



Ardchattan Sixers receive highest honour

SEE INSIDE: Bid4Oban's Restaurant Trail - part two

Green Shack plaudits

The world-famous seafood hut on Oban's Railway Pier has been mentioned at the Scottish Parliament after topping a list of the best UK places to eat seafood

Tony Monaghan, manager of The Green Shack, is thrilled at the recognition in parliament.



Two small businesses based in Oban and Tobermory have been recognised in the Scottish Parliament, following their inclusion in a UK-wide list of the best places to eat seafood, writes Fiona Scott.

Oban Seafood Hut (The Green Shack) and Café Fish, which is based in Tobermory, were included among seven Scottish businesses in the Observer newspaper's '22 best places to eat seafood

around the UK coast'. Both businesses were commended in the article by renowned chef-owner of the Inver restaurant near Strachur, Pam Brunton.

For the full story, turn to page 20.

GANAVAN VOTE CHEERS CAUTIOUS CAMPAIGNERS

Councillors have unanimously voted to remove housing as a development option for Ganavan, writes Kathie Griffiths.

The ultimate say still lies at Scottish Government level and it could take up to a year to get a final decision, but the vote from last Thursday's full council moves in cautious favour of campaigners who want to keep the much-loved open space green and free of new homes.

Friends of Ganavan (FoG) could not be happier with the news at this stage.

It was Argyll and Bute Provost Councillor David Kinniburgh who proposed that because of 'validly made public representations', the schedule mentioning Ganavan in the new local development plan (LDP2) should be amended and that housing be removed as a potential development use of the land. The motion was seconded on behalf of Oban, Lorn and the Isles Area

Committee by its chairperson Councillor Elaine Robertson.

It read: 'The Schedule 4 No 139 dealing with Ganavan should be approved subject to the amendment recommending to the reporter that housing be removed from the proposed list of uses for Potential Development Area P4023 in reflection of the validly made public representations under consideration by the reporter.'

The matter, along with the rest of the proposed plan, now has to go to the reporter appointed by the Scottish Government in Edinburgh for a final decision before it comes back to Argyll and Bute Council and can be adopted as a development blueprint. It could take up to one year.

Even if the reporter gives the Ganavan amendment the nod, there would still be a potential development area for recreation and tourism developers.

Continued on page 2.



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OT

Ganavan vote cheers cautious campaigners

Continued from page 1.

Councillor Elaine Robertson said regarding further housing at Ganavan she was delighted the strength of feeling in the community had been recognised and that the council had highlighted that to the reporter in the motion passed unanimously.

'We can only hope the reporter is supportive,' she said and added: 'I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Oban, Lorn and Isles Area Committee, to thank Friends of Ganavan for the work which went into the survey, to the provost and leaders, the officers for their help and to all our colleagues for their understanding and overwhelming support.'

'Ganavan is a very special area, enjoyed by the people of Oban, the surrounding area and our many visitors.'

A statement from FoG said: 'FoG could not be happier with this news.'

'A huge thanks is due to all who have given their time in filling in survey forms and



Councillor Elaine Robertson.

consultation responses and the support of the community councils.

'Thanks also to those councillors and officials who worked hard to secure the outcome the people want for the area, as well as The Oban Times for helping spread awareness of the campaign.'

'It has shown that people are passionate about Ganavan and this decision goes a long way to keeping Ganavan green.'

FoG surveys showed people wanted the area preserved for the benefit of communities and visitors as a green space for recreation.

An overwhelming majority or responses said no more housing should be built there.

CalMac left high and dry as catamaran deal scuppered

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

News that Pentland Ferries have pulled out of talks with CalMac about a chartered catamaran that would have provided a commuter service between Mull and Oban is disappointing, says island councillor Mary-Jean Devon.

Talks appeared to be at an advanced stage for the deployment of the MV Pentalina to provide additional resilience to the west coast ferry network, including an extra twice-daily service to Mull ideal for workers, but on Tuesday Pentland Ferries announced 'with much regret' it was withdrawing.

It is not known if a row last week, which saw the MV Pentalina fail a safety inspection, carried out by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency at the request of the Scottish ferries union RMT,



The Pentalina recently undertook sea trials in Oban and Mull.

had any bearing on the decision.

Councillor Devon said: 'It's disappointing because it would have given us a commutable service.'

Pentland Ferries managing director Andrew Banks said the vessel was safe and suitable for service but issues outwith its control were likely to arise over the lifespan of the contract to threaten commercial viability.

The MV Pentalina had already carried out sea trials across the West Coast and, while there were limitations, it was found the vessel could operate on the Oban to Craignure, Ardrossan to Brodick and Ullapool to Stornoway routes.

Mr Banks said: 'While we were very much looking forward to working with CalMac to help provide a solution to the challenges being faced by the island communities on the west coast of Scotland, it has become clear that issues outwith our control are likely to arise over the lifespan of the contract to threaten the commercial viability. Unfortunately these issues, which fundamentally stem from the very different status of a public-funded service compared to a small private operator such as ourselves, have given us no alternative but to withdraw from the discussions.'

'I would like to stress that the talks with CalMac were

positive and constructive and the vessel herself is safe and very suitable for service on the West Coast. However, our priority has to be to the continued viability of Pentland Ferries and to our employees and passengers. We cannot commit to a scenario whereby external factors have the potential to cause severe risk and reputational damage to the business that we have worked so hard

'Pentland Ferries have decided not to enter into a charter agreement... we are surprised and disappointed by this unexpected news.'

to build and unfortunately we have therefore let CalMac know of our decision.'

Robbie Drummond, managing director at CalMac, said: 'CalMac has been investigating the use of the MV Pentalina to provide additional resilience to our network. Berthing trials had shown she could successfully operate services to Arran and Mull and we were looking forward to her deployment. Unfortunately, Pentland Ferries have decided not to enter into a charter agreement for the use of the MV Pentalina on our network.'

'We are surprised and disappointed by this unexpected

news. However, this was entirely a decision for Pentland Ferries in relation to the use of its vessel. We will continue to work closely with Transport Scotland and Pentland Ferries and should they revisit that decision and make the vessel available to us at a future date, we would consider this option again.

'Whilst disappointing, we were able to develop an understanding of where the vessel could be used and where there would be limitations as a result of the berthing trials and operational issues with the vessel's single-ended design.'

'I know this news will also come as a great disappointment to our communities, particularly those we had been discussing the detailed options with. I thank them for their patience and support as we continue to search for suitable alternatives available for charter to enhance capacity and resilience within our network.'

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said: 'This vessel had been declared fit for relief service on four CalMac routes by the MCA before the RMT's intervention. We need an inquiry into how the Scottish Government's ferry procurement strategy has exposed crew and passengers to this unacceptable level of risk.'

The RMT raised safety concerns with the MCA's chief executive Brian Johnson on June 15. He replied: 'An MCA Surveyor has visited the vessel [MV Pentalina] to undertake an inspection of the area of concern. During this visit discrepancies were uncovered with respect to structural fire protection in way of the passenger accommodation and the corridor providing access to the crew accommodation and galley service.'

'The local marine office is working closely with the operator to agree a solution to the area concerned. The vessel remains out of commercial service at this time.'

Time to honour area's life champions

People across Argyll and Bute are being urged to honour the inspirational and innovative work being done to make the region a better place to live.

Nominations are being sought for the Scotland Loves Local Awards, which will see unsung heroes, including a

high street hero, place leader and those leading the charge to tackle climate change receive some much-deserved recognition.

Organised by Scotland's Towns Partnership, the awards will celebrate all that is great about towns and

neighbourhoods – recognising creativity and commitment towards shaping a sustainable, successful future.

The closing date for nominations is September 10. Winners will be announced on Thursday November 25.

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High school doing all it can to stop Covid spread

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Oban High School is doing all it can to stop the spread of Covid in the community.

Head teacher Peter Bain was at Monday's Zoom meeting of Oban Community Council to give 'facts rather than myths' about what strict measures the school has in place to control the virus. He also said 'hats off' to parents who have helped 'keep us and the community safe' by acting quickly to get tested and keep their children off school.

Mr Bain gave a detailed account of its system to track anyone who has potentially been in harm's way up to 48 hours before their last contact and outlined precautions, including one-way in to school, extensive use of hand sanitiser, wiping down tables, limiting



pupils' movement and restricting activities. He gave credit to the 'fantastic cleaners' sanitising touch points and said the school was working 'hand in glove' with the authorities.

Cases so far were 'almost exclusively' second and third years because they do not get to mix with other age groups, he said, adding: 'I seek to reassure the community we are doing what we can to prevent

Covid spreading.' On Monday a pupil in S3 tested positive for the virus, resulting in 14 other students having to self-isolate. The week before, 20 pupils had to self-isolate after another single case was identified and before that 27 students were self-isolating – a member of staff was involved.

'The reasons I believe we are able to minimise the impact is because of the strict restric-

Oban councillors Elaine Robertson, Roddy McCuish and Kieron Green with headteacher Peter Bain and school captains Hannah and Angus on a socially-distanced visit to give support through this difficult Covid time and to give congratulations on exam success.

tions we employ at Oban High School,' said Mr Bain.

Also in Oban, customers who went on four specific sea trips from the North Pier were being asked to self-isolate for 10 days and get tested for Covid. The call comes after NHS Highland's Health Protection Team was notified of cases of Covid-19 linked to Oban Sea Tours.

'We would ask customers who took a tour with Oban Sea Tours on the following days and times to self-isolate for 10

days from the date of the tour and to book a PCR test whether you have symptoms or not,' said a spokesperson for NHS Highland.

Those trips were: June 19 12.30pm two-hour circular tour from North Pier, June 20 12.30pm and 3pm two-hour circular tours from North Pier and the 10am same two-hour tour on June 21.

Argyll and Bute has the tenth highest Covid rate across Scotland. NHS Highland says cases are increasing area-wide but it has highlighted Oban as a particular concern, with 64 positive cases identified in the town in June – a stark contrast with the 154 cases registered across the whole of the local authority's area in the entire month of May.

It is vital everyone across Argyll and Bute stays cautious and follows guidance on how

to stay safe and limit it spreading, says Dr Tim Allison, NHS Highland's director of public health.

Anyone who becomes unwell should isolate immediately and seek a PCR test. Tests can be booked through NHS Inform online or by calling 0800 028 2816.

'The vaccination programme is incredibly successful but not everyone has been vaccinated and it is vital we are cautious until everyone has had an opportunity to be vaccinated. Please limit your contact with other people to try to minimise the risk of further spread,' added Dr Allison.

Latest Public Health Scotland figures between June 18 and 24 showed 204 new cases in Argyll and Bute with 21 in Oban North, 20 in Oban South, 11 in Benderloch Trail and four in Loch Awe.

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Free milk to return to classroom

Primary school pupils in Argyll and Bute will get milk free from the start of next term.

A report to the full council recommended that the 10 pence charge for a 189ml serving of milk in the area's primary schools should be removed, at a potential cost of £21,000 to the authority.

When the matter was discussed, rival councillors clashed over the Scottish Government's record on education before the recommendation was agreed.

The virtual meeting took place on Thursday June 24 – the same day as First Minister Nicola Sturgeon fielded questions on the Scottish Government's education record in the Scottish Parliament.

A council officer also revealed plans to involve pupils in taster sessions to help develop menus for school meals.

New regulations set by the Scottish Government have limited the amount of sugar, red meat and processed red meat that can be used.

Councillor Jim Anderson,



Councillor George Freeman, Independent, Lomond North, remarked: 'Given that the Scottish Government seem to be becoming more green these days, is it not possible that they might be looking for local authorities to remove red meat, and possibly all meat, from menus?'

Councillor Gordon Blair, SNP, Cowal, said: 'To reassure Councillor Freeman, the Scottish Government will do its best to ensure kids are eating properly.'

'I welcome this move to allow milk to be part of a reasonable diet.'

'It is all part of a strategy and it is all on the Scottish Government website, bringing children out of poverty and giving them diets allowing them longer, more fulfilling lives.'

The recommendation to remove the 10 pence milk charge was unanimously agreed.

KEEPINTOUCH

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Independent, Dunoon, said: 'I welcome this paper. It is the way forward. I am also wondering how free school meals will affect the uptake.'

Ross McLaughlin, the council's head of commercial services, said: 'This is the first round and we will take feedback into consideration.'

'When Covid restrictions allow, we will have youngsters in for tasting sessions. We hope this will keep uptake as high as possible.'

He also pledged that once the 2021/22 term started, figures for uptake to date would be collated and shared.



The sign on Station Square, Oban, warning against playing ball games, among other things.

Late-night ball games must stop

by Kathie Griffiths
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Teenagers kicking footballs up at windows late at night are terrifying elderly residents.

People living in Lismore House overlooking Oban's Station Square are fed up with being frightened by the youngsters playing games.

Councillor Roddy McCuish has taken up residents' concerns and it has been reported to police.

'There are signs up making it clear that no ball games should be played in that area. This behaviour is unacceptable. It's going on late at night up to and after 11pm on some occasions. These teenagers are trying to kick balls off the building. They are terrorising the people living there. It's not fair.'

Councillor McCuish said apart from a couple of holiday flats, the majority were privately owned and lived in by older people.

'It's being going on for a while now and seems to be getting worse and worse. It has been reported to police now and I'm hoping that will make a difference.'

'I don't want to be a killjoy for young people and I know it's important for them to be outside and getting exercise but terrifying older people in their own homes is not a game to be played.'

'It's frightening for the people in those flats. Things happening like that can wear you down. Even when it's not happening, you can't relax for waiting for it to start up again. I want to get the message

out that these ballgames must stop. I'd appeal to parents whose children are out in the evenings to make sure you know what they are doing.'

Chief Inspector Marlene Baillie said: 'We are committed to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in our communities in order to keep people safe.'

'Community policing is at the heart of what we do and officers work closely with partner agencies to try and divert young people into more worthwhile pursuits as we are acutely aware of the upset that any form of anti-social behaviour can have within a community.'

'We have officers patrolling in the area and anyone with any concerns should contact Police Scotland on 101.'

POLICE FILES

■ About 9pm on Monday June 21 at Mansefield Road, Port Ellen, Islay, a man, 33, was charged with behaving in an abusive manner towards a woman. A report was submitted to the fiscal.

■ About 12.05am on Thursday June 24 at Station Road, Oban, a 62-year-old man allegedly behaved in an abusive manner towards a woman. Police arrested and charged

him. A report was submitted to the procurator fiscal.

■ About 2.55am on Sunday June 27 at Corran Esplanade, Oban, two men were arrested – a 26-year-old for alleged assault and a 32-year-old for allegedly assaulting a police officer, assaulting another person and possession of a controlled substance. The men were charged and a report sent to the fiscal.

■ On Sunday June 27 at Catalina Avenue, Oban, a man, aged 24, was charged with assault. A report will be submitted to the procurator fiscal.

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

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Firefighters thanked for saving chip shop

by Kathie Griffiths
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Firefighters have been praised for saving an Oban chip shop.

Fire broke out in two outbuildings at the back of Oban Fish and Chip Shop in George Street during the early hours of Sunday, sending flames shooting into the sky.

Although the sheds were destroyed and thousands of pounds of stock lost, the shop and restaurant escaped damage.

Owner Lillian Hutchison said the firefighters were heroes.

'If it wasn't for them, the whole business would have been lost. They did a marvellous job and saved it. They are my heroes,' she said.

Fire forensics are due before the weekend to try to discover what started the blaze.

'We haven't a clue at the moment. It could be electric...we will have to keep an open mind until forensics have been,' said Mrs Hutchison.



Police broke news of the fire with a phone call to Mrs Hutchinson at 3am on June 27.

'It was terrifying when we got there. I thought it was coming out of the shop but it was out the back. There are flats and houses there. Thankfully no-one got hurt. It could've been much worse. Someone could've got killed,' she added.

Loss adjusters will be visiting the

business this week to count the cost of the fire but there could be about £10,000 of stock lost plus the value of the large sheds, which were burned to the ground.

'There must've been at least £5,000 of fish in the freezers then there was other stock, the oil, potatoes, our boxes - the freezers themselves,' said Mrs Hutchison.

'It's terrible, just at this time when

Flames from the outbuildings at the back of Oban Fish and Chip Shop. Photograph: Stephanie Jade McNiven

we are trying to get up and running and back to some kind of normality from Covid and lockdown,' she added.

Police said the fire was not being treated as suspicious.

Stephanie Jade McNiven lives next to the outbuildings and was woken by a neighbour ringing her doorbell to warn her.

'The flames were coming across. It got big really quickly. As I walked out of my house the fire crews were already there. We had the Appin crew there as well. They all did a great job and stayed for hours to make sure everything was out. I was told to stay out of the houses until it was over and then they came in to check it was all safe and I was okay. Police and ambulance were also there waiting in case they were needed. Well done to our emergency services,' she said.

Breach of peace man fined £1,200

A contractor working on Mull got drunk at a hotel in Tobermory and committed a breach of the peace.

Oban Sheriff Court heard on Monday that police were called and when they arrived at the hotel Scott Flannigan of 6 Dankeith Road, Symington, Ayrshire, had already been 'restrained by patrons'.

The 34-year-old, who pleaded guilty to the charge, had been drinking in the hotel bar, became argumentative and was asked to leave on August 12 last year.

'He stayed outside shouting and swearing and went to a nearby truck, took a metal pole and proceeded to walk up and down outside pointing it at staff and patrons,' said James Dunbar, procurator fiscal.

Flannigan was taken to hospital at Craignure by police as he had a head injury, with visible swelling around his left eye. His defence agent Jane McLaren said that Flannigan had been on the island for work and had been drinking in the hotel bar where there was 'an altercation'.

'He received an injury to his eye; a fracture to the eye socket and bite marks to his back.' She added: 'He accepts he had too much to drink.'

Looking at Flannigan's previous offences Sheriff Patrick Hughes imposed a fine of £1,200 as an alternative to custody and ordered him to pay a £75 victim surcharge.

'This must be the last time you come back into court for offences of this kind,' said the sheriff.



Parking is a big issue in Tobermory although changes are now being made.

Good news for Tobermory parking

Work is due to start later this year on a new car park for Tobermory, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Plans are progressing for the new site at Baliscate, close to the town's cemetery, with £400,000 of Crown Estate support and £375,000 from rural tourism infrastructure funding.

Mull councillor Mary-Jean Devon says it is good news for the town.

Tender documents and designs are going before planners to get the go-ahead for the development that will include spaces for 66 cars, seven coaches and 21 campervans. It will also have six electric vehicle charging points.

Councillor Devon said: 'There's been a lot of hard work to get us to this point. It started about one year last September, the weekend of

the local Mòd, when we had a meeting between Mull Traffic Management Group and council officials with us saying we couldn't have another summer of parking chaos.

'We identified the land at Baliscate and the council said it owned it.'

A spokesperson for Argyll and Bute Council said: 'Tobermory is a popular visitor destination and we hope the new car build will ease some of the visitor pressures in the village centre.'

'Work is due to start later this year, once all regulatory consents are in place.'

Argyll and Bute Council's application for a share of the rural recovery fund was one of the latest bids from local authorities and national parks to the Scottish Tourism Emergency Response Group which has £5.8 million avail-

able to be spent on improving infrastructure and creating jobs at a number of Scotland's popular visitor destinations and nature hotspots.

Tourism Minister Ivan McKee MSP said: 'Scotland has world-leading legislation giving people rights to access our countryside but it's important these are exercised responsibly and with respect for others, for wildlife and for the land itself. Investing in visitor management and supporting our rural communities is a crucial part of sustainable tourism growth.'

Malcolm Roughead VisitScotland chief executive, said: 'Tourism is a force for good and if managed responsibly, sustains communities in every corner of Scotland, creates jobs, tackles depopulation and improves the wellbeing of everyone who experiences it.'

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OT

Around Oban

KAY MCDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk



The first of July already, I can't believe we're over half way through the year.

Despite everything that's happening in the world, time doesn't seem to be slowing down. I'm so happy that all our younger folk are now getting the chance to be vaccinated and the organisation and speed with which it's all happening is really impressive.

The spike in Covid cases in Oban at the moment is quite scary and it may be because it's been easy to become complacent after this length of time, but it's a reminder, if we needed it, that the bugs are still out there and even those who have been vaccinated need to take care and continue to wear masks, clean our hands and give each other space.

In saying that we do need to be out and about again supporting our local businesses who have worked so hard throughout to keep us safe and keep their businesses afloat.

We owe it to all of those

WHERE IS THIS?



people who have worked throughout the pandemic and the ones who are able to reopen now who have kept us fed, watered and supplied with the things we need to keep us happy. They've put their health on the line to do that and now we should be supporting all our local businesses whether they're a one-man-band or a national company.

If we stick to the guidelines and take care then we can lead a normal life, seeing people, shopping, going out and about to appreciate the summer – just remember to be OBAN MINDED.

The photograph last week of the beautiful flower baskets was taken in Airds Crescent at the Wallace Optometrist end. This week's is something I hadn't noticed until recently.

Islay hub proposal could be revamped

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

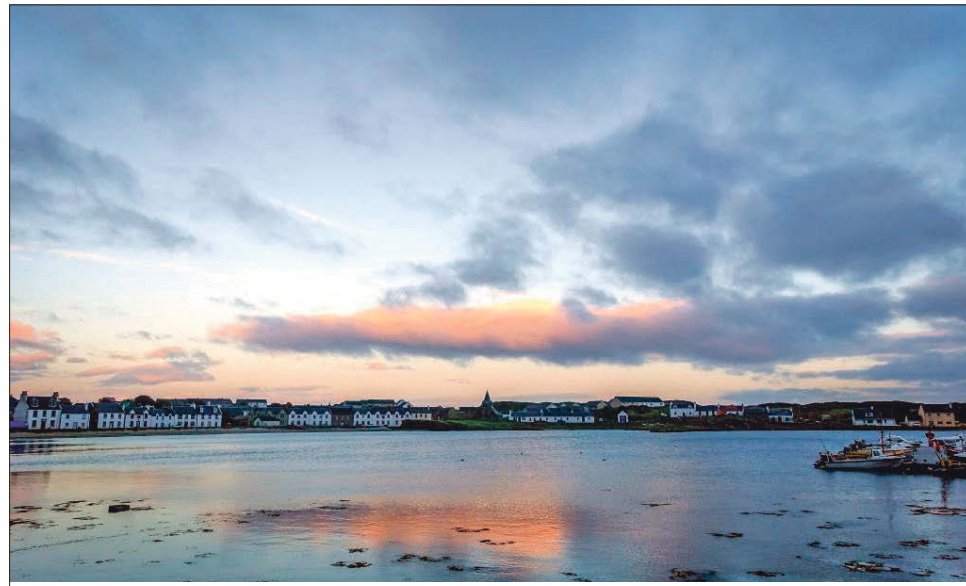
Plans for a new community hub on Islay have been withdrawn after running into objections from neighbours.

But they are likely to return in a revised form.

Argyll and Bute Council announced proposals for Port Ellen playing fields, lodged by South Islay Development (SID), have been taken off the table.

But planning agent Colin Hastie confirmed to the authority that the boundary line for a planned motorhome area at the proposed site will now be redrawn and a fresh application submitted.

The plans were for the building of a new community hub to replace the existing pavilion, along with the relocation of a play area, the formation



Objectors to the Port Ellen plans raised concerns about possible lack of green space for villagers.

of parking and motorhome pitches, electric vehicle charging point and the siting of a toilet and shower block.

Not everybody has been happy with the plans, 26 objections were lodged with the council along with three expressions of support.

Objectors raised concerns about a possible lack of green space to allow parking room for camper vans and other vehicles, as well as a perceived threat to existing community facilities.

A petition was also lodged

with the council during the public consultation process.

A cover note with the petition, submitted by Kevin Campbell, said: 'Nobody wants to lose the vital green space to campervans and parking.'

'All this project will do is take away healthy outdoor activities and force kids inside.'

'Also, we have a local cyber café that already does most of the stuff that SID is saying will go into this new hub.'

'The village is not big enough for two charities fighting for

the same funding, and it's taken the cyber café years to get to where it is.'

A community consultation had been carried out into the project.

Mr Hastie has told the council the application will now be amended.

YOURSTORY
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Local authority's worth rises

Argyll and Bute Council was worth over £22 million more at the end of the financial year than it was 12 months previously, a report has revealed.

The local authority's net worth is now £347.7m as of March 31 2021 compared with £325.4m on the same date 12 months earlier.

The increase is mainly attributed to more cash, and cash equivalents, through significant Covid funding awarded before the end of March 2020 for use over the next two years.

The information featured in a covering report for the council's unaudited accounts, which went before all members at a virtual meeting on Thursday June 24.

Councillors were also asked to approve the cancellation of a rent deposit debt totalling nearly £123,000, as it was felt

that this would have no impact on the council's general fund.

Executive director Kirsty Flanagan said: 'The unaudited annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with professional and statutory requirements.'

'The general fund balance has increased by £30.964m, after taking into consideration the movement during the year, the end-of-year outturn position and the new earmarkings.'

'The net worth per the balance sheet has increased by £22.288m to £347.759m. Overall the financial position of the council remains stable.'

On the proposal to cancel the debt, Ms Flanagan added that the council operated a rent deposit scheme as a measure to improve access to housing which ran from 2003/04 to 2009/10.

Remaining balances within this scheme number more than 400, with all individual balances being under £1,000. The newest loans date from 2009/10.

The last repayment transactions recorded in this scheme were in 2014/15 and the total balance of these outstanding debts is £122,844.

In recognition of the low probability of recovery of these debts a bad debt provision was created in 2012/13 covering the full amount of the outstanding debt.

It was recommended the council agreed to write off the outstanding rent deposit debt balances totalling £122,844.

'These debts have already been provided by way of a bad debt provision and therefore there will be no impact on the council's general fund,' said Ms Flanagan.



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Behind the scenes at Atlantis

Atlantis Leisure is grateful to the community for the support shown following last week's decision to close the centre for 10 days to help stop the spread of the latest Covid outbreak in Oban.

Atlantis' first commitment is to the safety of our customers and staff team. Whilst closing the centre is undoubtedly very frustrating, it will help to halt the spread of this latest local outbreak and enable the community to recover more quickly.

Since opening up after the recent lockdown we have been delighted with the response of our customers to the newly configured and safer environment. Read on to find out more about what's been happening behind the scenes as part of that:

Facilities

Our wifi system is undergoing an upgrade this month to improve its strength and coverage throughout the



building. This is part of our ongoing commitment to develop greener ways for us to run Atlantis. Improving the wifi in the building allows us to more fully use cloud-based systems which ultimately mean we're able to use less paper.

Customers will feel the

benefit too, with better connectivity throughout the building enabling easier future activity booking whilst you are in the centre.

Atlantis was successful in a number of grant funding applications which have enabled us to complete various projects around the centre.

Atlantis are continuing to review the potential reopening of the Soft Play so that it might be able to return as soon as possible.

These include completing the development in our wet-side changing area by upgrading the W/C facilities. The upgrade includes new walling, flooring and sanitary innovations such as automatic taps to increase the safety of the facility and reduce water usage.

Elsewhere in the centre, improvements have been made to some of our well-used flooring with new carpet tiles laid between the café area and the wet-side changing area. The café area itself has a new floor covering after more than 27 years of faithful service from the old lino.

Café Atlantis

We are hopeful that the café will be able to reopen soon

after the main centre reopens following this latest closure.

In preparation for reopening, we've been working alongside Beth and Iain MacDonald on improvements that will benefit the way the café operates. Much to the excitement of all the staff team, one of these includes a brand new coffee machine! The café and the soft play often work in partnership and we're continuing to review the potential reopening of the soft play so that it too might be able to return as soon as possible.

Atlantis Activity Programme

Whilst the Atlantis Leisure building is closed and the activities it hosts are on pause, outdoor activities remain available to book. Outdoor tennis is still open with all sessions requiring booking in advance. The Atlantis Summer

Holiday Camp programme is under review – currently we will not run any activities during the first two weeks of the holidays.

The programme is necessarily very staff intensive and being able to run any event safely is our first concern. We'll continue to review our plans and announce any changes via social media and our website.

Staff

Huge congratulations to Donna Moore after she passed her latest circuit training qualification – well done Donna!

We're delighted that Rebecca Mackinnon has taken on the role of Welfare and Support Officer for the Atlantis staff team. Rebecca will offer support across a variety of areas relating to how staff are getting on at work, possible training opportunities and general advice and guidance.



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OT



Clockwise from left, Kimelford-based Donald Smith; Mull firefighters Iain Noble, Gordon Rutherford and Richard Henderson; below right, Ronald Ross from Arrochar; and right, Islay firefighter Graeme Smith flanked by colleagues from the Bowmore station – all have dedicated the last four decades of their lives to keeping people safe.



Thanks to Argyll and islands firefighters for long service

by Kathie Griffiths
kg Griffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Six retained and volunteer firefighters have clocked up a combined service of more than 240 years between them protecting some of Argyll's most remote communities.

Mull trio Richard Henderson, Iain Noble and Gordon Rutherford along with Islay's Graeme Smith, Kimelford-based Donald Smith, and Ronald Ross from Arrochar have each dedicated the last four decades of their lives to keeping people safe.

'Serving your community as a retained or volunteer firefighter is a huge commitment. To continue to do so for 40 years is an absolutely incredible achievement and I would like to thank them all for their service over the years.'

'Each one of them has made a huge difference to their local area during this time, and they have played their part in protecting their neighbours and visitors to these areas,' said Argyll Area Commander Joe McKay, senior officer for East and West Dunbartonshire.

Iain Noble, whose day job is keeping the fleet of West Coast Motors buses on the road, is a watch commander at Tobermory Fire Station. He joined the service following in his dad's footsteps.

'My dad served for more than 28 years and any chance I got as a youngster I was at the station. By the time I

joined up he was my gaffer! I really enjoy my role and have a great crew who make the station what it is.'

'We have enormous pride in the service we provide to our communities and we get huge support from them,' he added.

Ronnie Ross also got the bug early. He said: 'My dad was in the service in Arrochar from its inauguration in 1961 and I grew up with alarms going off in the home to alert him to incidents. As soon as I was old enough I applied and I finally secured a post in 1980.'

'I knew I was able to help my community so I signed up.'

Builder Ronnie added: 'I've attended many incidents and still get the same adrenaline rush when the pager is activated. The need to help and assist folk in their hour of need is still strong. I have learned and benefited from the training in many ways which has helped me in my private life and employment.'

It was not so much a calling as a command for marine mechanical and electrical engineer Donald Smith that led to him joining up.

'I was ordered by my father-in-law to apply and when I thought about it I knew that I was able to respond and help my community so I signed up. I've had a great 40 years and I

also enjoy the social side of the service and raising money for charity,' he said.

When crofter Gordon Rutherford of Bunessan is not busy tending to his prize-winning sheep he is busy as stonemason at Iona Abbey.

Self-employed builder Richard Henderson started off his fire service career in Tobermory then moved to the station in Salen after getting married, and Bowmore mechanic Graeme Smith's father and uncle both served as firefighters, so he chose to follow the same path.

When Covid restrictions allow, the firefighters will have their service recognised and be thanked in person for their achievements.

Graeme Smith was thanked earlier this month for his commitment when AC McKay visited Islay to meet the crews based there.

Mr McKay said: 'The wealth of experience they have gained has allowed them to contribute to the development of our current crews and will ensure the skill and professionalism they have displayed over the years continues with the future generations.'

'We are always keen to hear from people of all walks of life who want to consider a rewarding career like the ones described.'

If you are interested in joining, visit www.firescotland.gov.uk/work-with-us/retained-firefighters.aspx

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Far left, Ardchattan Scout troop scaled the heights above Glen Creran for a ceremony to welcome new recruits, these youngsters pictured were already members; and left, Ardchattan Scout troop welcomes new recruits at a ceremony at the top of Glen Creran, 810m up.

Scouts and Cubs mark achievements

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Seven new recruits went to great heights to join Ardchattan's scouts at the top of Glen Creran.

The youngsters made it to the summit of Creach Bheinn to officially become part of the 37th Argyll (Ardchattan) Scouts' troop in an investment ceremony 810m up.

Lofty accolades have also been awarded in the scouting group to its cub pack sixers Orion, Felix, Sam and Holly who have been presented the Chief Scout's Silver Award.

After more than two years' hard work, the dedicated cubs received their awards – the highest a cub can get – at Tralee beach having achieved all seven challenge badges during their pack time before moving up to scouts after the summer.

Their badges ranged from teamwork and adventures to leadership and to personal challenges they chose themselves from cycling to school to kayaking rapids on the River Awe and camping at midwinter to cooking three course meals for their families. The sixer cubs' achievements

are testament to the hard work of the cub pack's previous leaders especially Adrian Beard, Andy and Moira Newiss and Chris MacPherson.

'Although some have now stepped into other roles in the scouting group, they laid the groundwork for these cubs to achieve this highest award,' said acting cub leader Susannah Hughes.

It could be more than 25 years since the Ardchattan cubs were last awarded the honour.

'The cub pack would also like to take this opportunity to thank Adrian who has recently stepped down as Group Scout Leader for 37th Argyll; his enormous enthusiasm and support to all the children and families of our scouting group is hugely appreciated,' she added.

All sections of 37th Argyll (Ardchattan) Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are full for now but there is a waiting list if other families from the area surrounding Oban are interested.

Mrs Hughes will be moving on soon to help run the Ardchattan scouts so the cub pack is urgently looking for a new leader.

If you can help, email exec.37thargyll@gmail.com



Ardchattan cub pack Sixers receive the Chief Scout's Silver medal – the highest honour a cub can receive.



TRANSMISSION



Virtual Event

Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy Virtual Public Consultation

SSEN Transmission invites you to share your views with us

What is being consulted on?

We would like to invite you to join our virtual consultation exhibitions to share your views and feedback on our proposals for our Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy which aims to enable the connection of new renewable generation to support the transition to net zero emissions. This strategy is comprised of three elements:

1 Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275kV Connection
Following previous rounds of consultation on this project, we are now looking to hear your views on our Preferred Alignment for the overhead line within the selected route (Route Option 3). This event will also be the first formal public consultation for the Creag Dhubh substation Pre-application Notice (PAN).

2 Creag Dhubh to Inveraray 275kV Overhead Line
This is a new project which would involve between 8-12 km of new 275kV overhead line constructed between the proposed new substation at Creag Dhubh, and a connection point on the Inveraray to Crossaig overhead line. We are inviting views as to our Preferred Route Option, within which the replacement overhead line will be located.

3 Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Substations
To complete the Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy all the connected substations require upgrade to 275kV capability, as a result we are progressing with a new project which would involve construction and operation of four new 275kV electricity substations, south of Inveraray. We are inviting views regarding preferred Site Options identified for each of these substations.

The team will be available for live instant message chat sessions on:

Wednesday 14th July 2021
10am-1pm & 5-7pm

Thursday 15th July 2021
10am-1pm & 5-7pm

Thursday 29th July 2021
10am-1pm & 5-7pm

How can I get involved?
The virtual consultation exhibitions are part of a 5 week long consultation and have been designed to be fully interactive, allowing for presentation of key project information and plans, as well as providing an opportunity to engage directly with the project team via the chat sessions. The virtual consultation portal, the consultation brochure, other supporting documents and feedback forms can be accessed on the project webpage:
www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/argyll-and-kintyre-275kv-strategy/

Consultation starts on Monday 12th July 2021 and closes on Friday 13th August 2021. We kindly request that feedback forms are submitted by 13th August.

If you have any questions about the project or are unable to join the virtual consultations and you would like a paper copy of the consultation brochure please contact the Community Liaison Manager by email, phone or post:

Helen Batey
Community Liaison Manager
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, Inveralmond House, 200 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 3AQ
Helen.Batey@sse.com
01925 800 833 / 07778 453 993

OT

A Rum Deal

ANGUS MACDONALD

editor@obantimes.co.uk

A gorgeous castle on a Hebridean island with a world-class sea view and a decent skelp of land for sale for possibly as little as a £1. Tempted?

As reported by The Oban Times last week, NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage) is selling Kinloch Castle on the Isle of Rum, with the sales particulars being shown to a few choice potential buyers by Scottish Development International.

The particulars would have you salivating at the beautiful rooms, impressive furniture and jaw dropping beauty of both the exterior of the castle and scenery.

The brochure reveals the castle is in need of repair, but is 'wind and water tight'. Perhaps these words will have set an alarm bell tinkling in the back of your mind. The truth is the building has quite extensive wet and dry rot, the chimneys need to be rebuilt from the ground up, and a substantial, multi-million



pound restoration project is urgently required.

The photographs are misleading, having been taken well over a decade ago. Some of the rooms now have collapsed ceilings and the furniture is deep in dust and debris.

In 1957 the 10,000-hectare island, the castle — then in good condition — and all its contents were bought by the government from Lady

Bullough. At that time the population on the island was about 60, recently falling to a low of 22.

In 2003 the castle came runner-up in BBC2's Restoration series, attracting 143,000 votes. Griff Rhys Jones described Kinloch as a 'victim of bureaucratic neglect' and Prince Charles unsuccessfully lent his weight to a refurbishment plan.

The heritage part of

Scottish Natural Heritage obviously did not extend to taking responsibility for the upkeep of a rare 'A' Category building, which has been on the 'Buildings at Risk register' since 2004. Historic Environment Scotland (formerly Historic Scotland) which has a remit to insist on the preservation of historically important buildings, has clearly given a free pass to its fellow Scottish

Government agency. In 2019 a report concluded that there was just 18 months left to save the building.

The Kinloch Castle Friends Association was set up 25 years ago under the chairmanship of Professor Ewan Macdonald, who has been a member of the Rum Community Trust. It takes work parties to the castle and two years ago in frustration, put forward to Scottish Natural Heritage a fully costed proposal to take over the building, raise the £10m required, manage the restoration and reopen as a hostel, with a café and self-catering apartments. The offer was rejected because there was no guarantee of funding and doubt about the viability of the hospitality business.

In my opinion Kinloch Castle is a good opportunity for a hospitality business. These days many holiday makers seek a different experience — remoteness, adventure, living history. The

island of Rum is the most beautiful and varied of all the Hebridean islands, with its massive volcanic mountains, endless sandy beaches, and assorted wildlife, from sea eagles and Manx shearwater to red deer and dolphins. Hill walkers, mountain bikers, academics, kayakers and artists would give their right arm to visit Rum and stay in the beautiful castle.

Public ownership has failed Kinloch Castle, and the population of Rum is a fraction of what it should be. It must be hoped that a perfect buyer will emerge with a love of the west of Scotland, pride in ownership of a unique, historically important building, and deep enough pockets to carry through the expensive restoration. We have a final chance to ignite economic regeneration and trigger a significant population increase of this island.

Many thousands of concerned people are craving a good outcome.



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Drax powers up plans for new Hollow Mountain station

Plans for a new power station inside another hollowed out cavern at Ben Cruachan have been revealed.

More than one million tonnes of rock would need to be excavated to create the extra space for it – big enough to fit London's Big Ben on its side.

From today, July 1, people can go online to view the plans and have a say.

The public consultation is the first phase of Drax getting consent from Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989. The process could take about a year.

If approved the new underground site would eventually double the amount of electricity currently being generated.

Building work to the east of Drax's existing 440MW pumped storage hydro station could begin as soon as 2024, creating hundreds of jobs and making enough electricity to power around a million homes by about 2030.

Further consultation events are planned for later in the year and an application is expected to be submitted to Scottish Ministers in early 2022.

Support from the UK Government will also be need-



Drax's current turbine hall inside Cruachan.

ed. The upper reservoir, which holds 2.4 billion gallons of water, will be large enough to serve both power stations says Drax, which announced the project as the UK gets ready to host the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow.

As well as supporting almost 900 jobs during the construction it will help Scotland towards reaching its net zero power system by 2045.

Drax Group CEO Will Gardiner said it was an exciting and important project

which underlines Drax's commitment to tackling the climate crisis.

'Our plans to expand Cruachan will unlock more renewable electricity to power homes and businesses across the country and support hundreds of new jobs in rural Scotland.

'Last year, the UK's lack of energy storage capacity meant wind farms had to be paid to turn off and we lost out on enough renewable power to supply a million homes.

'We need to stop renewable power from going to waste by storing it, and Drax is ready to move mountains to do just that.'

Argyll and Bute's MP Brendan O'Hara and MSP Jenni Minto have welcomed Drax's decision to pursue planning approval.

Mr O'Hara said: 'It is great news for this area and for Scotland.'

Ms Minto added: 'In the run-up to COP26 in Glasgow, it's more vital than ever that we come up with innovative solutions to the climate emergency and ensure that future generations reap the rewards of Scotland's vast renewable potential.'

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Launch of LEG Power's £2 Million Share Offer to Fund Community Owned Hydro Scheme is Imminent



View from Beinn a Bheithir

LEG Power Lochaber (LEG Power) will launch a £2 million Community Share Offer to construct a community owned micro hydro (544kW) scheme in Summer 2021. Members of the public will be invited to apply for shares in LEG Power and can expect to receive a return on their investment through member share interest.

The Abhainn Greadhain hydro scheme in Glenachulish is being led by Lochaber Environmental Group (LEG) which is a charity that has been serving the whole of Lochaber for 20+ years. The profits from the scheme will be used to fund environmental projects in Lochaber.

LEG took over the scheme in 2019 after being approached by Local Energy Scotland (LES) with a view to offer the scheme for community ownership. LES offered grant support and a loan which enabled LEG to review the feasibility of the Scheme, pay for the package of permissions and complete the development tasks, including raising the necessary finance. LEG then established LEG Power Lochaber, a community benefit society, with the purpose to develop and own the hydro scheme. LEG Power Lochaber is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority as a community benefit society, registration no. 8053. The funds raised from the public share offer will be used to construct the hydro scheme.

This exciting opportunity gives the residents of Lochaber and other supporters of renewable energy schemes a chance to get involved by becoming a member of LEG Power. Community shares are a practical way of supporting this local environmental charity that serves the Lochaber community through sustainable food, active travel and energy-efficiency projects. The scheme will be 100% owned by LEG Power.

LEG Power will be working in partnership with Energy4All Limited, based in Cumbria, to manage the administration of this share offer. Energy4All is a non-profit



distributing social enterprise that promotes and facilitates community ownership of renewable energy in the UK. To date, Energy4All has promoted thirty co-operatively owned projects and raised over £88 million for community renewable energy projects.

The site for the scheme is located on land owned by Forestry and Land Scotland on the Abhainn Greadhain river at Glenachulish in Lochaber. The environmental impact will be minimal due to a number of existing access tracks for construction vehicles and trees felled will be replaced.

To register your interest in receiving a copy of the share offer document when the offer launches please visit www.legpower.coop/register. Further details about the project can also be found on our website.

As Chair of LEG Power Lochaber and Lochaber Environmental Group, Marian Austin has a real passion for renewable energy, is an advocate of sustainability and has a determination to make things happen.

She has previous experience in Project Managing the construction of a very successful hydro scheme at Nevis Range which has now been in operation for five years. Utilising a burn on a nearby hill, this provides much of the power used on the site, cutting their running costs and also feeding 'green' energy into the grid for distribution throughout the country.

Marian sees LEG Power Lochaber as an exciting new venture in harnessing some of the area's natural resources to generate not only electricity, but also money to help finance other LEG environmental projects, but also providing a good return to investors.

While the benefits of Hydro power are becoming ever more evident in a world aiming to become carbon neutral, Marian is well aware that careful planning and working with a number of official bodies is required to successfully complete the Glenachulish project

To this end, she and fellow members of the LEG board, have been planning and preparing to get the project underway for almost two years with support from Local Energy Scotland- Preparatory work has already begun by clearing commercial woodland for access and building work, but like so many ventures, Covid has brought things to a halt at times.

Marian said: "Everything is now running about a year behind our original schedule, but all that we have achieved, such as the grid connection and permissions are still in place, as they too have had to allow for the 'Covid factor'.

"The community share launch is now going ahead with our partners at Energy for All and this is the final key in making the project happen. The minimum share application is likely to be £100 and every share sold brings us closer to our goal.

"While this project may be based in Glenachulish, it has far reaching benefits for the whole of Lochaber, not to mention the global environment.

"Every share is an investment for a greener future and will also benefit the investor with a reasonable rate of return. We urge Lochaber residents to sign up for more information on the share offer."



LEG Power Director Christine Rolin is not only right behind the Glenachulish project but as her home is located just a few hundred yards from where the Power House will be built, she will also be living right beside it.

A Marine Biologist by training, Christine also worked for the Lochaber Environmental Group (LEG) for a few years before joining the board.

With her experience in ecosystems and sustainability of the natural environment she sees the Hydro Power development as a 'feedback loop', using renewable energy in the shape of Lochaber's very high rainfall to produce electricity, which in turn generates income for the community, which can then fund other 'green' projects across the whole of Lochaber.

As a charity, LEG is dependent on regular input from a variety of funding sources and despite being very successful in this since its formation over 20 years ago, there is never any guarantee what level of support will be forthcoming. Earnings from Glenachulish will help provide more predictable financial stability, allowing greater forward planning, an expansion of projects which can be supported and also create secure jobs in the local environmental sector.

When the project is operational, volunteers will also have an important role to play in monitoring and maintaining its running alongside the specialists, further contributing to local knowledge and experience in this field.

Christine said: "It's all about the local people and communities who will benefit from the success of this LEG Power development. Local community-owned renewable energy makes use of Lochaber's rainfall as a sustainable natural resource, while the income will support new and ongoing, projects to improve environmental sustainability projects across the Lochaber community".



New project to support towns' regeneration

Argyll and Bute Council is to deliver additional regeneration projects as part of the Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP).

At a full council meeting last Thursday, councillors approved an initial first phase of £260,000 to support a range of major improvement projects in the area. The overall allocation for The Place Based Investment Programme 2021/2022 is £821,000. A report about the next phase of funding will be presented at the Policy and Resources Committee in August.

The initial phase includes the Argyll-wide shopfront improvement scheme (£80,000), to support local business owners invest in their shopfronts through the provision of grants. It follows the successful Scottish Government Town Centre grant scheme in 2020/2021 which supported more than 70 Argyll and Bute businesses.

Drive launched to recruit more childminders for rural Argyll

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Taynuilt childminders Dee and Brian Pennock are backing a council campaign to recruit more child carers in rural areas.

Mr and Mrs Pennock, who took up childminding in 2008, have lost count of how many youngsters have passed through their door in that time but it has filled their home with laughter and pride.

Now the pair are urging others living in rural areas to think about following in their footsteps – particularly to fill a need for more childminders for tots aged up to three.

Argyll and Bute's early years team will give full support and help guide anyone interested, from expressing that first interest up to registering with the Care Inspectorate.



Financial help is also available for equipment, such as push-chairs and stairgates, as well as small home changes.

Dee said: 'Our home is always filled with laughter and there is never a dull moment. If ever a problem crops up and we feel that we need some advice there

is always plenty to be had from so many in early years.

'During the last 13 years we've lost count of the number of children that have passed through our door but we always feel a lot of pride when we hear that one of them is doing well, just graduated,

Dee Pennock and her husband have been childminding since 2008 and says their house is always filled with laughter and there is never a dull moment.

secured their first job, gone on to become a midwife or doctor, engineer or electrician. There is a pride to be had in the fact that perhaps, just maybe, we may have had just a little hand in their success. We've both enjoyed working together at home making our living doing something that we both love doing.'

Argyll and Bute Council's policy lead for education Councillor Yvonne McNeilly said registered childminders provided an outstanding service and were an absolute integral part of its childcare

strategy. She said: 'Argyll and Bute is a beautiful yet very rural local authority, so it's really important that we get as many people as possible to consider a career in childminding.'

'Not only do childminders enable children and young people to thrive in a loving, homely environment, they are fully committed to providing an extremely high standard of childcare,' she said.

And added: 'Being a childminder is a fantastic, rewarding job and we're here to help guide and support any potential new recruits through the process. I would urge anyone considering it to get in touch with us in the first instance to find out more.'

Interested? Visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/how-become-childminder or call 01369 708503.



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Oban
Restaurant Trail
 PART 2

Oban Restaurant Trail

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11. Taste of Argyll Kitchen



Offering seasonal game dishes from local farms with some of Scotland's finest seafood platters. All in a welcoming setting and quality guaranteed.

Website:
www.facebook.com/Taste-of-Argyll-kitchen-109705220635424
Tel: 07477 238186

12. Cuan Mor



Offers a selection of the finest local beers, real ales and whiskies, to compliment the menu's extensive selection of locally sourced produce.

Website:
www.cuanmor.co.uk
Tel: 01631 565078

13. Piazza & Ee-usk



Waterside Italian Restaurant. Just opposite is Ee-usk, With over 25 years experience in the seafood industry, the MacLeod family have built Ee-Usk into a world renowned Scottish fish restaurant.

Website:
www.piazzaoban.com
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Tel: 01631 563628
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14. China Restaurant



Traditional venue, with a classic Chinese menu, plus Thai dishes and local seafood options.

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/chinaoban>
Tel: 01631 563575

15. Nories Fish & Chips



With 3 generations of frying excellence, this award winning chip shop is well established. Available for sit in or takeaway.

Website: www.facebook.com/NoriesFishandChips
Tel: 01631 563736

16. Coast Restaurant



Calming colours and music create a relaxed setting to enjoy the best local shellfish, fish and Scottish meats.

Website: www.coastoban.co.uk
Tel: 01631 569900

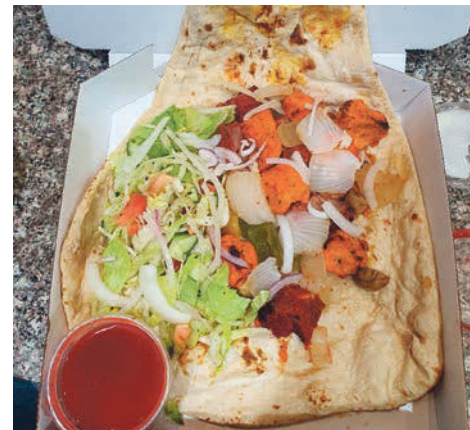
17. Mondo Pizza - Peri Peri Fury



Oban's newest restaurant, serving Italian Pizza, Peri Peri Chicken & Burgers, Fried Chicken & much more.

Website: www.facebook.com/MondoPeriPeri
Tel: 01631 565786

18. Kebabish Of Oban - Takeaway or delivery



A long established takeaway/delivery with a vast range of Pakistani food varying from curries, kebabs, donners, burgers and pizzas, all made from fresh local produce.

Website:
www.kebabishofoban.co.uk
Tel: 01631 565786/ 565686

19. The Oban Fish & Chip Shop



More than just a fish & chip shop selling a selection of shellfish & traditional home-made dishes. Sit in or takeaway available.

Website: www.obanfishandchip-shop.co.uk
Tel: 01631 569828

20. Chilli Grillz Oban - Takeaway or delivery



Offering a range of different cuisines on offer from Kebabs, Pizza, Indian Curries

Website:
www.chilligrillz-oban.co.uk
Tel: 01631 358182

21. Taj Mahal Oban



Situated in the heart of Oban town centre offering a delicious selection of authentic, Indian cuisine.

Website:
www.tajmahal-oban.co.uk
Tel: 01631 566400

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OT

LETTERS

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

Step in right direction

A cautious cheer went up last week after Argyll and Bute councillors voted unanimously to remove housing as a development option for Ganavan.

And while the ultimate say lies with the Scottish Government, it is a step in the right direction.

Argyll and Bute Provost Councillor David Kinniburgh proposed the amendment to remove housing as a potential development use of the land, however, it still means that the green space could potentially be developed for recreation and tourism.

Given a Friends of Ganavan survey showed people wanted the area preserved for the benefit of local communities and visitors as a green space for recreation, the changes are a good move. Let's hope the Scottish Government reporter agrees.

Catamaran deal scuppered

The news that Pentland Ferries has pulled out of talks with CalMac about the potential charter of its catamaran MV Pentalina, will be a bitter blow to many islanders, and CalMac.

Let's hope that it is not too long before another vessel is found to fill the gap.

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



School uniform discussion

The current discussion regarding the unreasonable enforcement of Oban High School uniform is an important one.

In no way does it detract from or deny the many successes and achievements of both pupils and staff at OHS. We are proud of the way our young people, despite experiencing significant upheaval and difficulty this last year, have continued to work with staff and teachers to achieve and maintain their educational goals. The achievements and successes of all at OHS are a great reflection on the area and we continue to applaud that.

However, the mental health and wellbeing of our young people is vital in ensuring they continue to feel supported and able to meet the goals they set for themselves. This is why parents, pupils and the Oban High School Uniform Reform Group feel the current unreasonable enforcement of school uniform policy is untenable and inappropriate.

Our young people have spent a great deal of time isolated from peers; going to school is an opportunity for them to re-establish those connections and relationships, alongside their academic work. Feeling comfortable, confident and free to express themselves is vital in maintaining their mental health and sense of wellbeing.

Sixty-five per cent of parents/guardians surveyed reported that their child had been subjected to unreasonable enforcement, ranging from having to wear shared clothing or shoes, sent home or taken to the shop to purchase alternative clothing. Such measures remove the young person from academic time; are often highlighted in front of peers thereby causing embarrassment and shaming; and detrimentally impact upon their confidence and sense of wellbeing.

On behalf of parents and pupils, OHS Uniform Reform Group is asking that OHS cease this unreasonable enforcement and comply with Argyll and Bute council policy that states schools are encouraged to suggest school uniform but that 'school uniform is not compulsory and it is not policy to insist on pupils wearing uniform or having specialist items of clothing in order to engage in all the activities of the curriculum. As such, pupils will not be deprived of any educational benefit as a result of not wearing uniform'.

Current enforcement also appears to unfairly target girls, working against the modern ideals of body positivity, and is discriminatory. We are not suggesting that the uniform be removed; we recognise the benefits and rewards of a school uniform. However OHS Uniform Reform Group, parents and pupils suggest that the current en-

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk

Bliadhnaichean air ais nuair a bha mi fhin agus cuid eile a' brodanachadh gnìomhachas turasachd na dùthcha, gun chus soirbheachaidh, gus aithne a thoirt dhan Ghàidhlig agus a cultar nan cuid margaideachd tha cuimhn' agam gun robh fiù 's Buill seann Chomhairle Sgìre an Eilein Sgitheanaich is Loch Aillse teagmhach mun argamaid againn.

Chaidh rannsachadh bheachdan ceud neach-turais a dhèanamh ann am Port Rìgh air feasgar samhraidh agus chuir e iongnadh air na Comhairlichean gun tuirt còrr air dà thrihan gun robh iad ag iarraidh Gàidhlig a chluinntinn is fhaicinn! Thug e ùine mhòr eile mun do thachair e, ach 's math a bhith a-nise a' faicinn an aithne a tha Tadhail Alba a' toirt dhan chànan, agus am plana is am poileasaidh a th' aig a' bhuidheann dha taobh. Ach a dh'aindeoin sin tha e follaiseach gum bheil e doirbh dha daoine a tha an sàs ann an obair-aigheachd greimeachadh air na cothroman a tha an lùib na Gàidhlig mar shàr tharraing bhuanachdail.

Chan eil teagamh, saoilidh mi, nach dèanadh leithid de dh'fhoillseachadh feum a thaobh inbhe agus ire a' chànan, agus fàs cuideachd air àireamh luchd-ionnsachaidh. Le fios gum bheil mu leth mhillean neach an sàs ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig an-dràsta, tha fhios nach robh e riamh cho iomchaidh a bhith mothachail air a' chothrom a th' ann luach a bharrachd a chur air na

dh'fhiosraicheas luchd-tadhail ann an Alba, agus gu sònraichte air a' Ghàidhealtachd, Innse Gall, agus na h-Eileanan an Iar.

Thar leth-cheud bliadhna tha cosnadh bho thurasachd air fàs gu bhith na phrìomh phàirt de theachd-an-tìr Alba, agus ged a tha ceann a tuath 's an iar na dùthcha a' faotainn tomhas mhath den sin tha dragh ann gum bheil dìth plana-leasachaidh coileanta na chnap-starra agus thathas ag obair a dh'ionnsaigh leithid sin a-nise.

Cha ghabh àicheadh gum bheil cosgais àite-an-fuirich is ithe air fàs gu math daor an seo, agus tha feum air a h-uile tarraing a ghabhas foillseachadh anns an fharpais luach airgid le bailtean turasachd thall thairis. Ri linn sin uile tuigidh sibh mo thàmailt a thaobh nan cothroman cailte, na mo bheachd-sa, ann an dà iris bhrèagha dhathte a thàinig thugam tro phàipear-an-naidheachd air an t-seachdain seo chaidh.

Bha iad le chèile a' margaideachd na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eileanan, ach a bharrachd air facal neo dhà ann an ainm ionaid an siud 's an seo chan fhaca mi iomradh air Gàidhlig anns na h-aithrisean mu na rudan a tha tarraingeach dha luchd-tadhail. Chan urrainn dhòmhsa a thuigsinn ciamar, aig a' char a bu lugha, nach do nochd rudeigin mu eachdraidh bheò a' chànan, a ceòl, is a buaidh air ainmean-àite.

Mo nàire air cothrom cailte dhi, agus dhan ghnìomhachas!

Technology is not our friend

Recently I was passing some time in the Oban and Lorn hospital, and as I waited I thought that I would buy a bottle of water, given that the ambient temperature was approaching 20C. I selected a vending machine, gave it £1.50, received 40p change but no water.

Neither the staff in the RVS shop nor the hospital receptionist were able to help, although the receptionist did point out a number on the offending machine that I could phone to report the fault. After reporting the fault and explaining twice what had happened, I was offered the refund sent to my home or to the hospital for me to pick up.

When are we going to realise that customer service systems do everything but serve the customer?

David Hebenton, Oban

forcement is heavy handed and inappropriate.

School uniform should encourage a group identity whilst allowing individuals to express themselves; dress appropriately for the weather; be gender neutral; and not impact upon the education or wellbeing of the young people. The current enforcement does not meet these criteria, nor does it comply with Argyll and Bute policy.

We are keen to discuss ways to improve the situation with OHS and Argyll and Bute Council in order to ensure our young people continue to feel supported; continue worth with and succeed at OHS; and continue to maintain their wellbeing and develop their own identities.

We have always been and remain our young people's biggest fans, and are proud of all those who have passed through, and continue to pass through Oban High School.

Oban High School Uniform Reform Group.

DISTRICT NEWS



Dr Cathy Ford with her flowers.

Community wish GP well

Patients at Easdale Medical Practice have said a temporary goodbye to Dr Cathy Ford after six years of caring for remote communities, stretching from Seil to Arduaine and over to Luing.

The good news is that although Dr Ford has left the busy practice as a partner – she will be back as a locum in August.

Before becoming a partner there Dr Ford had already worked as a locum in the area for seven years.

To wish her well, she was thanked at a small farewell gathering on the island where she was presented with flowers and a hand-crafted sycamore bowl.

Practice manager Mary Phillips said: 'She will be sorely missed but we are glad she will be returning to us!'



Lismore Primary School pupils in their garden with the new shed.

Thanks for the bumper crop of donations

Pupils at Lismore Primary School are saying thanks for their new garden shed.

An appeal for donations to build a new shed for their garden harvested a good crop of donations.

The children have been busy planting, looking after and gathering a variety of fruit and vegetables thanks to all those in the community who donated money and time to the project.

'They have also been learning to cook their produce and enjoyed eating it for lunch –

especially the rhubarb,' said the school's Roxanne MacColl.

She added: 'The staff and pupils are all looking forward to a bumper crop of strawberries, carrots and courgettes in the polytunnel, potatoes from the raised beds and apples from the orchard.'

'Thank you again to everyone who has helped us get to this point; we have lots of plans for next year and hope to be able to share some of our produce with you very soon.'

At random

MARTIN LAING

editor@obantimes.co.uk



Charity champ

I read with considerable interest last week the excellent feature written by my chum Fiona Scott about Paddy Crerar, chairman of the hotel company which bears his name.

It made me think that the estimable Paddy probably deserves a further nod for the charitable work he does, as touched on by Fiona at the end of her piece.

Many of you reading this will be aware that the Crerar Hotel Group owns a number of highly regarded establishments, including the Oban Bay and Isle of Mull Hotel and Spa. Fewer may realise that it is also responsible for The Crerar Trust.

Astonishingly, Crerar Hotels donates half of all its profits to the trust, to give to good causes mostly in the areas in which its hotels are located but also further afield. According to its website, 'the trust has donated over £4 million in the past 10 years, to hundreds of community groups and charities. As Crerar Trust chairman Paddy Crerar explains: "It's our customers who are making the difference to everyday lives. Without their patronage, we could give nothing back".'

Among the beneficiaries to have received large sums in recent times are Oban Addiction Support and Information Service (£15,000), Oban Hospice (£10,080) and Oban Rotary Senior Citizens' Club (£1,500). There are many others.

Isn't it gratifying and reassuring to come across a high-powered business executive so well rooted in his communities and who gives back so handsomely?

Wild claim?

Now, I'm an urbanite by upbringing and know precariously little of agricultural and wildlife issues, but I was more than surprised to read that North Connel farmer Julie Campbell's sheep may have been savaged by a wolf rather than dogs out of control.

I didn't think there were any wolves roaming our countryside any longer but were hunted to extinction yonks ago. Am I wrong or is the police officer who made the claim wide of the mark?

What do you think?

Send your comments to editor@obantimes.co.uk

Salute for charity stalwarts John and Jean Alexander

Royal British Legion Scotland stalwarts John and Jean Alexander have stepped down from chairman and secretary roles after a combined 24 years serving the Easdale branch.

The couple were presented with gifts and thanks when members met at Clachan Seil's Tigh an Truish inn on June 19. It was the branch's first meeting in 18 months because of Covid.

Mr Alexander has served as chairman for 11 years and wife Jean has been secretary for 13 years.

Ron Hetherington is now chairman after being given special permission from RBL's national board of trustees to become the first non-veter-

an to take on the lead role. Area chairman Mick Connor was at this month's meeting to attend the historic occasion.

Squadron Leader Lorraine Reynolds was also voted in as the Easdale branch's new secretary.

Retiring Easdale branch Royal British Legion Scotland officers Jean and John Alexander flanked by Donny Reynolds, branch standard bearer, and Scott Connor, who is the area standard bearer.



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Lynx and beaver protection a big deal says alliance

The Scottish Rewilding Alliance is calling on the Scottish Greens to put lynx and beaver at the heart of any agreement it reaches with the Scottish National Party.

The Scottish Greens' manifesto states it would 'support the gradual reintroduction of species native to Scotland where appropriate and in cooperation with local communities, including a lynx reintroduction trial'.

'The Scottish Greens have committed to restoring nature through rewilding, including a trial lynx reintroduction,' said Steve Micklewright, Scottish Rewilding Alliance convenor and chief executive of Trees for Life.

'If they reach an agreement with the SNP that includes this commitment, many will see this as a sign they can achieve real change through cooperation.'

The Labrador-sized Eurasian lynx was driven to extinction in Scotland around 500-1,000 years ago through hunting and habitat loss.

It has now been reintroduced to many areas of Europe, including areas used for farming, hunting, forestry and tourism.

Research suggests the Highlands has enough habitat to support around 400 lynx, which the rewilding alliance believes could help to restore nature's balance by controlling numbers of roe deer, the cat's preferred prey.

Support

Following a survey which showed that 52 per cent of Scots supported and 19 per cent disagreed with a pilot reintroduction of lynx, Steve said: 'A trial reintroduction of lynx will have very strong public support, and there would be no clearer signal that Scotland intends to become the world's first Rewilding Nation.'

The alliance also wants to see a better approach to beaver relocations to suitable areas of Scotland where beavers are still missing, to help stop the wild beavers being killed when they cause problems for farmers on Tayside.

Since the government legally protected beavers in 2019, NatureScot has issued dozens of licenses resulting in 20 per cent of the Scottish population being killed in 2019, according to the alliance.

Rural Connections wheels into action

A new project to get more people walking, wheeling and cycling in Argyll and Bute has been launched by Cycling UK.

The new Rural Connections project is designed to meet the unique needs of Argyll and Bute, the Western Isles and five other rural parts of Scotland.

Cycling UK staff will be based in these seven areas and will support people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to get active for everyday journeys, leisure and adventure.

The project will support walking, wheeling [actively supporting people that use wheelchairs] and cycling for all abilities including:

- offering short- and long-term cycle loans to help people find a cycle that works for them
- supporting local organisations to coordinate and add walking, wheeling and cycling opportunities to their existing activities
- upskilling of volunteers to deliver activities in their communities and keep cycles working if there is no local bike shop
- building localised networks of organisations, communities and individuals supporting walking, wheeling and cycling initiatives.

Scotland has seen a surge in cycling during the Covid pandemic, with cycling journeys up 47 per cent in the 12 months since March 2020.

In two areas, Dunoon and Lerwick, Cycling Scotland's counters recorded an increase of more than 100 per cent.

Car use remains high, however, with 78 per cent of people in rural and remote areas travelling to work or education by car compared with 65 per cent in the rest of Scotland.

As activity is known to boost mental and physical health, Rural Connections aims to enable more people to choose to get active instead of driving for short journeys, whether a trip to the shops, a visit to friends or to attend an appointment.

The project also aims to encourage people in rural and remote areas to walk, cycle or wheel to explore their surroundings: to enjoy a picnic, a family cycle ride or a pleasant walk without the use of a car.

The programme builds on Cycling UK's current community work, such as the Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme which saw more than 30,000 bikes repaired during the pandemic.



Aisa Nebreda is here to help as Rural Connections development officer for Argyll and Bute.

Funded by Smarter Choices Smarter Places, development officers will use their expertise and knowledge to work closely with community organisations, businesses, public sector agencies and individuals.

Aisa Nebreda can't wait to get started as Rural Connections development officer for Argyll and Bute. She said: 'I'm looking forward to working with lots of local organisations to increase the take-up of walking, wheeling and cycling, and I'm really keen to work with resource centres across Argyll and Bute to provide first-hand experience on all-ability cycles.'

'Cycling UK has worked very successfully with Fyne Homes recently and we would like to continue supporting that.'

Rural Connections senior project officer Fiona Johnston said: 'Cycling UK knows walking, cy-

cling and wheeling improves people's health and wellbeing but the benefits are wider than that.

'When more people choose to use their cars less, communities become more pleasant places and there can be an economic boost, so everyone in the community can benefit.'

'For those living in rural and remote areas, even if you want to travel in an active way it can sometimes seem like there's no other option than the car.'

'Rural Connections aims to provide an alternative and the support many people need to make that change in behaviour.'

'Our staff will be people who live and work in the communities themselves, as they have the best knowledge of what will work in their area.'

For more information, contact aisa.nebreda@cyclinguk.org



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Kerry beams her message from the ocean depths

The GRAB Trust's Kerry MacKay has swapped her usual classroom-based workshops for the high seas over the next few weeks.

Having set sail on the tall ship Pelican of London, the intrepid scientist is bringing her message on avoiding littering the beaches of the West Highlands to schools and the community from the depths of the ocean instead.

Until mid-August Kerry is taking part in the of the Darwin200 sailing expedition, as part of the professional dive team.

She has been doing outreach to schools in Argyll in the run-up to the summer holidays, as well as stopping at bucket list locations such as St Kilda, the Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland, and Bass Rock.

She said before boarding the tall ship last month that she was 'so excited' to be joining the Darwin200 team.

'I'm especially looking forward to scuba diving places like St Kilda and Shetland, doing underwater surveys and filming.'

This will be the second voyage Kerry has crewed on, as she was part of the Darwin200 UK Launch last year where she circumnavigated the UK.

The GRAB Trust will be working in partnership with the Darwin200 project, Marine Conservation Society and several other ocean conservation organisations to supervise and conduct ocean research during the voyage.

Led by Young Scientists, there will be projects to record cetaceans, seabirds, and plastic pollution.

And Kerry says anyone can join in: 'We want as many people as possible to share this experience with us; we have a crack team of camera professionals aboard who will capture all the adventures on deck, underwater, and with drones.'

'So follow the adventure on the GRAB Trust and Darwin200 social media pages. There will be epic videos, cutting edge science, live lectures, and lots of stunning scenery with



Kerry MacKay of Argyll and Bute's GRAB Trust is inviting people to join her on the Darwin200 project.

amazing wildlife.' Kerry will also be collecting and answering people's questions throughout the voyage.

Anything at all can be asked: just email questions to GRABkerryDarwin21@gmail.com Kerry will answer in the videos online.

Join Kerry's adventure on Facebook @ GRABbmlp and The GRAB Trust's YouTube Channel: The GRAB Trust - Beaches & Marine Litter Project.

The Darwin200 page is on Facebook @ Darwin2002021, on Twitter and Instagram @ Darwin200_ and YouTube channel Darwin200, as well as using #Darwin200. Don't forget to check out the Darwin200 website at darwin200.com

DOWN MEMORY LANE

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



This week we have chosen another photograph from our archives. These youngsters are all turned out in their 'Sunday best' for their school photograph. But which school and what year? If you recognise yourself or recognise on of the pupils or the teacher, we'd love to hear from you. Email us at editor@obantimes.co.uk



Reader Michael Nicolson got in touch with us about this photograph which we ran a couple of weeks ago. He said: 'Your photo this week is the ScotRail raft race team just before the race which started at the sailing club. It's either 1989 or 1990, not sure which. Left to right are Jay Parkinson, Angus MacColl, David Turnbull, Andy Thow, Derek Macdonald and myself. A colleague commented that the photo looks like a bad Monty Python sketch! I tend to agree!

DEREK WILSON

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BUSINESS NEWS

Piece Box is couple's bread and butter

Dervaig's Mary Ireson and Jamie Fisher have born and bred a new business venture in Dervaig.

The couple, who have three children and moved to the village from the Ross of Mull eight years ago, are four weeks into a new venture serving up sandwiches and other picnic treats Monday to Friday.

When they moved five doors along to a bigger house in 2019 to make a living from a new business they saw an opportunity to turn what the former owner used as an artist's studio into what is now The Piece Box.

Fisherman Jamie still goes out to sea to bringing home crabs and lobsters for their sell-out sandwiches and Mary, who has been a youth worker on Mull and ran an outdoor centre, gets busy in the kitchen to keep up with demand.

With start-up help from the SJ Noble Trust and The Waterfall fund, life has been hectic over the past six months.

'There was a lot more work than we first envisaged. We had to get water down to the shed and put a new kitchen in. A new car park area had to be built and landscaped but it's all worth it - we hope,' said Mary

'We've had massive help from trades people on the island and friends. Jamie has worked, as usual, like an absolute Trojan coming home from long days at sea to then have to paint, fix and dig.

'There's a mix of locals and visitors coming to the shop, whether it's people picking up picnics to take to the beach or out on a boat or just to enjoy at home. We've been blown away by the response.

'We feel so lucky to be here doing this. We want it to be something that will benefit our village - it is our family's home and a huge part of our life. We are small-scale but it's big to us. The idea is to grow a lot of what we use and sell, using local meat and fish from the sea.'

Seafood eateries earn plaudits in Scottish parliament

Oban and Tobermory food spots among best places to eat

Two small businesses based in Tobermory and Oban have been recognised in the Scottish Parliament, following their inclusion in a UK-wide list of the best places to eat seafood.

Café Fish, which is based in Tobermory and the Oban Seafood Hut (The Green Shack), were included among a total of seven Scottish businesses in the Observer newspapers '22 best places to eat seafood around the UK coast'.

Both businesses were commended in the article by renowned chef-owner of the Inver restaurant near Strachur, Pam Brunton.

News of the inclusion in the Observer's list, prompted MSP Donald Cameron to acknowledge the achievement in the Scottish Parliament by means of a written motion.

'I am extremely pleased that two businesses from Argyll have been recognised at a UK-wide level in this way,' he said.

'This positive publicity can only help these local businesses and others across Argyll.

'Few things are better than freshly caught and locally prepared seafood, and I look forward to visiting both businesses over the summer to try out their offering.

'As we continue our recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, it is more vital than ever that we support our local businesses as well as encouraging tourists to spend money locally.'

Tony Monaghan, manager of The Green Shack which sits beside the CalMac ferry terminal, had not seen either the Observer article or the Scottish Parliament motion but had certainly heard about them from his customers this week.



Tony Monaghan is thrilled to be welcoming customers back to The Green Shack.

'Everyone has been asking us about it when they come to the shack,' he said.

'It's great to have some good news after the last year and we are thrilled that people think so highly of us. We have missed our overseas visi-

tors this year but we have had lots of new people coming from all over Britain so can't complain.

'It's just fantastic to be open again and welcoming all customers wherever they come from.'

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From honesty box to big name department store

by Kathie Griffiths
kgriffiths@obantimes.co.uk

Lismore candlemaker Hazel MacCormick is taking part in this year's Great British Exchange trade event heading for Glasgow this summer.

Hazel will be taking her Lismore Luminations soy candles and other scented goods that she makes on the island to the city to run a pop-up stall at high-end department store John Lewis in the week starting August 16.

'When I heard about the Great British exchange I thought it was too good an opportunity not to try,' she said.

'I contacted them to see if I could run one of their pop-up stores.

'The Great British exchange looks over

your brand and products and then pitches it to John Lewis on your behalf.

'John Lewis liked my brand so agreed that I could have a stall. It's a fantastic opportunity for me,' said Hazel, who began her business from an honesty box at the end of her road on the island.

'When I started out three years ago I never dreamt that one day I would be in one of the major department stores in Glasgow and my candles selling in more than 20 shops all over Scotland,' she added.

The Great British Exchange was set up in 2014 to support British businesses and revolutionise how retailers source and buy products.

Hazel MacCormick of Lismore Luminations.



Volunteering chances sought in Argyll

Organisations are being sought which can offering volunteering experience for young people to help them improve their career prospects.

Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface (TSI), in conjunction with Argyll and Bute Council, is looking for partner organisations as part of the Young Person's Guarantee programme.

Backed by a £60 million Scottish Government investment, the guarantee aims to give all young people in Scotland the chance to succeed despite the economic impacts of coronavirus (Covid-19).

Partners willing to refer young people to the programme are also being sought.

Takki Sulaiman, CEO of Argyll and Bute TSI, said: 'The Young People's Guarantee will help give a young person a great start to their career by offering quality supported volunteering opportunities.'

'Charities and local groups can help as they are closest to the volunteering opportunities in our communities.'

'Grants may be available to support placements and young people will receive support from coaches.'

'Register your interest today and we will work together to help keep our communities strong.'

Loganair makes carbon-neutral pledges

Loganair has committed to being fully carbon neutral by 2040.

It is the first UK regional airline to take such a step towards managing and mitigating the environmental impact of flying.

The GreenSkies initiative includes a programme of carbon offsets to remove the same amount of carbon from the environment as that generated from each Loganair flight.

At the same time, the airline is tackling the long-term goal of introducing sustainable aircraft to its fleet.

Live trials will take place in the Orkney Islands this summer on developmental aircraft powered by hydrogen and renewable electricity.

Meantime a £1 carbon offset charge is being included in the ticket price for every customer's flight starting yesterday, July 1.

The airline company believes that by using the

collective power of those flying with Loganair, carbon neutral flying can be achieved at a modest cost per passenger.

Funds raised through the GreenSkies charge will be invested in projects across the world to remove the same amount of carbon from the atmosphere as is generated by Loganair flights.

These include reforestation projects and wind farms that will replace carbon-heavy coal and gas-fired power stations.

Later this year, Loganair will also establish a new fund for grants to help with the cost of establishing renewable energy projects in the communities that it serves.

Loganair chief executive Jonathan Hinkles said: 'We are extremely proud to be the first UK regional airline to set ambitious goals for a carbon-neutral future. The technology required to deliver zero-carbon regional flights is still

under development and testing today, and these are programmes in which we're pleased to be taking an active role. We think it's right to ask our customers to join us on this journey to carbon neutrality, and the £1 GreenSkies charge within Loganair's ticket prices means that we can immediately mitigate the impact of the carbon emissions from every flight.'

Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport Michael Matheson MSP, said: 'Loganair's involvement in the aircraft trials, taking place at the Sustainable Aviation Test Environment in Orkney, is also a great example of how our ownership of Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd creates a unique opportunity for Scotland to lead the drive towards zero emission aviation.'

Loganair has also been invited to participate in the UK Government's Jet Zero Council.

Hotel sets sail with new coastal tours

A Port Appin hotel has teamed up with an Oban-based sea tours operator to offer visitors new guided tours of the region's coastline and island.

The Wee Hotel Company's Pierhouse Hotel and Seafood Restaurant and Oban-based Coastal Connections are offering collections directly from the end of the Port Appin pier and from Oban harbour for full day trips to Tobermory, Mull or Coll of up to 12 passengers.

Visitors will have the chance of seeing harbour seals, basking sharks, minke whales, porpoise, otters and dolphins, as well as Glensanda Super Quarry and Duart Castle.

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LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

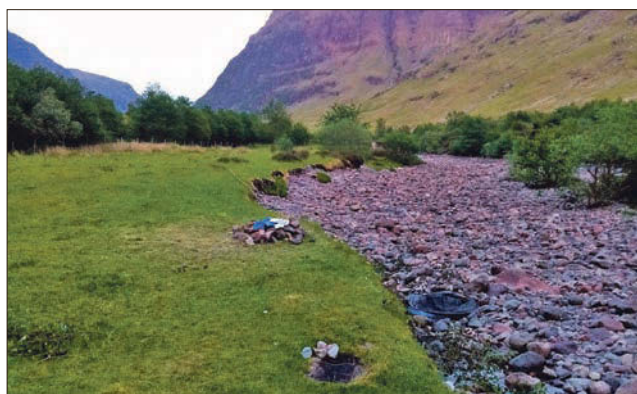
YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON IN ARGYLL AND LOCHABER

Love this place, leave no trace

The National Trust for Scotland is urging visitors to Love this place, leave no trace in a new campaign to protect scenic beauty and encourage visitors and campers to minimise their impact, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Scotland's national conservation charity launched the campaign this month in a bid to address some of the serious issues faced at the properties and wild locations it cares for.

Littering, fences and trees being used for firewood and dogs worrying livestock are just some of the anti-social experience trust staff and



The site of a campfire in Glencoe.

volunteers have been facing. lockdown restrictions have Over the past year, when lifted, National Trust for

Scotland staff have welcomed record numbers of visitors to its world-renowned areas of natural beauty.

People have been able to explore and discover the treasures on their own doorstep with the national conservation charity, which for 90 years has cared for and protected many of the country's most loved places, following government advice on Covid-19 and social distancing.

With international travel still uncertain, trust staff and volunteers anticipate high levels of visitor numbers in the months ahead.

The cumulative effect of large numbers of people visiting the countryside can lead to unintended damage and the trust has addressed this in recent months with campaigns highlighting the impact on local wildlife and ecosystems and providing advice on how to visit safely and responsibly.

The charity hopes the Love this place, leave no trace campaign will also help raise vital funds for clean-up efforts and help people understand how to minimise their impact on these beautiful places.

The National Trust for

Scotland is urging people to get out and visit the locations and properties it cares for responsibly.

To help, rangers from National Trust for Scotland have drawn up 10 top tips to Love this place, leave no trace including parking with care, taking rubbish home, staying on paths, using a stove instead of lighting a fire, keeping dogs under control and choosing a camping spot carefully.

You can also donate online and find out more about work being done in a particular NTS area at: www.nts.org.uk/leave-no-trace

Mull Fiddle Week heads to Oban Advertorial

Mull Fiddle Week is heading over to Oban to run some of its workshops for young people with learning disabilities.

The series of sessions, between Monday August 9 and Friday August 13 and part of a bigger week of workshops and performances in Tobermory, are free and in partnership with charity Hear My Music.

Hear My Music is a Glasgow-based charity helping people with complex needs and/or Autism to express themselves through music making.

These workshops are for ages five to 26 and will be led by two specialist practitioners who will work with individuals and also with small groups.

Event organisers are keen to hear from any groups in the Oban area who are interested in getting involved.

Individual sessions will last for 30-45 minutes and group sessions last for 45 minutes up to one hour. The structure will be clear and consistent, including the likes of a greeting song or exercise, a warm up and time to create something new.

During the sessions, participants will explore traditional music through different techniques including technology and other instruments. Non-verbal participants will be encouraged to make choices,

both personally and musically using visual aids, picture communication systems and a coloured notation system called Figurenotes used for

composition.

Hear My Music practitioners specialise in the creation of new music with individuals who traditionally may struggle

to be heard or have autonomy over their choices.

There will also be a collaborative element to the week where the creative output

from all Mull Fiddle Week participants will be included and woven together in a shared performance at the end of the week. This may need to be

done through pre-recorded material or video-link-up but there might also be the chance of an in-person performance on Mull on the Friday.

Music Sessions

for

Young people with additional and complex support needs

9th-13th August, Oban and Mull

Who should I contact?

To find out more about the sessions [click here](#) contact laura_mandleberg@hotmail.com

If you would like to speak on the phone about specific access challenges please contact Emily on 07890 512824 or emily@hearmymusic.org.uk

Participant-led music sessions for 5-26 year olds run by specialist practitioners from **Hear My Music**, exploring traditional music through different techniques including technology and other instruments



Robert in lockdown

ROBERT ROBERTSON

robert.d.robertson@hotmail.co.uk



You wait a year and a half for a gig, go to bed the night before like a child at Christmas, then wake up to hear the wind howling down the street and the rain pelting against your bedroom window.

What can be more Scottish than that? Well, perhaps going out of your first international tournament in 23 years having only scored one goal... but the less said about that the better.

The rain belted down all day last Thursday but it certainly did not dampen the spirits of the over 1,500 revellers – many of whom had travelled from various parts of Scotland for their first taste of live music in what feels like an age.

All seated at tables, two metres apart, the energy from the crowd manifested itself in actions like brollies being held aloft and moved up and down – rather than dancing or jumping around. This new kind of energy did not go unnoticed by anyone on stage.

Kinnaris Quintet and Breabach both came offstage totally thrilled and also quite emotional after playing for their first live audience in so long. I felt similarly emotional.

Despite the rain coming lashing in between the stage roof and the lighting truss (and the front two metres of the stage subsequently resembling the Clyde), we managed to stay relatively dry. My guitar pedals were covered in a see-through plastic bag in order that I didn't electrocute myself!



The Tide Lines lads during a brief moment when the rain held off and allowed a photograph of the fanzone on Glasgow Green.

A few years ago, a gig in these conditions would have been a pretty miserable experience. I've played a few of them in my time. But such was the excitement of audience, artists, and stage crew, just to be back doing what we all love, the whole night was full of nothing but joy.

As for Tide Lines, it was our first chance to play the material from our latest album live – despite the fact it was released as long ago as last May. It was lovely to hear people singing along with the new songs and being able to thank them in person for their support.

We now await nervously to see what the coming months will bring in terms of lifting of restrictions, but no matter what happens, I don't think many of us will forget the feeling of hearing a live crowd

cheer after many long months.

On an entirely different note, congratulations are in order in this week's column to Anda Campbell from Bunessan who was honoured last weekend (alongside Peter Bruce and Malcolm Ross) by the National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs at their annual Honours Celebration which was held virtually this year.

There is a fantastic interview with Anda and Iain Cathcart still up on Facebook as part of the event which is well worth watching. Both men are sitting in Anda's conservatory overlooking the beautiful Bunessan Bay. Knowing that conservatory as I do, I would hazard a guess there were a few drams enjoyed after that interview – and deservedly so after a life time of dedication to Scottish Dance Music.

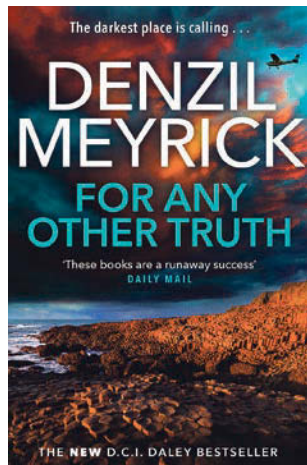
Denzil delighted as DCI novel tops bestseller lists

Campbeltown author Denzil Meyrick is 'delighted' that his latest DCI Daley thriller has become one of the UK's fastest selling books.

Released earlier this month, For Any Other Truth flew to the top of the Amazon audio-book bestsellers' list ahead of new books from the likes of Lee Child, Barack Obama and Stephen King.

The Kindle edition also became an instant bestseller on that platform while the print edition went straight on to Waterstones' bestseller lists and sold out three times in one day on Amazon.

The book is the ninth instalment in Denzil's DCI Daley series set in Kinloch, a fictional town based on Campbeltown.



For Any Other Truth by Denzil Meyrick.

When a light aircraft crash-lands at Machrie airport, DCI

Jim Daley and his colleague Brian Scott rush to the scene, but it soon becomes clear that both occupants of the plane were dead before take-off.

Meanwhile in Kinloch, fisherman Hamish is unwittingly dragged into danger when he witnesses something he shouldn't, and hotel manager Annie is beginning to suspect her new boss may not be as he first appeared.

And just as Chief Superintendent Carrie Symington thinks she has finally escaped the sins of her past, she finds herself caught in an even deadlier trap.

As the action spills across the sea to County Antrim – all under the scrutiny of the security service – the search is on for any other truth.

What's on at Oban Cinema



THIS WEEKEND

Friday 2 July

Dogtanian U	12:15/14:30
Fast & Furious 9 12A	12:30/16:00/19:30
Peter Rabbit 2 U	16:45
The Father 12A	19:15

Saturday 3 July

Dogtanian U	12:15/14:30
Fast & Furious 9 12A	12:30/16:00/19:30
Peter Rabbit 2 U	16:45
The Father 12A	19:15

Sunday 4 July

Dogtanian U	12:15/14:30
Fast & Furious 9 12A	12:30/16:00/19:30
Peter Rabbit 2 U	16:45
The Father 12A	19:15



EVENT CINEMA FUNNY GIRL: THE MUSICAL

Captured live in 2018, *Funny Girl* is semi-biographical, based on the life and career of Broadway star, film actress and comedienne Fanny Brice (a role made famous by Barbara Streisand on Broadway and in the 1968 film adaptation), and her stormy relationship with entrepreneur and gambler Nick Arnstein.

Showing Thursday 15 July at 19:30

obanphoenix.com 01631 562905

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MONDAY: 8am-12pm Breakfast show with Stephen
12-3pm Lunch with Bob G
4.45pm-5pm Talking Papers
5pm-7pm Drive Times with Marcus
7pm-8pm Highland Fling with Rosemary
8pm-9pm Calum McLuckies Show
9pm David Cullen Show

TUESDAY: 8am-10am Breakfast Show with Stephen
10am-12.30pm Ken Hunter
1pm-3pm Macky on FM
3pm-5pm Mental Musings with Mer & Vicky
5pm-7pm Drive Times with Bob G
7pm-8pm Highest Praise with Stuart Chalmers
8pm-9pm Scottish Sounds with Archie Cameron

WEDNESDAY: 8am-11am Breakfast Show with Stephen
11am-1pm Comfort Zone with Lesley
1pm-3pm Doug in the afternoon
4pm-7pm Drive Times with Campbell
7pm-9pm Country meets Rock N Roll with Len
9pm Gordon's Grooves

THURSDAY: 8am-11am Breakfast Show with Andy & Sarah
11am-2pm Lunch Show with Steve
3pm-7pm Drive Time with Stephen
7pm-9pm Christine's Collections
9pm-10pm Ann's Ceilidh
10pm Margo Till Midnight

FRIDAY: 8am-10am Breakfast The Small & Tall Show
10am-1pm Brunch Show with The One
1pm-1.15pm Talking Papers
1.15pm-2pm Drivetimes
2pm-3pm Sports View with the Dream Team
3pm-4pm Country Meets Country with Jackie Craig
4pm-6.45pm Evening Show with Peter Rainnie
6.45pm-7pm Oban Pride on the Waves with Jay & Crystal
7pm-8pm Breakfast Show with Stephen
8pm-10pm Saturday Morning Live with Linda
10pm Jukebox Jamboree with Ken Mc
11pm Sports View with the Dream Team

SATURDAY: 8am-10am Sports View with Archie Darling
10am-1pm Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
1pm-3pm Sunday Morning with Breege
3pm-6pm Sunday Brunch with Stephen
6pm-7pm New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch
7pm-8pm Drum & Bass with Graham.

SUNDAY: 8am-10am Sports View with Archie Darling
10am-1pm Evening Show with Dave Hobbs
1pm-3pm Sunday Morning with Breege
3pm-6pm Sunday Brunch with Stephen
6pm-7pm New Country Show with Dave & Murdoch
7pm-8pm Drum & Bass with Graham.

Kintyre is purrfect place for Conspiracy of Cats author

by Hannah O'Hanlon
editor@campbeltowncourier.co.uk



Author Bev Cox penned her debut novel in France during lockdown.

Reports of 'big cat' sightings in the West Highlands have consistently appeared in The Oban Times' columns throughout the paper's history.

Perhaps that is what enticed Bev Cox, author of new novel Cats of Conspiracy, to relocate from rural France, where she lived for five years, to the Sound of Kintyre.

Edinburgh-born Bev penned the thriller, her first novel, while still living on the Continent with her husband Ian before the couple's return to Scotland.

Set in Africa, Conspiracy of Cats not only features domestic, furry felines but also wild, ferocious big cats, and offers the reader an exciting escape and sometimes shocking journey into a world of murder, mystery and magic.

Without letting the cat out of the bag, there is one dramatic scene that will undoubtedly shock readers but, on the whole, Conspiracy of Cats is an easy-going read and may even elicit a few laughs.

Bev revealed that writing the book – due to be released

later this summer under the pen name B C Harris – served as a coping mechanism while living in one of the world's strictest Covid-19 lockdowns.

With Bev feeling increasingly isolated and homesick, unable to sleep at night and even fearing fortnightly trips to shops for groceries, Ian suggested she wrote a story she'd told him years before.

He thought writing could be a distraction, something to take Bev's mind off the pandemic, and he was right.

Overlooking her beautiful garden in France, Bev disappeared into her imagination to rediscover characters she'd dreamed up years ago.

Within a few months, these characters had come to life as Conspiracy of Cats began to take shape.

The author dedicated between six and eight hours a day, almost every day, to perfecting the book, transporting herself to the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania where the supernatural murder mystery is set.

Although Bev and Ian spent a month in South Africa seven years ago, the writer's knowledge of Kilimanjaro was limited so she extensively researched the Maasai people, their culture, the commerce of the Kilimanjaro area and Tanzania in general.

Less than three months later, the first draft of the novel was finished.

'I literally couldn't type quickly enough to get it all out,' Bev said. 'Writing this story saved me from depression and undoubtedly saved Ian too, as

he managed to get the real me back.'

Originally describing herself as a reader rather than a writer, Bev found she really enjoyed the therapeutic writing process and now describes herself as a committed author.

Since completing Conspiracy of Cats, Bev has worked on several other stories.

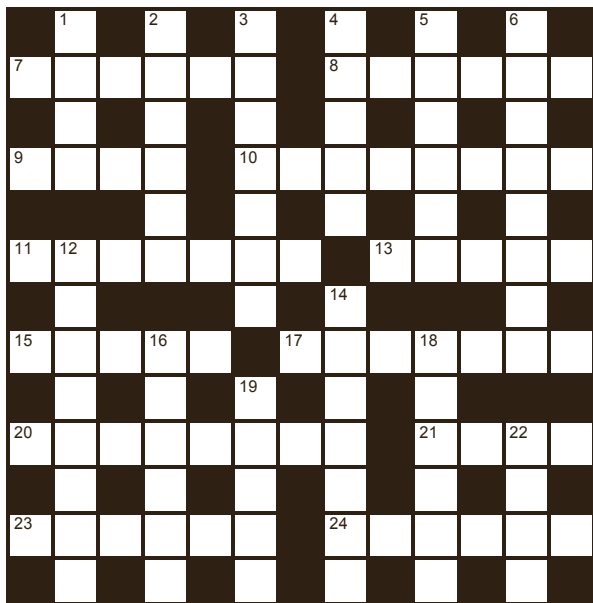
Before last Christmas, she finished writing Making Sacrifices. Set between Edinburgh and Exmoor, it has its own cast of characters and is now almost ready for submission.

And she has now started writing another murder mystery, The Accidental Assassin, a tale about a young woman who makes a career change from carer to contract killer.

'I want to keep writing for my younger self,' Bev explained. 'I never had the time when I was young.'

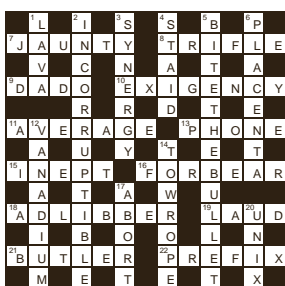
'I also want to write for my husband, because he believes in me, and for my daughter, so I can leave something of myself behind.'

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Linking verb (6)
 - 8 Walking on air (6)
 - 9 Scrape (4)
 - 10 Appendix discussion (8)
 - 11 Resistance to change (7)
 - 13 Plunge (5)
 - 15 Worry (5)
 - 17 Bashfulness (7)
 - 20 Ballpark figure (8)
 - 21 Wise one (4)
 - 23 Deliverer of cold cubes (6)
 - 24 Antediluvian (3-3)
- Down**
- 1 Brother (4)
 - 2 Jet (6)
 - 3 Dish served on toast (7)
 - 4 Linked table and chairs (5)
 - 5 Leveler of ground (6)
 - 6 Assiduous (8)
 - 12 Paragon (8)
 - 14 The boss (7)
 - 16 Black mark (6)
 - 18 A thing of great value (6)
 - 19 Street-smart (5)
 - 22 Stage part (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



Sun rises on Iain's labour of love album

Emerging singer-songwriter Iain Wilson releases his debut album this month as a labour of love, writes Kathie Griffiths.

Holding On 'Til Sunrise is to be released on Friday July 9 and is a window into Iain's soul as he addresses the emotional turmoil mental health can bring to an individual.

Produced, recorded and engineered by Keith Morrison at Wee Studio on the Isle of Lewis, the album is heavily influenced by '80s style synth, infused with a more current pop sound and Iain's own distinctive vocal and guitar playing.

The title, Holding on 'Til Sunrise, is a lyric taken from the last track of the album, Sunrise, which takes the opportunity to tell the story about the continuous struggles that mental health issues bring. With this final track, there is the hope and light that comes with the sunrise, the dawning of a new day and new promise.



Iain Wilson's debut album is out on July 9.

Iain wanted to make sure the album ultimately offered promise and hope, the tracks build through the turmoil and the darkness and move towards a more positive and brighter outcome evoking an emotional journey from start to finish.

He said: 'I find a lot of comfort in song writing; it gives me the opportunity to explore emotions I might not otherwise have had an outlet

for. It's an invaluable platform for me where I can express my feelings and explore the challenging emotions I am feeling. I am, however, so aware that not everyone has an outlet such as this so I wanted this debut body of work to help in some way to spread awareness of mental health challenges but also to try and normalise talking about the issues that so many are facing.'

Joining Iain on the album

is Keith Morrison on keys/synth; Ruaridh Neil on drums; Abigail Pryde on violin and vocals; Nick Hamilton on electric guitar; and Peat and Diesel's Boydy on electric guitar.

The nine-track body of work has been 18 months in the making.

Holding on 'Til Sunrise will be available to stream and download on all digital platforms.



Swallow the Sea are just one of the great acts lined up for the summer extravaganza.

Music, dance and theatre adds up to summer of fun

The beautiful gardens of Armadale Castle will provide the stunning venue for SEALL's 2021 summer programme.

More than 30 events in music, theatre, dance, literature and children's shows, will take place this year between Saturday July 5, and September 11. All events will be held outdoors under canvas and the programme is designed to celebrate the unique maritime heritage of Skye, Raasay and Lochalsh.

The 2021 summer programme is supported by Creative Scotland and the Year of Coasts and Waters 20/21 event fund and will be part of a nationwide celebration showcasing Scotland's unique coastal heritage and encouraging its protection for future generations.

Paul Bush OBE, director of events at VisitScotland, said: 'We are delighted to be supporting the SEALL 2021 Summer Programme as part of the Year of Coasts and Waters 20/21. Scotland offers the perfect stage to showcase the arts and SEALL's summer events will celebrate the unique culture of Skye and its relationship with coasts and waters.'

Programme highlights are music from Karine Polwart, Charlie McKerron, Dàimh, Blue Rose Code, Adam Sutherland and Rant. There is theatre from the Walking Theatre company; puppetry shows and workshops for the

children; spectacular dance from Oceanalover; and aerial performances on five-metre-high swings.

Also heading to Armadale in August is a three-day literature event with a visit from the Story Wagon – a creative reading and writing space for adults and children. Alongside this, guest authors Gavin Francis and Alastair McIntosh will talk about their books, and the 'remarkable' poem, And so Somersault, by Skye's Gaelic poet Myles Campbell will be the focal point of a unique event

'We hope this will give audiences the confidence to return...'

in English and Gaelic, together with a panel discussion and the launch of a Skye-made poetry pamphlet.

SEALL creative director Marie Lewis said: 'During our long absence from live events we have been looking at ways in which to continue our work and keep our audiences, staff, volunteers and performers safe.'

'It was our intention to launch the new-look Skye Festival this year, which would have taken place over 10 days at the beginning of July, but we decided against it. Instead, we took the programme and spread it across three summer months.

'We were determined not to miss out on the theme of coasts and waters and many of our events have a strong coast and waters angle.'

Throughout the programme, social distancing will remain in place and tickets for the seated concerts are being sold in blocks of two, four and six benches or tables with a few single seats available.

Marie added: 'Safety is our main concern and, in order to host in-person events in line with the Scottish Government Strategic Framework for Covid-19, we decided to play it as safe as possible and put on socially-distanced outdoor events with enhanced health and safety procedures in place.'

'We have reduced our audience numbers, arranged for socially distanced seating on benches and tables, one-way systems and hygiene stations and, thanks to funding from the SCVO Adapt and Thrive Fund, purchased a massive stretch tent wherein all our concerts will be held.'

'We hope this will give audiences the confidence to return to live events over the summer. We are certainly ready for it.'

'Tickets for all our July events are on sale now and August will be following soon. All we need now is the good weather.'

For details of the summer programme, tickets and to download a brochure, visit www.seall.co.uk

M'ALBA

MY ALBA

DIARDAIN 1 An t-Iuchar / THURSDAY 1 July

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 An t-Eilean/From Skye with love
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/ History Shorts
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 Fuine
- 21.00 Bruadair a' Bhais
- 22.00 Seòid a' Chidsin – The Kitchen Coves
- 22.30 Slighean Sgoile an t-Saoghail/ Most Dangerous Ways to School
- 23.20 Dealbh is Slighe
- 23.30 Mach a Seo!

DIHAOINE 2 An t-Iuchar/ FRIDAY 2 July

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 An Là – NEWS
- 19.25 NEW Dàn
- 19.30 Machair
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/ History Shorts
- 20.00 Tir is Teanga
- 20.30 An Lot/An Glasadh
- 21.00 Is Mise an Teanga/The Great Book of Gaelic
- 21.45 Binneas/Na Trads
- 22.00 Eilbheas/ Elvis
- 23.00 Cuirm@Celtic
- 23.50 Dhan Uisge

DISATHAIRNE 3 An t-Iuchar/ SATURDAY 3 July

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 17:45 An Là – NEWS
- 18.00 Farpaisean Chon-Chaorach / Sheepdogs Trials
- 19.00 Is Mise an Teanga/The Great Book of Gaelic
- 19.45 Binneas – Na Trads
- 20.00 Tir is Teanga
- 20.30 Trusach- Sgeulachdan a' Glasaidh/Life

- in Lockdown
- 21.00 Cuirm @ Celtic
- 22.00 Slighean Sgoile an t-Saoghail/ Most dangerous ways to school
- 22.50 Dealbh is Slighe
- 23.00 Ceòl Duthchasach/Ken Burn's Country Music
- 00.50 Dhan Uisge

DIDÒMHAICH 4 An t-Iuchar/ SUNDAY 4 July

- 16.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 18.15 An Là – NEWS
- 18.30 Seachd Là/ News Review
- 19.30 Slighe Anndra
- 19.55 Dàn
- 20.00 Fuine/Baking Show
- 20.30 Dreach Ùr
- 21.00 Cumhachd a'Yoik/The Power of Yoik
- 22.00 Cuirm@Celtic
- 23.00 Eilbheas/Elvis

DILUAIN 5 An t-Iuchar/ MONDAY 5 July

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Puirt-adhair/Highland Airports
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/History Shorts
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 Moladh na Maighdinn
- 21.00 Trusadh – Bardachd Ghaidhlig/Gaelic Poetry
- 22.00 Julie Fowlis / Ceòl Aig Baile
- 22.30 Rocky Ros Muc/Sean Mannion

DIMÀIRT 6 An t-Iuchar/ TUESDAY 6 July

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 An t-Eilean/From Skye with love
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language

- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/ History Shorts
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 Slighe Chladach Fìobha/Fife Coastal Path
- 21.00 Uisge ar Batha
- 22.00 Trusadh – Bardachd Ghaidhlig/Gaelic Poetry
- 23.00 Dàn
- 23.05 Machair
- 23.30 Slighe Anndra
- 23.50 Dhan Uisge

DICIADAIN 7 An t-Iuchar/ WEDNESDAY 7 July

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 Puirt-adhair/Highland Airports
- 19.30 Speaking our Language
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/ History Shorts
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 Trusadh. Sgeulachdan a' Ghlasaidh (Life in Lockdown)
- 21.00 Gothenburg 83
- 22.00 Mach a Seo!
- 22.30 Julie Fowlis/Ceòl aig Baile
- 23.00 Bruadair a Bhais/A Dream of Death

DIARDAIN 8 An t-Iuchar/ THURSDAY 8 July

- 17.00 Prògraman Chloinne – Children's programming
- 19.00 An t-Eilean/From Skye With Love
- 19.30 Speaking Our Language
- 19.55 Earrann Eachdraidh/ History Shorts
- 20.00 An Là – NEWS
- 20.30 Fuine
- 21.00 Murchadh MacPhàrlain:Bard Mhealboist
- 22.00 Air an Rathad/On the Road
- 22.30 Slighean Sgoile an t-Saoghail/Most Dangerous Ways to School
- 23.20 Dealbh is Slighe
- 23.30 Mach a Seo!



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OT

Clipper yacht training for young people based in Oban

This summer will see Oban used as a home port for a project that could well see a local young person securing a berth for one of sport's most famous challenges – the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race, writes Mark Entwistle.

The new campaign Our Isles and Oceans was launched in Scotland last month, with funded programmes for young people affected by the Covid pandemic and lockdown.

The cornerstone of the project is a partnership with the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race.

Through this partnership, Our Isles and Oceans and the Clipper Race will be providing funded sailing programmes for young people to learn to sail on the west coast of Scotland.

Our Isles and Oceans is now calling for 18- to 35-year-olds



The Clipper Round the World Race training yacht will be based in Oban this summer and young people are encouraged to apply for courses.

Photograph: Matthew Dickens/ imagecomms

the first Our Isles and Oceans programme to launch will take place on a Clipper Race yacht.

Under the guidance of a Clipper Race training skipper, each group of recruits will be challenged to learn new practical skills, develop their self-belief and work as a team.

In addition, 10 of these recruits will then be offered the opportunity to apply for an additional four weeks of intensive ocean racing training to be held at the Clipper Race Training HQ in Gosport, Hampshire.

If successful, they would receive a funded place on board the 70-foot, Our Isles and Oceans team entry which will be competing in the Clipper 2023-24 Race.

Each recruit would complete one leg of the Clipper Race circumnavigation.

With young people being particularly impacted this past year, Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, record-breaking sailor and co-founder of the Clipper Race, hopes this new programme will make a positive change in the successful candidates' lives.

Sir Robin says the skills and confidence built during sailing can be transferred to other aspects of life.

'Sailing is so much more than just a sport or pastime as it gives you experience that is as useful in the workplace as it is on board a yacht,' he said.

'The sport develops self-confidence and self-esteem which is so important to restore following the pandemic.'

Recruitment for the Our Isles and Oceans campaign is now open and applicants aged 18-35 can apply through www.ourislesandoceans.co.uk

to apply to its initiative, as the pandemic has had a negative impact on this age group's education and employment opportunities over the last 15 months.

The organisation plans on basing its 68ft Dubois-

designed racing yacht in Oban for three five-week blocks over the next 18 months.

The yacht will be used to train and qualify 120 young people with two sailing qualifications.

The Clipper Race is the only event of its kind which offers

everyday people the opportunity to train to become ocean racing sailors.

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Around the markets

United Auctions Stirling (Thursday 24th June 2021) sold 3080 prime sheep comprising of 1320 spring lambs to average 236.31ppk and 367 prime hogs selling to average 178.44ppk also 1393 ewes and rams. New Season Lambs (1320) – Meadows of Ballied (BTex) £140.00 x2, £139.00, £136.50 & £132.00; Harviesmailing (Tex) £139.00; Pathhead (Tex) £136.00; Little Raith (Tex) £134.00 & £133.00; Kinloch (Cont) £131.00; Merkins (Cont) £129.00; Grange of Elcho (Suf) £130.00; Little Raith (Suf) £128.00 & £127.00; Merryhill (Suf) £127.00; Little Raith (Suf) £126.00; Powblack (Hamp) £111.00; Bangour (Char) £96.00; Ardgate (Mule) £93.50; Myreside (DSS) £92.50.

(BTex) 274.00ppk; Harviesmailing (Tex) 273.00ppk; Carriston (Tex) 271.00ppk; Wester Middleton (Tex) 270.00ppk x2; Carrat & Floors (Tex) 268.00ppk; Little Raith (Suf) 270.00ppk; Kinloch (Suf) 262.00ppk; Grange of Elcho (Suf) 260.00ppk; Myreside (DSS) 232.00ppk; Bangour (Char) 226.00ppk; Ardgate (Mule) 213.00ppk; Powblack (Hamp) 195.00ppk.

Ewes (1393) – Meadows of Ballied (Tex) £178.00; Binn & Carriston (Tex) £170.00; Carriston (Tex) £168.00 & £164.00; Carse of Trowan (Tex) £163.00; Catcune (TexX) £159.00; Dippen (TexX) £158.00; Wester Balgair (TexX) £152.00; South Dundonald (BTex) £158.00; West Lundie (BTex) £132.00; Newton of Collessie & Carriston (Cont) £150.00; Catcune (Suf) £137.00; Flass (Suf) £134.00; Gillbank (Suf) £132.00;

New Season Lambs (1320) – South Dundonald (BTex) 293.00ppk, 291.00ppk, 287.00ppk & 283.00ppk; Meadows of Ballied

Catcune (SufX) £129.00 & £128.00; Carse of Trowan (SufX) £128.00; Lilyburn (BFL) £136.00 & £126.00; Carroch (BFL) £120.00; Whitehouse (Zwa) £121.00; Quixwood (Mule) £115.00; Floors (Mule) £112.00; Quixwood & Carse of Trowan (Mule) £111.00; West Lecropt (Hamp) £108.00; Wester Bleaton (Chev) £100.00; Mid Seat (Chev) £94.00; Carroch (Chev) £92.00; Claish (Chev) £90.00; Newmains (Lley) £100.00; Flass (Lley) £98.00; Newmains (Lley) £95.00; Drimsynie (BF) £94.00; Merkins (BF) £93.00; Burnhead (BF) £91.00; Easter Deans, Peattieshill & Witches Craig (BF) £90.00. Tups – Flass (Suf) £154.00; Lenaig (Suf) £116.00; Colony (Chev) £133.00; Glenlyon (Chev) £126.00; Abercairny (Chev) £114.00; Forrit (Lley) £126.00; Wester Campsie (Cross) £130.00; Newmains (Cross) £126.00; Coldrochie (Lley) £126.00; Shield (BF) £85.00.

Agritourism opportunities

Agritourism and selling farm produce direct presents opportunities for many of Scotland's farmers and crofters to be in control of their own economic destiny at a time when businesses will have to adapt in a new post-Brexit world, writes Caroline Millar, chair of NFU Scotland's East Central Region, in a guest blog now up on the National Framing Union of Scotland's website.



Caroline Millar

For those farmers and crofters keen to engage with the public, agritourism provides an income stream which complements and adds value to farm produce and is one route to securing a sustainable future for the family farm.

However, Caroline writes: 'We do not have the necessary data on Scottish agritourism to provide an overall summary of the impact of the sector.'

'The aggregated picture is essential as we endeavour to make our case as farmers and crofters for policy and capital investment support to help maximise the growth of the sector for the benefit not only of those in agriculture but the whole rural economy.'

'Without the answer to "What is the economic impact of agritourism in Scotland?" we cannot move forward in a more dynamic way which will grow the sector faster.'

She concludes by encouraging farmers and crofters to take part in a national survey to will help shape future support for businesses in farm retail or agritourism: 'If you are currently in agritourism or thinking about it, please take part in this census.'

'It will not only benefit your business in the future but will benefit your fellow farmers and crofters too.'

The census can be completed here: tinyurl.com/agritourismsurvey3

Read Caroline's full blog at: Agritourism Opportunities – Caroline Millar Guest Blog (nfus.org.uk)

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Source: YouGov 2018



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

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

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

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description
21/02946/FUL	Glenmamie, Lochailort	Erection of house
21/02903/FUL	East Park Bunroy, Roy Bridge	Proposed 2-bedroom holiday letting unit
21/02153/FUL	Land 95M NE of Kilchoan Farmhouse, Inverie, Knoydart	Replacement building and associated works
21/02918/FUL	Commando Memorial Spean Bridge	Extension to Memorial Garden
21/02926/S42	Site of Former Primary School Zetland Avenue Upper Achintore, Fort William	Application under Section 42 to Modification of Planning Condition No.16 of planning reference 18/05402/FUL
21/00398/FUL	Moorings Hotel Banavie Fort William	Reconfiguration of and extension to hotel including reconfiguration and extension to car park
21/03004/FUL	The Steading Camas Inas Acharacle	Amendment to planning permission 20/02274/FUL - Erection of boathouse with self-contained residential unit above
21/03044/FUL	Land 50M NE of Mill House Drimin	Erection of two houses
21/02978/FUL	Land 30M NW Of Mo Dhachaidh Ormsaigbeg Kilchoan	Erection of house (amendment to planning permission 20/04433/FUL)
21/02783/FUL	Annalore Spean Bridge	Erection of house (amendment to Planning Permission 21/00713/FUL)

Time period for comments is 14 days & 21 days for 21/02918/FUL
ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

Proposal of Application Notice
Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Scotland)) Regulations 2008 &
The Town and Country Planning (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020
Public Exhibition to be held in respect of proposed Creag Dhubh Substation.

National Development – Erection of electricity substation comprising platform area, control building, associated plant and infrastructure, ancillary facilities, access track(s), laydown area(s) and landscape works.

A proposal of application notice (PAN) has been submitted to Argyll & Bute Council. In light of COVID-19 restrictions consultation is required to be undertaken virtually. The following event and information sources have been set up:

- Virtual Village Hall Consultation: 14th July 2021 10am-1pm & 5-7pm
15th July 2021 10am-1pm & 5-7pm
29th July 2021 10am-1pm & 5-7pm
- Join and find more information on the project website:
<https://www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/creag-dhubh-dalmally-275kv-connection/>

Interested parties are invited to participate in these events. These will enable a real time opportunity to replace the usual face to face public event, and also enable offline communication if preferred. Comments and queries can be made for 14 days after the events.

The project website and information postcards to be provided to the community will provide more information on the project, comments on these are also encouraged and can be made throughout the consultation period.

Comments should not be submitted to the Council at this time as they will not be taken into consideration. Statements made to the prospective applicant and their representatives are not representations to Argyll & Bute Council. If a planning application is subsequently submitted, then there will be an opportunity to make a direct representation to the Council at that time.

Further information or queries can be requested by contacting:
helen.batey@sse.com

First Registration of a Croft

Allina Langley has registered her croft 5 Cornaigmore, Tیره on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 8th March 2022.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C7772.

Proposed apportionment of a Common Grazings

Mr Robert Gregor Cameron is applying for an apportionment of part of the Uisken Common Grazings extending to 37.74ha for the purpose of woodland creation.

Written comments from any shareholder or owner of the said common grazings (which may be made public) to: Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness, IV3 8NW - info@crofting.gov.scot by 29/07/21.

CROFTING COMMISSION COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD DECROFTING APPLICATIONS

1. I. C MacDonald & J MacDonald, 1 Cornaigmore, 0.050 ha, Site for a dwelling house. (110877)

2. I. Campbell, Brolas, 0.151ha, Site for a dwelling house. (109145)

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 30/07/21 at info@crofting.gov.scot / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

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Public Exhibition:

Cruachan Power Station Expansion proposal

Dates: Thursday 1st July to Friday 23rd July (3 weeks)

Location: www.cruachanexpansion.com

DRAX Group is proposing an extension to its existing pumped storage power station at Cruachan, Loch Awe, Argyll & Bute.

We are holding a public exhibition in order to provide the local communities and interested parties with the opportunity to view the early-stage proposals, ask questions and leave feedback.

Further exhibitions will be held later in 2021 prior to submission of the application to Scottish Ministers for determination.

As a result of ongoing uncertainty surrounding the holding of public events during the COVID-19 pandemic, this exhibition will be held on-line via the project website.

Copies of the exhibition boards and other materials will be available for viewing and download via the exhibition at www.cruachanexpansion.com

For questions about the project please contact:

Email: getintouch@cruachanexpansion.com

Telephone: 0141 352 2360

Address: Stantec UK Ltd

9 George Square, Glasgow, G2 1DY

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Argyll and Bute Council

PLANNING

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

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013 REGULATION 20(1) ADVERT STATEMENT
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997 (AS AMENDED), RELATED PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

Ref. No.	Proposal	Site Address
21/00819/PP	Conversion and extension of existing stone outbuilding to form dwellinghouse	Ruin West Of Ferry House, Bonawe, Oban, Argyll And Bute, PA37 1RL
21/00965/PP	Erection of dwellinghouse, fuel store building, chicken coop, polytunnel, potting shed and fencing, siting of shepherd's hut for holiday letting purposes including formation of access and installation of septic tank	Land North West Of Ar-Dachaidh, Bunnass, Isle Of Mull, Argyll And Bute
21/00947/PPP	Site for the erection of dwellinghouse	Land South East Of Machrie Rockside, Kilchoman, 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, Lochgilhead, 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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Source: YouGov 2018



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GOLDEN WEDDING

MELLES - CAMPBELL - On July 9, 1971 at Newbattle Parish Church, by the Late Rev. McGhee, Janet to Iain. Present address: Oaklea, Erray Road, Tobermory.

DEATHS

CAMPBELL - Peacefully at Lorn and Islands Hospital on June 23, 2021. Mary (Molly) Campbell in her 97th year, beloved sister of Katie and the late Archie Campbell and much loved aunt and great aunt and a good friend to many. Funeral service will take place at Appin Parish Church on Thursday, July 8, 2021, 12.00 noon, burial thereafter at Old Appin cemetery. Family flowers only please. Regrettably the funeral is by invitation only due to current restrictions.

McALEER - Suddenly but peacefully at home on June 22, 2021, aged 92, Cecilia (Sheila) McAleer, beloved wife of the late Joe, dear mother to David and the late John. May her soul rest in peace.

SMYLIE - Suddenly, but peacefully, at Lorn and Islands Hospital, after a short illness, on June 22, 2021, Douglas Smylie, aged 76 years, of 8 Coille Mhinnean, Furnace, Argyll. Much loved husband of Alma. Adored Dad of Maureen, John and Aileen. Much respected father in law of David, Trisha and Surry. Cherished Papa of Matthew, Rachael and Kieran. Dear brother, uncle and cousin to all the family. A good neighbour, dear friend and popular work colleague to many. Much respected member of the local and wider communities. A private family

service was held at Cumlodden Parish Church on Monday, June 28, 2021, followed by interment at Kilevin Cemetery, Crarae, Sadly missed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

BROWN - The family - Iain, Liz, Margaret and Patsi, wish to thank most sincerely all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind expression of sympathy following their sad loss. For their attendance at the open air service at Duror Cemetery on June 22 and to everyone who lined the route from St. Munda's Church. All cards, visits and offers of help were much appreciated. Grateful thanks to doctors and staff at Ballachulish Medical Practice, the carers who attended to Mary over the years, and Abbeyfield for their kindness

to Mary, and a special mention to Anna. Sincere thanks to Rev. Charles MacKinnon for a wonderful and poignant service, also to the Laroch Bar and Restaurant for the buffet afterwards. Special thanks to Jamie at Manson and McBeath for his compassion and professionalism which helped make a sad time go without a hitch. His care and attention to detail was appreciated, and also to McDonald Bros for the floral arrangements. The retiral collection was taken for Abbeyfield, Ballachulish.

MEMORIAMS

BROWN - Treasured memories of my wonderful parents, Lachlan, died July 2, 1972, Annie, died July 4, 2002. Beautiful memories.

- Their daughter Christina, Dunoon, grandchildren, Alison, Devon and Ewan, USA.

CAMERON - In loving memory of our dear mum and nana Annette, who passed away June 30, 2013 and our dad and papa Ian, on April 2, 1997. Always in our thoughts Forever in our hearts.

- Mairi, Margaret, John and families.

CRAIG - Remembering my dear husband Johnnie, who passed away on July 2, 2017. Your photo stands in pride of place

A lovely smile lights up your face

You always seem to be so near How I wish Johnnie you were still here.

- Love Isobel xx

CRAIG - Precious memories of a loving dad and Papay, Johnnie, who died July 2, 2017. Our hearts still ache in sadness And secret tears will flow What it meant to lose you No one can ever know.

- Love Shirley, Davy, Nicole and Kian xx

CRAIG - In memory of a very special brother-in-law, John. No longer in our lives to share But in our hearts you are always there.

Simply the best.

- Moira, George and family.

FYFE - Remembering a friend and brother-in-law Eoin of Kinlochleven, conscientious and loyal, who was taken from us on July 1, 2020.

From Iain, Balivanich, Benbecula.

MACINNES - Precious memories of my loving husband Eoghan (formerly of Isle of Luing), died July 2, 2006. Loved and remembered every day.

- Mairi, Strollamus.

TURNER - Treasured memories of Dennis, a beloved husband and dad, who died July 3, 1993.

Always in our thoughts

Forever in our hearts

- Elizabeth, Julie and Steven.

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Mull's online clan gathering boosts Maclean membership

by Sandy Neil
editor@obantimes.co.uk

Organisers say the Macleans' first virtual gathering last week has increased membership and interest in the clan and its ancestral lands on Mull.

Wherever and however isolated clan members were in the world during the Covid-19 pandemic, they could connect with their kinfolk and Mull via online videos of stories, music, talks, tours, interviews and quizzes. Access to the website remains free for everyone to enjoy until August 22.

'The covid pandemic, having forced the postponement of our 2022 gathering until 2023, led to us deciding to break with tradition and hold an extra virtual gathering this year, from June 22 to June 26, to remind us of our common bond of family and fellowship in these difficult times,' explained the Clan Maclean Association's (CMA) website.

The five-day gathering was topped and tailed by a welcome from the 28th clan chief Sir Lachlan Maclean of Duart and Morvern, plus a welcome song by Duncan Staffa MacLean and a farewell and thanks from the chief's elder son and heir, Malcolm Maclean Younger of Duart.

In between came many stories and storytellers, including Scot An Sgeulaiche telling of Eoghan a'Chinn Bheag (Ewan of the Little Head), and gripping tales of clan war like



The Chief welcomes clan members at the gathering on Mull in 2017.

the Battle of Traigh Ghruinneard (Gruinart Strand), told by BBC Alba broadcaster Brigadier John Macfarlane from Taynuilt. Dr Alasdair Whyte from Mull recited The Spartans of the North, a poem written by the clan's seanchaidh (bearer of old lore) Sorley MacLean for their 1992 International Gathering.

Presentations included those about great clansmen like Sir Harry Aubrey de Vere Maclean, commander of the Sultan of Morocco's Army and less praiseworthy ones such as Donald the spy, James the highwayman, Roderick the assassin, Buddy the mobster, Jack the 'super thief' and the Wild McLean Boys.

There's also a chat with whisky

experts Charlie and Hector MacLean and tours of the Isle of Mull Cheese Factory, Tobermory's Mull Museum and Duart Castle's private quarters given by the clan chief, who also updates on its restoration. Singer Dougie MacLean, composer of Caledonia, returns to his family croft and reminisces and the Maclean Rowers, Jamie, Ewan and Lachlan MacLean, relate their record-breaking row across the Atlantic.

Add to all this music from the chief's bagpiper Pipe Major Calum MacLean, Tobermory High School Pipe Band, five Maclean brothers called The Kilmartin Pipers, Isle of Mull Gaelic Choir and Junior Gaelic Choir, the charity Mull Music Makers and Mull musicians Sorren

Maclean and Hannah Fisher.

'Clan Farquharson did a virtual clan gathering and, being Clan Maclean, we have done it bigger and better – or at least we think,' said CMA president Anne Maclean of Dochgarroch. 'Our contributors stepped up to the plate, giving amazing content.'

'We made a decision we were not going to charge. We wanted it to be PR for Clan Maclean, Duart Castle and the Isle of Mull. We had more people viewing it than could possibly come to Mull – at least 3,000. We had an uptake in membership. It has drummed up enthusiasm for the 2023 gathering. I would like to continue to use online as a way to keep in contact with the clan and drum up interest.'

'I was a bit hesitant about the 'virtual' part,' said one Canadian attendee, Ian MacLean of Tidnish, Nova Scotia. 'It was far better than I dreamed. I loved it and admire all the hard work put into it by so many people. The one thing the virtual gathering did, that real gatherings don't allow, is for a person to experience all the events. And there were no midges virtually! It would be nice to see such virtual events in the 'mid-term' between in-person gatherings, but I suspect that is too much to expect of even the keenest volunteers.'

'You can't beat in-person gatherings for making connections with new or old friends.'

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Like the prodigal son, we think true life is out there somewhere. We seem to think that others are living more exciting and meaningful lives. We think if we are not checking the things off our bucket list, we will be disappointed at the end.



It seems that the two things most people have regrets about, if they do, is letting fear keep them from risking more and, most importantly, neglecting to spend the time it takes to love those whom God has given them.

Jesus makes it clear he will have neither of these regrets. Jesus knew that the hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the End. (John 13:1)

Jesus risked living by love all the way to a cross and poured his love into those whom God had given to him. It is one thing to claim to love everyone in general and another to risk pouring your life into a few – with all of their wonder and all of their blemishes.

Jesus then gives his beloved followers one primary instruction. Love one another as I have loved you.

Jim Cowal pens these simple, but true, lyrics:

When it's all been said and done
All my treasures will mean nothing
Only what I've done
For love's reward
Will stand the test of time.

Reverend Tom Telfer, Kilchrenan and Dalavich linked with Muckairn.

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Shinty round up

The 2021 Scottish Hydro Camanachd Cup competition is under way but the shinty schedule on Saturday June 26 was decimated as a result of covid issues.

South shinty Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup - first round Southern Section Inveraray P Lochaber P

Lochaber are yet to play this season and that run continues as their tie against Inveraray at the Winterton was postponed because of covid restrictions.

Ballachulish P Bute P

Ballachulish's meeting with Bute at Jubilee Park was postponed because of covid restrictions.

Mowi Senior League C

Oban Celtic P

An increase in covid cases in Oban led to the postponement of the match between Oban Celtic and Oban Camanachd at Mossfield.

This was to be the first Oban derby of the season but the game was called off early in the week.

Oban Celtic were the designated home side and they thanked supporters for their understanding. The club issued a statement confirming they had to take the difficult decision to suspend all activity for a week, with a review to be taken after that.

The statement went on to say that with the rise of covid in the area, and with several members affected either by isolation or awaiting test results, they felt it was in the best interests of members and the wider community to suspend all activities.

The statement concluded by urging everyone to follow government guidance and to consider others.

Both clubs are in Artemis Macaulay Cup first round action at Mossfield this Saturday



Action from Saturday's match between Aberdour and Glasgow Mid Argyll.

Photograph: Central Scotland Shinty.

with Oban Celtic taking on Ballachulish at noon and Oban Camanachd facing Bute at 3pm. Oban Celtic assistant manager Les Kinvig said: 'Last week's covid issues from within the club, which was mainly folk having to isolate, have cleared and thankfully everyone is ok which is the most important thing.'

'It was right to be cautious and we'll just have to monitor things closely for the rest of the week given the high number of cases in the area.'

'Hopefully Saturday's tie against Ballachulish goes ahead. Lennon Campbell has been receiving physio to help shake off his niggling injury, whilst David Hill is fit again as is Duncan MacDougall so we are looking forward to getting back into it.'

Oban Camanachd manager Stephen Sloss said: 'Having so few games is not doing us any favours, especially with a Camanachd Cup tie against Fort William on the horizon in a couple of weeks.'

'The boys need games on a Saturday.'

'Ourselves and Oban Celtic have the potential to reschedule this game and play mid-week though so hopefully we'll get the match fitted in soon.'

'Hopefully the tie against

Bute will go ahead. We have Keith MacMillan and Garry Lord available but Scott MacMillan is working away and Evan MacLellan might not be available.'

Lochside Rovers host the Lochaber second team in the HIS Sutherland Cup first round at Ganavan, whilst the Oban Celtic second team do not have a fixture.

Taynuilt will travel to the Winterton to take on the Inveraray second team.

Aberdour 0 Glasgow Mid Argyll 8

A strong first half performance earned Glasgow Mid Argyll an 8-0 victory over Aberdour in their 3pm throw-up at Silversands.

The surface was slippery for both sides but a sharper, fitter GMA side quickly settled into the game.

Former Oban Celtic player Ally McKerracher gave GMA the lead on three minutes with a well-worked goal. McKerracher found space at the back post where he slotted the ball into the bottom corner of the net.

McKerracher sent a volley just a couple of feet past the post soon after and it would have been a spectacular finish had it gone in.

GMA were moving the ball around nicely and Oliver MacRae netted on his left side to make it 2-0 on seven minutes.

McKerracher got his second on 35 minutes and, a couple of minutes later, Craig Anderson, who lined up in attack after starting the season at full centre, added his name to the scoresheet.

There was some good inter-play between the visiting forwards before Oliver MacRae got his second on 39 minutes and Craig Anderson got another a minute before the break to make it 6-0 at half-

time. Aberdour introduced Angus Thorburn, who was just back from his holidays, at half-time.

The GMA forward play was a joy to watch and Ally McKerracher completed his hat-trick a couple of minutes short of the hour.

Aberdour battled hard and stemmed the tide for a while but couldn't prevent James MacLeod from making it 8-0 10 minutes from time.

Mowi South League A Lochside Rovers P Col Glen P

Lochside Rovers' meeting with Col Glen at Ganavan was postponed because of covid concerns in Oban.

Taynuilt P Inveraray P

The clash between Taynuilt and the Inveraray second team at Taynuilt Sports Field will be rearranged because of covid restrictions.

Mowi South League B Aberdour 0 v Kyles Athletic 4

The Aberdour reserves and the Kyles Athletic reserves met for the second successive Saturday, this time in a noon throw-up at Silversands.

Kyles were 5-1 winners the previous weekend and they came out on top in this one too.

The first 45 minutes looked as if it might end up goal-less before full centre Innes MacDonald, who also netted the previous weekend, put the visitors in front on the stroke of half-time.

The goal boosted Kyles, and Cairn Limbert and Stewart Taylor also scored for the second successive Saturday on 62 and 68 minutes. David Martin rounded off the scoring three minutes from time.

A youthful Aberdour fared well in defence with Calum Murray, in particular, working hard.

Glasgow Mid Argyll P Tayforth P

The match between the



Glasgow Mid Argyll put eight past Aberdour at the weekend.

Photograph: Central Scotland Shinty.

Glasgow Mid Argyll reserves and Tayforth at Peterson Park was another covid cancellation.

Mowi Central League Lochaber 7 Ardnamurchan 2

David Langan scored five times as the Lochaber second team defeated Ardnamurchan 7-2 at Spean Bridge.

Gregor Cameron and Darris Riddle scored the others for the hosts with Sam MacKenzie and Seamus Buchanan countering for Ardnamurchan.

Kilmory P Oban Celtic P

The 2pm throw-up between Kilmory and the Oban Celtic second team at MacRae Park was postponed earlier in the week because of the rise of covid cases in Oban.

All throw-ups were at 2.30pm unless stated.

Women's Camanachd Association (WCA) shinty action

The 2021 Women's Camanachd Association shinty season is up and running with most of the fixtures taking place on Sunday June 27.

Clubs will play in an agreed one-off format incorporating regional groups to limit travel. These groups comprise of four senior leagues and three development divisions.

WCA Mowi North Senior League Glenurquhart 2 Strathglass 1

Hazel Hunter's double helped Glenurquhart defeat Strathglass 2-1 in their 10am throw-up at Drumnadrochit on Saturday June 26.

Morgan Redpath countered for neighbours Strathglass.

WCA Mowi West Senior League Ardnamurchan B 0

Ardnamurchan A 2

Roslyn Ritchie scored twice as Ardnamurchan A defeated Ardnamurchan B 2-0 in their 2pm throw-up at Strontian.

Skye Camanachd P Kinlochshiel P

The match between Skye Camanachd A and Kinlochshiel was brought forward to Friday June 25 at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

However, a covid concern within the Kinlochshiel club led to a postponement.

WCA Mowi North Senior League Lochaber P Badenoch B P

Lochaber's meeting with Badenoch B at Spean Bridge was postponed because of covid concerns.

Inverness 4 Lovat 4

Inverness and Lovat drew 4-4 in their 2pm throw-up at the Bught Park.

Katie McMillan scored all four Inverness goals, with Laura Gallagher's hat-trick and Jade Longworth's strike earning Lovat a draw.

Great effort from Oban's Glentress seven

Three teams from Oban set off for Peebles last weekend for their first mountain biking competition since Strathpuffer in February 2019.

Glentress Forest was the destination for a seven-hour endurance event attracting entrants from across Scotland and the north of England.

Covid arrangements meant racing with no support and minimal equipment on the 11km of natural single-track descents and cripling climbs.

North Argyll Cycle Club fielded

three pairs and a solo rider. The teams fell into order and lapped consistently as the drizzle dried off through the day. Initial rusty technique after a long break developed into a more focused effort and all the riders pushed hard to the end.

Team Ben Lora Massive Aye! - Sam Wood and James Barrow - opting for trail and enduro bikes were closely matched to team Rusty Cycle Shed - Nick Charlton and Steven Groom - on XC bikes. Both teams completed nine laps to finish four minutes apart and

fourth and seventh respectively in their age groups.

Team Ginger All the Way - Iain McDonald and Fraser Inglis - were late entries to the event and pushed hard to deliver eight laps. Inglis' eyebrows raised as McDonald explained: 'The cake stop was worth the slower lap.'

Power houses

Despite this unplanned feed these power houses placed a strong 10th in their category.

Tom Smith came back to cycling competition after a long absence and rode solo.

Despite his experience he commented regretfully after the first lap: 'I set off too fast.'

He regained his composure and lapped diligently and with precision to complete eight laps and gain 14th in his category.

The duel of the day was between Fort William's Gary Macdonald and Rab Wardell from Glasgow. Both riding solo, the two elite riders tested each other over the full seven hours.

Both completed 11 laps with Wardell taking the time advantage at the end.

Sixth place finish for John

An intense battle throughout the Dutch Moto3 Grand Prix at Assen last Sunday ended with Oban's John McPhee finishing in sixth place.

An issue off the line for John saw him drop from 11th to 15th on the opening lap, placing him inside a second group of riders. Putting in a series of fast laps, the Oban rider moved back inside the top 10 and re-joined the leading pack on lap eight. John joined the podium fight five laps later, but was shuffled back to sixth. Slightly adrift of the race leaders, McPhee crossed the line seventh but was promoted to sixth following team-mate Darryn Binder's penalty. He goes into the summer break 13th in the championship with 37 points. John will now enjoy a break before action resumes with two back-to-back races in Austria, the first being the Grand Prix of Styria from August 6 to 8.

Young Oban Saints win first silverware

Continued from page 40. Lane with no chance. It would have been easy for the young Oban side to let their heads drop at this point but with a cup final to win all over again they re-took the lead on 69 minutes. A long pass forward from Michael Campbell found Zander Craik who cut in from the left hand side. It looked like he had taken the ball a little wide but his powerful right-foot shot hit the inside of the goalkeeper's left hand post and bounced out to strike partner Cody McCulloch, who smashed his finish high into the net to make it 3-2.

With four minutes of the match remaining, Saints put the game out of reach. Preston MacIntyre's corner from the right found the head of Zander Craik who nodded home to spark huge celebrations from the players on the pitch as they knew this goal had all but sealed the win. Those scenes were more than matched as the referee blew his final whistle, with captain Preston MacIntyre lifting the trophy after the presentation on the pitch.

Coaches Allan MacDonald and Alex Craik were delighted for the boys, commenting that after all the hard work and commitment shown from the squad this year the cup victory was a great reward for them.

The team thanked Glasgow and District Youth Football League for organising the Divisional Cup for the teams this year; Donald Black, chairman of Saints Youths, for buying the team dinner on the way home; main team sponsor JM Boyd (Heating and Plumbing) for their continued support and all parents for their support at matches this season.

The team are now taking a two-week break before they get their pre-season training underway in mid July.

Craignure Golf Club results

It has been a busy two weeks at Craignure with competitive Sunday competitions being played out in glorious summer weather.

Results: Sunday June 20, Anniversary Open: 1 Dariusz Myszak 39 points; 2 Calum MacDougall 39; 3 Barry Whenman 38; 4 Adrian Fitness 38. The places were decided on countback after some close scoring. Sunday June 27: Lorna Christie Trophy: 1 Colin Newton 42 points; 2 Steve Wilson 41; 3 Barry Whenman 38. Congratulations to Colin on his first win.

Rugby season draws to a close for Oban High School girls

Oban High School's under 14 girls' rugby team played their final game of the 20/21 season on Wednesday last week for the Bradbury Cup.

This was also the last chance for the girls to say farewell to their senior coaches Poppy McKillop and Isla MacGillivray. Although Isla will continue to work with the squad after summer, Poppy is off to college in Glasgow.

The girls took a moment before kick-off to present Poppy with flowers and a card as a token of their appreciation for her hard work and motivation to grow and improve girls' rugby at Oban High School.

The game was fast paced and with little competition at the breakdown lots of tries were the order of the day. Some lovely footwork and agility provided the opening try of the day for the Sharks. Numerous tries were exchanged as referee Allan Wright endeavoured to keep up with play. In attack, both teams looked dangerous with A MacQueen, R Gemmell, A MacFarlane-Barrow, N Duncan, T Robinson and C Armour all proving tricky to stop. Great playmaking by J McCann for the Sharks and J Jevons for the Bulls provided many opportunities for both teams. L Gibson, A Logan, C MacAloon and R Carre were

carrying out their defensive duties to a high standard throughout the game with some great cover and tackle defence. After extra time, the game ended in a 10-10 draw. This seemed a fitting result to end what has been an explosion of enthusiasm for rugby amongst players at Oban High School.

Kirsty Sinclair, the ladies' captain of Oban Lorne RFC, presented the Bradbury Cup which was shared on this occasion.

Murray Hamilton, head of



Action from last Wednesday's match for the Bradbury Cup.

physical education, said: 'I am extremely proud of all the students who take part in sport and represent the school, however, the rugby girls have been outstanding this year. 'They have committed to getting better and working hard. I love coaching them and seeing them make progress every week. Senior girls like Poppy and Isla have been inspirational and excellent role models to these young players, who love having the seniors coach them. I am really grateful for their commitment and

volunteering their time.' Girls' rugby training will start back after summer on Wednesday after school on the astro pitch. Any girls interested should see Mr Hamilton in PE. The Girls' School of Rugby is also running next year and new S1 players are encouraged to apply via the information on the transition Google Classroom or the high school app.

Next season the girls are looking forward to playing in their first away fixture against opposition from the Glasgow North regional district. They will have a tournament in September to kick-start their season.

Next season the girls are looking forward to playing in their first away fixture against opposition from the Glasgow North regional district. They will have a tournament in September to kick-start their season.

Bulls beat the Sharks at football

Oban High School Girls' football team played their second challenge match of the Sharks vs Bulls series last week.

It was a tight affair separated by a solitary goal scored by Rachael Steward. The game was played at a high tempo and in good spirit and refereed by Jude Bain, who was very impressed by the girls' sportsmanship.

With the spoils going to The Bulls this time, the series has levelled up at one win each.

See www.obantimes.co.uk for photographs.

Argyll Rally falls under Welsh wizard's spell

The Dunoon Presents Argyll Rally delivered a spectacular curtain-raiser for the Scottish Rally Championship amid the stunning scenery of Cowal – but it was a Welshman who grabbed the headlines.

Making a radical switch from the forest road event that has taken place since 2017, the Mull Car Club-organised rally took place on closed public roads, starting with a dramatic Dunoon town centre circuit on the evening of Friday June 25.

This was the season opener for the KNC Groundworks

Scottish Rally Championship, joined by the Northern England Tarmacadam Rally Championship and a top-quality field of 120 crews took part.

Castle Douglas driver Jock Armstrong with Tobermory's Cameron Fair on pace notes led the event in their Fiesta Ford Rally2 after the town stage – but with three more stages in Cowal to come that night, it would be short-lived as the Aberdeen/Aberystwyth team of Freddie Milne and Patrick Walsh took the overnight lead. Eighteen seconds behind

Milne was the MINI WRC crew of Daniel Harper and Chris Campbell with David Wright and Paula Swinscoe third in their Fiesta R5. Milne stayed ahead across undulating, narrow stages in Glendaruel, Strathlachlan and Whistlefield, opening up a gap approaching 20 seconds. A one-minute chicane penalty on stage seven, however, dropped him out of contention, leaving Wright to pick up the top spot.

More drama awaited as a similar penalty befell Wright on stage 11. With Welshman

Meirion Evans and co-driver Jonathan Jackson Volkswagen in their Polo GTi R5 mounting a last loop charge, it would be Evans who came out on top.

Harper secured second overall with Milne taking the final podium place.

Clerk of the course Chris Woodcock said: 'Thank you to the organising team who pulled everything together and the authorities and sponsors for working closely with us to ensure we had everything in place to abide by current restrictions.'

and the Lochgilphead side for stepping in after original opponents Callander Thistle had to call off. The match will be played at the Oban Community 3G pitch, kicking off at 1.15pm. Due to current Scottish Government restrictions and Scottish FA pro-

ocols, spectators are not allowed, although they can stand behind the perimeter fence. The Saints squad returned to training last week and club secretary David Buchanan has organised some attractive pre-season friendlies starting with Lochgilphead Red Star

this weekend; Saturday July 10 – Division One play-off game against Castlemilk in Motherwell; Saturday July 17 – Vale of Leven in Oban; Saturday July 24 – Thorn Athletic in Oban and Saturday July 31 – Stenhousemuir in Oban.

Saints back in friendly action ahead of play-off

In preparation for their Central Scottish Amateur Football League One play-off game against Castlemilk Dynamo on Saturday July 10, Oban Saints will play a friendly against Lochgilphead Red Star this Saturday.

Thanks go to Colin Weir

Lorn Healthy Options weekly health tip

A change of identity can go a long way.

Studies into how we approach our time after retirement show that people broadly fall into one of two camps.

Some take the view that retirement represents an opportunity for more activity and hobbies such as gardening, fishing, cycling, walking and wildlife watching. Others take a much more negative view and feel their best is behind them, they are less functional, more prone to illness and feelings of what's the point as deterioration is inevitable.

Some studies have found that those who adopt a more positive outlook on life will live for more than seven years longer so the identity we have of ourselves can play a huge part in our future health trajectory.

So perhaps instead of focusing on the results we would like to achieve, we could think about changing our identity. Perhaps instead of setting a goal to get fitter and lose one stone in the next 12 weeks we could think about becoming the sort of person who doesn't miss a planned workout. Or perhaps a person who plans, buys and eats more healthy foods the majority of the week.

A shift in mindset can change our daily choices and then the results will take care of themselves. If your new identity can be anchored to a keystone habit, such as being more active, this will ripple out into other aspects of your life. For example, if you train more, you will sleep better. Sleep better and you will improve your energy levels and focus. With more focus and energy you may eat more healthily and so control your weight more effectively. Control the weight and it's easier to train and stay active.

So if you often struggle to achieve the goals you set yourself, what about a change of identity?

For the full message go to the free resource section on our website.

Rob Graham, lead exercise professional, Healthy Options.

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Bob told 'just go out and play golf' as he bids to make Ryder Cup team

European Ryder Cup captain Pádraig Harrington has urged Bob MacIntyre to 'just go out and play golf' as the Oban golfer bids to make this year's team at Whistling Straits in September.

MacIntyre is just outside the nine automatic spots in Harrington's team, having been on the Irishman's radar for the match in Wisconsin after recording his breakthrough win on the European Tour last November, then breaking into the world's top 50 for the first time earlier this year.

New US Open champion and world No 1 Jon Rahm is to spearhead the European side, with Tommy Fleetwood, Tyrrell Hatton, Rory McIlroy, Paul Casey, Viktor Hovland, Lee Westwood, Matthew Fitzpatrick and Dundee-based Frenchman Victor Perez occupying the other automatic berths at the moment.

As things stand, MacIntyre is set to be up against Open champion Shane Lowry, former US Open winner Justin Rose, record Ryder Cup points-scorer Sergio Garcia and Ryder Cup talisman Ian Poulter in a battle for the other three places. Pádraig said: 'Everyone has just got to go and play golf and try and get in there automatically.'

After a week off, Bob is meant to be playing in a number of major tournaments starting with the Irish Open at Mount Juliet today (Thursday) but has had to pull out of that after being traced as a close contact with a positive case of Covid following his flight home from the US Open.

Young Oban Saints win first silverware

Oban Saints 4
Knightswood 2

Glasgow & District Youth Football League Divisional Cup

Oban Saints Under 15s were crowned Glasgow and District Youth Football League Divisional Cup champions last Sunday afternoon after a 4-2 win against Knightswood saw them end their 2020/21 season on a high.

As the temperatures soared to well over 20 degrees C at Toryglen Regional Football Centre, the young Saints kept their cool to turn in an excellent performance and win their first piece of silverware.

Saints, in their red away kit, started the game strongly and settled any nerves with an early opener on four minutes.

Goalkeeper Josh Lane found Zander Craik with an early kick out to set Saints off on the counter attack and with Zander spotting midfielder Ewen Campbell making a lung-bursting run his through ball found the onrushing midfielder who finished first time with his right foot to give the goalkeeper no chance.

The same two players combined again to double Saints' advantage on 10 minutes.

Good wide play from Zander resulted in a cross and there, to volley home with his left foot,



Oban Saints players and coaches Alex Craik and Allan MacDonald with the Divisional Cup.

FOOTBALL

was Ewen Campbell again. The Saints pushed for a third and looked to have a good shout for a penalty as Zander Craik tumbled in the box on 12 minutes, but the referee didn't agree and waved play on.

Having looked dangerous throughout from set pieces, it was a corner from the right that let Knightswood back

into the game on 25 minutes. A deep corner to the back post was headed back into the danger area and despite loud claims by the Saints players for a handball, the ball was bundled into the net to make the score 2-1 at the interval.

Into the second half and after a bright start Saints had a great chance to increase their advantage as the referee awarded a penalty kick after Zander Craik was fouled in the box.

Saints' top scorer this season grabbed the ball but his penalty was saved by the goalkeeper's legs with Knightswood able to clear the danger before the rebound could be tucked away.

The Glasgow side were now coming into the game more, although on 63 minutes Saints' midfielder Aidan MacDonald had a shot from distance which the Knightswood goalkeeper saved comfortably.

A minute later, after some


hesitant Saints play in midfield, Knightswood equalised with a well-taken right-foot shot from just inside the box, leaving Josh

Continued on page 39.



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Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 1 July, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

1	0441 1.5 1019 2.9 TH 1649 1.4 C 2254 3.2	3	0000 3.0 0632 1.7 SA 1236 2.8 1842 1.7	5	0221 3.0 0832 1.7 M 1440 3.0 2100 1.7	7	0358 3.3 1008 1.4 W 1610 3.3 2242 1.5	
2	0534 1.6 1119 2.8 F 1742 1.5	4	0116 3.0 0734 1.7 SU 1345 2.8 1949 1.7	6	0313 3.1 0923 1.6 TU 1527 3.1 2157 1.6	8	0441 3.4 1049 1.3 TH 1651 3.5 2321 1.4	

OBAN WEATHER

Thursday

Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 20°C to 12°C.

Friday

Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 21°C to 13°C.

Saturday

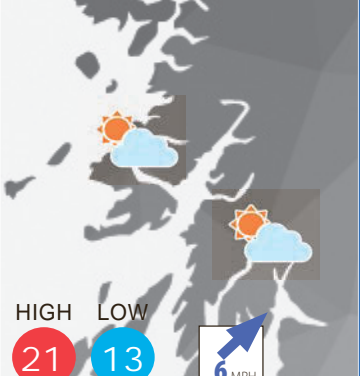
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 13°C to 20°C.

Sunday

Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 14°C to 20°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST

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



HIGH 21 LOW 13

6 MPH

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Lochaber duo receive Papal honour

SEE INSIDE: LEG Power launches Hydroelectric Share Scheme



Denial after row erupts over house plan for park

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

The Highland Council was forced to issue a vociferous denial this week that any concrete plan existed to bulldoze one of Kinlochleven's only two playparks to make way for new houses.

The furore erupted after Fort William and Ardnamurchan councillor Andrew Baxter, who also lives in Kinlochleven, went public with information sent to him in an email on Friday, concerning a housing option for the playpark site in the village's Lovat Road.

Kinlochleven has two play areas, both of which are in need of refurbishment and which recently featured on the front page of the Lochaber Times after complaints about their condition.

Councillor Baxter posted on his Lochaber voice social media page that he was 'horried' by the possibility and also posted an image of an architectural drawing showing six houses located on the playpark site.

'This is the first time I have heard of such a plan and it is certainly not an area of the village I've ever heard



suggested as being suitable for development,' he said.

'I've taken the unusual step of posting the details on this page and making my opposition to any such plans known to council officers.

'This means that if it came to the planning committee I would be prevented from taking part in any debate.

'However, I think that a loss of a play area at a time when the council should be spending money to improve play spaces for our children

is unacceptable. Lochaber councillors have discussed with officers how we can find money to improve playparks.

'Just 10 days ago we told officers we wished to allocate £50,000 from a new fund to go towards the two play areas in Kinlochleven.

'Little did I realise there was a plan to concrete over one of these spaces.

'Although we need good quality new social housing in Kinlochleven there are more suitable sites in the village than

trying to shoehorn houses in a gap surrounded by houses that would lead to a loss of amenity to those residents.

'By publicising this I hope that local residents will also express their opposition and that council officers rethink this development so that it doesn't go beyond the drawing board stage and become a full planning application.'

Quizzed by the Lochaber Times about what was going on, a spokesman for the Inverness-headquartered local

Councillor Andrew Baxter this week in the Kinlochleven playpark he says is being threatened by proposed housing.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

authority said there were no plans to develop the Lovat Road playpark.

The spokesman went on to explain: 'Due to the high demand for affordable housing in the area we have been looking at a number of possible sites as part of a broad trawl for sites in Kinlochleven and the wider Lochaber area.

'There are no plans to develop this site.

'Had we felt it appropriate to move forward, a full report would have been given to local ward members for their consideration.

'We will continue looking for suitable sites for development in Kinlochleven as we are keen to deliver some quality affordable new homes for the village.'

But when informed of the council's denial, Mr Baxter was less than impressed. 'It seems peculiar that I was being asked for my views on a plan complete with an architect's

Continued on page 2.

NEWS



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SPORT



Shinty round-up from Lochaber

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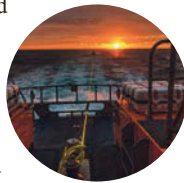
Show site at Loch Fyne



LT

Ardnamurchan rescue as boat fouls propellor

At the end of what was a busy week for Tobermory RNLI, its Severn class lifeboat was launched on Saturday night to go to the aid of a motor vessel which had fallen foul of some rope from a fishing creel.



Answering a request from the coastguard, the volunteer crew arrived at the scene, three miles north-east of Ardnamurchan lighthouse, at around 8.30pm to find that the nine-metre vessel, with one person on board, had fouled its propellor.

Having assessed the situation, Deputy Second Coxswain Dave Underwood decided a tow was necessary to safely help the boat. The tow rope was passed and the motor boat was taken to Tobermory. During the tow, the propellor was released and the vessel entered Tobermory Bay under its own power.

Swansong for music school director Peter

by Iain Ferguson
fort@obantimes.co.uk

After 16 years at the helm, Peter Rose has retired as director of Lochaber Music School.

The organisation was founded in 1987 by eminent cello teacher Audrey Scott when there was no string teaching provided for the Lochaber schools and since then its range of instruments and teaching have greatly diversified.

Under Peter's leadership, with a team of highly-talented and experienced tutors, and financial support from Highland Council, the music school has grown from strength to strength.

It now offers individual lessons and an exciting and fulfilling musical curriculum in the Camaghael Hostel every Tuesday, enriching the lives of more than 140 Lochaber



children, aged six months to 17 years old.

Peter is also known internationally for his successful environmental musicals, performed in prestigious concert halls and theatres throughout the world. Co-written with lyricist Anne Conlon, these have been commissioned by WWF and sung by thousands

of children on every continent. Recently their musical Ocean World, which highlights the plight of the planet's oceans, was performed for the G7 First Ladies in the open air at Minack Theatre, Cornwall.

Awarded the MBE in 2016 for services to musical education and conservation nationally and internationally, Peter is

Peter Rose, left, with music school founder Audrey Scott, his successor David Murray and well wishers from the music school.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

now intending to devote more time to composing, teaching the piano and performing.

Taking Peter's place as director will be violinist David Murray. For several years David has been a string tutor at the music school and he is a former long-standing member of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

Peter said: 'The music school is a unique Lochaber institution and I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to direct its course for the last 16 years. Hundreds of children have passed through our doors and benefited from the remarkable teaching and performing skills

of our tutors. Most arrive as babies or toddlers and over the years develop a keenness to learn to play instruments and sing in the company of other like-minded children.

'Some go on to become successful and established music professionals. But all of them – whatever their ambitions – discover a love and appreciation of music that we are confident will be with them for the rest of their lives.'

'In so many ways, Lochaber Music School has always felt like one big musical family. I wish the children and their tutors all the very best for the future, knowing that the music school is in the safe hands of David Murray, its new director.'

Members and trustees held a socially-distanced garden reception, where Peter received gifts and was presented with a silver quach by Audrey Scott.



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Councillor Andrew Baxter pictured this week at the playpark. Photograph: Iain Ferguson

U-turn after row erupts over house plan for park

Continued from page one. The possible layout on Friday afternoon but after considerable public opposition expressed over the weekend I am told that this wasn't really a plan at all,' he said.

'You can hear the squeal of brakes in Inverness all the way down here in Kinlochleven as the council executes a U-turn.'

Mr Baxter's original post drew more than 70 comments, almost all of which

expressed fury over the possibility the playpark could be under threat.

Parent Mark Macgregor told the Lochaber Times: 'As a local, I, as with everyone, I think, was shocked to see these plans, especially on a playpark we are trying to save – and one the council is fully aware we are trying to save.'

'It's a disgrace that no locals were consulted about this, especially as the site is a

play park, a bad one yes, but it is a place we can improve. It's typical of the council to do nothing for the youth but take things away that could help them promote learning, life skills and make friendships.

'I am disgusted by this and I know the village will object to this being built. They have money to build houses on a park but nothing to improve or renew it. Shocking, to be honest.'

Noise, nuisance and traffic speed among key issues for Kilmallie

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Noise, nuisance and speeding traffic were among the key issues for the local community, according to John Hutchison this week when he gave his annual report as acting chairman of Kilmallie Community Council at its AGM.

Mr Hutchison told the online meeting the community council continued to be concerned about noise and other nuisance at Annat, which is the site of the commercial pier and industrial estate in Corpach.

Mr Hutchison continued: 'We were disappointed that some businesses declined to become involved in a community liaison group but are pleased to hear that Highland Council has now specified that one be formed in connection with a recent planning consent and we



Kilmallie Community Council chairman John Hutchison.

look forward to that happening without delay.'

He went on to commend the A830 Group for the work it did in identifying trunk road concerns and then taking these forward to Transport Scotland and trunks roads' operator BEAR Scotland.

'Similarly, we commended the unidentified parties who took direct action by erecting 30mph repeater signs through Corpach. Although short-lived, their effect was noticeable and their action in highlighting the issue may yet prove worthwhile – affixing repeater stickers on wheelie bins is being investigated by the police,' added Mr Hutchison.

Mr Hutchison then mentioned the Kilmallie Community News [KCN] publication. He said: 'The Kilmallie Community News is justifiably a source of pride for us. The editorial team of Carol Anne [Campbell] and Ann [Moffat] deserve our thanks, as well as the sponsors, which included Covid funding this year. Printing of the KCN appeared to be challenging until the Lochaber Times stepped in twice to help – we are grateful.'

Mr Hutchison also explained that some projects had been difficult to take forward owing to the Covid pandemic, with much of the community council activity taking place online.

'However, I must mention the Hardship Fund, the Helpline and the Community Cupboard which is evolving into the Community Fridge. In my experience many Highland communities abound with 'unstoppable women' and Carol Anne is one of them who, with her team of volunteers, has surmounted the various obstacles that have arisen along the way,' he said.

'Our community councillors have attended other meetings, namely the Active Travel Group, the Blàr Mòr Community Liaison Group – once it was belatedly set up by The Highland Council – and the new Belford project, or

more properly Lochaber Health and Social Care Redesign since there are broader issues than a new hospital building.'

Among other issues mentioned by Mr Hutchison was the Linnhe Community Alliance. He told the meeting: 'I am pleased that joint working with adjacent community councils [CCs] has been resurrected through the Linnhe Community Alliance, involving the five CCs round the loch along with Glenfinnan.'

'Our annual grant from the Highland Council remained stable this year, although we have done well with Covid-related funding opportunities. We also received a very kind bequest from the estate of the late May Greenfield of Chevalier Cottage, Tomonie.'

'Linked with funding, we are determined to put the KCN on a stable footing, to continue

to produce and distribute it free of charge to all homes and businesses, including Blàr Mòr when the houses are occupied. We need £2,700 a year to do this and we are close to halfway there.'

Mr Hutchison concluded by saying he was sorry that Colin 'Woody' Wood had to stand down as chairman soon after last year's AGM, adding: 'But I am pleased that he remained on the CC and will continue to do so.' He added: 'We should all be glad that we have a community council – some places don't and you have shown that you support us when it's critical.'

The AGM also saw the election of office-bearers for the coming year, with Mr Hutchison confirmed as chairman, Gwyn Moses swapping the treasurer's role for that of vice-chairman and Russell Leaper appointed secretary for another year.

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Family of missing hiker told of discovery

The family of a hiker who went missing after reaching the summit of Ben Nevis last week was informed a body had been discovered during searches.

Sara Buick, 24, from Dundee, was reported missing in the area last Tuesday after reaching the summit of Ben Nevis in the early hours of the morning.

Police say there are no suspicious circumstances and a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal in due course.

Ms Buick, an experienced walker, reached the summit of Ben Nevis around 5am last Tuesday and posted a 'selfie' photograph.

However, she had not been seen since climbing the mountain and concern grew for her welfare.

Police said this week they would not be issuing any further information.

Floral tributes at Mallaig after popular fisherman dies at sea

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Dozens of floral tributes were laid at Mallaig harbour and aboard two local fishing boats following the tragic death of popular fisherman Lachlan Robertson.

Mr Robertson, 61, died on Thursday after he and a fellow crew member aboard the fishing vessel the Reul a'Chuain fell into the sea in the Sound of Rum.

A Police Scotland spokesperson said it was around 5.30pm on Thursday that officers were alerted and told the Lochaber Times: 'Emergency services attended, including the RNLI Lifeboat from Mallaig and HMCg helicopter from Stornoway. Both men were recovered from the water but one, a 61-year-old man, was



Floral tributes to Mr Robertson were left at Mallaig harbour and aboard Mr Robertson's two boats. Photograph: The Robertson family.

sadly pronounced dead. There are no suspicious circumstances and a report will be submit-

ted to the Procurator Fiscal.' The other man suffered minor injury and did not require any hospital treatment.

After the incident, Mr Robertson's daughters, Kenna and Rachael Robertson, told mourners they could lay flowers at Mallaig Harbour in tribute to their dad, also known as Lachie.

An online post read: 'Investigations will be ongoing in the morning, but you are welcome to leave flowers by the statues at CalMac in the morning which we will move later, or go to the boat in the afternoon to leave them.'

'Thank you everyone for your kind words. The support from the community has been amazing and much appreciated.'

On Saturday, Mallaig Football Club held a minute's silence ahead of the match against Portree to pay their respects to Mr Robertson.

A post on the club's Facebook page after the match read: 'Before we come to the reaction



from today's game, we'd like to pay our respect to Lachie Robertson who sadly passed away recently.

'A great local character who was much loved by so many in the area, he will be greatly missed.'

'Both sides paid tribute with a minute's silence before today's match. RIP Lachie.'

After the weekend, which saw many flowers and bouquets left at the harbour and aboard not just the Reul a'Chuain but also the Nighean Donn, which was the second boat Mr Robertson had, Kenna posted: 'What an overwhelming response from the last post. Thank you everyone.'

'There are too many mes-

sages to reply to, but we have read each and everyone one. We have moved the flowers to dad's house to enable the boat to be moved and have kept all the little messages sent with the flowers.'

There was also a large number of tributes paid on social media. One woman posted: 'Beautiful flowers at such a heartbreaking time - your father, Lachie was held in high esteem and loved by many.'

Another said: '...your dad was a true gentleman, he will be missed by so many,' while another said: 'your Dad was very highly thought of by all who knew him', and yet another described Mr Robertson as 'A true Highland gentleman'.

Firefighters return to Glenfinnan area to tackle another wild fire

Just weeks after being called to Glenfinnan to deal with a wild fire that destroyed thousands of young trees, firefighters were back in the area again on Monday afternoon to join estate



workers in tackling another blaze, this time on the neighbouring Fassfern Estate.

A spokesperson for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service said: 'We were alerted at 3.09pm

on Monday June 28 to reports of a fire in the open near the Glenfinnan Viaduct, Highland.

'Operations Control mobilised two fire appliances and firefighters extinguished the flames.' Crews left the scene after ensuring the area had been made safe.

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Pope honours Lochaber residents

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

Two more residents of Lochaber have been commended by Pope Francis in recognition of their service to the Holy See, the Catholic Church and society at large.

Entrepreneur and creator of The Highland Cinema in Fort William Angus MacDonald, from Roshven, received a papal knighthood, while Lillian MacDonald, from Arisaig, received the Benemerenti Medal.

These awards come just weeks after sisters Isa Henderson and Mae MacDonald also received Benemerenti Medals from Bishop Brian McGee, Diocese of Argyll and the Isles, for their services to the church in Morar and Mallaig.

Ahead of the latest presentations, Bishop McGee celebrated Mass at St Mary's in Arisaig and paid tribute to Lillian and Angus's contributions to the church and the wider community.

As well as members of the recipients' families, guests included Reverend Stewart Goudie, Councillor Allan Henderson, community councillors and parishioners.

People also joined the ceremony via a live-stream broadcast online to help make the day extra special.

Bishop McGee told the Lochaber Times: 'The Catholic communities in the Rough Bounds are small but it is lovely to see Pope Francis recognising what good people are doing in the area. Lillian MacDonald received the Benemerenti Medal in recognition of her care of young people in her long teaching career - especially in Lochaber - as well as her dedication and service to the local church, enriching the liturgy by her singing and her organisational skills on the

parish pastoral council, parish finance board and as parish secretary. She has been a great support to successive priests.

'Angus MacDonald was made a member of the Equestrian Order of St Gregory the Great in recognition of his support to liturgy by his reading at Mass and the work he has undertaken in restoring local church buildings.

'Through fundraising he has supported many local charities and activities, as well as stimulating business opportunities to help residents continue to live in the West Highlands.

'Receiving a Papal Award is an honour but it is also an invitation for further commitment to the church and the good of wider society. All the local

'I am now allowed to ride a horse through St Peter's Square...'

church shares in the award and it is an invitation for everyone to live a life of service.'

As well as the new cinema and leading refurbishment projects at the churches in Arisaig and Glenfinnan, Mr MacDonald is also well known for his work through the Moidart Trust and the Dragon's Glen initiative.

The Pontifical Equestrian Order of the Knights of St Gregory the Great is one of the five orders of knighthood of the Holy See and is given for conspicuous lay service to the church on the recommendation of a diocesan bishop with the support of the papal nuncio.

Mr MacDonald said: 'Sometimes you never really know exactly what such awards are for. Father Stan just rang one evening and explained about it.

'When he mentioned the

Equestrian Order of the Knights of St Gregory I thought he was pulling my leg. However, it is very humbling to be recognised and it was a lovely day and event.'

The papal knighthood comes with privileges such as the right to a front row seat at papal audiences.

'And also it seems I am now allowed to ride a horse through St Peter's Square in Rome,' said Mr MacDonald with a laugh.

'Mind you, I'd have to do it in a kilt and on a Highland pony being a Highlander,' he added.

Lillian, who has been involved for what she said was 'a lifetime' with the church, helping with general duties, also said she felt very honoured to be recognised with an award of the Benemerenti Medal.

'But I think it also reflects and represents the work done by a whole range of people locally on a day-to-day basis,' she added.

Father Stan Pamula, parish priest for Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and St Cumins Parish, Morar, and St Mary's RC Church in Arisaig, said the event last Tuesday had gone very well.

'It was a lovely day and the weather was much better than the forecast had been,' he said. 'I think such events are extremely important as a way of marking appreciation for people's efforts over long periods of time.

'Unfortunately, as parish priests we can be so busy that sometimes you end up taking people for granted without realising it, simply because they are always there to help, day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out.

'Lochaber has a rich history of charity and of people helping each other and long may it continue.'



Angus MacDonald who received the Papal Knighthood of the Order of St Gregory the Great. Photograph: Anthony MacMillan.



Lillian MacDonald with her certificate for the Benemerenti Medal which is an honour awarded by the Pope.

Photograph: Anthony MacMillan.

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VIEW FROM THE CHAMBER

When was the last time you spoke to a member of the Scottish Government's Cabinet?

When was the last time you had the chance to get the needs of your business heard by those at the top of government?

If you are a member of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce, the answer to these questions is Tuesday.

One of the many benefits of chamber membership is the chance to contribute to and take part in meetings with cabinet secretaries, ministers, MSPs and MPs. Engaging directly with chambers of commerce is one of the most important ways that those in government can hear about the needs of the people and businesses they are representing.

This week we were delighted to welcome Ivan McKee MSP, the new minister for business, trade, tourism and enterprise, to an online meeting with around 30 of our members. As Mr McKee's portfolio covers so many aspects that are crucial to the membership of Lochaber chamber, we were excited to invite him along.

We hope Tuesday's construc-



tive meeting will be the first of many with Mr McKee as we continue to work towards ensuring the best possible economic recovery for Lochaber.

The meeting with Mr McKee follows two other recent chamber meetings with senior government figures. Members have met with Kate Forbes MSP, the cabinet secretary for finance and the economy, and Ian Blackford, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber and leader of the SNP in Westminster.

Through these meetings, we have been able to give a voice to our businesses and ensure that the politicians working on our behalf are well aware of the key issues, challenges and needs of Lochaber businesses.

Join Lochaber Chamber of Commerce to get your voice heard by those in power. Visit www.lochaberchamber.co.uk to join online or email membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk to arrange a chat with one of the team.



Logan Barker, left, and Dean Hutchison, raised funds for Ewan's Room and Lochaber Hope.



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Pair put skills to good use for Fort charities

The summer solstice weekend saw two of Lochaber's newest outdoor adventure entrepreneurs put their skills to good use to raise money for two charities.

Logan Barker, from Fort William, and Dean Hutchinson, originally from Northern Ireland but now also living in Fort William, are the brains behind L and D Adventures and the intrepid duo organised a fantastic event along the Caledonian Canal, at Banavie, to fundraise for mental health and well-being charities Ewen's Room and Lochaber Hope.

Doubling up as a productive way to launch their new adventure sports business, Logan and Dean spent from 9am to 9pm all weekend renting paddleboards and canoes out on the canal, with all proceeds going to their chosen charities.

They also took part in an impressive relay challenge along the canal, including cycling, paddle boarding, canoeing and running for 12 hours each day, not to mention a raffle with prizes generously donated by

local businesses. 'The weekend was a great success, having completed 198km and raising more than £1,000 for Lochaber Hope and Ewen's Room,' Logan told the Lochaber Times.

'We are very grateful for all the support shown through those who turned up on the day, donated money and the businesses which provided raffle prizes.

'Getting involved with the community is at the core of L and D Adventure's ethos and we are honoured and grateful to be able to do so right from the get-go. Ewen's Room and Lochaber Hope have provided us with support and opportunities as we have been building our business and we are happy we have had the chance to put our expertise to good use and help raise money and awareness for the two outstanding charities.'

Becky Drinkwater, from Ewen's Room, commented: 'We really appreciate Logan and Dean's support. It has been a pleasure working with them both.

'It was so lovely to see so

many businesses and people within our community come together to support them and to help raise much-needed funds towards our work. Thank you L and D Adventures and best of luck with your new business venture.'

Lochaber Hope's Vicky Kelly added: 'Lochaber Hope is sincerely grateful to Dean, Logan and everyone who supported their superb fundraising event.

'It was also wonderful to see everyone enjoying our fabulous outdoors and many trying water activities for the first time.

'Well done Logan and Dean and good luck from us all on your new venture.'

L and D Adventures will be based on the Caledonian Canal, at the top of Neptune's staircase, every Saturday, so if anyone is looking to get on the water give them a shout. And if you would still like to donate to the two charities Logan and Dean were raising money for, you can find their Just Giving page at the following address at <https://www.justgiving.com/team/LandDsSummerSolstice>

End of an era at Arisaig SWI

by Nic Goddard
fort@obantimes.co.uk

After more than a century of helping bring women together, the closure of the Arisaig branch of the Scottish Women's Institute (SWI) last month marked the end of an era, writes Nic Goddard.

It was one of the first institutes in the country, starting in 1917 when a group of women in Arisaig began the branch of the Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI), an organisation which was new to Scotland.

In recent years with the growth of the SWI as more branches opened in towns and cities, the R for 'Rural' was dropped from the name in 2015.

The Arisaig branch has proved a lifeline for many women over the intervening decades but at the institute AGM last month the difficult decision to close was taken. Member Ann Martin said: 'It



Arisaig SWRI members photographed around 40 years ago. Photograph: Arisaig SWI.

was both a celebration to have an in-person meeting and a sad occasion to be taking the decision that the institute

would close. Over half of our members do not have access to social media and were unable to attend the

online events which enabled other institutes to continue. Despite our best efforts to attract new members we

simply did not have sufficient capacity to continue with a committee.'

Secretary June Cairns explained: 'Although in many ways the SWI is not as necessary for providing a social life for rural women as it once was, it is still relevant to women today. Sadly many younger women would find that hard to believe and that is partly why it can be so difficult to attract new members. The organisation is seen to be for elderly ladies drinking tea, knitting and baking scones.

'SWI is still able to make women's voices heard in government and the business world. So although some institutes, like Arisaig, are unable to continue, SWI will be relevant for a while yet.'

The legacy of the work undertaken by the SWI in Arisaig will be remembered in the history of the community, both during the war years and during celebrations and village events when those

baking, organising and fundraising skills were put to excellent use.

Ann added: 'Over the years, the ladies have had a lot of fun, learned many new things as per the unofficial motto of the organisation, 'If you know a good thing, pass it on'.

'Arisaig ladies are very proud of our record as winners of the Federation annual quiz.

'Our names are on the shield so many times that it sometimes seemed to have taken up residence in our cupboard in the Astley Hall where we met.'

The Institute may have closed but the women of Arisaig will continue to meet for walks, lunches and outings and the Facebook page for the branch will remain open to allow others to join in.

There remain several institutes in the Lochaber Times area and to find your local SWI branch check the website at www.theswi.org.uk



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Sasha hopes flower project will blossom in Fort William

by Mark Entwistle
mentwistle@obantimes.co.uk

A Fort William entrepreneur is hoping to encourage more of Lochaber's residents to buy cut flowers grown in Scotland to help tackle climate change and biodiversity loss.

Sasha McKinley, who runs the Emporium of Worldly Goods in the town's Monzie Square, even hopes to get people to have a go at growing their own blooms for the home.

Her shop, which sells ethically-sourced goods from around the world, won a Fair Trade and Sustainability Award in 2020.

Sasha also now supplies seasonal, sustainably-grown cut flowers and plants and is a member of the Flowers from the Farm initiative as well as a new group Flowers Grown

in Scotland. An estimated 86 per cent of flowers in the UK sold through florists, supermarkets and wholesalers are imported from Holland, Ecuador, Colombia, Kenya and even Ethiopia.

Flowers from Scottish growers will be freshly picked and will save thousands of travel miles.

Grown seasonally on a small scale, they are mainly grown outdoors without artificial light, heat or chemicals.

Sasha told the Lochaber Times: 'This is my third year growing seasonal plants and flowers for the shop at our home in Fort William.'

'We grow outside and in tunnels, as well as in raised beds, and we have recently begun keeping bees, which are loving the garden.'

'Our compost is a mix of peat free, garden/home/

chicken compost, and enriched garden soil. We don't use any pesticides or treat our plants with chemicals other than fertiliser and don't use artificial preservatives.

'We repurpose as much waste from the shop as possible in the garden – cardboard and paper is used for compost and no-dig beds, bubble wrap is used to insulate and protect the plants during cold spells, and all of our tubs are turned into planters.'

'I am also now running learning tours/workshops of the garden to encourage everyone to have a shot, no matter how much space you have, and am available to work with you directly in your garden to plan your garden.'

Sasha with her home grown flowers. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos



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Launch of pioneering GO-HI transport accessibility app

The Highlands and Islands are leading the way in Scotland with the launch of a ground-breaking new app, writes Mark Entwistle.

It is designed to make it easier for residents, tourists and business travellers to access the information they need to make greater use of public transport and car sharing and to decide when cycling is an option.

HITRANS, the regional transport partnership, has developed the bespoke GO-HI branded app in partnership with a leading technology firm to provide instant access to information on buses, trains, taxis, car hire, car clubs, bicycle hire, air travel and ferries.

This allows users to plan their journeys and find, book and pay for all modes of transport in one place using any iPhone or Android mobile device.

GO-HI is powered by Fleetondemand's Mobbileo Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) platform, which has been built to use partner MaaS schemes.

It is being funded by the EU North Sea Region Stronger Combined project and the Scottish Government's MaaS Investment Fund.

Caol and Mallaig Ward councillor Allan Henderson,



Chairman of HITRANS Councillor Allan Henderson with the app which will help users better plan their journeys across the Highlands.

Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image.

who chairs HITRANS, said the pioneering project provided a one-stop-shop for all travel needs.

It combines a journey planner with real-time travel information, tickets and payment options, allowing integration of bus, rail, flight, bike, car club, demand responsive transport (DRT), car rental and taxi operators across the Highlands.

Mr Henderson added: 'It is an ambitious region-wide solution that has the potential to make a significant contribution to improve accessibility for residents and visitors.'

'It also addresses

Government ambitions to reduce carbon emissions by encouraging a modal shift from sole occupancy cars to shared cars and public transport alternatives.

'It will also help to create healthier lifestyles by improving the sustainable travel choices people can make in the region including active travel opportunities.'

Since the project began nearly a year ago, a significant amount of data from a wide range of transport users has been gathered to enable GO-HI to go live and in the future much more information will be added.



Mixed Martial Arts fans Angus Anderson, left, and Nico Scally with hairdresser Terri Nicolson of the Stag and Buck, who dyed their hair blond as part of the challenge to raise money for Lochaber Autism Group. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

When nature calls outdoors... bag it and bin it!

Highland Council is urging folk who are caught short outdoors to clean up after themselves in a bid to keep the countryside clean.

The Bag It, Bin It campaign aims to clamp down on human waste in the countryside and raise awareness of issues of public health.

Chairman of the council's communities and place committee Councillor Allan Henderson said: 'We want to welcome visitors to our beautiful countryside, but we

need to minimise the negative impact on the natural environment and on the people living in these communities, so every effort must be taken to Bag It, Bin It.'

The campaign also provides useful advice to help visitors be prepared before they start their trip as well as outlining steps the council has taken to help people enjoy the Highlands in a responsible and sustainable way. Advice is also being given out to visitors

who may not always be near to a public toilet facility.

To them the message is: 'Human waste is extremely harmful to people, spreads disease in wildlife and can pollute water sources. People in rural communities in the Highlands often rely on natural (private) water supplies, which can be contaminated by waste. It's not safe for yourself, others or the environment – so where, possible bag it and bin it instead.'

Autism group boost thanks to challenges

by Fiona Scott
fscott@obantimes.co.uk

A group of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) enthusiasts and followers of the Fight First Foundation (FFF) have put themselves through a whole series of physical ordeals, not in the ring or cage but to raise money for an autism charity, writes Iain Ferguson.

Proposed and organised by FFF's Lewis Simpson, well known for his interviews and podcasts with big names on the worldwide MMA circuit, he devised a series of challenges which the participants would undertake when donations reached a predetermined amount.

Taking part over 24 hours live on social media, they attracted a large following who watched and donated money to see them undertaking each challenge.

While the whole event was carried out in a great spirit of fun, many of the events involved harmless, but unpleasant, tasks with viewers and donors sending messages of encouragement, laughing with them and congratulating them on their successes.

Day and night the boys stuck to their instructions, which included eating a spoonful of cinnamon powder, a raw egg, a chilli, pouring a bucket of icy water over themselves or eating 10 burgers. For larger sums and after the initial 24-hour challenge, they also agreed to a body wax, dye their hair blond, get a piercing or even a tattoo.

While taking part in the challenges the boys also agreed to donate one pound every time they swore.

Lewis Simpson and 'the team' had hoped to raise around £1,000 for the group, but with their tremendous enthusiasm and willingness to get involved in a wide range of quirky challenges, they actually raised almost five times as much with a final figure of £4,840.

Lewis said: 'We picked Lochaber Autism Group because it was formed by parents who felt that there was very little professional support for their children, so they took it upon themselves to give them a safe environment where they are accepted and parents can share advice.'

'The guys were so keen to take part and did everything that was thrown at them with great enthusiasm and a laugh for the full 24 hours, while being watched live on Facebook.'

'I would like to thank them and also the many people who donated money. It really was a great experience for a good cause and I'm glad it worked so well.'

Amie Wallace of the autism group said: 'All the families are completely overwhelmed by the boys' efforts and the children are looking forward to finding fun activities to use the money for.'

'We rely on our own fundraising and this has been difficult due to Covid, so we are looking forward to a brighter future with the kids using this amazing amount of money.'



Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy Virtual Public Consultation

SSEN Transmission invites you to share your views with us

What is being consulted on?

We would like to invite you to join our virtual consultation exhibitions to share your views and feedback on our proposals for our Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy which aims to enable the connection of new renewable generation to support the transition to net zero emissions. This strategy is comprised of three elements:

1 Creag Dhubh to Dalmally 275kV Connection

Following previous rounds of consultation on this project, we are now looking to hear your views on our Preferred Alignment for the overhead line within the selected route (Route Option 3). This event will also be the first formal public consultation for the Creag Dhubh substation Pre-application Notice (PAN).

2 Creag Dhubh to Inveraray 275kV Overhead Line

This is a new project which would involve between 8-12 km of new 275kV overhead line constructed between the proposed new substation at Creag Dhubh, and a connection point on the Inveraray to Crossaig overhead line. We are inviting views as to our Preferred Route Option, within which the replacement overhead line will be located.

3 Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Substations

To complete the Argyll and Kintyre 275kV Strategy all the connected substations require upgrade to 275kV capability, as a result we are progressing with a new project which would involve construction and operation of four new 275kV electricity substations, south of Inveraray. We are inviting views regarding preferred Site Options identified for each of these substations.

The team will be available for live instant message chat sessions on:

Wednesday 14th July 2021
10am-1pm & 5-7pm

Thursday 15th July 2021
10am-1pm & 5-7pm

Thursday 29th July 2021
10am-1pm & 5-7pm

How can I get involved?

The virtual consultation exhibitions are part of a 5 week long consultation and have been designed to be fully interactive, allowing for presentation of key project information and plans, as well as providing an opportunity to engage directly with the project team via the chat sessions. The virtual consultation portal, the consultation brochure, other supporting documents and feedback forms can be accessed on the project webpage: www.ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/argyll-and-kintyre-275kv-strategy/

Consultation starts on Monday 12th July 2021 and closes on Friday 13th August 2021. We kindly request that feedback forms are submitted by 13th August.

If you have any questions about the project or are unable to join the virtual consultations and you would like a paper copy of the consultation brochure please contact the Community Liaison Manager by email, phone or post:

Helen Batey
Community Liaison Manager
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks, Inveralmond House, 200 Dunkeld Road, Perth, PH1 3AQ
Helen.Batey@sse.com
01925 800 833 / 07778 453 993

LT

Big lift for cyclists in Highlands

It is now easier to take your bike on the bus on a number of Highland scheduled services thanks to a pilot being run by HITRANS, in partnership with Scottish Citylink and Stagecoach.

Reusable bike socks (covers) will be available on coach services provided by Stagecoach between Inverness and Caithness, and by Scottish Citylink on services between Inverness and Skye, Fort William and Ullapool. The covers fit easily over the wheels and chain mechanism, allowing the bike to be safely carried in the luggage compartment of the coach.

There will be two socks available on each service, free of charge. If the pilot service proves popular, a booking service may be introduced in the future. The scheme will benefit people wishing to take the bus and then cycle for their onward journey, and visitors travelling to or from the Highlands and islands for cycle touring holidays.

Time to honour champions of local life in Lochaber

People are being urged to make their voices heard to honour the inspirational and innovative work being done to make the West Highlands a better place to live, writes Fiona Scott.

Nominations are being sought for the Scotland Loves Local Awards, which will see unsung heroes, including a high street hero, place leader and those leading the charge to tackle climate change, receive some much-deserved recognition.

Organised by Scotland's Towns Partnership (STP), the awards will celebrate all that is great about towns and neighbourhoods – recognising creativity and commitment towards shaping a sustainable, successful future.

STP chief officer Phil Prentice said: 'Day in, day out people are working tirelessly to make communities across the

Highlands better places to live, improving the lives of those around them.

'The Scotland Loves Local Awards are a chance to say thank you for all that they do.

'We need you to help us highlight the people, places and projects making the region cleaner, greener, stronger and fairer whether through design, delivery or sheer determination.'

Scotland Loves Local is spearheaded by STP with the support of the Scottish



Government and the campaign is encouraging everyone to strengthen their community by supporting the businesses and people around them. It has backed work across the region.

The award categories are:

- High Street Hero (a business, organisation, constituted charity or social enterprise – including individuals associated with the organisation – which has gone above and beyond to support those around them)

- Place leader
- Climate town

- Creative town
- Innovative town
- Streets and spaces
- Town centre living

Scotland's community wealth minister Tom Arthur MSP is backing the call for award nominations.

'Over the past year our communities have come together to support each other through the pandemic, from supporting local businesses to helping vulnerable neighbours,' he said.

'The Scotland Loves Local Awards importantly recognise those who have gone above and beyond.

'If you know of a person or organisation that has made a difference, I would urge you to nominate them to receive well-deserved recognition.

'The Scottish Government has committed to a £10 million Scotland Loves Local programme to help revitalise

our town centres. As we recover from the pandemic we are pushing forward with an ambitious agenda of economic transformation by building wealth in local communities and delivering greater, greener and fairer prosperity.'

Nominations can be made at www.lovelocal.scot/awards, where full category criteria can also be found.

There, you can briefly share the details of your nominee and why you would like to see them recognised.

The closing date for nominations is Friday September 10.

Winners will be announced in a virtual celebration to be broadcast on Thursday November 25, as the culmination of Scotland's Towns Conference – this year being staged as an online showcase in a series of events over three days.

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Mr Allan pointed out that at a time when interest in Gaelic is growing, the decline in the use of the language in island communities has been getting worse.

Gaelic Language Plan debate held in Scottish Parliament

A debate on the next National Gaelic Language Plan has held in the Scottish Parliament by Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan, writes Fiona Scott.

Prepared by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on behalf of the Scottish Ministers, consultation has started on the fourth plan which details public strategy and policy for the promotion of the language.

The islands MSP was joined in the debate by MSPs from across the political spectrum.

'I would like to thank all those who took part, contributed or engaged with the debate,' he said. 'The new parliamentary

term will be important in securing the status and vitality of the Gaelic language, and I felt it was important these issues should be discussed early.

Stronger
'Much good has happened since the Gaelic Language Act was passed in 2005: we now have BBC Alba, Gaelic medium education has grown, many public bodies now have Gaelic language plans, and the place of Gaelic in culture and the arts is now much stronger.'

Mr Allan also pointed out that, at a time when interest in Gaelic is growing, the decline in the use of the language in

island communities has been getting worse. He added: 'Just as we need to recognise Gaelic belongs to all of Scotland, here is also a need for Gaelic policies that are more tailored to the needs of vernacular communities, and which acknowledge the difference between planning for the language needs of a school and those of an island.'

'We have an opportunity now, with our new National Gaelic Plan, to do something to make sure that the promotion of Gaelic is not just a question of how many people have Gaelic, but of how many people use it.'

Western Isles Health Board balances the books

NHS Western Isles has broken even financially for the 13th year in succession.

Western Isles Health Board members this week congratulated staff across the organisation for the effective management of finances.

At last week's board meeting, Director of Finance Debbie Bozkurt indicated that NHS Western Isles ended the 2020/21 financial year with a £110,000 surplus.

Interim board chairperson Gill McCann said: 'To be reporting such a strong financial position at the end of such a challenging year is an excellent position to be in, particularly considering the difficulties we have all faced.'

'Congratulations to all staff across NHS Western Isles for this achievement.'

Chief executive Gordon Jameson added: 'Staff have worked extremely hard to protect and deliver high quality services to patients, whilst maintaining a strong financial position. We should all feel very proud of what has been achieved.'

Stornoway students take over shop window

Students at Lews Castle College UHI have been gifted the window at Lewis Revivals in the centre of Stornoway to showcase their end of year work, writes Fiona Scott.

In a celebration of fashion and collaboration, young designers and their lecturers have curated a window display to exhibit some of their expertly crafted work which is part of their HND.

Over the past three years the fashion department has developed to include the provision of NC and HNC/HND levels of study.

Netty Sopata, fashion course leader at LCC UHI, said: 'This is a perfectly timed opportunity and a great location for our students to showcase a glimpse of their end-of-year collections.'

'Everyone has had a challenging year, but these guys have kept focused and worked



exceptionally hard under challenging conditions to complete their studies to a high standard.

'A huge thank you to Sarah at Lewis Revivals for giving the students this opportunity. If anyone is interested in studying fashion, please go and see the display. It will give you an insight into the different pathways students have taken

to reach the standard of craftsmanship on display.'

Student Jackie Keddie has been sewing for many years and feels she has learned 'so much more' during her time at college.

'I have gained more skills and confidence and have had the privilege to work with tutors who have a great knowledge of the fashion business and



Students from Lews Castle College UHI have been showcasing their work in Stornoway.

fashion illustration,' she said. Student Breagha Halbert started the course fresh out of high school and has now almost completed her HND.

She said: 'Learning to create my own designs and taking part in things that I am actually interested in has been amazing.'

'If this course continues to a degree level I will definitely be joining.'

Lewis Revival is an independent shop in Stornoway with a sustainable lifestyle focus that includes a collec-

tion of vintage and new items for the home as well as vintage Harris Tweed clothing.

The shop has a range of fairly traded and locally-made treasures and aims to promote ethical consumer choices through reuse, upcycling and supporting craftspeople and the Fair Trade movement.

The business also collaborates with adjoining shop Empty House Traders, which features Fair Trade clothing and gifts, vintage clothing, a collection of vintage vinyl records and books.

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Lochgilphead
Lochgilphead Bowling Club
Mondays - 3pm
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FOCUS



Know your levels!

The Highlands are still in level 1 (with some islands at level 0) and while we're all enjoying more freedom to go out and to meet up with more family and friends inside our homes, we still need to remember to follow the guidelines. With so much changing, it can be hard to keep up with what's allowed.

So, what exactly does level 1 mean for Lochaber?

We can meet socially in groups of up to:

- Six people from three households in your home or theirs – and can stay overnight, including in self-catering accommodation (one bedroom per household or extended household).
- Eight people from three households in an indoor public place like a café, pub, or restaurant until 11.00pm (alcohol now permitted to be served indoors)
- 12 people from 12 households outdoors, with two-metre social distancing between households

We can travel anywhere in Scotland in levels zero, one or two but must not enter a level three or four area unless for a permitted reason. We can travel to England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, or the Channel Islands.

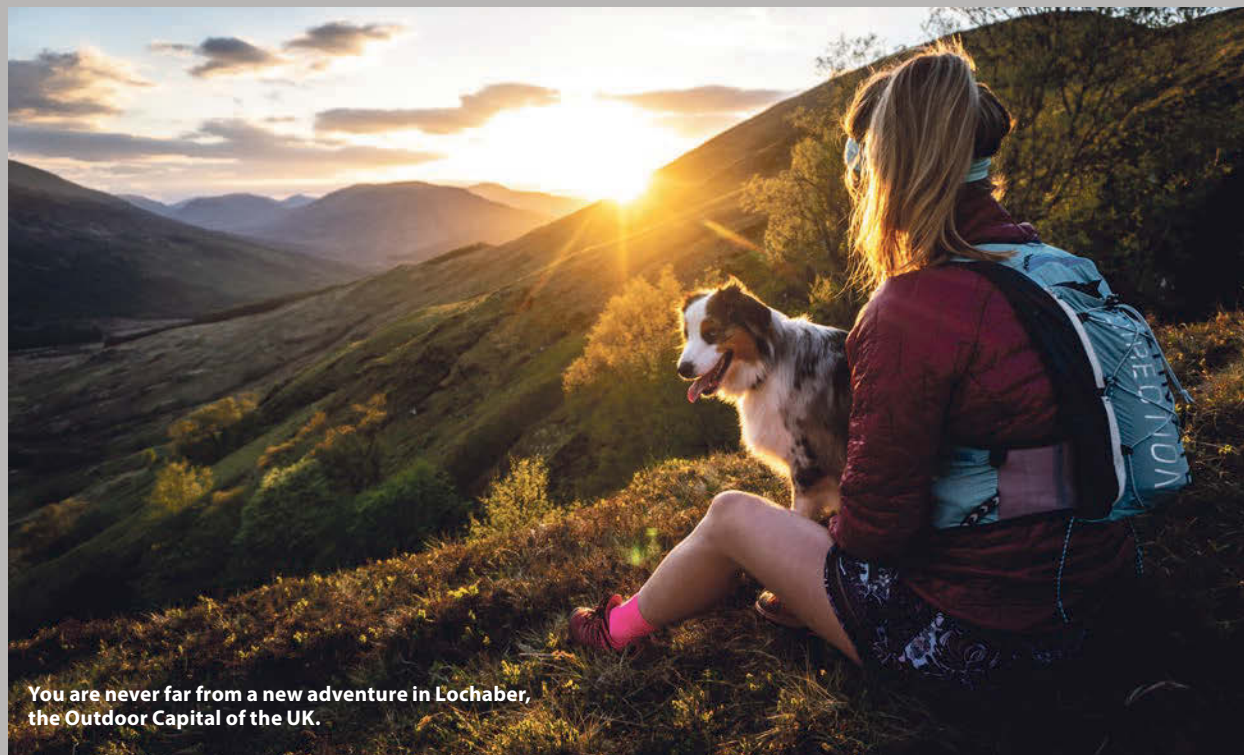
There was a recent delay to further loosening of restrictions and it is now expected that all parts of Scotland will move to level 0 from 19 July, if the required conditions are met. Once all adults over 40 have received two doses of vaccine, it is then hoped that the remaining legal restrictions can be removed on 9 August.

We're delighted to once again be able to welcome visitors and explore our own area with others again.

As we get more and more used to being out and about, please do remember to book ahead with businesses so they can ensure they're meeting social distancing limits, and remember to cancel if you can't make it. This small courtesy can make a big difference to a business.

If you're a local business who'd like to benefit from the support of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce and the promotional opportunities of the 'Outdoor Capital of the UK' marketing, please get in touch on membership@lochaberchamber.co.uk. We're here to help!

Enjoy summer in Lochaber...responsibly



You are never far from a new adventure in Lochaber, the Outdoor Capital of the UK.

The summer holidays are here! School's out for seven whole weeks...and we're looking forward to helping you share family adventures in the Outdoor Capital of the UK!

With so many of us holidaying at home this year, we're very lucky that Lochaber is the perfect place for a fantastic staycation summer experience.

And it's not just visitors who can enjoy exploring Lochaber. If you're staying close to home this summer, there's lots to see and do in our own back garden - after all, it is one of the most amazing natural playgrounds in the country! You don't have to venture far to find a new adventure to enjoy with the family or to share with visitors.

This year, more than ever, we all know that we need to take care of our surroundings and communities while we're out and about.

VisitScotland's new responsible tourism campaign, called 'Scotland - Yours to Enjoy. Responsibly', aims to raise awareness of the importance of exploring the outdoors responsibly with the focus on asking people to leave no trace of their visit and protect Scotland's stunning countryside. This campaign also helps people to share responsible tourism messages via social media using the hashtag #RespectProtectEnjoy.

As part of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce's work to support local business, we promote the area using Lochaber's destination brand 'The Outdoor Capital of the UK'. If you haven't had a look at the Outdoor Capital recently, check

us out on Instagram, Facebook and at www.outdoorcapital.co.uk. You'll find loads of great ideas for the summer holidays and beyond!

Throughout the pandemic and recovery, we've been working with VisitScotland and other key tourism partners to support local tourism businesses and to create a new Scotland-wide visitor management plan and marketing activity that will encourage people across Scotland to enjoy our outdoors in a respectful way.

We can all do simple things to help protect and respect our landscape and communities. Please remember to:

- Pick up litter; and take it home with you
- Avoid crowded areas and move on if a location is too busy
- Park responsibly and safely
- Clean up after your dog
- Keep your dog on a leash around farmland
- Do not disturb natural flora, fauna or animal habitats
- Follow current COVID guidance

By enjoying Lochaber responsibly and respecting others and our precious environment, we can all enjoy our fabulous Outdoor Capital of the UK now and in the future.

Follow the Outdoor Capital of the UK on social media for lots of inspiration to help you discover great summer holiday activities, and share the inspiration with others to explore local, shop local, and enjoy local...responsibly! Use the hashtags #RespectProtectEnjoy and #myOutdoorCapital on social media.



Young people are going places with DYW!

Helping young people get ready for the world of work is what Lochaber Chamber's 'Developing the Young Workforce' team is all about. The team works closely with schools, further education, and businesses throughout the west highlands to help young people get ready for their future world of work.

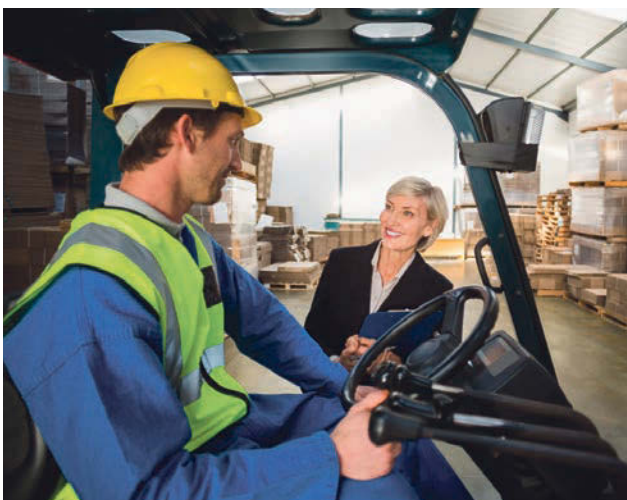
Over the course of the pandemic, DYW West Highland has been actively helping the young people of the west highlands by providing a series of informative on-line workshops to introduce them to the wide range of career options on their doorstep.

The series of career insights webinars have provided a

fantastic opportunity for secondary school pupils, school leavers, college and university graduates, parents, and carers to liaise with a range of industry experts from across different growth sectors in the west highlands.

The last session before the school holidays was "Keep Your Highland Career Moving", which focused on careers in our vital transport sector. The interactive zoom event was really eye-opening about the range of job and apprenticeship opportunities in rail, sea, sky and road.

There was loads of great information for young people and plenty of inspiration and advice on next steps



The transport sector offers a wide variety of career opportunities for young people

from the speakers from Inverness Airport, Stagecoach, Ferguson Transport & Shipping, Kishorn Port and Ullapool Harbour. If you or the young person in your life are looking for some

help with finding a future direction, you'll find a lot of inspiration on www.dyw-westhighland.org website and on the DYW West Highland social media channels.

We've made the 'protect. outdoorcapital' app even better



Even in Level 1, it is still a legal requirement for hospitality and tourism businesses to collect customer contact details to quickly contain any spread in suspected covid cases. We've recently updated our Test & Protect app to include the option to add your table number. This helps the NHS contact tracers narrow down who was close to the person with Covid and help to ensure only those at potential risk are told to self-isolate.

Lochaber Chamber of Commerce was one of the first organisations in Scotland to create a bespoke 'track & trace app' to help our hospitality businesses easily record the customer details they need to keep. Customers can quickly check into your venue using a unique number or scannable QR code. If guests don't have a smartphone, you can still take their details on paper and add them into the app at the end of each day.

This easy-to-use mobile web app is available for free to all Lochaber hospitality businesses. Simply visit protect.outdoorcapital.co.uk and follow the simple steps to sign up and take the hassle out of managing customer details and your own visits to local venues.

EVEN EASIER TO CRUISE LOCH LINNHE

CRUISE
LOCH LINNHE



Elsie pulls up alongside Neil Cameron's fishing vessel whilst cruising Loch Linnhe for the children to say hello!

In its first few weeks of operation hundreds of delighted customers have enjoyed the delights of taking to the water on Cruise Loch Linnhe's stunning new vessel, Elsie.

Passengers have enjoyed some brilliant sunshine and spectacular views, but on a few unseasonably cool days have received a bright, warm welcome from skipper Karl Spierling and his crew as they set

off down the loch taking in the scenery while enjoying the live commentary describing the views as they passed by.

BIG SCREEN

While Karl highlights what can be seen from the deck or from the comfy warmth of the enclosed cabin, 'cruisers' can also enjoy the wonders of what lies beneath on a big screen displaying images from detailed sonar scans of the



Families enjoying a fun day out aboard Elsie as they cruise around Loch Linnhe

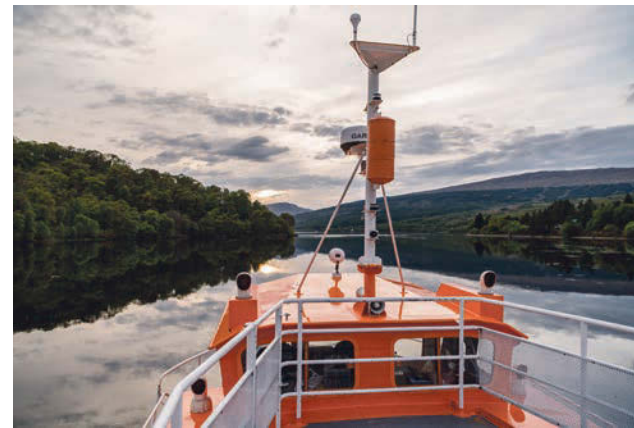
underwater contours. This reveals many interesting features and objects lying on the sea bed as the boat glides over them.

No matter what the weather, on-board catering provides hot or cold drinks with a selection of snacks, all adding to the enjoyment of the two hour trip. When not following the regular daily schedule, 'Elsie' is also available for private charter, whether it

be family parties, company outings, fishing trips or maritime crew exchange. Urgent deliveries are also perfectly matched to her powerful, yet efficient, twin diesels, capable of propelling even a boat of Elsie's size at 20+ knots.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

The first of these special occasions was appropriately a birthday celebration for well known local entertainer, Paula



Beautiful views of the loch

MacAskill whose family joined her on board for an enjoyable cruise. A group from Bun Sgoil Ghaidhlig Loch Abar, 70th and 80th birthday parties have also enjoyed the delights of cruising on the Elsie.

For a trip down the loch on a regular daily cruise, or a different way to mark a special event, Cruise Loch Linnhe and Elsie are waiting to add that little bit extra enjoyment, just

for you. Tickets are easy to book from the new website www.cruiselochlinnhe.co.uk and can also be purchased over-the-counter from long established local business, Marshall and Pearson, opposite Cameron Square in Fort William High Street.

EASY

It's now even easier to get on board and enjoy the wonders of the loch and land.

LT

LETTERS

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

Congratulations!

We would like to offer our congratulations to Lilian MacDonald and Angus MacDonald, who both received Papal honours for their contributions to the Church and wider community.

Lillian received a Benemerenti Medal, just weeks after sisters Isa Henderson and Mae MacDonald also received the award, while Angus received a Papal knighthood.

We are sure both awards are well deserved, but are particularly taken with Mr MacDonald's honour which allows him to ride a horse through St Peter's Square in Rome.

End of an era

After more than a century of bringing women together, it was sad to learn that the Arisaig branch of the Scottish Women's Institute has closed.

It is an unfortunate fact that while the institute has seen numbers grow in towns and cities, the more rural branches have seen membership dwindle as older members pass away and it proves difficult to recruit younger women. Thankfully Lochaber is still home to SWI groups that people can join.

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

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

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

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School uniform discussion

The current discussion regarding the unreasonable enforcement of Oban High School uniform is an important one.

In no way does it detract from or deny the many successes and achievements of both pupils and staff at OHS. We are proud of the way our young people, despite experiencing significant upheaval and difficulty this last year, have continued to work with staff and teachers to achieve and maintain their educational goals. The achievements and successes of all at OHS are a great reflection on the area and we continue to applaud that.

However, the mental health and wellbeing of our young people is vital in ensuring they continue to feel supported and able to meet the goals they set for themselves. This is why parents, pupils and the Oban High School Uniform Reform Group feel the current unreasonable enforcement of school uniform policy is untenable and inappropriate.

Our young people have spent a great deal of time isolated from peers, going to school is an opportunity for them to re-establish those connections and relationships, alongside their academic work. Feeling comfortable, confident and free to express themselves is vital in maintaining their mental health and sense of wellbeing.

Sixty-five per cent of parents/guardians surveyed reported that their child had been subjected to unreasonable enforcement, ranging from having to wear shared clothing or shoes, sent home or taken to the shop to purchase alternative clothing. Such measures remove the young person from academic time; are often highlighted in front of peers thereby causing embarrassment and shaming; and detrimentally impact upon their confidence and sense of wellbeing.

On behalf of parents and pupils, OHS Uniform Reform Group are asking that OHS cease this unreasonable enforcement and comply with Argyll and Bute council policy that states schools are encouraged to suggest school uniform but that "school uniform is not compulsory and it is not policy to insist on pupils wearing uniform or having specialist items of clothing in order to engage in all the activities of the curriculum. As such, pupils will not be deprived of any educational benefit as a result of not wearing uniform".

Current enforcement also appears to unfairly target girls, working against the modern ideals of body positivity, and is discriminatory. We are not suggesting that the uniform be removed, we recognise the benefits and rewards of a school uniform. However OHS Uniform Reform Group, parents and pupils suggest that the current enforcement is

Beachd Ailein

ALLAN CAMPBELL

ailean@obantimes.co.uk

Bliadhnaichean air ais nuair a bha mi fhin agus cuid eile a' brodanachadh gnìomhachas turasachd na dùthcha, gun chus soirbheachaidh, gus aithne a thoirt dhan Ghàidhlig agus a cultar nan cuid margaideachd tha cuimhn' agam gun robh fiù 's Buill seann Chomhairle Sgìre an Eilein Sgitheanaich is Loch Aillse teagmhach mun argamaid againn.

Chaidh rannsachadh bheachdan ceud neach-turais a dhèanamh ann am Port Rìgh air feasgar samhraidh agus chuir e iongnadh air na Comhairlichean gun tuirt còrr air dà thrian gun robh iad ag iarraidh Gàidhlig a chluinntinn is fhaicinn! Thug e ùine mhòr eile mun do thachair e, ach 's math a bhith a-nise a' faicinn an aithne a tha 'Tadhail Alba a' toirt dhan chànan, agus am plana is am poileasaidh a th' aig a' bhuidheann dha taobh. Ach a dh'aindeoin sin tha e follaiseach gum bheil e doirbh dha daoine a tha an sàs ann an obair-aigheachd greimeachadh air na cothroman a tha an lùib na Gàidhlig mar shàr tharraing bhuannachdail.

Chan eil teagamh, saoilidh mi, nach dèanadh leithid de dh'fhoillseachadh feum a thaobh inbhe agus ire a' chànan, agus fàs cuideachd air àireamh luchd-ionnsachaidh. Le fios gum bheil mu leth mhillean neach an sàs ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig an-dràsta, tha fhios nach robh e riamh cho iomchaidh a bhith mothachail air a' chothrom a th' ann luach a bharrachd a chur air na

heavy handed and inappropriate. School uniform should encourage a group identity whilst allowing individuals to express themselves; dress appropriately for the weather; be gender neutral; and not impact upon the education or wellbeing of the young people. The current enforcement does not meet these criteria, nor does it comply with Argyll and Bute policy.

We are keen to discuss ways to improve the situation with OHS and Argyll and Bute Council in order to ensure our young people continue to feel supported; continue worth with and succeed at OHS; and continue to maintain their wellbeing and develop their own identities.

We have always been and remain our young peoples biggest fans, and are proud of all those who have passed through, and continue to pass through Oban High School.

Oban High School Uniform Reform Group.

dh'fhiosraicheas luchd-tadhail ann an Alba, agus gu sònraichte air a' Ghàidhealtachd, Innse Gall, agus na h-Eileanan an Iar.

Thar leth-cheud bliadhna tha cosnadh bho thurasachd air fàs gu bhith na phrìomh phàirt de theachd-an-tìr Alba, agus ged a tha ceann a tuath 's an iar na dùthcha a' faotainn tomhas mhath den sin tha dragh ann gum bheil dìth plana-leasachaidh coileanta na chnap-starra agus thathas ag obair a dh'ionnsaigh leithid sin a-nise.

Cha ghabh àicheadh gum bheil cosgais àite-an-fuirich is ithe air fàs gu math daor an seo, agus tha feum air a h-uile tarraing a ghabhas foillseachadh anns an fharpais luach airgid le bailtean turasachd thall thairis. Ri linn sin uile tuigidh sibh mo thàmailt a thaobh nan cothroman cailte, na mo bheachd-sa, ann an dà iris bhrèagha dhathte a thàinig thugam tro phàipearan-naidheachd air an t-seachdain seo chaidh. Bha iad le chèile a' margaideachd na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eileanan, ach a bharrachd air facal neo dhà ann an ainm ionaid an siud 's an seo chan fhaca mi iomradh air Gàidhlig anns na h-aithrisean mu na rudan a tha tarraingeach dha luchd-tadhail. Chan urrainn dhòmhsa a thuigsinn ciamar, aig a' char a bu lugha, nach do nochd rudeigin mu eachdraidh bheò a' chànan, a ceòl, is a buaidh air ainmean-àite.

Mo nàire air cothrom cailte dhi, agus dhan ghnìomhachas!

Technology is not our friend

Recently I was passing some time in the Oban and Lorn hospital, and as I waited I thought that I would buy a bottle of water, given that the ambient temperature was approaching 20C. I selected a vending machine, gave it £1.50, received 40p change but no water.

Neither the staff in the RVS shop nor the hospital receptionist were able to help, although the receptionist did point out a number on the offending machine that I could phone to report the fault. After reporting the fault and explaining twice what had happened, I was offered the refund sent to my home or to the hospital for me to pick up.

When are we going to realise that customer service systems do everything but serve the customer?

David Heberton, Oban.

DISTRICT NEWS

GREAT GLEN

Students invited to apply for help with study costs

Young people from in and around the Great Glen interested in studying a renewable energy-related subject are being invited to apply for financial support for study costs.

The support scheme run by Falck Renewables Wind Limited, owners of Millennium Wind Farm north of Invergarry, is for those from areas around their 10 wind farms in Scotland.

It is aimed at helping students of renewable energy-related subjects with some of the expenses they incur while studying, including travel costs, equipment, software or broadband.

Now in its fourth year, the scheme has so far provided funding for students from Aberdeenshire, Sutherland, Falkirk and South Lanarkshire.

Richard Dibley, managing director of Falck Renewables Wind Limited, said: 'In these challenging times, the more help we can offer young people the better. As we move towards a low carbon future, qualifications in subjects related to renewable energy will be increasingly useful and we hope some financial support will encourage young people in this direction.'

FORT WILLIAM

Cash for bus links at Blar Mhor and Upper Achintore

The Highland Council has secured £2.76m to transform public transport in the region, including money for bus-only links at Blar Mhor and Upper Achintore in Fort William.

It follows a successful bid to the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund and means the council and its partners will now develop options for ambitious bus priority schemes that aim to tackle the negative impacts of congestion on bus services.

The local authority says the work will provide the change necessary to modernise the transport network by cutting congestion and car use by offering more reliable public travel choices that help to tackle the climate and ecological emergency.

This phase one funding will also allow the council to deliver projects at Raigmore Hospital



The start of the clean up, with assistance from The Highland Council Mobile lift vehicle.



From left, Tony Weldon, David Brady, Stuart Gallacher, Jeanette Lane and Gaynor Weldon get to work with the paint brushes.

and Rose Street in Inverness. The rest of the phase one funding is allocated to prepare outline business cases, appraisals and other feasibility work to support a second funding bid that has the potential to unlock further funding of up to £21.7m.

Councillor Trish Robertson, chairperson

Monumental effort for memorial makeover

Fort William war memorial has been sparkling in the sunshine thanks to the Fort William and District Branch of Royal British Legion Scotland.

Over the past few months volunteers from the group have been cleaning up the monument and the surrounding area.

The job has been a tremendous undertaking this year and over many weekends the group has washed the monument from top to bottom with assistance from Highland Council using a lighting vehicle fitted with a mobile lifting platform.

The base has also been repainted, hedge cut, the old poppy floral display has been removed

and replaced with a Tommy cut out figurine and a Lest We Forget plaque was made by MacPherson Welding and concreted thanks to a small donation of post crete from TSL.

New chips donated by Gardenstop on the Blar have been laid in the garden area.

Collection buckets

On Saturday June 26, which was also Armed Forces Day, £71.71 was donated via collection buckets and the branch thanks everyone for their donation.

While the work was being done, members of the clean-up party talked to locals and visitors and thanked them all for their positive comments.



New Tommy and Lest We Forget signs.

of the council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee, said: 'The Bus Partnership Fund centres on tackling congestion, which is most pronounced in our biggest urban areas, Inverness and Fort William.'

'We look forward to developing options and engaging on these exciting projects that will

help to create a healthy, sustainable transport network that is fit for an age of climate and ecological emergency.'

A cash bid for projects in Skye was not successful and council officers are now exploring other potential opportunities for the projects proposed in this bid.

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Robert in lockdown

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You wait a year and a half for a gig, go to bed the night before like a child at Christmas, then wake up to hear the wind howling down the street and the rain pelting against your bedroom window.

What can be more Scottish than that? Well, perhaps going out of your first international tournament in 23 years having only scored one goal... but the less said about that the better.

The rain belted down all day last Thursday but it certainly did not dampen the spirits of the over 1,500 revellers – many of whom had travelled from various parts of Scotland for their first taste of live music in what feels like an age.

All seated at tables, two metres apart, the energy from the crowd manifested itself in actions like brollies being held aloft and moved up and down – rather than dancing or jumping around. This new kind of energy did not go unnoticed by anyone on stage.

Kinnaris Quintet and Breabach both came offstage totally thrilled and also quite emotional after playing for their first live audience in so long. I felt similarly emotional.

Despite the rain coming lashing in between the stage roof and the lighting truss (and the front two metres of the stage subsequently resembling the Clyde), we managed to stay relatively dry. My guitar pedals were covered in a see-through plastic bag in order that I didn't electrocute myself!



The Tide Lines lads during a brief moment when the rain held off and allowed a photograph of the fanzone on Glasgow Green.

A few years ago, a gig in these conditions would have been a pretty miserable experience. I've played a few of them in my time. But such was the excitement of audience, artists, and stage crew, just to be back doing what we all love, the whole night was full of nothing but joy.

As for Tide Lines, it was our first chance to play the material from our latest album live – despite the fact it was released as long ago as last May. It was lovely to hear people singing along with the new songs and being able to thank them in person for their support.

We now await nervously to see what the coming months will bring in terms of lifting of restrictions, but no matter what happens, I don't think many of us will forget the feeling of hearing a live crowd

cheer after many long months.

On an entirely different note, congratulations are in order in this week's column to Anda Campbell from Bunessan who was honoured last weekend (alongside Peter Bruce and Malcolm Ross) by the National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs at their annual Honours Celebration which was held virtually this year.

There is a fantastic interview with Anda and Iain Cathcart still up on Facebook as part of the event which is well worth watching. Both men are sitting in Anda's conservatory overlooking the beautiful Bunessan Bay. Knowing that conservatory as I do, I would hazard a guess there were a few drams enjoyed after that interview – and deservedly so after a life time of dedication to Scottish Dance Music.

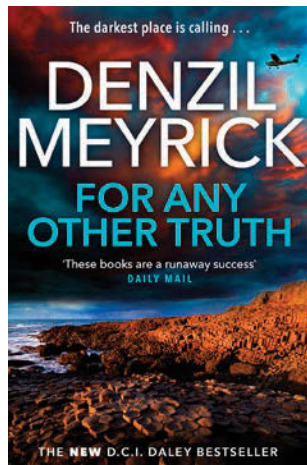
Denzil delighted as DCI novel tops bestseller lists

Campbeltown author Denzil Meyrick is 'delighted' that his latest DCI Daley thriller has become one of the UK's fastest selling books.

Released earlier this month, For Any Other Truth flew to the top of the Amazon audio-book bestsellers' list ahead of new books from the likes of Lee Child, Barack Obama and Stephen King.

The Kindle edition also became an instant bestseller on that platform while the print edition went straight on to Waterstones' bestseller lists and sold out three times in one day on Amazon.

The book is the ninth instalment in Denzil's DCI Daley series set in Kinloch, a fictional town based on Campbeltown.



For Any Other Truth by Denzil Meyrick.

When a light aircraft crash-lands at Machrie airport, DCI

Jim Daley and his colleague Brian Scott rush to the scene, but it soon becomes clear that both occupants of the plane were dead before take-off.

Meanwhile in Kinloch, fisherman Hamish is unwittingly dragged into danger when he witnesses something he shouldn't, and hotel manager Annie is beginning to suspect her new boss may not be as he first appeared.

And just as Chief Superintendent Carrie Symington thinks she has finally escaped the sins of her past, she finds herself caught in an even deadlier trap.

As the action spills across the sea to County Antrim – all under the scrutiny of the security service – the search is on for any other truth.

HIGHLAND CINEMA

FRI 2ND JULY - THUR 8TH JULY



ADVANCE PREVIEWS WED 7TH JULY, 7:30PM + THUR 8TH JULY, 7:30PM



FRIDAY 2ND JULY
Cruella (12a) 10:30am. Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 10:45am. Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1:15pm, 4:45pm + 7:15pm. In The Heights (PG) 1:30pm. In The Earth (15) 4:30pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 8pm.

SATURDAY 3RD JULY
In The Heights (PG) 10:20am. Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 10:45am. Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1:15pm, 4:45pm + 7:15pm. Cruella (12a) 1:30pm. In The Earth (15) 4:30pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 8pm.

SUNDAY 4TH JULY
Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 10:30am. Highlands From The Air (U) 11:15am. Cruella (12a) 12:45pm. Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1pm, 4pm + 7:15pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 4:15pm. In The Earth (15) 7pm.

MONDAY 5TH JULY
In The Heights (PG) (Bairns at the Box Office 10:30am.) Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 10:45am. Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1:15pm, 4:30pm + 7:15pm. Cruella (12a) 1:45pm. In The Earth (15) 4:45pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 7:45pm.

TUESDAY 6TH JULY
Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1:15pm, 4pm + 7:15pm. Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 1:30pm. In The Earth (15) 4:45pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 7:30pm.

WEDNESDAY 7TH JULY
Cruella (12a) 10:30am. Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 10:45am. In The Earth (15) 1:15pm. Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1:30pm, 4pm + 7:15pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 4:45pm. Black Widow (12a) 7:30pm.

THURSDAY 8TH JULY
Cruella (12a) 10:30am. Peter Rabbit 2 (U) 10:45am. In The Earth (15) 1:15pm. Fast & Furious 9 (12a) 1:30pm, 4pm + 7:15pm. The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard (15) 4:45pm. Black Widow (12a) 7:30pm.



Monday morning showings for parents/guardians accompanied by pre-nursery age children

MON 5TH JULY, 10:30AM IN THE HEIGHTS



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LT



Manu Kurewa.



Aileen Ritchie.



Lorna King.



Kieron Nicholson.



Rachelle Atalla.



Nas Saraei.

Writers line up for Skye residency

More than 350 applications have been received for seven places on this year's Young Films Foundation Skye screenwriting residency programme.

It provides the lucky participants with the chance to develop a screenplay for a feature film or TV drama or comedy series with support from established industry mentors.

They also receive masterclasses and tutorials from well-known film and TV writers, directors and producers.

Each script will be commissioned and paid for by one of the following: BBC Drama, Sky, Channel 4 Drama,

Channel 4 Comedy, Film4, BBC Films and BBC/MG Alba.

The programme, which began last week, culminates in writers bringing developed scripts for a week-long residency in Skye where every aspect of their scripts will receive in-depth analysis from mentors, experts and commissioners.

Scenes

Time will also be given for the writers to work with established actors and directors on scenes from their draft scripts in the studio.

The successful 2021-22 screenwriters are:

■ Aileen Ritchie and Manu Kurewa, writing partnership.

Mentor: John Collee, writer - Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World, Hotel Mumbai (AACTA Nominee Best Screenplay 2019), Happy Feet)

■ Holly Tennant. Mentor: Joe Thomas, writer and actor - The Inbetweeners, Channel 4; Chickens, Channel 4; White Gold, BBC.

■ Keiron Nicholson. Mentor: Hilary Martin, producer - From Darkness, BBC; In The Flesh, BBC - BAFTA Winner Best Mini-Series 2014; In The Dark, BBC.

■ Lana Pheutan. Mentor: Mairead Hamilton, writer and director - Bannan, BBC Alba.

■ Lorna King. Mentor: Stevie Lee, producer - Frank, The Reason I Jump, BIFA Winner Best Documentary 2021.

■ Nas Saraei. Mentor: Hania Elkington, writer and producer - The Innocents, Netflix.

■ Rachelle Atalla. Mentor: Olivia Hetreed, writer - Girl with a Pearl Earring, BAFTA Nominated Best Screenplay, Adapted 2004, Wuthering Heights, Spy Princess.

Programme founder Chris Young said: 'We were astonished by the sheer volume of applications for this year's programme and it has been a tough process narrowing it down.'

'It's encouraging for us to see how much Scotland's new talent appreciates the unique opportunity offered by this programme and it's clear there is an important gap here in Scotland which we're hoping to fill - namely to connect up the talent with the bigger industry out there and feed the ambition of these new voices.'

The programme will cumulate in a week-long immersive residency in June 2022 where participants, mentors, experts and commissioners will come together to discuss and develop their work with further masterclasses and networking on the Isle of Skye.



Holly Tennant.



Lana Pheutan.

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Shinty round-up

Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup – first round Northern Section Glenurquhart 2 Strathglass 0

Glenurquhart were 2-0 winners in their tie against Strathglass, a 3pm throw-up at Blairbeg.

The sides met in their annual MacDonald Cup clash during the pre-season when Strathglass were 4-2 winners. However this time Glenurquhart got revenge.

One of the most significant changes since the previous meeting was Lachie Smith's return at full back for Glenurquhart, allowing Ally MacKintosh to push forward to full centre where he was influential.

It was a warm day and the ground was hard and the game definitely missed the edge supporters would have brought to the occasion.

Both sides have changed significantly since pre-covid times and were full of young players.

Glenurquhart took the lead on 23 minutes when David MacLennan took a pass from Connor Golabek before firing past Adam Todd in the visiting goal.

A neat passing move created Glenurquhart's second goal five minutes into the second half with Jed Stoddart firing a rasping shot home to make it 2-0. Adam Todd was a busier keeper than Stuart MacKintosh, whilst both teams were missing the inclusion of an all-out scorer.

Beaully P Inverness P

The match between Beaully and Inverness at Braeview Park was called off because of covid

restrictions. Beaully Shinty Club issued a statement saying they had been made aware of a covid case within their playing members so had postponed all club activity for at least a week.

The statement concluded by saying that although the outbreak at the club is minimal, the connection the club has to the community, and the duty of care they have to other clubs in shinty, meant the only choice available was to suspend activity for a minimum of seven days.

Mowi Senior League A

Fort William P Skye Camanachd P

The clash between Fort William and Skye Camanachd at An Aird was called off on Friday afternoon because of covid concerns.

Fort William manager Victor Smith said: 'The players affected hadn't been training or involved with the rest of the group so it is disappointing Saturday's match didn't go ahead. I guess that's just where we are at the moment.'

'I do worry clubs will end up losing players if they don't have shinty matches to play as they'll find something else to do instead. I fully expect Saturday's MacTavish tie against Kilmallie to go ahead though. We have Sean Cameron back which is a boost and youngsters Craig MacDonald and Lewis Murphy will keep their places in the squad after doing so well against Kinlochshiel in our last game.'

Kilmallie P Kinlochshiel P

Covid issues have prevented the Kilmallie first team from taking the field this season and just when their match

against Kinlochshiel at the Canal Parks looked to be going ahead, it was called off because of covid concerns on the Kinlochshiel side.

Kinlochshiel issued a statement confirming that due to covid in the area, the club has postponed the first team game against Kilmallie, the second team game against Glengarry and the ladies' game against Skye.

The statement went on to say that one of the Kinlochshiel coaches was in close contact with a work colleague whose family are showing covid symptoms. They have been tested but the result will not be known until Monday so club activity has ceased until the results are known.

Mowi Senior League B

Kingussie P Newtonmore P

The first Badenoch derby of the season, which was due to take place at the Dell, was postponed because of covid issues in Newtonmore.

Newtonmore issued a club statement notifying supporters that due to a positive covid case within the club, and some other players having to isolate, the Mowi Senior League B fixture with Kingussie has been postponed.

The club stated that the health and well-being of members and the community were a priority at this time before wishing everyone affected a speedy recovery.

Caberfeidh P Lovat P

Lovat and Caberfeidh were due to meet at Castle Leod for the second time in 10 days.

Lovat won 4-0 last time around but covid restrictions have delayed Caberfeidh's chances of revenge.

Caberfeidh have suspended all club activity until July 5 at the earliest.

Strathdearn Cup – first round

Beaully 3 Strathglass 6

The Strathglass second team were 6-3 winners against the Beaully second team in their 7pm throw-up at Braeview Park on Monday June 21.

Strathglass took an early lead when Steven Hyslop netted after three minutes.

However youngsters Callum Flynn on 20 minutes and Finlay MacLennan four minutes later had Beaully 2-1 ahead.

Ronan Melens pulled Strathglass level on 35, but Duncan Anderson put Beaully back in front three minutes after.

A Robbie Stokes goal on 42 minutes meant it was 3-3 at the end of a goal-ridden first half.

Strathglass pulled away in the second half with Robbie Stokes getting his second on 52 minutes to give his side a 4-3 lead.

A second from Steven Hyslop on 55 minutes and an effort from Donald Fraser on 69 minutes completed the 6-3 win, sending Strathglass through to the next round.

Newtonmore 9

Strathspey Camanachd 0

The Newtonmore seconds ran out 9-0 winners against Strathspey Camanachd at the Eilan.

Brodie MacBean scored on three and 13 minutes to put Newtonmore 2-0 ahead, whilst efforts from Arron MacBean on the half-hour and Struan Ross on 39 minutes made it 4-0 at the break.

Sorley Thomson added a double on 53 and 57 minutes to make it 6-0.

Struan Ross added a seventh on 68 minutes, whilst Brodie MacBean completed his hat-trick on 75 minutes. Ritchie Irvine rounded off the 9-0 win three minutes from time.

Newtonmore's young team played very well and Strathspey were limited to just one shot on target during the match.

Duncan MacPherson was outstanding at half back for Newtonmore whilst young Rasmus Cheyne at left wing back also caught the eye. Sorley Thomson was excellent up front.

This was a good sporting derby contest and despite the defeat, Strathspey will take positives from the experience against their higher league opponents.

Skye Camanachd walk-over v Kilmallie

The Skye Camanachd second team were given a walk-over



Jed Stoddart, Glenurquhart, with Thomas MacLean, Strathglass. Photograph: Neil Paterson.

as their Kilmallie counterparts were unable to raise a team for their Strathdearn Cup first round tie at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

Skye travel to face the Fort William reserves in the second round.

Mowi North League A Kinlochshiel P Glengarry P

The meeting between the Kinlochshiel second team and Glengarry at Ràraig was called off because of covid issues.

Lochcarron P Fort William P

The clash between Lochcarron and the Fort William second team at Battery Park didn't go ahead because of covid issues affecting the An Aird side.

Mowi North League B

Glenurquhart 1 Kingussie 4

The Kingussie colts came from a goal down to beat the Glenurquhart colts 4-1 in their noon throw-up at Blairbeg.

Daniel MacKintosh gave Glenurquhart the lead on 10 minutes but Pavel Nagle pushed forward from midfield to score from distance on 20 minutes.

Martin Dallas on the half hour and five minutes later made it 3-1 at the break.

Dylan Borthwick's goal a couple of minutes into the second half made it 4-1 and was the last goal of the game.

Lovat P Caberfeidh P

The match between the Lovat seconds and the Caberfeidh seconds at Balgate was rearranged for Tuesday June 29 with a 7pm throw-up but was unlikely to go ahead given covid restrictions in the area.

Mowi North League C Inverness P Beaully P

The game between the Inverness second team and the Beaully second team at the Bught Park was another covid casualty.

All throw-ups were at 2.30pm unless stated.

Women's Camanachd Association (WCA) shinty action

The 2021 Women's Camanachd Association shinty season is

up and running with most of the fixtures taking place on Sunday June 27.

Clubs will play in an agreed one-off format incorporating regional groups to limit travel.

The groups will comprise four senior leagues and three development divisions.

WCA Mowi North Senior League

Glenurquhart 2 Strathglass 1

Hazel Hunter's double helped Glenurquhart defeat Strathglass 2-1 in their 10am throw-up at Drumnadrochit on Saturday June 26 2021.

Morgan Redpath countered for neighbours Strathglass.

WCA Mowi West Senior League

Glenurquhart 0 Skye Camanachd B 5

Skye Camanachd B were 5-0 winners in their 1pm throw-up at Craigard.

Meghan Campbell scored four times for the islanders with Rhianna Kirk getting the others.

Ardnamurchan B 0

Ardnamurchan A 2

Roslyn Ritchie scored twice as Ardnamurchan A defeated Ardnamurchan B 2-0 in their 2pm throw-up at Strontian.

Skye Camanachd P

Kinlochshiel P

The match between Skye Camanachd A and Kinlochshiel was brought forward to Friday June 25 at Pairc nan Laoch, Portree.

However a covid concern within the Kinlochshiel club led to a postponement.

WCA Mowi North Senior League

Lochaber P Badenoch B P

Lochaber's meeting with Badenoch B at Spean Bridge was postponed because of covid concerns.

Inverness 4 Lovat 4

Inverness and Lovat drew 4-4 in their 2pm throw-up at the Bught Park.

Katie McMillan scored all four Inverness goals with Laura Gallagher's hat-trick and Jade Longworth's strike earning Lovat a draw.



Glenurquhart's Andrew Corrigan rises above Ruairidh Strachan, Strathglass.

Scottish FA showcases Land of Football at Claggan Park

Continued from page 40.

stunning, there wasn't anywhere better to play and enjoy football than Scotland, with the mountains providing a positive distraction when the 'football isn't great'.

Colin 'Woody' Wood from Fort William FC said: 'Football has, and will continue to be, the heart of Fort William. It brings people together and I mean why wouldn't it with such a fantastic pitch to play on.'

'It has been great to be involved in these videos and be asked by the Scottish FA to showcase the ground and passion of the community.'

Coinciding with the launch of the governing body's new strategic plan *The Power of Football*, the mini-series showcases the many ways in which football inspires people in everyday life: boys and girls, men and women of all ages.

Platform

Ian Maxwell, Scottish FA chief executive, said: 'Qualifying for EURO 2020 gives us a real platform on which to strengthen the foundations of the national game.'

'Football generates more than £1bn of social return on investment in this country and I'm pleased that we could share the uplifting stories across the country during the tournament.'

'The power of Scottish football will not only endure throughout the tournament; it will go much further beyond.'

Maree Todd MSP, minister for public health, women's health and sport, believes that the series of films highlights the power that football brings to communities and the passion of supporters in Scotland.

'With strong ties to clubs, communities and national teams, often spanning generations – it is an exhilarating force,' she added.

Other videos in the series include:

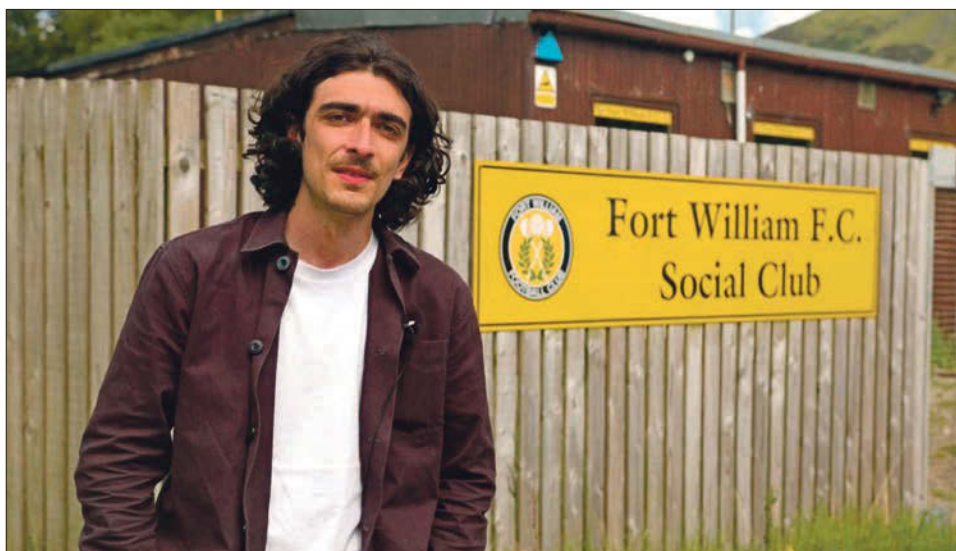
■ Getting the thoughts on the world's oldest football nation from some of Scotland's youngest fans in Stirling

■ A visit to Dyce Boys' Club in Aberdeen to understand the importance of grassroots as one of their graduates steps onto the big stage

■ Hearing from a true Scotland legend, and someone who has played in front of sell-out crowds – Stuart McCall, as he tells how vital it is to have fans back in stadiums in Glasgow

■ Listening to fans of Dundee and Dundee United on how they put their rivalries to one side in support of the Tartan Army

You can watch the video and the series at: <https://euro2020.scottishfa.co.uk/national-tour/>



Episode four travels to Fort William, where presenter Chris McQueer, left, chats to fans at one of the most picturesque football pitches in the world.

'Football has, and will continue to be, the heart of Fort William. It brings people together and I mean why wouldn't it with such a fantastic pitch to play on.'

The Land of Football focuses on the fans that have been inspired by Scotland men's return to the big stage for the first time in 23 years.



The Off Beat Bike swimmers take the plunge.

Paddlers and pedallers take to the water under watchful eye of club

Lochaber Yacht Club (LYC) safety team took to the water last weekend as the Off Beat Bikes crew trialled how challenging it would be to swim across Loch Linnhe.

Vince Dean and Steve Marshall, in the two ribs, teamed up with paddling members Lucy Burns, Keiron Shatwell and Victoria Kimber to take part in the extraordinary task on Sunday afternoon.

'It was a beautiful day for it and everything

went smoothly so no rescues were needed, thankfully,' said a LYC spokesperson.

Nicky Sharrat was the first lady back, followed by Nix and Foss Forster. Shortly after Julie Corner and Penny Clay all arrived at the slipway at Lochaber Yacht Club.

'A huge well done to everyone who took part and a big thank you to our volunteer members for the part they played in keeping everyone safe,' added the spokesperson.

Hard work on the training front earns Zach rugby club award

Lochaber Rugby Football Club's 'S3 Bubble' rounded off their year by celebrating their own endeavours – and those of their parents – after a difficult season.

Youth convenor Stevie McAleer presented S3 player Zach Alexander with the 2020/21 Season Train Hard Award for his age group.

Stevie paid tribute to the boys in the 'S3 Bubble' for turning up week after week and noted Zach had been selected by his team-mates through an accumulation of points over the full course of the season.

Runners-up for the award were Callan Griffin and James Richmond.

A unique aspect of the S3 Bubble is that the majority of the team live outwith Fort William. The parents of Archie and Robbie Gray from Knoydart; Josh Seymour from Fort Augustus; J-J Blackley and Stui MacLennan from



Lochaber Rugby Football Club Youth Convenor Stevie McAleer presents S3 player Zach Alexander with the 2020/21 Season Train Hard Award for his age group.

Acharacle; Callan, James and Ruairidh Fothergill from Mallaig and Zach from Ardgour all made big efforts to get their boys to as many

of the 25 training sessions as possible. Special mention to Callan's and Ruairidh's parents who managed to get them in to every session.



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Floating like a butterfly on new boxing floor

MOWI Community Fund helps pay for vital new gym equipment

While the world's greatest boxer Muhammed Ali may have 'floated like a butterfly and stung like a bee', members of Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club can wax lyrical on the power of salmon for helping them master boxing skills, writes Iain Ferguson.

Thanks to a donation from the Mowi Community Fund, the club has bought and installed a new canvas floor in the training ring at its Corpach gym.

Since its formation around 12 years ago, the Lochaber Phoenix club has taken the amateur boxing world by storm, winning many trophies and producing champions at all levels in competitions against the best in the country – all this while being one of the most remote clubs with the smallest membership.

Key to this is not only the great Lochaber talent but also the high level of all-round training given by the coaches from day one.

Much of this award-winning skills' development means working in the ring on movement, stance, delivery and footwork in a realistic boxing bout environment.

Young boxer Cameron Whyte from Spean Bridge has been with the club since

'After more than a decade of continuous use, the old canvas was beyond repair and needed to be replaced

the early years and has held championship titles at every age group in his category and represented Scotland in the National Squad.

Since leaving school, Cameron has worked for Mowi, so it was appropriate he accepted the new canvas on behalf of the club by touching gloves with Jayne MacKay, community engagement officer, Mowi Scotland. Jayne however, declined the opportunity to spar with him.

Coach Aidan Donnelly said: 'After more than a decade of continuous use, the old canvas was beyond repair and needed to be replaced.'

'The ring is in constant use. A good quality canvas floor is vital, but also very expensive.'

'We are very grateful to Mowi for funding the new cover which we hope will see service for the next 10 years, maybe even helping the club produce a few more champions.'



Jayne MacKay of Mowi takes on boxing champion and Mowi employee Cameron Whyte on the new ring canvas donated to Lochaber Phoenix Boxing Club by the company. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos.

Scottish FA showcases Land of Football at Claggan Park

Players and supporters of Fort William Football Club play a starring role in a new five-part mini series which encapsulates the legacy impact of Scotland's qualification for UEFA EURO 2020 in communities across the country.

The Land of Football is being aired by the Scottish FA and focuses on the fans that have been inspired by Scotland men's return to the big stage for the first time in 23 years.

Episode four travels to Fort William, where presenter Chris McQueer chats to fans at one of the most picturesque football pitches in the world – Claggan Park.

Standing in the imposing shadow of Ben Nevis, the stadium has a capacity of 1,300. Players and spectators were shown images of Ottmar Hitzfeld stadium in Switzerland – the highest pitch in the world at 2,000 metres above sea level – and asked where they would prefer to be. It was unanimous that while Ottmar was

Continued on page 39.



The Lochaber Times: 95p



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Chain, shackles and buoys all available to purchase

Tide tables for Oban during the week from **Thursday 1 July, 2021** are listed below with differences for major ports listed alongside. All times are GMT (add one hour BST)

1	0441 1.5 1019 2.9 TH 1649 1.4 C 2254 3.2	3	0000 3.0 0632 1.7 SA 1236 2.8 1842 1.7	5	0221 3.0 0832 1.7 M 1440 3.0 2100 1.7	7	0358 3.3 1008 1.4 W 1610 3.3 2242 1.5	Ardrihaig -5.35 Campbeltown -5.30 Crinan -0.47 Islay Port Ellen 2.00 Lochboisdale +0.30 Mallaig +0.25 Portree +0.55 Tobermory +0.16 Dover +5.30
2	0534 1.6 1119 2.8 F 1742 1.5	4	0116 3.0 0734 1.7 SU 1345 2.8 1949 1.7	6	0313 3.1 0923 1.6 TU 1527 3.1 2157 1.6	8	0441 3.4 1049 1.3 TH 1651 3.5 2321 1.4	

FORT WILLIAM WEATHER

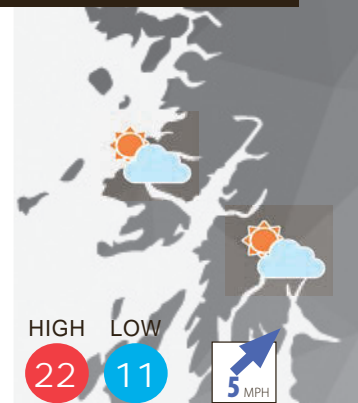
Thursday
Sunny intervals and light winds
Temperatures 11°C to 20°C.

Friday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 13°C to 23°C.

Saturday
Sunny intervals and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 12°C to 23°C.

Sunday
Light rain showers and a gentle breeze
Temperatures 13°C to 22°C.

FRIDAY FORECAST



HIGH 22 LOW 11 5 MPH