carol took on a lockdown challenge to 'Everest' a hill near Barcaldine



Iris MacMillan, above, has been selected for the British Orienteering Talent Squad (Tier 1) for the 2020-21 season and, left, Kirsty Pallas has worked in outdoor pursuits since she was 17 years old.



in September. 'Everesting' means cycling up the same hill until you have completed the height of Mount Everest – 29,029 feet. She cycled the same hill for nearly 18 hours. NACC members came out to support her and she has raised thousands of pounds for Macmillan Cancer Support. Carol said: 'I always feel that

I am one of the least sporty people in the world, which is odd as I now spend most of my free time on my bike. I came to it late from a background of inactivity and I tend to think that if I can cycle for miles then anyone can! I love the freedom, the adrenaline, the friends, the escape, the adventure, the competition, the feeling when

you collapse into bed at night totally exhausted and especially the hills.'

Talking about her Everest challenge, she added: 'It was a day I'll always remember, from riding alone under the stars to the party atmosphere of the afternoon and the long, hard evening when each hill seemed to take 100 years.'

An up-and-coming sportswoman to watch is Iris MacMillan, a junior member of Loch Eck Orienteering Club, who after attending a talent assessment camp for British orienteering in Edinburgh during the October holidays has just heard she has been selected for the British Orienteering Talent squad (Tier 1) for 2020-2021 season, says Stacey.

Away from the classroom, depute head at Dunoon Grammar School Kirsty Campbell is an aspiring marathon runner.

'I plan to run a marathon in March, which I am excited about. I have always kept fit and enjoy cycling. I ran a few 5ks but I was speaking to a teaching assistant in the school who runs and he encouraged me to start again. I ran 18 miles on Sunday and feel great, but a bit tired. Running gets me outdoors and I enjoy the headspace to think and relax.'

To read more, go to liveargyll.co.uk/women-in-sport-week-2020-athletes-in-argyll-bute

Talented Aileen's colourful calendars boost charities

Her style has been favourably compared to that of no less an artistic figure than John Lowrie Morrison, writes Colin Cameron.

High praise indeed and it is easy to see where the similarity lies with the vibrant work of Jolomo in the images captured by budding amateur photographer Aileen Gillies. And she is putting her talents to good use, having raised thousands for charity this year, at a time when fundraising has been difficult.

Though a keen snapper, work commitments meant Lochgilphead resident Aileen rarely got the chance to take photographs. Then lockdown happened and it was when out taking the government's permitted exercise that Aileen's innate talent blossomed.

As her collection of images from Mid Argyll and beyond grew, Aileen decided to put together a charity calendar and it flew off the shelves, rapidly raising £1,000 for the Macmillan suite at Mid Argyll Hospital.

Aileen, originally from Ford, explained: 'The Macmillan unit looked after my mum before she died and were also great with dad and I.'

'I always said I would do something to thank them and I thought this was a good time as they must be missing out from donations from funerals.'

Aileen didn't stop there and a visit to Tarbert post office over the summer led her to take photographs of the scenic fishing village – which then became the Summertime Tarbert calendar. By Monday this week, Aileen's calendar



Aileen's charity calendars are selling like hotcakes.

sales had raised £2,800 for the Macmillan unit.

'I want to hit the £3,000 mark,' she said, 'plus I have calendars left and I think people are starting to buy Christmas presents.'

Kintyre charity Shopper Aide will also benefit from the proceeds of a third calendar by Aileen created from striking photographs taken during a visit to Glencraigs Farm, Campbeltown, featuring sunflowers, poppies and wildflowers.

With a photograph selected for the 2021 Harbro calendar and high hopes of catching the eye of VisitScotland's Instagram account, Aileen has plans to expand as she gains experience.

A website is in development and with the calendars' success Aileen decided to do cards, which can be bought in the Courtyard, Inveraray, and the Argyll Gift Company in Tarbert. Find out more on Aileen's Facebook page; email aileengillies@hotmail.co.uk or call her on 07825 291614.

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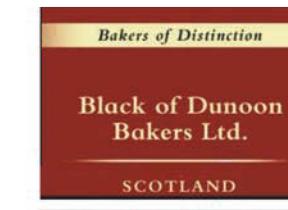
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LETTERS

Playpark repairs are urgent

It was so disappointing to hear the wonderful playpark, which the community worked so hard to get up and running, has been closed again, this time due to damaged equipment.

It is understandable a well-used park means equipment will be vulnerable to wear and tear, but given the playpark had been closed for so long it will be hard on youngsters locked out again after such a short period of play.

We agree safety must come first, however, it does seem surprising that there is some doubt about who is responsible for maintenance.

Let us hope the work to ensure Oban playpark can reopen is carried out soon and quickly and that our children are not locked out for as long as they have been in the past.

Key moment for Rockfield

We were delighted to hear this week that the builders have now handed over the keys for the Rockfield Centre to the community.

This is a fantastic achievement and has only been possible due to the hard work of so many.

With the next phase to furnish the inside of the building now started, we are excited to hear the first tenants hope to move in in January. We can't wait.

The editor welcomes letters of approximately 300 words in length for publication on this page. However we reserve the right to shorten, to amend or to refuse to print them. Names and postal addresses must be supplied, including on emails, to indicate good faith. A daytime phone number is also required for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Please email: editor@obantimes.co.uk or write to: Letters page, The Oban Times, PO Box 1, Oban, Argyll, PA34 4HB.

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

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We will attempt to resolve your issue in a timely, reasonable and amicable manner. However, if you are unsatisfied with our response, you can contact IPSO by email: inquiries@ipso.co.uk. We will abide by the decision of IPSO.



A83 Glen Croe option

It was interesting to read the article in last week's Oban Times that Argyll and Bute Council favours the Glen Croe option running adjacent to the A83 to be a permanent solution to this ongoing threat.

I really hope this means using the forestry road on the opposite side of the valley 'adjacent' to current A83. This really does seem to be the ideal solution.

Yes, it would no doubt cost a lot but the alternatives mean an ongoing struggle with no really sound final solution to this very serious problem.

Argyll and Bute residents/businesses have been amazingly patient over the years but we all live with the knowledge the current road is unsafe and dangerous and the day could easily come when we hear of a fatal accident due to yet another landslide.

Argyll has always been a beautiful, special part of Scotland. What a boost it would be to the economy for visitors to come here with no threat to their lives as they travel around it.

The expense of completing this major new road would be more than justified with a prosperous new outlook for our beloved Argyll.

Scotland has boasted great engineers in its past history. Let us trust there are still those out there capable of the task.

Moreen Moller, Clachan.

Salmon study is PR exercise

Arran residents became familiar with dead salmon after the escape from Mowi's Carradale North salmon farm in August - 48,834 farmed salmon escaped; 30,616 died.

Launching a genetics study with funding from Mowi will just delay any solution to the problems of fish escapes and their impact on our genetically different wild Scottish salmon and comes too late. Farmed salmon of Norwegian origin, compromised by weakness and disease, have contributed to the inexorable decline in our wild salmonid populations, no longer often seen in the famous fast running west coast salmon rivers of Scotland, including Arran.

This is a PR exercise. In the past five years, Mowi has lost 188,800 salmon from its farms through escapes from Colonsay, Hellisay, Loch Alsh and Carradale.

Research is often a delaying tactic to avoid making hard decisions. There should be no further planning permissions for more and large biomass salmon farms in Kilbrannan Sound or any high energy sites, or increases in biomass anywhere, approved by councillors in the west coast.

Sally Campbell, Lamlash.

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

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Gairdeachas ann an saoghal a tha car dorcha leis gun do bhuannaich Alba aig an rugbaidh an aghaidh na Cuimhrigh, le 14 puing gu 10! Thug e snodha gaire orm fhaicinn gun robh fear leis an ainm Harris a' cluiche dha Alba, agus fear Lewis ann an sgioba na Cuimhrigh, cha robh a dhith ach reiteire leis an ainm Cliseam! Thàinig glasadh nàiseanta a' choròna-bhiorais anns an rathad sa Mhàrt agus dh'fhàg sin sinn a' feitheamh greis mhòr ris na geomannan deireannach anns an fharpais sia nàiseanan seo. Ach bha Alba a' feitheamh ochd bliadhna deug airson gèam rugbaidh eadar-nàiseanta a bhuining an aghaidh na Cuimhrigh ann an Cardiff! B' e gèam math a bh' ann agus na mo bheachd dh'fhàg cothromachd chomasan nan sgiobaidhean fa leth an fharpais nas teinne agus cùisean nas intinniche, agus nas spreòdaiche, dhan luchd-amhairc. Bha e tāmailteach dhan dà sgioba nach fhaodadh sluagh a bhith an làthair aig a' phàirc ag amharc a' ghèama beò, agus gun teagamh bha na cluicheadairean agus luchd-amhairc air telebhisean ag ionndrainn an t-seinn mhìorbhailleach a bu dual a bhith ri chluinntinn aig leithid de ghèam anns a' Chuimhrigh. Mar is dual cuideachd, agus a dh'aindeoin sàr spàirn a' gheama, chriochnaich cùisean gu càirdeil modhail. 'S maig a rachadh etarra, car mar a tha fior le sluagh gach taobh dhen Chliseam!

Taobh eile na Roinn Eòrpa bha muinnitir baile

agus sgìre Izmir san Tuirc a' cladhach gu brònach tro sgrios na crith-thalmhainn a mharbh co-dhiù deugachadh dhaoine agus a dh'fhàg ceudan eile air an droch leòn. Suidheachadh uabhasach far am bheil daoine nan èiginn a' lorg bhall teaghlach agus chàirdean, le dòchas gun tig iad beò bhon sprüllich. Mar a dh'èirich le Covid 19 chan eil crith-thalmhainn a' toirt feart sam bith air criochan a stéidhich mac an duine agus thug an croithnachadh seo cuideachd buaidh air a' Ghrèig ann an nàbachd na Tuirce. Fad iomadh bliadhna tha cùisean eadar an dà nàbachd sin air a bhith gu math fuar agus aimhreiteach, ach's neònach mar a thachras agus tha e coltach gun tug an sgrios a bhuanal orra le cheile luchd-riaghlaidh nan dùthchannan seo ri cheile mar nach fhacas bho chionn fhada. Nach bu mhath gun leanadh agus gum fasadh sin gu còrdadh maireannach.

Le Sasainn air ais fo làn-ghlasadh a-rithist tuigear leamhachas agus tāmailt mhuinnit na dùthcha sin, ach theagamh gum bheil daoine a' fas nas mi-riaraichte leis a' charachd phoilitigeach a tha a' dol an lùib chûisean. Saoilidh mi gur e rùn a' mhòr-shluagh gun dèanar na ghabhas, cho luath 's a ghabhas, gus a' choròna-bhioras a cheannsachadh agus gum bheil e mar dhleastanas air gach pàrtaidh poilitigeach co-obrachadh gus an t-amás sin a choileanadh! Bidh sin a' ciallachadh gun tèid déildeadh gu cothromach ri gach sgìre den dùthach ge bith an cuij dàimh phoilitigeach.

Threat to free speech?

The SNP's dangerous Hate Crime Bill could threaten free speech in our homes.

Humza Yousaf has confirmed controversial offences will apply inside the home, essentially criminalising free speech at the dinner table.

The SNP must withdraw this Bill and think again instead of trying to force through dangerous attacks on our freedoms.

Councillor Alastair Redman,
Kintyre and Islands ward.

We are killing the planet

I am suffering from Ecological Anxiety Syndrome. The symptoms are mixed but are characterised by unexpected bouts of crying over tree stumps and an unwholesome desire to grab people by the shoulders and shake them whilst shouting 'Can't you see what you're doing?'

I have been to the doctor and he tells me it is

just a symptom of my ardent belief that we are killing the planet. He's put me on a course of pills called 'Idongivadam'.

Seriously, though, every day I read or hear about poison we have thrown in extravagant quantities into our lochs, see newly-fallen rain washing out our increasingly bare hillsides or hear of valuable peat being dug up so we can grow a few flowers. We have to start doing more than congratulating ourselves on producing electricity by wind power alone. We have to care whether Forestry and Land Scotland wants to actually look after the environment entrusted to them or just wants to make money. We have to ask if NatureScot should be responsible for looking after our wildlife or should instead be rebranded WildliferemovalScot.

If we don't, the agencies to whom we have given the authority to 'manage' our vanishing planet will likely contribute to killing it.

Nick MacIneskar, Tayvallich.

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DISTRICT NEWS

Lochnell PJ day boosts Cancer Research Oban

Lochnell Primary School pupils have boosted the funds of Cancer Research Oban.

Primary seven youngsters raised £273.01 by organising a pyjama day for the school. They were responsible for informing families and counting all of the donations.

Speaking on behalf of the organisers, Arran Macgregor, Daniel Morrison, Lucas Van de Hee and Finlay Wilson said: 'We had a lot of fun organising this and making people happy. All our peers were very happy and so were we. We also had a lot of fun on the day itself. It was awesome.' Mrs McGregor of the Oban committee was delighted to accept the cheque from primary seven pupils.



Lockdown penpal project a 'write' treat



Some of the St Columba's Primary School pupils who took part in the penpal project.

Youngsters have been putting pen to paper to strike up friendships with residents at Oban's Eader Glinn during the covid pandemic.

Pupils at St Columba's Primary School have been sharing their lockdown experiences with their new-found older buddies as part of a letter writing project suggested by parish priest Father James.

Head teacher Michaelina MacLellan said: 'When our parish priest Father James suggested we start writing to Eader Glinn residents, it was as part of an accredited programme that the children take part in called The Pope Francis Faith Award.'

'To be awarded this, the children need to have shown that they have helped in their community.'

She added: 'As well as writing about lockdown, they have been telling each other jokes. Many of our pupils have been missing their own grandparents so this project has been special for us and Eader Glinn.'

Manager at Eader Glinn Angela MacKay said:

'Father James approached me, after speaking with one of the teachers at St Columba's school, to ask if the children could write to some of our residents.'

'This was following on from a conversation we had about the impact Covid-19 restrictions are having on them.'

'Our residents can now have their loved ones visit them which is fantastic but these visits are still limited.'

'We all miss seeing people coming and going and the level of interaction we had prior to the pandemic, although we are able to keep in touch via iPads.'

'We were delighted with this suggestion and together we set up pen pals, where our residents would be supported in writing back to the children.'

'It has only just started but our residents thoroughly enjoyed reading their letters with stories of their lockdown and sharing jokes.'

'It is a great example of our community working together through challenging times.'

At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Changed days

Huzzah! I'm back! Though I'm sure some of you will consider this to be a thoroughly bad penny turning up yet again.

This column, which I have been so privileged to be able to write over the past few years, was suspended owing to Covid as I was furloughed, along with many colleagues, for the duration. And now, curiously, a new chapter starts for me as I have left The Oban Times and can therefore resume my ramblings in this space.

Technically, I've retired, though sooner than would be ideal, partly on health grounds albeit I will not bore anyone with the details.

Of far more importance than my departure is the retirement of my good friend and colleague Davie Buchanan, an amazing servant to the newspaper and his beloved Oban Saints Football Club.

There can be few people anywhere who devote an astonishing 55 years of unbroken service to a single employer, in Davie's case, rather obviously, the OT. During my short service - four years that simply flew past - Davie was a superb guy to work with and I know I speak for everyone at Wyvex Media when I say he will be much missed. Luckily for Saints, Davie seems to have no plans to curtail his activities on behalf of the club.

I look forward keenly to continuing our friendship and the regular Thursday sessions in our favoured pub of choice.

Enjoy your retirement, Davie, and I'll try to do the same.

Strange days

I can't resurrect this column after all these months without a nod to the dreadful pandemic that has so comprehensively changed all our lives and brought an end to so many others.

People keep talking of a return to 'normality' as if the events of 2020 will somehow be behind us in the future.

For me, nothing will ever be the same and I very much doubt if it will be for anyone else. We can't return to the former normality but we can adapt to our altered reality.

What do you think? Send your views to editor@obantimes.co.uk.

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A collage of images showing the exterior of a modern industrial building with green roofs and various units, and several interior views of workshop spaces with wooden floors, metal shelving, and overhead cranes.

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A collage of images showing various home improvement projects, including a porch addition, a large glass door, and a modern extension to a house.

BUSINESS NEWS

Orders fly for new Whitetail liqueurs

Christmas has come early for a distillery on Mull.

Family-owned Whitetail Gin Distillery has just signed a 55-store deal with the Co-op in Scotland to sell its new liqueurs.

The Co-op is not the only retailer to have snapped up the five new liqueurs for their shelves in time for the run-up to the festive season. Whitetail's director Jamie Munro, below, said the distillery - the first on the island for 230 years - had received a 'heavy surge of orders'.

Jamie's mum Katie Mackay from Tiroran Country Estate has been using her experience as an award-winning chef to head up the lip-smacking range, hand-picking botanicals and flavours from their island home before they are infused with the brand's Whitetail Gin.

While the distillery kept its shop shut this season during Covid to respect vulnerable neighbours, the team at Tiroran has not been idle and has been busy thinking up new ideas and how to move the business forward onto new exciting ventures, said Jamie.

There is Aqua Mint and Lime; Ginger, Vanilla and Rhubarb; Lemon-Balm and Elderflower, Late Summer Berry and Pink Grapefruit & Rosemary.

A 500ml bottle of liqueur costs £20. It is bottled on site at the distillery.

Co-op Local Sourcing Buying Manager for Scotland Kevin Buchan said: 'We are delighted to be working closely with distillers like Whitetail. The Co-op is all about connecting communities, making a difference and creating value locally.'



£63,000 town boost delights BID4Oban

by Ellis Butcher
ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



Oban town centre has been awarded £63,000 towards a series of projects and nearly £50,000 in support is heading to Mull.

Argyll and Bute councillors sanctioned the awards at a meeting of the full council on Thursday October 22.

The latest funding is the largest single award the Business Improvement District has received to date and plans are in place to ensure the capital projects are completed by March 31 2021. The award comes on the back of a £44,000 award for street signs that will be implemented within the same timescales. There was a delay in this because of the Covid pandemic.

The primary award is for Business Improvement Grants with a total budget of £28,000 including a contribution from BID4Oban. These grants have been successful with £62,000 having been invested since 2012. This funding is available to businesses to improve their business signs or shop fronts. There is an expectation that local contractors should be used for any work. Guidelines are available on the BID4Oban website.

Andy Spence, chief executive of the business group BID4Oban, said the town was 'absolutely delighted' to receive the funding.

He said: 'It will make a significant impact to the town and give us a fighting chance for the start of next year's tourist season as well as improving the ambiance and facilities in the town.

'It's going to enable us to do a lot more projects than we originally planned,' he said.

'One of the caveats is that any contracts for work have to be in by March 31, so it is projects that are going to happen pretty much immediately.'

The new award will see improvements made to the approaches and entrance to McCaig's Tower with voluntary group Keep Oban Beautiful.



Andy Spence, chief executive of the business group BID4Oban, said the cash would make a significant impact to the town and give it a fighting chance for the start of next year's tourist season.

Plans are in place to cut back overgrown foliage and replace existing planting schemes with sustainable low maintenance plants. Provision has also been made for the installation of picnic benches.

Additional funding has been made available for new welcome signs to the entrance of the town on the A85 and A816, as well as the North Pier Pontoons.

An upgrade and extension of the town's wifi system will also be completed, linking it to the new Oban Town Directory.

One of the most challenging projects is an award to provide waste disposal solutions for the many campervans and caravans that visit the town.

The shopfront works project also sees £28,000 awarded to Tobermory where, again, property owners will be required to contribute.

The final instalment of the Oban, Lorn and the Isles share of government funding incorporates £20,000 towards a vital £315,000 flood gate plan for Tobermory.

The report before councillors said because of the need to have the funding allocated before

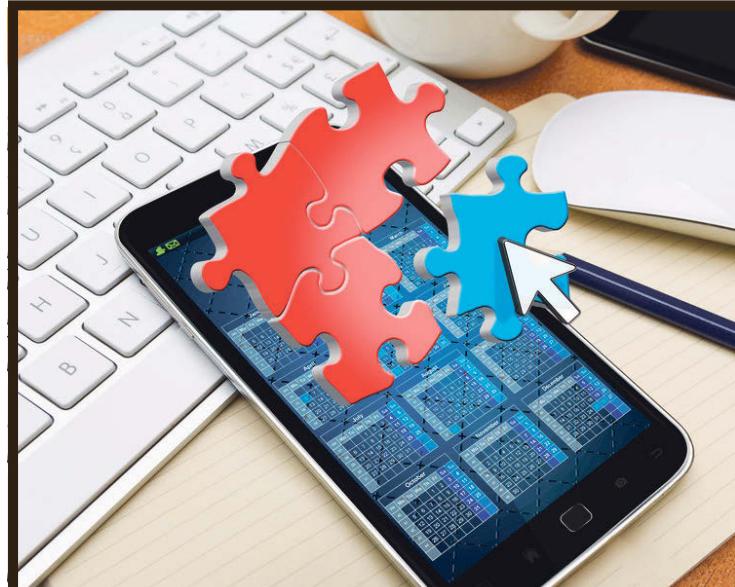
the end of the financial year in 2021, the council planned to use it to prime 'already established' programmes. It also wanted to back projects where potential match funding is in place and there are staff/community resources in place to deliver them quickly.

Council executive director Kirsty Flanagan said: 'Due to the immediate need to build resilience within the economy, the aim of the fund is to support construction activity within town centres.'

'A key constraint of the fund is therefore the tight timeline to physically deliver capital projects within the current financial year or, at the very least, agree a signed contract for the works or be started on site by April 1 2021.'

'Projects have been chosen to support the viability of our town centres and where possible linked to either a town centre action plan that has often been taken forward through a making places initiative.'

'To achieve a range of capital projects that will make a meaningful difference, there is a need to make quick decisions and link where possible to established programmes of work.'



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Outlook bright for Oban businesses as AGM hears of funding boost

There may be a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel for Oban's business community as the town's Improvement District shuts the door on the 2019/20 season and looks ahead to 2021, writes Fiona Scott.

BID4Oban held a virtual annual general meeting last week when chief executive Andrew Spence reported that, despite the devastating effect Covid-19 had brought to the tourist and hospitality industries this season, the savings made along with additional funding could be put towards further improvements and initiatives ahead of an expected 'staycation' influx next year.

'Everything was going swimmingly until the end of March this year and then Covid struck,' he told members of the board and other interested parties during the online gathering.

'With events, visits and cruises cancelled, our role turned into a more supportive one where partnership working proved crucial in managing the crisis.'

'Next year is likely to be a huge one in terms of staycationers and we will be ready for it. We have to reinvent ourselves in these ever-changing times and by continuing to work together and support each other we can make sure Oban is at the top of the list as a 'go to' destination.'

Thanks to a £63,000 boost from the Scottish Government's Town Regeneration Fund, projects will go ahead - see page 18.

During the pandemic BID, working alongside Argyll and Bute Council, The Oban Times and Oban FM, have played a major role in pulling the town together and keeping everyone informed.

Key advertising for business in the community, the set up of the Oban Business Directory (www.obantown



Andrew Spence says Oban will have to reinvent itself post Covid.

directory.co.uk/), resilience signs for all levy payers and infrastructure support grants to enable cafes and bars to trade externally were just some of the work carried out by BID.

In excess of £200,000 of support grants were awarded to local businesses as a result of BID4Oban intervention and support.

'Communication to our levy payers and community in general has been key to our success in the months of the Covid pandemic,' added Mr Spence.

As well as raising its profile and relevance to the business community during the pandemic, BID also

took on responsibility of the Oban Food Hub providing essential food packages to those shielding, at risk and in need of support on behalf of Argyll and Bute Council. To date 2,500 parcels have been delivered using volunteers, council workers and education staff.

For the next few months the focus will be on Shop Local, Support Local, Use Local, an exciting campaign that encourages the community to support local businesses across Oban.

Tony Cave, chairman of BID4Oban, thanked Mr Spence and his team for their outstanding contribution over very difficult and trying times.

Towns Partnership Resilience Fund

BID4Oban Ltd (Oban Business Improvement District) received more good news this week with a funding award of £20,000 from Scotland's Towns Partnership - more than was expected. It will be used as follows:

Shop Local, Support Local, Use Local: Working with established media organisations The Oban Times, Oban FM and newly-created Digital Oban Business Directory, we have an exciting campaign that encourages customers to support businesses across Oban. This is aimed at local residents across the surrounding area. We want people to change their mindset and spend locally be it with national chains or independent retailers and service providers.

Love Oban Brand: Using our successful Love Oban Vouchers Scheme, we will heavily advertise and highlight the benefits of using locally-sourced vouchers to support our key independent retailers.

Oban Business Directory: Established since the Covid onset, this one-stop shop for everything Oban includes business, activities, what's on and services. We will heavily promote Oban business services using social media partner KMC Communications.

Marketing Shop & Support Local: Using The Oban Times, Oban FM and social media, weekly stories and scenarios will be created by way of advertising, advertorials, talk shows and highlighting local businesses. Preferential advertising rates have been negotiated with local media to advertise their services.

Social Media: Highlighting business services using social media vox pops.



BID4Oban is in the process of negotiating free parking to boost Christmas shopping.

Late night shopping: This will be heavily promoted in the run up to Christmas to spread customers across the day to make it easier for them to shop in comfort.

We will be involved in the pan-Argyll Shop Local campaign which involves support to non-BID towns offering support and advice.

Free Parking: We are in the process of negotiating free parking across Oban for December, in partnership with Argyll and Bute Council and BID4Oban.

Commenting on the funding, Andrew Spence of Oban Business Improvement District said: 'This is a welcome boost in the run up to the festive season.'

'We are making every effort to change the mindset of people in relation to how they use local businesses and services. This funding will go a long way to ensuring we can support local businesses via marketing, advertising and promotion.'

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Fighting to protect our na...

Morvern Lines

IAIN THORNBER

iain.thornber@btinternet.com

As the days shorten and the land is impregnated with the seeds of winter, red deer begin to leave the high corries and make their way down to the low ground in search of shelter from whatever Mother Nature is about to throw at them.

Come the first snow, they will be forced onto road sides and other unfamiliar territory where they will no doubt be called a problem.

Now, as anyone familiar with the animal kingdom knows, it is not the animals that are the problem, but the humans. From a deer's point of view, there are three major threats these days. Those who own the land, trees and over-management. Time has moved on, yet some of the wealthiest landowners in Europe are still able to lasso huge tax-free grants to plant millions of trees without being means-tested or having to give any thought as to where the poor displaced deer, including pregnant hinds, are to end up other than in a slaughter house by way of what Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) now NatureScot - at last dropping the word 'heritage' - refer to as 'compensatory culls'. One estate factor complained to me a few years ago that he had only made £150,000 profit on one woodland grant scheme after clearing his expenses.

At the end of the Second World War, a shortage of timber resulted in the recognition of the potential of the Scottish hills for forestry as well as sheep. Exploitation of the land below the tree planting line soon deprived deer of much of their traditional winter shelter. Shelter is vital, particularly for the females nurturing unborn calves. Only in rare instances does anyone along the way, including Forest and Land Scotland which has the final say in the matter, care where fences are built.

Why give eye-watering grants to grow quick-growing, unsightly, non-native conifers under which nothing flourishes? Answer – land nationalisation. Take away the deer and the 'toffs with guns' will lose interest, leaving their property to commercial exploitation and so-called community buyouts which governments will ultimately control and eventually tax to the hilt. Yes, there are issues about land in the Highlands, especially wherever there is absenteeism. A prime example is to be found in



Morvern where 400 square miles are owned by less than 20 people – none of whom are resident.

Another is the 5,000 acre Eisg Brachaidh estate in Assynt whose owners – who live in Australia – have, allegedly, secured more than £420,000 of public money to build a 12-mile long, six-foot high fence around the estate to keep deer out and which will make it easier for those trapped inside to be shot.

As if the cost wasn't controversial enough, the fact there was no local consultation with affected communities makes it worse. Could this be the forerunner of an enclosure for wolves and lynx? Locals are asking if it is appropriate to build such a massive fence visible from Suilven in a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area for birds, a National Scenic Area, a Wildland Area and a Special Area of Conservation.

It would appear the intention is to fence in all the deer on Eisg Brachaidh, which is estimated to be 300 stags, hinds and calves, then exterminate them when there may not be a market for their carcasses because of Covid-19.

nate them when there may not be a market for their carcasses because of Covid-19.

David Davies, the owner of nearby Inverpolly and agricultural tenant of Eisg Brachaidh, says such an ambitious replant would normally be done through a standard Forestry Grant Scheme, but because there is an agricultural tenant - himself - organisations which do not have the processes in place to run such a project, have been handed the reins and are trying to rush the project through under cover of Covid.

They are doing so, he says, in defiance of the Scottish Land Commission's Good Practice Programme.

Instead, he says, 'there has been no consultation. The core problem is that the cash has been allocated first and then the detail has been left for others to work out'.

David Davies' argument is that the decision-making process has been flawed from the beginning. He cites the fact there was only one tender, when public procurement rules state

there must be five tenders for any project over £50,000 to proceed. Phil Jones, secretary of Assynt Community Council, claims many in the locality regard the scheme as an extraordinary waste of public money. Little wonder bats are fluttering in the trunk strewn attics of Great Glen House, SNH's prestigious Inverness headquarters, and a wobble is being felt in the Scottish Parliament building in Edinburgh.

'Who or what is a Scottish landowner?' someone jocularly asked from the audience during a conference about deer management in Inverness years ago. The reply, from a self-deprecating laird sitting on the panel, was equally amusing: 'Lives in a large house, wears knickerbockers; controls - or thinks he does - everything that moves on the adjacent hundred thousand acres. Is reported to be stinking rich, but mean. Drinks a lot - hereditary. Hates mountaineers and ramblers. Destroys the habitat with hydro electric schemes and by driving hideous roads across the glens to allow his gin-slinging,

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Tide tables for Oban during the week from Thursday November 5, 2020 are listed below with differences for major ports listed underneath. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

	Thur	01.58	1.4	07.43	3.7
		14.05	1.7	20.07	3.5
Fri		02.33	1.5	08.19	3.5
		14.42	1.9	20.46	3.2
Sat		03.19	1.7	09.03	3.3
		15.41	2.1	21.42	3.0
Sun		04.23	1.8	10.07	3.2
		17.30	2.1	23.19	2.8
Mon		05.42	1.9	11.56	3.1
		19.10	2.0	**.**	**
Tues		01.57	3.0	07.00	1.7
		14.00	3.4	20.26	1.7
Wed		02.51	3.2	18.10	1.5
		14.53	3.6	21.20	1.4

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

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

WEATHER

Thursday

Light cloud and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 9°C to 12°C.

Friday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 6°C to 11°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

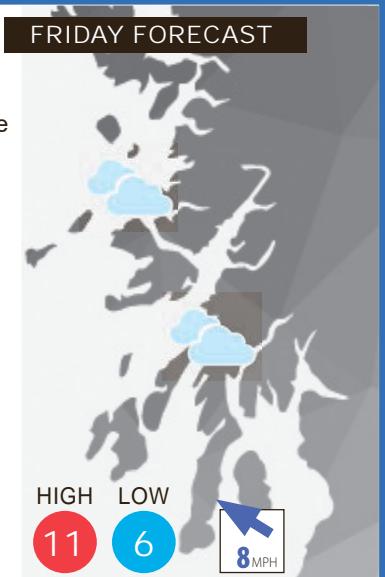
Saturday

Sunny intervals and light winds
Temperatures 6°C to 9°C.

Sunday

Light cloud and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 8°C to 10°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST



tural heritage



Left: estate stalkers counting deer on Kingairloch estate more than a century ago. Photograph supplied by Iain Thornber.

Above: looking across Cul Beag from Inverpolly and over part of the Eas Brachaidh estate. Photograph supplied by Iain Thornber. **Right:** hinds and calves are at risk when there are plans to plant trees on good hill ground. Photograph William Cameron.



gun-toting friends who have lost the use of their legs, access to the stalking corries and grouse moors in tracked vehicles and Range Rovers. Plants trees for profit and doesn't care if his employees' houses leak like sieves, so long as there is plenty water for the fish to run – most

certainly not for his whisky. Makes a fortune out of his crofting estate and bends Scottish Natural Heritage to his will by devious connections and subscriptions to the Labour Party. Belongs to committees that control the population.'

To be continued next week.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Tracking down the details...

We had a number of people responding to the photographs in recent papers.

Maurice Wilkins got in touch in connection with the photograph in the October 22 issue, saying: 'The top photo in 'Down Memory Lane' last Thursday is of the prizewinners at Oban Photographic Club, 2012-13 session, taken in the lounge of the Regent Hotel in March 2013.

'From left to right the members are: back row: George Chalmers, Alex Clark, Hugh Wilson, Eric Shaw and Ronnie MacKillop. Front row: Edwina Aitken and Veronica Speirs. Two other winners, Stephen Lawson and David Williams, were camera shy – actually they were not there that evening.'

And Jimmy Allardice got in touch about the other image that week. He told us: 'The photograph you carried in your paper 22/10/20 was taken in Oban railway station in the early 1980s. The gentleman in uniform was the station master, Mr Donnie McDonald. He was my station master in Crianlarich station just before going to Oban and, may I say, he was an absolute gentleman. Behind Donnie is Archie Carnie, to his right is driver Stevie Thompson, to his right is another driver Kenny MacIntyre and to his right is Jura Jock, another driver and lover of vintage cars. I was signalman

at Crianlarich for many years and had the privilege to work with these men. The occasion unfortunately escapes me, but it looks like a retirement.'

Sheila Macdonald also got in touch about this photograph and filled in some of the blanks. She said: 'I'm responding to your request for information about the photo taken of staff at Oban Railway Station in possibly 1981. I can't confirm the year, but it was obviously during the time my father was Station Master, which was from 1976 to 1988.'

'From left to right the names are Bill Broadfoot, James Christie, handing over the cheque is Una Reid, behind her with cap on is John McKechnie, more commonly known as 'Jura', Kenny MacIntyre, Stevie Thompson, Donnie Macdonald, my father, behind him Archie Carnie then John's wife Betty McKechnie. Sadly, the only one still with us is Una, so I called her to ask who the lady is receiving the cheque/ticket? Apparently she was Helen MacMorris, no longer with us either, but Una can't remember what the occasion was or what the 'award' was.'

'Una still lives in George Street, Oban, and is a font of knowledge of past Oban Railway Station personnel.'

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Proclaimers double the love

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



The Proclaimers are supporting a new Mary's Meals campaign to double the love.

Scottish rock duo Craig and Charlie Reid have been supporters of the Dalmally-founded charity for several years and have taken time out from writing their next album to help the charity with its latest fundraising.

The new Double The Love campaign was officially launched on Monday November 2 and will see the UK government match public donations to the charity until January 31 next year, up to £2million.

It means funding raised through Double The Love will allow Mary's Meals to reach more than 43,000 hungry children in Bong County, Liberia, with a life-changing meal at school. In Liberia, more than half of all children drop out of school before they finish their primary education and 64 per cent of girls are out of school. The charity believes the nu-

The Proclaimers double up to support Mary's Meals' new Double The Love campaign. Photograph: Chris Watt.

tritious food it funds which is prepared by communities attracts children back into the classroom and gives them the energy to learn.

One half of The Proclaimers Craig said: 'We think the work Mary's Meals does is fantastic. We've been following its incredible impact for years and we're delighted to be able to support its campaign to feed more hungry children in Liberia.'

Twin brother Charlie added: 'For the next few months, people's donations will be doubled

by the UK government, meaning supporters can double the impact of the pounds they're giving.

'This year has been tough for everyone in different ways but, in the same way that music brings people together, Double The Love offers a brilliant opportunity for us all to get behind Mary's Meals and show children in Liberia that we care.'

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, children have continued to eat Mary's Meals out of the classroom thanks to the safe community distribution of food to be prepared and eaten at home.

As schools across Liberia re-open, the charity is working

closely with local governments and communities to make sure children still get a nutritious daily meal.

Daniel Adams, executive director of Mary's Meals, said: 'With the charity's low-cost approach, a donation of just £15.90 will feed a child with Mary's Meals for a whole school year and with the Double The Love funding from the UK government, the same amount will feed two children over the next few months.'

In such a challenging year, this generous match funding from the UK government offers an incredible opportunity to transform the lives of many more hungry children in Liberia.'

COMPETITION TIME WIN £200 OF LOVE OBAN VOUCHERS



With Christmas around the corner and pockets tightened this year wouldn't it be great to give that special someone exactly what they want! Courtesy of our friends at BID4Oban, one lucky reader will win £200 worth of Love Oban Vouchers COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE.

All you have to do is collect 3 tokens over three weeks starting on 5th November, get them to us by 10am Thursday 26th November and you will be entered into a prize draw to win this fantastic prize.

What are you waiting for, give the gift of Oban and start collecting your tokens!



[View www.bid4oban.co.uk/love-oban/spending-vouchers/overview/ to find out where you can spend the vouchers.](http://www.bid4oban.co.uk/love-oban/spending-vouchers/overview/)

T&Cs: Winner must be able to collect vouchers from the BID4Oban Office, 43 Stevenson Street, Oban PA34 5NA at 10.30am on Monday 30th November. Digital Subscribers, please email a copy of your digital subscription email with a screenshot of each token to adverts@obantimes.co.uk. You will be interviewed by one of our trained journalists and photographed and this will appear in the Oban Times on Thursday 3rd December. We will protect your personal data. We only gather what we need for the requirements of this competition. Entry data will be deleted/disposed immediately upon the competition entry deadline and in a manner appropriate to GDPR regulations. Entrant's details will not be used for any other activity.



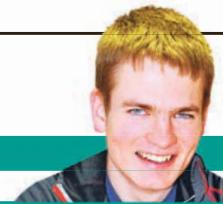
HOW TO ENTER

All 3 tokens must be sent in a single envelope to Oban Times Love Oban Competition Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate Oban, PA34 4HB. One token from each week is required, multiple entries are allowed, but must be submitted in separate envelopes. Photocopied tokens will not be accepted. Winners must agree to take part in publicity. Employees of Wyvex Media Ltd and their immediate family are not eligible to enter. The editor's decision is final.

Robert in lockdown!

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



In this mad world we are living through just now, with restrictions across the country tightening, a little bit of perspective can sometimes be hard to come by.

I realised this week, to my surprise, that it has been a year since our Tide Lines show in the Barrowland Ballroom. This brought some mixed emotions. The feeling of leaving the stage that night having just enjoyed probably the best gig in my life was one of absolute ecstasy. Had I known what lay ahead in the coming months, however, my thoughts would have been entirely different.

In this week of all weeks, however, we must all seek a bit of perspective and try to put what we are going through in context.

We are having to stay apart for a little while and wear masks, but we're not having to hide in Anderson Shelters, or send our children away to safety or our young men to the front line. Those who did go through such horrors in previous generations are never far from my mind at this time of year.

As a young lad growing up in Lochaber, I was lucky to be involved in the annual commemorations as the old commandoes who trained in the area throughout the Second World War travelled up to pay their respects to their comrades, whether they had fallen in the war or passed



I'm missing gigs like this in Glasgow's Barrowland Ballroom but this week of remembrance has brought some much-needed perspective.

away since. Myself and my accordion teacher, John Cameron from Lochside, would play for these veterans in the Alex Hotel in Fort William each year. They were a wonderful group of people who took great joy in seeing how Lochaber's young musicians, which included Lochaber High School pipe band and wind band, had improved each year and they were always extremely keen on hearing about Gaelic music and culture.

I used to look forward to playing them a medley of their old war songs like It's a Long Way to Tipperary or We'll Meet Again and see them all hold hands and be transported back to that most defining period in their lives and our history.

There was one gentleman in particular who used to write to me throughout the year. I recall my concern when one

year he wrote to say his health would not allow him to make the trip and my sadness when the following year the letter came not from the gentleman, but from his daughter.

I always pause in November to pay my respects to these great people and to be thankful that I knew some of them personally.

This year I do so with a more profound sense of gratitude than ever.

Many of our favourite liberties have been suspended at the moment. Among them, meeting friends and family, standing shoulder to shoulder, singing and dancing together in a room like the Barrowlands.

But, were it not for the brave men and women who answered the call of duty, we may never have known these liberties in the first place.

That is why I will remember them this week more than ever.

Big Quiz Night countdown starts

Teams from around Oban and further afield are gearing up for Tearfund's Big Quiz night on Saturday November 14.

Last year, around 140 people gathered in the town's Corran Halls to take part in the annual event, raising £1,200 for the charity.

As a result of Covid restrictions, this year's quiz will take place virtually, via Zoom, with money raised again helping change the lives of people living in poverty.

They include Alaya, her husband Bazwell and their three young children in Malawi.

Alaya and her family rely on growing maize to survive, but weather patterns that have guided their farming for generations have changed and it's putting everyone at risk of sickness and starvation. Frequent flooding brings diseases, such as cholera, and damages their home, washing away what little food they have. With Tearfund's partner AG Care, Alaya and Bazwell are learning new ways of



working the land under these tough conditions.

Mary Black, of Oban Baptist Church, one of the local organisers, said: 'We are very much looking forward to taking part in the Big Quiz Night, with hundreds of other hosts, bringing our friends and family together to stretch our brains and support the work of Tearfund.'

'While we've all taken part in quizzes recently over video calls, this promises to be a real challenge.'

Every pound raised from the Big Quiz Night will go straight to Tearfund via JustGiving.

You can take part on your own, in a family or as a team of up to eight people.

In the first instance, please register by emailing Mary at maryb7562@gmail.com with your name and your team name.

If you are part of a team, one person can register and they will then be sent the link nearer the time to pass out to other team members. However, when joining on the night, all team members must remember to use the same team name.

Mary continued: 'We are suggesting those taking part donate £5 per individual, with children under 10 taking part for free, and students can enter for a donation of any amount.'

While there will be no winning prize, we are asking entrants to nominate their local charity to receive a gift.

To donate your entry fee, visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/obantearfundbigquiz

The event starts at 7.30pm. Be sure to have your pen and paper handy.

WHAT'S ON AT OBAN PHOENIX CINEMA FRI 6 - THU 12 NOV



Drama/Thriller

Cordelia lives with her twin sister, Caroline in a basement flat in London. Once a promising actress, an event in Cordelia's past changed her outlook and emotional state. Her gradual move towards independence is placed into jeopardy, however, when her sister leaves with Matt, her boyfriend, for a weekend away. Seemingly able to cope at first, the weekend becomes overwhelming for Cordelia and she begins to unravel, regressing back to the state of confusion.

FRIDAY 6 NOV

The Runaways | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Pixie | 15
Cordelia | 15

16:15
16:30
19:00
19:30

SATURDAY 7 - SUNDAY 8 NOV

Two By Two: Overboard! | PG
The Runaways | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Pixie | 15
Cordelia | 15

14:00
14:15/16:15
17:00
19:00
19:30

MONDAY 9 - TUESDAY 10 NOV

The Runaways | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Pixie | 15
Cordelia | 15

16:15
16:30
19:00
19:30

WEDNESDAY 11 NOV

The Runaways | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Cordelia | 15
NT Live: War Horse | 12A

16:15
16:30
19:00
19:30

THURSDAY 12 NOV

The Runaways | 12A
The Secret Garden | PG
Harry Potter & The Chamber of Secrets | PG
Cordelia | 15

16:00
16:30
18:45
19:00

Harry Potter Marathon

See The Chamber of Secrets this Thursday



THREE DAYS AND A LIFE TROIS JOURS ET UNE VIE

Drama/Thriller
Rated 15 | Nov 20 & 23

The murderer always returns to the scene of the crime, even if fifteen years later. This is the case in a captivating rural thriller based on the best-selling novel by master crime writer Pierre Lemaitre. It is Christmas 1999 in a small village in the Ardennes, a seemingly safe provincial world, where everyone knows one another and follows the other's movements. It is a cotton-wool-wrapped microcosm which is one day rocked by the inexplicable disappearance of a four-year-old boy. And that's not all...



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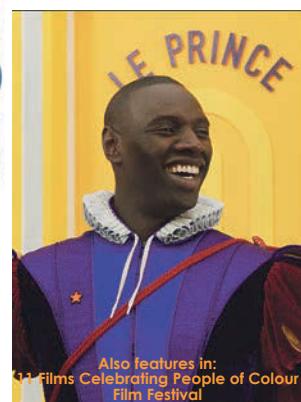
COMING IN DECEMBER

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PETIT PAYS

SMALL COUNTRY PETIT PAYS

THE SLEEPING CAR MURDERS COMPARTIMENT TUEURS



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THE LOST PRINCE LE PRINCE OUBLIÉ

Adventure, Comedy, Family
Rated 12A | Nov 27 & 30

Djibi is a single father whose life revolves around his beloved 8-year-old daughter Sofia. In her bedtime story every night, he takes her to Storyland, a fantasy film studio where their extraordinary adventures come to life with the heroine always Princess Sofia and her father the valiant prince. However, three years on pre-teen Sofia begins to grow out of her father's stories, creating her own, and Djibi faces his toughest challenge yet – maintaining his role.

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 once seated to have food and drink. Visit www.obanphoenix.com/covid-19 for full details.

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.bbfc.co.uk for more information about film certificates.



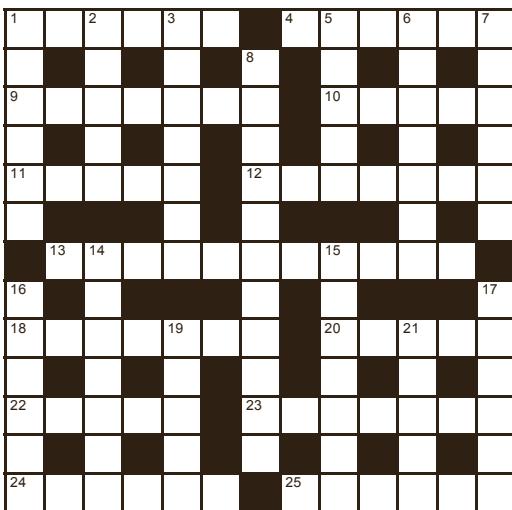
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MONDAY:	8am-12pm Breakfast show with Stephen
	5pm-7pm Drive time with Marcus
	12-3pm Lunch with Bob G
	4.45pm-5pm Talking Papers
	5pm-7pm Drive Times with Marcus
	7pm-8pm Highland Fling with Rosemary
	8pm-9pm John McLuckies Show
	9pm David Cullen Show
TUESDAY:	8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen
	10am-12.30pm Ken Hunter
	1pm-3pm Macky on FM
	3pm-5pm Mental Musings with Mer & Vicky
	5pm-7pm Drive Times with Bob G
	7pm-8pm Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers
	8pm-9pm Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron
WEDNESDAY:	8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen
	10am-1pm Comfort Zone with Lesley
	1pm-3pm Doug in the afternoon
	4pm-7pm Drive Times with Campbell
	7pm-9pm Country meets Rock N Roll with Len
	9pm Gordon's Grooves
THURSDAY:	8am-11am Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah
	11am-2pm Lunch Show with Steve
	3pm-7pm Drive Time with Stephen
	7pm-9pm Christine's Collections
	9pm-10pm Ann's Ceilidh
	10pm Margo Till Midnight
FRIDAY:	8am-10am Breakfast Show with Jay
	10am-1pm The One with Allan
	1pm-1.15pm Talking Papers
	4pm-6.45pm Teeney & Tiny Show with Harry
	6.45pm-7pm Sports View with the Dream Team
	7pm-8pm Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig
	8pm-10pm Evening Show with Peter Rannnie
	10pm Late Show with Jay.
SATURDAY:	8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen
	10am-1pm Saturday Morning Live with Linda
	3pm-6pm Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc
	6pm-7pm Sports View with the Dream Team
	7pm-8pm Sounds Scottish with Archie Darling
	8pm-10pm Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
	9am-11am Sunday Morning with Breeze
	11am-2pm Sunday Brunch with Stephen
	7pm-9pm New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch
	9pm Drum & Bass with Graham.

CROSSWORD



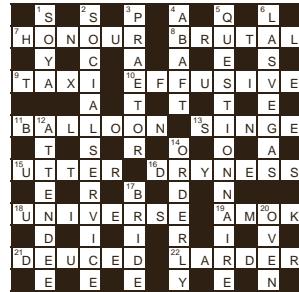
Across

- 7 Cream bun (6)
- 8 Take-away (6)
- 9 Dirty mark (4)
- 10 Excessive (8)
- 11 Sail hoister (7)
- 13 End piece (5)
- 15 Raft wood (5)
- 17 Three-pronged spear (7)
- 20 Young singer (8)
- 21 Small recess (4)
- 23 Damaged (6)
- 24 Slow down (6)

Down

- 1 Trick (4)
- 2 Pie cover (6)
- 3 Place to store weapons (7)
- 4 Eight in a group (5)
- 5 Fate (6)
- 6 Item to scrutinise (8)
- 12 Turn of expression (8)
- 14 Cheese (7)
- 16 Tacky (6)
- 18 Give (6)
- 19 Key material (5)
- 22 Yours and mine (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Remembering Jessie 'undisputed Queen'

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

At the first Mòd of An Comunn Gàidhealach in Oban in 1892, an evening concert took place in the railway station that had been specially adapted for the occasion.

For those of us who remember, even in its faded glory, the beautiful glass and iron structure of the original Victorian station, we can imagine the scene that evening, with the gas lights reflected in the glass roof against the night sky.

The building was full to capacity, partly due to the presence of Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria, who was married to the Marquis of Lorne.

The real attraction, however, was Jessie Niven MacLachlan, a daughter of the town who was embarking on what would be a glittering career as a professional singer of Scottish and Gaelic song.

Shortly after this event, on the recommendation of Princess Louise, Jessie



Jessie Niven MacLachlan sang for Queen Victoria, launching her professional career.



MacLachlan received an invitation to sing before Queen Victoria at Balmoral Castle, where she sang four Scottish and four Gaelic songs, the latter receiving particular praise from the Queen.

From this point on, Jessie MacLachlan's star was in the ascendant and during her career she sang in some of the most prestigious concert halls around the world, as well as throughout Britain and in Ireland.

Hers was the first voice in Gaelic to be recorded on the newly-invented gramophone

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Big Trails: epic adventures

A new guide highlighting 25 long distance trails across the UK is launched today.

Big Trails: Great Britain & Ireland is an inspirational guide featuring routes from the South Downs Way, the Pennine Way, delving into the heart of Scotland on the West Highland Way, along the Causeway Coast Way and into southern Ireland's Beara Way.

The book is designed to inspire big adventures. Rather than being carried along the route, this guide provides everything you need to plan and explore further, including a general overview of the trails, specific technical information, overview mapping, key information and stunning photography. As well as this, each route specifies approximate timings to allow for custom itineraries.

Edited by Kathy Rogers and Stephen Ross, it is published by Inspiring Adventure and is available in all good bookshops and online.

Jessie MacLachlan: Queen of Gaelic song'

when she sang in 1899 for the record company Berliner and in 1904 for Pathé in Paris.

It is through these recordings that we can today get a sense of her glorious soprano voice and why thousands flocked to hear her sing.

Born in Oban in 1866, with connections to Mull on her father's side, Jessie Niven MacLachlan was, in her day, the undisputed Queen of Gaelic song, a musical superstar as famous as Scottish contemporaries such as Harry Lauder and James Scott Skinner.

Her career took her around the world, accompanied by her pianist husband Robert Buchanan, but she died just short of her 50th birthday.

Over the years, her name has slipped from public memory and her story is little known, despite the fame she enjoyed in her lifetime.

The Celtic cross marking her final resting place and that of her husband has fallen into disrepair and is now lying on the ground in Cathcart Cemetery, Glasgow. However, plans are now being made to

restore and refurbish the memorial and, once circumstances are less restricted, to share and celebrate the life and work of this remarkable Argyll woman.

A Crowdfunder Page has been set up to raise the £3,000 needed for the repair work.

The page also provides information on the project. There has been a positive and generous response and it is hoped the target will soon be reached.

Information

Pricilla Scott, who initiated the project along with Professor Wilson Mcleod, University of Edinburgh, and Mary Ann Kennedy, said: 'It is clear that re-telling the story of Jessie Niven MacLachlan has jogged memories and more information on her fascinating life is coming to light.'

'She was very proud of her Oban and Mull roots, remarking on one occasion, 'Why should I not extol my native Argyllshire, the home of Deirdre and the Sons of Uisneach, of Duncan Bàn MacIntyre, of Livingston, the

poet, and of Evan MacColl, who has given us the very cream of Gaelic poetry'.

'Argyll should be very proud of Jessie Niven MacLachlan.

'Since the Crowdfunder was launched, some people with family connections to Jessie MacLachlan have been in touch, one from the other side of the world, and have shared photographs of the singer that have been treasured and passed down.'

'We would be most interested in hearing from anyone from the MacLachlan or Niven families with connections to Jessie Niven MacLachlan, particularly if they have stories or memorabilia that have been preserved within their family.'

If anyone would like to donate to the Crowdfunder the details are in the link below and all donations will be most gratefully received.

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/celebrate-jessie-maclachlan-queen-of-gaelic-song?fbclid=IwAR0pdhmYROxwb-WCdXtsLDDVOjM3KxWK-mHhJ3vdD6eBM8qIevJ6vY-Hg8mFiM

M' ALBA MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 5 an t-Samhain

THURSDAY 5 November

- | | | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|------------------------|-------|---|
| 17.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 20.00 | Machair (rpt) | 20:00 | An Là – News |
| 19:00 | Clann a' Chogaidh Mhoir (Small Hands in A Big War) (rpt) | 20.25 | Fraochy Bay (rpt) | 20.30 | NEW - Vets: Gach Creutair Beo |
| 19.25 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) | 20.30 | Fuine (rpt) | 21.00 | Linn de Dhealbhan (Johnston Collection) (rpt) |
| 19.55 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) | 21.00 | ALT (rpt) | 22.00 | Fois ann am Fios – Trusadh (rpt) |
| 20.00 | An Là – News | 22.00 | NEW The Optimists | 23.00 | Ceolmor@Piping Live (rpt) |
| 20.30 | Air an Smuid (rpt) | 22.45 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) | 23.30 | Alleluia! Spiritual Music & verse (rpt) |
| 21.00 | Talamh gu Truinnsear (rpt) | 22.50 | Na Worlds 2019 (rpt) | | |
| 22.00 | FUNC (rpt) | 00.30 | Breabach@Blas (rpt) | | |
| 22.30 | Side nan Seachd Sian/ Disaster Diaries (rpt) | | | | |
| 23.20 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) | | | | |
| 23.30 | Na Trads: An Tobar (rpt) | | | | |

DIHAOINE 6 an t-Samhain

FRIDAY 6 November

- | | | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 17.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 16.00 | NEW : SWPL – Hibernian v Rangers | 19.00 | Turas a' Bhradain (rpt) |
| 18.35 | Machair (rpt) | 18.05 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) | 19.30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) |
| 19.00 | An Là – News | 18.15 | An Là – News | 19.55 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) |
| 19.25 | Fraochy Bay (rpt) | 18.30 | Seachd La – News Review | 20.00 | An Là – News |
| 19.30 | Cearcall (rpt) | 19.30 | Alleluia! (rpt) | 20.30 | NEW Fuine |
| 20.00 | Fomh mo Bheatha (rpt) | 20.00 | Air an Smuid (Steaming) (rpt) | 21.00 | Caileagan a' Chogaidh Mhoir (rpt) |
| 20.30 | Thar na Loidhne/Crossing the Line (rpt) | 20.30 | Vets: Gach Creutair beo (rpt) | 22.00 | NEW Na Trads: An Tobar |
| 21.00 | Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt) | 21.00 | Mathair a' Chinne Suidhe (rpt) | 22.30 | Talamh gu Truinnsear (rpt) |
| 22.00 | Scottish Premiership – St Mirren v Dundee United | 22.15 | ALT (rpt) | 23.30 | Julie Fowlis – Ceol Aig Baile (rpt) |
| 23.45 | Dhan Uisge (Lochindorb) | 23.15 | The Optimists (rpt) | | |
| 23.50 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) | | | | |

DISATHAIRNE 7 an t-Samhain

SATURDAY 7 November

- | | | | | | |
|-------|---|-------|---|-------|--|
| 16.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 17.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 19:00 | Turas a' Bhradain/The Salmon's Journey (rpt) |
| 17:45 | An Sgoth (rpt) | 19:30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) | 19.30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) |
| 18.00 | Leann an Lus (rpt) | 20:00 | An Là – News | 19.55 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) |
| 19.25 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) | 20.30 | Thar na Loidhne (rpt) | 20.00 | An Là – News |
| 19.30 | Cearcall (rpt) | 21.00 | Fois ann am Fios – Trusadh (rpt) | 20.30 | NEW Eorpá |
| | | 22.00 | Julie Fowlis – Ceol Aig Baile (rpt) | 21.00 | Truinnsearan ar Sinsrean (rpt) |
| | | 22.30 | FUNC (rpt) | 22.00 | FUNC (rpt) |
| | | 23.30 | FUNC (rpt) | 22.30 | QE2 (rpt) |
| | | | | 23.15 | Dhan Uisge (Rubislaw Quarry) (rpt) |
| | | | | 23.20 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) |
| | | | | 23.30 | Na Trads: An Tobar (rpt) |

DILUAIN 9 an t-Samhain

MONDAY 9 November

- | | | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|--|-------|------------------------------------|
| 17.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 19:00 | Turas a' Bhradain/The Salmon's Journey (rpt) | 19.30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) |
| 19:00 | Clann a' Chogaidh Mhoir (Small Hands in A Big War) (rpt) | 19:30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) | 19.55 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) |
| 19:30 | Fraochy Bay (rpt) | 20:00 | An Là – News | 20.00 | An Là – News |
| 20.00 | Cearcall (rpt) | 20.30 | Thar na Loidhne (rpt) | 20.30 | NEW Eorpá |
| 20.30 | Fomh mo Bheatha (rpt) | 21.00 | Fois ann am Fios – Trusadh (rpt) | 21.00 | Truinnsearan ar Sinsrean (rpt) |
| 21.00 | Thar na Loidhne/Crossing the Line (rpt) | 22.00 | Julie Fowlis – Ceol Aig Baile (rpt) | 22.00 | FUNC (rpt) |
| 22.00 | Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach (rpt) | 22.30 | Gaoil is Call (rpt) | 22.30 | QE2 (rpt) |
| 23.45 | Dhan Uisge (Lochindorb) | 23.00 | FUNC (rpt) | 23.15 | Dhan Uisge (Rubislaw Quarry) (rpt) |
| 23.50 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) | 23.30 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) | 23.20 | Na Trads: An Tobar (rpt) |

DIMÀIRT 10 an t-Samhain

TUESDAY 10 November

- | | | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|
| 17.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 17.00 | Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming | 19:00 | Turas a' Bhradain/The Salmon's Journey (rpt) |
| 19:05 | Clann a' Chogaidh Mhoir (Small Hands in A Big War) (rpt) | 19:30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) | 19.30 | Speaking Our Language (rpt) |
| 19:45 | An Sgoth (rpt) | 20:00 | An Là – News | 19.55 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) |
| 19.50 | Leann an Lus (rpt) | 20.30 | Thar na Loidhne (rpt) | 20.00 | An Là – News |
| 19.55 | Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt) | 21.00 | Fois ann am Fios – Trusadh (rpt) | 20.30 | NEW Eorpá |
| 19.55 | Cearcall (rpt) | 22.00 | Julie Fowlis – Ceol Aig Baile (rpt) | 21.00 | Truinnsearan ar Sinsrean (rpt) |
| | | 22.30 | FUNC (rpt) | 22.00 | FUNC (rpt) |
| | | 23.30 | FUNC (rpt) | 22.30 | QE2 (rpt) |
| | | | | 23.15 | Dhan Uisge (Rubislaw Quarry) (rpt) |
| | | | | 23.20 | Binneas na Trads (rpt) |
| | | | | 23.30 | Na Trads: An Tobar (rpt) |



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What Shop Local means

Regular readers of these pages will know that Kay McDonald's passion for her home town is unequivocal, shared with us weekly in this very paper in her Around Oban column.

Who better in that case to take us on an pre-advent journey highlighting the many shopping, festive and community spirited benefits of our wonderful town.

This week Kay has been exploring the shopping local opportunities and sharing with us her thoughts as she ticks off the items on a list of gifts for around 30 friends and relatives covering an age range from 9-91.

'I absolutely love Christmas and shopping for gifts is a major part of that,' she told us.

'I've already started and am thoroughly enjoying walking around the shops in Oban and seeing what unique and traditional items they have on offer.'

'It's really important to me to shop local at Christmas and there are so many benefits to it.'

'You can feel things, see the true colours and sizes, smell things and find things you didn't expect as you are looking around.'

'We also have really good, helpful shopkeepers who are great for advice and help which is so much better than the soul-less internet or big city shops.'

As well as shopping for Christmas Kay is in the process of moving home and is finding that most of her furnishing requirements can be met by staying local too.

'There are so many great shops right on our own doorstep, I really don't see the need to go further afield,' she added.

As well as the small independent shops in Oban there are also many national stores to chose from for those who require the latest 'must have' technologies or toys.

Kay says: 'There is so much choice in Oban. Town centre offers a wide range of novel shops offering original, fresh and unique products while round on the industrial estate you have a range of chain stores selling all the latest gadgets and homewares. We're spoiled for choice really.'

'Another great benefit to staying local is all the many cafe's and restaurants we have to enjoy when we need a mid-shop pick-me-up.'

Among her many roles within the community Kay is a Town Ambassador



along with Joe Reich and has just finished her eighth season.

'It has been a really strange one but we have still enjoyed seeing visitors from near and far enjoying what the town has to offer as the lockdown eased,' she said.

'Talking seems to be what I do best, ask anyone. I get to meet and greet a huge variety of people including locals and those in businesses in the town and one of my main jobs is to encourage visitors and locals to take advantage of the businesses we have here, sometimes even locals don't know what that is.'

Kay has been quite right to start her Christmas shopping now and is encouraging others to do the same.

'With Covid restrictions in place we all need to be a wee bit more organised this year and avoid crowding into shops in December,' she added.



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Christmas Cake Recipe

This is a recipe for a lovely Christmas cake which has been tweaked over the years from previous recipes I have used, and it never fails to please. The most important thing when making a Christmas cake is to take your time and plan. You are not going to make it and eat it the same day so relax and chill and enjoy the fun. Why not involve kids or grand children? Ideally you should make your cake up to eight weeks before Christmas for maximum flavour and texture, but I have made cakes three weeks before and they have tasted great.



Ingredients

Fruit for the cake

450g currants

175g sultanas

175g raisins

50g chopped glacé cherries (Slightly more is nicer)

50g mixed chopped candied peel (Slightly more is nicer)

zest of 1 lemon and 1 orange

100ml brandy – or more for soaking the fruit. Would recommend 200-300ml

The fruit for this cake will require pre-soaking. I recommend that this is done for at least 24 hours however for the best results let it soak for a few days! Place all the fruit and in a bowl and mix with the brandy, cover with clingfilm or foil and leave everything to soak. Give it a wee shake every now and again.

Cake Mixture

225g plain flour

½ teaspoon salt

½ level teaspoon nutmeg, freshly grated is best

1 teaspoon ground mixed spice

225g soft brown sugar

4 large eggs

1 dessertspoon black treacle

225g butter soft and at room temperature

Grated rind of a lemon and orange

Method:

Place the sugar, butter, mixed spice, nutmeg, and salt in a large bowl. Using a mixer cream together until the mixture is light and fluffy. In another bowl whisk the eggs. Add the beaten eggs to the mixture a couple of tablespoons at a time. Be careful that the mixture does not curdle at this stage. If it does, add a couple of tablespoons of flour.

Prior to adding the flour to the mixture, ensure you sift it. Gradually fold the flour into the mixture a few tablespoons at a time until all the flour is combined. Do not use a mixer! Lastly add the treacle. A good tip is to warm slightly in the oven for a few minutes to warm up. Makes it easier to fold into the mixture.

You are now ready to add the pre-soaked fruit to the cake mixture. Add a few tablespoons at a time using a nice big spoon or spatula. Take your time to ensure all the fruit is covered in the cake mixture. Try not to over mix.

The cake needs to cook in a 20cm round or 18cm square baking tin preferably with a removable base. Grease the tin thoroughly. Line the base with a cut out of baking paper to fit the tin. I recommend double lining. Cut out baking paper to line the insides of the tin. Again, I recommend double lining.

Place the mixture in the tin ensuring it is as level as possible. Cut out another oversize circle of baking paper and place over the top of the tin and tie with string to ensure it stays in place. Cut out a hole in the centre about 2cm to allow some of the moisture to escape when cooking. As the cake will be in the oven for a considerable time, the outside edges of the tin will need protecting to avoid uneven cooking or burning of the outside of the cake. I recommend using brown parcel paper however good quality baking paper will do the same job. I use Bacofoil non-stick baking paper. Secure this with string.

The cake should now be placed on a baking sheet then placed in a pre-heated oven on the lowest shelf at 130-140 degrees. Leave in the oven and do not touch or look at it for 3 ½ hours. It is likely that the cake will require up to an hour longer cooking time dependant on your oven. To test the cake is cooked through, pierce the cake through the cut in the centre with a knife or skewer. Leave for 20 seconds. If it comes out clean and free from any mixture it is cooked! If not pop it back in and repeat the test.

When you are happy the cake is cooked remove from the oven and leave in the baking tin. For best results leave the cake to cool overnight. Remove the cake from the cake tin but do not be tempted to remove the baking paper on the base or sides of the cake. This will protect the cake from drying out.

The cake will need fed with brandy weekly until you are ready to decorate if. To do this prick the cake with a skewer and pour a couple of capfuls of brandy over the top and allow to soak in. Wrap the cake in foil and store in a cool, dark dry place.

In a few weeks we will be publishing instructions for icing the cake.

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Around the markets

United Auctions, Tiree, Friday

October 30: sold 741 suckled calves and store cattle and 52 cast cows. Bullocks sold to £1300, for a 683kg, CharX from M/s MacLean, Heylipol Farm to average £826.50 (+£126.50) while Heifers sold to £1320 for a 677kg, CharX, also from Heylipol Farm to average £745.10 (+£134.91). Bullocks sold to 322p/kg, for two, 236kg Lim crosses from Mr I Brown, 6 Barrapol to average 237.94p/kg (+31.49p) and Heifers sold to 340p/kg for two, 324kg Lim crosses from Mr I MacKinnon, Parkhouse to average 238.73p/kg (+41.75p).

A good offering of quality bred cattle in all ages was presented to a strong force of mainland buyers resulting in all sellers returning home from the sale in a jubilant mood. Special thanks to all concerned in adapting the market to enable sellers to see their stock being sold whilst everyone kept to social distancing measures in place.

Leading Prices and Lots
Bullocks - AAx - £1200, 6
Barrapol; £1170, £1150, £1110,

1070(8), Croish; £1030, Hillcrest; £1010(6), Croish; £1000(2), Whitehouse; £990, Hillcrest; £960(2), Croish; £920(3), Ruaig. BSHx - £795(2), Heylipol Farm; £750, Hillcrest. BRBx - £1015(2), Ruaig; £980, £850(2), Ruaig. BAx - £960(2), £875, Lochphuill. CHARx - £1300, £1220, £1200, Heylipol Farm; £1190(2), 4 Kilkenneth; £1185(3), Heylipol Farm; £1170, Salum; £1140(3), Heylipol Farm; £1120(4), Braeside; £1080(2), £1050, Salum; £1050, Heylipol Farm; £1050, Braeside; £1050, Salum; £1045, Braeside; £1020, Salum; £995(2), Braeside; £990(4), £980(3), Heylipol Farm; £970 & £960, Salum; £940, Braeside; £940, Ruaig; £940(5), Heylipol Farm; £930, Braeside; £910(4), Salum; £900(2), Heylipol Farm; £900, Garaphail. LIMx - £1270, Heylipol Farm; £1110, Parkhouse; £1090, Braeside; £1080, Heylipol Farm; £1070, Parkhouse; £1060; Heylipol Farm; £1060, 7 Balinoe; £1040(2), Ruaig; £1030, Hillcrest; £1020, Skipinnis; £1010, Ruaig; £990, Parkhouse; £975, Hillcrest; £970, Parkhouse; £955(2), £950(5), £940(4), Heylipol Farm; £940,

Parkhouse; £925, Mannal; £920(3), Hillcrest; £910, Mannal; £905(5), 3 Kenovay; £900, 6 Balevullin; £900(3), Ruaig; £900(2), Hillcrest; £900(8), Parkhouse. SALx - £1070(3), Drumaglea; £1035, 10 Balevullin; £1020, 5 Balevullin; £1010, 6 Crossapol; £1000(2), Drumaglea; £1000, 3 Kenovay; £980, 6 Crossapol; £975(6), Druimasaith; £940, Drumaglea; £940(2), 2 Kilkenneth. SIMx - £1100(2), £1045, Middleton Farm; £1010, Ardeas; £960, Braeside; £910(3), Ardeas; £905, 3 Kenovay. Heifers - AAx - £1140, Hillcrest; £1030, Croish; £1020, Whitehouse; £1000, Hillcrest; £1000, Whitehouse; £990(2), Croish; £960, Scarinish Farm; £940(2), Whitehouse; £930(2), £900, Croish. BRBx - £1130, Heylipol Farm. BAx - £895(3), Lochphuill. CHARx - £1320, £1070(3), Heylipol Farm; £1065(2), Braeside; £1060(2), Drumaglea; £1050, Heylipol Farm; £990(2), 4 Kilkenneth; £975, Braeside; £965, £960(2), Heylipol Farm; £955(5), 4 Kilkenneth; £955(2), Braeside; £955(3), Salum; £945, Ruaig; £940, £930(3), Heylipol Farm. LIMx -

£1140, Heylipol Farm; £1100(2), Parkhouse; £1020, Heylipol Farm; £960, Parkhouse; £945, Ruaig; £900, 6 Balevullin; £900, Mannal; £900, Hillcrest. SALx - £1050, Parkhouse, £1010(5), Druimasaith; £980, 5 Balevullin; £900, Druimasaith. SIMx - £890, Ardeas. Leading Prices per Kilo Bullocks - AAx - 278p(4), 283p(2), 6 Barrapol; 309p(2), Hillcrest; 309p(5), Ruaig; 302p, Mannal; 300p, 3 Middleton; 300p(2), 6 Balevullin; 299p(4), 296p, Lochside; 294p, Mannal; 290p, Parkhouse; 289p(3), Hillcrest; 288p, 6 Barrapol; 288p(2), Garaphail; 288p(2), Sandaig; 286p(3), Hillcrest; 285p(2), 6 Balevullin; 283p, Mannal; 283p(2), 2 Heylipol; 283p(4), Sandaig; 280p(3), 6 Barrapol; 279p(2), 7 Balinoe; 278p(2), 2 Heylipol; 277p(2), Garaphail; 277p, Whitehouse. SALx - 264p(3), 6 Crossapol; 257p(3), 251p, Mainroad; 250p(2), 5 Balevullin. SIMx - 286p(2), 267p, Lochphuill; 251p, 3A Caolis, 250p(2), 10 Crossapol. HFRS - AAx - 275p(2), Whitehouse; 256p(5), Scarinish Farm; 255p(2), Whitehouse. BRBx - 244p, Ruaig. BAx - 225p(3), Lochphuill. CHARx - 288p(3), Clachan, LIMx - 136p, Clachan; 127p, Heylipol Farm; 123p, 4 Heanish; 123p, Heylipol Farm; 120p, Hillcrest; 120p, 6 Crossapol. SALx - 144p, Parkhouse. SIMx - 131p, Ruaig.

INCALF COWS - £800, Clachan. BULLS - SAL - £1100, 6 Crossapol.

294p(2), Garaphail; 288p(2), Lochside; 287p, Mannal; 283p(2), 3 Middleton; 281p(6), 2 Heylipol; 280p, 3 Middleton; 280p(5), Lochside. SALx - 284p(4), 8 Balevullin; 279p(6), 10 Balevullin; 274p(4), 268p(2), Mainroad. SIMx - 295p, Lochphuill; 273p, 10 Crossapol; 257p, Lochphuill.

CAST COWS PER HEAD - AAx - £960, Hillcrest. BRBx - £980, Braeside; £940, Ruaig. HERx - £850, Clachan. LIMx - £1095, Braeside; £990, £980, Heylipol Farm; £970, Hillcrest; £930, Clachan; £920, 6 Crossapol. SALx - £850, Parkhouse. SIMx - £960, Druimasaith. CONT - £930, Mainroad.

CAST COWS PER KILO - AAx - 125p, Scarinish Farm, 122p, Clachan. BRBx - 140p, Ruaig; 127p, Braeside. HERx - 131p, Clachan, LIMx - 136p, Clachan; 127p, Heylipol Farm; 123p, 4 Heanish; 123p, Heylipol Farm; 120p, Hillcrest; 120p, 6 Crossapol. SALx - 144p, Parkhouse. SIMx - 131p, Ruaig.

INCALF COWS - £800, Clachan.

BULLS - SAL - £1100, 6 Crossapol.

SCOTTISH FIELD

— November issue —



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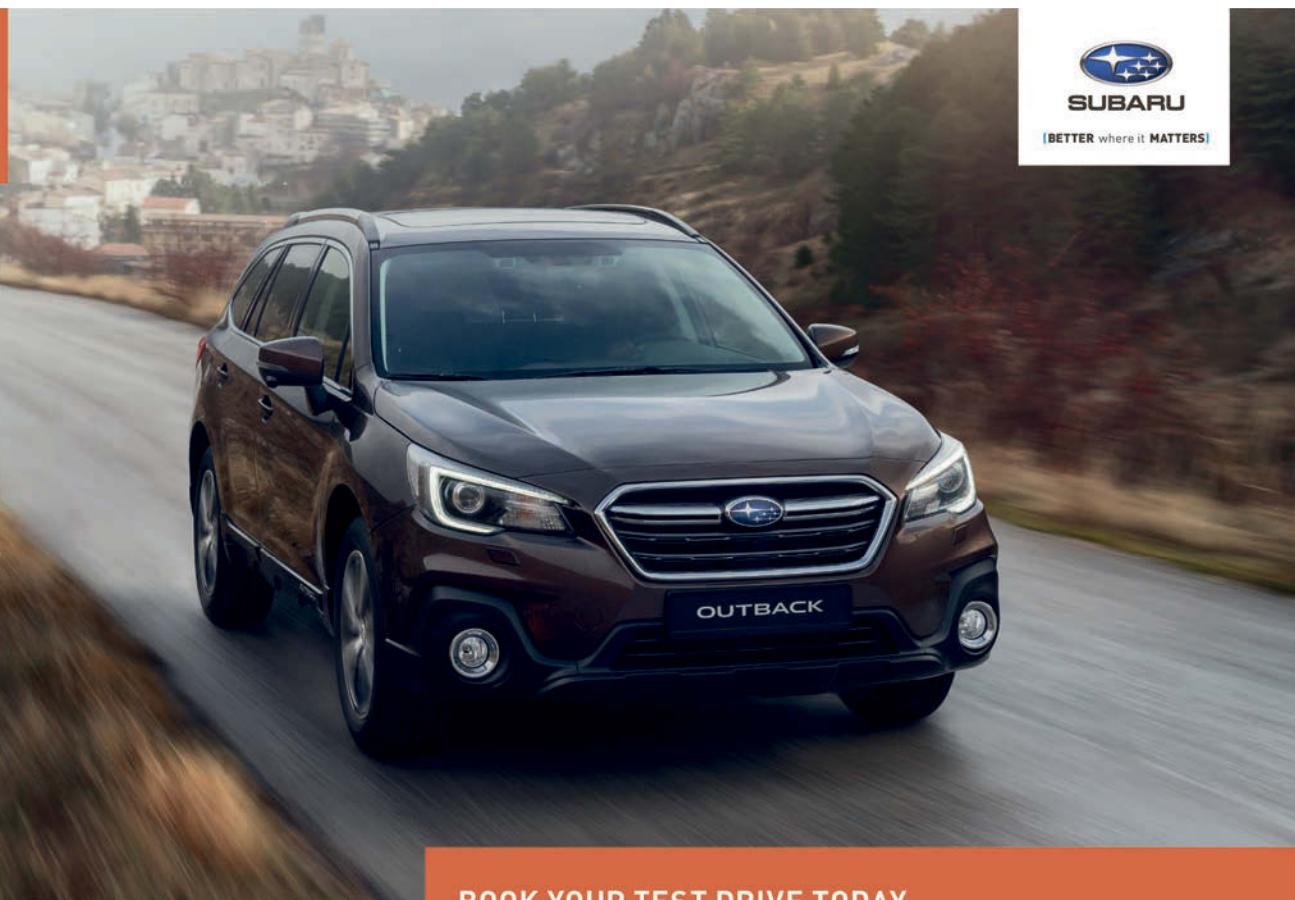
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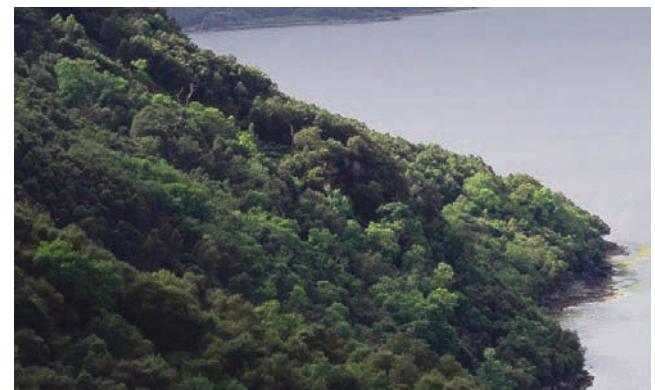
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West Coast PROPERTY GUIDE



NatureScot (formerly SNH) is considering the disposal of c. 600ha of land at Glencripesdale nature reserve (grid ref. NM 724616).

NatureScot invites expressions of interest (to be received by 5th April 2021) from community groups which may wish to acquire or lease the land.



Please contact: Lizzie Richards, South Highland Rural Surveyor
via email; lizzie.richards@nature.scot or phone; 01463 701620

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
20/03939/FUL	Land 55M SE Of Library and Visitor Centre, Leven Road, Kinlochleven	Formation of caravan park and erection of toilet/shower block and office building
20/04168/FUL	Land 145M SW Of the Ariundle Centre, Ariundle, Strontian	Removal of caravan and erection of house
20/02940/PIP	Cuildorrag Cottage Onich, Fort William	Erection of house - Renewal of 17/01525/PIP
20/04067/FUL	Allanbreck Lettermore, Ballachulish	Siting of holiday letting unit (amended design to planning permission 19/04538/FUL)
20/04102/FUL	Plot 3, Former Caravan Site Faichem, Invergarry	Proposed Erection of Dwelling House and Garage
20/04014/FUL	Land 60M NW Of Unit 5 Glen Nevis Business Park Fort William	Erection of office building and formation of parking area
20/04146/FUL	Plot 2 North East Of Ardfriseal, Invergarry	Erection of 2 houses

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

Atlantis COMMUNITY LEISURE

AGM
Monday 30th November 2020
7pm – 8pm
Zoom meeting
Contact nick.wesley@atlantisleisure.co.uk to attend
It's our 27th AGM and we would love you to join in celebrating our achievements and plans for the future.

NOTICE
WESTBANK DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED
(Company Number SC612514)

Notice is hereby given that on 28 October 2020 a Petition was presented to the Sheriff at Oban Sheriff Court by Westbank Developments Limited craving the Court inter alia that Westbank Developments Ltd having its registered office at c/o Abacus Services, Abacus Building, 8 High Street, Oban, United Kingdom, PA34 4BG be wound up by the Court and in which Petition the Sheriff by Interlocutor dated 29 October 2020 ordained any persons, if they intend to show cause why the prayer of the Petition should not be granted, to lodge Answers with the Sheriff Clerk at Oban Sheriff Court within eight days after intimation, service or advertisement, all of which notice is hereby given.

Gillian Buchanan, Thorntons Law LLP,
Whitehall House, 33 Yeaman Shore,
DUNDEE DD1 4BJ
Agent for Petitioner

MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
MOORING
SEIL SOUND, ARGYLL AND BUTE

Notice is hereby given that Mr. G. MacAlister has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of depositing a 2 point mooring at:

Cost	< £2500	
Location	Latitude	Longitude
Marker 8	56° 18.198' N	05° 35.431' W
Marker 9	56° 18.203' N	05° 35.424' W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at <https://bit.ly/2H3c7vo>.

Objections relating to safety of navigation or environmental issues in respect of the application should be made in writing to:

Licensing Operations Team, Marine Scotland, Marine Laboratory, 375 Victoria Road, Aberdeen, AB11 9DB within 28 days of the date of this notice or by email to: MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot, quoting reference: 00008922 and Mr. G. MacAlister.

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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
20/01569/PP	Erection of telecommunications equipment compound with 22.5 metre high lattice tower and associated works	Land At Colaig Ridge, South West Of Upper Achachenna Farm, Kilchrenan, Taynuilt, Argyll And Bute
20/01796/PP	Variation of condition 5 of planning permission reference 15/02119/PP (Erection of an anemometer mast (80 metres high) for a temporary period of 5 years) amendment to time period to allow for additional wind monitoring	Land South East Of Blarhour Farmhouse, East Lochaweside, Dalmally, Argyll And Bute
20/01414/PP	Erection of a dwellinghouse	Plot 6, 2 Freddie's Field, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA75 6AL
20/01734/PP	Erection of facilities building to include; washrooms, toilets, laundry and kitchenette and installation of treatment plant	Land At Ulva Ferry, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
20/01844/LIB	Display of 2 fascia signs	Perle Oban Hotel, Station Road, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5RT
20/01499/PP	Construction of rock armour breakwater and steel monopile overnight berthing facility, including walkway, gangway access and associated works	Fionnphort Ferry Slip, Fionnphort, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
20/01350/PP	Formation of accesses and site infrastructure relative to planning permission in principle ref: 19/00908/PPP	Land East Of Plot 7 Imeraval, Port Ellen, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
20/01804/PP	Change of use of outbuilding to form facility for the rectification and bottling of gin on a small scale	Taydock, Bridgend, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute, PA44 7PX
20/01765/PP	Widening and improvement works to road junction	Land Adjacent To Dun Ardnish Nerabus, (Junction Off A847) , Port Charlotte, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute
20/01955/PPP	Site for the erection of 3 dwellinghouses	Land North West Of Cinnamara, Port Ellen, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute

Written comments can be submitted online <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/find-and-comment-planning-applications> or to Argyll and Bute Council, Development Management, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT within 21 days of this advert. Please quote the reference number in any correspondence. Any letter of representation the Council receives is considered a public document and will be published on our website. Anonymous or marked confidential correspondence will not be considered. A weekly list of all applications can be viewed on the Council's website. Customers are requested to use electronic communication where possible during the coronavirus pandemic as our ability to process postal mail is restricted.

To find out more about living and working in Argyll & Bute visit us at:
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CROFTING COMMISSION
COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATION

R Fletcher, 1 Lorgbaw, 0.200 ha, site for a dwelling house (105226)

Comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 04/12/2020 at info@crofting.gov.scot / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

www.highland.gov.uk



Caol & Lochyside Flood Protection Scheme

The design for the construction of the flood scheme is now complete and work is scheduled to start in early 2021 for up to 2 years. The Highland Council is seeking community input into the choice of colour and pattern of the riverside flood wall and the landscaping plans for the whole scheme.

The plans are available to view at Vickers Flooring windows at Caol Shopping Centre and feedback forms can be picked up from and returned to the Community Cupboard. Plans are also on The Highland Council website – search for Caol and Lochyside and links to the information, including a questionnaire can be found on the Caol Community Council Facebook page. Return your comments by 30 November 2020. Tel: 01408 635317 Email: caol@lochyside.fps@highland.gov.uk

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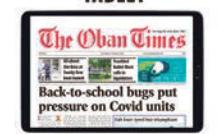
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MACINTYRE - COLLINS
- Andy and Susan were married on November 6, 1970 at St. Andrew's Church, Fort William by Canon George Henderson.

DEATHS

BARTLETT - Suddenly on October 22, 2020, aged 75 years, Sandra Joyce née Munro, beloved wife of the late Brian Bartlett, much loved mum of Kim, Linda and Tracey, loving Nana, great-nana, sister, aunt and friend. Forever in our hearts.

BELL - Peacefully at home in Tobermory on October 27, 2020, Flora (Lola), aged 104 years. Wife of the late Dodo Bell, mother of Tina, and much loved granny and great-granny. Funeral was held in Tobermory Top Cemetery on Wednesday, November 4, 2020.

CLARK - Peacefully at home on Wednesday, October 28, 2020, Neil MacKinnon Clark of Perth Place, Fort William, aged 72 years. Dearly beloved

husband of Eleanor, father to Fiona and Neil, and Grandad to Neillie, Erin, Aaron and Logan. Funeral in private due to Covid restrictions on Friday, November 6. Enquiries to Manson & MacBeath Funeral Directors, Inverlochy. Tel: 01397 701110.

MACLEOD - Suddenly and peacefully at home on Sunday, November 1, 2020, Christina Campbell née Morrison, beloved wife of Bannantyne, mother of Laura and Martin, grandmother of Alex and Lewis. A private ceremony will take place on Friday, November 6, due to current restrictions.

McCALLUM - On October 13, 2020, Elizabeth (Bette), beloved wife of the late Alasdair, passed away peacefully after a short illness, in Hartwell Lodge Care Home, Fareham, Hants. Sadly missed by family and friends in this country and Spain where she previously lived.

MORISON - Crawford Smart, retired Postmaster, Isle of Iona, died peacefully on October 31, 2020 in Craignure

Hospital, aged 87. Much loved father of Derek, Hilary, Morag, Malcolm and Neil, and husband of Moira with whom he is finally reunited. A memorial service will be held on Iona at a future date.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HYDE - The family of the late John Hyde wish to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expressions of sympathy, cards and flowers, following their recent sad bereavement. Also those who lined the roadside and attended the crematorium to pay their last respects. To the Rev. G. Cringles, for his poignant service for a fitting send-off. Sincere thanks to Ian of D and A Munn for the very personal handling of the funeral arrangements and thanks to the Thistle and the Rose for beautiful floral arrangements. Thanks also for all the special care at Lorn Medical Centre and Lorn and Islands Hospital.

MOORE - Bryan, passed away peacefully at home, Glenlyon House on October 19, 2020.

He leaves behind his loving wife Ann and his three sons, Glenn, Johnathan and Lee. For many years he attended the Macmillan Day Bed Unit, receiving their expert treatment from the most dedicated and caring team. Dalmally Surgery always gave us help and encouragement, Dr Fiona MacPhee's guidance and honesty, will forever always be appreciated, our wonderful district nurses, each and every one, always going the extra mile for both their patient and the family. On Bryan's passing we would like to thank D & A Munn for trouble free arrangements, Alyson Stewart Humanist captured perfectly his life as we knew it, piper Ian MacIntyre who's wonderful playing lifted all our spirits. All the people who rang, sent cards, writing and saying the loveliest things, Bryan would have been amazed and so touched. Friends and neighbours who lined the route to pay their respects on his final journey, truly a community who all put their arms around us. Bryan's long life was a gift given to us, a treasure full of

happy memories, love and laughter which we will hold close to our hearts forever and always.

STEWART - The family of Christine Stewart wish to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends and neighbours for all the beautiful cards, flowers and messages of sympathy. A special thanks to Bill Skene for his heartfelt service, and McDonald Brothers for the lovely flowers. Sincere thanks to Manson & MacBeath for their compassion and professionalism in all aspects of the funeral arrangements. Thank you to Brian Heriot for piping in Caol and at the graveside. Also, a special thanks to all who took the time to pay their respects at the roadside. Thanks to Jamie and Brian at The Awkward Eater for catering. Finally, a massive thanks to Etive House who cared for Christine in her latter years.

MEMORIAMS

CAMERON - In loving memory of a beloved wife and mother, Louie who passed away on November 10, 2000 at

Kilmalieu. Twenty years have passed since you went away. We think of you every single day. Words are not needed as memories are clear. You are still remembered as loving and dear.

- Your loving family, Allan, Catherine, Jamie and Claire, Amber, Iona, Katie, Cara and Isla.

DUFF - Precious memories of my loving wife and mother Caroline, who died November 7, 2016. Always in my thoughts. Forever in my heart. - Ian.

GRANT - John Duncan (Iain). So many memories of Iain, a much loved brother and uncle. You are in our thoughts every day as another year passes since you left us so sadly on November 4, 2008. Miss you always.

- Love Margaret, Neil and families.

MACDONALD - In loving memory of Effie, a dear mother, mother-in-law and nanny who passed away November 8,

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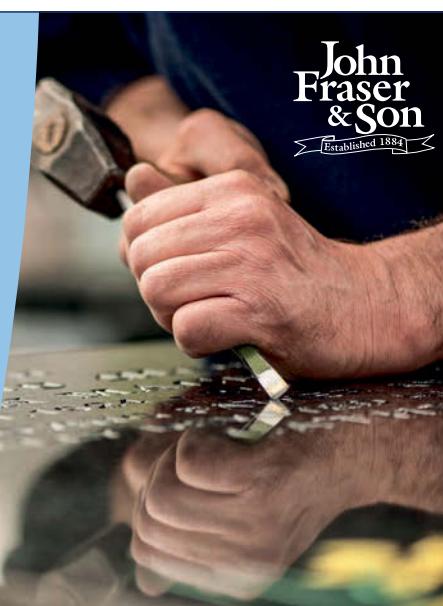
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Our lips cannot speak how much we loved you,
Our hearts cannot tell what to say,
But God only knows how much we miss you,
In our home that is lonely today.
- Mairi-Anne, Neil, Kieran, Kyle and Ryan.

MACINTYRE - In loving memory of Andrew, died November 7, 2017, a dear husband, dad and papa. Sadly missed.

- Maureen, Lynne, Andrew Jr, Kerry, Abby and Matthew xx

MACINTYRE - In loving memory of Andy, our dear brother-in-law, who passed away November 7, 2017. Always in our thoughts. Forever in our hearts.

- Iain, Sandra and family, Ballachulish.

Oban Times ANNOUNCEMENTS
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Held for court

About 11.40pm on November 1, at Caol Ila, Islay, a man, 34, was arrested for allegedly behaving in an abusive manner and failing to provide a breath specimen at the roadside. The man later allegedly failed to provide a blood sample at Bowmore Police Station. Subsequently, and in relation to the same incident, another man, aged 28, was arrested for alleged abusive behaviour and possession of an offensive weapon. Both men were charged, held for court and a report has been sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

Abusive behaviour

About 2am on October 26, in Albany Street, Oban, a man,

24, behaved in an abusive manner. The man was charged and issued with a Recorded Police Warning.

Vandalism

Between 1pm and 2pm on October 26, at Colonsay Terrace, Oban, eggs were thrown at a property. Police are investigating.

Drugs

About 10pm on October 28, at Shuna Terrace, Oban, a man, 21, was stopped and searched by police and found in possession of cannabis. The man was issued with a Recordable Police Warning.

Assault

About 3pm on October 30 at Miller Road, Oban, a man, 38,

was stopped and searched by police.

The man allegedly became aggressive and assaulted the police officers.

He was arrested and charged and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Speeding motorist

About 1.25pm on November 1, at the A85 near Glen Orchy, a motorist was stopped for allegedly exceeding the

speed limit. The driver, a man, 73, was charged and a report sent to the Procurator Fiscal.

Breach of bail curfew conditions

About 11.30pm on October 31 at MacVicar Court, Dunbeg, a man, 22, allegedly breached Bail Curfew Conditions imposed by the court by being within the address. Police attended

and arrested the man who then allegedly behaved in an abusive manner and assaulted police. The man was charged, held for court and a report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Anyone with information in relation to the above, or to any incident, should contact their local police station on telephone number 101 or, anonymously, through Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

From Fear to Faith

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help and You will not hear? Habakkuk 1:2

Facing a fearful future, the prophet Habakkuk trembles before a God who seems to have forgotten him and his people. Their hometown, Jerusalem, faces fearful capture by the rising might of the Babylonian Empire. Habakkuk's desperate prayers seem unanswered.

Habakkuk decides to wait expectantly, like a watchman, for what God will say to him. God answers, speaking to his point of need.

The just shall live by faith (2:4)

Habakkuk needs faith and his heart is strangely warmed by God's words. His fear evaporates in the heat of faith. God has spoken. Nothing can now stand in his way, he can leap over a wall, overcome any obstacle. If God is with him, who can be against him? He knows in his heart that God works all things together for good for those who love him.

In God I have put my trust, I will not be afraid. Psalm 56:4, Habakkuk's lament turns into heartfelt praise.

I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation (3:18)

May we hear God's Word at our point of need.

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Bob MacIntyre.

Bob narrowly misses out on maiden victory

Oban's Bob MacIntyre came close to his first win on the European Tour at the weekend.

Starting his final round two shots off the lead in the Cyprus Open at the Aphrodite Hills resort on Sunday, MacIntyre put on a flawless display of golf in a bogey-free round of 65.

His final total of -18 would have been enough to win most tournaments, however, England's Callum Shinkwin and Finland's Kalle Samooja shot final rounds of 63 and 64 respectively to edge Bob into third place. Shinkwin lifted the trophy after a play-off.

MacIntyre's approach shot at 14 ricocheted off the pin to land 35 feet away. On any other day that would have either dropped in for an eagle or at worst left him a tap-in birdie.

His efforts in Cyprus mean he moves up to 57th in the Race To Dubai and up to 91st in the World Rankings. With the next European Tour event being played at the same venue today (Thursday November 5), MacIntyre will hope to go closer to that maiden victory and consolidate his place in the season ending Tour Championship in Dubai.

Women pedal into bike club in record numbers

North Argyll Cycle Club (NACC) is celebrating a record number of women members.

The number has doubled since 2015 and its committee boasts four women who take the lead in organising club events and activities, says Christina Wood, who is one of them.

'There was a time when I felt like the token woman and it felt very much a club for boys but it's different now. It's fantastic and a lot of it is down to social media. Women are very much in the driving seat,' added Christina, who spoke to The Oban Times as part of Active Scotland's Women and Girls In Sport Week.

Women's membership started to boom after the club's Steven Groom started putting up more posts and messages, encouraging people to go along and give the club's weekly rides round Loch Creran a try with no-one having to worry about being left behind.

'Now the club has more ladies involved and represented on the committee, we are more aware of some of the barriers that prevent women and girls from taking up cycling and we work to tailor our events much more with these barriers in mind – finding ways to help people overcome them and make our club a welcoming one for everyone,' said Christina.

The Loch Creran route is perfect for all abilities, being relatively flat, using the Sustrans cycle path up to the loch before a quiet road lapping round it.



Female members of North Argyll Cycle Club have doubled since 2015 and are now a driving force in the club.

People, particularly women we found, liked having this option, especially those new to road cycling and nervous of traffic.

'Some came along, then brought friends and it took off. Now some of those women are doing time trials. It's incredible.'

'Our social media posts were reassuring. Before all that, there was a belief the club was just for serious cyclists with expensive lycra, kit and bikes but Steven's posts really helped open the door to the sport for lots of people – especially women.'

Pre-covid, the club was holding regular Tuesday cycles, leaving from Ben Lora Café at Benderloch to lap Loch Creran.

'We're so fortunate to have that route on our doorstep,' said Christina, who joined



ever ridden before during lockdown. People have been going out individually, in twos or in family groups.

'We did hold a virtual time trial using the Strava app, with people doing the same stretch individually then putting their times up. It made us feel there was a bit of a club again,' she said.

Current government rules allow a group of up to 30 cyclists out. 'We're not doing that, we don't feel that would be right just now,' Christina added. 'We are finding ways to keep the club going during Covid and our Facebook page is the doing a great job at keeping everyone in touch.'

'NACC is in a really good place with numbers. Women membership especially is going from strength to strength. We were right in the middle of

this growth spurt when Covid came but we hope people will still be itching to join us when normality returns.'

'Even now they can join as new members and go to our Facebook page to see what Covid-compliant events we have coming up in the next few months,' said Christina, who is also involved in West Coast Netball with teams in Oban, Fort William and over in Mull.

Women and Girls In Sport Week encourages more women to get active and to understand and break down any barriers that might discourage them.



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Bombshell ballot sees estate buy-out collapse

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

As the dust settles on the bombshell ballot result that saw a sizeable majority of Morvern residents vote against a community bid to buy the 2,500-hectare Killundine Estate, reasons why so many voters turned against the project remain a mystery.

News came through on Friday that the ballot on whether the bid should proceed had seen 142 people vote no, with 102 in favour.

The bid will now not progress further, in spite of £2.4million being raised by Morvern Community Woodlands (MCW) which included £1million from the Scottish Land Fund.

The vote result came just ahead of MCW's Hallowe'en fundraising target being met largely through what the group described as 'philanthropic donations'.

'It is a particular disappointment for MCW because the outcome of our attempts – all

done by volunteers – was that MCW was on the point of securing the necessary £2.7 million,' explained Alasdair Firth, chairman of MCW.

'However, MCW accepts the ballot demonstrates the project did not have the community's support and that, therefore, this result brings it to an end.'

Resident Iain Thornber, a

'I hope this isn't the end and local people will work together to attract investment, new homes and jobs.'

long-time critic of the buy-out plans, believes there was a host of reasons for the ballot result.

These, he claimed, included MCW not being seen as representing the wider community; MCW failing to convince residents its members had the necessary knowledge and experience to work and run a large agricultural unit and the bid group failing to organise a

ballot at the beginning. 'They failed because even if they had found enough money for the capital cost, there were serious concerns that the rebuilding and running costs would fall back on the public purse which in turn would result in higher taxation locally,' added Mr Thornber.

'This was the wrong place, time and group. I would be surprised if Killundine won't be held up by the Scottish Government as a 'how not to do it' and pushes the community right to buy legislation back years.'

Lochaber constituency MSP Kate Forbes said public opinion was 'most definitely split' when it came to the proposal.

'It does seem a great shame that there are properties on the estate falling into disrepair at a time when we are in great need of housing and bringing young families into the area,' she said.

'I hope this isn't the end and that local people will be able to come and work together to attract proper investment, new homes and jobs.'



Hallowe'en fun aboard Jacobite Steam train

Passengers boarding the Jacobite steam train at Fort William on Friday were in for a Hallowe'en treat.

For they found Masters of the Universe cartoon villain, Skeletor, driving the engine, a wizard managing the train,

and various other ghoulish creatures, including big screen monster the Predator, meeting their every need during the journey along the world's most picturesque railway line.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Belford steering group to be 'up and running' by end of month

Lochaber MSP Kate Forbes says she has been assured by NHS Highland the steering group for the new Belford Hospital in Fort William will meet before the end of this month.

At a recent meeting between MSPs, MPs and senior health board representatives, the constituency MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch raised the issue and called for plans to move forward as quickly as possible.

Ms Forbes told the Lochaber Times that NHS Highland was subsequently in touch with her to say 'it has been confirmed that the steering group will be up and running by the end of November'.

Ms Forbes told the Lochaber Times: 'I am pleased to hear the steering group has been rescheduled for later this month. It is very important this group is a vehicle of progress – to deliver a new Belford. There are some obvious hurdles to overcome, including agreement on the clinical model, support of the community and a clear and agreed timetable.'

'I hope NHS Highland can renew its commitment and get some momentum behind this.'



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Sheila Sutton with her birthday greeting from The Queen.

Sheila celebrates centenary with card from Queen

There was a special birthday card among the congratulations Annat resident Sheila Sutton received on Sunday on the occasion of her 100th birthday.

Mrs Sutton, née Smart, was born in Walsall and moved to Fort William after the Second World War where she and her late husband Mick ran the Caledonian Warehouse. She was also the post mistress.

The couple, who went on to have a son and daughter, Carol and Christopher, started a caravan site at Annat Mill, Corpach, then moved with the arrival of the pulp mill to develop and run Linnhe Caravan Park, now Linnhe Lochside Holidays, until the 1980s.

Mrs Sutton, a grandmother of two, was an active Guider and was Brown Owl for many years. She was also involved

with the WRI and travelled widely including to the ACWW World Conference in Nairobi.

She has always been interested in nature and art and was involved in the local art group for many years. She and her husband established the local Scrabble group and were volunteer drivers.

Along with the speech therapist at the time, Fiona Gardener, they hosted speech therapy classes and Mrs Sutton still keeps in close contact with Fiona, who now lives in Guernsey, and many class members.

Family celebrations were restricted in scale in line with coronavirus regulations, but daughter Carol Jones told the Lochaber Times it was still a very enjoyable occasion.

'We had a lovely day with a special diabetic birthday cake and, of course, the much-anticipated card from The Queen,' said Mrs Jones from her home in Edinburgh this week.

Caol pupil tests positive for coronavirus

The Highland Council says it is continuing to work with NHS Highland's Health Protection Team and other community group partners in a joint approach to tackle Covid-19 in the greater Fort William area, writes Mark Entwistle.

The statement follows a positive case of Covid-19 being diagnosed for a pupil

associated with Caol Primary School.

A group of individuals are following advice from NHS Highland's Health Protection Team and will now be self-isolating for 14 days.

The school continues to follow the Health Protection Team's direction and has the appropriate hygiene procedures in place.

Recently, the Highland Council produced a coronavirus help and support leaflet for Fort William.

At the time of the leaflet's publication, vice convener of the council, Councillor Allan Henderson, who is also chairman of the Communities and Place Committee, said:

'Council staff including environmental health and educa-

tion are working closely with public health in Fort William.

I understand that there will be anxieties among the community so there is support and assistance available from Environmental Health, and Benefits and Welfare and community partners.

A leaflet has been produced to highlight the support available.'

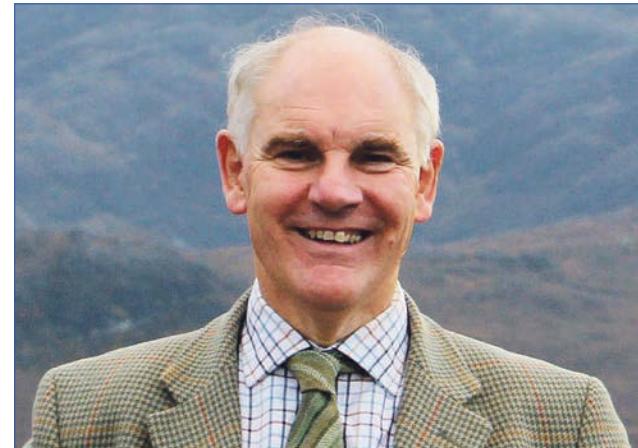
Central Belt restrictions 'end Lochaber tourist season'

by Mark Entwistle
markentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The tourism season for 2020 has effectively come to an end in places like Lochaber, Skye and the Small Islands thanks to the travel ban placed on visitors from the Central Belt as part of the new five-tier system of Covid-19 restrictions which came into force on Monday.

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)'s Highlands and Islands Development Manager David Richardson said that while the Scottish Government's response to the latest developments looks broadly proportionate, and the placing of the Highlands and Islands and Moray in Level 1 was welcome, this was only part of the picture.

'Tourism supports, directly or indirectly, more of our businesses and communities



Highlands and Islands Development Manager of the Federation of Small Businesses David Richardson.

today's [Thursday October 29] announcement.

'Above all, we need sufficient financial support to keep the many key groups, like those in tourism not covered by the hospitality hardship fund and businesses without premises, alive, and we need to see razor-sharp communications from government at all levels to keep everyone on-side and avoid confusion.'

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Baxter 'fobbed off' over 20mph school signs

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Lochaber councillor Andrew Baxter was knocked back in his attempt to get the issue of faulty 20mph speed warning signs near schools added as an urgent item to the agenda for Thursday's meeting of the full Highland Council.

It was expected that only a handful of the flashing 20mph signs on the approaches to schools across Lochaber and the rest of Highland region would be operational for last week's return of pupils after their October break.

The problem appears to lie with the current SIM card technology within the units as they are apparently no longer supported by the current or alternative suppliers due to out-dated 2G capabilities.

The council told the Lochaber Times last week that the SIM



Fort William resident Chris Jones, left, with Councillor Andrew Baxter at the non-working warning lights beside Lundavra Primary School last week. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

on the agenda for the full council meeting, Councillor Baxter felt the matter was sufficiently urgent to ask for it to be considered.

However, shortly before the start of the meeting, his request was turned down on procedural reasons. He did manage to slip the subject into later discussions on other matters, making a direct plea to council depute leader Alasdair Christie to intervene and make this particular issue a key item for the council's recovery board, which he chairs.

'With the change in daylight hours recently, it's quite disappointing we have not reac-

tivated these,' said Councillor Baxter. 'I would be concerned if this issue wasn't resolved by the spring.'

Councillor Christie responded, saying he would look at the matter and 'see what can be done to improve it'.

But Councillor Baxter told the Lochaber Times this week: 'I was disappointed that my attempt to debate this as an urgent item was blocked.'

'However, I did ask about it during discussions on other matters. Yet again I was fobbed off by a suggestion that the council is replacing the SIM cards. This is wrong.'

'From the information I've been given, every sign requires a hardware upgrade.'

To make matters worse, the council hasn't even drawn up the tender documents to have these replaced. The council continues to fiddle around, whilst school safety is at risk.'

Although the issue was not

Fort William man named in A82 crash fatality

Police Scotland has confirmed that the man who died in a crash on the A82 on Monday October 26 was John Hugh Mackenzie from Fort William.

The incident happened around 5.25pm on Monday near Glengloy, north of Spean Bridge. Mr Mackenzie, 66, was the driver and sole occupant of a green Citroen Berlingo which was involved in a collision with a lorry. The driver of the lorry was uninjured.

Enquiries remain ongoing to establish the full circumstances and anyone with information who has not already spoken to an officer should call 101, quoting incident 2566 of October 26.

Trial of 20mph speed limits in Fort due to start soon

The 18-month trial of enforceable 20mph limits in Fort William is due to start imminently.

The trial will see almost

every residential street in Fort William reduced to a 20mph limit, although the A82 and A830 are not affected.

Once the trial is over, the restrictions can be made permanent or lifted, depending on feedback.

To make them work, traffic calming features will be put in on Kilmallie Road, Argyll Road, Lundavra Road and two Speed Indication Device Signs will be located on Ross Place and Zetland Avenue/Lochaber Road.

One exception to the new limit is Kilmallie Road, along the river. This will be under construction for most of the period because of the flood scheme. A separate plan for that section will come forward as flood works progress.

Caol and Mallaig councillor Ben Thompson said: 'I know there are lots of requests for 20mph limits in residential streets outside Fort William.'

'The team doing this work are working as fast as they can to expand the programme across the Highlands. I hope we'll see Lochaber villages getting the same treatment soon.'

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LT

Call for Holyrood to help manage campervan boom

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The Scottish Government needs to play a lead role alongside local authorities, partners and private sector landowners to manage the boom in camper van staycation holidays.

So said Caol and Mallaig councillor Allan Henderson, responding to statements by Scottish tourism minister Fergus Ewing after the latter appeared to palm off responsibility for the issue onto already struggling councils and national park bodies.

Responding in the Scottish Parliament to a question from Highlands and Islands Labour MSP Rhoda Grant on how the Scottish Government is going to tackle residents' concerns about 'dirty camping' and future tourism pressure, Mr Ewing stressed adequate service provision is ultimately for the local authority or national park authority involved.



A multi-agency group, which met in September, is due to report back in November to look at solutions and make recommendations to ministers.

But Mrs Grant said she had serious concerns: 'Councils and public agencies in our region were already struggling with their finances before this pandemic hit and the extra stress caused by Covid-19 will further tie their hands to invest in solutions.'

Communities and local businesses want the Scottish Government to hear their voices on this issue and want to be assured that next year there are solutions and infrastructure in place to re-

lieve pressure on pinch points such as the NC500 and on the Western Isles.'

In his reply to Mrs Grant, Mr Ewing said: 'While the responsibility for adequate service provision is ultimately for the local authority or national park authority involved, we recognise many areas of rural Scotland have seen an uplift of visitors in recent years.'

'This group will therefore build on the work of the successful £9m Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund which has helped realise material solutions through the installation of infrastructure such as car parks, toilets and motorhome

There are calls for the Scottish Government to take a lead role in managing the boom in campervans.

waste disposal points.' The group has agreed to identify how public bodies, communities and national park and local authorities might work closer to identify long-term solutions to visitor management at rural pinch points and scenic areas.

However, asked for his view, Councillor Henderson told the Lochaber Times the coming winter should not be handed over to political wrangling, but used for doing something.

'The Scottish Government should take a lead role alongside local authorities, partners and the private sector landowners,' he said. 'This would be in the form of a national visitor management scheme to address the current pandemic situation and expected growth of campervan staycation holidays, with extra funding injected into the

Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund. This plan would need to enable quick installation of emergency infrastructure to support local initiatives, by reducing bureaucracy.'

'Coupled with wardens to support maintenance and education, this could be cost neutral in areas with most pressure. To me the winter is not for petty squabbling, but action. To this end we have the B8008 working group up and running with solutions identified.'

His fellow Caol and Mallaig elected member, Denis Rixson, added: 'I think Rhoda Grant makes a fair point. The Scottish Government has invested in rural infrastructure but Highland applications alone could swallow up the fund for the whole of Scotland. If the Scottish Government is serious about tackling the problems of the tourist industry post-Covid, they must invest. They hold the purse-strings.'

Comment on look of new flood wall

Highland Council has asked Caol and Lochyside residents to help decide the colour and pattern of the flood wall which is to be built at Lochyside and have extended the consultation by a month to give people more time to respond.

Caol Community Council has put information about the flood scheme at points across Caol and Lochyside as well as on its Facebook page.

Details of the landscaping plan have also been published for comment.

The landscaping includes planting, footpaths, seating areas and a new play area on the shore. Details of the options for the flood wall and the landscaping plans are currently being displayed in Caol Shopping Centre and feedback forms can be picked up from and returned to the Community Cupboard. People can also view the details at www.highland.gov.uk/caolandlochysideflood-protection. People have until November 30 to feed back their preferred options.

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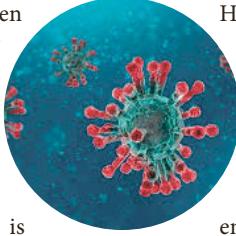
Call for local response if Covid situation changes

Lochaber should be given the benefit of a more appropriate level of coronavirus lockdown if the new system of tiered restrictions alters for Highland region, writes Mark Entwistle.

Currently Highland is in tier one of the five-level strategy and a special meeting of the local authority last week saw a majority in favour of a Highland-wide approach being adhered to, with no sub divisions.

The meeting was to allow members to formally consider and debate Scotland's Strategic Framework for Covid 19.

Following debate, members supported Highland being placed in tier one as it stands in the strategic framework document which would allow home visiting. This was in line with the views expressed by NHS Highland's Director of Public



Health.

The council also agreed that a Highland-wide approach should be taken and the area be treated as one and not sub-divided.

But asked by the Lochaber Times if it might be difficult persuading people in more remote locations, such as Acharacle or Mallaig, of the need for tighter restrictions across the whole of Highland region in the event of, say, an outbreak confined to somewhere like Inverness or Dingwall, Caol and Mallaig councillor Denis Rixson said he favoured restrictions tailored to smaller areas.

'However, I recognise that messages may then become confused. It's a judgement call

but I favour local responses, which can be looser – or tighter – as required,' he said.

His fellow ward member, Ben Thompson, had argued in the meeting for the council to request different tiers within Highland. 'But the majority of councillors were in favour of a single Highland approach,' he said. 'The reason I support separate levels within Highland is the scale of Highland. It's one third of Scotland. There are other councils in Scotland that are geographically smaller even than Lochaber. Residents and businesses in those smaller council areas benefit from the more appropriate local level of lockdown, either up or down.'

I would like to see Lochaber, Caithness and Skye given the same benefit of more appropriate levels of lockdown.'

Highlands and Islands MSP and Scottish Shadow Health Secretary Donald

Cameron told the Lochaber Times: 'Clearly the Scottish Government should be open-minded about how we can apply a more tailored approach within local authority areas like the Highland Council, but we must also ensure we do not overcomplicate the key messages and, of course, public health remains the paramount consideration.'

Councillors also considered travel restrictions from areas with level three or above.

Opinion on this was split with 30 members supporting the Scottish Government travel restrictions and 28 saying they did not.

Finally, in terms on how messages should be communicated to members of the public and council staff, councillors were unanimous in saying that messaging must be concise and should be led and co-ordinated by the Scottish Government.

Lochaber in tier one of government restrictions

Lochaber and the rest of Highland region, together with the Western Isles, have been put in tier one of the new Covid-19 restrictions introduced by the Scottish Government.

Most local authorities were put in tier three - 19 out of 32 - with eight in tier two and five – including Highland – in tier one.

The new tier system is broadly based on an analysis of five key indicators:

- number of positive Covid-19 cases per hundred thousand people over the last week
- percentage of positive tests
- forecast for new cases in the weeks ahead
- capacity of local hospitals
- capacity of local intensive care units

These factors are assessed alongside the advice and recommendations of local public health officials, National Incident Management Team, the Scottish Government's chief clinical and policy advisors and consideration of local circumstances such as specific Covid-19 outbreaks; travel and work patterns and the extent to

which health services are provided by neighbouring health boards. Final decisions are based on all of these factors.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: 'Here in Scotland and across the UK, we have been dealing with the same pattern of Covid-19 resurgence as experienced around the world. Europe is now firmly in the grip of a second wave and only last night France and Germany re-imposed nationwide lockdowns.

In Scotland, we acted early – with some difficult but necessary measures – and while we have no grounds for complacency we do see some encouraging signs. In the last week, cases have increased by four per cent whereas two weeks ago the weekly increase was 40 per cent. If we all dig in and stick with it, this proportionate approach has a real chance of being sustainable, keeping Covid under control over the winter. If we succeed, we open the prospect of being able to lead lives which are substantially closer to normal in the weeks and months to come.'

 UK Government
Scotland

NHS

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HANDS



FACE



SPACE

LT

VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Is your work/life balance stressing you out? If so, you're definitely not alone. Managing stress can be difficult at the best of times, but throw in a pandemic, a huge degree of uncertainty and continual rapid change and it's no wonder so many of us feel stressed, anxious and struggling to cope.

We all have beliefs about stress and find our own ways to cope, but are we making the best choices to really help us excel under pressure?

We're pleased to invite Lochaber Chamber of Commerce members to an exclusive online member event – Excelling Under Pressure – led by Suzy Beaumont, founder of Change your World Events.

Her organisation brings together leading experts to inspire, motivate and empower, creating a ripple effect of positive change for individuals and organisations. Suzy is also an accredited facilitator with the Stress Management



Suzy Beaumont, who will deliver the Excelling under Pressure webinar.

Society, delivering its courses to businesses across the UK. The Excelling Under Pressure interactive workshop on Monday November 23 is designed to build self-awareness, resilience and to empower individuals to recognise workplace stress and tackle stress-related challenges at work through effective coping strategies.

In the workshop, we'll explore some of the flawed strategies people commonly use to deal with stress at work and provide more beneficial alternatives, including practical exercises and techniques designed to increase personal resilience. This free workshop is for Lochaber Chamber of

Commerce Members only and numbers are limited.

During lockdown and beyond, Lochaber Chamber has continued to provide members with targeted events to help with staffing issues, training on new technology, employment law, change management, ministerial meetings, local networking and more.

If you'd like to benefit from the events, promotion and other business support on offer from Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, see our website for more information or email membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk. We're a friendly team who go out of our way to support local businesses. Join us and we can help you too.

NHS Highland takes ownership of Home Farm

The transfer of Home Farm Care Home in Portree on Skye from HC-One to NHS Highland has been agreed, with NHS Highland formally taking ownership of the care home from Monday of this week, writes Mark Entwistle.

NHS Highland and HC-One have been working closely to ensure the transition of ownership has been as smooth as possible and that practical arrangements are in place to ensure levels of service are maintained.

An Interim Registered Manager at Home Farm has been put in place to lead the care home, where 10 residents died following the coronavirus outbreak which began in April, safely through this change process. NHS Highland will also be completing essential maintenance work in the weeks and months ahead to update and improve the look and feel of the building, while ensuring Covid-19 guidelines are adhered to and any noise and disruption is kept to a minimum.

David Park, NHS Highland



Home Farm care home.

Deputy Chief Executive, said: 'I know this has been an extremely challenging period for residents, relatives and staff.'

'NHS Highland's primary aim throughout this time has been to ensure the safety and well-being of residents and to improve standards of care within Home Farm.'

'This remains our focus and we are committed to ensuring the standards of care continue to improve. We will remain in close contact with residents and their relatives to ensure they are kept up-to-date as this work continues to progress.'

Views Dail M

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

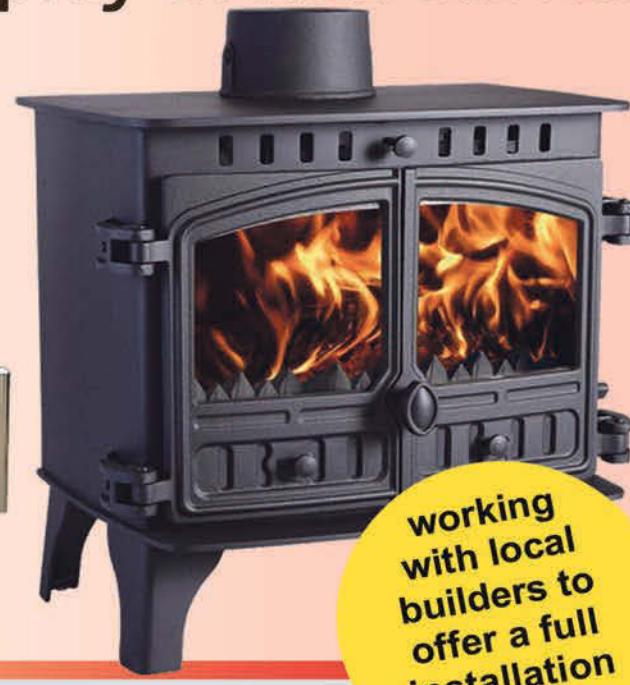
Redevelopment plans for 'no longer fit for purpose' and derelict buildings at Strontian offer opportunities for visionary community-led care services for the future, according to those involved.

Residents in Acharacle, Ardgour, Morvern, Sunart and West Ardnamurchan are being asked to have their say in the future of the Dail Mhor site in Strontian, with a newly-released artist's impression and vision for the site's redevelopment available for comment in a community consultation.

The proposal is the work of charity Urram, which has been established from the working group set up by five community councils – Acharacle, Ardgour, Morvern, Sunart and West Ardnamurchan – in response to the closure of the Dail Mhor residential home in 2017. After



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the sudden closure of Dail Mhor three years ago, it was partially reopened as a respite centre in 2018, along with funding for a project officer.

The new consultation, which invites responses from everyone in the area, is part of phase one of an ambitious proposal to turn a redundant school building, village hall, GP surgery and care home building into

a new development offering a 'care and community hub'.

The hub will include new supported housing, flexible day care and respite care, a GP surgery and rooms for care at home, district nurse and ambulance services. There will also be a new community hall with a kitchen and smaller rooms for hire. Site owner, Highland Council, said the

current buildings have five years left at best.

This volunteer group was established to ensure long-term provision of care services across the peninsulas and aims to work in consultation with the community, Highland Council, NHS Highland and other partners.

Urram board member Jenni Hodgson said: 'We are really excited to share the draft drawings. We are looking forward to hearing everyone's views and suggestions to enable us to work up the plan and see it through to fruition.'

Plans can be viewed online on each the community council website and consultation packs are available in local shops or can be delivered on request.

There is a questionnaire for written responses in the consultation pack and an online survey is available at UrramCare and a dedicated telephone line on 07517 035005.



Newly-awarded Queens Men, from left, Josh Higginson, JayJay Calder and Daniel Turner with Duncansburgh Cup winner Robert MacTaggart. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Fort BB hosts special Covid-secure service

Members of the 2nd Fort William Company of the Boys Brigade were honoured at a special service in Duncansburgh Macintosh Church on Friday evening,

Held under strict Covid regulations governing religious services, Reverend Richard Baxter welcomed the small group of officers, boys and parents. He then handed over to Captain Ian Fleming who gave an outline of the much reduced activities of the company throughout the year before announcing the names of award winners and inviting them to pick up their certificate, badges and trophies which were displayed at the front of the church.

Queens Badges, the highest



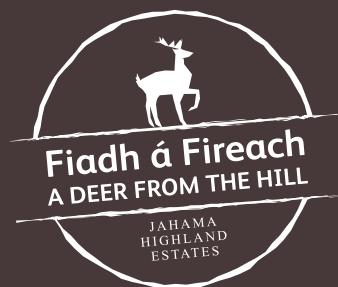
Top row, from left: Diego Watson, Kalen MacLeod and Keiran Mathieson. Bottom row, from left: Lewis Colyer and Logan Knox. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Kalen Macleod and the Best Junior Section boy was Keiran Boyd. Former Captain Andrew Muirhead, who is retiring from the Company, was honoured with photos projected on to a large screen, marking his association with the organisation for more than half a century.

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LT

Former commando to the rescue



Former Royal Marines sniper Aldo Kane, left, with Wayne Auton. Mr Auton was the Advanced Paramedic from the EMRS helicopter and is also a former Royal Marine Commando. Photograph: Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team.

Former Royal Marines sniper and adventure show TV presenter Aldo Kane has been praised for helping mountain rescue personnel with an emergency on Ben Nevis.

After a 20-year stint in the military, Mr Kane started working as a stunt co-ordinator on Hollywood movies before fronting adventure documentaries with the likes of Tom Hardy and Steve Backshall.

Mr Kane, who originally hails from Kilwinning, south-west of Glasgow, was in Lochaber recently when he came to the aid of an injured walker on Britain's highest mountain.

In a post on its Facebook page, Lochaber Mountain

TV presenter praised for Ben Nevis effort

Rescue Team singled out Mr Kane for thanks.

'Recently we were called out to a mid-day incident in Steall Gorge. The team was faced with a seriously injured casualty, using a lot of our resources.'

'Whilst evacuation was taking place, CG R151 [Coast Guard helicopter] and the Emergency Medical Retrieval Service (EMRS) were on standby in Glen Nevis,' said the team.

'At this point we received another call for an injured walker high up on Ben Nevis, around the corner 4 area. It was decided R151 would transport the casualty, along with consultants from EMRS, to hospital in Glasgow.'

'Meanwhile the EMRS helicopter lifted specialist retrieval practitioner, ex-bootneck [slang for a marine] Wayne and two team members onto the Ben.'

'This is the first time team

members have been transported by EMRS and it was a huge help to us, which we are very grateful for.'

'The team located the casualty at half way and found that they had been carried down by another ex-bootneck, Aldo Kane.'

'Obviously not everyone is capable of carrying a person down the path by themselves, but Aldo went above and beyond and saved considerable extra team resources which would have been taken up for a stretcher carry. Thanks Aldo!'

Only a few weeks later, the team was faced with an almost identical callout at the same place in the gorge, only this time it was at night.

Glenfinnan Community Council

Glenfinnan Community Council recently held its October meeting via the Zoom online conferencing platform.

Vice chairman Simon Matthews presided and a number of issues, includ-

ing the following, were discussed:

■ There was an update from the Community Facilities Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation on work to the new community car park.

■ Pedestrian crossing at the National Trust: Emily Bryce of the National Trust for Scotland reported the legal agreements are sorted.

The money has to be spent in this fi-

nancial year, but work is anticipated to start in December and continue until March. The pedestrian crossing is understood to be positioned midway between the entrances to the two car parks. It will be a button-controlled crossing with a timer. There will be street lighting at the crossing. Related to this, Alistair Gibson had objected to wording in September 2020's minutes that im-

plied Glenfinnan Estate was holding up proceedings and asked for the minutes to be amended. Apologies to the estate for any inaccuracies.

■ Police report: Twelve reports comprising two cause for concerns, two road traffic collisions, two speeding/dangerous driving offences, four parking issues, one case of vandalism and one complaint of a speed boat on the loch.

■ Parking: Emily Bryce asked for more police cones to prevent verge/pavement parking.

Sergeant Keith Almond said they are in short supply across the division and are 'advisory' only. Sergeant Almond is keen to discuss more permanent arrangements with the community council and to involve BEAR and Traffic Scotland in a

Continued on right.

Home-Start Lorn – Celebrating 32 years of working with families in Oban, Lorn and now on Mull



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Bringing up children is one of the most difficult jobs we will ever have to do. Home-Start Lorn has been supporting families with young children throughout the whole of the Oban and North Argyll

area, including the outlying villages since 1988 and on the Isle of Mull since 2016. Through our home-visiting volunteers we offer a unique service providing practical and emotional support to parents/carers with one or

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We have just recently started a café project in partnership with Hope Kitchen for families



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Trustees

We are managed by a board of trustees. They are all volunteers with a variety of skills and knowledge. We are very lucky to have a treasurer who is a

qualified accountant as well as a retired teacher, social worker and others. What we NEED on our board is someone with Social Media skills who can help us raise our profile and someone with good data analysis to help us make the most of the data we collect. Perhaps you can help?

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Martina Preece, left, and Helen Thompson looking west down Loch Leven towards the Pap of Glencoe from Macdonald Hotel and Cabins in Kinlochleven.

Glencoe duo in Top 100

Two of Discover Glencoe's committee members are celebrating after being named in a list of the Top 100 Women in Tourism.

Following the inaugural Top 100 which was launched in 2018, this year's announcement by Women in Tourism recognises not just individual achievements over the last year, but the combined passion which has supported the sector throughout 2020 – one of the most challenging years to date for the Scottish tourism industry.

Chairwoman Martina Preece and treasurer Helen Thompson were nominated for the honour by Discover Glencoe to thank them for all their efforts and

hard work. They have both gone above and beyond in these volunteer posts to help, support and represent Discover Glencoe members, communities and tourism in the area during these difficult times.

Martina said: 'Though we were aware of our nominations, this is an unexpected award. It's a privilege to be listed alongside all the other well-deserving, hardworking women in the tourism and hospitality industry throughout Scotland.'

Reflecting a diverse industry that drives the Scottish economy and delivers the warm welcome which visitors from all over the world recognise and celebrate, the 2020 Top 100 includes those working

within hotels, destination organisations, tour operators, marketing agencies and visitor attractions.

During an unprecedented year, the Top 100 gives special recognition to those working on behalf of the Scottish tourism sector including colleagues from the Scottish Tourism Alliance, the Association of Scottish Self Caterers, HIT Scotland and the Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions.

Susan Russell, chairwoman of Women In Tourism, said: '2020 has been an unprecedented year, not just for tourism but for our way of life as we know it.'

'Today's announcement gives us an opportunity to recognise

colleagues across our industry who go above and beyond on a daily basis.'

'The Top 100 reflects the sector as a whole, from Shetland to the Scottish Borders and the Outer Hebrides to Fife, and while we recognise the challenges facing our industry, today's announcement is an important moment to celebrate and thank everyone for all they have done and continue to do.'

Other women from Lochaber and the Islands to be named on the list are: Anne Gracie-Gunn, Skye Connect; Helen Thompson, MacDonald Hotel, Kinlochleven; and Katie MacLeod-English, journalist/social influencer, Outer Hebrides.

Continued from page eight.
solution, given the expected benefits of the new car park.

Councillor Allan Henderson provided information on Traffic Scotland's expectation that Highland Council has responsibility for Glenfinnan's road issues, however, as the road is a trunk road, Transport Scotland has jurisdiction.

There is talk of yellow lines, but if

these are not in place for the 2021 season, clearways are a possibility, but have limited value.

A lower road speed limit is still being pursued at every opportunity and is being taken up by all Lochaber communities and villages in light of a '20's plenty' campaign being trialled in the Scottish Borders.

■ Disposal of motor home waste: Councillor Denis Rixson advised

that a disposal facility would be part of developments at the west end of Lochaber and a further option next year.

■ Firework display: Les McFarlane had contacted suppliers and arranged that the purchase of fireworks would be deferred until 2021.

■ Trains: West Coast Railways (WCR) will continue its service until Friday November 13.

Notwithstanding the dispensation on the installation of waste tanks until 2023, Councillor Rixson and Hege Hernae reported Highland Council's environmental health team will follow up on WCR.

■ Hege Hernae, secretary of the West Highland Community Rail Partnership, brought to councillors' attention the opportunity for Glenfinnan to become

part of Sustrans' National Cycle Network. She asked if Glenfinnan Community Council would support West Highland Community Rail Partnership applying for a feasibility study.

The application deadline is November 6.

She asked for an email from the community council to support the study.

Enjoy the Ardrhu House magic of 'spa la carte'

We all need something special right now to make us feel good in body and soul; to lift our spirits and inject some joy back into life. Ardrhu House has the perfect solution with its 'spa la carte' approach to wellness. The luxury spa, beloved by visitors and locals-in-the-know, has answered the call by providing with its holistic treatment menu, an indulgent treat whilst maintaining a safe environment. These Spa Days are truly à la carte: you buy the time with a therapist and you get to choose whatever treatments you desire with plenty of expert help and advice available to make the wisest decision. The emerald steam room, Finish sauna, hydro-jet shower and outdoor Jacuzzi overlooking Loch Linnhe await you. The spa team comprises an Ayurveda practitioner, herbalist, aromatherapist and sound healer; all coming together to weave the magic of Ardrhu House for a bespoke spa experience. World-famous brands like Ila and Temple Spa are part of the range of products used for these exquisite treatments available exclusively in Scotland at Ardrhu House. Treatment choices vary in length and include a therapeutic range for insomnia, restlessness, anxiety, stress and exhaustion. The massage treatments are popular with male and female customers and a couples' visit includes some amazing rituals to be shared together side by side in the same treatment room. A half-day includes either breakfast or afternoon tea and the full day features both - and the à la carte theme continues. You can add a light lunch or blocks of extra spa time as you desire; it is all about you receiving the finest spa experience. Activities on offer at the hotel can also be added, like yoga, canoeing or wild swimming. The full story unfolds when you visit <https://www.ardrhuhouse.com/spa>



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Lewis Castle College brings £24m to Hebrides economy

A new economic impact report reveals the economic contribution Lewis Castle College (LCC) UHI in Stornoway makes to the local economy – contributing £24m and supporting 230 jobs in the Outer Hebrides.

With new plans for a campus redevelopment as part of The Islands Deal, it is hoped LCC UHI will further increase its role in the economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The proposed re-development project will allow the college to deliver training in more flexible and innovative ways as well as meeting the learning needs of individuals, businesses and communities.

The report, which was commissioned by the university partnership last year, has been produced by independent consultancy Biggar Economics.

The findings also reveal the partnership's impact across Scotland has grown by 20-25 per cent since it was last measured in 2010, mainly due to an increase in staff and graduates.

The partnership achieved full university status in 2011 and will be celebrating its

tenth anniversary in February 2021. The authors highlight the university's value goes beyond its financial contribution, explaining: 'The benefits of the university extend beyond the significant gross value added and jobs measured. It supports sustainable and inclusive economic well-being and social development in the broadest sense for people, communities and employers across the region. It supports heritage and culture, the economy, the environment, the regional health sector and it offers routes to personal and collective growth and development.'

Lewis Castle College Principal Sue Macfarlane said: 'This report clearly demonstrates the importance of Lewis Castle College to the local economy and community, particularly at this very difficult time.'

'We fully intend to build on this success, working with our partners across the Western Isles as well as colleagues across the university to ensure the college is at the centre of the economic recovery of the islands.'

Subsea cable repair delay could cost trust £2.4m

A community wind farm trust on Lewis faces losing up to £2.5million in revenue if it takes a possible 12 months to fix the failed subsea power cable between Skye and Harris, writes Mark Entwistle.

There are now 'grave concerns' over Stornoway power station's capability to maintain a steady, sustainable supply to the islands over the winter.

The 33kV cable, which failed last month, is part of a line that carries power from the National Grid at Fort Augustus to the island network node at Stornoway. Now that the imported supply to Lewis and Harris has failed, diesel stations at Battery Point and Arnish are having to work full time to keep the islands on supply.

SSEN confirmed the cable fault was located 15km from land and at a depth of 130m. An on-site repair is not possible in these water depths and SSEN intends to replace the entire

subsea cable, end-to-end – a length of 32kms.

SSEN is currently sourcing generator back-up sets at the Battery Point station to guarantee security of supply for islanders and the company says there is no question of black-outs while the on-island diesel stations are providing power.

'This has serious consequences for the money we give out...'

However, early indications are that replacement of the subsea link could take up to 12 months due to procurement challenges with cable this length.

One of those affected is Point and Sandwich Trust which uses the income from its Beinn Ghrideag wind farm to support projects and organisations developing social, cultural, educational and environmental well-being.

Calum Macdonald, developer of the wind farm at Beinn Ghrideag, said: 'We haven't been able to produce any output since the cable went down and it now looks like we won't be able to produce any output for up to 12 months, according to SSE.'

'That means we will not earn any income over these 12 months. That obviously has serious consequences for the money we normally give out to the various organisations and projects we support, so we will need to discuss with our beneficiaries and our stakeholders the situation and work out the best way forward for this difficult period.'

The trust's annual total income from the wind farm is about £2.5million a year. If the outage is shown to be the result of an accident rather than wear and tear, the trust can recover a maximum of five months out of the 12 from insurance. If it is wear and

tear, no insurance is payable. Comhairle Leader Councillor Roddie Mackay recently met with senior representatives from SSEN.

Commenting afterwards, he said: 'We will continue to press SSEN and others to ensure this vital community income is safeguarded and, if necessary, compensated for.'

As well as Battery Point and Arnish power stations on Lewis remaining in operation for the duration of the fault, SSEN has also increased deliveries of fuel via sea tankers to the power stations and is sourcing large back-up mobile generation sets.

Mark Rough, director of customer operations at SSEN, said: 'We'd like to reassure our customers that our well-established resilience plans are in place to maintain power supplies to homes and businesses as we source and install the new cable.'

To read the full story, visit www.lochabertimes.co.uk

Whatever your business needs! Catch local eyes with an improvement grant

Business Improvement Grants 2020/2021

BID4Oban (Oban Business Improvement District) has been awarded £21,000 to support businesses within the BID Levy Area to improve the appearance of Shopfronts or alternatively Signage for businesses that may be located in some of the commercial areas of the town as part of the £63,000 Town Regeneration Fund from the Scottish Government. Since its inception, BID4Oban has provided Improvement Grants in excess of £62,000 including £12,000 over 2020, some of which was



to enable businesses to change their business models to enable outside trading. The new award will be combined with a further £7000 from BIDS own funds delivering a total funding

pot of £28,000. BID4Oban have agreed with Argyll and Bute Council that the existing BID process for allocating grants will be used. This is to ensure compliance with current

procurement processes. The maximum grant will be £1500 per business or 50% of the costs. There is an expectation that businesses will use local contractors wherever possible.

Potentially, the improvement grants will generate an investment of £56,000 in Oban businesses and associated contractors. There is a condition that all works, and grants must be

approved by 31st March 2021. Many businesses have benefited from these grants to greatly improve the appearance of their business.

Applications are available from <https://bid4oban.co.uk/projects/business-relocate-or-expansion-frontage-grant/information/>
All applications will be treated on a first come first served basis. For full details contact the BID4Oban office or email admin@bid4oban.co.uk



Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



Tributes to shinty stalwart and former councillor

by Mark Entwistle
markentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Tributes have been paid to former Lochaber councillor Neil Clark following news of his death.

Mr Clark represented his community on Lochaber District Council and on The Highland Council, serving as chairman of Lochaber District Council from 1993 to 1996.

Ken Johnston, from Upper Achintore Regeneration Group and a former planning officer who worked with Mr Clark for many years, paid a personal tribute.

He said: 'Neil was a determined and hard-working councillor who dedicated himself to working to improve his home town. He was active until just recently. Indeed, he gave me a lift home from a community council meeting just last year.'

'He was the last chairman of



Former
Lochaber
councillor Neil
Clark.

the old district council in 1996 and was then elected to the then new Highland Council. He served on the planning committee, chaired the Nevis Partnership and served on the community council for many

years. I have memories of many meetings with him all over Lochaber. His year-on-year support and promotion of investment in Lochaber within the Highland Council will be a fitting legacy.

'Upper Achintore has lost a real champion. Sincere condolences to Eleanor and family.'

Mr Clark was a British Telecom Engineer for 30 years, retiring in 1996, which allowed him to dedicate all his time and energy to his role as a councillor until he stood down in 2007. He became chairman of the Nevis Partnership and its predecessor Nevis Working Party. He also held the post of chairman of Fort William Steering Group and was an active member of Fort William Community Council for many years.

Highland Council leader Councillor Margaret Davidson said: 'Neil was instrumental in getting key strategic development opportunity in Fort William under way - from the expansion of the town's retail space and housing portfolio to spearheading the waterfront regeneration pro-

ject. He particularly enjoyed his role as chairman of the Nevis Working Party and the challenge of balancing conservation issues with providing facilities for the many visitors.'

'One of his more memorable quotes on the subject was: 'Glen Nevis and the Ben is our major attraction and we must be sure we do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg.'

'I think this sums up how as a councillor he did a great job of not only representing the people who voted for him but that he also had the experience and skills to see the wider picture.'

'His dedication and commitment to look to the future and ensure Lochaber was well placed to make the most of every opportunity is a lasting legacy. I'm sure everyone who had the privilege of serving with him will have their own special memories. Our thoughts go to his family at this

sad time.' Described as a shinty fanatic, Mr Clark's other interests away from the debating chamber included gardening and walking. Even when he was no longer a councillor, he supported his community in his role as an employee of the council's housing service.

Lochaber Committee chairman councillor Andrew Baxter added: 'Anyone who contacted Neil will know he always dealt with issues with great patience and courtesy. Neil was at his most impressive when he was arguing for the best possible deal for Fort William and its residents.'

'He continued to do that as an effective chairman of the community council.'

In that role he was determined that community council views should never be ignored by Highland Council. Fort William has lost a doughty community champion.'

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School investment priorities confirmed

Councillors have heard the Scottish Government has now been officially informed Broadford Primary School on Skye has been nominated as a Highland Council priority for consideration for inclusion in the new funding model for school investment projects.

At Thursday's meeting of the council, elected members were updated on the Learning Estate Improvement Programme (LEIP), the Scottish Government's new funding model for school investment projects.

The update followed on from a special meeting of Highland Council on October 1, during which elected members agreed Broadford Primary School should be nominated as the council's priority for consideration by the Scottish Government for inclusion in Phase 2 of the LEIP. Nairn Academy was also nominated as the next priority. The update, provided to the full council on Thursday, confirmed that a formal response had now been submitted to the Scottish Government by Highland

Council Chief Executive Donna Manson, on October 14, stating these nominations.

In addition, Highland Council's response also outlined how the authority was well placed to participate in Phase 2 of LEIP with a clearly defined list of priorities for investment and a commitment to provide the capital funding necessary to support this approach.

Councillor John Finlayson, chairman of the education committee and councillor for Ward 10 Eilean a' Cheò, said: 'The council decision to support Broadford as Highland's number one priority for LEIP funding with Nairn as number two is clearly good news for these two communities and I remain hopeful these nominations will be looked on favourably by the Scottish Government.'

Both nominations are now under Scottish Government consideration and an announcement on which Phase 2 funding bids have been successful is expected in December.

Loving life as a 'mermaid'

A new BBC ALBA documentary offers a glimpse into the lives of islanders in the Outer Hebrides through the harsh winter months and features a real-life 'mermaid'.

In Trusadh: An Geamhradh/Winter, which aired last week and is available on the BBC iPlayer until November 28, hears from Kate Macleod, aged 23, from Uig on Lewis. She is a wild water swimmer and braves the sub-zero temperatures of the sea and lochs on the island all-year-round.

Ms Macleod uses a monofin when she swims and has a mermaid tail which was custom made for her by a woman

in Hawaii to fulfil her childhood dream of being a real mermaid. She has also uses it for commercial work.

A freelance editor who makes short films for BBC The Social and has her own YouTube channel, Ms Macleod said: 'My family tend to try and spend time outdoors and the sea plays a huge part in our lives.'

'We embrace everything in this area. The problems of the world are far from your mind. You just swim. I feel like a mermaid. I just enjoy it.'

'When I put my head under the water, I feel weightless and as I swim, I appreciate the beauty around me.'



Kate Macleod uses a specially made monofin to let her swim like a mermaid.

Seumas Mactaggart, head of production and development at Stornoway-based TV production company MacTV, which made the programme for BBC ALBA, added: 'This is a unique glimpse into the lives of islanders inspired by winter in some of Britain's

most westerly communities. The nights draw in, the clocks fall back and winter arrives in the Western Isles. Here, where low-slung villages link wilderness and sea, the dark season throws landscape and life and their many textures into sharper focus.'

'It can be harsh and it is always long. Many would never endure it, but for some who live here, winter brings its own light – a time of creativity, to be cherished.'

'This programme falls into step with artists, poets, wilderness lovers and more as they navigate their own versions of winter in this island outpost.'

Call for new law on memorial vandalism

A petition calling on the desecration or vandalism of war memorials to be treated as a specific criminal offence has won the backing of Highlands and Islands Scottish Labour MSPs, Rhoda Grant and David Stewart.

The pair are supporting the call for the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce legislation which recognises such vandalism as a specific criminal offence.

The petition lodged with the Scottish Parliament's Petitions Committee was brought by Glasgow based 'Friends of Dennistoun war Memorial' following an attack on their community's memorial.

Ms Grant said: 'These war memorials act as grave markers for thousands of forces personnel who died serving their country and are often the only place where family members and loved ones can visit to pay their respects.'

'They deserve to be respected and treated as graves.' Mr Stewart added: 'Currently, attacks on war memorials are dealt with in the same way as attacks on any other public or private property and I agree with campaigners on this issue that this doesn't feel adequate and fails to recognise the unique nature and importance of our war memorials to families of those we have lost, our armed forces community and our veterans.'

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Wild Words

KIRSTEN BELL

fort@obantimes.co.uk



The green hills are singing into copper and bronze and all around us trees are drifting into the autumn spectrum.

From the yellow birch to the still green oak, with rowan, alder and hazel at varying stages between, the trees and bracken are calling back their chlorophyll.

Chlorophyll is the green pigment that allows the tree to absorb light needed for photosynthesis. It is green to the human eye because the tree absorbs red and blue light but reflects the green. Autumn leaves may be a sign of decay, of the trees shedding what is no longer needed, but it is when the trees are at their most energetic that we see most of their waste – green is the colour of light the tree throws back.

Each tree reaches a point though where they have stored enough sugar under their bark and in their roots, where they cannot store any



Autumn colours are all around us.

more. If they haven't reached that point, they are forced any way to withdraw their liquids deep within to protect themselves from the threat of coming frosts.

Unless you are a pine tree, of course, then you effectively have anti-freeze in your needles and a thick layer of wax that allows you to keep your greenery all year round.

Deciduous trees, however, begin to prepare for their winter rest. Their chlorophyll

is broken down and the carotene and anthocyanin pigments that remain in the leaves now have their chance to shine. The sycamores near us are the first to leaf in the spring and so seem to be the first to turn. Their five-pointed leaves appear like golden stars in a deep green sky.

The Woodland Trust suggest the depth of the yellows, oranges and reds we see each year depends on

weather conditions. Cold and dry weather that stays above freezing affects the pigment, giving the leaves a redder hue, as does longer spells of autumn sunshine.

There is another theory that the vibrancy of the leaves shouts a warning. The brighter the colour the stronger the tree – the stronger the caution to insects. These tiny creatures may find a sheltered home for the colder months, but when spring comes this glowing tree will be capable of defence, so they'd better find another, paler, weaker home. Warning issued, energy reserves pulled back into the trunk and roots, the tree will seal off its branches. Leaves will be released and fall to the ground under their own weight or in the first wind. From here on in, the wind will whistle through bare wood; without their leafy sail to catch the air the trees will be safer from storm damage, the colours of spring stored safe within.

Council confirms response to BT on proposed removal of Highland phone boxes

The Highland Council on Thursday agreed a response to BT's proposal to remove 107 of the 348 public call boxes from across the Highland area.

Under Ofcom guidelines, the local authority is responsible for co-ordinating a consultation and responding on behalf of the Highland community.

The council's response to BT is based on representations received during two phases of public consultation, the second phase closing on October 10.

Based on consultation feedback, the council has objected to 65 public call boxes being removed and expressed support for a further three being 'adopted' by their community.

Councillors emphasised the importance of BT's public call boxes across Highland, not least in times of emergency.

Convener, Councillor Bill Lobban, said: 'Local call boxes act as a lifeline in our remote rural areas with poor, inconsistent or sometimes no mobile signal and for communities experiencing greater levels of

poverty, where some may not always be able to afford use of a mobile phone.'

Extreme disappointment was expressed by councillors that,

not only is such an exercise is being carried out by BT during a global pandemic, but that it also comes nine months after the conclusion of the previous consultation; 49 per cent of the payphones in the current consultation were previously considered for removal in 2019, at which time clear reasons were given for why they must be retained.

Councillor Lobban added: 'I am pleased there was support across the chamber that we send our robust response to BT as I am not at all pleased this has had to be dealt with so shortly after we previously responded to the consultation last year.'

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**By Dr Sam Jones, SAMS
Oceanographer**

We often think of the world's oceans as discrete systems, operating independently from one another.

In fact, they are so deeply interconnected it is more appropriate to think of a single world ocean in constant circulation.

Like a vast, stately conveyor belt, water flows from the tropics to polar regions where it cools and becomes denser, pouring back along the basins and valleys of the seabed towards the lower latitudes. This flow encompasses every ocean basin and takes many hundreds of years to complete a full circuit.

A striking example of this process in action is the ocean's delayed response to climate change. Since the industrial revolution, the Polar seas have been taking in additional heat and pollutants from human activities and diligently storing them in the deep oceans of the world, where they will reside for many years before eventually resurfacing. Not gone forever, just filed under 'to deal with later'.

Ocean exploration to help climate change predictions

Such is the importance of oceanographic data to climate and environmental scientists, a team from SAMS braved rough open Atlantic seas in October to retrieve and redeploy underwater sensors attached to moorings.

The Atlantic segment of this flow is known as the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC). 'Meridional' refers to the south-north nature of the flow and 'overturning' describes its upwelling and downwelling components in the tropics and the poles, respectively.

Despite its stately progress, the energy moved by the AMOC is staggering. Roughly 1.25 Peta (10¹⁵) watts of heat is continuously transported from the tropics towards the Atlantic Arctic via this mechanism, more than 60 times the present rate of world energy consumption.

Ambitious

The idea that human activity could disrupt this immense current system was first considered in response to an unexpected result. In 1957 an ambitious hydrographic survey aimed to measure the total amount of water and heat transported by the AMOC using a line of observations between the eastern and western sides of the Atlantic ocean.

This effort successfully delivered a figure for the

'Despite its stately progress, the energy moved by AMOC is staggering'

strength of the AMOC and a follow-up experiment in 1981 was conducted to see whether anything had changed during the 24-year interval.

Contrary to expectations, the transport was found to have decreased significantly. The discrepancy was tentative evidence this seemingly inexorable current system was slowing down.

A possible culprit for the slowdown was forthcoming. The Polar ice caps store vast amounts of fresh water and human-induced climate change has added to existing ice melt, causing more fresh water to flow into the Polar oceans. Fresh water reduces the density of seawater so has the potential to disrupt the engine that drives the AMOC. Water in the Arctic may no longer have sufficient density

to sink and flow towards the tropics.

There is much evidence that such slowdowns occurred due to melting at the end of the last ice age, as recently as 8,200 years ago.

This is the scenario portrayed in the movie *The Day after Tomorrow*. It's true the warm, salty North Atlantic Current keeps Western Europe relatively mild and that a reduction in this current could lead to cooling in the northern hemisphere. That the current could 'switch off' in a matter of days, leading to polar super-hurricanes and an influx of wolves into New York is less scientifically rigorous, but in the interests of dramatic cinema we'll let that slide.

After the discovery of an apparent slowdown in the AMOC, it was imperative we learned more about the Atlantic portion of the ocean conveyor belt. How quickly was it slowing down? What would the implications be for climate in the northern hemisphere? How sensitive would it be to future changes in climate?

To answer these questions,



Dr Sam Jones, SAMS oceanographer, is helping to uncover the inner workings of the ocean conveyor belt.

the RAPID mooring array was instigated in 2004. It comprised a line of deep ocean moorings maintained between Morocco and Florida to continuously measure the AMOC in a more comprehensive manner than had previously been possible.

The data provided by this array demonstrated that the slowdown was real, but more gradual than had initially been feared. However, the scale of year-to-year and even seasonal variability in current strength was far greater than expected.

A large unknown remained:

various measurements of the ocean current and the temperature of the sea across the north-east Atlantic, as this is crucial to understanding how the UK climate will change short-term and long-term.

'Computer models that use such data are producing worrying predictions about how our weather will change, suggesting increased rainfall and temperature shifts that industries like agriculture need

how much of the water which passes through the RAPID array reaches the Arctic to cool and sink and how much just recirculates in the North Atlantic? To answer this question and better understand the engine which drives the AMOC, it was decided a second array of instruments – a 'gateway' across the entrance to the Polar seas – was needed.

This mooring array stretched from Western Scotland, via Greenland, to the east coast of Canada and was named the Overturning in the Sub-Polar North Atlantic Program (OSNAP).

This international effort has been maintained since 2014 and has offered further insight into the inner workings of the ocean conveyor belt. We now know, for example, that most of the cooling and sinking occurs east of Greenland, not in the Labrador Sea as was previously thought. In addition, most of the strong year-to-year changes in AMOC strength originate in the stormy seas of the Eastern North Atlantic where we currently find ourselves.

of the deep Atlantic Ocean. Each mooring the ship visited consists of tens of instruments distributed along a wire, which is anchored to the seabed and kept vertical by floats. Due to the depth of the ocean basins, most of the moorings are several kilometres long, so there is great skill in recovering each mooring intact onto a relatively small vessel, downloading data and redeploying in precisely the same location.

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LETTERS

Strontian community is taking control – again

We just love the fact Strontian residents are not content to sit around and wait for someone else to make decisions about their community's future.

Having successfully built their new primary school, ensuring the building was future-proofed, this time it is the health and well-being of residents that is the focus of their hard work.

They believe 'no longer fit for purpose' and derelict buildings offer opportunities for visionary community-led care services for the future.

Phase one of the ambitious and exciting proposal will see a redundant school building, village hall, GP surgery and care home building turned into a new development offering a 'care and community hub'.

The planned hub will include new supported housing, flexible day and respite care facilities, a GP surgery and rooms for care at home, district nurse and ambulance services. There will also be a new community hall with a kitchen and smaller rooms for hire.

We wish them all the best as they move forward with this ambitious project.

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A83 Glen Croe option

It was interesting to read the article in last week's Oban Times that Argyll and Bute Council favours the Glen Croe option running adjacent to the A83 to be a permanent solution to this ongoing threat.

I really hope this means using the forestry road on the opposite side of the valley 'adjacent' to current A83. This really does seem to be the ideal solution.

Yes, it would no doubt cost a lot but the alternatives mean an ongoing struggle with no really sound final solution to this very serious problem.

Argyll and Bute residents/businesses have been amazingly patient over the years but we all live with the knowledge the current road is unsafe and dangerous and the day could easily come when we hear of a fatal accident due to yet another landslide.

Argyll has always been a beautiful, special part of Scotland. What a boost it would be to the economy for visitors to come here with no threat to their lives as they travel around it.

The expense of completing this major new road would be more than justified with a prosperous new outlook for our beloved Argyll.

Scotland has boasted great engineers in its past history. Let us trust there are still those out there capable of the task.

Moreen Moller, Clachan.

Salmon study is PR exercise

Arran residents became familiar with dead salmon after the escape from Mowi's Carradale North salmon farm in August - 48,834 farmed salmon escaped; 30,616 died.

Launching a genetics study with funding from Mowi will just delay any solution to the problems of fish escapes and their impact on our genetically different wild Scottish salmon and comes too late. Farmed salmon of Norwegian origin, compromised by weakness and disease, have contributed to the inexorable decline in our wild salmonid populations, no longer often seen in the famous fast running west coast salmon rivers of Scotland, including Arran.

This is a PR exercise. In the past five years, Mowi has lost 188,800 salmon from its farms through escapes from Colonsay, Hellisay, Loch Alsh and Carradale.

Research is often a delaying tactic to avoid making hard decisions. There should be no further planning permissions for more and larger biomass salmon farms in Kilbrannan Sound or any high energy sites, or increases in biomass anywhere, approved by councillors in the west coast.

Sally Campbell, Lamlash.

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

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

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Gàirdeachas ann an saoghal a tha car dorcha leis gun do bhuannaich Alba aig an rugbaidh an aghaidh na Cuimhrigh, le 14 puing gu 10! Thug e snodha gàire orm fhacinn gun robh fear leis an ainm Harris a' cluiche dha Alba, agus fear Lewis ann an sgioba na Cuimhrigh, cha robh a dhìth ach rèitire leis an ainm Cliseam! Thàinig glasadh nàiseanta a' choròna-bhiorais anns an rathad sa Mhàrt agus dh'fhàg sin sinn a' feitheamh greis mhòr ris na geamannan deireannach anns an fharpais sia nàiseanan seo. Ach bha Alba a' feitheamh ochd bliadhna deug airson gèam rugbaidh eadar-nàiseanta a bhuiinnig an aghaidh na Cuimhrigh ann an Cardiff! B'e gèam math a bh' ann agus na mo bheachd dh'fhàg cothromachd chomasan nan sgiobaidhean fa leth an fharpais nas teinne agus cùisean nas inntinniche, agus nas spreòdaiche, dhan luchd-amhairc. Bha e tòmailteach dhan dà sgioba nach fhaodadh sluagh a bhith an làthair aig a' phàirc ag amharc a' ghèama beò, agus gun teagamh bha na cluicheadairean agus luchd-amhairc air telebhisean ag ionndrainn an t-seinn mhìorbhaileach a bu dual a bhith ri chluinntinn aig leithid de ghèam anns a' Chuimhrigh. Mar is dual cuideachd, agus a dh'aindeoin sàr spàирn a' gheama, chriochnaich cùisean gu cairdeil modhail. 'S mairg a rachadh etarra, car mar a tha fior le sluagh gach taobh dhen Chliseam!

Taobh eile na Roinn Eòrpa bha muinntir baile

agus sgìre Izmir san Tuirc a' cladhach gu brònach tro sgrios na crith-thalmhainn a mharbh co-dhiù deugachadh dhaoine agus a dh'fhàg ceudan eile air an droch leòn. Suidheachadh uabhasach far am bheil daoine nan eigin a' lorg bhall teaghlach agus chairdean, le dòchas gun tig iad beò bhon sprìullich. Mar a dh'èirich le Covid 19 chan eil crith-thalmhainn a' toirt feart sam bith air crìochan a stèidhich mac an duine agus thug an criothnachadh seo cuideachd buaidh air a' Ghrèig ann an nàbachd na Tuirce. Fad iomadh bliadhna tha cùisean eadar an dà nàbachd sin air a bhith gu math fuar agus aimhreiteach, ach 's neònach mar a thachras agus tha e coltach gun tug an sgrios a bhual orra le chèile luchd-riaghlaidh nan dùthchannan seo ri chèile mar nach fhacas bho chionn fhada. Nach bu mhath gun leanadh agus gum fàsadh sin gu còrdadh maireannach.

Le Sasainn air ais fo làn-ghlasadh a-rithist tuigear leamhachas agus tòmait muinntir na dùthcha sin, ach theagamh gum bheil daoine a' fas nas mi-riaraichte leis a' charachd phoilitigeach a tha a' dol an lùib chùisean. Saoilidh mi gur e rùn a' mhòr-shluagh gun dèanar na ghabhas, cho luath 's a ghabhas, gus a' choròna-bhioras a cheannsachadh agus gum bheil e mar dhleastanas air gach pártaidh poilitigeach co-obrachadh gus an t-amas sin a choileanadh! Bidh sin a' ciallachadh gun tèid dèiligeadh gu cothromach ri gach sgìre den dùthach ge bith an cuid dàimh phoilitigeach.

Threat to free speech?

The SNP's dangerous Hate Crime Bill could threaten free speech in our homes.

Humza Yousaf has confirmed controversial offences will apply inside the home, essentially criminalising free speech at the dinner table.

The SNP must withdraw this Bill and think again instead of trying to force through dangerous attacks on our freedoms.

**Councillor Alastair Redman,
Kintyre and Islands ward.**

We are killing the planet

I am suffering from Ecological Anxiety Syndrome. The symptoms are mixed but are characterised by unexpected bouts of crying over tree stumps and an unwholesome desire to grab people by the shoulders and shake them whilst shouting 'Can't you see what you're doing?'

I have been to the doctor and he tells me it is

just a symptom of my ardent belief that we are killing the planet. He's put me on a course of pills called 'Idongivadam'.

Seriously, though, every day I read or hear about poison we have thrown in extravagant quantities into our lochs, see newly-fallen rain washing out our increasingly bare hillsides or hear of valuable peat being dug up so we can grow a few flowers. We have to start doing more than congratulating ourselves on producing electricity by wind power alone. We have to care whether Forestry and Land Scotland wants to actually look after the environment entrusted to them or just wants to make money. We have to ask if NatureScot should be responsible for looking after our wildlife or should instead be rebranded WildliferemovalScot.

If we don't, the agencies to whom we have given the authority to 'manage' our vanishing planet will likely contribute to killing it.

Nick MacIneskar, Tayvallich.

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DISTRICT NEWS

Knoydart Post Office reopens in new home

Knoydart Post Office at The Knoydart Foundation Community Shop, Inverie, reopened last week.

The previous branch at Inverie closed in April last year following the retirement of the Postmaster and the withdrawal of the premises for Post Office use.

The planned reopening was delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Planned opening hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10am till noon.

Post Office services will be offered from a low-screened, open-plan serving point alongside the retail counter.

David Duff, Post Office Change Manager, said: 'We are delighted to be restoring Post Office services to the area.'

'We will be making it easier for customers to get their cash, send and collect their mail and do their banking because we know how important these services are to local residents.'

'We are confident this vibrant new-style Post Office at the heart of the community will meet customer needs.'

Remember the fallen at home this year

Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day will be commemorated across Highland but in different ways than usual.

Following the latest Scottish Government guidance on commemorative events, Highland Council is not organising any Remembrance parades, events or services for Sunday, November 8 and Wednesday November 11.

Instead, people are being encouraged to continue to follow the guidelines and pay their respects at home or on their doorsteps by observing the national two-minute silence and to donate to the Poppy Scotland appeal at www.poppyScotland.org.uk

Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Lane MBE, Fort William and District branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland, said: 'As unfortunate as this is, we feel honour bound to pay homage to the fallen of Lochaber.'

If anyone is able to take photographs of this tribute, please send them to us and we will attempt to have as many of them as possible published.'

Blackford urges support for Poppy Appeal

Ross, Skye and Lochaber MP Ian Blackford has urged constituents to mark Remembrance Sunday remotely – and donate to the Poppy Appeal – despite Covid-19 restrictions preventing the usual local services and parades this year.

The SNP Westminster leader, who will attend the Cenotaph, alongside other political leaders, said: 'We must never forget the huge sacrifices made by our armed forces and veterans.'

The Royal British Legion is encouraging individuals and communities to mark Remembrance Sunday by taking part in remote and socially-distanced activities this year, such as watching the service on television or pausing for the two-minute silence at home or on your doorstep.

Other suggested activities include creating a Remembrance space in your garden, hosting an online Remembrance service or setting up a community forum to discuss Remembrance stories.

I would also encourage people to get involved in this year's Poppy Appeal, either by buying a poppy or making an online donation to help

support veterans. These donations are needed this year more than at any other time.'

He added: 'Sadly, owing to Covid-19 restrictions, the annual Remembrance Sunday march past the Cenotaph will not take place this year. I will, however, be honoured to attend the closed Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph to honour the fallen.'



While there will be no official parade or events, Ian Blackford is urging people to support The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal.

PLOCKTON

Plockton and District Community Council held its October monthly meeting online. The following items were discussed:

- Septic tank, Rhu: New planning permission to be applied for.
- Village clean up: inappropriate due to Covid. There has been a request from residents to obtain skips.
- Maintenance of village benches: Bench at Rhu to be replaced with one donated to the village by Maureen Leask.
- Letter of support for Aird Ferry Dornie: currently closed due to Covid restrictions. Biz Campbell stated she would be glad of community council support regarding Aird Ferry Centre future.
- War memorial letter to Mr P Mackenna: Letter of thanks sent for work done to wall.
- Cattle grid at Ceann An Uib: Letter to Susan Galloway, head teacher, Plockton High School. She replied stating that fencing is to be erected around the back of the school and hostel to prevent the cattle getting in rather than a cattle grid.

■ Dangerous tree at Plockton Church: This has been reported to Iain Turnbull of the National Trust for Scotland, which is in discussions with the council.

■ Welcome to Plockton signs: Original artwork was not retained. IH and DM will look at a replacement.

■ Damaged road signs: Biz Campbell to action this. Plockton High School to be asked to apply to Safer Routes for Schools for better signs. Ian Hay to contact.

■ Covid 19: The community council has been supporting the Covid WhatsApp group which is working well.

■ The community council approved the purchase of four signs welcoming people back to Plockton and District at a cost of £320.

■ 14 Harbour Street will be retained as social housing. Funding has been achieved for upgrading from the Scottish Government.

■ Fireworks display cancelled for November 5. No decision yet on Hogmanay display.

■ Grant application for £500 Supporting Community Resilience Fund applied for and awarded – £320 used for 'Welcome' signs.

■ Highland Council participation request

form submitted in conjunction with Plockton and District Development Trust. The request covered traffic management and parking in Plockton and Duirinish. The community council and the new trust have agreed to work together on this, with the trust taking the lead.

■ Hand sanitisers: Plockton received four units which were placed in the Community Hall, Free Church, paper shop and play park.

■ The community council received a letter from Simon Dunsford, HM Inspector HSE, updating on cattle management in the village. The letter is available on Plockton.org

■ Bins at the pier: Letter received from Jane Buckley. Bins are now emptied twice a week.

■ Postmistress recognition: F Mackenzie to organise card and flowers for K Havard who has retired after serving the community as Postmistress for more than 22 years.

■ Poppy wreaths: The Highland Council will not be laying wreaths this year on November 11 due to Covid 19 restrictions. Traditionally the British Legion lays a wreath on the memorial in Plockton.

■ Next meeting: December 14 at 7.30pm.



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Challenging times but Ollie on target for 366-day goal

Fort William Juniors football coach Ollie Stephen combined his enthusiasm for the team with his regular keep fit and stress relieving runs in a challenge to raise funds for the youngsters.

Rain or shine, hot or cold, Ollie pledged to run at least 5km per day, every day, for 366 days - 2020 being a leap year - coupled with push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups and crunches to help raise funds to run the club which, due to geography, has costly travelling to compete, as well as all the usual expenses.

He said: 'Lots of people give up their time for free to help run the club and train the boys at all levels. The work that goes on in running the club and making sure we are compliant is massive. As well

as that, the club always faces financial challenges, being so far geographically away from the other teams we play. Kit for the boys to train and play in, along with other training equipment and charges for hire of pitches, such as Lochaber High Astro, can really add up.'

Starting at the beginning of the year, Ollie is now approaching his target of 2,400kms, although a few months ago he had to give up the 'extras' after injuring his wrist, but carried on running.

'I've run through lockdown, three storms and some serious leg pain and shin splints and am on track to make 2,600kms with two months to go,' he added.

'I haven't really pushed the donations side of things, but

want to try and raise as much as possible as it's an incredibly worthy cause.'

'I have a Go Fund Me page - 2020 challenge-for-fort-william-youth-footballers) - but would also happily take any donations at the Claggan Park club house.'

Although he has never foundered in his challenge, Ollie has often been joined on his runs by son Jack, who also plays for the juniors. And daughter Lucy sometimes cycles alongside him to give words of encouragement.

Ollie Stephen on another run to raise money for young footballers.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.



Camanachd board discusses Covid impact with MSP

Covid-19 was the main topic of conversation at the Camanachd Association's September board meeting.

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch MSP Kate Forbes was also present, taking part in discussions on how Covid has impacted the sport and clubs.

Difficulty in travelling to fixtures in rural communities under current restrictions was highlighted among the many challenges clubs are

facing, however, Derek Keir, Camanachd Association Chief Executive Officer, commended the forward-thinking approach from shinty clubs during the pandemic.

'Clubs have been extremely positive and pro-active in moving beyond the current crisis by working through their Covid readiness documents and getting back to playing the sport,' he said. 'At present, 17 clubs have completed their documentation and are ready to play which is testament to

the hard work and great character of the volunteers who drive our clubs.'

The Camanachd Association is ready to work with any club which wants to take the next steps on its journey in returning to sport.'

The first shinty matches since March were played on Saturday September 26.

Other actions were discussed including the development of facilities for Scotland's most historic sport. There was focus on increasing the number of

schools engaged in shinty and the role modern facilities play in retaining members.

Recent developments noted included the partnership with Highland Highland, Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise as well as Inverness Shinty Club regarding facilities at the Bught Park and UHI campus.

Further discussions also highlighted the incredible role sponsors have played in 2020 with significant contributions from Mowi, Tulloch Homes

and Highland Industrial Supplies.

Keith Loades, president of the Camanachd Association, said: 'We greatly appreciate Kate taking the time out of what is a hectic schedule to spend time listening to the challenges that our clubs - and the association as a whole - are facing.'

Ms Forbes said: 'Having several of the top teams in my constituency, I am well aware of the importance of shinty to communities across the Highlands as well as

further afield. I was pleased to take part in the recent board meeting and am taking a very keen interest in the short-term working group's work on stemming rural depopulation which is a subject very close to my heart.'



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