



Oban play park welcomes in new era



Mull boy receives best birthday gift – ever!

OBAN FOR BUSINESS
A list of local businesses open during lockdown

Father hits out against drink driver's jail bid

by Kathie Griffiths
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A drink driver who killed a Mull vet after downing cider and whisky has begun a legal bid to serve the rest of his prison sentence in France.

Thomas Wainwright is almost four years into a 12-year jail sentence after a head-on crash in which his hired Maserati ploughed into Theresa Wade's Berlingo van near Craignure on October 28 2015.

Wainwright, who had been drinking for eight-and-a-half hours that day, was on the wrong side of the road but tried to blame Miss Wade, 29, for the smash. Road traffic experts disproved his claim.

Last year the Scottish Government refused a request by Wainwright – whose family is of Scottish origins but he has lived in France for most of his life and worked as a first officer on a French yacht – to be transferred into the custody of the French authorities, but he has now launched a petition for

a judicial review against that decision at the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

Miss Wade's father Trevor Wade told The Oban Times Wainwright should have the 'decency' to stay where he is and serve out the rest of his sentence in the country where he committed the crime.

He said: 'I'm very much against him going to France. If he went back I would worry about him getting out too early. He got 12 years, it was the maximum the judge could give him, and he should have the decency to serve that time here, where it happened.'

'He's got a cheek, only thinking of himself. There is no real reason for him to go to France.'

During sentencing at the High Court in Glasgow in 2017, Judge John Morris QC had remarked on Wainwright's lack of remorse and on his arrogance in giving evidence.

It was also revealed during Wainwright's trial that he had a

Continued on page 10.



Youth speak up for people's park at Ganavan

Young people are making themselves seen and heard as part of a growing campaign to protect 'people's park' Ganavan from the threat of more houses being built. At the weekend, this group of friends, all aged under 12, took themselves and placards to the popular beach to make their point. To read more about the video messages they have been making, turn to page two.

Lockdown and school updates

The lockdown in Scotland will continue until 'at least' the end of February, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has announced.

In an update to the Scottish Parliament on Tuesday afternoon, she said the number of cases of Covid in Scotland was still too high and that pressure on the NHS remained severe.

However, she said progress had been made, with daily cases having more than halved and hospital admissions appearing to have peaked. The announcement followed a meeting of the Scottish Government cabinet on Tuesday morning.

Miss Sturgeon said: 'The cabinet decided the current lockdown, including the stay-at-home requirement does need to remain in place at least until the end of February.' In terms of pupils returning to school, Miss Sturgeon said the Scottish Government would look at the 'careful and gradual' return to school from February 22 following the February mid-term break.

She said the dates were still subject to 'continued progress' in suppressing the virus and would be subject to

Continued on page five.

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OT

Beach mural backed by Oban Community Council

An idea for a mural celebrating the history of Ganavan has been warmly encouraged by Oban Community Council.

Resident Jane Terris gave a short briefing to the council on an idea for a mural to go on an empty space at the gable end of the utility block.

Jane told a meeting of the council the response so far had been overwhelming and a group had been formed – Ganavan Heritage and Peoples Park initiative – to apply for funding for the project.

However, she said Argyll and Bute Council's local development plan two, which has pencilled-in potential development in the same area, could prove an issue.

Councillor Roddy McCuish, told the meeting he was in full support of a 'local initiative' at the site.

He said: 'Ganavan is crying out for something like this and if we can all work together and make Ganavan even more attractive perhaps it might change how other people, including outside developers look at Ganavan.'

Councillor Elaine Robertson said she had recently read the draft of a new book concerning Oban in wartime and said Ganavan featured prominently as an area for the maintenance and repair of seaplanes.

'We want to develop tastefully and historically,' said Councillor Robertson. 'Most of our visitors go out to Ganavan at some point and this would be interesting for them.'

Marri Malloy, convener of Oban Community Council, encouraged the formation of an official group.

'I think you should just go ahead, set up your committee, get your constitution done and I am positive you'll get support for it from local people,' she said.

The Ganavan Heritage and Peoples Park Initiative will run alongside the Friends of Ganavan community group but with an emphasis on the heritage of the area.

Its Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/Ganavan-Heritage-and-Peoples-Park-Initiative-101366848626188

Youngsters support Ganavan campaign

by Kathie Griffiths
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Young voices are speaking up as part of a campaign to save Ganavan from the threat of more houses.

Mum Jo MacLean whose daughters Iona, eight, and Breagh, 10, were the driving force behind a number of video appeals on Facebook to stop any potential developers in their tracks, says the popular beach is Oban's 'local park' and would be a massive loss.

She says the Friends of Ganavan campaign to save it from ever being built on reminds her of the film Local Hero, where a small Scottish seaside community comes under threat of an American oil refinery wanting to take it over.

'It's just like the movie where the community all gets together to save their beach,' she said, adding: 'Sometimes



Young people at Ganavan making their voices heard as part of a campaign to protect the area from more housing.

who is eight, enjoys swimming and climbing on the rocks and getting a snack from Dougie Dan's van.

'It would be bad if they built houses there. There would be no grass left and the shinty pitch would go. The new houses would mean more cars,' he said.

Eldest brother Lachie, 10, thinks the only homes at Ganavan should be for wildlife – not for more humans.

'I would never think people would build houses so close to the water. It should be for animals to live there, not people. More houses would spoil our Ganavan,' he told The Oban Times.

Meanwhile youngest D'Arcy brother Murdo, who is four and wore his superhero Batman outfit in his video, said: 'I like playing at Ganavan with my friends and my dog Norie. I like seeing the boats and building sandcastles.'

He is also worried more houses might put pirates off from coming to look for buried treasure!

it takes the voices of children to make a point and be heard. Iona and Breagh came up with the words in their videos themselves.

'They didn't need any prompting.'

'Ganavan is our local park. Building more houses would threaten our children's playground.'

Calls for Ganavan to stay out of the grip of developers are mounting from devotees far and wide. An appeal has gone out for people to write to councillors and parliamentary representatives – one man has already sent a letter to the First Minister.

Iona MacLean, who has

celebrated birthday parties at Ganavan, said: 'I wouldn't like them to build more houses there. It wouldn't feel so big anymore. I like to go there a lot to play, paddleboard and skateboard in the car park.'

Her sister Breagh added: 'I go there after school with my friends and we have really good adventures. If there were more houses we wouldn't have as much fun.'

The girls' videos have inspired other friends and young people to make their own video appeals – including the four D'Arcy brothers from Oban.

Six-year-old Sorley D'Arcy likes exploring the rockpools best, while big brother Caley,

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New group answers call of nature

The toilets at Ganavan Sands will officially reopen this weekend.

Just hours after an appeal by BID4Oban and The Oban Times for someone to come forward to take on the task of opening and cleaning the public convenience, Adventure Oban has stepped up to help.

The newly-established limited company and community body is chaired by Dave Blezard, who runs Outside Edge, Oban's independent outdoors sports shop.

An Adventure Oban spokesman said its supporters were passionate about Ganavan as swimmers, runners, cyclists, walkers and paddleboarders.

They recognised the necessity for the facilities to be open to the public at weekends and had agreed to take on the role.

The arrangement will be in

place every weekend until April when Argyll and Bute Council fully reopens the loos for the start of the new season.

Andy Spence, left, the BID4Oban chief executive, who has been working to get the toilets reopened, said he was 'delighted' with the breakthrough and thanked Adventure Oban for coming forward.

Exercise
Opening the toilets at weekends has been on the agenda for some time as a result of the number of people flocking to Ganavan for exercise during the latest lockdown.

Mr Spence said inductions were being carried out and the toilets would reopen this Saturday and Sunday, February 6 and 7.

'It's good to have a commu-

nity group involved in this and BID4Oban thanks Argyll and Bute Council and local councillors for supporting this initiative,' he said.

At a meeting of Oban Community Council last week, Dougie Graham, who runs a snack bar at the car park, explained he could no longer fully take on all of the role.

An honesty box is to be provided for donations towards the costs of reopening.

These include cleaning materials, the wages and the licensing which are being met as a one-off gesture by BID4Oban.

The arrangement will see the toilets cleaned once a day and at the end of each weekend with people urged to make donations.

Adventure Oban added that it is on the verge of announcing exciting new plans to encourage outdoor adventure locally.

POLICE FILES

About 12.30am on Tuesday January 26 at George Street, Oban, a car was stopped and searched by police. The driver, a man, 23, was allegedly found in possession of cannabis.

The man was charged and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 1pm on Tuesday January 26 at Shore Street, Oban, a man, 40, was stopped and searched by police and allegedly found in possession of Diamorphine.

Police thereafter searched a house at Shuna Terrace, Oban, under warrant where a quantity of heroin and cocaine was recovered.

The man was cautioned and charged and a report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

About 5am on Wednesday January 27 at Miller Road, Oban, a man, 38, was stopped and searched by police and found in possession of cannabis. The man was issued with a Recorded Police Warning.

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'Listen to us, we'll work with you', planners told

by Kathie Griffiths
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Mull is imploring Argyll and Bute Council to listen to its views on potential plans to redevelop Craignure pier.

More than 25 people joined Monday's Zoom meeting called by Mull Community Council after concerns the proposals had been sprung on the island with a claim half of the population was not aware of a consultation going on.

Plans being developed cover not just the long-term future of the pier and its marshalling area, but also what needs to be done now to continue working.

A three-week online consultation by the council is advertising options on social media and asking for comments but worries were expressed at Monday's virtual meeting that Argyll and Bute



Craignure Pier is almost 60 years old and showing signs of its age.

had already made its choice.

Mull councillor Mary Jean Devon asked why the council had repeatedly used the wording 'preferred option' in its online presentation of availa-

ble options if the decision had not already been made.

She said: 'To the public it appears the council has made a decision against their backs,' adding a lot of people felt the consultation was flawed. She said the views of people who live and work day-to-day on Mull should come 'first and foremost'.

Marines manager for Argyll and Bute Stewart Clark told the meeting no decision had been made yet, adding: 'Rest assured we're not going to appear with a planning application in the next few months.'

He also said any community feedback coming after the end of the three-week consultation would not be ignored and would go before council members.

The question of a possible community buyout of the pier was also raised at the meeting.

Councillor Devon said: 'Craignure is a village. We don't want a giant infrastructure that means it will lose its identity. We implore you to listen to the public. Please, please listen to what the people are saying. We are a force to be reckoned with.'

Villagers in Craignure want any development to be sympathetic to their 'amazing' community. They are worried how businesses could be impacted, fearing the wrong option could result in job losses. There are also anxieties about traffic decanted on the island's roads from bigger ferries coming, as well as light pollution at night and overnight noise.

Norman Hickson, chairman of Craignure Bay Community Group, said villagers were not 'nimby's', but overall the majority of people in Craignure could see the advantage of

keeping any redevelopment small and considerate, urging the council to heed the 'spirit of the place'.

'Always enhance it, never hurt it,' he said, insisting there should be no reason for any development not to be attractive or for the new terminal to ruin anyone's view

'That would just be lazy design. I'd hate for this to get to planning for us to say if we like it or not. We want to work with you.'

Mr Hickson told Mr Clark the village had such a small area of land left that it would be 'defended by the last person standing in Craignure, if anyone tried to take it away'.

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

Friends of Oban Community Playpark welcome in new era

A new generation of caretakers has come on board to ensure Oban's community playpark will be in safe hands for years to come, writes Fiona Scott.

Friends of Oban Community Playpark held its online annual general meeting on January 16 in the hope interested individuals would step up and take on the four main committee roles.

If new people did not respond positively it was likely the group, started in 2011 to oversee and fundraise for the installation of the Atlantis Leisure-based playpark, would have to call it a day and disband the constituted group, leaving the playpark without a community voice.

However, last week the group announced that an all-new committee of parents, who are passionate to continue the great work that Lyndsay Elliott and her team have been doing over the past nine years, had come forward.

Taking over as chairman is father of two Dave Ainscough who said: 'I believe it is really important to continue the hard work this group has been doing over the years.'

'Having heard the requests



Dave Ainscough with his two sons. He becomes the new chairperson for the group.

for volunteers, I was interested to learn more, as were many others who came forward.

'Living just up the road from the park with our two boys, we have regularly used and enjoyed the space and the playpark for many years.'

Incoming vice chairperson Emma D'Arcy has always been involved in sports development and hopes her passion for promoting physical activity and living an active lifestyle will be of use to the group.

'Play is a massive part of this

and where better to do it than at the playpark,' said Emma.

'It's sad to be saying goodbye to most of the original members but also exciting to have some fresh faces on board to continue to be the voice for this brilliant inclusive playpark we have here in Oban.'

Lucy Roberts, who has lived in Oban for seven years and remembers what it was like to not have a proper playpark, takes on the role of secretary.

'After the issues with the flooring and some equipment, it's been frustrating and upsetting to see the park shut for long periods of time.'

'Now it's time for a new team to ensure the playpark is still going strong for future generations.'

Treasurer Graeme Greenlaw added: 'Our hope is that by continuing this group we will be able to represent the park, the people who use it and the community to ensure it remains an asset for Oban and its many visitors for many years to come.'

Former chairperson Lyndsay Elliott will stay on as a committee member to help with the transition.

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Oban care home concerns amid budget cut plans

by Ellis Butcher
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A shake-up of health and social care services is looming across Argyll and Bute as bosses seek to save nearly £7 million in the coming year.

A budget consultation will run until February 19 and a major meeting of health and social care (HSCP) bosses will take place at the end of March to make decisions.

It could see some services cut, changed or even returned as part of a raft of proposals.

One of the headline suggestions to cut costs is to transfer residents out of two 'not fit for purpose' in-house care homes and place them into private sector homes.

The HSCP has not publicly identified which of its six local authority homes in Oban, Tiree, Islay, Ardrishaig, Rothesay or Dunoon might

be affected. But it has sparked concerns about the future of Eadar Glinn Residential Home on Drummore Road, Oban.

Councillor Kieron Green, chairman of the main health and social care management board, was asked to identify which care homes the HSCP had in mind and to rule out Eadar Glinn.

'These are difficult choices and there are no easy options left to reduce our spending.'

Councillor Green declined to do so and said at this stage the HSCP was consulting at a 'strategic level' on what people's priorities were and was not at the point of identifying specific properties involved.

If the proposal was taken

forward after the consultation, further engagement would be required before any decision was made, he said.

Councillor Green urged people to take part in the consultation if they have comments about any potential transfer of residents.

He said some may support some of the options which include a possible return of urology services from Greater Glasgow and Clyde to Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban.

Other proposals could see 'staffing changes' at two of three children's homes serving Argyll and Bute.

The area has three local authority children's homes, one in Oban and the others in Dunoon and Helensburgh.

In terms of the budget, officials are understood to have identified around £4.3m of savings and need feedback on the remaining £2.5m of

savings. The HSCP said: 'We cannot simply continue to provide the same services in the same ways. We have to find efficiencies, transform how we operate and do less going forward.'

'These are difficult choices and there are no easy options left to reduce our spending. We would really value your views to help us make the best decisions that will affect all of our lives.'

The HSCP reduced spending by £6 million during 2020-21. The reductions do not end there as a further £4.5m will be required in 2022-23.

The consultation runs until February 19 with the public asked to identify their 'priority services'.

To take part in the consultation please visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/forms/hscp-budget-consultation-survey-2021-22.

Councillor McCuish shares vaccination worries

A councillor has expressed concerns over how long it might take for all Oban residents to be vaccinated against the coronavirus.

While welcoming the start of the roll-out of the Covid jab in town and praising the efforts of Lorn Medical Centre, Councillor Roddy McCuish is worried about the speed of vaccine supply to Oban.

He told a meeting of Oban Community Council: 'It's great to see the vaccinations rolling out in the town, with all the health staff vaccinated and those of a certain age.'

'My calculations might be wrong and while they are doing a tremendous job down there, at the rate they are getting the vaccinations in and the rate they are rolling it out, it'll be Christmas before everyone gets vaccinated.'

'We need to get more of the vaccination rolled out and I know the government is doing its best to do that.'

Jessie MacFarlane, community council treasurer, said that on January 23 during the first clinic held at the Lorn Medical

Centre, more than 440 people had been vaccinated.

Mairi Dunning, its practice manager, told The Oban Times the centre had made projections about the roll-out and it was not anticipated it would take until Christmas to achieve. Along with other GP surgeries, it was dependent on vaccine supply.

She said: 'At the moment we are really quite happy with how it's going. It is getting quicker and people have been very accommodating. On Saturday alone, 250 people were vaccinated between 9am and 12.30pm.'

As of Monday this week, 750 doses had been given out at a combination of special clinics, the hospital, in care homes and to the housebound, with an emphasis on over-75s and key workers. Around 17,000 doses are required in the Oban area to give everyone over the age of 18 a vaccination twice.

The centre held its first Covid vaccination clinic on January 23 and its second on January 29. A third clinic is to be announced in due course.

Taking pride from our history

Oban Pride chairman Phill Dexter takes a look at the origins of the movement in the first of a series of weekly articles to celebrate Pride History Month.

Oban Pride held its inaugural event in 2019, which was a significant year for the LGBTQ+ community throughout the world.

Although we were holding our first Pride march, the events began in 1970 following the Stonewall riots of 1969, which many say were the start of the modern day Pride movement.

The Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York, catered for an assortment of patrons, including gay men, lesbians, transgender people, sex workers, drag queens and homeless youths. These people faced discrimination and an anti-gay law system. Many establishments would not allow these people in but the Stonewall Inn would, which is why many gathered there.

Following a series of police raids on the inn, which included many beatings and arrests of the patrons, the Stonewall,



The first Pride march in Oban took place in 2019.

as well as others in nearby bars and in the nearby area, stood up for themselves and the LGBTQ+ community and started fighting back against the police.

These riots started on June 28 1969 and occurred over several nights. The first Pride marches took place in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles in 1970. The first official Pride in the UK was held in London in 1972 and the first official Pride in Scotland was held in Edinburgh in 1995.

In 2019 there were 22 Prides held in Scotland and we were

delighted to hold our first Pride in Oban in 2019, marking 50 years since the Stonewall riots.

We felt so welcome in Oban with our first Pride march and event.

The spirit throughout the community was amazing and we could not have been more pleased with how peaceful the day was.

Unlike the Stonewall riots where people were beaten and arrested for being LGBTQ+, we had a peaceful day full of love and respect - a true sign of how far the LGBTQ+ Pride movement has come.



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New home is Owen's best birthday present

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



What do you get a six-year-old boy for his birthday? How about a house?

That's exactly what Mull's Owen Delarey got on his special day this year. While most young lads can only dream of getting toy cranes for their birthday, Owen got the real thing when his family's new house was delivered to Ulva Ferry on the island's west coast.

The big event, marking an exciting fresh start on the island for Owen, his mum Ruth, sister Phoebe, nine, and brother Robin, 13, just happened to coincide with the youngster's birthday.

'It had to be his best birthday present ever,' said Ruth, who works at the Spar shop in Salen and was one of 31 hopefuls wanting to be allocated one of the four new affordable homes



going up for long-term rent on a site at Oskamull as part of a Mull and Iona Community Trust project working with Ulva School Community Association (USCA).

Ruth, who hails from Edinburgh but has lived on Mull for three years, said news of being selected for one of the new houses came as a huge relief after living short-term

in a number of properties. She said: 'It was really wonderful to get the good news that we'd been selected for one of the houses.'

'I'd almost been homeless before. It means I can relax now we have a long-term rental. There was a point I thought we'd have to leave Mull.'

Ruth took Owen along as a birthday surprise to see the

Owen de la Rey on the new house site with his sister Phoebe, mum Ruth and her partner Jason Smith.

pre-fab units of their new home being unloaded. They hope to move in by April.

Ruth continued: 'We found out last week the first house had arrived on the site and the next one coming was going to be ours and going to be delivered on Owen's birthday.'

'He really loves cranes so it was a special treat to watch it get unloaded. He wanted to know which bit was going to be his bedroom.'

Two of the new homes have three bedrooms while the others have two bedrooms. Built by The Wee House Company, the homes are 90 per cent ready before leaving their Ayrshire factory and are delivered on site ready-fitted with kitchens, bathrooms, plumbing and

electrics.

MICT general manager Moray Finch said the 31 applications were assessed against an allocation policy which had previously been drawn up in consultation with the community. There was a balanced but strong weighting in favour of families with primary school age or younger children to help sustain numbers at Ulva Primary School. Other factors taken into account included applicants' housing circumstances, the length of time living in the area and any links to it.

Mr Finch said all four properties have now been allocated.

'This is an incredibly proud moment for myself and Helen MacDonald, our hard-working housing project manager. It is the culmination of seven years work, working alongside volunteers from the community and Ulva School Community Association,' he added.

Lockdown and education updates

Continued from page one. final confirmation following a review in a fortnight.

'Our intention is that from the week beginning February 22 there will be a full-time return of early learning and child care for all children below school age.'

There will also be a full-time return to school for all pupils in primaries 1-3 and a part-time return, a limited basis, for senior phase pupils to allow in-school practical work necessary for the completion of National Qualification courses.

'It is intended that no more than five to eight per cent will be physically present at any one time,' she said.

There will be 'small increases' in existing provision for children and young people with 'significant' additional support needs where there is a 'clear and demonstrable necessity'.

Ms Sturgeon also said testing would be rolled out to those who work in schools, early learning and child care settings to provide 'at home' testing twice a week.

£10,000 campervan waste unit fails to find a home in Oban

A search for an Oban site to house a waste disposal unit for visiting campervans has so far drawn a blank, writes Ellis Butcher.

The unit, which is used for emptying toilet cassettes in campervans and caravans, is designed to avoid waste being disposed of in the environment, such as Ganavan, a meeting heard.

But despite a number of inquiries, BID4Oban chief executive Andy Spence told councillors it had proved 'extremely difficult' finding anyone prepared to take it on.

He told a meeting of Oban Community Council on Monday: 'We have £10,000 funding to install this and supply this for the town, and we all know the issues caused last year. Basically no-one wants it located on their premises.'

It was suggested the Pennyfuir Wastewater Treatment Works could be a potential location. It was manned, had good access and was out of the way, the meeting heard.

Mr Spence said the preference had been to site it at Lochavullin where camper-



vans park up opposite Tesco. Ideally though, the unit needed to be located in a manned petrol filling station to ensure it was maintained, clean and not vandalised, he said.

Georgina Reid, a corporate affairs manager for Scottish Water, told the meeting the company regularly worked with and supported the developers of campervan waste disposal points and that some funding was available from the Scottish Government.

Community council member Laura Corbe said the wastewater site at Pennyfuir was the 'only sensible place' to site it.

'You'll discover that nobody

else wants it in town,' she said. 'They do smell.'

'I know people say they don't, but they do. I've seen a lot of them and not one of them has been manned and I think that's totally unnecessary to think they do need it manned. Everybody knows how to use them.'

Mr Spence agreed to pursue it with Scottish Water.

Councillor Roddy McCuish said: 'How ironic is it that Andy has this funding and we are struggling to spend it? For goodness sake we've got the funding, it's a stepping stone to doing something and let's stop beating about the bush and find a location.'

Coronavirus

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

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



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

Email info@bid4oban.co.uk



Oban Business Improvement District
www.bid4oban.co.uk



OT

Around Oban

ANDREW SPENCE

editor@obantimes.co.uk

It's good to have had some reasonable weather over the last week to enable people to get out walking round the town.

And there is more good news on the horizon this week with the news that Ganavan toilets are reopening from this weekend.

Thanks to the powers of Facebook, a group of volunteers have come forward to open and close the toilets at weekends - a great indication of what can happen in a community when like-minded individuals come together.

As I write this piece, I have received a telephone call from a local resident, who wished to remain anonymous, offering a donation of £300 to cover the users agreement between BID4Oban and Argyll and Bute Council. It is incredible the generosity of some people.

Also encouraging is seeing the Friends of Ganavan group achieve more than 3,000 followers on Facebook, which indicates the passion there is locally

WHERE IS THIS?



to see Ganavan used and maintained for not only the residents of Oban but all our visitors throughout the year.

It is still strange to walk through the town and pass all the shops and businesses locked up. We need to ensure that when the time comes, we are all there for them and make sure we are shopping locally.

As always there are businesses operating under various lockdown conditions and remaining open.

Hats off to you all. We greatly appreciate what you are doing.

Last week's photograph was taken in Gibraltar Street. This week's is fairly easy.

Skatepark project reveals preferred site ...but have your say

by Kathie Griffiths

kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Movers behind plans for a community skatepark in Oban have revealed their preferred town centre spot.

Out of 19 possible sites looked at, the grassy area in front of Atlantis Leisure Centre could be the best option.

But it is still early days and nothing is set in stone, says community skatepark chairman Mark MacQueen, announcing that thanks to £12,000 funding from the Oban Common Good Fund and the MacQueen Brothers Charitable Trust - a feasibility study is ready to start.

As part of the study there will be opportunities for townspeople and others interested

in the venture to have their say online in how the project takes shape and where it will go.

'We feel our preferred choice is the grassy area in front of Atlantis. Nothing is set in stone but we are investigating the possibility.'

'We know it's a sensitive issue but we've looked at about 19 different sites. If you make it central it belongs to the whole town. It is more accessible, easy to get to.'

'If it goes at either end of town then it identifies with that particular area rather than being an asset for everyone. It also has to be somewhere that is safe.'

'There are countless commercial opportunities it could bring too, from attracting out-of-town visitors to new

businesses selling equipment, clothing or even lessons, he said.

'We are really excited that we are moving forward with a facility that will allow more people to enjoy an exercise and is also one that, with Covid in mind, is a loosely spaced activity,' added Mr MacQueen.

The project has already got the thumbs-up from famous stunt biker Danny MacAskill and its Facebook page now has more than 770 followers with more than 750 likes. The more 'likes' the page receives, the more it will help ramp up funding from major backers, says Mr MacQueen.

Depending on its size and form, a skatepark will cost hundreds of thousands of pounds to build and big

funders will want to see just how much support the project has from its community.

Oban Community Skatepark is due to have a Zoom meeting tonight, Thursday February 4, with Alan Jones Associates of Inverness to discuss what the feasibility study will entail and what needs to be done.

Alan Jones is a top wheel park producer who has already delivered successful sites across Scotland.

Add your voice of support by visiting the skatepark group's Facebook page to join the campaign.

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Lifeline Jura road 'left to rot', claims community councillor

A Jura resident has said the island's only A road - a lifeline supply and commute route which provides vital access for emergency services - has been 'left to rot', writes Hannah O'Hanlon.

Neil Gow, a member of Jura Community Council, spoke out in desperation having complained about the 'utter disrepair' of a section of the A846 for months with little result.

He explained a now-badly-potholed section of the road, a few hundred metres long, was resurfaced in October 2020.

'Within days, it was deteriorating to a far worse state than it has ever been,' Neil said.

Neil said that despite some 'sympathetic responses and promises of action' after continuous complaints to Argyll and Bute Council from the community council and members of the wider community, the condition of the road became worse rather than better.

'As the predictable wet winter weather set in, the stretch became increasingly dangerous.'

Neil personally complained to the council after a fellow Jura resident received a response on December 4 advising that



The badly potholed section of the A846 on Jura.

repairs would be carried out by January 3.

'Given the dangerous state of the road by this stage, and the speed of deterioration, I found this delay unacceptable. Predictably, the January 3 deadline was missed. The road is now in utter disrepair in multiple sections. What holes have been patched have either been emptied within days or dwarfed by the surrounding disintegration of the remaining carriageway.'

'It is frankly a disgrace that Jura has been left to rot like this. The people of Jura need a road. Anything less is a failure.'

An Argyll and Bute Council spokesperson said: 'When

lockdown eased in the late summer, we completed five road retreat programmes on Islay and Jura.

'We are working hard to deal with the localised damage on the mile-long stretch of Jura road that was resurfaced. Localised damage is not unusual.'

'As well as monitoring and patching the potholes, we will arrange for a contractor to overlay the damaged areas. We would love to do everything our communities want us to, including full maintenance of our 2,300 kilometres of roads. The fact is, we would need to invest more than £100 million to bring the entire road network up to an A1 standard.'

Why your business must act now to continue trading with Europe

NEW RULES for doing business with Europe are in place and you must act now to continue trading with the continent. The UK Government has already minimised disruption, staggering border control changes. But you must ...

- Make customs declarations when exporting goods to the EU – couriers, freight forwarders or customs agents can help.
- Ensure you have an EORI number starting with GB, check new rules for importing and exporting, and that your goods meet origin rules.

The way we do business with the EU has changed. Many firms are already adapting to the new rules and making plans for the future. If your business has not introduced changes, it is not too late. But you must act now! This is what you need to do.

- If exporting, you need to check the EU business you're exporting to is also ready. If you're due to travel to the EU for work, you may need a visa or work permit.
- If you want to hire from outside the UK, including the EU, you must be a Home Office licenced sponsor under the UK's new points-based immigration system.

MAKE CHANGES

Trading with Europe has changed. So, to avoid disruption to your company's operations, you need to make changes too. Visit the [gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition) site and use the Brexit checker tool to access personalised actions for your company.



HEADING FOR EUROPE: New rules are now in place for trading with the continent.

TEAMWORK IS VITAL

Teamwork is the secret of UK transition success, according to an award-winning Cumbrian family business.

"There are UK Government website resources," confirms Barry Leahey, MD of ninth generation family firm Playdale Playgrounds.

"There's also the Department for International Trade. The CBI has an excellent website, there's lots of assistance on there, as does the IOD and local chambers.

"We've accessed all these great resources to create an action sheet. All the information is out there.

"You've got to do your research but you only have to do it once," continues the business



PLAYDALE PLAYGROUNDS

boss who "sells fun all over the world", his 100-plus workforce supplying 51 countries.

"In the first weeks of January we've got goods on the road. What we're finding is our European partners, who we've prompted, have also been breaking old habits and creating new ones

"I think everything's going smoother than we expected."

'IT'S NOT A HASSLE'

Companies still preparing for the new rules should not "bury their heads in the sand."

"It will sort itself out. You have to deal with things you've never dealt with before. But, once you've put the systems in place, it's not as big a hassle as you think," assures James McGoldrick.

Bradfords successfully supplies luxury hampers, baskets and gift sets to the EU and beyond thanks to following UK Government guidelines.

"The UK Government website was very good, it took you through everything," he confirms, reassuring other operators who must now swiftly follow suit that "these things are all quite quick actually."



BRADFORDS BAKERS

His firm's preparation ensured EU trade is now "incredibly busy" and it is currently operating at an estimated 350% up on last year's trade.

"It helped that we had all our ducks in a row. The UK Government website was very clear on certain things we had to do."

'YOU'RE NOT ALONE'

"We're all in this together" reassures a South Wales company chief whose family firm is successfully trading under the new rules.

Two thirds of Neath-based Naissance's essential oil sales are with "important trading partners" within the EU.

"My advice is don't bury your head in the sand," advises Jem Skelding, who employs over 100 staff.

"We're all trying to figure this out. If you are struggling with it, or finding it difficult, you're not alone, there's help and advice.

"The UK Government website has lots of useful information.

"The light at the end of the tunnel is we're seeing progress, things are improving. Try to see



NAISSANCE

the positives." Jem stresses urgent action from business is required regarding VAT, GDPR, EU workers, duty deferment, terms and conditions, contracts, customs declarations and agents as well as Economic Operators Registration and Identification numbers.

"As things settle down, new opportunities will undoubtedly present themselves."



New rules for business

Doing business with Europe has changed.

Act now at [gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition)

All together >

OT

POLICE FILES

■ Around Thursday January 14 at Colonsay Terrace, Oban, deliberate damage was noted to the communal playpark slide. Police are investigating.

■ About 10.30am on Tuesday January 26 at Sunderland Drive, Oban, police searched a house under warrant and allegedly found a quantity of drugs which have been sent for analysis.

■ Between January 23 and 26, at McKelvie Road, Oban, a wall opposite the playpark was vandalised with spray paint. Police are investigating.

■ Between January 15 and 18, a newly-rendered wall at Sinclair Drive, Oban, was damaged. Police are investigating.

■ **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 555 111.**

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Kerrera wheels out ebikes

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk



Residents on Kerrera have been given £75,000 from the Scottish Government to wheel out an electric bike hire scheme.

Isle of Kerrera Development Trust (IKDT) will use the money to fund two ebike schemes - one for its 68 residents and another for visitors.

The new fleet will include 13 ebikes and four specialist ebikes to carry cargo from shopping to children.

Funding will also buy two bike shelters, four bike racks, an outdoor charging point and signs to mark out an ebike friendly route.

Some of the money will also be used to set up an app-based booking system.

The hire scheme will be mostly based at the old school where cyclists will also have access to drinking water.

IKDT's development officer Aideen Shields said the award timed nicely with news of a new road to connect the north

Government funding will pay for a fleet of ebikes on Kerrera.



and south of the island, adding that the ebikes will make a big difference to residents' lives either for travelling from one end of the island to the other or from getting from the ferry at Gallanach into Oban and back.

The first of the bikes are due to arrive mid-March with help from Oban Cycles, whose staff have been 'brilliant', added Aideen.

Kerrera was invited to put in

a bid for the funding after taking part in a government consultation to form the national island plan in which residents had flagged up transport as an issue.

Successful

IKDT was one of two successful applicants for the £270,000 Islands Green Recovery Programme: Sustainable Transport Fund being funded by the Scottish Government.

'We felt we had a good

chance but knew competition for funding would be pretty tough so we were amazed to discover we were one of just two schemes to be successful,' said Aideen.

The fund, administered by Energy Saving Trust, forms part of the £2 million Islands Green Recovery Programme investing in active and low carbon transport projects in island communities and supporting economic recovery

from the Covid pandemic. Voluntary Action Barra and Watersay was the second recipient of the award, receiving £195,000. Its project includes buying an electric minibus, creating charging points and upskilling island mechanics on electrical vehicle maintenance.

Ellie Grebenik, senior programme manager at Energy Saving Trust, said: 'These local initiatives are a brilliant example of how communities can invest in measures to provide easier access to active travel and low carbon transport options.'

'We look forward to working with the successful applicants as they work to improve the local environment and well-being of island residents and visitors.'

And Islands Minister Paul Wheelhouse added: 'We know being environmentally responsible and mitigating the effects of climate change can be more expensive for people living on our islands. This investment will help to reduce that financial burden.'

SCOTTISH FIELD

— February/March —



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the perfect
wedding

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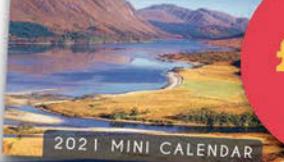
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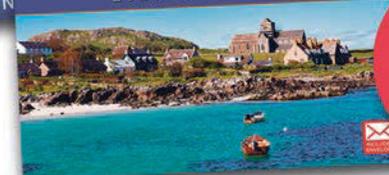
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Iona's Norah Kirkpatrick, 89, receiving her vaccination.

Iona's eldest resident given island's first vaccine

Great great grandmother Norah Kirkpatrick was first in the queue when vaccines arrived on Iona, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Norah, who will be 90 in June, was so happy to be getting the vaccination on Friday she even got dressed up for the occasion, said eldest grand-daughter Amanda Coats who lives in Stewarton, East Ayrshire.

Amanda, who sent this photograph to The Oban Times

with Norah's blessing, said: 'She was just so thrilled to be getting her vaccine that she wanted to share the good news.

Norah, who has three grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren, has also just become a great great grandmother for the first time.

'She hasn't been able to see baby Ayla who was born on November 17 last year because of Covid, but we hope the two will finally meet sometime this year,' said Amanda.

Communities have their say on wind farm plan

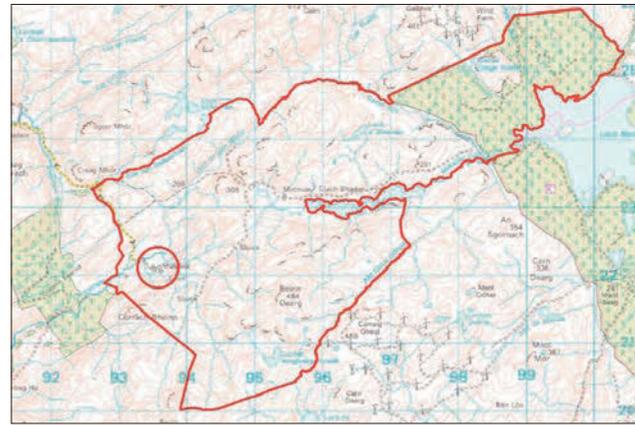
An online public exhibition for a 26-turbine wind farm has generated valuable feedback, says Vattenfall, the Swedish state-owned energy supplier.

The virtual public exhibition event and online consultation for the Musdale Wind Farm was launched last December and closed on Tuesday February 2. At the time of going to press, it had received more than 350 unique views.

The company said the process had generated 'valuable feedback' through the online survey and calls between the public and project team.

The proposal was first announced in November 2020 and Vattenfall said it will be designed to optimise the excellent wind resource.

It says the wind farm would be capable of powering approximately 117,500 homes with low-cost, renewable energy.



The wind farm, with a maximum blade tip height of up to 200m, would go on land approximately 5.5km south east of Kilmore village and 9km south east of Oban.

Carraig Gheal Wind Farm occupies land to the southeast and Beinn Ghlas Wind Farm occupies land to the north.

Alison Daugherty, senior project manager for Vattenfall, said: 'We would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to visit our online exhibition over the last couple of months and provide comments on this early stage of the proposal. We've had more than 30 people get in touch directly and

Further information about the project can be found at group.vattenfall.com/uk/what-we-do/our-projects/musdale-wind-farm-proposal

there has been some fantastic local feedback – particularly through the one-to-one calls – helping us identify potential issues, concerns and opportunities early in the project which can be looked at further as the proposal progresses.'

Over the next few months the company will undertake detailed technical and environmental studies and follow up on some of the feedback.

She added: 'We are also planning to initiate specific consultation on community benefit around spring time on how the project could deliver meaningful benefit to the local area – including the local supply chain.'

A&B HSCP Together
Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership

NHS Highland

Across Argyll and Bute Stop Smoking Advisors delivering the Quit Your Way Stop Smoking services are there to help you have a healthy start to 2021. An important role for this team is encouraging people to never start smoking as well as helping those who do to "quit their way" as part of the team's effort to work towards the Scottish Government's aim of a tobacco free generation by 2034.

QUIT YOUR WAY
with our support

The Argyll and Bute team take great pride in helping people make life changing steps to give up smoking for good. Becoming Smoke Free has immediate health benefits such as a lower heart rate, improved carbon monoxide levels and a better sense of taste and smell. Within weeks improvements can be experienced in coughing, breathing and lung function. For those who have asthma, after stopping smoking for a few weeks the severity of asthma attacks reduce. Within a year, stopping smoking can result in improvements for people with mild to moderate Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and reduce the risk of coronary heart disease by 50%!

Making that first appointment with an Advisor can feel like a really big step so all clients will be welcomed, supported and listened to – everyone's journey is different so Advisors will provide a bespoke stop smoking programme for every individual client. Advisors will explain that the NHS Quit Your Way Stop Smoking Service is free, supportive, non-judgemental and is generally provided over a 12-week programme. Regular contact is made throughout this duration to review each individual's progress and any challenges that arise.

Advisors work with clients to find out what their goals are, what motivates them and how to successfully help them stop for good. Advisors also talk through the medications available, discuss what would work best for the client and arrange for these to be prescribed.



Being smoke free will also improve the health of family and friends exposed to second hand smoke. Savings of several thousands of pounds each year can be made, allowing your wallet to be much healthier too!

The team are aware many smokers are worrying about Covid-19 and the risk of more severe symptoms which is why it's an important time to get this message out.

If you are thinking about stopping smoking, would like more information or would like to speak to someone about your smoking habits the team would encourage you to get in touch.

Evidence shows that you are four times more likely to stop smoking when supported by a Stop Smoking Advisor so don't delay that quit any longer, the team are here for you to start 2021 smoke free!



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If you'd like to stop smoking, please complete the form, and your local advisor will get in touch with you.

<https://www.smokefreehighland.scot.nhs.uk/contact/>

If you would like to talk to someone directly, contact our local advisor Kathy Graham on 07972678923

NHS Highland Number on

08457 573 077

Mon-Fri 9-5pm

Email: nhsh.absmokefreeservices@nhs.scot



OT

Father speaks out against drink driver's jail move bid

Continued from page one.

Mr Wade, who is 70 and lives in Oban with his wife Mary, said losing their eldest daughter Theresa, pictured, had changed their lives forever. Theresa also left two younger sisters, Rosie and Louise.

'We will never forget her. It was such a waste of life cut short. We were a family but now we are just four fifths of a family. We are living but it's not the same and never will be without her. We were so close. Our team has been well and truly broken, but we just have to push through it.'

'Over the years we built up photos of us all and kept them in carrier bags. We'd just pop into them and could pull out photos that had all five of us in them.'

'We have not been back



into those bags in five years,' said Mr Wade, who cannot face visiting his daughter's grave near Bunessan. He said he had only been back to Mull twice since

the crash. He and his wife now have a joint burial plot next to Theresa's for when their own days end.

Mr Wade, who used to run Bayview Stores at Bunessan, said Theresa had built up her own business on Mull and had a bright future ahead of her, with the eyes of the veterinary world watching her because she was so young and promising.

'He wiped it all out in a flash and took the lot,' Mr Wade said. 'No matter what I taught her to be ready for in life, I could never have prepared her for Wainwright,' he added.

Wainwright was also banned from the roads for 15 years at his High Court sentencing. 'He should be banned for life, he should never be behind a wheel of a car or be in charge of a boat ever again,' said Mr Wade.

Soroba flats at risk if pipe bursts ignored

by Ellis Butcher

ebutcher@obantimes.co.uk



A £2.7 million major pipework project is needed because of concerns a future burst could 'seriously undermine' local flats, councillors heard.

Scottish Water and Caledonian Water staff took part in an online Zoom meeting of Oban Community Council on Monday to explain why the project is taking place in lockdown.

It follows criticism last year over a lack of notice about the work and complaints about tier four workers from Glasgow visiting what was then tier two Oban.

Site manager Mark Batten told councillors the pipe being replaced was installed during the 1940s and now suffered repeated bursts.

The company had tried temporary fixes but a long-term



replacement was now needed because any burst inside the hillside at the back of the flats would be 'virtually impossible' to fix, councillors heard.

Important

Mr Batten said: 'The real threat is there is a bad burst up by the flats and it undermines the groundworks of the flats. That is why getting the [new] pipe is deemed so important.'

Georgina Reid, corporate affairs manager for the west

region, said unfortunately Oban Community Council had been 'the one group' which had not been properly notified of the work last year due to a 'technical' reason.

Ms Reid apologised and said it was an oversight and the company would always engage with the community council in a project of this size.

Updates

She said: 'I do have to say we got off to a bad start with yourselves but there have been updates from Mark on a more than weekly basis and we really appreciate how helpful the community has been on the Soroba estate,' she said.

The company was praised for having come to the table and the efforts made since by Mr Batten, who regularly took time out to keep residents updated.

Community council member Grant Nicholson said the project was very well managed

and he had been impressed by the effort being made during recent poor weather.

Community council member Keith Millar asked whether the new pipework was needed to connect potential new housing which may be on the cards in future.

Ms Reid said the reason for the project was to address the issues with the existing infrastructure.

Mr Batten added the company had tried to use lockdown to its advantage as the work had involved a 'tricky area' outside the busy primary school where buses emerge.

Mr Batten said the project was currently 'two weeks ahead of schedule' and would now proceed as far as it can towards the junction with the A816. It would then go back to where it started half way through, and return to the top to where the flats are, he said.

Stoddarts

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Anthony Covid-19 patient

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STAY HOME ▶ PROTECT THE NHS ▶ SAVE LIVES

OT

LETTERS

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

Young guns of Ganavan

It was great to read about all the youngsters who are speaking up as part of a campaign to save Ganavan from the threat of more houses.

Two youngsters, Breagh and Iona MacLean, were the driving force behind a number of children's video appeals on the Friends of Ganavan's Facebook page to stop any potential developers, saying the popular beach is Oban's 'local park' and would be a massive loss if more houses were to be built there.

And we couldn't agree more.

With more than 3,000 members, the Friends of Ganavan Facebook group has seen a flurry of activity over the last week or so, with many people posting their photographs of families down the years enjoying the area and voicing their support for the area to be preserved for recreation and wildlife.

One member of the group has carried out a survey of the area and posted a long list of birds, mammals, insects and plants – a number of which seem to be rare – that can be found in the area.

It would be a huge tragedy if we were not to safeguard this natural heritage. We should listen to the wise voices of our children.

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.

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



Have a care for livestock

Could we please make people aware that enjoying snow and sledging has a more serious side.

In one of our fields where there are young sheep, people assumed the field was empty and enjoyed some sledging time. There were sheep in the field which were panicked and scattered into the wood. After a couple of hours searching, we found one young sheep dead. Please do not assume there are no stock in fields even if at first you cannot see them. It is always best to check at a farm where it is safe to sledge. Please do this.

**Dee and Fergus Lyon,
Fernoch Farm, Lochgilphead.**

Deer safety

Ian Fergusson, head of Wildlife Management for Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), is right to alert motorists to deer on the roads at this time of year but it is nothing less than shameful that he should use the opportunity to further FLS's relentless annihilation policy by misquoting the Deer Working Group report which, in fact, establishes that hill deer numbers have declined in the last 20 years. (The Oban Times and Lochaber Times, January 28 2021).

If there are deer on the road it isn't because they want to be there. They have been driven on to them through his FLS approving and encouraging applications to plant trees on their traditional wintering ground. A very good example of this is to be found in Morvern near the head of Glen Geal, adjacent to the A884 where, for centuries, deer have crossed between three different properties in search of food and shelter. Now, because of an extensive new woodland scheme to the south of the road, a corridor has been created in which many deer are being trapped, killed or maimed which never happened in that area before.

Locals pleaded for the fence to be moved further away but were told by FLS's Highland and Islands woodland officer it would not be necessary as the landowner's representative had said, bewilderingly, that all deer in the vicinity would be shot. Mr Fergusson and FLS are able to reduce road accidents involving deer. They should do so by refusing to grant fund any proposed woodland scheme within at least half a mile of a public road.

Iain Thornber, Morvern.

A choice needs to be made

We can all see the benefit of a medical delivery service to the nearby Isle of Mull and every pilot would love to have their own dedicated airspace.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Abair ùpraid gun eireachdas a thog an Roinn Eòrpa a thaobh malairt bhanachdaichean Covid 19, agus gu sònraichte ag agairt bhacaidhean a chur air crìoch Poblachd na h-Èireann, rud a bhathas a' gealltainn fad bhliadhnaichean nach tachradh. Aig àm sgrìobhaidh seo tha a' Bhruiseal a-nise ag ràdh gur e mearachd rianachd a dh'fhàg gun deach am fios fhòill-seachadh gun cuireadh an t-Aonadh Eòrpach riaghailt 16 de aonta Bhrexit an sàs gus smachd a ghabhail air bhanachdaichean Covid a bhiodh ga ghiùlan thar crìch na Poblachd, a-staigh dhan Rìoghachd Aonaichte. 'S dòcha nach b' iongnadh Prìomh Mhinistear Seanadh Èireann a Tuath a ràdh gur e gnìomh gu math bagarrach a bha seo, agus ged a tha na h-Eòrpaich air am fàgail car maslach chan eil iad idir air an argamaid a leigeil às a thaobh cuin is còir an cuid òrdain de na bhanachdaichean a bhith air an liubhairt.

Cha robh coire sam bith aig Riaghaltas Bhreatann an seo oir dh'òrdaich esan banachdach bho chaochladh bhuidhnean bho chionn suas ri trì mìosan agus tha na h-òrdain sin a-nise gan libhrigeadh. Ghabh Pàrlamaid na h-Eòrpa coirre fhèin na bhiodh a dhìth de bhanachdach Covid 19 airson gach ball den Aonadh a riarachadh, ach cha do dhearbh i na h-òrdain airson sin gu bho chionn ghoirid. Le gainnead banachdach dha dùthchannan an aonaidh, agus nàire a bhith cho fada air deireadh, a' lèireadh mhinis-

tearan agus sheirbheiseach-chatharra Eòrpach tha iad a-nise a' feuchainn ri impidh a chur air na companaidhean a tha a' dèanamh nam bhanachdaiche 'n gur còir dhaibh na h-òrdain acasan a libhrigeadh gun dàil a dh'aindeoin 's ged a bha Breatann air òrdachadh fada romhpa. A bharrachd air gum bheil sin a' dol an aghaidh an seòrsa modha a th' air a bhith stèidhichte fad linntean, tha na h-Eòrpaich agus a h-uile dùthaich san t-saoghal a dh'iarradh na stuthan seo a cheannach a-nise a' tuigsinn cumhachd nam buidhnean mòra eadar-nàiseanta seo.

Chan e aithne ùr a tha seo idir! Ma thèid thu dhan bhùth a shìreadh faothachadh air pian chì thu tric dà thaghadh den aon chungaidh-leighis is tè nas lugha na leth prìs na tèile air a bheil ainm na companaidh a rinn i. Tha iomadh bliadhna bhon a bha fios gum faodadh cun-gaidhean-leighis a bhith gan libhrigeadh air dùthchannan bochda an t-saoghail aig prìs fada nas saoire na tha a' tachairt, ach le smachd aig buidhnean àraid air dealbhachd nan drogaidhean tha e doirbh buaidh a thoirt air a' phrìs. Saoil an toir Covid 19 cothrom dha dùthchannan an t-saoghail aontachadh gum bheil cor a' mhòr-shluaigh nas cudromaiche na beartas luchd-seilbh chompanaidhean mòra, agus gun tèid eòlas dealbhachd bhanachdaichean a roinn feadh an t-saoghail seach a bhith fo smachd buidheann neo dhà. Abair buannachd a bhiodh an sin!

This is not the first time conflicts in the operation of different types of aircraft have occurred and it has taken decades to evolve the rules that allow them all to operate together safely. Ask any pilot.

Drone operators, with low cost aircraft flown by low cost personnel, want freedom of the air without observing the safety considerations and are using the medical need as a Trojan Horse to get regulatory approval. Ultimately this could mean Amazon could get your makeup order to you a few hours quicker, but Jet2 would have to fit serious, electronically-guided firepower to clear the way on your Mediterranean holiday.

Purple Airways, used for royal flights and things like this temporary controlled airspace, are a nightmare for pilots as the news frequently doesn't reach pilots in time, especially in the Highlands where mobile phone and internet

signals are less reliable. Among many others, the biggest risks to these courier drones are privately operated drones flown blind with low piloting skills and the air ambulance which operates similar routes at similar altitudes.

Citizens of Mull should consider which is more important: getting off the island to hospital in an emergency or getting medical supplies onto the island. The simple solution is for the drone operators to train as pilots and observe visual flight rules like everyone else. By all means publish the routes used on aeronautical maps for safety's sake. The operators might complain about cost, but why have governments bothered to spend years enacting ever more capable air navigation orders if we're not prepared to pay the price of safety.

Brian R Philpotts, Kilninver.

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DISTRICT NEWS

OBAN

Rockfield team takes a shuftu at new zoom sessions

Heritage Hunter volunteers at Oban's Rockfield Centre started hosting an additional programme of zoom sessions this week.

Heritage Shuftu (a wee peek at) features presentations from speakers covering a wide selection of local heritage-related topics.

Kicking off on Wednesday February 3, the sessions will be held every two months, depending on speaker availability.

Neil Owen joined the heritage team for the first session which took a peek at Oban Port Defences in an informal evening presentation.

Heritage Shuftu is additional to the normal Blether Session hosted by John which will go ahead as normal on Wednesday February 24.

For more information on staying connected with the Rockfield Centre visit www.therockfieldcentre.org.uk

LERAGS

Historic Kilbride Kirk awarded £68,500 towards restoration

Kilbride Kirk in Lerags Glen has been awarded £68,500 from Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) Covid Recovery Fund.

The money will enable Friends of Kilbride to carry out phase three of its restoration and renovation of the Kirk and Session House.

The work will involve removing the root bore of a large, invasive sycamore in the northwest corner of the Kirk and consolidation of the north wall, session house and wall heads. The root bore, from a tree felled 10 years ago, has been identified as presenting a serious threat to the stability of the extant buildings and at present it is not possible to access either the session house or the north side of the Kirk because of the danger of falling masonry.

The project follows work to rebuild the west gable wall and make safe the west door. This work was made possible thanks to generous grants from the Caraig Gael Wind Farm Community Trust and the Clan MacDougall Society of North America.

During these works, which took place last summer, a trench was opened revealing the original, intact, cobbled floor of the Kirk. It can-



Kilbride Kirk, Lerags Glen. The current funding, from HES, will enable Friends of Kilbride to undertake Phase Three of its programme of restoration and renovation of the Kirk and Session House.

not, however, presently be exposed and restored because of the ongoing risk of damage because of the root bore.

The works will be undertaken soon by stonemason Michael Hogg and TreeWorks Oban. The project will be supervised by consultant architect Shauna Cameron and consultant archaeologist Dr Clare Ellis of Argyll Archaeology.

Seymour Adams, chairman of Friends of Kilbride, said: 'We are delighted to receive this generous grant from Historic Environment Scotland, which recognises the importance of the ruins at Kilbride and the success of the first two phases of our conservation programme. By the time the site reopens to the public in the spring, local craftsmen will have transformed the visitor experience of Historic Kilbride, despite the Covid-19 pandemic.'

Alex Paterson, chief executive at HES, said: 'From museums in the Highlands to historic venues and buildings in central Scotland and the Borders, we are pleased to support a diverse range of projects the length and breadth of Scotland as part of the Historic Environment Recovery Fund. By helping to protect jobs, reopen historic sites and maintaining investment in traditional skills training and apprenticeships, we hope to support the wider recovery of the sector and Scotland's economy.'

For further information visit: www.friendsofkilbride.scot

ACHALEVEN

Achaleven Primary School receives its eighth Green Flag

Achaleven Primary School has been awarded its eighth Green Flag by Ecoschools Scotland.

Pupils have been working hard to incorporate environmental matters into everyday life,

not only in school, but in the community and beyond.

Their focus over the last two years has been on reducing litter, minimising waste and learning about clean water and sanitation – one of the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

Becoming global citizens and championing change is core to the school's beliefs and they recently adopted a section of nearby beach to look after and carry out regular beach cleans.

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for education, Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, said: 'I love hearing about the different approaches our schools take when working towards their Green Flag. Achaleven's focus on learning about clean water and sanitation is tremendous. This educates the children about the huge part clean water plays in our everyday lives and lets them explore the science involved in the process of making it safe to drink. It is fantastic they are getting the community involved too. These children are our future and it's extremely encouraging to see the enthusiasm they are showing towards making a difference to the world.'



Youngsters from Achaleven Primary School in Connel have adopted part of their local beach to make sure it is kept clean.

At random

MARTIN LAING

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Support still needed

I was wandering the streets of Oban last Monday morning and met my chum and Oban Times legend Davie Buchanan.

Davie and I, some of you will recall, both retired from the newspaper at the end of October last year, my former colleague after a staggering 55 years.

I mentioned how quiet the town centre was, to which Davie responded that he had never seen it so deserted in all his years. There was, indeed, a distinctly eerie ambience with nary a soul to be seen in George Street and around the harbour.

This train of thought coincides with repeated stories in the newspaper about the economic hardship being felt so harshly across a number of sectors, not least of which are hospitality and seafood production, both linchpins of Oban and Argyll.

My heart goes out to every entrepreneur at this incredibly difficult time. So I would urge all residents to do their utmost when circumstances allow to support the area's businesses by staying loyal and shopping locally.

Slippery slope avoided

I found myself sympathising with both Bill Irvine and Argyll and Bute Council over the former's criticism of gritting around his home in Jane Road, Dunbeg.

Mr Irvine pointed out - quite reasonably, I thought - that the streets where he lives are dangerous when icy and that he had been injured in a fall recently as a result.

The council responded - quite reasonably, I thought - that its priority is to keep the main routes clear and to treat the pavements in busier areas.

Mr Irvine also said - quite reasonably, I thought - that a grit bin at the top of the road would allow residents to treat the surfaces themselves when they become slippery in cold spells.

That is an excellent compromise and should be readily achievable. In fact, Councillor Elaine Robertson has said she is on the case and will try to organise it.

The whole affair makes a cheering change from the usual bitter bickering involved in disputes with the council.

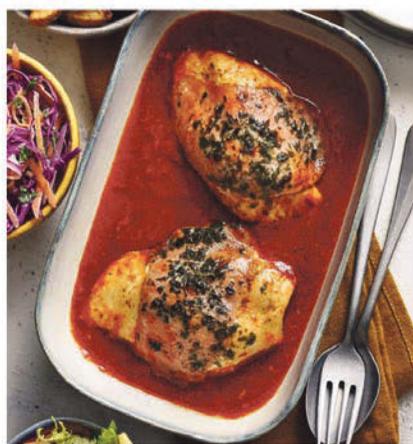
Everyone has been reasonable and will be better off for doing so.

What do you think?

Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

Hunter's chicken

The search for your new teatime favourite is over! Smoky bacon and a tangy sauce give chicken breasts a new lease of life in this lip-smacking supper



Ingredients

- ½ x 330ml can diet cola
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 chicken stock cube, crumbled
- 250g passata
- 1 tbsp soy sauce/tamari
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 smoked back bacon medallions or rashers, visible fat removed
- 4 skinless and boneless chicken breasts
- Chopped parsley, to serve

Method:

1. Pour the diet cola into a medium-size non-stick saucepan over a high heat, bring to the boil and cook until reduced by two-thirds and almost syrupy.
2. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas 6.
3. Add the red peppers, garlic, stock cube, passata, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, balsamic vinegar and 150ml boiling water to the cola. Reduce the heat to medium and bring to a simmer, then cook for 10 minutes or until the peppers are soft, adding a little extra water if needed. Blend until smooth using a stick blender or food processor.
4. Carefully wrap the bacon medallions or rashers around the chicken breasts and arrange them in an ovenproof dish, seam-side down. Pour the sauce all over the chicken and roast for 20-25 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through.
5. Spoon the sauce over the chicken and sprinkle over the parsley before serving hot. This is delicious served with Slimming World chips and salad.

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BUSINESS NEWS

Connel cafe gets the go ahead

A 'ruinous' building is to be transformed into a café after council officials granted planning permission.

Argyll and Bute Council gave the go ahead for plans by P A Sinclair of Dalrannoch for a site off Main Street, Connel, which had five expressions of support and six objections.

The café will serve soup, sandwiches, cakes, tea, coffee, breakfast rolls and other items.

A council planning officer said in a report: 'The site is situated within a well-established residential area of Connel, surrounded by residential dwelling houses on all sides. The site is currently occupied by a ruinous structure which comprises stone walls to wall head height with no roof, doors or windows.'

'It is considered the proposal represents a suitable opportunity for redevelopment of the site to provide a café consistent with the policies and guidance set out above and is a proposal which will benefit the local economy in accordance with one of the central challenges for Argyll and Bute, that of delivering sustainable economic growth.'

The officer continued: 'The proposed development will have no materially adverse impact upon the historic environment. Neither will the proposed development result in any material harm to the natural environment.'

'The development has been determined to raise no issues or concerns except for any specifically referred to within this summary assessment and it is recommended planning permission is granted subject to the conditions.'

Some of the objections raised concerns over a perceived lack of parking and that traffic problems would increase.

The planning officer said: 'The agent worked closely with the trunk roads authority to agree an upgrade of the existing vehicular access.'

'Should the blocking of the public Main Street become an issue, this is an issue for the roads authority and ultimately Police Scotland.'

Eriska chef in the mix for 'ultimate' scholarship

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



An Argyll chef could be cooking up a storm at Gleneagles this year after making it onto the shortlist for a prestigious scholarship.

Josh Wilkinson, currently working as senior chef de partie at the Isle of Eriska Hotel, has been named as one of six finalists in the search for recipients of the second annual Andrew Fairlie Scholarship.

Born in Bathgate, the 25-year-old attended college in Stirling before moving on to ply his trade at the Cromlix in Kinbuck. However, when Covid scuppered his plans to work in London last year, the youngster took up his position at Eriska from where he applied for the scholarship.

'I've always been interested in cooking. As I grew older it snowballed into a passion that I wanted to pursue.'

'The scholarship offers great opportunities and I am really excited to be given a chance to prove myself among other talented chefs,' said Josh. 'I've always been interested in cooking. As I grew older it snowballed into a passion that I wanted pursue and I couldn't imagine a job that didn't involve food.'

Currently on furlough, Josh is keen to get back to the Eriska kitchen where, under the expert eye of head chef Andrew Bell, he can continue to cook up a storm.

'Working with Andy has been great,' he added. 'He has great energy and enthusiasm and loves trying out new ideas. I have learned



Josh Wilkinson is one of six finalists hoping to be awarded this prestigious scholarship.

a lot from my short time there and look forward to continuing my journey.'

Spearheaded by Hospitality Industry Trust Scotland and supported by the First Minister, the Scottish Government and The Gleneagles Hotel, the scholarship was first launched in February 2019 in recognition of Andrew Fairlie's significant and lasting contribution to the hospitality industry. The scholarship recognises two outstanding individuals each year – one male and one female - who are forging ahead

with their culinary careers and working in Scotland.

Stephen McLaughlin, Restaurant Andrew Fairlie Head Chef and lead judge, said: 'I am thrilled to have selected six chefs from our many applications for the Andrew Fairlie Scholarship Finals Day. Each have shown in their applications a fine sense of drive and an unwavering commitment to themselves to develop, learn and rise to challenges in front of them.'

The final stage of the competition will take place at Gleneagles, where each of the finalists' skills will be put to the ultimate test before the winners are announced. The Finals Day date has been postponed due to Covid-19, but will take place later in 2021 when it is safe to do so.

'Being 'match fit' will be key for Finals Day. I am looking forward to seeing and hearing how our finalists have been keeping their minds sharp and their knives keen during what have been odd and difficult times,' added Mr McLaughlin.

The winners will gain industry-wide recognition as Andrew Fairlie Scholars experience once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, such as a practical stage in an international kitchen and at Michelin star restaurants Restaurant Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles and Core by Clare Smyth.

Other aspiring chefs in the running for the 'ultimate scholarship' in the industry include Zdenka Tomova, 26, 1st Commis Chef at The Strathearn at Gleneagles Hotel; Amy Stephenson, 22, Chef de Partie at The Torridon; Spud Henderson, 31, Chef de Partie at Craig Millar @ 16 West End; Ryan McCutcheon, 28, Chef Patron at Achray House Hotel and Peter Meechan, 24, Junior Sous Chef at The Strathearn at Gleneagles.

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Tyndrum business owner shares pandemic lessons

The co-owner of an award-winning café has shared business lessons learned during the pandemic, writes Fiona Scott.

Sarah Heward, with husband Alan as managing director, opened The Real Food Café at Tyndrum in 2005, transforming a derelict Little Chef into a roadside diner with a turnover of £1.6 million.

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, she said it was making record profits and they were looking to open a new business.

Yet by March this year - if it can reopen - the café will have traded for just 15 weeks out of the previous 54 weeks.

Sarah said: 'I have learned more in the past year than ever before. I guess one of the fundamentals for me is to keep the faith. Keep the faith in your ability and, very importantly, in your supporters and colleagues around you. No-one gets through things like this on their own.'

The business invested heavily in Covid-19 safety and built extra handwashing stations outside. It also kitted staff out in hi-vis uniforms to take and deliver orders to customers' cars.

The inside of the café was restructured and it registered with safety schemes such as VisitScotland's 'Good to Go' and the AA's 'Covid Confident'.

Before reopening in July 2020, the business also invested in an online ordering platform and went cashless.

She said the system had yielded some 'astounding statistics', with revenues of £435,000 during the 15 weeks it was open - equivalent to 80 per cent of the sales for the same period in 2019.



Sarah Heward says the pandemic has offered welcome lessons for her business, The Real Food Café in Tyndrum.

Sarah said: 'This learning has been without a doubt the best thing to come out of the pandemic. We may never have come to understand the value of online retailing if we were not forced to do so.'

The business still plans to look for a location in central Glasgow to create a flagship fish and chip takeaway and delivery.

Sarah said the business had remained in constant contact with furloughed staff and provided training and learning plans so they can continue to learn new skills.

'We host a weekly Zoom team meeting and one-to-one's for their mental health and wellbeing. It is important to us our team feel in-

cluded and are fit and ready to come back to work when we eventually reopen,' she said. Having seen how the Highlands was overwhelmed as lockdown was lifted, the business has also formed a new local action group to tackle the 'poor' rural infrastructure for mass tourism.

Sarah said it aimed to secure funding for improvements including tourist information, public car parking, rural housing, waste facilities and new toilets, including a Changing Places toilet. 'We hope this will be a tangible and lasting legacy from Covid-19 that will benefit the local community, tourists and disabled travellers,' she said.

Cash boost for Duart Castle

Duart Castle on the Isle of Mull is to receive £17,625 in recovery funding from Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

The money has been awarded to the Duart Castle Partnership to help with work at the 13th-century castle as it plans for the next visitor season. A one-way system will be developed so visitors can explore the castle safely.

The Historic Environment Recovery Fund was launched in October with two funding streams available to support the recovery of Scotland's historic environment sector from the impacts of Covid-19.

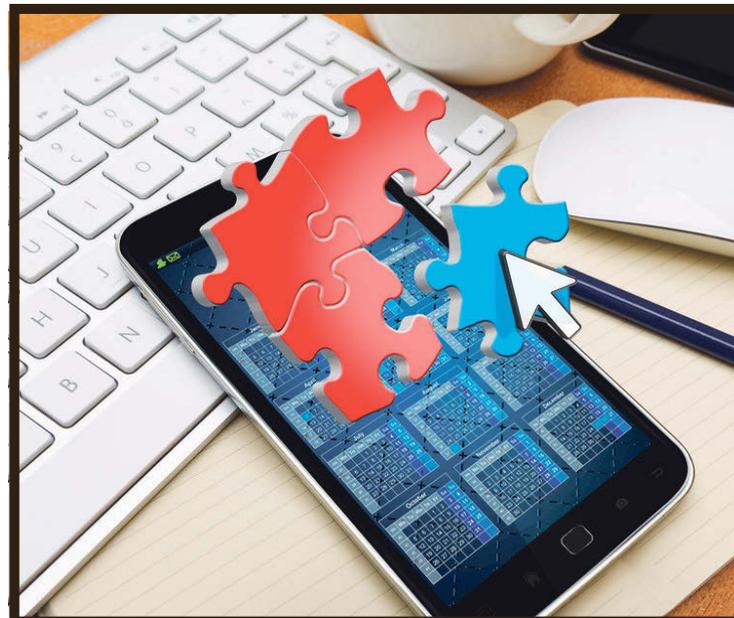
HES has awarded funding totalling £1,916,238 to more than 40 organisations across the country.

Alex Paterson, chief executive at HES, said: 'By helping to protect jobs, reopen historic sites and maintaining investment in traditional skills training and apprenticeships, we hope to support the wider recovery of the sector and Scotland's economy.'

'While historic sites and visitor attractions have been impacted by the closure of sites and the loss of revenue, other organisations in the sector have had to adapt the way in which they carry out their work, put crucial training and educational activities on hold and look at new ways to generate income and we hope this funding will allow recipients to prepare for the future.'

He added: 'The historic environment sector provides countless benefits to communities - including providing jobs and generating tourism spend - and it is vital we support these organisations and ensure their important work can continue as we face the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and seek to harness future opportunities.'

Fiona Hyslop, cabinet secretary for culture at the Scottish Government, said: 'I am pleased a wide range of projects will benefit from Scottish Government funding. The support delivered will safeguard our shared heritage for future generations, protect jobs and help to strengthen Scotland's wider economic recovery.'



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'The woods are a great feature of this unique Demesne, they have not been touched for 30 years. The main land for many miles along the windings and indentations of the south shore of the beautiful Loch Sunart and in a south and south-easterly direction. The banks of the picturesque and sheltered inlet of Loch Teacuis are alike adorned by fine natural copses of oak, birch and other indigenous trees, rising from the water's edge, in some places most precipitously, from eight hundred to a thousand feet. The whole of the growing timber is included in the purchase. Among the amenities of the estate is a lead mine in the hills, which was profitably worked in the past. The old store house still stands at the junction of Liddesdale River with the loch - this might be a source of revenue in the future. There are oyster beds at several places along the shores of Loch Sunart and at the head of Loch Teacuis.

'It is as a sporting estate that this property especially commends itself to the capitalist, its possession affording the opportunity for indulging to the utmost that most alluring and pleasurable pastime. The deer forest. A tract of land about six miles in length and extending to about 3,000 acres has been cleared from sheep and cattle and from natural configuration and woods and affords perfect shelter and forms a breeding ground for red deer, which get water in abundance from the rills and rivulets scarring the hillsides and from the lochans on their summits. Forty to forty-five stags are shot in season, with an average of over sixteen stone weight and from six to eleven points each, a 'royal' being occasionally brought down. The grouse moors are extensive and prolific sport, yielding good bags through the season. In addition to grouse, are pheasants, black game, wild duck, snipe and hares in abundance, woodcock which breed on the ground and rabbits by the hundreds. Also excellent sea-trout fishing with an occasional grilse and salmon. Yachting can be enjoyed to an unlimited extent. The Lochs Sunart and Teacuis delightfully sheltered resorts, the Sound of Mull and other tributary lochs are a never failing change, while in and out among the Western



Left, Glencripesdale House in ruins shortly before it was completely demolished in 1963 and, right, The Kelpie (120 tons) off Glencripesdale. Below: four of the staff employed at Glencripesdale.

Photographs supplied by Iain Thorne.

Islands and further away to the Hebrides or the vast Atlantic itself, longer cruises can be obtained.

'The property is carrying at the present time over 9,000 sheep, for which there is continuous pasturage at all seasons, the mountains and valleys contributing to their sustenance and well being, and even the hill tops, from the basaltic formation of many of the mountains, afford, directly the snow is off, fresh and eagerly sought-after pasturage. There is also a pedigree herd of Highland cattle, somewhat reduced just now by recent successful sales, but there is scope for maintaining a large number. Access can be reached by yacht to Oban and thence by express dining and sleeping and saloon trains. The journey from Oban can be accomplished to London in about thirteen hours, Edinburgh in about four hours and Glasgow in about four hours. A public steamer leaves Oban for Salen on Loch

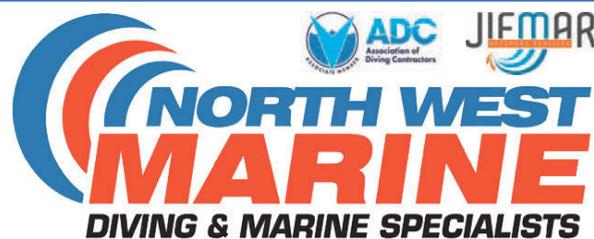
Sunart on Tuesday and Friday throughout the year at noon and puts off at Glencripesdale about five o'clock. It returns from Salen Wednesday and Saturday mornings early. On other days, a second-class steamer plies from Salen to Oban, calling at Tobermory in time to catch the fast steamers direct to Oban.

'From within a short distance of Laudale House there are public roads to Fort William and Lochaline, where there is a pier at which steamers to and from Oban call several times daily. Both these roads are readily reached by launch from Glencripesdale House. There is a daily delivery and collection of letters at Glencripesdale House and a private telephone to the post and telegraph office at Laudale.

'Intended purchasers can arrange for viewing by writing to the factor, Laudale House, Ardgour RSO, Argyllshire. He will also arrange for their accommodation, if desired, at Laudale

House and otherwise for their meeting the public steamer and supplying ponies for mountain excursions.'

There is no indication in the sales particulars of what offers were expected but a starting bid of £100,000 on the day of the auction was referred to in a contemporary newspaper report. It fell to £75,000 but was withdrawn and the sale postponed. Although the Newtons, who lived much of the year in and around Birmingham, adored Glencripesdale, the illness and subsequent death of a senior member of the family brought home to them the practical difficulties of having a distant holiday home. This, coupled with the tremendous expense of maintaining a remote working estate and a defaulting lawyer, who was imprisoned, began to take its toll. Following the death of Horace in 1920, the whole family way of life changed and no-one amongst the beneficiaries was in a position to take over.



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	1109 3.2		0742 1.5		1018 1.3		1157 1.0	Mallaig	+0.25
F	1800 1.6	SU	1438 3.1	TU	1647 3.4	TH	1756 3.7	Portree	+0.55
	2355 3.0		2043 1.6		2245 1.2			Tobermory	+0.16
								Dover	+5.30

WEATHER

Thursday

Sleet and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 3°C to 5°C.

Friday

Sleet showers and a moderate breeze
Temperatures 2°C to 4°C.

WEEKEND OUTLOOK

Saturday

Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures -1°C to 5°C.

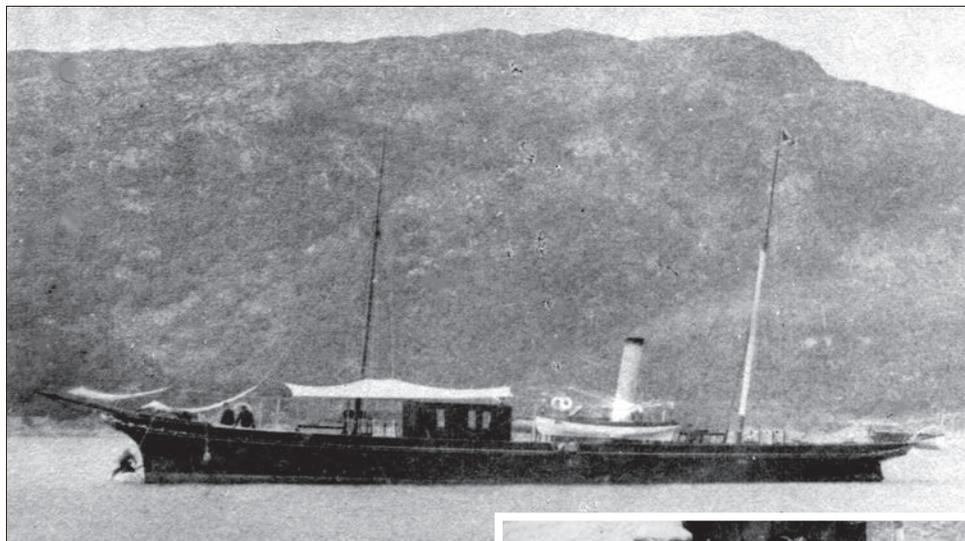
Sunday

Sunny intervals and a moderate breeze
Temperatures -1°C to 5°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST



Antiques – part 3



Glencripesdale estate and house whittled down to 1,792 acres was offered for sale in 1921. That fell through and a further attempt was made four years later, when prices were at a particularly low level, to sell for £5,000. An offer was received but the prospective buyer cried off when he realised just how isolated it was having heard that on one occasion the Newtons had been marooned there for some days when the steamer, the Lochinvar, failed to turn up owing to bad weather.

The family fortunes weren't helped by Horace who didn't trust any woman with money resulting in him creating a very complicated family trust which was not liquidated until 1968 - 48 years after his death. When the Newtons first bought Glencripesdale, or Glen as they always referred to it, they travelled in great pomp and luxury. Horace's family hired two special railway saloons - one a sleeping car - brought to Redditch Station on the Midland Line. There they were hitched onto connecting trains which eventually brought them to Oban, where they boarded the Kelpie, their own 98ft long, 102-ton, twin-screw, steam yacht which took them on to Glencripesdale. She was extremely expensive to run and very little used. She was eventually sold and a launch named the Invicta purchased instead. The family were always having to go for cruises to 'exercise' the crew when they were really much happier messing about in the Glen. It was said that to keep the Kelpies crew occupied, they would get up



stream simply to lift lobster pots behind Carna. Eventually the Newton's 26,000 acres were broken up into five separate units - Carna, Rahoy, Kinlochteacuis, Laudale and Glencripesdale, all of which have had a number of owners, except the 600-acre island of Carna which remains in the hands of Horace's descendents. Glencripesdale House was requisitioned by the military for special training purposes. Seven officers and 100 or so men from the naval commando unit at Dorlin on Loch Moidart occupied the house for about a year. The interior of the house was so badly vandalised it could not be occupied again without an expensive refit. Looting was rife and when the Newtons returned after the war they discovered many of their possessions had disappeared.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



Blast from the past for reader Moira

Moira Cameron contacted us this week about the above photograph, which we published on January 14.

She said: 'I currently live in the Netherlands, but Catriona MacLellan, now of North Connel but who lived next door to us on Pulpit Hill back in the 1960s, sent me a copy of the above paper because she thought she spotted me in the picture of a class from Rockfield School in 1975. She's right, that's me with the specs in the back row - and it's a real treat to see the picture after all this time, although I absolutely cannot remember it being taken.'

'Strangely, I wasn't in John Watson's P7 class that year, I was in the parallel class with Mrs Moncrieff as my teacher, but there was one time when my class went on a school trip while I stayed behind, for some reason now forgotten, and sat in with Mr Watson's class for the day. So perhaps it was taken that day.'

'I recognise a few of the people in the photograph and wonder how many of the class are still in the Oban area themselves or have family there.'

'In the back row you've got Gordon Campbell behind the boy in the striped jumper, then two along from him Caroline Johnstone is the tallest girl, with Margaret Mackintosh next to her, wearing a hairband, then Joan, whose surname I'm afraid I can't remember - it'll probably pop into my head

once I've sent this email - and then me. In the second back row, Colin Erridge is standing next to Mr Watson, further along Tam Clark has the tartan jumper on and Donald Melville is at the right-hand end of the row behind Alec MacDonald, who is helping to hand the money to Reverend Higgins - not Wiggins.'

Kneeling at the front, from left to right, are: Pauline Welsh, Laurel-Ann Robertson, Rhona Milliken, Christine MacIntyre, shading her eyes, and Denise Lafferty. Other faces in the photograph look familiar but I don't remember any more names.'

Headmaster at the time - or 'the Heidi' as he was known - was Pat, not Peter, Robertson - a man whose voice could strike fear into your heart from the farthest end of the playground but who often gave a bunch of us a lift in his car up to Pulpit Hill, especially at lunchtimes when walking home left very little time for us to eat anything before we had to run all the way back down to school.'

As long as we are all dealing with coronavirus, it won't be possible to organise a proper reunion but is there somewhere on social media where folk from this class and the parallel P7 of the time can get in contact with each other? I'd certainly love to hear from any old classmates.'

Moira can be contacted at moira.cameron@hotmail.com

WINTER SALE

Must end 6th February

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Island festivals cancelled

Organisers of two island festivals have announced their cancellation this week.

Fèis Ìle, a week-long celebration of Islay with whisky, music, dancing and more, has had to be cancelled for the second year running due to the Covid-19.

And Tìree Music Festival organisers announced on Monday, 'with heavy hearts', that the event - a highlight of the summer festival calendar - was also having to be cancelled due to the ongoing pandemic.

Organisers of Fèis Ìle had hoped it would be possible to hold the 2021 event between May 28 and June 5, but that has proved impossible.

In a statement, they said: 'With deep regret, we announce that this year's festival is cancelled.'

'Keeping everyone safe is our top priority. Even if travel to Islay is allowed, the ceilidhs, tastings and large events that make the fèis what it is will not be able to take place. We also



need to allow for the fact that people need to be able to make plans to travel and stay.'

Fèis organisers confirmed they will 'be in touch soon about refunds or transferring to 2022' with people who had already bought tickets.

The statement concluded:

'Islay and its businesses would love to welcome you back when restrictions allow. Slàinte mhath.'

Tìree organiser said that despite the positive news on approved vaccines, they had decided there were still too many risks and uncertainties

for them to safely plan and deliver Tìree Music Festival in 2021.

A spokesperson for the festival added: 'As always, our priority is ensuring TMF is a safe, family-friendly event and sadly this cannot be guaranteed under the current circumstances.'

Tìree Music Festival fans will have to hold on for another year to get back to the popular event.

Photograph: Alan Peebles

When we made the decision to cancel TMF2020, we were overwhelmed that nearly 80 per cent of ticket holders transferred their tickets to 2021 and it's been fantastic to continue to see such interest in our unique festival.

'Once again, we will give priority to current ticket holders to automatically transfer all tickets (festival access and add ons) to TMF2022, which will be held from July 8 to July 10 2022.'

Anyone not able to make 2022 and who wishes to request a refund should email office@tireemusicfestival.co.uk with your name and ticket order ID so the request can be processed by Eventbrite.

The spokesperson continued: 'We please ask for patience on these refund requests as this

is a significant administration undertaking for our small festival which has no full-time staff.

'All refund requests must be received by 11pm on Sunday February 28 2021.'

'There have been so many requests to purchase the refunded ticket allocation and this show of support has been a great source of comfort during these challenging times.'

'As soon as we can safely begin planning TMF2022 we will release this allocation. As always, priority will be given to those on the TMF mailing list so please sign up via the website if you have not already done so.'

'Thank you for continuing to support our wee island festival.'

'We're working on ways to bring a taste of Tìree to you in some way this summer and we will keep in touch about this in the coming months.'

'Stay safe and we can't wait to welcome you back to Tìree in 2022.'

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74%

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

Source: YouGov 2018



George Alston's new novel is set in the Western Highlands during the 1970s.

Lochaber 'village' takes centre stage in new novel

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



A former Kinlochleven resident has made 'the village' the central hub in his debut novel.

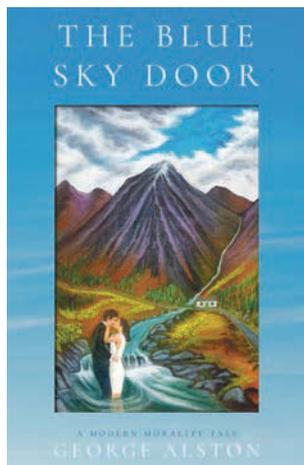
The Blue Sky Door by George Alston is set in the Western Highlands during the 1970s through to the new millennium.

The story revolves around Kinlochleven, at the head of Loch Leven, where the author lived for three years.

Although Kinlochleven is always referred to as 'the village' in the book, it is easily identifiable from the description of its location, its surroundings and the site of the former aluminium factory, now redeveloped into a leisure centre.

The plot starts and ends in 'the village', but also takes place along the shores of Loch Linnhe. Oban is renamed Bannock in the book, Fort William is referred to as Orchy, while familiar places such as the Lodge stay the same, as does Bodach, the mountain, which holds out the unrequited dream of love and eternity for the central characters.

The Blue Sky Door follows Stewart, who deserts his girlfriend, leaves his job and departs for the Highlands of Scotland where he meets and connects with a mysterious



young woman, Melanie, who lives on a mountainside.

His arrival is resisted by some villagers and he struggles for acceptance.

As his bond with Melanie grows, she becomes more resentful of anything that takes him away from her. While Stewart is open about his past, Melanie reveals very little about her own background and the arrival of Stewart's ex-girlfriend adds fuel to the fire.

The mountains symbolically represent the struggles Stewart faces and the truths he must accept, as well as providing a stunning backdrop to this novel about humanity, love and morality.

George Alston began life in

Lancashire, moved to Kent then migrated to Scotland.

An avid mountaineer, it is no surprise the outdoors feature prominently in his work. He now lives in Keswick, Cumbria, and spends most of his time painting and writing.

A prolific creator, Alston received countrywide publicity for his artwork in the 1980s from the BBC, ITV, The Guardian, Daily Telegraph and other news outlets. He has written articles and taken photographs for numerous climbing and outdoor magazines and been published in women's magazines.

'It seemed only natural to follow this up with a novel,' he said.

'This is a simple tale of romance between a man and a woman, but it also reflects aspects of the human condition with which we can all identify – love, joy and sadness, greed, choice, egotism, evil, retribution, followed by redemption.

'An original storyline set in the Highlands of Scotland, it takes us into a quirky world of individuals who all revolve around the two central characters.

'The plot reveals a surprise ending in which the reader, as well as being an onlooker, also becomes an important feature of the denouement.'

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

Youth arts projects benefit to tune of £40,000

Folk musicians and creative practitioners involved in traditional music projects for children and young people across Scotland are being encouraged to apply for a share of £40,000 to support their work, writes Fiona Scott.

The new fund being distributed by traditional arts organisation Fèis Rois launches this week.

The Youth Small Grants Scheme is part of a Scottish Government Covid-19 funding package to support the arts, administered by Creative Scotland.

A number of organisations across Scotland, including the Dingwall-based organisation Fèis Rois, have been awarded funding through the Small Grants Scheme to distribute money to freelance artists to work with children and

young people across Scotland. Applications for the money opened on Friday January 29 and applicants can apply for between £500 and £5,000 to deliver their traditional music projects for young people.

This fund is open to freelance folk musicians, artists and creative practitioners living and working in Scotland looking to work directly with children and young people.

As the fund directly supports freelancers, this fund is not open to applications from organisations, local authorities, groups or clubs.

Fiona Dalgetty, Fèis Rois chief executive, said: 'At Fèis Rois, we enable people of all ages to access, participate in, enjoy and benefit from the traditional arts across Scotland and further afield.'

'This new fund will allow

many of Scotland's top traditional musicians and creatives to continue their work with young people at a time when it has been severely impacted by the pandemic.

'Many of them have had to drastically adapt their ways of teaching and working and having the additional support to continue their important work with young people is crucial to ensure our young people don't miss out on the huge benefits that being involved in traditional music projects can bring.'

The fund is particularly aimed at activities with young people most affected by the pandemic and lockdown restrictions. Priority groups for the Small Grants Scheme include young people living in areas of social and economic deprivation, young carers, young people

with disabilities, those experiencing mental ill health and several other groups.

The funding panel, which consists of Fiona Dalgetty, Siobhan Anderson, Music Officer at Creative Scotland, award-winning Gaelic singer and multi-instrumentalist, Julie Fowles and Ruairidh Gollan, a freelance musician and Fèis Rois board member, will meet in March to review the applications.

Successful applicants will be able to start projects from the end of April this year and will have until March 2022 to complete their projects. They will also receive two training and networking sessions to support them with their projects.

The deadline for applications is March 14. More information can be found on the Fèis Rois website www.feisrois.org.

New writer award for Mull-based author

Oban Gaelic Choir's new song hits right note

A mull-based author is hoping a Scottish Book Trust Award can help turn her ambition to inspire children through her writing into a reality, writes Fiona Scott.

Sally Costelloe is one of 11 recipients of the New Writers Awards 2021, which provide a selection of talented writers who have not yet published a full-length book or collection, with professional guidance to help them move towards publication as well as financial support.

Funded by Creative Scotland and run by Scottish Book Trust, the national charity transforming lives through reading and writing, the awards have supported more than 100 creative individuals since 2009.

Born in Essex, Sally spent 20 years as a journalist and editor for tattoo art magazines. She is currently editing the manuscript of her first children's novel. Sally is passionate about writing for the seven-to-10 years age group as she feels that is when a life-long love of reading can begin.

'I am so excited to receive a New Writers Award,' she said. 'The support and mentoring will be invaluable as I hone my technique, settle into my style and hopefully edge towards publication. If my writing inspires just one child to carry



Sally Costelloe will receive £2,000 plus professional guidance to help her publish her novel for seven-to-10 year olds.

on reading, that would be the ultimate achievement.'

The prestigious judging panel included Scots Makar Jackie Kay, Niall Campbell and Colin Waters for poetry; Tendai Huchu, Janice Galloway, Denise Mina and Alan Bett judging fiction; and Dean Atta, Lari Don and Hannah Sycamore, Scottish Book Trust, judging Children's and Young Adult entries. The Gaelic Books Council selects the two Gaelic New Writer Awardees.

Each of the 11 recipients will receive £2,000 and support tailored to their needs including mentoring from writers and industry professionals, training opportunities and

the platform to showcase their work to publishers and agents.

Marc Lambert, chief executive officer of Scottish Book Trust, said: 'In uncertain times, it is more important than ever to celebrate and discover new writers in Scotland.'

'As always, the standard of the applications were very high and we look forward to future publications from this group.'

The New Writers Showcase, a celebration of work by last year's awardees, will be held online through Scottish Book Trust's social media accounts on Wednesday March 31. Information about tickets will be available on the Scottish Book Trust website soon.

Oban Gaelic Choir has been congratulated for its 'wonderful' piece of new music, writes Ellis Butcher.

Councillor Mary-Jean Devon said the lullaby 'was out of this world' and at a meeting of Oban Community Council she encouraged people to give it a listen if they had not already.

'It's absolutely fantastic, so well done Oban Gaelic Choir,' said councillor Devon, an independent representing Oban, South and the Isles on Argyll and Bute Council.

Mhòrag a' Mhòrag is described as a historic piece of music collected by the last bàrd of the MacDougalls, Dugald Gordon MacDougall (1845-1914).

It was intended as a lullaby sung by a clansman to his grand-daughter on a victorious return from the battle of Dàil Rìgh near Tyndrum in 1306.

Its lyrics are: 'Morag, Morag, I will come to Dunollie with you; Morag Morag, you will see the new moon there.'

The new music is available at www.facebook.com/ObanGaelicChoir

CROSSWORD

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- Across**
- 1 Pretentious (4)
 - 3 Give up (4,4)
 - 9 Ten decades (7)
 - 10 Brava or del Sol, holiday destina
 - 11 Unclaimed goods (4,8)
 - 14 Press for payment (3)
 - 16 Vestige (5)
 - 17 Holder of packaged items (3)
 - 18 Spectacular (3-9)
 - 21 Cut of meat (5)
 - 22 One from one side of a political
 - 23 Vision aiding lens (8)
 - 24 Harmonious relationship (4)
- Down**
- 1 Honour given (8)
 - 2 Going at with hammer and this (
 - 4 League, creeper or a girl (3)
 - 5 Scarves (12)
 - 6 Bath (7)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

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3	I	P	P	T	D	O						
4	E	M	I	R	E	S	C	A	L	A	T	E
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11	T	S	H	I	R	T	U	N	L	E	S	S
12	S	C	Y	L	E	T						

Robert in lockdown

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



A memorable Strip the Willow partner

As a wonderful, virtual Celtic Connections comes to an end, my mind is drawn to the final weekends of festivals gone by where artists and punters meet for one last horo-gheallaidh and sanity is sometimes in short supply.

One year, in the wee small hours, the famous festival club was closing and the only party remaining was in the residents' bar of the Holiday Inn. A group of pipers, led by Calum MacCrimmon of Breabach fame, struck up and began marching along Renfrew Street - soon accumulating a significant band of merry followers.

I was initially among this band but randomly decided to stop off in a newsagents where my eye was caught by a nearly life-sized stuffed tiger in the window.

'How much is that tiger in the window?' I asked, trying not to burst into song and, in no time, I was back following the skirl of distant pipes with the massive soft toy under my arm.

On reaching the Holiday

Inn, I discovered the pipers had continued playing inside and a huge Orcadian Strip the Willow had formed in the foyer.

A 'who's who' of traditional music stardom had lined up and I decided to join with my tiger. When my turn came, I spun the tiger for 16 beats, threw it to the next man in line, spun the next lady, then caught my tiger in the middle as it was thrown back. Our merry dance continued and, miraculously, we both reached the bottom unscathed.

In my mind, I had moves like John Travolta but by this time in the morning, I imagine the inanimate tiger cut a more co-ordinated figure on the dance floor than I did.

The following morning - or, more accurately, a couple of hours later - I awoke in my flat and got up to pour a glass of orange juice, reminiscing immediately about what a tremendous occasion the previous evening had been.

Still half asleep, you can imagine my sudden confusion when I wandered into my

living room to discover the teddy tiger lying sprawled out on the floor.

I had heard of people experiencing pink elephants blowing bugles on mornings such as these, but this was a new one!

Soon, of course, the nonsense of a few hours ago came flooding back. A quick and nervous scan through Facebook set my mind at rest that there was no embarrassing or incriminating photographic evidence from the Strip the Willow and I was struck with relief I had got away with it.

Then came a text from my Auntie Margaret, 30 miles away in Stirling, which said: 'Just been reading about you dancing with a tiger in the Herald!'

One day soon, great nights like this will return. When they do, just remember, to paraphrase Burns loosely: when'er to dance with a cuddly toy you are inclined, just check there is nobody from the national press watching!

Lewis writer unveils new novel

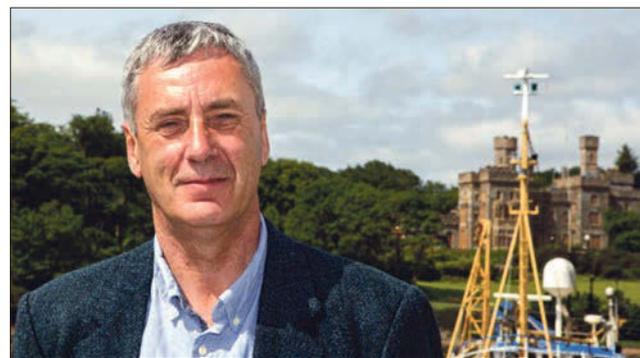
A son of the Hebrides, Donald S Murray is about to publish a new novel, writes Fiona Scott.

The writer and poet, whose work has been shortlisted for the Saltire Literary Awards and the Callum Macdonald Memorial Award, will see his new book, *In a Veil of Mist*, published on March 11.

The story centres on some top-secret biological warfare experiments that were undertaken in the waters off the Isle of Lewis in the 1950s on a floating laboratory called the Ben Lomond.

In the novel, Donald draws upon his own memories growing up on Lewis, as well as rumours, half-truths and whispers he overheard linked to the stories of the experiments.

Operation Cauldron, 1952: Top-secret germ warfare experiments on monkeys and guinea pigs are taking place



Donald S Murray's new book is out on March 11.

aboard a vessel moored off the Isle of Lewis.

Local villagers Jessie and Duncan encounter strange sights on the deserted beach nearby and suspect the worst. And one government scientist wrestles with his own inner anguish over the testing, even if he believes extreme deterrent weapons are needed. When a noxious cloud of plague bacteria is

released into the path of a passing trawler, disaster threatens. Will a deadly pandemic be inevitable?

A haunting exploration of the costs and fallout of warmongering, Donald S Murray follows his prize-winning first novel with an equally moving exploration of another little-known incident in the Outer Hebridean island where he grew up.

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAOIN 04 An Gearran

THURSDAY 04 February

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
19.00 Turas a' Bhradain/ The Salmon's Journey (rpt)
19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/ History Shorts (rpt)
20.00 An Là - NEWS
20.30 NEW Eorpa/ European Current Affairs
21.00 Talamh Torrach (Scotland's Food & Drink) (rpt)
22.00 Ceol Duthchasach/ Ken Burn's Country Music
23.50 Dhan Uisge (River Garry) (rpt)

DIHAOINE 05 An Gerrann

FRIDAY 05 February

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
19.00 An Là NEWS
19.25 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
19.30 Machair (rpt)
20.00 Cearcall (rpt)
20.30 Garradh Phadruig (rpt)
21.00 So Here I Am: 100 Years of Crofting
21.50 Dhan Uisge (River Garry) (rpt)
22.00 State of Happiness: The Summer House (rpt)
22.45 NEW ALT
23.00 Cuirm@Celtic Connections 2021 (rpt)

DISATHAIRNE 06 an Gerrann

SATURDAY 06 February

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
17.45 An Là - NEWS
18.00 NEW Scottish Premiership - Hibernian

v Aberdeen

19.45 Sgeul Slainte (rpt)
20.00 Cearcall (rpt)
20.30 Leugh Mi (rpt)
21.00 Cuirm@Celtic Connections 2020/2021 (rpt)
22.00 Concorde (rpt)
22.50 Binneas na Trads (rpt)
23.00 Scottish Premiership - Hibernian v Aberdeen (rpt)
00.45 ALT (rpt)

DIDÒMHNAICH 07 An Gearran

SUNDAY 07 February

16.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
18.15 An Là - NEWS
18.30 Seachd La/ News Review - NEWS
19.30 Alleluia/ Spiritual Praise (rpt)
20.00 Eorpa/European Current Affairs (rpt)
20.30 An Taigh-Fuine/ The Bakery (rpt)
21.00 Gladys (rpt)
22.00 Cuirm@Celtic Connections 2020/21 (rpt)
23.00 State of Happiness: The Summer House (rpt)
23.45 Binneas na Trads (rpt)

DILUAIN 08 an Gearran

MONDAY 08 February

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich/ Heathers Portraits (rpt)
19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - NEWS
20.30 NEW Garradh Phàdrug
21.00 Trusadh - Eric R. Cregeen - Thachair Sruth ri Steall (rpt)
22.00 Seoid a' Chidsin - The Kitchen Coves (rpt)

22.30 DIY le Donnie (rpt)
23.15 Sgeul Slainte (rpt)
23.30 TradFest (rpt)

DIMÀIRT 09 an Gearran

TUESDAY 09 February

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
19.00 Turas a' Bhradain/ The Salmon's Journey (rpt)
19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - NEWS
20.30 An Taigh - Fuine/ The Bakery (rpt)
21.00 A' Suathadh Ri Iomadh Rubha/ The Campbell Family Story (rpt)
22.00 Trusadh - Eric R. Cregeen - Thachair Sruth ri Steall
23.00 Fraochy Bay (rpt)
23.30 Alleluia/ Spiritual Praise (rpt)

DICIADAIN 10 An Gearran

WEDNESDAY 10 February

17.00 Prògraman Chloinne - Children's programming
19.00 Dealbhan Fraoich/ Heather's Portraits (rpt)
19.30 Speaking Our Language (rpt)
19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh (rpt)
20.00 An Là - NEWS
20.30 Air Iomall - Music from the Edge (rpt)
21.00 DIY le Donnie (rpt)
21.45 Sgeul Slainte (rpt)
22.00 TradFest (rpt)
22.30 Talamh Torrach (Scotland's Food & Drink) (rpt)
23.30 Seoid a' Chidsin - The Kitchen Coves (rpt)



BBC.CO.UK / ALBA | BBC.CO.UK / IPLAYER

Co-bhanntachd eadar MG ALBA agus am BBC | A partnership between BBC and MG ALBA

HIGHLAND FASTENERS LTD DEAL

25pcs Socket Set 1/4" Drive Ratchet

The socket set offers the most popular sizes sockets, a selections of bits and extensions plus a ratchet offering multiple positions.



ONLY £15.00 exc. vat!!!

Highland Fasteners Ltd, 23-25 Stevenson Street, Oban, Argyll
01631 570584 e-mail sales@highlandfasteners.com

OBAN FOR BUSINESS

To minimise the risk of spreading the virus, you must stay at home as much as possible. Full guidance is available from www.gov.scot and it is expected that these restrictions will last in Scotland until at least mid February but will be reviewed. There are a list of examples of reasonable exemptions on the [gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot) website. Although you can leave home for these purposes, you should stay as close to home as possible. Shop online or use local shops and services wherever you can. Travel no further than you need to, to reach a safe, non-crowded place to exercise in a socially distanced way. To minimise the risk of spread of coronavirus it is crucial that we all avoid unnecessary travel. Over the next 4 weeks, the Oban Times, in conjunction with BID4Oban and Oban FM, will give readers an insight into our local services, what you can and can't do and the struggles some businesses owners are facing.

BUILDING, DIY, HOME, GARDENING & SERVICES

BUILDBASE

Mon-Fri 7.30am-5pm
Sat 8am-12pm
Tel: 01631 570518

CITY PLUMBING SUPPLIES

Mon-Fri 7.30am - 5pm
Sat 8am-12pm
Tel: 01631 567640

CITY ELECTRICAL FACTORS

Mon-Fri 7.30am-5.30pm,
Sat 8.30am-12pm
Tel: 01631 562362

CRAIGARD DÉCOR

Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.30pm
Sat 9am-1pm
Tel: 01631 562680 / antonycave@aol.com

HIGHLAND FASTENERS

Mon-Fri, 7.30am-5pm
Sat 8am-12pm
Tel: 01631 570584

HIRE & SUPPLIES

Mon-Fri 7.30am-5pm
Tel: 01631 566306

HOMEBASE

Sun-Mon 9am-6pm
Tues-Sat 9am-8pm
Tel: 0345 640 7807

KINLOCHLAICH GARDEN CENTRE

Orders for collection or delivery
Tel: 07881 525754 / Email fiona@kinlochlaich.plus.com

MACLEOD TV

office@macleodtv.co.uk
Tel: 01631 564310

MACQUEEN BROS

Reduced service - Open for local moves

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

and self storage
Tel: 01631 564848

SCREWFIX

Mon-Sat, 7am-7pm (6pm Sat)
Sun 9am-4pm
Tel: 03330 112112

WEBSTERS OF OBAN PHOTOGRAPHIC CENTRE

Open by appointment
Tel: 01631 562917 / Email: obanphoto-graphic@btconnect.com

CHEMISTS AND HEALTHCARE

Try to avoid contacting your pharmacy by telephone, unless it is essential.

BOOTS THE CHEMIST, GEORGE STREET

Mon-Sat 9am-5.30pm
Tel: 01631 562517

BOOTS THE CHEMIST, BESIDE DOCTORS

Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Closed 1pm-2pm for lunch
Sat 9am-1pm
Tel: 01631 564560

GORDON'S CHEMIST

Mon-Sat 10am till 5.30pm. Closed 1pm-2pm for lunch
Tel: 01631 562053

JOHN WALLACE OPTOMETRIST

Open by appointment only.
Tel: 01631 563170

SPECSAVERS

Mon-Sat 9am-5.30pm
Sun 11am-4pm
Tel: 01631 567640

FUEL STATIONS & SUPPLIERS

All service stations also stock a vast range of food, wine, groceries, confectionery and newspapers.

BIRCHWOOD GARAGE

Mon-Sat 6.30am-6pm

HALFWAY HOUSE

Mon-Sun 7am till 7pm

HIRE & SUPPLIES

Mon-Fri 7.30am-5pm
Tel: 01631 566306

OBAN FILLING STATION

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

WEST HIGHLAND GAS LTD

Mon-Fri 8am-5pm
Tel: 01631 564050

LOCAL FRESH FOOD & DRINK SUPPLIERS

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

ALBA KITCHEN GARDEN

Mon-Sat 9.30am-5.30pm
Tel: 01631 563645 / 07778 003833

D WATT & SON

Tues-Sat 9am-1 pm.
Tel: 01631 562358

DOUGIE DANS CATERING VAN

Thur-Sun 11am-4pm
Tel: 07783 329805

GO NAKED VEG ONLINE & SHOP

Shop: Tues - Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 9am-5pm
For delivery: Order a week ahead if possible (up to 3 weeks)

Website: www.gonakedveg.co.uk
Tel: 01631 358200 / 07585 177444

IAIN DARLING/WYNNE BUTCHERS

Mon-Sat 9am-2.30pm
Tel: 01631 567400

JACKSON BUTCHERS

Tue-Sat 9am-4pm
Tel: 01631 562016

MILLSTONE WHOLEFOODS

Mon-Sat 9.15am--5.15pm
Tel: Saffron on 01631 562704 or email contact@millstonewholefoods.co.uk

TASTE OF ARGYLL

Mon-Sat 10am-5pm
Tel: 07882 226675

THE OBAN BEER SELLER

Tel: 07796 418973 / Email: obanbeer-seller@gmail.com

OBAN FOOD HUB

Order online by midnight Tuesdays
www.thegreatbritishfoodhub.com/hubs/oban-1, collect Thursdays between 4pm and 6pm from Scout Hut behind Cathedral. Safe pick up.

LEGAL, PROPERTY AND INSURANCE

ANDERSON BANKS SOLICITORS & ESTATE AGENTS

Open 9am-5pm
Oban Office: 01631 563158 Email: info@andersonbanks.co.uk
Benbecula office: 01870 602061 Email: uist@andersonbanks.co.uk

E THORNTON & CO

Answering machine service.
Telephone: 01631 566 771 / Email: info@ethornton.co.uk

DM MACKINNON SOLICITORS & NOTARIES

Tel: 01631 563 014. Answering machine service
Email: info@dmmk.co.uk

JELF CLARKE THOMSON

Tel: 01631 567675. Answering machine service

MACPHEE & PARTNERS

Open Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm
Tel: 01631 562308 / Email: law@macphee.co.uk

MORHAM & BROTCHE

Mon-Fri 9am - 5.15pm
Tel: 01631 563 721
Email: admin@morhambro.co.uk

STEVENSON KENNEDY SOLICITORS

Tel: 01631 562317
Email: mail@stevensonkennedy.co.uk

WYLIE & BISSET

4 High Street, Oban
CALL OUR DEDICATED HELPLINE
Tel: 0141 566 7096

NEWSAGENTS AND CONVENIENCE STORES

Most stores have put crowd control measures in place. Please remember to wear face coverings in enclosed spaces.

ALBANY STORES

Mon-Sun 6am-11pm
Tel: 01631 564635

SOROKA SHOP

Mon-Thur 9am-9pm
Fri-Sat 9am-10pm
Sun 10am-9pm
Tel: 01631 562999

McCOLLS

What do you do if your

So the Scottish Government is quite clear on the stay at home message, however if you need to get your car serviced, MOT or repaired you are permitted to attend your local garage to drop off or pick up the vehicle.

Most garages in and around town are not allowing entry to their premises so you must call and speak to the mechanic before dropping in.

Simple measures to protect staff and customers have also

been put in place. These include staff wearing gloves and regularly washing their hands; having hand sanitiser in public and staff areas; wiping down cars before and after carrying out work; implementing social distancing on site; minimising interaction and reducing staff numbers.

Morrison Motor Repairs, Crenan Marine, Barcaldine, are one of several garages in the area that are still offering essential services and owner Stewart Morrison

GARAGES

All garages are sticking to strict guidelines, please call beforehand.

ALL CARS & COMMERCIALS

1 Crannog Lane, Oban
Mon-Fri 8am-5pm
Tel: 01631 565555

CJ AUTO REPAIRS

Glengallan Industrial Est, Oban
Working to reduced hours, please call
Tel: 01631 566009

FIN'S PLACE

Old Mill Est/Soroba Rd, Oban
Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm
Tyres, brakes, batteries etc
Tel: 01631 566 220 or 07766 757 013

FLIT

2 Glencruitten Road, Oban
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
Vehicle hire, servicing and bodyshop
Email: flit@btconnect.com
Tel: 07810391753

KWIK FIT

Market Street, Oban
Mon - Fri, 8.30am-6pm (till 5pm Sat)
Sun 10am-4pm
Tel: 01631 566282

KERRIE'S TYRES

Quarry Rd, Oban
Mon-Sat 8.30am-5pm
Tel: 01631 570 000 / 0787 6762631

MCCONECHY'S

21 Lochside St, Oban
Mon-Sat 8am - 6pm
Email: oban@mcconechys.co.uk
Tel: 01631 570047

MUNRO'S GARAGE

2B Lochavullin Rd, Oban
Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm
Sat 9am-12pm
All vehicle servicing, repairs, MOT's
Tel: 01631 564463 to book your vehicles in.

MORRISON MOTORS

Unit 1 Crenan Marine, Barcaldine, Oban PA37 1SG
Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm
Sat 9am-2pm
Vehicle rentals for short and long term and all types of motor repairs
Tel: 07825 581171



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Oban Business Improvement District

www.bid4oban.co.uk



car needs attention?

and his staff have adapted to the current situation well.

'It has been a bit of a changing scenario since the pandemic began last year but we have managed to keep on top of it and do what we have to to keep our business running and our staff and customers safe,' said Stewart.

'The hire side of the business suffered a bit at the start as vehicles had to sit for 48 hours after they had been sanitized and we missed out on a lot of

hires because of that.

'There is now a product that you can spray on and just leave for half an hour though so these obstacles are being overcome.'

While garages remain open, if you or anyone in your household has Covid-19 or displays any of the symptoms you should not leave the house, even to take your car for urgent repairs.

RODDY'S GARAGE

15 Mill La, Oban
Booking ahead by telephone required.
Tel: 01631 565882

SCOTT ROBERTSON ACCIDENT REPAIRS

Quarry Road
Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm
Tel: 01631 569441

TRAILWEST

3 Mill Lane, Oban
Open as normal for repair plus new supply and hire of trailers to the agricultural industry
Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm
Tel: 01631 563638



MORRISON MOTORS

Unit 1 Creran Marine, Barcaldine, Oban PA37 1SG
Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat 9am-2pm
Vehicle rentals for short and long term and all types of motor repairs
Tel: 07825 581171

Mon-Sun 7am till 8pm
Tel: 01631 569896

DUNOLLIE STORIES
Mon-Thur 10am-8pm
Fri-Sat 10am-9pm
Sun 10am-7pm
Tel: 01631 566544

HANNAH'S
Mon-Sat 6am-8pm
Sun 6am-6pm
Tel: 01631 566913

DUNBEG STORES
Mon-Fri 7am 10pm
Sat 8am-10pm
Sun 8am-9pm
Tel: 01631 566576

CONNEL VILLAGE STORE
Mon-Fri 6am-3pm
Sat 8am-3pm
Sun 7.30am-1pm
In store post office Mon-Fri 9am-1pm,
Sat 9am-12pm
Tel: 01631 710219

THE PINK SHOP
Mon-Thur 7am-9pm
Fri-Sat 7am-10pm
Sun 8am-9pm
Tel: 01631 720201

BALVICAR STORES
Mon-Fri 8.30am-6pm
Sat 9am-6pm
Sun 9.30am-2pm
Tel: 01852 300373

RESTAURANTS AND TAKEAWAYS

While sit in is not allowed, most eateries are offering a takeaway service from the door. Please call prior to arrival.

BIRCHWOOD FILLING STATION
Hot filled rolls, available Mon-Sat
6.30am-2pm
Mon-Sat, 6.30-6.30pm
Tel: 01631 565359

CORIANDER
Wed-Sun 5pm-9pm
Tel: 01631 570806

GEORGE STREET FISH TAKE-AWAY
Mon-Sun 11am-8pm
Tel: 01631 566664

KEBABISH OF OBAN
Sun-Thur 4pm-12am
Fri-Sat 3pm-1.30am
Tel: 01631 566885 / Order online at
kebabishofoban.co.uk

KRONKS
Sat-Sun 10am-3pm
01631 358019

NORIES FISH & CHIPS
Mon-Sun 11.30am-9.30pm
Tel: 01631 563736

OBAN FILLING STATION
Garage: Mon- Sat: 7am-8pm, Sun
8am-8pm
Food: Mon-Fri 7am-2pm, Sat
8am-12noon
Tel: 01631 571101

OBAN GRILLHOUSE
Mon-Sun 5pm-11pm Collection or
delivery
Tel: 01631 358246

PIAZZA
Thur-Sun 5pm-8pm

Tel: 01631 563628

TASTE OF ARGYLL KITCHEN
Fri 3pm-9pm
Sat & Sun 10am-9pm
Tel: 07882226675

YUWU CHINESE TAKEAWAY
Wed-Sun 4pm-8pm
Tel: 01631 565078
Web: www.yuwu.co.uk/take-away

SUPERMARKETS & FOOD-HALLS

Most superstores in town are operating crowd control measures to help manage social distancing, with hand sanitiser for customer and colleague use. They are working tirelessly to restock shelves daily. Please be patient and kind.

ALDI
Mon-Sat 8am-10pm
Sunday 9am-7pm

BOOKERS CASH AND CARRY
Mon 9am-2pm
Tues-Fri 7.30am-4pm
Sat 7.30am-1pm

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

LIDL
Mon-Sat 8am-10pm
Sun 8am-8pm

MARKS AND SPENCER
Mon 8am-9pm
Tues-Sat 8am-8pm
Sun 9am-6pm

TESCO
Shopping: Mon-Sat 7am-10pm, Sunday
8am-8pm
Petrol Filling Station - Mon-Sat 6am-
8pm, Sun 7am-8pm
Post office - Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm, Sat
9am-12.30pm, Closed Sunday
Café - Closed

SPORT AND FITNESS

OBAN CYCLES
Shop Tue-Sat, 10am-3pm
Tel: 01631 566033 / Email: obancycles1@gmail.com

TAXIS
For essential travel only

ARGYLL TAXIS
01631 565293

ETIVE TAXIS
01631 566880

LORN TAXIS
01631 564744

OBAN TAXIS
01631 564148/566676/564666

VETS AND PET SERVICES

OBAN VETERINARY SURGEONS
Tel: 01631 562876

PETS AT HOME
Mon-Fri 9am-6pm
Sat 9am-7pm
Sun 10am-5pm

CREATURE COMFORTS
Mon-Sat 10am-2pm
Mail order deliveries available.
Tel: 01631 563150

USEFUL INFORMATION

HOME-START LORN

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

HOPE KITCHEN

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

New Hope is staffed Monday to Friday 10am-4pm. Parcels can be picked up 11am-2pm

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

MOLEIGH RECYCLING CENTRE

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm
Sat-Sun 11am-4pm
In order to keep both staff and customers safe, please ensure you follow social distancing rules when using the site, and stay 2m apart from staff and other customers
If any sites become too busy or full, or if too much traffic is queueing, the site may need to be closed temporarily.

OBAN FM

103.3FM
Your community radio station bringing you all time favourites and news, 7 days a week

ROYAL MAIL

Albany Street Sorting Office
Mon 7am-9am
Tue 8am-10am
Wed Closed
Thur-Fri 8am-10am
Sat 8am-12pm
Sun Closed

WEST COAST MOTORS

At this time the new levels will not impact on West Coast Motors service levels. Over the coming days we will endeavour to keep you updated if this changes.
For all information relating to bus travel during this pandemic please visit www.westcoastmotors.co.uk/travelling-bus

Information correct at time of going to print. This page will run in the Oban Times every week for as long as necessary - printed information will be updated weekly.

Please feel free to get in touch with us if you would like to feature your business, or know a business that should be included.
Emailadverts@obantimes.co.uk

Double Crossword

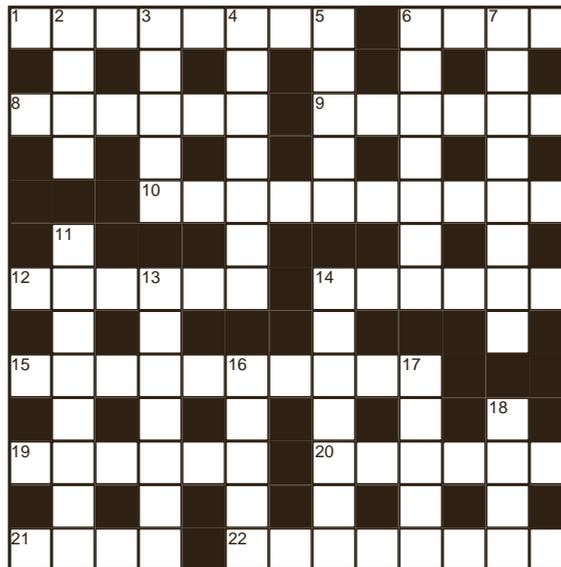
The puzzles are different but both use the same grid

Cryptic Across

- Sacked when completed! (2,3,3)
- Removes the inner parts (4)
- At a higher price it must be more beloved (6)
- Small amount of publicity about love bird (6)
- Twisting and turning in its bed perhaps (10)
- Author will be found in the assembly tonight (6)
- Not so wild about piano and fiddle (6)
- Certainly in every way (2,3,5)
- One who takes things the wrong way (6)
- It depends on winter being cold (6)
- Telephoned back to growl (4)
- Promising to be attractive! (8)

Cryptic Down

- Votes against one's reorganisation (4)
- Arm he dislocated in women's area (5)
- Increase in profit at the public house acquired cheaply (7)
- Copied guide leader first who yawned (5)
- George and Morag wove the coarse cloth (7)
- Definite high spots of a South American tour? (3,5)
- Belittle the dramatic collapse (4,4)
- Where one might have to stop to pay one's way (4,3)
- Running in the heat (7)
- In summer get to join the company (5)
- Throw away support for injury (5)
- Scheme to get ET off earth perhaps (4)



Quick Across

- Shocked (8)
- Agile (4)
- Polish port (6)
- Keyboard operative (6)
- Niggard (10)
- Dodged (6)
- Languish, fade (6)
- Banned (10)
- Administer (6)
- Irritable (6)
- Knock unconscious (4)
- Walking like a duck (8)

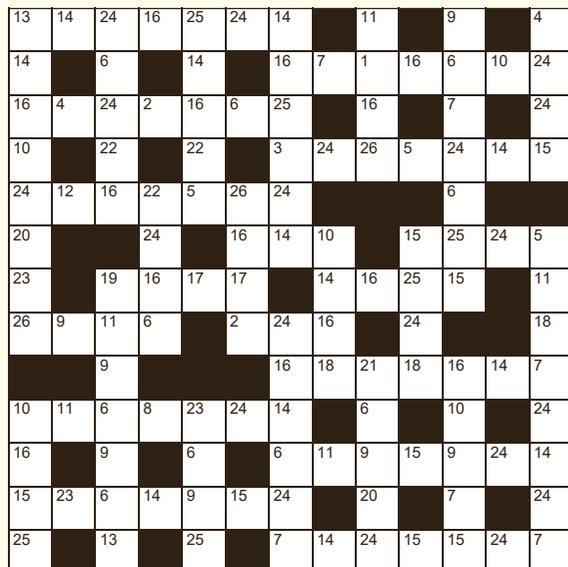
Quick Down

- Neat (4)
- Made hastily (3,2)
- Compared (7)
- Trench (5)
- Displaying wisdom (7)
- Begrudged (8)
- Outer garment (8)
- Make out (7)
- Moved unsteadily (7)
- Begin again (5)
- Lived (anag.) (5)
- Fibre cereal (4)

All puzzles on this page are supplied by Sirius Media Services. To try our new puzzle, Zygolex, go to www.zygolex.com - available in book form or as an app.



CROSS CODE



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

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

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

Quiz Challenge

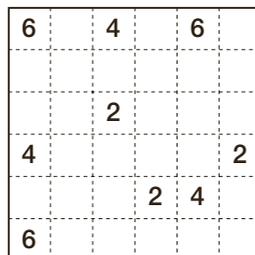
- Claude Littner replaced Nick Hewer on which reality TV show?
- Pertussis is the alternative name for which medical condition?
- Which defender, a German international footballer, played for Middlesbrough, Chelsea, Stoke City and Leicester City?
- Britain's first section of motorway, the eight-mile Preston bypass, is now part of which motorway?
- Name the manager of Chelsea FC who is a nephew of Harry Redknapp.



Harry Redknapp - see Question 5

- Which TB is a British luxury retail clothing company founded in Glasgow in 1987?
- For what does the commonly used text abbreviation IMHO stand?
- The William Tell Overture was written by which Italian composer?
- Which country is the world's last remaining grand duchy?
- Which Northern Ireland MP is the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party in the House of Commons?

BOX CLEVER



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

COMMON LINK

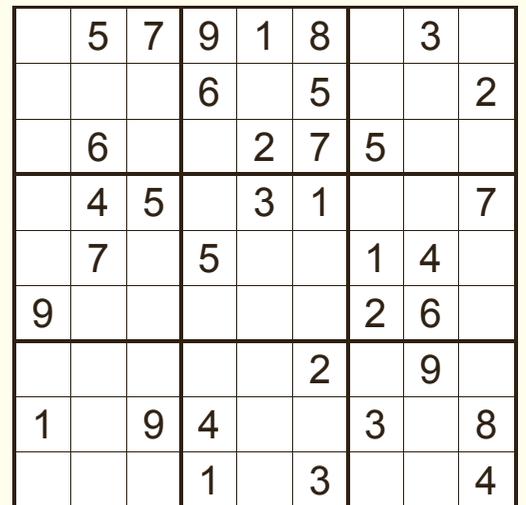
The answers to the following five questions contain a word or words which have a common theme. Can you find the link?

- In the USA, what name is given to an unidentified corpse or a male whose identity is to be withheld?
- On which ship did Sir Francis Drake circumnavigate the world between 1577 and 1580?
- Which novel by Jackie Collins was the sequel to The Stud?
- Which rock group recorded Bohemian Rhapsody, one of the longest songs in popular music?
- Which Latin word was mistakenly given to areas of the Moon formed by ancient volcanic eruptions?

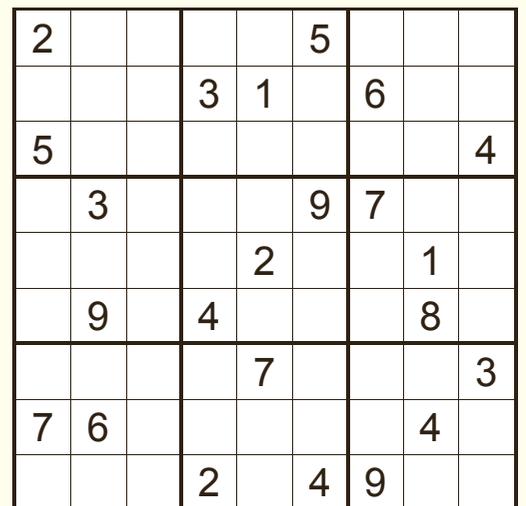
SUDOKU

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

Easy

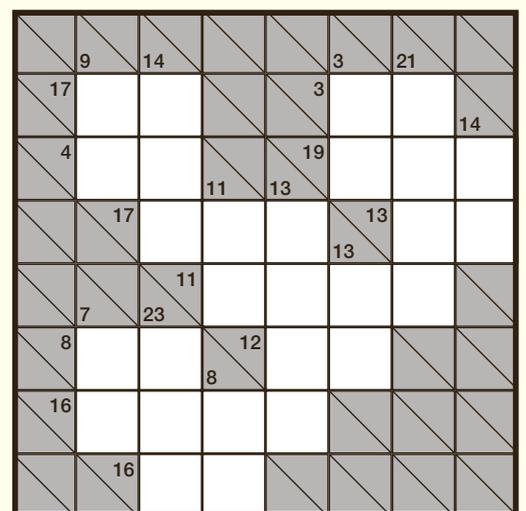


Hard



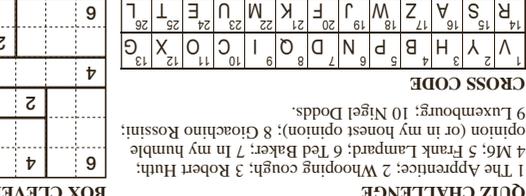
KAKURO

Fill in the blank squares in the grid with numbers so that each horizontal or vertical line adds up to the total given in the box either to the left or above it. Horizontal totals are given in the top right corners of the shaded boxes; vertical totals in the bottom left corners. You can use the numbers 1 to 9, but may not use the same number more than once in any run. The number may be used again, however, in the same row or column but as part of another run.



SOLUTIONS

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD:
 Across - 1 In the bag; 6 Guts; 8 Dear; 9 Plover; 10 Meandering; 12 Typist; 15 Prochenna; 12 Evaded; 14 Withers; 15 Prochenna; 19 Govern; 20 Livey; 21 Sun; 22 Waddling.
 Down - 2 Tidy; 3 Ran up; 4 Likened; 5 Engaging; 6 Program; 7 The Andes; 11 Gaped; 6 Grogram; 7 The Andes; 11 Overcoat; 13 Discern; 14 Wobbled; 16 Play down; 17 Toll bar; 14 Thawing; 16 Merge; 17 Shing; 18 Plan.
QUICK CROSSWORD:
 Across - 1 Started; 6 Spy; 8 Gdansk; 9 Typist; 10 Plover; 12 Evaded; 14 Withers; 15 Prochenna; 19 Govern; 20 Livey; 21 Sun; 22 Waddling.
 Down - 2 Tidy; 3 Ran up; 4 Likened; 5 Engaging; 6 Program; 7 The Andes; 11 Gaped; 6 Grogram; 7 The Andes; 11 Overcoat; 13 Discern; 14 Wobbled; 16 Play down; 17 Toll bar; 14 Thawing; 16 Merge; 17 Shing; 18 Plan.
COMMON LINK:
 1 John Doe; 2 The Golden Hind; 3 The Bitch; 4 Queen; 5 Mare; 6 Common link; 7 Female animals.
KAKURO:
 1 The Apprentice; 2 Whooping cough; 3 Robert Huth; 4 Me; 5 Frank Lampard; 6 Ted Baker; 7 In my humble opinion (or in my honest opinion); 8 Gioachino Rossini; 9 Luxembourg; 10 Nigel Dodds.
CROSS CODE:
 1 V; 2 L; 3 H; 4 B; 5 P; 6 N; 7 D; 8 O; 9 I; 10 C; 11 X; 12 G; 13 A; 14 S; 15 A; 16 Z; 17 W; 18 J; 19 F; 20 M; 21 K; 22 U; 23 E; 24 T; 25 L; 26 R.





HOME
Sweet
HOME

moving home
during a pandemic



PETER MURPHY & Co
ESTATE AGENTS

LOCHABER'S NEWEST
ESTATE AGENT

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A FRESH APPROACH TO SELLING HOMES

Buying or selling? What you can do right now

Life goes on regardless of lockdowns so use this time wisely to get yourself into the best possible position so you are ready for action when the time comes.

House moves cannot be kept on hold forever; up and downsizing plans have to go ahead and so do moves for work or family circumstances. Rest assured - all the players in the property market are working hard to keep things moving.

How on earth do you move house during a pandemic with so many lockdown rules in place?

The Scottish Government says you are: 'strongly advised to postpone at this time, if possible'.

But sometimes staying put is not an option; moves for family circumstances, including finances, and employment, have to take place. The current guidelines from Holyrood say work can be carried out in someone's home for 'the maintenance, upkeep or functioning of the home'

If keeping your home functioning means moving house then do not worry.

People can enter your home, 'to support a home move, for example furniture removal'.

And, 'it is permitted to leave your house for activities in connection with moving home (including viewing a property), or for activities in connection with the essential maintenance, purchase, sale, letting, or rental of residential property that the person owns or is otherwise responsible for'.

But the advice continues: 'You should search for property online and do viewings virtually in the first instance and only physically view a property which you most likely want to move into'.

This is where our estate agents have stepped up to the challenge. Most have expanded their

online presence with video views of properties and the number of photographs of each property has been vastly increased.

Moving house is possible and the market is strong, but don't just take our word for it.

Last week the Financial Times reported that UK property prices rose at their fastest rate since 2016; with a four-year high in November, saying that lockdown lifestyle shifts and government measures boosted property prices in spite of economic slowdown.

The Scottish Property Federation (SPF) is the voice for the property industry in Scotland. Michaela Sullivan MRTPI, who chairs the foundation, is optimistic; she said in the organisation's review at the end of 2020: 'As we move into 2021, We still have some hurdles to face, as the vaccination programme will not be completed overnight, furlough will come to an end, our public finances have been altered beyond all recognition and the potential long-term impacts on how we occupy and use our real estate are not yet understood.'

The Home Owners Alliance reports: 'With demand outstripping supply, it's definitely a 'sellers market' as newly listed homes are being snapped up. This puts sellers in a strong position to negotiate and pick from the best buyers who are able to move quickly.'

Nearly a quarter of those planning to buy their first property say they have been able to save more cash during lockdown, according to research from the Nottingham Building Society. The money saved on commuting and the removal of any temptation to go out for a meal or the treat of a weekend away have all helped boost nest eggs.



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Moving home during a pandemic

Scottish Government guidelines, updated earlier this month say: All home moves are permitted, provided they can be carried out safely. This continues to be the case following the announcement of the measures in the five level system and the temporary lockdown.

People can move home in all protection levels, and to and from areas with different levels. Property viewings are to be done virtually in the first instance and in taking account of the new strain of the virus it may be advisable to postpone viewings of properties or delay a home move, where this is possible.

Related activities in connection with the purchase, sale, letting or rental of a residential property include:

- Visiting estate or letting agents, housing association or council offices, developer sales offices or show homes where necessary
- Viewing a residential property to look for a property to buy or rent where necessary
- Preparing a residential property to move in.
- Moving home
- Visiting a residential property to undertake any activities required for the rental or sale of that property.

Although you can leave home for these purposes, you should consider if you can delay these activities where possible.

The Lochaber property market is on the move, with new estate agency at Lochybridge...



Some readers may recognise the owner of new estate agents Peter Murphy & Co Estate Agents. Peter Murphy is well known in the Lochaber area from his time as a former player and chairman of Fort William FC. Peter left Fort William for Inverness some 25 years ago with his wife Tricia to pursue a career in financial services. In 2004 he turned his negotiating skills to estate agency and in 2012 began working for a national estate agent. As Branch Manager of a company with 260 branches he turned the Inverness branch from loss making to the most profitable branch in whole of the UK.

Changes in family circumstances have led Peter & Tricia to decide to move back to Fort William. They feel there is now an opportunity to offer a fresh approach to sellers across the Highlands. Peter & Tricia will provide a competitively priced estate agency service from Oban to Fort William and Inverness, whilst offering the level of service a seller would expect when selling what is likely to be their most valuable asset. They will carry out accompanied viewings at no cost and are open weekdays from 9am til 9pm as well as Saturdays from 10am til 4pm. Their new office is about to open at Sheraton Retail Park at Lochybridge, Fort William. To ensure the safest possible way of carrying out viewings they will temperature test all viewers before they enter homes and follow all Covid19 protocols. They recognise that buyers want to fully appraise a home before visiting it so offer high quality virtual tours as well as professional photography and floorplans. Enjoy a customer friendly, professional and fresh approach to selling your home with Peter Murphy & Co Estate Agents today – call today on 01397 708555.

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Around the markets

Caledonian Marts Ltd, Monday February 1: sold 895 Store Hoggets and Feeding Ewes at their fortnightly sale.

A good show of Hoggets forward for numbers met a similar trade to the last sale, with the overall average for 895 Hoggets sold levelling out at £80.06.

Top price of the day went to W & E Cook, Balcachie for a pen of Texel Hoggets at £108.

Leading Prices:
 Store Hoggets per Head – Texel £104 & £102 Bower Park; Continental £100 Bower Park; Beltex X £99 Mosshead; Beltex £98 Craiglaw & Feddans; Suffolk £96 Balcachie; Cross £96 Standingfauld; exel X £95 Loig; Mule £84 Alpin Cottage; BF £78 Allanfauld & Drumardoch
 Feeding Ewes per Head:

Texel £78 Bower Park; Cheviot X £70 Lochnell; BF £46 Innieshewan Farms.
United Auctions, Oban, Tuesday January 26: sold 662 sheep of all classes. Hoggs sold to £94.00 for Suffolk Crosses from Barcaldine Home Farm to average £53.06 (+£5.59). 2021 kicked off with a bang at Oban Livestock Centre when averages in all sections of the sale recorded a substantial increase on the corresponding sale last year.

Leading lots & prices: Hoggs – SuffX – £94.00, Barcaldine HF. TexX – £87.00, £77.00, £67.00, Gallanachmore. Chev – £78.00, Strongorm; £76.00, Ardachy; £71.00, Daltote. Cross – £84.00, Ederline Estate; £80.00, Lochnell HF. BF – £70.00, Ormsary Farmers; £64.00, Stroneskar; £64.00, Ardachy; £63.00, Stroneskar;

£63.00, Gorteneorn; £63.00, Gallanachmore; £61.00, Achalic; £61.00, Castles Estate. Ewes – TexX – £88.00, Glenamachrie. Chev – £65.00, Dunach Estate. Cross – £71.00, Wood Cottage Croft; £67.00, Lochnell HF; £64.00, Glenamachrie; £60.00, Wood Cottage Croft; £60.00, Ormsary Farmers. Mule – £81.00, Ormsary Farmers; £63.00, Lusraganbeag. BF – £60.00, Barndromin. Rams – Suff – £75.00, Culbhuirg. BFL – £76.00, Saulmore. Belt – £88.00, Ormsary Farmers. Tex – £93.00, 83 Borve; £86.00, Dunach Estate; £82.00, Ardachy. Cha – £80.00, Culbhuirg. Chev – £94.00, £87.00, £80.00, Strongorm; £80.00, The Steadings; £80.00, Dunach Estate; £80.00, Ederline Estate; £80.00, Barndromin. Cross – £88.00, Barcaldine HF. BF – £85.00, Saulmore. Wedders – BF – £79.00, Stroneskar.

Invitation for farming families to join hit TV documentary series

Farming families in the Highlands and beyond are being offered the chance to take part in a hit BBC documentary on the agricultural lifestyle.

A fourth series of This Farming Life is currently screening on BBC 2 every week at 8pm on Wednesdays. Such is its popularity, it has now been commissioned for a fifth series, with members of the farming community being asked to get in touch to discuss the possibility of taking part.

A BBC Scotland spokeswoman said: 'I know a lot of farmers in the Inverness and Highlands area are fans of This Farming Life, so this may be of interest. 'The documentary series will



once again follow farming and crofting families over the course of a year and the BBC particularly want to hear from those who have a year of change or challenge ahead.' Any farmers interested

in appearing, or those who know someone who might be perfect for the show, are asked to get in touch with the team via assistant producer Kate Thomson at email: kate.thomson@bbc.co.uk



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 20-foot race, 100-foot holding pen
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The system is easy to move and erect where required and can be easily modified to suit your requirements. Also ideal for TB testing and the cattle sliding gate gives full control of the livestock from outside the race and stops the race from spreading out.

MAIN FEATURES:

- Made from high-tensile steel
- All hurdles are 6 railed x 1.75m high
- A funnel is incorporated into the race-way
- All hot-dipped galvanised finish
- 3000mm (3m) long
- 20-foot race
- 60-foot holding pen. Includes all joining pins/stakes
- Total 200-feet of penning

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- 10 x 3m (6 railed) cattle hurdles
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All-New Isuzu D-Max crowned 2021 Pick-Up Of The Year by 4x4 Magazine

The All-New Isuzu D-Max has won its very first UK award after eclipsing all the competition at the 4x4 Magazine awards. Judges at the specialist off-road publication were awestruck by its high levels of comfort and even greater capabilities and deservedly crowned the newcomer as the '2021 Pick-Up Of The Year'.

Isuzu has a solid reputation in the UK for providing tough, practical and proficient vehicles. The All-New D-Max inherits Isuzu's unmistakable workhorse DNA, with an even stronger chassis, and adds greater levels of refinement, safety and off-road capabilities.

After a conducting a comprehensive driving appraisal, testing the safety equipment and comparing its specification with the competitors, the esteemed panel were convinced that there was only

one worthy winner and bestowed the coveted title upon the All-New Isuzu D-Max.

The judges were particularly impressed by the new model's comfortable interior, refined driving characteristics, sleek dashboard design and new infotainment systems, which includes a 9-inch touchscreen display on the top-of-the-range model.

Alan Kidd, Editor at 4x4 Magazine, commented: "This D-Max is far more refined to drive on the road. It's smoother and quieter at all speeds, with steering and suspension that disguise its size. Its cabin is a quantum leap forward with cutting-edge electronics mounted on a superb looking dash".

As the UK's only 4x4 and Pick-Up Magazine, their dedicated readership of off-road enthusiasts will also be interested in the D-Max's even stronger

chassis, faster engaging shift-on-the-fly 4WD system and the rear diff-lock, which is now standard on All-Purpose and Adventure range models.

The increased refinement, safety and comfort of the All-New Isuzu D-Max hasn't compromised Isuzu's renowned practicality, with the new model offering a 3.5t towing capacity and a maximum payload of over one tonne. Power is derived from an efficient, Euro 6D compliant diesel engine, which produces up to 164PS and 360Nm of torque.

Customers have a wide range of models to choose from including 4x2 or 4x4, a 6-speed manual or automatic transmission, three cab types (single, extended and double cab) and four brand new trim levels. Each new model comes with 125,000 mile / 5 Year warranty and 5 years UK and European roadside assistance.



Achieving a maximum five-star rating in the new rigorous Euro NCAP test, the All-New

Isuzu D-Max arrives into UK showrooms in March 2021 and customers are encouraged

to register their interest now by calling S&S Services on 01292 880080

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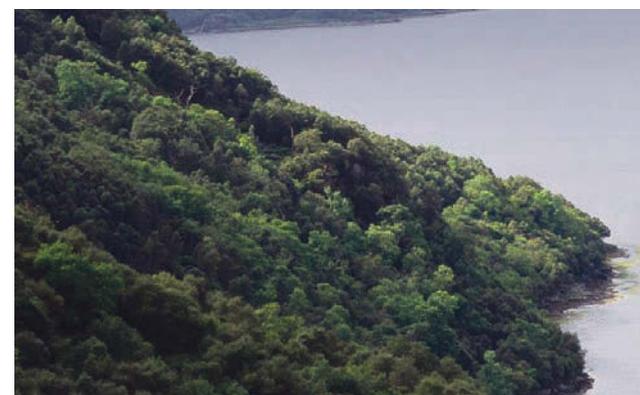
Campbeltown Motor Company, Snipefield, Drumore, Campbeltown 01586 552030 REASSURANCE **BUILT IN**

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



Established in 1994, Colin Brolly Forestry Ltd is a family owned and run timber harvesting business based in Achnabreac, Lochgilphead operating mainly throughout Argyll and the Islands.

SERVICE ENGINEER

Due to an increasing work load we require an experienced engineer to join our team to assist with the maintenance and repair of our fleet of forestry machinery, both onsite and within our workshop.

The successful applicant must hold a full UK driving licence and should be self-motivated and reliable. Experience of forestry, agricultural or heavy plant machinery would be desirable.

This is a full time permanent position, and salary will be dependent on the successful candidate's knowledge and experience.

If this position is of interest or for further information please contact Jude Brolly on jude@colinbrollyforestry.co.uk

OFFICE MANAGER

We have a position for a full-time office manager based in our office at Achnabreac who would be responsible for the smooth day to day running of the office and as the role covers a wide range of office duties, a flexible approach to working would be advantageous.

A knowledge of accounting and payroll software, and Microsoft Excel is required.

The role would involve liaising with and providing support for the workshop and harvesting teams

If this position is of interest or for further information please contact Jenny Brolly on jenny@colinbrollyforestry.co.uk

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KITCHEN MANAGER!



We're looking for an enthusiastic and experienced Kitchen Manager to lead and develop our busy team, take responsibility for quality and stock control, training, kitchen efficiency, health and safety and more. A passion for locally sourced food and to continually develop our menu with a focus on artisan pizzas, sharing platters, salads and local dishes is also a must.

FRONT OF HOUSE!



We're also looking for two new cheery, full-time Front of House staff. If you have experience working in a vibrant, busy bar and café / restaurant environment, a passion for customer service and the ability to shine in diverse roles, we'd like to hear from you! Successful candidates should ideally be barista trained, with the flexibility to work across all areas.

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WWW.HIGHLANDCINEMA.CO.UK/CAREERS/




**MARINE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010
MARINE FARM, AIRD FADA, MULL**

Notice is hereby given that Southwest Mull and Iona Development has applied to the Scottish Ministers of the Scottish Government, under Part 4 of the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010, in respect of the deposit of a marine farm at:

Cost	Latitude	Longitude
£150,000		
Aird Fada, Mull	56° 20.667 N	006° 08.957 W
	56° 20.824 N	006° 08.029 W
	56° 20.574 N	006° 07.870 W
	56° 20.407 N	006° 08.803 W

(WGS84)

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at <https://bit.ly/2Y0LL2u>

Objections relating to safety of navigation in respect of the application should be made by email to:

MS.MarineLicensing@gov.scot within 28 days of the date of this notice, quoting reference: 00008878 and Southwest Mull and Iona Development.

Fair Processing Notice

The Scottish Government's Marine Scotland Licensing Operations Team (MS-Lot) determine applications for marine licences under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. During the consultation process any person having an interest in the outcome of the application may make representation to MS-Lot. The representation may contain personal information, for example a name or address. This representation will only be used for the purpose of determining an application and will be stored securely in the Scottish Government's official corporate record. Representations will be shared with the applicant and/or agent acting on behalf of the applicant, any people or organisations that we consult in relation to the application and, where necessary, be published online, however personal information will be removed before sharing or publishing.

A full privacy notice can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/marine/Licensing/marine/PrivacyNotice>. If you are unable to access this, or you have any queries or concerns about how your personal information will be handled, contact MS-Lot at: ms.marinelicensing@gov.scot.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

MacLennan Motors Ltd Of Pierhead, Scarinish, Isle of Tiree, PA77 6UH. Is applying to change an existing licence as follows

To keep an extra 3 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at the operating centre at 15B Crannog Lane, Lochavullin Industrial Estate, Oban, PA34 4HB.

Owners or occupiers of the land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Amax Haulage Ltd, 44a Culcabock Avenue, Inverness IV2 3RG is applying to change an existing licence as follows: to add an operating centre to keep 3 goods vehicles and 3 trailers at Annat Quarry Industrial Site, Corpach, Fort William PH33 7NL. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATION

1. C & E Rozga, Knockrome, 0.21 ha, Plot for development, (107721)

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 05/03/2021 at info@crofting.gov.scot / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

DECROFTING DIRECTION ISSUED

1. R Fletcher, 1 Lorgbaw, 0.200 ha, Site for dwelling house, with fencing and use conditions (105226) Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

Oban Times PUBLIC NOTICES
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www.highland.gov.uk



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

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

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

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
20/05158/FUL	Land to South of The Old Inn Letterfinlay, Spean Bridge	Demolition of log shed, erection of house
21/00247/FUL	Land 70M SW Of Hillside Station Road, Arisaig	Erection of house (amended design to 20/00337/FUL)
21/00299/FUL	Queen Anne House 111 High Street, Fort William	Alterations and Change of Use from First Floor Office Accommodation to Apartment
20/05040/PIP	Plot 110M South of Leanderly Torlundy, Fort William	Change of use of farm buildings to bunkhouse and art studios
21/00308/FUL	Plot 2 North East Of Ardfriseal, Invergarry	Amend position of house previously approved under ref: 20/04146/FUL
20/05026/FUL	St Andrews East and West Fassifern Road, Fort William	Converting of a Guesthouse to 2 Dwelling Houses
21/00019/FUL	Land 115M SE Of Taigh Cruinn Duisky, Fort William	Siting of recreational hut
21/00291/FUL	The Old Manse Strontian Acharacle	Alterations to The Old Manse and Conversion/Extension of Outbuilding to Form Self Contained Unit
21/00068/FUL	4A Blar Mhor Industrial Estate Lochyside, Fort William	Formation of hardstanding and siting of chill unit

Time period for comments is 14 days

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

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Proposed Assignment of a Croft

Ishbel Wilson is applying to assign the croft at 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16 Unachan to Bruno Berardelli of Hill Farm, Torlundy, Fort William. Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot by 04/03/2021.

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
20/02249/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land At Croft 1, Cornaigmore, Isle Of Tiree, Argyll And Bute
21/00009/PP	Erection of 2 dwellinghouses, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of vehicular access	Jay Cottage, Land South West Of Ulva Cottage, Salen, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
20/02275/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, installation of sewage treatment plant and formation of access	Land At Croft 16, Balleuvullin, Isle Of Tiree, Argyll And Bute
20/02023/PP	Formation of vehicular access	Ballimackilliechan Croft, Isle Of Lismore, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA34 5UL
20/02284/PP	Change of use from a vacant laundry property (Class 2) to a shop (Class 1) and a micro brewery (Class 4)	11A Main Street, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute, PA75 6NU
21/00016/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Lettershuna Croft 2, Appin, Argyll And Bute
20/02094/PP	Alterations and extension to main dwellinghouse and conversion of barn to form two bedroom annexe and alterations to existing private vehicular access	Struan House, Kilchrenan, Argyll And Bute, PA35 1HG
20/02357/MIN	Temporary mineral working to provide aggregates for development associated with Kilchoman Distillery	Land South East Of Kilchoman Distillery, Bruichladdich, Isle Of Islay, Argyll And Bute

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

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

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BIRTH

MELLOR - On January 27, 2021, to Jodie (née Whitehead) and Hamish, a son Jasper Guy, a brother to Algy.

DEATHS

CAMERON - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban, on January 28, 2021, age 69 years, Ann (née Barr), beloved wife of the late Alexander Cameron (Alasdair), dear mum of Sandy, Bernard and the late Stephen and much loved granny of Sean and Natasha. Sadly missed by all.

HENNIS - Harry of Lochawe and formerly Co. Durham. Beloved husband of Maureen. Passed away at home on January 26, 2021. Due to current restrictions a private funeral service will be held.

JOLLY - Katharine Emily (née MacDougall) passed away peacefully at Darnley Court Nursing Home, Glasgow on January 24, 2021, after a battle with Parkinson's. Katharine was 84, and was a retired primary school teacher. Much loved wife of Michael, cherished mother of Liz, Ian and Jim, dear mother-in-law to Lucy, fond

Granny to Caitlin, Joshua and Benedict and much more to the extended family and friends, she will be sorely missed. Due to current restrictions a private funeral will be held, at Linn Crematorium in Glasgow on Monday, February 8. To join the funeral live online, please contact the family for details. Donations if desired to parkinsons.org.uk.

LEECH - William (Bill) died peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital on January 26, 2021, aged 82. Dearest husband of Carol, beloved father of Owen, much loved brother, brother-in-law, father-in-law, uncle, great-uncle, cousin, treasured friend to many and man of faith. Sincere thanks to all for the kindness, help, prayer support, gifts of flowers and food, messages of love and comfort and tribute to Bill. He will be deeply missed by many but is now released from pain and frailty. He is forever with the Lord. Cremation at Cardross on February 9, followed by a Service of Thanksgiving in Oban Parish Church at 4.00pm (regretfully by invitation only because of current restrictions).

Family flowers only, please, but donations in memory of Bill for the Oban Hospital Macmillan Day Bed Unit and the RNLI will be very gratefully received through Hamish Hoey & Son Ltd, 37-39 Stevenson Street, Oban.

MACALLISTER - Peacefully after a short illness at Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban on February 1, 2021, aged 88 years, Mary Jane (née Johnson), beloved wife of the late William MacAllister, much loved mum of Wilma, June, Peter John and Robert, a loving grandmother and great-grandmother. Sadly missed by all who knew her.

MACCOLL - Angus Gray MacColl (Innes), sadly but peacefully passed away at Moss Park on January 27, 2021 aged 83. Beloved husband to Agnes, much loved dad to Allan and Susan and a wonderful Grampa to Eilidh, James and Alastair. Funeral service will take place on Friday, February 5 at 1pm at St Adamnan's Church, Duror, thereafter to Duror Cemetery following current restrictions.

MACMILLAN - Finlay John. Passed away peacefully after

a short illness on January 21, 2021. Precious and youngest son of Mary and Ross, Tíree, Skye and Bishopbriggs. Treasured brother of Iain Ross and Kenneth Hector, loving father to Mark, Hannah, Heather and Ailidh. Funeral service at Falkirk Crematorium on February 4 at 12.15pm. Due to current Covid restrictions, numbers are limited. Service can be viewed online, details available from the family. Family flowers only please.

MORRISON - Ronald Malcolm, aged 53, sadly but peacefully at home on Saturday, January 30, 2021, held by his family. Much loved husband of Mary-Flora and adored father of Carrie. Cremation to take place on Tuesday, February 9 at 1.15pm at Cardross Crematorium. Private funeral under current Covid restrictions.

In lieu of flowers all donations to the Beatson Glasgow. Cortege to leave family home at approximately 12.45pm to travel East towards Sinclair Street then along West King Street. Ronnie will be sorely missed, sleep well.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CAMPBELL - The family of the late John Campbell would like to thank all relatives, neighbours and friends for the many expressions of sympathy through cards, messages, phone calls and flowers received following their sad loss. A sincere thank you to Catriona and family from Hamish Hoey & Son for their guidance and professionalism, Father James MacNeil, The Thistle & The Rose, Piper Angus MacColl, Mary Catherine MacNeil and finally to all who lined the route to pay their respects. Sorely missed by us all.

MEMORIALS

MACLACHLAN - In loving memory of my dear uncle, Ian MacLachlan of Glen Feochan, Kilmore and Lynn Court, Oban, who died February 2, 2005.

Forever remembered.
- Gordon, Joe, Sheena and family.

MACLEAN - Precious memories of Ian (Cleasy), a much loved son, brother and

uncle who died February 5, 2004.

There is a place in our hearts that is yours alone.

- Mum, Ann, Sandra and families.

MACLEAN - In loving memory of Mary MacLean who died February 8, 2005, aged 65 years. Beloved wife of the late Alistair. A much loved Mum, Gran and Mother-in-law.

Our hearts are filled with memories,

Which we gather through the years,

All the happy times we shared,
Are treasured souvenirs.

- Dugald, Arlene and families xx

McCOMBIE - In loving memory of a dear father, father-in-law, grandad and great-grandad Bert, who died January 31, 2015.

Time slips by, memories stay
Quietly remembered every day.

- Teenie, Peter and John.

You are always in our thoughts
Grandad.

- Fraser, Fiona and Kevin.

Gentle Jesus up above
Give Grandad Bertie all our love.

- Kyle and Summer.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Charity takes ownership of historical Hebridean chapel on Isle of Ensay

Supporters of an ancient church on the remote Hebridean island of Ensay, just off Leverburgh, Harris, have taken on ownership of the building and responsibility for its upkeep.

Ownership of Ensay Chapel has been transferred from the Argyll and The Isles diocese of the Scottish Episcopal Church to the Friends of Ensay, a charitable organisation registered in 2018.

Ensay Chapel, believed to have been built during the late Middle Ages, has historically been the subject of an annual pilgrimage, whereby a congregation travels from Leverburgh by boat to attend a service.

The Friends of Ensay is now seeking support from across Scotland and internationally, to assist with raising funds for

the building and its upkeep.

Chris Merlin, appointed guardian of Ensay Chapel, said: 'For anyone who has ever visited Ensay Chapel, they'll be familiar with the beauty of the building and its setting. For the past six years, it's been an ambition of ours to take on ownership of the church and responsibility for the building and its grounds, so we're very grateful to [law firm] Brodies for stepping in to handle all the necessary legal work.'

'This is a big project for us, but one to be enjoyed by the wider community, and we are appealing to anyone who wishes to contribute financially to essential repairs for the church, to get in touch. We've already had interest from descendants of the Stewart family - previous owners of the church, house

and island - who are based in New Zealand, so we're hoping to attract support from across the globe.'

'We're also looking forward to starting the annual service again once social distancing restrictions are eased, and would invite the community to get involved too.'

Karren Smith, partner in rural business and based in Brodies' Highland office, said: 'Historical buildings like Ensay Church are a valuable part of Scotland's heritage. We're proud to have played a role in bringing the church back into the folds of the local community and wish the Friends of Ensay all the best for the future.'

Anyone interested in providing support to the Friends of Ensay can contact info@friendsofensay.co.uk

MEMORIALS

PERSONAL NOTICE

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

A tweet recently caught my attention: 'My secret fear is that lockdown ends and my life is basically the same.'

A telling comment, suggesting something could change for the better. The human heart always longs for something more. There is a hint at some kind of look 'inside'.

How and what we see inside ourselves has an impact on

how and what we see on the 'outside'.

Let me suggest a paradoxical way to bring about change: do nothing, just be aware. Whatever change we long for has to be sought firstly through the inner journey. Awareness involves just being present to reality, being just there as we actually are, dropping all attempts to pretend we are

different, or to soften our story and experience.

This requires such courage!

We humans are guarded when it comes to exposing who we truly are, even to ourselves. There is inside every one of us a lack of unity, bits that do not fit together, longings that clash, aspects that are at war with one another, and we just can't hold it all together with

tranquility. Etymologically, the purpose of any religion (Latin re-ligio) is to join things up again; to enable us to hold all the paradoxes and contradictions together.

In Christianity that holding together comes only from the experience of Mercy and Compassion.

In these trying times, what about consciously forgiving

YOUR reality for what it is? It will change you. And that inner change will be reflected on the outside by an increased 'at-oneness' with one another.

We will change to the extent we are willing to know the truth of what is really happening inside us.

Monsignor James MacNeil,
St Columba's Cathedral,
Oban.



Historic first as Bishop elected online

In a historic first online episcopal election, the Diocese of Argyll & The Isles has chosen a new bishop.

The Reverend Canon Dr Keith Riglin, pictured right, was selected by the Electoral Synod from a short-list of three candidates, and will fill the vacancy brought about when the previous Bishop, Rt Rev Kevin Pearson, became Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway last year.

The successful outcome also means that the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church will now have a full complement of seven bishops for the first time in five years.

After his election, the Bishop-elect said: 'I am delighted and deeply touched to be elected as Bishop.'

'This is such an important



time for our communities and churches. I'm humbled by the confidence placed in me, and look forward to all that God may do.'

The Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, said: 'I am delighted to welcome Rev Canon Keith Riglin to the College of Bishops. Keith has served the diocese of Argyll and The Isles as an encourager and enabler, bringing fresh insights that has invigorated the clergy and congregations. May he be blessed in his new ministry.'

'My thoughts and prayers are also with the two candidates who were not elected, the Very Rev Margi Campbell and the Rev David Railton. May their ministry continue to flourish as they follow the path of their vocation.'

Canon Riglin is vice dean and chaplain at King's College London, where he is also a visiting lecturer in the department of theology and religious studies. He also serves as assistant priest at St Anne's Church, Soho, and as an authorised presbyter at Wesley's Chapel, London.

Prior to his appointment at King's in 2012, he served briefly in the diocese of Argyll and The Isles, where he has had permission to officiate since 2012. In March 2020 he was installed as an honorary canon of St John's Cathedral, Oban.

He has two daughters and lives with his wife, a Methodist presbyter. He enjoys cinema and contemporary dance, is a passionate fan of the music of the late Beatles member George Harrison, and has been a life-long fan of Doctor Who since watching the first ever episode in 1963, at the age of five.

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Third place finish sends Bob into world's top 50

Grant will help amateur football

Oban Saints Amateur Football Club has welcomed funding from the Scottish Government which will be used by the Scottish Football Association (SFA) to protect the game at all levels and help clubs survive these unprecedented times.

The Scottish Amateur FA and the Scottish FA appreciate their membership clubs have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, both in terms of finance and the major restrictions on recreational football, and have agreed the Scottish Amateur FA should benefit from the government funding. A grant of £100,000 has been allocated by the Scottish FA from the Scottish Government funding and the association's executive and finance committee has agreed the entire grant will be passed on to member clubs.

The 2020/21 season has been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, although the association remains confident football will return during the current 2020/21 season and the 2021 summer season.

Like everyone else, it has no idea when exactly that will be due to the ever-changing

situation. However, it hopes these funding decisions will ensure 2021 will be a better year for amateur football as everyone tries to recover from Covid-19.

The Scottish Amateur FA thanked the Scottish FA and the Scottish Government for the funding.

Scottish Amateur FA president Stuart Urquhart said: 'We all hope the virus situation will improve quickly in the weeks ahead to allow amateur football to return in all parts of the country.'

Oban Saints secretary David Buchanan said: 'Everyone in the amateur game is delighted with the grant awarded by the Scottish FA. Like us, most of the clubs will have paid their fees for season 20/21 so the money will probably be allocated to the various amateur leagues and used to pay club affiliations, cup fees and player insurance for season 21/22.'

'Players in our Central Scottish and Greater Glasgow league teams can't wait to get started again when the time is right. We were lucky that when we were previously in tier two we were able to train and play local friendly fixtures against tier one and tier

two teams under strict SFA protocols up until Boxing Day when, like most of the country, we were put into tier four which meant all training and games had to stop.'

Last week the Scottish FA held extensive consultations with representatives of leagues and clubs affected by the temporary suspension announced on Monday January 11. This has been beneficial in understanding the specific challenges faced by clubs, in particular understanding the key components required to allow a return to play. Given that current lockdown measures will remain in place across Scotland until at least the middle of February, the existing temporary suspension will be extended until midnight on Sunday February 14. This affects all amateur leagues and leagues with predominantly part-time clubs, although a number of full-time clubs have been affected.

The Scottish FA will continue to work with those affected to develop league and division-specific plans for a return to training and playing. An update will be communicated to the clubs by Wednesday February 10.

A third place finish in the Dubai Desert Classic on Sunday has landed golf ace Bob MacIntyre a place inside the world's top 50 for the first time in his career.

Starting the day just one shot behind England's Paul Casey, Bob had his eyes set on a second European Tour victory.

However, it was not to be as, in relatively windy conditions, an impressive Casey shot a two under par final round to win by four shots over South African Brandon Stone. Bob closed with a two over par 74 to secure his third spot.

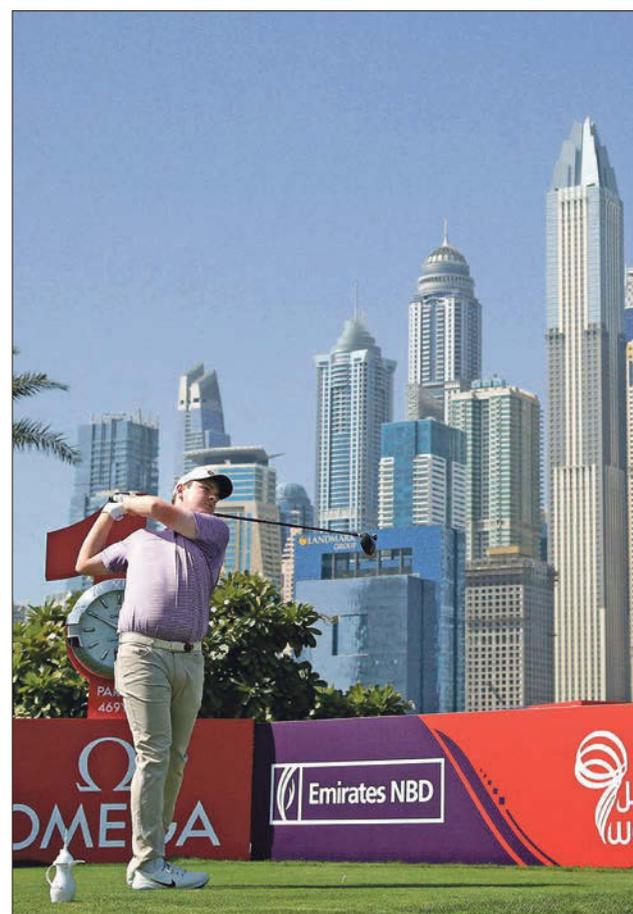
'I just have to keep giving myself chances,' Bob said afterwards.

'Like today, if I keep giving myself these chances, I'm going to bundle over the line again at some point.'

The result moved Bob into seventh place in the Race to Dubai but, more significantly, it catapulted him from 52nd to 44th in the world rankings table.

This gives him the chance to compete in the upcoming WGC events and potentially The Masters at the start of April.

He also became the world's top-ranked left-hander when the Official World Golf Ranking was updated on Monday morning, moving past two-time Masters champion Bubba Watson (48) and overtaking Tiger Woods (46) for the first time in his career.



Bob MacIntyre hits his tee-shot on the first hole on day three of the Omega Dubai Desert Classic at the Emirates Golf Club.

This week sees the final leg of the Desert Swing, as the tour moves on to the Saudi International at the Royal Greens Golf and Country Club from Thursday February 4 to Sunday February 7.



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Minister's delight at engagement good wishes



Daredevil Danny films new gravity defying video

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

A list of local businesses open during lockdown

Fears raised as visitor strategy 'falls far short'

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Tourism minister Fergus Ewing's response to a parliamentary question that the Scottish Government's Visitor Management Strategy (VMS) 'will not resolve all the issues' when it comes to problems caused by surging tourist numbers, will set alarm bells ringing in Lochaber communities.

Mr Ewing was responding to a question from Highlands and Islands Labour MSP Rhoda Grant, with the latter later saying communities will just have to wait to see what concrete plans the government has to tackle concerns about a predicted second wave of tourists descending on the region this summer and autumn.

'You would think these plans are state secrets,' commented Mrs Grant. 'I can see that many people and families will be looking at staying in the UK this year, much like last year, especially if everyone has managed to be vaccinated by July

and August. It's predicted that accommodation will be in short supply, especially in areas such as those around the NC500. What I would hate to see is dirty camping, litter left by the roadside and irresponsible parking and I am sure government ministers do not want that as much as anyone else.

'But what proposals are in the offing with Easter not far off and people looking hopefully to the summer? Whatever restrictions are in place by then, the country needs to be prepared and we can't let it drift on as it did last year.

'However, Mr Ewing's response that its VMS 'will not resolve all the issues' has set alarm bells ringing that local communities, councils and parks authorities will have the burden of responsibility for enforcement after suffering the stresses, strains and funding gaps left by the pandemic.'

Councillor Allan Henderson, Caol and Mallaig, was not

Continued on page five.

STAR Trekkers boldly go for the next generation



Tanya and Alan Ross, pictured with daughter Livia, say they are overwhelmed by the success of the first Star Trek Challenge in aid of their charity STAR for Harris, set up in memory of their son.

January saw STAR for Harris' first STAR Trek when 80 people took part individually to either walk 50km, run 106km or cycle 604km to raise funds to support the treatment of childhood cancer and raise awareness of the reality of childhood cancer.

For the full story, turn to page four.

Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

Covid vaccination programme in Lochaber ongoing

NHS Highland's Covid-19 vaccination programme is continuing across Highland, Argyll and Bute, with 42,755 first dose vaccinations completed by Sunday.

All care home residents, aside from those which currently have a Covid-19 outbreak, have been offered their first Covid-19 vaccination, with figures showing a 90 per cent uptake.

GPs, who will be vaccinating the majority of the public, have completed nearly 85 per cent of the over-80s group, meeting the target with several days to spare.

Dr Paul Davidson, deputy medical director for NHS Highland, said: 'This is a significant exercise. We are delivering the vaccination across a large and challenging geography, during winter, while simultaneously co-ordinating variable supply of vaccine products.'

'The challenge really cannot be under-estimated. It is thanks to all the staff involved with this programme and the tremendous effort they have put in that we have been able to deliver the vaccine to, as it stands now, 13 per cent of our population.'



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Skye daredevil Danny 'Doing the Dubhs' in new bike video

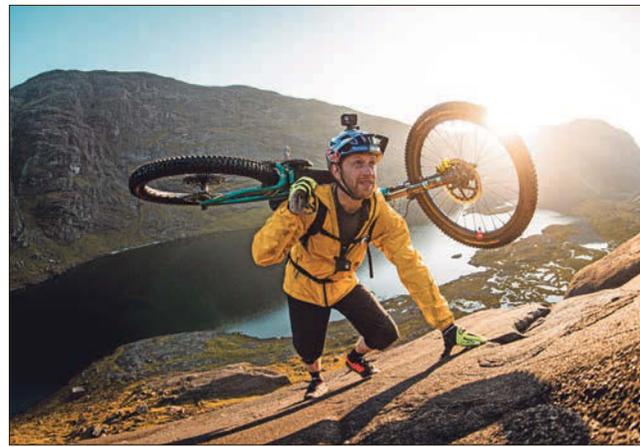
by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The latest video from Skye's own daredevil bike legend Danny MacAskill, in which he tackles the island's famous Dubh Slabs on the edge of the Cuillins, is already wowing his growing legion of fans.

Danny launched the new feature video, Danny MacAskill – The Slabs, on his YouTube channel last week.

The video, a We are Peny Media production directed by Robbie Meade and Danny, shows the biking professional scrambling to just below the summit of Sgurr Dubh Beag/Little Black Peak (733m), one of the most technical sections of the Dubh Ridge, unroped, with his bike strapped to his back.

From here the real test begins. Set against the magnificent backdrop of unrivalled



mountain wilderness views, Danny navigates down the seriously technical 900 metre route, over a very steep ledge system of black 'boiler-plated' Gabbro slabs, exposed steps and drop offs, buttresses and grassy clefts to the shores of Loch Coruisk at sea level.

Danny admitted to being

pretty nervous tackling a lot of the obstacles on the route: 'The most challenging part was definitely the final 200-metre slab vertical section, which on the first day was just not possible to ride.'

'It was very exposed and had a very difficult run out. This made the grip, braking and

Danny MacAskill climbs the Dubh Slabs to begin his latest challenge.

Photograph: Dave Mackison.

balance very difficult. You literally feel gravity just pulling you down the rock and when the only thing stopping you is your brakes you really feel how steep it is. Luckily it all worked out and I managed to get off the slab onto the grass reasonably controlled.

'As much as I enjoyed riding the Dubh Slabs, the most memorable emotion was the relief and satisfaction heading back over the loch on the boat after finishing the filming.'

Danny has always been a massive fan of rock climbers, and in particular the American free climbers Alex Honnold and Tommy Caldwell. Inspired by their achievements, he was keen to

film another technical mountain challenge descending on his bike. He came across the Dubh Slabs last summer when climbing with school friends.

He immediately saw the potential of the terrain and knew he needed to come and tackle it for his next project.

When things opened up and travel was permitted again he and a small crew pulled things together for a two-day shoot in September on a much smaller scale than recent sponsored bigger budget projects.

Duncan Shaw, producer of Danny MacAskill – The Slabs, business partner and fellow street trials rider, said: 'The biggest challenge of this shoot was access. The easiest and quickest way to get to the foot of the range is via local fishing boats. After the 20-minute boat ride, there is a 45-minute walk to the foot of the Dubh Slabs. Once there we

had to scale a rock face with all our kit. This is a challenging climb that should be roped in sections.

'The terrain was so steep it was near impossible to film Danny's ride using traditional methods. Our main camera, GoPro Hero 9, was mounted on a custom Built FPV drone, with two additional POV GoPro Hero 9s positioned on Danny's helmet and chest.'

Danny, 34, is widely known as one of the most entertaining content creators the world has to offer.

More than 11 years after his breakthrough video Inspired Bicycles – April 2009 was uploaded to the internet, this and his many other video projects have racked up well over 300 million views on various YouTube platforms.

View Danny MacAskill – The Slabs at [outu.be/4Ym2F-tHdkk](https://youtu.be/4Ym2F-tHdkk)

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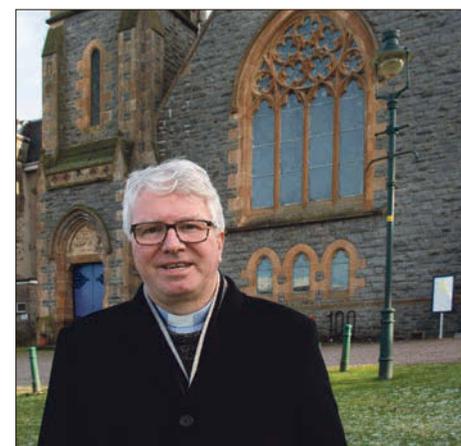
Lochaber churches ring the changes with eye to future

Readers of the Lochaber Times may have spotted a few changes to the local Church of Scotland congregations in and around Fort William and the surrounding area, writes Mark Entwistle.

We caught up with Fort William-based minister Reverend Richard Baxter to fill us in on what has been happening with churches locally.

As far as Fort William, Caol and Corpach are concerned, Reverend Baxter explained: 'The congregation – that is the people and the organisation that unites them – is now Fort William Kilmallie Church of Scotland. Everyone who used to be part of Duncansburgh MacIntosh or Kilmallie is now part of that.'

'We're still using three buildings – in Corpach, Caol and on the Parade in Fort William. We'll aim to keep that going but, realistically, only buildings which are well supported and actively used can have a long-term future so those decisions will depend on community support. To get people to the right place for services and events, the three buildings are now known as Fort William



Reverend Richard Baxter outside the Fort William Church.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

Kilmallie (Duncansburgh), Fort William Kilmallie (Caol) and Fort William Kilmallie (Corpach). The hall alongside Duncansburgh is now the MacIntosh Hall.'

Reverend Baxter added that a ministry team will serve the whole area, with himself as the parish minister, Rory MacLeod, a former army chaplain who will join soon as team minister; Morag Muirhead is an Ordained Local Minister and Bill Skene is a Reader. All of them work across the whole area and you can ask any of them for help and use any of our buildings if you need to.

When it comes to Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge, Torlundy and Letterfinlay, Kilmonivaig continues as a separate congregation and organisation, but shares the same ministry team as Fort William Kilmallie.

And Reverend Baxter concluded: 'Fort William Kilmallie and Kilmonivaig are parish churches and we're there for everyone in the community, not just our members.'

'If you want to share in worship, to organise a wedding or a funeral, to find space for a community event or activity, or find someone to talk to, don't hesitate to contact us.'

Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team members in action in hazardous conditions on Monday night. Photograph: LMRT.



January ends with flurry of activity for mountain rescue

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Recent dry, bright winter days appear to be attracting walkers and climbers out into the hills, with Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team (LMRT) called out three times in as many days in the past week.

It was almost the rare occurrence of a call-out free January for the team until late on Saturday afternoon when police received a report of two climbers in difficulty in Minus Two Gully on Ben Nevis.

A Police Scotland spokesperson told the Lochaber Times: 'Members of the local mountain rescue and coastguard teams attended, including air support, and both men were recovered safely around 5.45pm. There were no injuries and both were issued with fixed penalty notices for breaching coronavirus regulations.'

Following this the helicopter was diverted to another rescue at Creag Meaghaidh.

Then on Sunday, team members were in action again, this time to assist two climbers in difficulty on the North Face of Ben Nevis at around 6pm.

In a statement, Police Scotland said: 'Both climbers were uninjured and no further police action was required.'

Monday night saw 16 team members out on Castle Ridge

for around seven hours, assisted again by Rescue 151 (Coastguard helicopter). LMRT commented on its Facebook page: 'We were able to get to the two local lads and get them off the hill safe and sound.'

However, Assistant Chief Constable Alan Speirs said the best way to stay safe is to stay at home.

'To protect the NHS we also need to protect our volunteers and emergency service colleagues who, by the nature of their work, put themselves at risk each time they're called to an incident,' he said.

'Particularly at the weekends, we are seeing people travelling for leisure purposes outwith their local authority areas and sometimes getting caught out by the change in weather conditions.'

The substantial helicopter activity around Ben Nevis at the weekend, however, has drawn a complaint of excessive disturbance, with one resident who lives between Inverloch and Carr's Corner saying on one of the weekend's rescues, the Coastguard helicopter flew low over his house no less than 28 times until the early hours of the morning. 'It was unbelievable. No-one is decrying the work carried out by brave mountain rescue



team members who provide an invaluable service,' said John Carmichael, pictured left, who has been a local resident for 52 years.

'But the helicopter was so low, what seemed like almost tree height, that the vibrations were causing cups and crockery to rattle.'

'I know of several other people under the flight path who said the same thing, with one lady saying her children couldn't get to sleep because of the noise.'

Mr Carmichael claims such problems did not exist when the military provided the search and rescue (SAR) helicopters and only became a problem after the role was privatised.

Bristow Helicopters won the contract in 2013 to deliver the UK's SAR helicopter service for HM Coastguard.

Asked to comment, a Coastguard spokesperson said: 'In regards to the flight path of our helicopters during these two incidents, their respective courses of travel would have been most likely determined by the crew in line with the weather conditions at the time to ensure safety while factoring in the direction of onward travel and designated landing sites.'

MSP Kate bowled over by engagement news response

Kate Forbes and her fiancé Alasdair (Ali) MacIannan say they have been bowled over by the response of thousands of well-wishers following news of their engagement last month, writes Mark Entwistle.

After posting the news along with a photograph of her ring on her social media channels, Ms Forbes, MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch, received hundreds of emails congratulating the couple on their good news.

Mr MacIannan popped the question as a surprise after a recent local walk in the snow in the Highlands.

Ms Forbes told the Lochaber Times: 'Ali and I are very grateful for the incredible response to news of our engagement. We did not expect the amazing outpouring of kind wishes and support from across the political spectrum.'

'It has been a challenging year and good news is in



Kate Forbes and her fiancé Alasdair (Ali) MacIannan.

short supply so it was a lovely surprise. We hope any romance that can withstand lockdown will last the years.'

She added: 'Ali has a small business in the Highlands so has faced the same worries and challenges of other small businesses over the last year. He's a resident of Dingwall, though hails from the small village of Shieldaig on the shores of the west coast. We've known

one another for many years and share a lot of similar interests.

'There haven't been any great celebrations because of lockdown restrictions and the pressures of serving constituents and delivering the budget. Obviously the wedding will be subject to Covid restrictions and we look forward to turning our minds to that when time allows.'

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Joint effort to deliver vaccine

When Saturday's Covid-19 vaccination clinic in Stornoway had to be moved at short notice, staff at the Caberfeidh Hotel stepped in to provide an alternative venue.

As a result of the current Covid-19 outbreak in Western Isles Hospital, Stornoway, NHS Western Isles was unable to hold Saturday's clinic in the outpatients department as planned.

Caberfeidh Hotel staff didn't hesitate in providing help and ensured premises were available and ready for use resulting in 268 people being vaccinated.

NHS Western Isles chief executive Gordon Jamieson said: 'We are hugely grateful to the Caberfeidh team for stepping in to enable us to provide this clinic and for offering us the premises for future use. A kind and thoughtful delivery of cakes for the staff from No.9 coffee shop was quite literally the icing on the cake.'

Hotel group manager Stuart Beaufoy said: 'We are happy to help our local health board continue its tremendous work at this critical time.'

STAR trekkers boldy complete fundraiser

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

January saw STAR for Harris' first 'STAR Trek' where those taking part choose to either walk 50km, run 106km or cycle 604km.

The chosen targets were significant as they represent the distance between hospitals in Scotland where the STAR for Harris charity has given support.

The weather throughout January offered added challenges in the form of treacherous ice and snow, so the STAR Trekkers had much to contend with. However, numerous participants completed more than one event and two people successfully completed the triple challenge.

STAR for Harris helps raise awareness and supports treatment of childhood cancer, all as a legacy for Corpach toddler



Harris' parents Alan and Tanya Ross and daughter Livia were over the moon with the efforts of the STAR Trekkers.

Photograph: Abrightside Photography.

Harris Ross who died in 2010 aged just 15 months after a brave battle against cancer.

Organiser and Harris' mum Tanya Ross told the Lochaber Times: 'We couldn't be more

overwhelmed with the success of the STAR Trek challenge. Our incredible team of 80 STAR Trekkers were so supportive of each other and we loved following their individual progress. Though most of our participants were based in the UK, we had someone taking part from Italy and another off the coast of Africa. We also had several fabulous children taking part, with our youngest competitors only five years old.

'We undertook the challenge as a family with Allan and I running and Livia cycling the running distance. Livia is now at an age when she is aware of what her brother went through and she has a good understanding of what the charity does and why we do it.'

'Each of the participants did an incredible job helping raise the profile of childhood cancer, a cause so close to our hearts. We know that earlier diagnosis times could save lives and lessen some of the life-long side effects caused by cancer and

cancer treatment. Thanks to our amazing STAR Trek team, our generous donors and our wonderful continued sponsors Alvanca, this event raised just more than £9,000.

'This is just amazing and these funds will make such a difference to supporting children battling cancer.'

As a result of such an incredible sum being raised, the charity is in a position to donate its next instalment of £14,409 – Harris's date of birth in money – towards research into Harris' aggressive brain tumour type at Newcastle's Research Institute for Childhood Cancer.

'Each participant did an incredible job helping raise the profile of childhood cancer.'

Mrs Ross added: 'We will also continue to fund ward resources, including toys and arts and crafts, gift sets for children going into isolation for intense treatment, Christmas and Easter gifts, Santa sessions, ward celebration days and memory casts for families whose children have been told that their cancer is incurable. Once Covid restrictions are eventually lifted, our music therapists and other ward visitors that we fund, including face painters and magicians, will be back onto the wards.'

'We are looking forward to welcoming STAR Trekkers back for the next STAR Trek in July 21 and hopefully lots of Lochaber Times readers might sign up too.'

Special funding for rural tourism hotspots doubles

A special fund to help improve facilities at tourist hotspots in rural areas is to have its funding allocation doubled, Kate Forbes MSP has confirmed.

In her capacity as Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Ms Forbes announced last Thursday during her budget statement to the Scottish Parliament that the next round of funding for the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund will increase from just over £3million to £6.2million.

As a backbencher, the MSP for Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch was instrumental in calling for such a fund in the first place.

Through the first three rounds of awards it has since delivered almost £4million of improvements to her constituency alone – with lifeline funding helping popular tourist attractions such as the Fairy Pools on Skye and Glenfinnan.

Doubled

'The Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund has been an invaluable resource for communities across the Highlands and I am delighted to announce that its funding will be doubled,' Ms Forbes commented.

'The RTIF was first created to meet the very problems highlighted by my constituents, and it has certainly helped do so.'

'In places right across my constituency from Glenfinnan to Glenmore, and from the Fairy Pools to Cromarty, the RTIF has truly empowered communities to solve local problems.'

'The rapid increase in tourism in rural areas inevitably puts pressure on parking, toileting and camper van facilities, and RTIF has targeted funding at the places that need it most.'

'I hope this new and substantially increased funding will continue to relieve pressures at tourism hotspots across the Highlands.'



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Upgrade in pipeline for north-west Skye

Scottish Water is to spend £2 million replacing more than 10km of mains in north-west of Skye later this year, following a long-running campaign by MSP Kate Forbes.

At the beginning of 2018 the organisation told Skye's constituency MSP it intended to replace 830m of pipe at Roag, only to change that at the beginning of 2019 because of investment priorities.

However, after several letters and emails from Ms Forbes over the following two years,

Scottish Water will now include areas of Dunvegan, Roskhill and Roag in the project, benefiting at least 100 houses. Detailed design work is to start soon, which includes contacting landowners and property owners to discuss the proposals. Ms Forbes originally took up the case for Dunvegan crofter Alasdair MacLean, who first raised the issue 20 years ago whilst he was the Township Clerk of Roag. The current water mains is an old concrete asbestos

pipe, which was installed in the 1960s which has suffered countless bursts.

Ms Forbes said: 'Though I would like to have seen the Roag mains replaced well before now, I am delighted to have secured £2 million of investment. I will continue to work with Scottish Water to ensure there is a full upgrade. The latest correspondence is encouraging.'

Scottish Water has told Ms Forbes it is 'likely' work will start in the second half of 2021.

Editorial team pledge continued commitment to Lochaber coverage



Lochaber Times/Lochaber Life photographer Iain Ferguson.

As many of our readers and advertisers may know, the Lochaber Times has now permanently closed its office in Fort William's High Street and sold the property.

While the impact of the coronavirus crisis might have forced this unwelcome course of action, what it has not done is diminish our commitment to providing top quality news and sports coverage from across our region.

Which is why the Lochaber Times' senior reporter Mark Entwistle, who lives in Lochaber, together with Fort William-based photographer Iain Ferguson, are still on hand, ensuring the stories about

life in Lochaber which are important to you are still given prominent coverage in our pages.

With 75 years' combined experience between them of working on local and national newspapers, Mark and Iain know what makes a good story and what our readers want to see in the pages of the Lochaber Times and Lochaber Life magazine.

Mark said: 'The virus pandemic has forced a great many people into adopting different ways of working. While the loss of our office was a blow, it came down to a question of how our readers and advertisers are best served and we felt this is best

done by retaining experienced journalists on the ground, living and working in Lochaber. The closure of the office, while unfortunate, has allowed our reporting and photographic set-up, supported by our editorial colleagues at The Oban Times, to continue confidently into the future, providing quality editorial copy and photographs from this part of the Western Highlands.



Right: Lochaber Times senior reporter Mark Entwistle. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

Concerns raised over lack of visitor strategy

Continued from page one.

reassured by Mr Ewing's response, telling the Lochaber Times: 'This is precisely what we were hearing at the working group on Friday past. As councillors we are expected to sort the problems, but we need the tools from government and NatureScot working with land owners to manage the situation. Members are extremely agitated that despite all the good progress the group is making to increase parking and manage vehicles, the VMP [Visitor Management Plan] falls far short of addressing the perceived problems approaching the area from Easter on. Banning will only displace the problem. We get figures quoted of 14,000 new motorhomes being registered each year so the pressure can only get greater.

'While increase in RTIF [Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund] is good news, that will not address this year as there is a long run-in time.'

Mrs Grant received an answer to a parliamentary question in October when Mr Ewing said a multi-agency group was due to meet in November to look at solutions and make recommendations, but she says nothing more was heard.

Responding to Mrs Grant's question on Friday, Mr Ewing said an announcement will be made ahead of the 2021 season.

But he cautioned: 'Although some progress has been made by the Scottish Government and its partners, this will not resolve all the issues. This will require an ongoing partnership approach from relevant authorities and communities.'

'Littering, roadside dumping and anti-social behaviour should continue to be tackled through enforcement. Ultimate responsibility remains the responsibility of local and national park authorities.'

Concern as Covid begins hitting business owners' mental health

The coronavirus crisis is having a serious impact on the viability of businesses and the mental health of their owners in the Highlands.

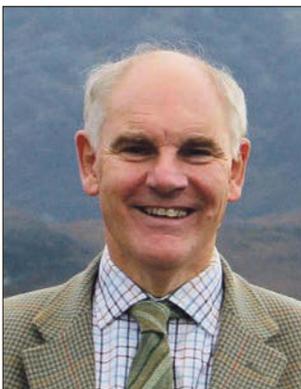
According to an online survey of 1,200 business owners and the self-employed conducted by FSB Scotland between January 13 and 18, more than half of Highland businesses are currently closed – 45 per cent by law, nine per cent voluntarily; 35 per cent are struggling to stay afloat and another third have seen their sales and profits fall.

Almost half are concerned about their ability to survive for the next few months and almost four in 10 Highland respondents have applied for grants from the local authority because their businesses have been forced to close or are restricted.

Recognising that almost four in 10 Scottish business owners are worried about their mental health, FSB Scotland is urging those that work for themselves to visit the FSB's 'Wellbeing Hub' on its website, which is open to all business owners and the self-employed.

It also wants the Scottish Government to pilot a new support service specifically for small business owners and the self-employed.

Responding to last week's Scottish Budget, the FSB has welcomed the stability it provides on several fronts, but is concerned more needs to be done to fill gaps in Covid grant support for businesses. The FSB is also concerned that while the continuation of small business rates relief – the Small Business Bonus – for the rest of this year will be welcomed by



David Richardson.

those who receive it, those that don't will be worried the 100 per cent Covid rates relief for them is only for three months.

Highlands and Islands hotels, restaurants and other tourism and hospitality businesses will have to pay full rates from July.

No-one knows when the 2021 season is going to take off and the FSB says businesses cannot be expected to pay tax to the government for properties they have been prevented from opening by the same government. The FSB wants to see full rates relief for all smaller firms being confirmed for the full year allowing local shops, pubs, hotels and restaurants to get back on their feet, but this will require additional funding from the UK Government in the Chancellor's Budget on March 3. Similarly, the Scottish Government and the wider public sector should pledge to freeze and reduce other fees and charges. FSB manager for the Highlands and Islands David Richardson said the survey results illustrate the impact of the visitor-based nature of the Highland economy.

'Yes, the picture right now is

gloomier in the Highlands, but more businesses here are confident tourism and hospitality will quickly pick up once travel restrictions are lifted,' he told the Lochaber Times.

'Until that happens, we must keep their heads above water. Their survival is vital and this is not just a matter for governments and the public sector.

'We can all play roles in

protecting the beating hearts of our communities by buying our goods and services locally; by keeping trade local. It matters more now than ever before.'

Coronavirus

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

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



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VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

Tourism business members of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce joined Cairngorms Business Partnership and other Highland Chambers for an insights session with Malcolm Roughead, VisitScotland CEO and Chris Greenwood, VisitScotland's senior insights manager this week.

The webinar brought together tourism business owners from across the Highlands to hear about VisitScotland's views on the future of Highland tourism.

VisitScotland believes there is a large amount of 'pent-up' demand for our tourism offering, with lots of people actively looking at Scottish holiday destinations online. At the moment, the tourism industry is rightly focusing on the 'dream now, travel later' message to inspire and help people plan their holidays. In order to build anticipation ahead of people visiting, it was recommended businesses increase their engagement to help to make the planning of a trip part of the overall experience.

While the pandemic has caused a great deal of economic hardship to some sectors of the population, people who have been able to continue to work



from home, while having vastly reduced outgoings, have been able to build up high levels of saving. VisitScotland expects these people may be planning to take up to three holidays this year. Self-catering, including luxury serviced facilities, health-enhancing breaks that offer opportunities for mind and body fitness, as well as breaks with a sense of purpose and connection were all highlighted as popular trends for coming seasons.

Although times have been very tough for those in hospitality, there was a real feeling of optimism from the businesses in the meeting, with many believing a good summer/autumn season is still possible and that the highlands are well placed to offer a reassuring, inspiring destination for visitors when the time is right.

For up-to-date tourism resources, surveys and trend reports visit www.visitscotland.org/supporting-your-business/advice/coronavirus

Welcome news on affordable homes

Largest housing programme since the mid-1970s

A report that 350 new, affordable homes could be available in Lochaber by April has been welcomed.

This month's Lochaber Area Committee reviewed a document outlining a number of projects which could result in almost 350 new affordable homes being on site in April this year.

Interim chairman of the Lochaber committee, Councillor Alan Henderson, Caol and Mallaig ward, said the provision of affordable housing in Lochaber was progressing well. 'We're informed this is the largest housing programme in the area since the mid-1970s. This is a huge boost to those needing housing in the area and to the Lochaber economy,' he added.

'The list of new housing achievements by the council

and its partner housing associations is impressive and is providing much-needed affordable new homes in our communities.'

Councillor Ben Thompson, Caol and Mallaig ward, chairman of the council's housing and property committee, added: 'It's fantastic to see so many houses being built in Lochaber, not just in Fort William, but particularly in the more rural and island areas where the impact is providing massive benefit to communities.'

Progress on a number of housing developments in the Fort William area was welcomed, including the conversion of former offices at Fulton House to create 12 flats for rent by Lochaber Housing Association.

Offices are also being converted at Lochaber House

'It's fantastic to see so many houses being built in Lochaber...in particular in the more rural and island areas.'

in Fort William to provide nine flats for the council; six flats for mid-market rent by Highland Housing Alliance and a ground floor retail unit.

At the Blar Mor, on the edge of Fort William, there is the development of 117 new homes for the council, Highland Housing Alliance and shared equity properties.

Work is currently ongoing at the former Achintore Primary School in Fort William to provide 37 new homes for council

houses and Highland Housing Alliance. At Glasdrum Road, in Fort William, six flats for council rent are due for completion in May, while another six housing units for shared ownership at Rankin Crescent, in Fort William, are currently being developed by Lochaber Housing Association with negotiations ongoing to deliver a further 28 units in future.

In other parts of Lochaber, progress was also welcomed on Rum, four units; Spean Bridge, 20 units, and Strontian, five units. Councillors were also informed about housing proposals currently being considered or yet to be determined at Arisaig, Caol and Upper Achintore, Fort William; Bunree; Kinlochleven; Mallaig, Roy Bridge, Knoydart, Strontian and on Canna and Eigg.

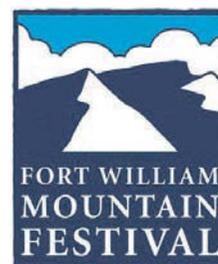
Covid sees 2021 Fort William Mountain Festival go online

Due to the ongoing challenges and restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Fort William Mountain Festival 2021 programme will be available online from February 19-25.

This will be the 17th year of the Fort William Mountain Festival and will once again present a stunning line-up of inspirational films – impressive action and adventure; educational and environmental, organised by our dedicated volunteer festival committee in Fort William, the 'Outdoor Capital of the UK'.

The programme includes world-class outdoor adventures split into 12 categories, each comprising four to five adrenaline-filled and thought-provoking films.

They include films from both the festival's own International Film competition entries and the Banff Centre Mountain Festival World Tour; the Scottish Awards for Excellence in Mountain Culture cele-



brating a range of outstanding achievements; and films covering thought-provoking environmental issues.

Of course, the festival is not just for high adrenaline adventure enthusiasts.

It's for everyone who appreciates the value, richness and diversity of the great outdoors.

Rod Pashley, chairman of The Highland Mountain Culture Association, organisers of the Fort William Mountain Festival, said: 'It has been a very challenging year for all concerned and we are very fortunate to live in an area of outstanding natural beauty that provides the opportunity to breath in wonderful fresh air, exercise and relax.'

It therefore comes as no surprise that celebrating the wild landscape that surrounds us in Fort William and Lochaber is the inspiration behind the Mountain Festival. The mountains, glens, rivers and coastline influence our cul-

ture in many ways, whether it is the beauty of the landscape, our engagement with it or the opportunities we find in it.

'This year, more than ever, we understand the power of the outdoors for our own health and wellbeing; the therapeutic nature of a short stroll in the outdoors or indeed a quiet outdoor place to sit and reflect; to re-energise. The Fort William Mountain Festival 2021 online event has something for everyone with a love for the outdoors.'

The 17th Fort William Mountain Festival, is sponsored by Ellis Brigham Mountain Sports, Patagonia, Jahama Estates, The University of the Highlands and Islands West Highland College, Lochaber Chamber of Commerce and the John Muir Trust.

The Festival also values its many friends and supporters behind the scenes, including Nevis Landscape Partnership, OCUK, the Highland Council, the Highland Cinema, Abacus Mountain Guides, Rare Breed Productions, the Highland Bookshop, Lamont Design and many more.



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Ian McHardy with the mailboat he made for the anniversary. Photograph: NTS.



Geir Soreng with the battered wooden mailboat from St Kilda. Photograph: NTS.

St Kilda postcards wash up on Norwegian island

Some very special postal deliveries were made recently, helping to mark the 90th anniversary of the evacuation of St Kilda.

Ten years previously, in 2010, to mark the 80th anniversary of the evacuation, the National Trust for Scotland made a miniature replica 'mailboat', filled it with postcards and launched it into the Atlantic Ocean.

Incredibly, in the August week of the 90th anniversary of the evacuation in 2020, the cards were finally delivered to their destinations, including Norway, including the descendants of the original St Kildans.

And the trust had a group of Norwegian children to thank for helping to get the mail delivered.

Mailboats are an old St Kilda tradition where the islanders launched their mail into the sea in tiny waterproof boats in

the hope they would be picked up by passing ships or make it to more populated places and be sent on.

In August, the mini mailboat last seen on St Kilda a decade previously was found by four children and their grandfather on a beach on Andøya, the northernmost island in the Vesterålen archipelago of Norway, about 180 miles inside the Arctic Circle and more than 1,000 miles from St Kilda.

Amazingly, after 10 years at sea, the boat had protected the postcards which were still intact. The children's grandfather, Geir Kristian Soreng, sent the NTS the cards commenting: 'My four grandkids found a treasure at the beach on Andøya, north of Norway. It was a postboat in wood, sent from St Kilda in 2010.'

'Emil, 9, Ask 9, Tiril, 6 and Erling, 4, were excited when they found a secret room in the



An older man launching the St Kilda mail boat from Hirta, St Kilda. Photograph: NTS.

boat, with a card saying 'We would be grateful if you could please post the cards'.

'This is a special story for the children and their families. Hopefully we will have the opportunity to visit Scotland and St Kilda in future.'

'We had never heard of this



A close up image of Ian McHardy's mailboat in 2010. Photograph: NTS

fabulous island and are fascinated by the story.' The NTS spent several weeks finding out who the cards had been written to, making sure the addresses were still correct and sending them on.

Then, on the 90th anniversary of the evacuation of St

Kilda, the cards were delivered to their recipients. Seven postcards with pictures of St Kilda were placed inside the vessel by Ian McHardy, the archaeologist on St Kilda at the time, who had also made the boat.

As well as enclosing cards to his family and friends, Ian included cards to a number of people with links to St Kilda.

Norman John Gillies, one of the last remaining St Kildans, was five at the time of the evacuation.

It was his mother's death in 1930 that is believed to have been the final prompt for the islanders to leave St Kilda. Mr Gillies died in 2013, but the NTS forwarded his card on to his son John Gillies in Ipswich.

It was one of John's relatives – the schoolboy Alexander Gillies Ferguson – who launched the 1885 mailboat that started the St Kildan tradition.



local news

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LOCHABER TIMES

The final card was written by Susan Bain, NTS Western Isles manager, to the charity's patron, HRH Prince Charles, The Duke of Rothesay, who had visited St Kilda in 1971 with HM The Queen.

Prince Charles' card was delivered to Birkhall, his Scottish home on the Balmoral Estate.

He replied to Ms Bain saying: 'I was delighted to receive your postcard and fascinated to hear about its decade-long journey to reach me, via the Arctic Circle no less!

'In such a fast-moving world, it is touching to know the tradition of a simple 'mail-boat' from the remote island of St Kilda can safely travel so far.

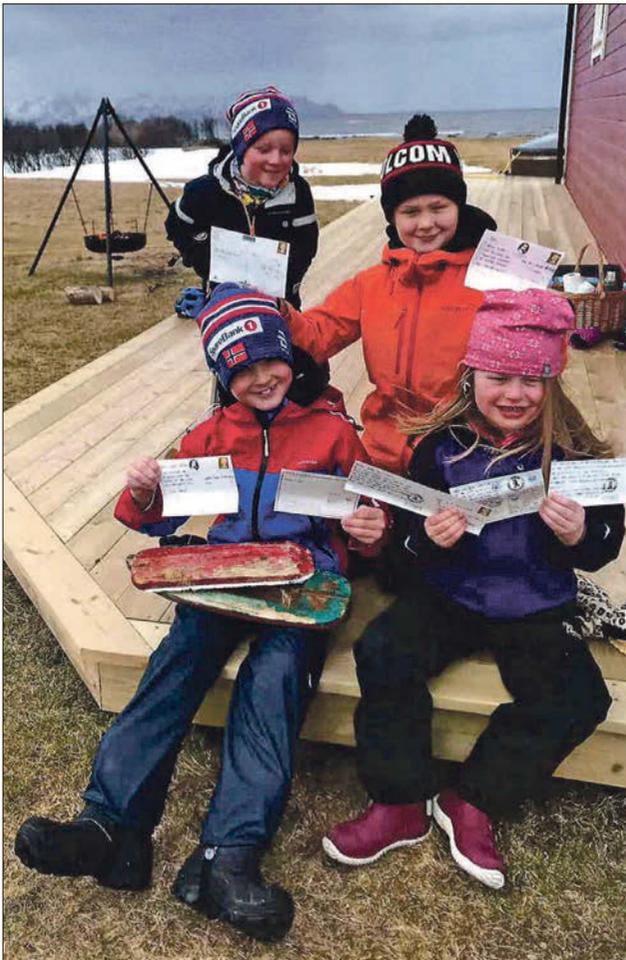
'I have never forgotten my visit to this amazing archipelago in 1971 and I so look

forward to returning one day, not only to remind myself of its rugged beauty, but also its extraordinary history and breathtaking bird life.

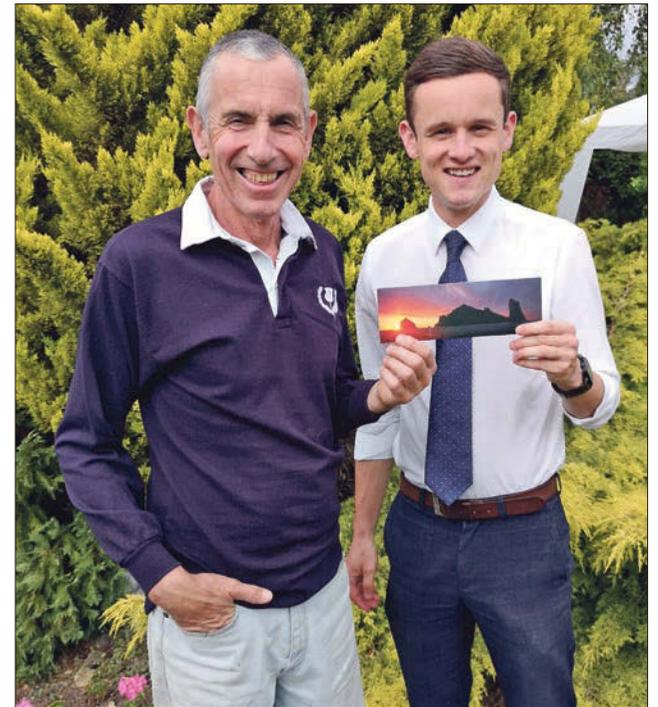
'As patron of the National Trust for Scotland, I am immensely grateful to all those who work to preserve our heritage through caring for special places like St Kilda.'

Ms Bain, Western Isles manager, told the Lochaber Times: 'Sometimes the mailboats worked very well as a means of communication and they got help within two weeks, but other times they took 10 years.

'It was an amazing connection that people on a small remote island in Norway found the boat that had come from a small remote island in Scotland.'



Norwegian youngsters Emil, Ask, Tiril and Erling were excited when they found a secret room in the boat, with cards. Photograph: NTS



John Gillies and his son with their postcard. Photograph: NTS.



Right: A view of St Kilda from the sea. Photograph: NTS.



Left: Prince Charles on St Kilda in 1971. Photograph: NTS.

SCOTTISH FIELD

— February/March —



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Planners put halt on Skye fish farm

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk



An application by Organic Sea Harvest (OSH) to set up a third fish farm on Skye has been refused by Highland Council.

The decision was taken at a North Planning Application Committee (NPAC) meeting last Tuesday.

The company, which currently operates sites in Culnacnoc and Invertote, had sought planning permission for a third site at Balmaqueen. The site would have seen an investment of £4m in salaries, equipment and stock.

Consisting of 12, 120-metre cages, the company said this latest venture would have provided full-time employment for seven farm employees and two boat workers, taking the direct work force to 21

full-time employees. OSH has its main office base in Staffin, servicing its nearby fish farm sites from the Staffin slipway and working closely with community organisation Staffin Community Trust (SCT).

Speaking after the application was refused, Councillor John Gordon said: 'I was supportive of the proposals as they would have brought financial benefit to our area.'

'We've been through a tough year as a result of Covid-19 and jobs are key in our economic recovery.'

'These farms would have created a number of good jobs and would have created advantages for our area.'

OSH spokesperson and founding director Alex MacInnes said: 'We are disappointed the Highland Council has not granted approval for Balmaqueen. At OSH, we

'This would have been a fantastic opportunity for us to support our community as we continue our mission of becoming the world's leading organic salmon farmer'

are committed to farming organically, creating a world-class product for a worldwide market and investing in the community.

'This would have been a fantastic opportunity for us to support our community as we continue our mission of becoming the world's leading organic salmon farmer. We look forward to bringing

Scottish organic salmon from Skye to the market in the near future. We appreciate the trust the community has given us for our two existing sites and will continue to work hard to show it that was the right decision.

'We will now consider closely whether we want to seek a review of the decision through the Local Review Body or appeal to the Scottish Ministers.'

The motion 'against' the application was proposed by Skye councillor Calum MacLeod, with the amendment voting 'for' the application proposed by Skye councillor John Gordon.

A second motion against the application proposed by councillor Raymond Bremner was dropped in favour of councillor MacLeod's motion. The motion 'against' was carried by eight votes to six.



Fort William footballer Owen is pride of Fraserburgh FC fans

Fort William footballer Owen Cairns receives the Fraserburgh FC 2019/2020 Season Supporters' Player of the Year Trophy. Owen, 22, now lives and works in Aberdeen but started his football career with Fort William Football Club's youth teams.

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LETTERS

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STAR Trekkers boldly go

Hats off to the 80 hardy souls who braved the January weather to raise money for the STAR for Harris charity.

Those taking part opted to walk 50km, run 106km or cycle 604km – a fantastic undertaking given the treacherous ice and snow during the month.

And well done to the participants who completed more than one event – two completed all three in the challenge.

Just over £9,000 was raised, which meant the charity could hand over its next instalment of £14,409 – Harris's date of birth in money – towards research into the aggressive brain tumour that took the tot from his family.

Well done everyone involved, particularly the Ross family.

Daring Danny on the Slabs

And talking about people who boldly go... for those who haven't yet seen Skye stunt rider Danny MacAskill's new video in which he tackles the island's famous Dubh Slabs on the edge of the Cuillins, we highly recommend it – although it is not for the faint-hearted.

You have been warned!

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

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

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Have a care for livestock

Could we please make people aware that enjoying snow and sledging has a more serious side.

In one of our fields where there are young sheep, people assumed the field was empty and enjoyed some sledging time. There were sheep in the field which were panicked and scattered into the wood. After a couple of hours searching, we found one young sheep dead. Please do not assume there are no stock in fields even if at first you cannot see them. It is always best to check at a farm where it is safe to sledge. Please do this.

Dee and Fergus Lyon,
Fernoch Farm, Lochgilphead.

Deer safety

Ian Fergusson, head of Wildlife Management for Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS), is right to alert motorists to deer on the roads at this time of year but it is nothing less than shameful that he should use the opportunity to further FLS's relentless annihilation policy by misquoting the Deer Working Group report which, in fact, establishes that hill deer numbers have declined in the last 20 years. (The Oban Times and Lochaber Times, January 28 2021).

If there are deer on the road it isn't because they want to be there. They have been driven on to them through his FLS approving and encouraging applications to plant trees on their traditional wintering ground. A very good example of this is to be found in Morvern near the head of Glen Geal, adjacent to the A884 where, for centuries, deer have crossed between three different properties in search of food and shelter. Now, because of an extensive new woodland scheme to the south of the road, a corridor has been created in which many deer are being trapped, killed or maimed which never happened in that area before.

Locals pleaded for the fence to be moved further away but were told by FLS's Highland and Islands woodland officer it would not be necessary as the landowner's representative had said, bewilderingly, that all deer in the vicinity would be shot. Mr Fergusson and FLS are able to reduce road accidents involving deer. They should do so by refusing to grant fund any proposed woodland scheme within at least half a mile of a public road.

Iain Thornber, Morvern.

A choice needs to be made

We can all see the benefit of a medical delivery service to the nearby Isle of Mull and every pilot would love to have their own dedicated airspace.

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk



Abair ùpraid gun eireachdas a thog an Roinn Eòrpa a thaobh malairt bhanachdaichean Covid 19, agus gu sònraichte ag agairt bhacaidhean a chur air crìoch Poblachd na h-Èireann, rud a bhathas a' gealltainn fad bhliadhnaichean nach tachradh. Aig àm sgrìobhaidh seo tha a' Bhruiseal a-nise ag ràdh gur e mearachd rianachd a dh'fhàg gun deach am fios fhoill-seachadh gun cuireadh an t-Aonadh Eòrpach riaghailt 16 de aonta Bhrexit an sàs gus smachd a ghabhail air banachdaichean Covid a bhiodh ga ghiùlan thar crìch na Poblachd, a-staigh dhan Rìoghachd Aonaichte. 'S dòcha nach b' iongnadh Prìomh Mhinistear Seanadh Èireann a Tuath a ràdh gur e gnìomh gu math bagarrach a bha seo, agus ged a tha na h-Eòrpaich air am fàgail car maslach chan eil iad idir air an argamaid a leigeil às a thaobh cuin is còir an cuid òrdain de na banachdaichean a bhith air an liubhairt.

Cha robh coire sam bith aig Riaghaltas Bhreatainn an seo oir dh'òrdaich esan banachdach bho chaochladh bhuidhnean bho chionn suas ri trì mìosan agus tha na h-òrdain sin a-nise gan libhrigeadh. Ghabh Pàrlamaid na h-Eòrpa coirre fhèin na bhiodh a dhìth de bhanachdach Covid 19 airson gach ball den Aonadh a riarachadh, ach cha do dhearbh i na h-òrdain airson sin gu bho chionn ghoirid. Le gainnead banachdach dha dùthchannan an aonaidh, agus nàire a bhith cho fada air deireadh, a' lèireadh mhinis-

tearan agus sheirbheiseach-chatharra Eòrpach tha iad a-nise a' feuchainn ri impidh a chur air na companaidhean a tha a' dèanamh nam banachdaiche' n gur còir dhaibh na h-òrdain acasan a libhrigeadh gun dàil a dh'aindeoin 's ged a bha Breatann air òrdachadh fada romhpa. A bharrachd air gum bheil sin a' dol an aghaidh an seòrsa modha a th' air a bhith stèidhichte fad linntean, tha na h-Eòrpaich agus a h-uile dùthaich san t-saoghal a dh'iarradh na stuthan seo a cheannach a-nise a' tuigsinn cumhachd nam buidhnean mòra eadar-nàiseanta seo.

Chan e aithne ùr a tha seo idir! Ma thèid thu dhan bhùth a shireadh faothachadh air pian chì thu tric dà thaghadh den aon chungaidh-leighis is tè nas lugha na leth prìs na tèile air a bheil ainm na companaidh a rinn i. Tha iomadh bliadhna bhon a bha fios gum faodadh cun-gaidhean-leighis a bhith gan libhrigeadh air dùthchannan bochda an t-saoghail aig prìs fada nas saoire na tha a' tachairt, ach le smachd aig buidhnean àraid air dealbhachd nan drogaidhean tha e doirbh buaidh a thoirt air a' phrìs. Saoil an toir Covid 19 cothrom dha dùthchannan an t-saoghail aontachadh gum bheil cor a' mhòr-shluaigh nas cudromaiche na beartas luchd-seilbh chompanaidhean mòra, agus gun tèid eòlas dealbhachd bhanachdaichean a roinn feadh an t-saoghail seach a bhith fo smachd buidheann neo dhà. Abair buannachd a bhiodh an sin!

This is not the first time conflicts in the operation of different types of aircraft have occurred and it has taken decades to evolve the rules that allow them all to operate together safely. Ask any pilot.

Drone operators, with low cost aircraft flown by low cost personnel, want freedom of the air without observing the safety considerations and are using the medical need as a Trojan Horse to get regulatory approval. Ultimately this could mean Amazon could get your makeup order to you a few hours quicker, but Jet2 would have to fit serious, electronically-guided firepower to clear the way on your Mediterranean holiday.

Purple Airways, used for royal flights and things like this temporary controlled airspace, are a nightmare for pilots as the news frequently doesn't reach pilots in time, especially in the Highlands where mobile phone and internet

signals are less reliable. Among many others, the biggest risks to these courier drones are privately operated drones flown blind with low piloting skills and the air ambulance which operates similar routes at similar altitudes.

Citizens of Mull should consider which is more important: getting off the island to hospital in an emergency or getting medical supplies onto the island. The simple solution is for the drone operators to train as pilots and observe visual flight rules like everyone else. By all means publish the routes used on aeronautical maps for safety's sake. The operators might complain about cost, but why have governments bothered to spend years enacting ever more capable air navigation orders if we're not prepared to pay the price of safety.

Brian R Philpotts, Kilninver.

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DISTRICT NEWS

WESTERN ISLES

New committee chairman looks forward to challenge

Councillor Paul Steele of the Barraigh, Bhatarsaigh, Eiriosgaigh agus Uibhist a Deas ward has been elected chairman of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's Education, Sport and Children's Services Committee.

Mr Steele has extensive experience of working with young people through his role as Youth Champion and has served as vice-chairman of the comhairle's Communities and Housing Committee since 2017. He will now step down from that position.

His election means that, for the first time, a director and chairman of the same committee will be based in Uist.

He said: 'I'm humbled committee members have put their faith in me, as a first term councillor, to chair this committee. I'd like to thank them for that and I'll do my best to represent them well during my term.'

'I'm looking forward to working with the new director of education Willie MacDonald and building on the foundations set by former chairman Angus McCormack and director Bernard Chisholm.'

'The next few years will be challenging but it's a challenge I relish. I'm committed to improving things for the children and young people of the Western Isles alongside my fellow councillors and everyone in the education department.'

EIGG, SKYE, LEWIS AND BARRA

Green recovery projects enjoy government cash boost

Community-led green recovery projects on Eigg, Skye, Lewis and Barra are among those to benefit from investment of £749,000 across the northern, western, Highland and Argyll islands.

Regional development agency Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) has approved £0.5m support from the Scottish Government's Islands Green Recovery Programme (IGRP) and £249,000 from its own budget.

The IGRP is a £2m fund to support locally-led green projects designed to help support their economic recovery from the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

It is split into four strands and managed by

Stornoway's Ben addresses massive virtual Burns Supper

A Stornoway man raised a glass to Scotland's national bard at a massive virtual Burns Supper for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) staff around the world last week.

Current Covid lockdown restrictions may have put paid to mass gatherings to celebrate Robert Burns, but that did not stop Isle of Lewis man Ben Stephen celebrating online.

Mr Stephen, who serves at the UK's Embassy in Tunisia, addressed a massive teams meeting online organised by staff at FCDO's joint HQ, Abercrombie House, in East Kilbride, to toast the world famous poet.

All of FCDO's 17,300 staff worldwide were invited to attend the event on January 25 to remember Burns' life and works.

Scots working for the UK Government in countries including Bahrain, Chile, China, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Pakistan, Peru, Tunisia, and Turkey were among those participating in the virtual Burns Supper.

Tunis-based Mr Stephen said before the event: 'The Tunisians have a strange affinity for Scotland. We both have bagpipes and taxi drivers love pointing that out and chatting about it to you in the cab. I'll be spending Burns Night eating the Tunisian version of haggis called osban and drinking a glass of Ardbeg.' Foreign



Stornoway man Ben Stephen is stationed in Tunis.

Office Minister Wendy Morton commented: 'Scots are at the very heart of helping FCDO be a force for good around the world and staff were keen to pay tribute to Robert Burns despite Covid-19.'

'Lockdown restrictions meant that the many Burns Suppers our embassies usually organise around the world to help showcase Scotland

did not happen this year, but that didn't stop us from celebrating.'

'Robert Burns was very much an internationalist, so I'm sure he would have approved of the UK government bringing the COP26 climate change summit to Glasgow and our work promoting human rights and helping the world's poorest countries.'

four partners, delivering investment in low carbon transport, food sustainability and zero waste projects.

The £0.5m HIE element is to support green economic recovery across the region's island communities. It has been awarded to emerging projects that will contribute to the transition to a carbon neutral region.

In the Western Isles, Gallan Head Community Trust will receive £9,390 towards conversion and decarbonisation of a community building, while CBA in Barra secured £96,000 for seaweed cultivation using community energy and repurposed fish farm infrastructure.

In Highland, Sleat Community Trust on Skye was awarded £59,547 for insulating and decarbonising the community shop building, while Eigg Trading (Community Development Trust) is to receive £68,000 for heat decarbonisation of community showers and laundry services.

HIE has also approved a further £249,368 for seven community-led green recovery projects in Shetland, Orkney, Highland and Argyll to help support jobs. These include initiatives to increase the availability of electric bike hire and electric vehicle charging points.

RAASAY

Raasay pontoon project awarded almost £450,000

A pontoon project on Raasay has been awarded almost £450,000 of Scottish Government funding.

Kate Forbes MSP welcomed the official confirmation that Raasay Community Pontoon project is to receive the funding from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund

(RCGF). Before the pandemic struck, marine tourism was identified as a growth sector and it is still hoped the new pontoon will be economically and socially beneficial for the island as restrictions ease.

The news came as Communities Secretary Aileen Campbell announced £25m for projects across Scotland, of which Raasay will receive £442,858.

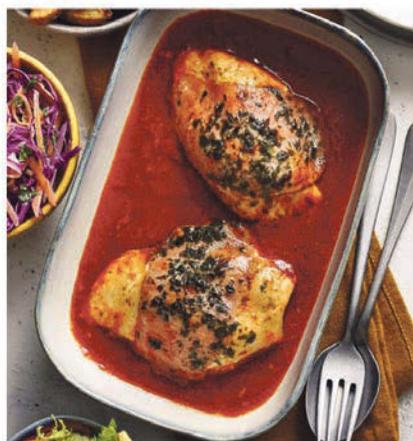
Since 2018/19, the RCGF has delivered more than £5 million to projects across Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch.

A delighted Ms Forbes said: 'Many Raasay residents have boats and one thing previously highlighted to me is they aren't able to access the sea at all tides. The new pontoons will rectify that.'

'It will also support increased tourism to the island. I expect the new pontoons will be well-used by locals and visitors.'

Hunter's chicken

The search for your new teatime favourite is over! Smoky bacon and a tangy sauce give chicken breasts a new lease of life in this lip-smacking supper



• Syn FREE • 50 minutes • Serves 4

Ingredients

- ½ x 330ml can diet cola
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 chicken stock cube, crumbled
- 250g passata
- 1 tbsp soy sauce/tamari
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 smoked back bacon medallions or rashers, visible fat removed
- 4 skinless and boneless chicken breasts
- Chopped parsley, to serve

Method:

1. Pour the diet cola into a medium-size non-stick saucepan over a high heat, bring to the boil and cook until reduced by two-thirds and almost syrupy.
2. Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas 6.
3. Add the red peppers, garlic, stock cube, passata, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, balsamic vinegar and 150ml boiling water to the cola. Reduce the heat to medium and bring to a simmer, then cook for 10 minutes or until the peppers are soft, adding a little extra water if needed. Blend until smooth using a stick blender or food processor.
4. Carefully wrap the bacon medallions or rashers around the chicken breasts and arrange them in an ovenproof dish, seam-side down. Pour the sauce all over the chicken and roast for 20-25 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through.
5. Spoon the sauce over the chicken and sprinkle over the parsley before serving hot. This is delicious served with Slimming World chips and salad.

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Mallaig & Road to the Isles - Tuesday & Friday
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Open 9am-5pm Tues to Fri, Sat: 8.30am-2pm
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WILDCAT VEGETABLES

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www.mcconechys.co.uk

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E. morarmotors@aol.com (Mallaig)
E. contact@morarmotorskye (Kyle)

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Saturday - 10:00am until 5:00 pm
Social distancing measures in place
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www.highlandtitles.com/nature-reserves/

OTHER INFO FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES

BALLACHULISH COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP

Visit FB page for more information
FB: Covid19balla
Wellbeing Larder
Tuesdays 5.30pm to 7pm
Saturdays 10am – 12pm
Call confidentially on 01855 604311

FOODBANK LOCHABER

Unit 4, Airds Crossing, High Street, Fort William
Tel: 01397 700212/07421087463
Open Mon, Wed and Fri 12pm-2pm
www.lochaberfoodbank.org
FB: lochaberfoodbank
Call confidentially for sing
High Street, Fort William33 6EUI. 01397 700212 or 07421087463

LOCHABER CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

We are still working (from home)- we are still here for you. Due to COVID-19, we are running a reduced service. To help keep you and our staff safe, our bureau will only be operating a telephone and email advice service. Tel: 01397 705311 (10 am to 4 pm), Email: adviser@lochaberCAB.casonline.org.uk

LOCHABER HOPE

Running a fully remote service.
Tel: 01397 704836
email: reception@lochaberhope.org.uk
FB: lochaberhope or www.lochaberhope.org.uk

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www.shielbuses.co.uk
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SLT welcomes amateur game survival funding



Bob MacIntyre hits his tee-shot on the first hole on day three of the Omega Dubai Desert Classic at the Emirates Golf Club.

Golfer Bob in world's top 50

A third place finish in the Dubai Desert Classic on Sunday has landed Highlands golfer Bob MacIntyre a place inside the world's top 50 for the first time in his career.

Starting the day just one shot behind England's Paul Casey, Bob had his eyes set on a second European Tour victory.

However, it was not to be as, in relatively windy conditions, an impressive Casey shot a two under par final round to win by four shots over South African Brandon Stone. Bob closed with a two over par 74 to secure his third spot.

'I just have to keep giving myself chances,' Bob said afterwards. 'Like today, if I keep giv-

ing myself these chances, I'm going to bundle over the line again at some point.'

The result moved Bob, from Oban, into seventh place in the Race to Dubai but, more significantly, it catapulted him from 52nd to 44th in the world rankings table.

This gives him the chance to compete in the upcoming WGC events and potentially The Masters at the start of April.

He also became the world's top-ranked left-hander when the Official World Golf Ranking was updated on Monday morning, moving past two-time Masters champion Bubba Watson (48) and overtaking Tiger Woods (46) for the first time in his career.

South Lochaber Thistle (SLT) Amateur Football Club has welcomed the release of funding from the Scottish Government to the Scottish Football Association aimed at protecting the game at all levels and to help clubs to survive these unprecedented times.

The grant of £100,000 will be passed on to member clubs in recognition of the negative impact Covid-19 has had at grassroots level both in terms of finance and the major restrictions on recreational football.

The Scottish FA has agreed the Scottish Amateur FA should benefit from the government funding.

SLT president Peter Newman said: 'The club very much welcomes all support for grassroots sport at this difficult time.'

'Depending on the sums involved, we will put it towards the vast training costs we still incur as we continue to try to promote football from cradle to grave with a special focus on getting our U15 ladies' team into a league.'

While the 2020/21 season has been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, the association remains confident football will return during the current 2020/21 season and the 2021 summer season.

Like everyone else, it has no idea when exactly that will be, due to the ever-changing

SFA agrees Scottish Government funding should be used to help grassroots teams

situation. However, it hopes these funding decisions will ensure that 2021 will be a better year for amateur football as everyone tries to recover from Covid-19.

The Scottish Amateur FA will advise exactly how the funding will be used for the benefit of member clubs.

Scottish Amateur FA President Stuart Urquhart said: 'We all hope the virus situation will improve quickly in the weeks ahead to allow amateur football to return in all parts of the country.'

'The Scottish Amateur FA thanks the Scottish FA and the Scottish Government for this funding allocation.'

Last week the Scottish FA held extensive consultations with representatives of leagues and clubs affected by the temporary suspension announced on Monday January 11.

This was beneficial in understanding the specific challenges faced by clubs, in particular understanding the key components required to

allow return to play when it is safe to do so.

Given that current lockdown measures implemented by the first minister will now remain in place across Scotland until at least the middle of February, the existing temporary suspension will be extended until midnight on Sunday February 14.

This affects all amateur leagues and leagues with predominantly part-time clubs, although a number of full-time clubs have been affected.

The Scottish FA will continue to work with those affected to develop league and division-specific plans for a return to training and playing.

A further update will be communicated to the clubs by Wednesday February 10.



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